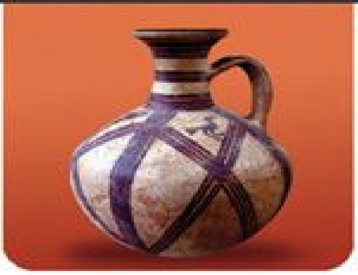

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DICTIONARY

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BakerBooks
a division of Baker Publishing Group
Grand Rapids, Michigan

© 2013 by Baker Publishing Group

Published by Baker Books
a division of Baker Publishing Group
P.O. Box 6287, Grand Rapids, MI 49516-6287
www.bakerbooks.com

Ebook edition created 2013

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ISBN 978-1-4412-3886-3

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data is on file at the Library of Congress, Washington, DC.

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PREFACE

To Christians, the Bible is canon, the standard of faith and practice. According to Calvin, it is a mirror of the soul that helps us understand ourselves better. Further, the Bible is the Word of God and thus like a "seed" (Mark 4:1–20) that serves as an agent of transformation from death to life if planted in the right soil, a receptive heart. Most significantly, it is the self-revelation of God himself. In the pages of the Bible, we come to know God through Jesus Christ, who he is and who we are in relationship with him. Thus, the importance of the Bible for our spiritual formation cannot be overestimated.

If we are honest, though, the Bible is not always easy to understand. The main message is clear enough, but much remains obscure. After all, the books of the Bible come from a variety of time periods, are written in a number of different genres and literary styles, and refer to customs that are quite foreign to us. The places named in the Bible are strange, and the number of people mentioned is virtually countless. We are distanced from both the Old and New Testaments by vast periods of time and culture.

The Baker Illustrated Bible Dictionary intends to help people read the Bible with increased understanding. The more than five thousand articles written by well over one hundred contributors draw on centuries of scholarship to help make clear what is enigmatic on first reading. This dictionary contains articles on major topics (for example, Jesus, God, all of the biblical books) as well as places and people, even if they just appear in a single verse in the Bible. The primary Bible version used for article titles and content is the 2011 revision of the New International Version, although articles also cover some of the more obscure terms used in the King James Version, and readings from a wide range of Bible versions are noted. The dictionary includes visual illustrations, charts, pictures, and maps to supplement the articles. In a word, this dictionary is a helpful resource to support everyday Bible reading as well as to prepare for group Bible studies or to follow up on sermons, and for many other reasons.

The editors wish to thank a number of people for their work in bringing this vast project to a successful conclusion. We thank Baker Publishing Group, and in particular Jack Kuhatschek, for inviting us to serve as editors of this book. Baker, as always, supported us with their excellent staff including Amy Donaldson, Brian Brunsting, Mike Williams, Trinity Graeser, and Brian Vos, the editorial and interior design team. Robert Hand and Robert G. Maccini did an excellent job making sure that the manuscript was ready for press. And, finally, thanks go to Kim E. Walton for organizing the photos and maps and Cheryl Van Andel for the cover design.

Early in the project Baker hired two of my students at Westmont College to start collecting the many subjects that we cover in this dictionary. Thank you Shane B. Kelly and Thomas G. Lengyel for your work as editorial assistants as well as writing some articles yourselves.

Indeed, we are very thankful for our writers, all of whom are named in the contributor list. We thank you for sharing your knowledge with our readers as well as for your timely submissions. While our heartfelt thanks go to all our contributors, special thanks go to Jessie Rainbow, Karen Traphagen, Susan Michaelson, John Michael Stanley, and Timothy Senapatiratne for the number of articles they took on and/or for writing articles at the end of the process when we needed them quickly.

Our heartfelt desire and prayer is that this volume will aid our readers in reading the Bible, not just for intellectual purposes, but so they may know and obey the God revealed in its pages.

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ABBREVIATIONS

GENERAL

//	parallels
Akk.	Akkadian
Arab.	Arabic
Aram.	Aramaic
c.	circa
cf.	confer
chap(s).	chapter(s)
DSS	Dead Sea Scrolls
e.g.	for example
esp.	especially
fem.	feminine
frg.	fragment
Gk.	Greek
Heb.	Hebrew
i.e.	that is
Lat.	Latin
lit.	literally
LXX	Septuagint
masc.	masculine
mg.	margin
MT	Masoretic Text
NT	New Testament
OT	Old Testament
par(s).	parallel(s)
pl.	plural
r.	reigned
sg.	singular
Vulg.	Vulgate

BIBLE VERSIONS

ASV	American Standard Version
BBE	Bible in Basic English
CEV	Contemporary English Version
ESV	English Standard Version
GNT	Good News Translation
GW	God’s Word
HCSB	Holman Christian Standard Bible
JB	Jerusalem Bible
JPS	Jewish Publication Society *Tanakh*

KJV	King James Version
MSG	The Message
NAB	New American Bible
NASB	New American Standard Bible
NCV	New Century Version
NEB	New English Bible
NET	New English Translation
NIV	New International Version
NJB	New Jerusalem Bible
NKJV	New King James Version
NLT	New Living Translation
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
REB	Revised English Bible
RSV	Revised Standard Version
TEV	Today’s English Version
TNIV	Today’s New International Version

APOCRYPHA AND SEPTUAGINT

1–2 Esd.	1–2 Esdras
Jdt.	Judith
1–4 Kgdms.	1–4 Kingdoms
1–4 Macc.	1–4 Maccabees
Sir.	Sirach
Tob.	Tobit
Wis.	Wisdom of Solomon

OLD TESTAMENT PSEUDEPIGRAPHA

4 Bar.	*4 Baruch (Paraleipomena Jeremiou)*
1 En.	*1 Enoch (Ethiopic Apocalypse)*
3 En.	*3 Enoch (Hebrew Apocalypse)*
Jub.	*Jubilees*
L.A.B.	*Liber antiquitatum biblicarum (Pseudo-Philo)*
Let. Aris.	*Letter of Aristeas*
Mart. Isa.	*Martyrdom and Ascension of Isaiah 1–5*
Pss. Sol.	*Psalms of Solomon*
Sib. Or.	*Sibylline Oracles*
T. Dan	*Testament of Dan*
T. Levi	*Testament of Levi*

DEAD SEA SCROLLS

CD-A	*Damascus Documenta*
CD-B	Damascus Documentb
1QapGen ar	1QGenesis Apocryphon
*1QH*a	*1QHodayota*
*1QIsa*a	*1QIsaiaha*
1QM	1QWar Scroll

1QMMT	Halakhic Letter
1QpHab	1QPesher to Habakkuk
1QS	1QRule of the Community
1Q28a	1QRule of the Congregation
4Q51	4QSamuela
4Q76	4QMinor Prophetsa
4Q418	4QInstructiond
11Q13	11QMelchizedek
11Q19	11QTemplea

RABBINIC TRACTATES

b.	*Babylonian Talmud*
m.	*Mishnah*
t.	*Tosefta*
y.	*Jerusalem Talmud*

’Abot	*’Abot*
B. Bat.	*Baba Batra*
Ber.	*Berakot*
‘Eruv.	*‘Eruvin*
Git.	Gittin
Hul.	Hullin
Ketub.	*Ketubbot*
Mid.	*Middot*
Nid.	*Niddah*
Rosh Hash.	*Rosh HaShanah*
Sanh.	*Sanhedrin*
Shabb.	*Shabbat*
Sheqal.	*Sheqalim*

TARGUMIC TEXTS

Frg. Tg.	*Fragmentary Targum*
Tg. Neof.	*Targum Neofiti*
Tg. Ps.-J.	*Targum Pseudo-Jonathan*

APOSTOLIC FATHERS

1–2 Clem.	*1–2 Clement*
Did.	*Didache*
Herm.	*Shepherd of Hermas*
Ign. Smyrn.	*Ignatius, To the Smyrnaeans*
Mart. Pol.	*Martyrdom of Polycarp*
Pol. Phil.	*Polycarp, To the Philippians*

NEW TESTAMENT APOCRYPHA AND PSEUDEPIGRAPHA

Gos. Phil.	*Gospel of Philip*
Gos. Thom.	*Gospel of Thomas*

PAPYRI

P.Mich.	Michigan Papyri
P.Oxy.	Oxyrhynchus Papyri
P.Zen.	Zenon Papyri

GREEK AND LATIN WORKS

Augustine

Civ.	*De civitate Dei (The City of God)*
Cons.	*De consensu evangelistarum (Harmony of the Gospels)*
Faust.	*Contra Faustum Manichaeum (Against Faustus the Manichaean)*
Quaest. Hept.	*Quaestiones in Heptateuchum (Questions on the Heptateuch)*

Cassius Dio

Hist.	*Historia romana (Roman History)*

Cicero

Att.	*Epistulae ad Atticum*
Fam.	*Epistulae ad familiares*
Off.	*De officiis*

Clement of Alexandria

Strom.	*Stromata (Miscellanies)*

Dio Chrysostom

3 Regn.	*De regno iii (Or. 3) (Kingship 3)*
2 Serv. lib.	*De servitute et libertate ii (Or. 15) (Slavery and Freedom 2)*

Epictetus

Ench.	*Enchiridion*

Epiphanius

Pan.	*Panarion (Refutation of All Heresies)*

Eusebius

Hist. eccl.	*Historia ecclesiastica (Ecclesiastical History)*

Gaius

Inst.	*Institutiones (Institutes)*

Herodotus

Hist.	*Historiae (Histories)*

Homer

Il.	*Ilias (Iliad)*
Od.	*Odyssea (Odyssey)*

Irenaeus

Haer.	*Adversus haereses (Against Heresies)*

Jerome

Qu. hebr. Gen.	*Quaestionum hebraicarum liber in Genesim*

Josephus

Ag. Ap.	*Against Apion*
Ant.	*Jewish Antiquities*
J.W.	*Jewish War*
Life	*The Life*

Justin

1 Apol.	*Apologia i (First Apology)*
2 Apol.	*Apologia ii (Second Apology)*

Juvenal

Sat.	*Satirae*

Lucian

Jupp. trag.	*Juppiter tragoedus (Zeus Rants)*

Origen

Cels.	*Contra Celsum (Against Celsus)*
Comm ser. Matt.	*Commentarium series in evangelium Matthaei*

Ovid

Metam.	*Metamorphoses*

Pausanias

Descr.	*Graeciae descriptio (Description of Greece)*

Petronius

Sat.	*Satyricon*

Philo

Dreams	*On Dreams*
Embassy	*On the Embassy to Gaius*
QE	*Questions and Answers on Exodus*
QG	*Questions and Answers on Genesis*
Spec. Laws	*On the Special Laws*

Pliny the Elder

Nat.	*Naturalis historia (Natural History)*

Pliny the Younger

Ep.	*Epistulae (Letters)*

Plutarch

Mor.	*Moralia*

Sallust

Hist.	*Historiae*

Strabo

Geogr.	*Geographica (Geography)*

Suetonius

Claud.	*Divus Claudius*

Tacitus

Ann.	*Annales*
Hist.	*Historiae*

Tertullian

Apol.	*Apology (Apologeticus)*
Marc.	*Against Marcion (Adversus Marcionem)*
Praescr.	*De praescriptione haereticorum*

Vegetius

Mil.	*Epitoma rei militaris (Epitome of Military Science)*

Vitruvius

De arch.	*De architectura (On Architecture)*

Xenophon

Anab.	*Anabasis*

Ancient Collections and Anonymous Works

Cod. theod.	*Codex theodosianus*
Corp. herm.	*Corpus hermeticum*

SECONDARY SOURCES

ARAB	*Ancient Records of Assyria and Babylonia.* Daniel David Luckenbill. 2 vols. Chicago, 1926–1927

A

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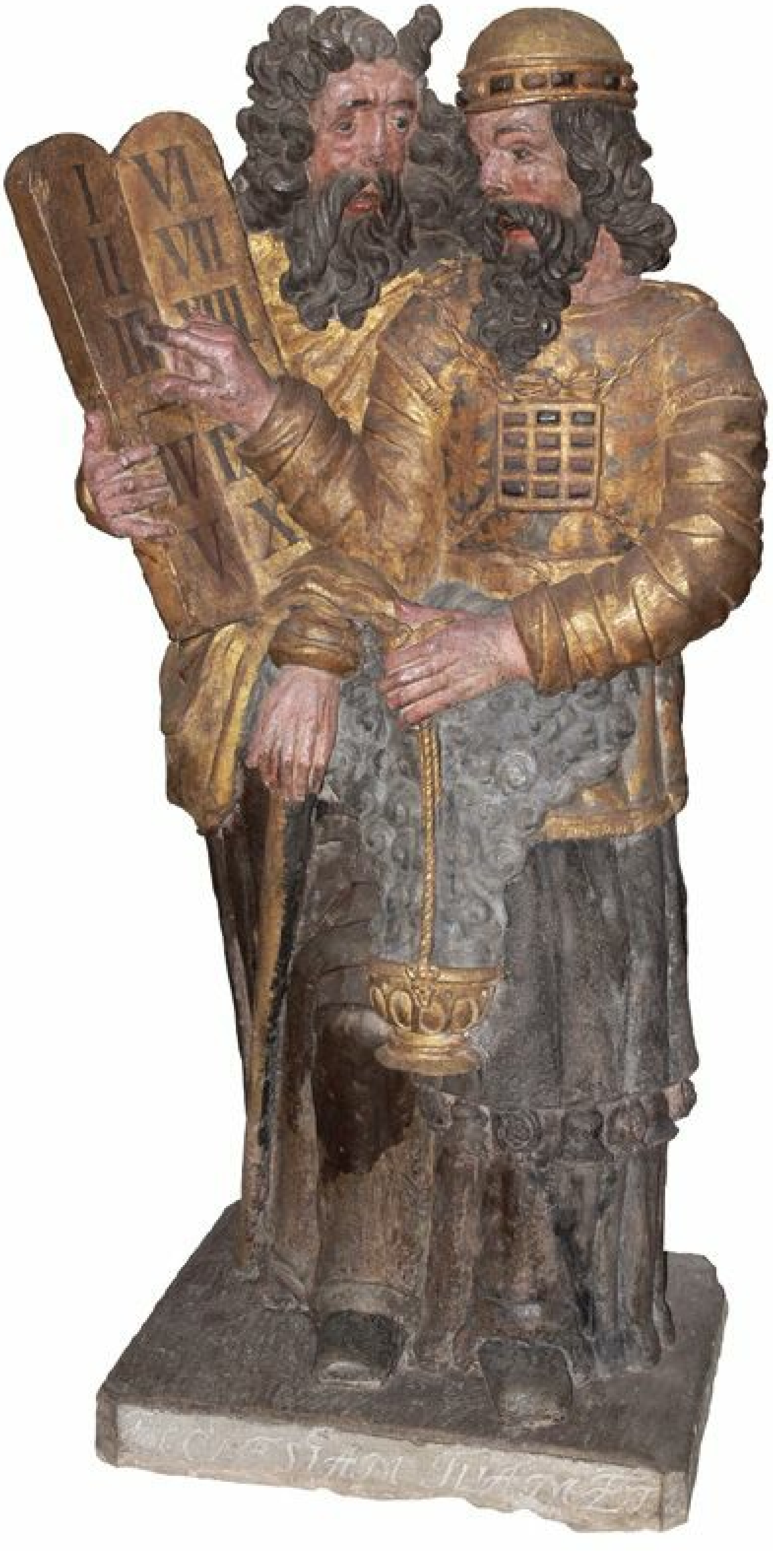
AARON Aaron was Moses’ older brother (eighty-three and eighty years old respectively, according to Exod. 7:7) and his close associate during the days when God used both of them to establish his people Israel as a nation. Aaron’s particular importance came when God selected him to be the first high priest of Israel.

Aaron first appears in the account of Moses’ divine commission at the burning bush. God charged Moses to return to Egypt and lead his people out of bondage (Exod. 3:7–10). In spite of God’s assurance of divine support and ultimate success, Moses hesitated to accept the call, finally citing his lack of rhetorical skills (“I am slow of speech and tongue” [Exod. 4:10]). Finally, God revealed that Aaron was on the way to see Moses. Aaron could “speak well” (Exod. 4:14), so he would serve as Moses’ mouthpiece.

Aaron plays a supportive role in the Exodus account of the plagues and the departure from Egypt. He was at Moses’ side. As previously arranged, Aaron was the spokesperson, acting as a prophet to Moses, who was “like God to Pharaoh” (Exod. 7:1). Indeed, the early plagues often were initiated by Moses commanding Aaron to “stretch out” his staff (Exod. 8:5, 16; cf. 7:9), though later Moses took over this role.



Carving of Moses and Aaron by Andreas Schultze (1666), part of the pulpit of the Lutheran Church of Saint Nicholas in Luckau, Germany

After much struggle, Pharaoh finally allowed the Israelites to leave Egypt. Aaron is not specifically mentioned as playing a role at the climactic moment of the crossing of the Red Sea, but he appears again in Exod. 16 during the first report of the Israelite community's grumbling about lack of food for the journey. Moses and Aaron were the objects of the grumbling (v. 2), with Aaron continuing his role as the one who speaks for Moses (vv. 9–10). Aaron also supported Moses' leading position during the first battle in the wilderness (Exod. 17:8–16). When the Israelites fought the aggressive Amalekites, Israel had the upper hand only when Moses kept his walking staff, representing God's presence, raised above his head. When his arms grew too tired to hold the staff aloft, Aaron and Hur were next to him, hoisting his arms high.

The event of greatest significance involving Aaron in the wilderness was his appointment as high priest. The divine mandate for his installation is recorded in Exod. 28. Aaron and his sons were to be "set apart" or "consecrated" (Heb. root *qdsh*) for service to God. They were given special garments that distinctively related them to the sanctuary (i.e., the similarity between the ephod and the innermost curtain of the tabernacle ["blue, purple and scarlet yarn"; Exod. 26:1; 28:6]). Instructions for the installation service are given in Exod. 29, but the event itself is reported in Lev. 8.

Aaron did not fare well on the one occasion when he acted independently from Moses. While Moses was on Mount Sinai receiving the two tablets of the law from the hand of God, Aaron gave in to the people's request to make a calf idol out of golden earrings that they gave him. Whether this calf idol represented a false god or the Lord (see Exod. 32:5) is irrelevant because in either case the worship was illegitimate and brought great harm on God's people. When Moses returned, he confronted Aaron, who gave lame excuses by blaming the people. Unexpectedly, the Levites, his own tribe, assisted Moses by killing many of those who worshiped the idol. For this act, the Levites were ordained to work as priestly assistants.

In spite of Aaron's sin, God did not remove him from his priestly responsibilities (thanks to the prayers of Moses [Deut. 9:20]), the height of which was to preside over the annual Day of Atonement. The incident of the golden calf was not the only occasion when Aaron tried God's patience. According to Num. 12, Aaron and his sister, Miriam, contested Moses' leadership. Using his marriage to a Cushite woman as a pretext, Moses' siblings asserted their equality. God, however, put them in their place, affirming Moses' primacy.

Other tribal leaders questioned Aaron's priestly leadership, according to Num. 17. Moses told all the tribal leaders to place their walking staffs along with Aaron's before God at the tent of testimony. God showed his favor toward Aaron by causing his staff to bud.

Both Moses and Aaron forfeited their right to enter the land of promise when they usurped the Lord's authority as they brought water from the rock in the wilderness (Num. 20:1–13). Sick and tired of the people's complaining, Moses wrongly ascribed the ability to make water come from the rock to himself and Aaron, and rather than speaking to the rock, he struck it twice. For this, God told them that they would die in the wilderness. Aaron's death is reported soon after this occasion (Num. 20:22–27).

Aaron is cited infrequently in subsequent Scripture, with the exception of priestly genealogies (1 Chron. 6:3, 49–50) or in historical reviews (Pss. 77:20; 99:6; 105:26). Psalm 133:2 presents a striking image of the blessings of communal unity by asking the reader to picture oil running down Aaron's beard. In the NT, the most significant use of Aaron is in comparison to Jesus Christ, the ultimate high priest. Interestingly, the book of Hebrews argues that Jesus far surpassed the priestly authority of Aaron by connecting his priesthood to Melchizedek, a mysterious non-Israelite priest who blesses God and Abram in Gen. 14 (see Heb. 7:1–14).

AARONITES The descendants of Aaron. The term occurs at 1 Chron. 12:27 (NIV: "family of Aaron") in reference to Jehoiada, the head of the clan at the time of David, who came to David's side along with 3,700 fighting men "to turn Saul's kingdom over to him" (1 Chron. 12:23). But it is equivalent to other expressions such as "sons of Aaron," used often in the OT.

AARON’S ROD Aaron’s rod (or staff) is his wooden walking stick, which had a significant role in the accounts of the plagues of Egypt. In Moses and Aaron’s first confrontation with Pharaoh, Aaron threw his rod to the ground, and it turned into a snake. Egypt was a land filled with poisonous snakes, so it is not surprising that the snake was a symbol of power and threat. Although the Egyptian magicians could mimic this act, Aaron’s snake swallowed the snakes produced by their rods, thus showing the superiority of Aaron’s God over their false gods (Exod. 7:8–13). Aaron used his rod by either extending it or striking the ground in order to initiate other plagues as well (turning the Nile into blood [Exod. 7:19], frogs [8:5], and gnats [8:16]). Interestingly, Aaron’s rod was featured in the early plagues, whereas Moses used his rod in some of the later and more powerful plagues as well as in the crossing of the Red Sea, perhaps showing Moses’ prominence (9:23 [hail], 10:13 [locusts], 14:16 [Red Sea]).

The rod was not a magical wand but rather a symbol of the presence of God. It is best to understand the rod as related to a tree that stands for God’s presence. It is a portable tree. That the rod is a portable tree and signifies God’s presence is clearly seen in Num. 17. In the face of dissension from other tribal leaders who disputed Aaron’s leadership, God directed Moses to place a rod from every tribe before him in the tent of testimony. Aaron’s alone budded into an almond tree, signifying that God was with him. His rod was then placed in front of the testimony, according to Heb. 9:4, in the ark of the covenant. It may also have been used by Moses to strike the rock and produce water (Exod. 17:5; Num. 20:9).

ABADDON A transliteration of the Hebrew word for “destruction,” signifying the grave or the underworld. It occurs six times in the OT: three times along with “Sheol,” which refers to the grave or the underworld (Job 26:6; Prov. 15:11; 27:20), once with “death” (Job 28:22), once with the word for “bury” (Ps. 88:11), and once in Job 31:12. Most modern translations render this word “Destruction.” In the NT, the word is used in Rev. 9:11 as the equivalent to the Greek word “Apollyon,” which means “Destroyer,” to refer to the angel of the Abyss.

ABAGTHA One of the seven personal attendants of the Persian king Xerxes (Ahasuerus), whom he commanded to bring Queen Vashti to his banquet (Esther 1:10). Working with the harem, he was a eunuch.

ABANA A river in the region of Damascus mentioned by the Syrian general Naaman as surpassing the Jordan River (2 Kings 5:12). Its exact identity is uncertain, but often it is identified with the Nahr Barada, which flows from the Anti-Lebanon Mountains through Damascus. Some ancient versions (LXX, Targum) and Hebrew manuscripts render it “Amana.” *See also* Amana.

ABARIM A mountain range in northwest Moab, separating the Transjordan Plain from the Jordan Valley. In this range stood Mount Nebo, the spot where Moses ascended to view the promised land and later died (Num. 27:12; 33:47–48; Deut. 32:49; 34:1–8). The prophet Jeremiah pictures an announcement of destruction from the peaks of Abarim (Jer. 22:20). *See also* Nebo.

ABBA An Aramaic term for “father,” used three times in the NT, always coupled with its Greek equivalent, *patēr*. A term of endearment used to refer to God, it demonstrates that the speaker has an intimate, loving relationship with God. Jesus so addresses God the Father in the garden of Gethsemane (Mark 14:36). The believer, filled with the Spirit, becomes God’s adopted child and thus can also so speak to God (Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:6). The OT provides a background for this in its teaching that God is the father of his people (Exod. 4:22; Deut. 32:6) and, in a special way, of the king (2 Sam. 7:14; Ps. 2:7).

ABDA **(1)** The father of Adoniram, who was in charge of forced labor at the time of Solomon (1 Kings 4:6). **(2)** Son of Shammua, son of Galal, son of Jeduthun, he was a Levite who moved to Jerusalem during the time of Nehemiah (Neh. 11:17). In 1 Chron. 9:16 he is listed by the (full?) name "Obadiah" ("servant of Yahweh").

ABDEEL The father of Shelemiah, an individual commissioned by King Jehoiakim to arrest Jeremiah and his scribe, Baruch (Jer. 36:26). He was unsuccessful.

ABDI **(1)** An ancestor of Ethan, from the Levitical clan of the Merarites. Ethan is listed as a temple musician appointed by David (1 Chron. 6:44). **(2)** An ancestor of Kish, a Levite from the clan of Merarites, who was commissioned to purify the temple at the time of Hezekiah (2 Chron. 29:12). **(3)** An Israelite man charged with the offense of intermarrying with a foreign woman during the time of Ezra (Ezra 10:26).

ABDIEL The father of Ahi, who was head of a family of Gadites (1 Chron. 5:15).

ABDON **(1)** A town located in Asher (Josh. 19:28 [according to some Heb. manuscripts; others have Ebron (so NRSV)]; 1 Chron. 6:74), given to the Levites (Josh. 21:30). **(2)** An Ephraimite who functioned as a judge in Israel for eight years and was noted for his forty sons and thirty grandsons, who rode on seventy donkeys (Judg. 12:13–15). **(3)** Son of Shashak, from the tribe of Benjamin (1 Chron. 8:23). **(4)** Firstborn son of Jeiel and Maakah, Benjamites from Gibeon (1 Chron. 8:30; 9:36). **(5)** Son of Micah (2 Chron. 34:20 [although in the parallel text, 2 Kings 22:12, the same individual is called Akbor son of Micaiah; see NIV mg.]). Along with others, he was commissioned to inquire of God's will after the rediscovery of the law of God at the time of Josiah.

ABEDNEGO The Babylonian name given to Azariah by Nebuchadnezzar's chief official, Ashpenaz, as part of an attempt to turn him into a Babylonian official (Dan. 1:7). He is one of three of Daniel's Judahite companions, along with Meshach and Shadrach. The three are later appointed as administrators over the province of Babylon (2:49). After being accused of failing to worship Nebuchadnezzar's gods, they are cast into a fiery furnace. They are kept safe by a fourth "man," who looks like a "son of the gods." Afterward, all three are promoted (3:8–30). "Abednego" likely means "servant of Nego" (a form of "Nebo," the Babylonian god of speech, writing, and water).

Panel from a fourth-century AD Roman sarcophagus showing Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the fiery furnace

ABEL “Abel” is the English spelling of two different Hebrew words. **(1)** The name of Cain’s brother (Heb. *hebel*). As Adam and Eve’s second son, he is mentioned in Gen. 4:2–9 (also v. 25) as the murdered brother of Cain, who slew him out of anger at his being more favored by God for offering a better sacrifice. He is not mentioned again until the Gospels (Matt. 23:35; Luke 11:51), where he is cast as the first representative of the “righteous blood” shed on earth. (The phrase “the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah son of Berekiah” [Matt. 23:35] constitutes a chronological “A to Z” of innocent blood shed in the OT.) He is last referred to in the book of Hebrews. In Heb. 11:4 an explanation is given for why Abel’s sacrifice was favored over Cain’s: it was offered in faith. In Heb. 12:24 Abel’s blood is contrasted with Christ’s. The nature of the contrast is not made explicit, but the context suggests that whereas both Christ and Abel were innocent, it is Christ’s shed blood that is efficacious to mediate the new covenant. The word *hebel* is also the same one used throughout Ecclesiastes, often translated “vanity” or “meaningless.” Abel’s name, therefore, may symbolize his short life.

(2) The first part of a number of OT place names (Heb. *ʾabel*) meaning “brook” or “meadow.” It appears several times, as seen in entries that follow here.

ABEL BETH MAAKAH A city north of Dan. Sheba fled there after his rebellion against David and was besieged by Joab, David’s military commander (2 Sam. 20:1–22). Ben-Hadad, king of Syria, conquered the city by defeating Israel’s King Baasha, thus answering the call of Judah’s King Asa for help (1 Kings 15:20). It was later conquered again, this time by the Assyrian king Tiglath-pileser III from the Israelite king Pekah (2 Kings 15:29). The name means “meadow [or ‘brook’] of the house of Maakah,” and it is possible that “Maakah” refers to the Aramean king who fought with the Ammonites against David (2 Sam. 10:6). *See also* Abel Maim; Beth Maakah.

ABEL KERAMIM A place name meaning “brook of vineyards.” The exact location of this town, east of the Jordan, is unknown. It is mentioned only in Judg. 11:33, among the towns devastated by Jephthah when he was pursuing the Ammonites.

ABEL MAIM A city mentioned only in 2 Chron. 16:4. But this is in a passage parallel to 2 Kings 15:29, where the name is “Abel Beth Maakah,” suggesting that “Abel Maim” is an alternate or later name. It means “meadow of water.” *See also* Abel Beth Maakah; Beth Maakah.

ABEL MEHOLAH A place name meaning “meadow [or ‘brook’] of dancing.” The exact location of this town, near the Jordan River, is unknown. It is one of the places to which the Midianites fled when attacked by Gideon (Judg. 7:22) and is mentioned as one of the towns under the governorship of Baana son of Ahilud, one of the twelve governors over Israel put in place by King Solomon to provide the king and the royal household with supplies (1 Kings 4:12). According to 1 Kings 19:16, it is Elisha’s hometown.

ABEL MIZRAIM A place name that occurs only in Gen. 50:11 and, according to the explanation given there, means “mourning of the Egyptians.” Joseph, along with his household and a large contingent of Egyptians, entered Canaan to bury Jacob. When the Canaanites saw Joseph mourning for his father at “the threshing floor of Atad,” they named the place “Abel Mizraim.” With other place names the Hebrew word *’abel* means “brook” or “meadow,” but the word for “mourn” is similar, so its meaning in Gen. 50:11 may be a pun.

ABEL SHITTIM A place name meaning “brook of acacias.” It is mentioned only in Num. 33:49, as the last stop before crossing the Jordan.

ABEZ *See* Ebez.

ABI Means “my father” or “father of” (often a reference to God) and is found as the first part of a number of personal names. In 2 Kings 18:2 (KJV, RSV, NASB) “Abi” appears as a shortened form of “Abijah” (mother of Hezekiah [see 2 Chron. 29:1]). *See also* Abijah.

ABIAH *See* Abijah.

ABI-ALBON An Arbathite, he was one of David’s thirty fighting men (2 Sam. 23:31). He is called “Abiel” in 1 Chron. 11:32.

ABIASAPH One of the three sons of Korah (Exod. 6:24). The Korahites were of the line of Kohath, one of the three sons of Levi (see Exod. 6:16–21), and therefore Levitical priests. Ebiasaph (1 Chron. 6:23, 37; 9:19) seems to be the same person. *See also* Ebiasaph.

ABIATHAR A high priest, son of Ahimelek, first mentioned in 1 Sam. 22:20, when he escaped Saul’s slaughter of the priests of Nob. He took refuge with David in the cave of Adullam and, having escaped with the ephod (1 Sam. 23:6–12), became the high priest after David’s reign was established. He was from the line of Eli, son of Aaron, and served with Zadok (line of Eleazar, son of Aaron) during David’s reign (2 Sam. 8:17), although note the reference there to “Ahimelek son of Abiathar.” This is usually considered a copyist’s error, since Ahimelek was Abiathar’s father, and

Abiathar is often mentioned as a contemporary of Zadok (e.g., 2 Sam. 15:29, 35; 1 Kings 1:7–8). When Absalom rebelled against David, Abiathar remained supportive (2 Sam. 15). Later, however, he supported Adonijah as David’s successor rather than Solomon, which led to his banishment to his hometown, Anathoth, by Solomon, thus fulfilling Eli’s prophecy (1 Sam. 2:30–35; 1 Kings 2:26–27). He is mentioned once in the NT, Mark 2:26, where Jesus recounts when David took the showbread to feed his men “in the days of Abiathar the high priest.” According to 1 Sam. 21:1–9, however, it was Ahimelek, Abiathar’s father, who was high priest at the time. This is often considered to be a copyist’s error, and some Greek manuscripts omit or alter the reference to Abiathar.

ABIB *See* Aviv.

ABIDA One of the five sons of Midian, Abraham’s son by Keturah (Gen. 25:4; 1 Chron. 1:33).

ABIDAN A Gideonite and the leader of the tribe of Benjamin during the early wilderness period (Num. 1:11; 2:22; 7:60, 65; 10:24). He assisted Moses and Aaron in the census (Num. 1).

ABIEL The father of Kish and grandfather of Saul (1 Sam. 9:1; 14:51). Also an alternate name for “Abi-Albon” (1 Chron. 11:32). *See also* Abi-Albon.

ABIEZER **(1)** The name of Gideon’s clan and territory, in the tribe of Manasseh, apparently known for grape production (Judg. 8:2). **(2)** A descendant of Manasseh, Joseph’s son, a Gileadite (Josh. 17:1–2; 1 Chron. 7:18). **(3)** One of David’s thirty fighting men (2 Sam. 23:27; 1 Chron. 11:28), also mentioned in 1 Chron. 27:12 as leader of David’s fighting divisions during the ninth month.

ABIEZRITES The descendants of Abiezer (Judg. 6:11, 24, 34; 8:32). *See also* Abiezer.

ABIGAIL **(1)** The wife of Nabal, a wealthy man from Carmel, she is mentioned prominently in 1 Sam. 25. While David was hiding from Saul in the desert, he sent a word of greeting to Nabal to ask for some food. This would have been a gesture of good faith on Nabal’s part, since his servants had been treated well by David and his men (vv. 7, 15–16). Nabal treated David’s request and his ten messengers with disrespect, so David intended to retaliate, even swearing that not a male would be left alive among Nabal’s people (vv. 21–22). One of Nabal’s servants, however, warned Abigail of Nabal’s behavior and that his life was now in danger. Thinking quickly, and without telling Nabal, she prepared food and brought it to David. She pleaded with David not to shed any blood, which would be to act like the foolish Nabal (“Nabal” in Hebrew means “fool” [v. 25]). She asked for forgiveness on Nabal’s behalf, spoke of the Lord’s favor on David’s “lasting dynasty” (v. 28), and said that she wished to be remembered when David’s current status was behind him and his rule was established (v. 31). David was persuaded by her words. Abigail then returned home and reported to Nabal what she had done. Upon hearing the news, his heart failed and he became “like a stone” for ten days, and then God struck him dead (vv. 37–38). David rejoiced at hearing the news and then made Abigail his wife, along with Ahinoam of Jezreel, both of whom were captured by the Amalekites at Ziklag (30:5) and later were present at David’s anointing (2 Sam. 2:2). Abigail is the mother of Kileab (2 Sam. 3:3 [Daniel, according to 1 Chron. 3:1]).

(2) David’s sister (1 Chron. 2:16–17), the mother of Amasa, one of David’s army commanders (2 Sam. 17:25). The name is spelled “Abigal” in 2 Sam. 17:25.

ABIGAL *See* Abigail.

ABIHAIL **(1)** The mother of Zuriel, leader of the Merarite clans (Num. 3:35). **(2)** The wife of Abishur, a descendant of Judah (1 Chron. 2:29). **(3)** A Gadite from Gilead (1 Chron. 5:14). **(4)** The mother of Rehoboam's wife, Mahalath (2 Chron. 11:18). **(5)** The father of Queen Esther and uncle of Mordecai (Esther 2:15; 9:29).

ABIHU The second of Aaron's four sons (Exod. 6:23). He and his older brother, Nadab, were allowed to approach the Lord on Mount Sinai with Moses, Aaron, and the seventy elders (Exod. 24:1, 9). He and his three brothers (the younger two were Eleazar and Ithamar) were made Israel's first priests (Exod. 28:1). He and Nadab "offered unauthorized fire before the LORD, contrary to his command," so they were consumed by fire (Lev. 10:1–2; cf. Num. 3:4; 26:61; 1 Chron. 24:2).

ABIHUD Grandson of Benjamin (1 Chron. 8:3), although it is possible that the text should be read as "Gera the father of Ehud" because Ehud's lineage is given in 1 Chron. 8:6.

ABIJAH **(1)** Samuel's second son, who, along with his older brother Joel, served as judge in Beersheba, but whose corruption drove Israel's elders to ask Samuel to appoint a king (1 Sam. 8:2–5). **(2)** Son of Jeroboam, the first king of the northern kingdom (930–909 BC). He died as a boy, in accordance with Ahijah's prophecy, because of Jeroboam's idolatry (1 Kings 14:1–18). **(3)** Son of Rehoboam, called "Abijam" in 1 Kings 15:1–8. He was the second king of the southern kingdom (913–910 BC). He followed in his father's sinful footsteps but was allowed to rule for David's sake. His reign was marked by warfare against Jeroboam, which is recounted in more detail and in a more positive light in 2 Chron. 13:1–22 (Abijah defeated Jeroboam, and the Lord struck Jeroboam down). He is listed in Matthew's genealogy of Jesus (1:7). **(4)** The mother of Hezekiah (2 Chron. 29:1 ["Abi" in 2 Kings 18:2, the parallel passage]). **(5)** The wife of Hezron in the genealogy of Caleb (1 Chron. 2:24 [though some emend the name away; cf. NAB]). **(6)** A son of Becher, a descendant of Benjamin (1 Chron. 7:8). **(7)** The leader of the eighth of the twenty-four divisions of priests serving in the temple (1 Chron. 24:10). **(8)** One of the priests in Nehemiah's time who signed a pledge to lead Israel in covenant obedience (Neh. 10:7). *See also* Abi; Abijam.

ABIJAM The firstborn son of King Rehoboam, he was the second king of Judah. "Abijam" is the name used in 1 Kings 15:1–8 (KJV, ESV, NRSV; NIV: "Abijah"). Elsewhere he is called "Abijah," and the use of "Abijam" by the author of 1 Kings may be meant to cast this king in a more negative light. *See also* Abijah.

ABILENE A region in Syria named after its chief town, Abila, located about eighteen miles northwest of Damascus. Luke reports that at the beginning of John the Baptist's ministry the region was governed by Lysanias II (Luke 3:1) as one of four rulers in the Judea province (with Pontius Pilate, Herod Antipas, and Philip). Josephus, however, only mentions three rulers and makes no reference to Lysanias.

ABIMAEL A descendant of Shem, one of Noah's three sons (Gen. 10:28; 1 Chron. 1:22).

ABIMELECH *See* Abimelek.

ABIMELEK **(1)** The king of Gerar who took Sarah into his house, deceived by Abraham into thinking that she was Abraham's sister. God warned Abimelek of this in a dream, so he released her and made restitution to Abraham and Sarah. God responded by opening up the wombs of his wife and slave girls (Gen. 20:1–18). He is likely the same person mentioned in Gen. 21:22–24 as one who made a treaty with Abraham at Beersheba.

(2) The king of Gerar during Isaac's lifetime (Gen. 26:1–35) and likely a son or grandson of the Abimelek mentioned in 20:1–18. As in the earlier incident with Abraham and Sarah, Isaac passed his wife, Rebekah, off as his sister, causing Abimelek great concern when he found out the truth. Abimelek ordered his people to cause no harm to the couple. Isaac planted crops, which did very well and provoked jealousy on the part of the Philistines, and this eventually led to Isaac moving on to Beersheba.

(3) Son of Gideon and his concubine (Judg. 8:31). After Gideon's death he murdered his seventy brothers in an effort to consolidate power under himself in Shechem. The youngest of the brothers, Jotham, escaped and spoke a parable against the citizens of Shechem. Three years later they rebelled against Abimelek under Gaal, but Abimelek was successful in capturing Shechem and killing many of its residents. When he attacked Thebez, he was killed by women who dropped a millstone on his head. That incident is mentioned later in 2 Sam. 11:21 by Joab as he is preparing his messenger for possible criticism by David for his strategy in besieging Rabbah.

Remains of a Bronze Age temple at Shechem, the hometown of Abimelek's mother

(4) Son of Abiathar, and a priest under David (2 Sam. 8:17). It is very likely that a copyist's error occurs here in which "Abimelek" and "Abiathar" have been transposed (cf. 1 Sam. 22:20).

(5) The man before whom David pretended to be insane, according to the superscription to Ps. 34. If the incident of 1 Sam. 21:10–15 is in view, where Achish the king of Gath is named, then it is possible that "Ahimelek" is a title for Philistine kings.

ABINADAB **(1)** The man in whose house the ark of the covenant rested for twenty years after it was returned by the Philistines (1 Sam. 7:1; 1 Chron. 13:7). **(2)** Son of Jesse and older brother of David who was passed over by Samuel when choosing a king (1 Sam. 16:8; 17:13; see also 1 Chron. 2:13).

(3) One of Saul's three sons killed by the Philistines on Mount Gilboa (1 Sam. 31:1–2; see also 1 Chron. 8:33; 9:39; 10:2). **(4)** Ben-Abinadab, who, according to 1 Kings 4:11, was Solomon's son-in-law and one of Solomon's twelve district officials. If "Ben-Abinadab" means "son of Abinadab" (David's brother), then he is Solomon's cousin as well.

ABINOAM The father of Barak, Deborah's army commander (Judg. 4:6, 12; 5:1, 12).

ABIRAM **(1)** Son of Eliab who, along with his brother Dathan and Korah and On, was an instigator of a Levite rebellion against Moses and Aaron. The earth opened up and swallowed them and their families (Num. 16:1–50; 26:9; Deut. 11:6; Ps. 106:17). **(2)** Son of Hiel of Bethel, who rebuilt Jericho, laying its foundations "at the cost of his firstborn son Abiram," which may be a reference to child sacrifice (1 Kings 16:34).

ABISHAG A young Shunammite woman brought to David's bed in his old age to keep him warm (1 Kings 1:3, 15). After David's death, his son Adonijah asked to marry her (1 Kings 2:17), which was a declaration of his continued attempt to secure the throne (see 1 Kings 1), for which Solomon put him to death (1 Kings 2:23–25).

ABISHAI Son of Zeruiah, David's sister, and brother of Joab, David's general (1 Sam. 26:6; 1 Chron. 2:16), he was an accomplished soldier in David's army. David intervened when Abishai sought to kill the sleeping Saul (1 Sam. 26:5–11). He accompanied his brother Joab as they pursued Saul's commander, Abner, for killing their brother Asahel (2 Sam. 2:18–24); they later murdered Abner (2 Sam. 3:30). He commanded an army against the Ammonites (2 Sam. 10:10–14; 1 Chron. 19:11–15). David prevented him from killing Shimei for cursing David (2 Sam. 16:9–12; 19:21). He led one-third of David's army against Absalom, David's rebellious son (2 Sam. 18:2), and an army pursuing Sheba in his rebellion against David (2 Sam. 20:6). When the Philistine Ishbi-Benob threatened David's life, Abishai rescued David by killing the Philistine (2 Sam. 21:16–17). He struck down eighteen thousand Edomites in the Valley of Salt and established garrisons in Edom (1 Chron. 18:12–13).

ABISHALOM A variant spelling of "Absalom" in 1 Kings 15:2, 10. *See also* Absalom.

ABISHUA **(1)** A Levite, son of Phineas and great-grandson of Aaron (1 Chron. 6:4, 50; Ezra 7:5). **(2)** A descendant of Saul (1 Chron. 8:4).

ABISHUR Son of Shammai, descendant of Jerahmeel of the tribe of Judah (1 Chron. 2:28–29).

ABITAL One of David's wives (2 Sam. 3:4; 1 Chron. 3:3).

ABITUB A Benjamite from Moab (1 Chron. 8:11).

ABIUD A Greek rendering of "Abihud." According to the genealogy in Matthew, Abiud, son of Zerubbabel, is a postexilic ancestor of Jesus (1:13; NASB, NIV: "Abihud"). *See also* Abihud.

ABLUTIONS Ablutions include a variety of practices found primarily in the OT through which persons washed in order to participate in the most important activities of the community, usually worship. Although terms referring to washing cover a variety of purposes, such as cleansing the hands or bathing (Gen. 18:4; Ruth 3:3; Acts 16:33; 2 Pet. 2:22), when one speaks of ablutions, the focus is upon the necessary tasks of cleansing after suffering separation from participation in the worship of the assembly because of some impurity (Deut. 21:1–9).

Sometimes ablutions were performed as a means of preparing a person for an activity of heightened importance. The priests of the OT underwent such cleansings, though they were not impure in the usual sense of the word (Exod. 30:19–21). The imagery communicated by such practices expressed the extreme holiness necessary to serve God and his people. Indeed, the sense of holiness and purity that pervaded the sacred rites of the OT was a major motivation for all levels of ablutions. For these heightened moments, however, the biblical record goes into extra detail concerning the process by which one could be washed. Special care was taken to avoid recontamination of the priest, the sacred instruments, or the camp itself, which would interfere with or render useless the rite that had been carried out (Lev. 16:4, 24, 26, 28). As with all ceremonial rites, however, the biblical interest is focused more upon the attitude and the heart of the worshiper than the rite itself. The integrity and the holiness of the participant were the true test of standing pure before God, not the ritual of cleansing (Ps. 24:3–6; Isa. 1:11–16).

Steps down into a ceremonial bath at Qumran

In the NT, the pattern of emphasis on the inner person begun in the OT received further expression. In the book of Mark, one of the conflict passages recounts an encounter between Jesus and the

Pharisees regarding the extent of ritual cleansing necessary in one's life (7:1–16). Jesus proclaimed, in full harmony with the OT, that it has always been the character of the individual that made a person clean or unclean, and that the washings of old were symbolic of that status, not determinative of it. Despite this, it seems that Jewish Christians of the first century chose to continue the practice of ritual washings. The writer of Hebrews argues that the use of such is both an illustration of the pure life (10:22) and a practice that may be considered unnecessary in light of what Christ had accomplished through his perfect work (6:2; 9:10).

Generally speaking, the source of washing for such ceremonial cleansing had to be "living water"; that is, it had to be moving. This could be obtained by pouring the water, by visiting a dedicated ceremonial bath, or by carrying out the washing in a location that already had moving water, such as a river. There is little question, based upon the similarities of early baptismal practices and the ceremonial baths uncovered at Qumran and elsewhere, that NT baptism draws many of its intentions and expressions from the OT ablutions. As such, the same observations about washings made above can be drawn concerning baptism. It is symbolic of an internal reality (Eph. 5:26); it is intended as a means of expressing community between the participant and the greater body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:13); and it is reflective of a higher calling of Christ to live holy lives (Acts 10:47).

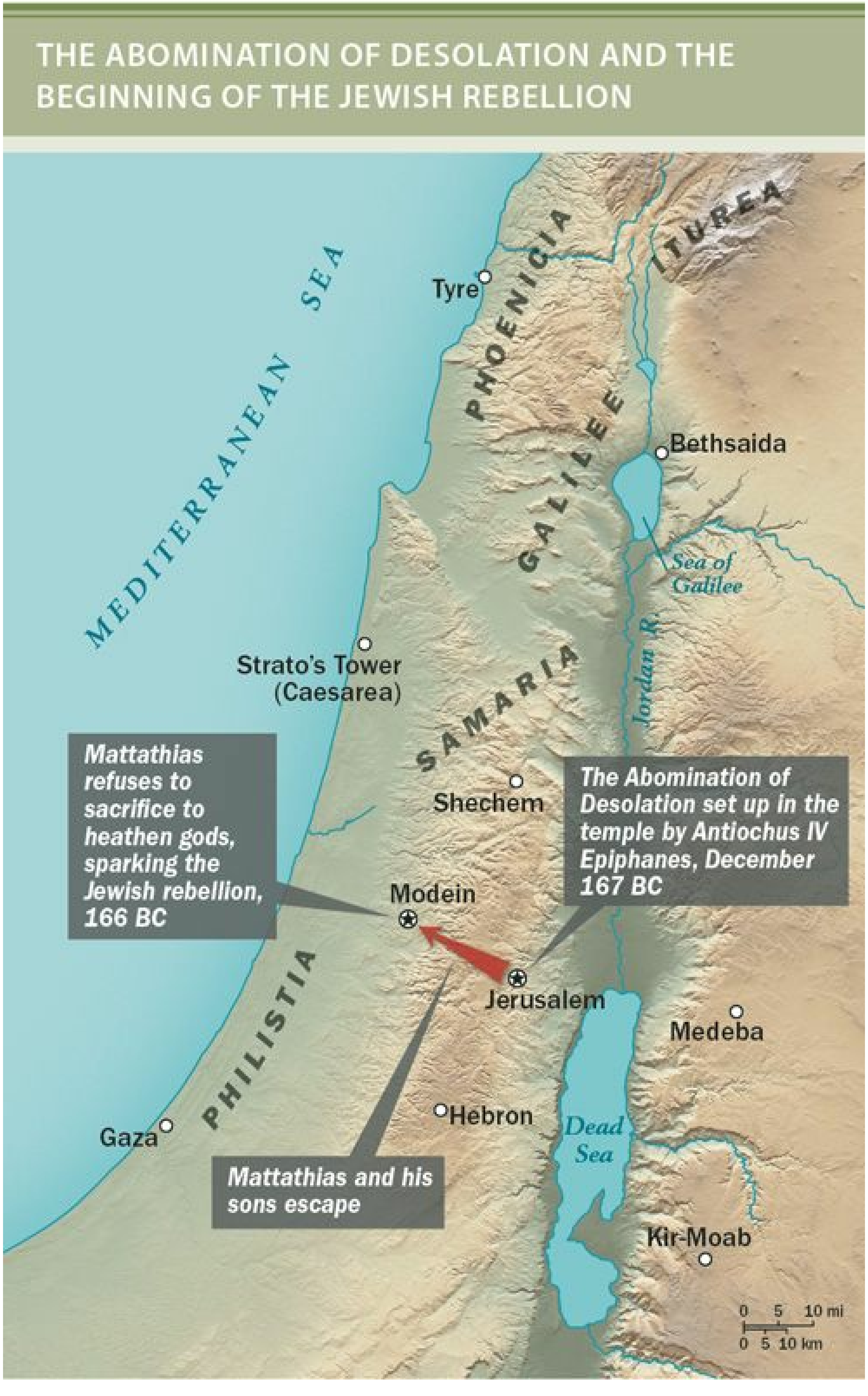
ABNER Son of King Saul's uncle, Ner (1 Sam. 14:50–51). Abner was Saul's military commander. He maintained loyalty to the house of Saul during Saul's struggle with David. Upon Saul's death, Abner made Saul's son Ish-Bosheth king over the northern kingdom. In battle with David's forces, Abner killed Asahel, the brother of David's military commander, Joab (2 Sam. 2:17–23). Abner rallied support for David's kingship after Ish-Bosheth accused Abner of sleeping with Saul's concubine (2 Sam. 3:7–13). Joab later murdered Abner to avenge his brother Asahel's death (3:22–27).

ABODE OF THE DEAD *See* Death; Grave; Hades; Hell; Pit; Sheol.

ABOMINATION, ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION "Abomination" is a translation of the Hebrew words *shiqquts* and *to'ebah* used primarily in the KJV (NIV uses terms such as "detestable," "desecrated," and "unclean"). The term *shiqquts* is used of idols (e.g., 2 Kings 23:13, 24; Jer. 7:30; cf. Ezek. 8:10), forbidden practices (e.g., 2 Kings 23:24), and generally anything contrary to the true worship of Israel's God (e.g., 2 Chron. 15:8; Isa. 66:3; Jer. 4:1; cf. forbidden foods [Lev. 11:10, 13, 42] and ceremonial defilement [Lev. 7:21]). The term *to'ebah* includes the prohibition of idol worship (Deut. 7:25; 27:15; 32:16) but can more widely apply to immorality (e.g., Lev. 18:22, 26–27), prophecy that leads to paganism (Deut. 13:13–14), blemished animals offered in sacrifice to Yahweh (Deut. 17:1), and heathen divination (Deut. 18:9, 12).

The "abomination of desolation" (NIV: "abomination that causes desolation), or "desolating sacrifice," refers to the desecration of the Jerusalem temple. The description occurs or is alluded to in Dan. 8:11; 9:27; 11:31; 12:11; Matt. 24:15; Mark 13:14; Luke 21:20; 2 Thess. 2:4; as well as 1 Macc. 1:54–64. These texts seem to attest to two or three stages of fulfillment of the prophecy.

First, Dan. 8:11; 9:27; 11:31; 12:11; and 1 Macc. 1:54–64 clearly speak of the actions of the Syrian ruler Antiochus IV Epiphanes (175–164 BC) against the Jerusalem temple in 167 BC. He was the younger son of Antiochus III, ruler of the Seleucid Empire. The name "Epiphanes" means "manifest," implying "manifest as a god." Antiochus's ambition was to use the common culture of the Greeks (Hellenism) to unite the diverse Seleucid Empire. In 167 BC, after being repelled from Egypt by the Romans, Antiochus unleashed his fury on Jerusalem. His soldiers attacked the city on the Sabbath, killing much of the male population and enslaving the remaining women and children (1 Macc. 1:29–36; 2 Macc. 5:24–26). There followed the prohibition of all Jewish rites, along with the rededication of the Jewish temple to the Greek god Zeus. Anyone caught reading the Torah, observing the Sabbath and dietary laws, or circumcising their male babies was killed (1 Macc. 1:54–64; Josephus, *Ant.* 12.248–64). In December of 167 BC the first pagan sacrifice was offered on the altar in the holy of holies in the Jerusalem temple (1 Macc. 1:54).


THE ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION AND THE BEGINNING OF THE JEWISH REBELLION
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
PHOENICIA
ITUREA
Tyre
GALILEE
Bethsaida
Sea of Galilee
Jordan R.
Strato's Tower (Caesarea)
SAMARIA
Shechem
Mattathias refuses to sacrifice to heathen gods, sparking the Jewish rebellion, 166 BC
The Abomination of Desolation set up in the temple by Antiochus IV Epiphanes, December 167 BC
Modein
Jerusalem
Medeba
PHILISTIA
Hebron
Dead Sea
Gaza
Mattathias and his sons escape
Kir-Moab
0 5 10 mi
0 5 10 km

Antiochus at first met pockets of resistance from faithful Jews who opposed his orders and were therefore martyred (2 Macc. 6:10–7:42). With Mattathias and his five sons, however, open defiance against Antiochus's policies ensued. Mattathias, a priest in the town of Modein, refused to sacrifice to heathen gods and killed the king's officer sent to enforce the edict. This incident sparked a Jewish rebellion led by Mattathias's family (the Maccabees) that culminated in his son Judas's defeat of Antiochus's forces in December of 164 BC. At that time Judas reconsecrated the temple to Yahweh, the God of Israel, and Israel resumed the observance of the Jewish law (1 Macc. 4:52–59). Not long thereafter, Antiochus, who had unsuccessfully tried to invade Persia, died of illness in 164 BC (1 Macc. 6:1–17; 2 Macc. 1:13–17; 9:1–29; Josephus, *Ant.* 12.354–59). Thus, the prophecies of Dan. 8:11; 9:27; 11:31; 12:11 regarding the rise and fall of Antiochus Epiphanes had come true.

Second, Daniel's prophecy apparently was not completely fulfilled with Antiochus, for Luke 21:20 labels the Roman assault on Jerusalem in AD 70 as the "desolation." In fact, the Roman destruction of the Holy City and its temple was an intensification of the OT prediction.

Third, some interpreters would extend the application of the prophecy of the abomination of desolation to the distant future. They contend that the ultimate fulfillment of Daniel's prediction will occur in connection with the end-time temple to be built by Israel, which the antichrist will desecrate. Supporters of this viewpoint appeal to Mark 13:14; Matt. 24:15; 2 Thess. 2:4 (cf. Rev. 11).

Those who identify only two stages of fulfillment for Daniel's prophecy understand Mark 13:14 and Matt. 24:15 to pertain not to a future end-time temple but to the fall of Jerusalem in AD 70 (cf. Luke 21:20). Furthermore, they see in 2 Thess. 2:4 an allusion to the emperor Caligula's (Gaius) plan to place a statue of himself in the Jerusalem temple in AD 40 (which, because of his assassination, did not occur).

ABORTION Abortion remains an important and vital issue in contemporary society, but the Bible does not comment directly on the practice. There is no law for or against, nor is there even a description or allusion to it, even though its practice was not unknown in the ancient world. Apparently, it was not an issue in biblical legislation.

Perhaps the most frequently cited passages tied to the contemporary abortion debate are Exod. 21:22–25; Job 10:10–11; Ps. 139:13–16; Jer. 1:5. Although these passages certainly speak to the unborn state, they have only indirect relevance, at best, to the issue of abortion.

The Hebrew wording of Exod. 21:22 is obscure and could refer to a miscarriage or full-term delivery; and the harm referred to could be that of either the mother or the child. Also, Exod. 21:22 speaks of accidental death, not a willing decision by a mother to abort a child.

Jeremiah 1:5 refers to God knowing Jeremiah before he was in the womb. This speaks to God's intention from time past to use Jeremiah as a prophet, and the text should not be generalized of everyone. Clearly, the focus is not on the personhood of the fetus but on the extent of God's knowledge.

Psalm 139:13–16 is perhaps most relevant to the debate, as the psalmist describes the wonder of God in "creating" and "forming" him in the womb. Since the passage refers to God's planning of the entire believer's life (v. 16), that life seems to begin in some sense in the womb. Similarly, Job 10:10–11 speaks of fetal development. Although these passages do not speak directly to the matter of abortion, they imply that God's care for humans does not begin only at birth.

However, care must be taken not to allow this relative silence to be misunderstood. The Bible is very clear about the sanctity of life, especially that of the innocent. The biblical argument against abortion is one that connects more to larger themes concerning protection of the innocent than to any one verse or to a lack of verses.

ABRAHAM Abram, eventually named "Abraham," is a well-known biblical character whose life is detailed in Gen. 11:25–25:11. The patriarchal name "Abram" is used exclusively in Genesis, 1 Chron. 1:27, and Neh. 9:7. Abram's name (which means "exalted father") is changed in Gen. 17:5 to "Abraham," meaning "father of many nations." His prominence as a biblical character is evidenced in the 254 references to him documented in both Testaments.

The historical reliability of the account of Abraham is vigorously debated by scholars, although the Middle Bronze Age (2200–1550 BC) is the generally accepted time period of Abraham's life. The narrative of his life is a selective account of key events that serves the theme and purpose of the larger biblical narrative.

The narrative account in Genesis details one hundred years of Abraham's life and moves quickly through the first seventy-five years of events. In just a few verses (11:26–31) we learn that Abram was the son of Terah, the brother of Haran and Nahor, the husband of the barren Sarai (later Sarah), and the uncle of Lot, the son of Haran, who died in Ur of the Chaldees. The plot line marks significant events in Abraham's life chronologically. He left Harran at the age of 75 (12:4), was 86 when Hagar gave birth to Ishmael (16:16), 99 when the Lord appeared to him (17:17) and when he was circumcised (17:24), 100 when Sarah gave birth to Isaac (21:5), and 175 when he died (25:7). In summary, the biblical narrator paces the reader quickly through the story in such a way as to highlight a twenty-five-year period of Abraham's life between the ages of 75 and 100.

The Abraham narrative in Genesis is a story intentionally structured around the familiar details of life and death, uprooting and resettling, faith and doubt, and dysfunctional relationships. It is distinguished with illustrations of divine activity in family and political relationships. God is speaking (12:1, 7; 15:5, 7, 9), revealing (12:7; 17:1; 18:1), rescuing, judging, and fulfilling words of promise (18:19; 21:1). God's fingerprint is clearly noted with the summary statements of the Lord's blessing (24:1) and wealth (24:35).

The covenant that God made with Abraham is a key element in the overall story and foundational for the theology of both Testaments. This divine arrangement is introduced in Gen. 12:1–3 and progressively unfolded with increased detail in Gen. 15; 17. It is structured so that the obligations are borne by the Lord himself. The covenant promises land, seed, and blessing to Abraham and his descendants. In Gen. 15 the Lord officially cut the covenant with Abraham, thereby guaranteeing his commitment to his word. The halving of animals and the walking between the cut pieces by God symbolized by the torch constituted an ancient covenantal ritual affirming God's responsibility for the covenant particulars.

The NT features Abraham in several significant ways. The intimate connection between God and Abraham is noted in the identification of God as "the God of Abraham" in Acts 7:32 (cf. Exod. 3:6). The NT also celebrates the character of Abraham as a man of faith who received the promise (Gal. 3:9; Heb. 6:15). Abraham is most importantly an example of how one is justified by faith (Rom. 4:1, 12) and an illustration of what it means to walk by faith (James 2:21, 23).

Those who exercise faith in the living God, as did Abraham, are referred to as "children of Abraham" (Gal. 3:7). Regarding the covenant promises made to Abraham in the OT, the NT writers highlight the promises of seed and blessing. According to Paul, the seed of Abraham is ultimately fulfilled in Christ, and those who believe in Christ are the seed of Abraham (Gal. 3:16, 29). In a similar way, those who have Abraham-like faith are blessed (3:9). The blessing imparted to Abraham comes to the Gentiles through the redemption of Christ and is associated with the impartation of the Spirit (3:14).

The promise of land made to Abraham is referenced specifically in Acts (7:5, 16) and Hebrews

(11:8, 11), where his obedient faith is featured and the land is discussed in connection with the historical context of his life. *See also* Abram.

ABRAHAM'S BOSOM Abraham's bosom (or side) describes God's blessings after death, using the picture of closeness with Abraham at a banquet (perhaps the messianic banquet [see Isa. 25:6–8]). The image appears in Jesus' story of the rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16:22–23). The bliss enjoyed by Lazarus in the bosom of Abraham stands in sharp contrast to the rich man's experience of great torment and suffering. This story is helpful for understanding the intensification of blessings for God's people following death and, similarly, of sufferings for the lost, but it does not describe the full extent of the eternal destinies of heaven and hell.

ABRAM Abraham's original name, used in Gen. 11:26–17:4. At Gen. 17:5 Abram is renamed "Abraham" because he will be a "father of many nations." "Abram" is formed from the common Hebrew word *'ab*, meaning "father," plus the root that means "exalted," although note that Scripture does not assign any particular theological significance to this name. *See also* Abraham.

ABRONAH A campsite of the Israelites on their journey from Egypt under the leadership of Moses and Aaron. It was situated between Jotbathah and Ezion Geber (Num. 33:34–35), but the exact historical location of Abronah is uncertain.

ABSALOM The third of David's sons, born in Hebron while David was king of Judah alone. His mother was Maakah, daughter of the king of Geshur, a small buffer state northeast of Israel where Absalom fled after murdering his brother Amnon (2 Sam. 13:37). Nothing is known of Absalom's formative years, but he plays a prominent role in the violence that overtook David following his murder of Uriah (2 Sam. 11). Absalom's sister Tamar was raped by his older half brother Amnon (13:1–19), and two years later he ordered his men to murder Amnon (13:23–33) before fleeing to Geshur. Joab convinced David to restore him (14:1–21). David snubbed him on his return, and he later rebelled against David, coming close to toppling him before being killed by Joab in the forest of Ephraim after his hair became caught in a tree (18:9–15).

ABSHAI *See* Abishai.

ABSTINENCE Abstinence refers to intentional restraint from participating in some activity.

One of the primary examples of abstinence throughout the Bible is fasting. People abstained from consuming food in times of seeking God's intervention (Esther 4:16), repenting of some sin (Ezra 10:6), responding to a disaster (2 Sam. 1:12), or preparing for a new venture (Matt. 4:2). One plausible rationale for fasting is that it permits clarity of focus and expresses reliance upon God for sustenance (Ezra 8:23).

Other examples of abstinence in the OT might be expressed in matters of degrees. Food laws prevented some kinds of food from being consumed at all (Lev. 11), other types could not be consumed if found under certain conditions (Lev. 17:15; Deut. 14:21), and still others could not be consumed if prepared in certain ways (Exod. 34:26; Deut. 14:21). Such abstinence was for the expressed purpose of consecrating the people of Israel (Lev. 11:44). Similarly, abstinence from work on the Sabbath was for all the people of Israel (Exod. 20:8–11), while abstinence from fermented drink and any produce of the grapevine was reserved for those under the Nazirite vow (Num. 6:3–4) and demonstrated holiness. The corporate focus in these practices served as an impetus for reflections upon abstinence in the NT. Jesus insisted that fasting be accompanied by proper motives (Matt. 6:16–18), and Paul suggested that abstinence be practiced when an activity might cause another to stumble (1 Cor. 8). Sexual laws called for abstinence from sexual activity outside of marriage. Paul even allowed for temporary periods of sexual abstinence within marriage so that the couple could devote themselves to prayer (1 Cor. 7:5–6).

ABYSS In classical Greek, *abyssos* is an adjective meaning "bottomless," and it was applied to the primeval deep of ancient cosmogonies, an ocean surrounding and under the earth. The LXX uses *abyssos* to translate the Hebrew *tehom* in Gen. 1:2 (KJV, NIV: "deep"). In the NT, *abyssos* refers to the world of the dead (Rom. 10:7; KJV, NIV: "deep") and especially the subterranean prison of disobedient spirits (fallen angels?; Luke 8:31; Rev. 9:1–2, 11; 11:7; 17:8; 20:1–3). Some English versions translate *abyssos* in Revelation as "the bottomless pit" (NRSV, NLT), others as "the Abyss" (NIV). *See also* Bottomless Pit.

ACACIA An English rendering of the Hebrew word *shittim*. When referring to the tree, many modern translations use "acacia" (Isa. 41:19; KJV: "shittah tree"); however, when *shittim* is used in reference to a place name, it often is simply transliterated as "Shittim" (Num. 25:1; Josh. 2:1; Mic. 6:5). More than likely, the place name resulted from an abundant presence of the trees in that location (Josh. 3:1; Joel 3:18).

The acacia tree is readily available in the Sinai and provides a hard wood suitable for crafting objects requiring durability. It was used in the construction of the ark of the covenant (Exod. 25:10), the poles for moving the ark (25:13), portions of the tabernacle (26:15–37), and parts of the altar of burnt offering (38:1, 6). *See also* Shittim.

Acacia tree

ACBOR *See* Akbor.

ACCAD *See* Akkad.

ACCEPTANCE This is a metaphor that illuminates the new relational status that Christ's redemption brings about between the believer and God. When Adam and Eve sinned, they were cast out of the garden and banished from God's presence. The privileged access that they once enjoyed was lost. As the result of Adam and Eve's disobedience, all human beings are born into the world in a state of alienation from God. This condition of disfavor with God is the root from which stem all other human problems in life.

Adam and Eve's decision to cover themselves with garments made of fig leaves was their "shortcut" attempt to cover their guilt and shame before God (Gen. 3:7). It is this same impulse that accounts for the many diverse religions in existence today. The assumption that distinguishes all false religions is that the condition of human spiritual alienation can be overcome by the performance of certain prescribed rituals or good works. God's act of making garments of skin to clothe Adam and Eve with (3:21) anticipated the "covering" that he would provide for sin and shame through his own Son's atoning death and resurrection. What distinguishes Christianity from other religions is its insistence that only God can initiate reconciliation with those who have broken his law. He alone can provide the necessary means that make it possible for him to forgive and accept them back into fellowship with him.

How is forgiveness related to acceptance? Forgiveness addresses one's need for the removal of guilt. Acceptance addresses one's need for a resolution to the problem of shame, the inward sense of unworthiness and inadequacy that one feels before God and others. When the high priest Joshua stood before the angel of the Lord with Satan standing there to accuse him because of his filthy garments, the Lord rebuked Satan; then "the angel said to those who were standing before him, 'Take off his filthy clothes.' Then he said to Joshua, 'See, I have taken away your sin, and I will put fine garments on you.' Then I said, 'Put a clean turban on his head.' So they put a clean turban on his head and clothed him, while the angel of the LORD stood by" (Zech. 3:4–5). This anticipates the new identity and status that Jesus would give to all who receive him. When the prodigal who had shamed his father returned, the father, instead of reproaching him, commanded his attendants to put a new robe on him, a ring on his finger, and sandals on his feet. "For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found" (Luke 15:24).

The NT uses very intimate metaphors to describe the new relationship with God that one enters upon believing. Adoption gives the believer a new legal status as a child of God. This is objective, but it is also experiential (Rom. 8:15–16). Hebrews tells us that Jesus is not ashamed to call us brothers and sisters (Heb. 2:11).

ACCESS Access usually refers to the right of a person of lesser status to appear in the presence of one of higher status and be heard. The word is appropriate in the context of a kingly court (see Esther 1:14; Zech. 3:7). Anyone not granted such access would risk execution when approaching the king for any reason unless the king approved it (Esther 4:11). The word is also appropriate in the context of the Lord's sanctuary, where it is closely related to approaching the Lord. In the OT, the right to approach the Lord in his sanctuary is limited. For instance, the high priest is the only person granted access to approach the Lord in the inner sanctuary, the holy of holies, and only on the Day of Atonement. Those who fail to approach the Lord properly risk death as a punishment (Lev. 10:1–3).

In reality, these two contexts overlap significantly.

Access in the NT focuses on the right to approach God. Unlike the access granted in the OT, the death of Christ grants to all believers the right to approach the Father, making no distinction between Jew and Gentile, since the same Spirit indwells both (Eph. 2:18). Furthermore, Christ's work secures access to both the kingly throne and the "true tabernacle" of God, where one finds grace and mercy in time of need (Heb. 4:16; 8:1–2; 10:19–22).

ACCO *See* Akko.

ACCOUNTABILITY *See* Age of Accountability.

ACCURSED Being accursed means being subject to judgment from God. "Curse" is used to translate several Hebrew and Greek words. The Hebrew word *'arur* appears repeatedly in Deut. 27:15–26; 28:16–19, passages that threaten consequences for both the land and its inhabitants if the latter disobey the covenant stipulations. Jeremiah frequently warned of desolation of the land as a result of the people's detestable acts.

A related Hebrew term, *kherem*, indicates giving over to divine wrath and destruction those who are in opposition to God (Josh. 6:17; 7:1; 1 Sam. 15:21). The Hebrew root *qll* carries the same connotations. One hung on a tree was under God's curse (Deut. 21:22–23). This judgment likewise could apply to the land (2 Kings 22:19).

Paul employed the Greek term *anathema*, indicating the object of a curse (Gal. 1:8; cf. Rom. 9:3). This word is used in the LXX to translate both *'arur* and *kherem*. Paul also used the Greek term *epikataratos* in Gal. 3:10–13, citing Deut. 27:26; 21:23 in his argument to keep the Galatians from returning to observing the law. All humans stand under God's judgment, but Jesus became accursed for us.

Some OT narratives describe death while hanging on a tree for those who were enemies of God's people and whose judgment was assured (Josh. 10:26; 2 Sam. 18:9–10). The ram caught in the thicket that served as Isaac's substitute (Gen. 22:13) is perhaps an adumbration of Jesus' substitutionary act on the cross (see 1 Pet. 2:24).

ACCUSER *See* Adversary.

ACELDAMA *See* Akeldama.

ACHAIA Most narrowly construed, Achaia is a region along the northern coast of the Peloponnesus, the southern peninsula of Greece. Paul's letters to the Corinthians were sent to this region (1 Cor. 16:15; 2 Cor. 1:1). In the NT, the term also has a broader meaning, so that the phrase "Macedonia and Achaia" refers inclusively to all of Greece (Acts 19:21; Rom. 15:26; 1 Thess. 1:7–8).

ACHAICUS An acquaintance of Paul mentioned along with Stephanas and Fortunatus (1 Cor. 16:17). These three visited Paul in Ephesus as representatives of the Corinthian church. They may have carried some of Paul's correspondence to the church there. The name "Achaicus" is derived from the geographical name "Achaia," suggesting to some interpreters that Achaicus was a slave or former slave, possibly of the household of Stephanas mentioned in 1 Cor. 16:15.

ACHAN A Judahite who disobeyed Joshua and kept for himself some of the plunder from Jericho (Josh. 7:1, 21). Achan's sin was discovered after the Israelite army was defeated by the men of Ai (7:4–21). He was stoned and burned along with his family and possessions (7:25–26). "Achan" resembles the Hebrew word for "trouble" (*'akar*), and in 1 Chron. 2:7 Achan is known as Achar, the "troubler of Israel" (NRSV). The place where he was killed was known as the Valley of Achor, the valley of "trouble" (Josh. 7:26).

ACHAR *See* Achan.

ACHAZ *See* Ahaz.

ACHBOR *See* Akbor.

ACHIM *See* Akim.

ACHISH A Philistine, king of Gath. When David sought sanctuary at Gath by pretending to be insane, Achish turned him away (1 Sam. 21:10–15). When Saul continued to persecute David, David and his men allied themselves with Achish, who gave David the city of Ziklag (27:1–6). While in Achish's service, David pretended to carry out raids against his own people, so that Achish came to trust him greatly (27:8–12). Later, Achish's advisers convinced him that David could not be trusted to fight against Israel (29:1–11). Achish is mentioned in the early reign of Solomon (1 Kings 39–40). Achish is called "Abimelek" in the superscription to Ps. 34.

ACHMETHA *See* Ecbatana.

ACHOR A valley in northern Judea (Josh. 15:7), identified with modern El Buqeah. Achor was the place where judgment was rendered to Achan after he stole plunder from Jericho (Josh. 7:24–26). The prophets envision the transformation of Achor into a verdant area (Isa. 65:10; Hos. 2:15).

ACHSAH *See* Aksah.

ACHSHAPH *See* Akshaph.

ACHZIB *See* Akzib.

ACRE **(1)** A unit of measurement of land area, originally equivalent to what a pair of oxen could plow in a day (see 1 Sam. 14:14; cf. Isa. 5:10). **(2)** Another name for the city Akko (see Judg. 1:31). *See also* Akko.

ACROPOLIS An acropolis (lit., "high city") is the elevated portion of an ancient city, typically containing temples, palaces, or other public architecture. In Jerusalem, the temples of Solomon and Herod stood on the highest hill within the city. The most famous acropolis in the Greco-Roman world was that of Athens, where the Parthenon stands. Paul preached within sight of the Athenian acropolis, already ancient by his time, on the nearby Areopagus during his visit to the city (Acts 17:19–34). After Athens, Paul went to preach and teach in Corinth (18:1–11), which also had a famous acropolis, the Acrocorinth.

The ruins of ancient Corinth with its acropolis, the Acrocorinth, in the background

ACROSTIC A literary device, most often used in poetry, in which the first letters of each line form a pattern. Biblical acrostics form an alphabetic pattern whereby successive lines or sections begin with a successive letter of the twenty-two-letter Hebrew alphabet. The lengthiest example is Ps. 119, which consists of twenty-two groups of eight verses. Within each group, the lines in each verse begin with the same Hebrew letter. Lamentations 1–4 also constitutes an impressive acrostic, with the alphabetic pattern repeated once in each of the chapters. Each letter of the alphabet in turn begins a unit of (usually) three lines. In Lam. 3, each of the three lines in each section begins with the same letter (as in Ps. 119). Other (often incomplete) acrostics include Pss. 9–10; 25; 34; 37; 111; 145; Prov. 31:1–31; and probably Nah. 1:2–10.

ACSAH *See* Aksah.

ACSHAPH *See* Akshaph.

ACTS OF THE APOSTLES This book, commonly referred to simply as Acts, is the sequel to the Gospel of Luke and records the exciting history of the first three decades of the early church. The book begins with the ascension of Jesus, followed by his sending of the Holy Spirit, and ends with the gospel message being proclaimed by Paul as a prisoner in the capital city of the Roman Empire. In the pages in between, the reader is introduced to the key people, places, and events of this strategic and crucial time of Christian history. The book of Acts provides insightful and inspiring reading. It forms the backdrop for understanding much of the NT (especially Paul's letters), and it provides important models for the contemporary church.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In order to understand the book of Acts, one must become familiar with its historical background. This includes understanding the book's authorship, recipients, and setting. In terms of authorship, the book technically is anonymous; however, there are good reasons for holding to church history's traditional view that its author is Luke. This tradition dates back to the early second century and is supported by internal evidence. This evidence further reveals that Luke was a physician and close companion of the apostle Paul (in fact, Luke was actually with Paul for some of the events that he records in Acts; see the "we" passages, found in 16:10–17; 20:5–15; 21:8–18; 27:1–28:16). Luke was well educated, well traveled, and familiar with both the Jewish and the Greco-Roman worlds. He was a Hellenistic God-fearer and a Christian. He was also familiar with the Jewish Scriptures, Greco-Roman rhetoric, and ancient histories, thus making him the perfect candidate to write an accurate history of early Christianity.

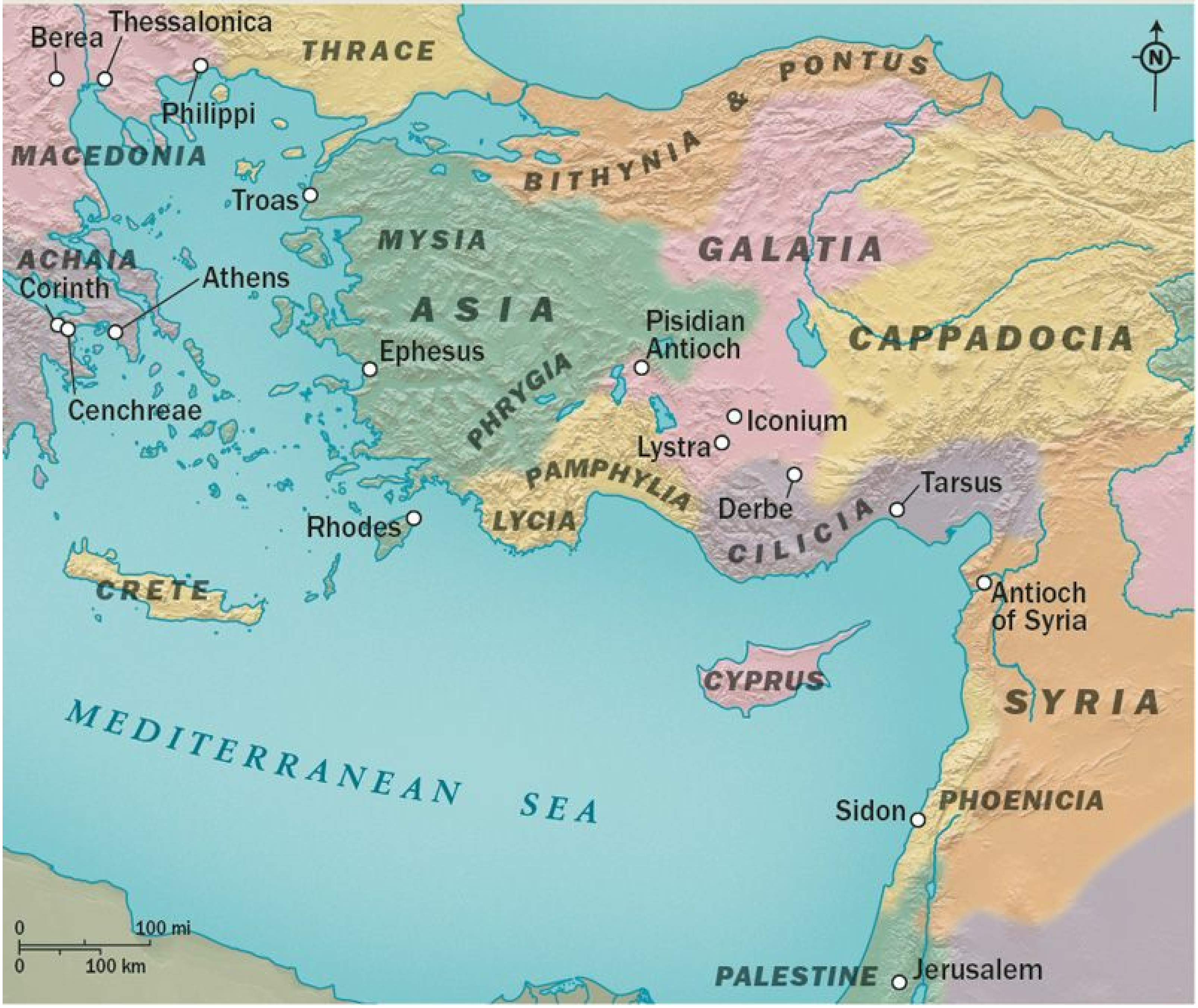
The specific recipient of Acts is Theophilus (1:1). Theophilus could be characterized as a relatively new believer of high social status, a person educated in Greco-Roman rhetoric and history, and one who possessed the financial means to promote and publish Luke's work (both the Gospel of Luke and Acts). It is probable that in some way Theophilus served as a bridge to a wider readership. It seems likely that Theophilus was Luke's ideal reader (i.e., an influential Greco-Roman of high social standing).

The specific setting of Acts is difficult to determine; however, it seems clear that the book was written during a time of crisis for the church. This crisis involved persecution and slander of Christians by both Jews and Gentiles. Both groups were trying to persuade public opinion against Christianity, including the opinion of Greco-Roman authorities. The persecution and slander were taking their toll on the church, and many Christians were demoralized and struggling to remain faithful as witnesses of Jesus. Christianity needed someone to write a response to this crisis. This response had to do three things: (1) accurately relate the history of the church to influential Greco-Romans of high social status; (2) show that Christianity was an ancient religion (ancient religions were considered to be legitimate by Roman authorities) and an asset to the Roman Empire, not a threat; (3) legitimize Christianity over against Judaism. The author of this reponse had to be someone who was respected both inside and outside of the Christian faith community, who knew the church's history well, and who was educated in Greco-Roman rhetoric. What better authorial candidate than Luke? Finally, the church also needed a person of high social status and financial means to help publish and promote the work; thus, Theophilus was chosen.

PURPOSE

The book of Acts was written for a variety of purposes. These include apologetics, legitimization, discipleship, and witness to salvation. The apologetic purpose of Acts focuses on how Christianity could be recognized as an ancient, honorable, and officially protected religion in the Roman Empire. Although Judaism had the status of *religio licita* (legal religion) with Roman authorities for most of the first century, Christianity encountered serious problems in this respect. Acts itself reveals a substantial amount of such evidence in this regard. For example, 16:20–21 shows that at Philippi, Paul and Silas were charged with disturbing the peace by advocating unlawful customs. In Thessalonica, the missionaries were accused of defying Caesar by promoting another king named "Jesus" (17:7). At Corinth, the charge was that of persuading the people toward unlawful worship (18:13). Later in Acts, Paul was charged by the Jewish priestly leaders with being part of an unacceptable sect that was stirring up riots in Jewish communities (24:5–9). In 28:22, when Paul addressed the Roman Jews, they responded by saying that "people everywhere are talking against this sect [Christianity]." Such accusations, accompanied by the fact that Christianity's founder had been crucified by Roman authorities, made it difficult for the Christians to gain credibility. Christianity's precarious position with Rome was further exacerbated by a strong Jewish campaign to separate from Christians and to label them as sectarian. This strategy certainly intended for Christianity to be viewed by Rome as *religio illicita* (illegal or forbidden religion). Thus, Luke writes Acts to defend Christianity by showing that it is not a replacement of Judaism, but rather its legitimate continuation. Therefore, it should be accepted by the Roman authorities as a legal religion just as Judaism was accepted.

Luke's apologetic message also appears to be directed inwardly, to a struggling church. This inward focus leads to Luke's next main purpose: legitimization of the Christian faith for its adherents. As part of his defense, Luke intends to equip the church in the midst of an identity crisis due to the constant threats of illegitimacy. This explains Luke's strategy of retelling the story of the church's origins so that followers of Christ would understand their true position from God's perspective. Thus, Luke verifies four things: (1) the Jewish Scriptures prophesied a coming messiah, and Jesus matched these prophecies; (2) the resurrection was foretold in Scripture and verified by eyewitnesses; (3) it was God's plan all along for Gentiles to be included in God's redemptive work; (4) Jews who rejected Jesus were acting in the same way their ancestors did; therefore, believers should not be surprised by their negative reaction to Jesus. Luke uses stories such as the one in Acts 2:41–47 to verify that salvation was genuinely being accomplished in the church and that Christians were experiencing the fulfillment of God's ancient promises to Israel. Luke's writing is intended to encourage his contemporary church members to remain faithful in their service and witness for the Lord. He reminds them that they are the true (legitimate) "people of God" and that God's Spirit will help them prevail and will give them abundant life even in the midst of hardship and persecution.


CITIES VISITED BY PAUL ON HIS JOURNEYS

Berea
Thessalonica
THRACE
PONTUS
Philippi
&
MACEDONIA
BITHYNIA
Troas
MYSIA
GALATIA
ACHAIA
Corinth
Athens
ASIA
Pisidian Antioch
CAPPADOCIA
Ephesus
PHRYGIA
Cenchreae
Iconium
Lystra
PAMPHYLIA
Tarsus
Derbe
Rhodes
LYCIA
CILICIA
CRETE
Antioch of Syria
CYPRUS
SYRIA
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
Sidon
PHOENICIA
0
100 mi
0
100 km
PALESTINE
Jerusalem
N

Another key purpose of the book of Acts is to foster discipleship. The prologues of both Luke’s Gospel and Acts verify that Luke is writing to provide instruction and teaching for Theophilus (see Luke 1:1–4; Acts 1:1–2). Part of this instruction reveals that the ascension of Jesus was not the end of his relationship with the world, but rather a new beginning. Jesus’ departure did not mean abandonment; in fact, it meant just the opposite. Jesus verifies his continuing presence and work in the world after his departure just as he had lived and worked before. In other words, the same Spirit who directed the ministry of Jesus is now going to direct the ministry of Jesus’ followers. The rest of the book of Acts provides instruction (with many personal examples) on how Christ can fulfill the ministry of believers through the power and direction of the Holy Spirit. Luke’s discipleship teaching includes helping believers learn how to experience and follow God’s Spirit (chap. 2), to boldly witness for Christ in the midst of persecution (chaps. 3–4, 8, 14, 16–17, 19–28), to sacrificially share resources with other Christians in need (chaps. 2, 4, 11), to resolve disputes within the church (chaps. 6, 15), and to take the gospel message of salvation to all people (chaps. 2, 11, 13–28).

The book of Acts places great emphasis on the message of salvation and the responsibility given to believers to share this salvific message with all people. This salvation-witness concept is clearly one of Luke's key purposes for the book of Acts. The Pentecost event of Acts 2 initiates the theme of salvation for all people and thus sets the agenda for the rest of the book. In this passage, various Jews from many nations hear the good news in their own tongue, which suggests that this news is for peoples of all tongues and nations yet for Jews first. The rest of Acts continues this theme of the universal scope of salvation. Luke makes it clear that this salvation crosses all geographical, ethnic, and social boundaries. In Acts, Luke is bridging the gap between Jesus' earthly ministry and a later generation of Christ followers who are to take the gospel to a much wider geographical area with even greater ethnic diversity. The message of salvation should be joined with Luke's emphasis on witness. The centrality of the theme of witness in Acts is verified by Jesus' words right before the ascension: "And you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (1:8). The book of Acts tells the story of how the early church received and obeyed the command of Jesus to bear witness of him to the ends of the earth.

LITERARY FEATURES

These key purposes of Acts are expounded through some distinctive literary features found in the book. One such literary feature is that the book of Acts was written in a literary genre called "apologetic historiography." This genre can be defined as the story of a subgroup of people told by a member of the group who explains the group's traditions and history while using Greco-Roman literary features. A good example of this literary genre is Josephus's *Jewish Antiquities*. Josephus tells the story of the Jews to Greco-Roman readers in hopes that they will better understand Jewish history and traditions and will accept the Jews in the larger Greco-Roman world. This appears to be exactly what Luke is doing in the book of Acts for Christians. However, Luke is not giving a defense of a particular ethnic group; rather, he is defending a multicultural people who transcend ethnic and geographical boundaries. In fact, this is a key part of Luke's message. Throughout Acts, Luke is trying to explain why his religion is one that crosses ethnic boundaries and is a universal religion inclusive of all ethnicities. As Luke tells the story of Christianity, he is careful to utilize Hellenistic literary features in order to connect with his primary audience. Evidence of these Hellenistic literary features in the book of Acts includes a narrative style illustrating the history through the personal experiences of key characters (Acts tells the history of the early church through characters such as Peter and Paul), the frequent use of speeches, personal observation of at least part of the narrative while maintaining anonymity of authorship (the "we" passages of Acts), and the frequent use of summaries to guide the narrative (Acts contains three major summaries [2:42–47; 4:32–37; 5:12–16] and a number of minor summaries [6:7; 9:31; 12:24; 16:5; 19:20; 28:31]).

OUTLINE AND SURVEY

Acts can be outlined according to Jesus' final words, recorded in 1:8: "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

I. Witnesses in Jerusalem (1:1–8:3)

II. Witnesses in Judea and Samaria (8:4–12:25)

III. Witnesses to the Ends of the Earth (13:1–28:31)

I. Witnesses in Jerusalem (Acts 1:1–8:3). Immediately following his ascension, Jesus tells his followers to return to Jerusalem and wait for the coming of the Holy Spirit. They promptly obey, and after ten days of waiting, the disciples are dramatically filled with the Holy Spirit and begin to share the gospel with those around them. This event occurs at the Jewish Pentecost festival, which was attended by Jews and Jewish proselytes from throughout the Roman Empire. After the Spirit comes at Pentecost, Peter boldly preaches to the crowds, and over three thousand people respond with saving faith (2:41).

Luke next provides an exciting summary of the Spirit-led life within the early church. This life is characterized by the early believers' participation together in the sharing of worship activities, material possessions, and spiritual blessings (2:42–47). This summary is followed by several dramatic healing miracles accomplished through Peter and the subsequent arrest of Christian leaders by Jewish religious authorities. Instead of squelching the Christian movement, however, these arrests only enhance the spiritual revival and its accompanying miracles. This revival is characterized by extreme generosity and unity within the early church (4:32–37).

The revival joy, however, is marred by the deceitful actions of Ananias and Sapphira, who lie to the church and to the Holy Spirit and are judged by God with immediate death (5:1–11). This story proves that God will go to extreme lengths to protect the unity of his church. Following more persecution and miracles, the disciples choose seven men to oversee distribution of food to Hellenistic widows who have been neglected in daily food distributions (6:1–7). One of these leaders, Stephen, is arrested and brought before the Sanhedrin. Stephen testifies boldly before the Jewish leaders and is promptly executed by stoning (chap. 7). This execution is endorsed by Saul, a zealous Pharisee who begins to lead fierce persecution against the church in Jerusalem (8:1–3).

II. Witnesses in Judea and Samaria (Acts 8:4–12:25). Saul's persecution forces many of the early church believers to leave Jerusalem. These believers scatter throughout the surrounding areas of Judea and Samaria. As they scatter, however, they continue to preach the gospel (8:4). Philip preaches in Samaria and performs many miraculous signs, producing a spiritual revival in the region. Hearing about this, the apostles send Peter and John to Samaria to minister to the Samaritans (8:18–25), thus confirming the cross-cultural nature of the gospel (Samaritans traditionally were hated by the Jews). Next Luke tells of Philip's evangelizing of an Ethiopian eunuch (8:26–40).

Following the Ethiopian's belief in Jesus, the narrative tells of Saul's dramatic conversion while traveling to Damascus to persecute Christians there (9:1–19). Saul's dramatic turnaround is met with suspicion by the other disciples, but eventually he is accepted by the believers with the help of Barnabas (9:27–30). Next Peter travels to the Judean countryside and heals the paralytic Aeneas and raises Dorcas from the dead (9:32–42). These miracles produce an exciting spiritual revival in the region. Following this, God gives Peter a vision to go to the coastal city of Caesarea in order to minister to Cornelius, a Roman army officer. Cornelius is a God-fearer, and through Peter's witness he responds to the gospel message and receives the Holy Spirit (chap. 10). Peter explains his actions with Cornelius to his concerned Jewish companions and verifies that God has indeed included the Gentiles in his plan of salvation (11:1–18).

This verification is followed by the report of what is happening in the church at Antioch, where

Jews begin to share the gospel with larger groups of Gentiles (11:19–21). This cross-cultural evangelism produces a spiritual revival in Antioch, causing the Jerusalem church to send Barnabas to the large Syrian city to investigate (11:22–30). Barnabas confirms that God is indeed at work in Antioch and invites Saul to come and help him disciple the new Gentile believers (11:25–26). Next Luke reports more persecution breaking out against Christians in Jerusalem, resulting in the arrest of James and Peter by King Herod. James is executed, but Peter miraculously escapes from prison with the help of an angel (12:1–19), and the church continues to increase, spreading throughout the Roman Empire.

III. Witnesses to the ends of the earth (Acts 13:1–28:31). Starting with chapter 13, the narrative shifts its focus from the ministry of Peter to that of Paul (formerly Saul). The church at Antioch begins to take center stage over the church at Jerusalem. This church commissions Paul and Barnabas and sends them off on their first missionary journey, accompanied by Barnabas's cousin John Mark. The missionaries first sail to Cyprus, where they preach in synagogues and encounter a Jewish sorcerer, Bar-Jesus. Next they sail to Pamphylia, thus crossing into Asia Minor, and preach the gospel in Pisidian Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe (this area was known as part of the region of Galatia). In these cities, God provides numerous miracles, and the missionaries experience a great response to the gospel as well as much persecution because of the gospel. On one occasion, Paul is actually stoned and left for dead (14:19–20).

Unfazed, Paul and his team boldly continue their mission. Eventually, they retrace their steps, strengthen the churches that they have started, and sail back to Syrian Antioch, where they give an exciting report to the church (14:26–28). Following this report, Luke tells of an important meeting of church leaders in Jerusalem. The subject of the meeting involves whether or not the new Gentile Christians should be required to follow the Jewish laws and customs. After debating the issue, the leaders side with Paul, determining that the Gentiles should not be burdened with Jewish laws and traditions, but simply must live moral lives and not eat food that has been sacrificed to idols (chap. 15).

Following this meeting, Paul and Barnabas decide to make a second missionary journey. Unfortunately, the two missionaries get into a dispute over whether to take John Mark with them again. The argument is such that the missionaries decide to separate, and Paul chooses a new partner, Silas. They travel by land back to Galatia. Barnabas takes John Mark and sails to Cyprus. Paul and Silas return to Derbe and Lystra and then make their way to Macedonia and Greece. They spend significant time in Philippi, Thessalonica, and Corinth before returning to Caesarea and Antioch (chaps. 16–18). Following his return, Paul makes a third missionary journey, revisiting churches in Galatia and Phrygia and staying in Ephesus for three years before visiting Macedonia and Greece for a second time.

Paul concludes his third missionary journey with a trip to Jerusalem, where he is falsely accused of bringing a Gentile into the temple. This accusation creates a riot, and Paul is rescued by Roman soldiers, who arrest him and transfer him to a prison in Caesarea, where he spends two years awaiting trial under the rule of Felix and Festus (23:34–25:22). Paul eventually exercises his right as a Roman citizen to have his case heard by the emperor. He is sent to Rome by boat and is shipwrecked on the island of Malta. Eventually he makes his way to the capital city, where he is placed under house arrest. While in Rome, Paul maintains a rented house and is free to receive visitors and write letters. In fact, it is thought that Paul penned his "prison letters" during this time of house arrest (Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Philemon). The narrative of Acts ends with Paul ministering boldly in Rome while awaiting his trial.

Acts and the Contemporary Church

The book of Acts provides a model for today’s church on numerous topics. These include understanding the role of the Holy Spirit, practicing community life within the church, dealing with hardship and persecution, overcoming social injustices, and carrying out missions.

Acts reveals that the key issue for Christians is learning to experience and follow God’s Holy Spirit, who enables believers to be bold in their witness for Christ, generous in their physical and spiritual support of each other, and effective in their ministries. Acts consistently reveals that one’s joy, power, and purpose come from the Holy Spirit. According to Acts, learning to follow and depend upon God’s Holy Spirit is the key to having a healthy church.

Acts also shows that the Holy Spirit produces a unique community life characterized by worship, generosity, blessing, and unity. Luke calls this Spirit-led common life *koinōnia*, which is explained and illustrated in the first five chapters of Acts (see esp. 2:42–47). It should be the desire and goal of every church to re-create this *koinōnia* community first experienced by the primitive church in Acts.

In addition to its *koinōnia*, the book of Acts serves as a model for the church in overcoming persecution and hardship. The narrative of Acts consistently reveals the sovereign power of God in overcoming opposition. The early church found great joy and growth in the midst of hardship and persecution, and today’s church can do the same.

Another important example for the church provided by Acts is in the area of social justice. Luke’s primitive church consistently removed ethnic prejudices, eliminated social hierarchy and status within the church, and elevated the role of women. Acts provides inspiration and guidance for today’s church in facing these same social issues.

In addition to overcoming social injustices, the church in Acts provides an excellent example of mission ministry. These believers consistently revealed God’s heart for the nations and made it a priority to share the gospel with all people everywhere. Acts’ emphasis on the universal nature of the gospel, the responsibility of individual Christians to witness for Christ, and the importance of planting new churches and discipling new believers sets a pattern for today’s church in the area of missions.

These examples should serve to inspire and guide the contemporary church as it seeks to follow and experience the Holy Spirit, who is so powerfully revealed in the book of Acts.

ACZIB *See* Akzib.

ADADAH One of the southernmost towns allotted to the tribe of Judah (Josh. 15:22).

ADAH Two women who married men excluded from the Israelite ancestry. **(1)** Lamech’s wife, in Cain’s genealogy (Gen. 4:19). **(2)** Esau’s Hittite wife, mother of the Amalekites (Gen. 36:2). As daughter of Elon the Hittite, Adah may (Gen. 26:34) or may not (Gen. 36:2–3) be identical with Basemath.

ADAIAH **(1)** The father of Jedidah and grandfather of King Josiah (2 Kings 22:1). **(2)** A descendant of Levi through Ethan (1 Chron. 6:41–42). **(3)** A descendant of Benjamin through Shimei (1 Chron. 8:21). **(4)** Son of Jeroham, and a priest who resettled in Judah (1 Chron. 9:12). **(5)** The father of Maaseiah, a commander under covenant with the priest Jehoiada (2 Chron. 23:1). **(6)** A descendant of Bani who was guilty of marrying foreign women (Ezra 10:29). **(7)** A descendant of Binnui also guilty of marrying foreign women (Ezra 10:38–39). **(8)** A descendant of Judah through Joiarib (Neh. 11:5).

(9) Son of Jeroham, and a priest who resettled in Jerusalem (Neh. 11:12; could be the same as #4).

ADALIA One of Haman's ten sons, all of whom were killed by the Jews in the citadel of Susa, along with five hundred others. At the request of Esther to King Xerxes, their corpses were then displayed by public hanging (Esther 9:7–14). Xerxes had permitted the Jews the right "to destroy, kill and annihilate" their attackers (8:11).

ADAM The name of a person and a word for "humankind." That the Hebrew word *'adam* can be both a personal name and a reference to humankind provides the biblical writers with a valuable means of drawing theological conclusions important to the nature of humankind's status before God. Unfortunately, in various places it is unclear whether it is a proper name or a more general noun. The origin of the word is usually understood to be related to "red" or "red soil," and the writer of Genesis makes the link between "the man" and "the soil" more apparent in Gen. 2:7, where man is said to have been created from *'adamah* (ground, earth).

The first man was named "Adam." Because of the difficulties of the word *'adam* serving as both a proper name and meaning simply "human," there is disagreement concerning when the text of Gen. 1–3 is referring to humankind and when it is utilizing "Adam" as a reference to the first man's name. This discussion often is driven by one's explanation of origins; however, the general rule applied by many Bible translations is that the presence of the definite article ("the") indicates that the author has humankind in mind, whereas its absence indicates the use of the proper name.

Humankind was created in the image of God (Gen. 1:27), who also uniquely breathed into human beings his own breath (2:7), indicating a distinct capacity for relationship between them and God. This emphasis is furthered in the text by God's granting to humankind stewardship of the rest of his creation (1:28–30). The fall (Gen. 3) apparently arose out of the desire of human beings to usurp God's position and determine for themselves what is beneficial and what is harmful (knowledge of good and evil). The step of disobedience taken in consuming fruit from the forbidden tree had dire consequences for the relationships between men and women, humankind and creation, and humankind and God. The fall, however, did not eliminate the reality that humankind is still in the image of God and capable of continued relationship with him (5:1–3).

Other OT passages rely on Adam for purposes of genealogy (Gen. 5:4; 1 Chron. 1:1) but also begin to highlight some theological conceptions of him that would become significant in his description elsewhere in Scripture. Job 31:33 may suggest a link between Adam's attempt to cover his sin (Gen. 3:7, 10) and the propensity that human beings have to do the same (cf. Isa. 43:27). Psalm 8 expresses reflections concerning the creation of humankind, and the wonder of God's interest and investment of himself in it. The writer of Ecclesiastes seemingly toils over the status of human beings in relation to the earth, since the former die but the latter continues (Eccles. 1:3–4). Such passages demonstrate the corporate responsibility that humankind bears for sin following Adam's first sin and establish a framework through which the NT writers may be able to address the most significant human problems.

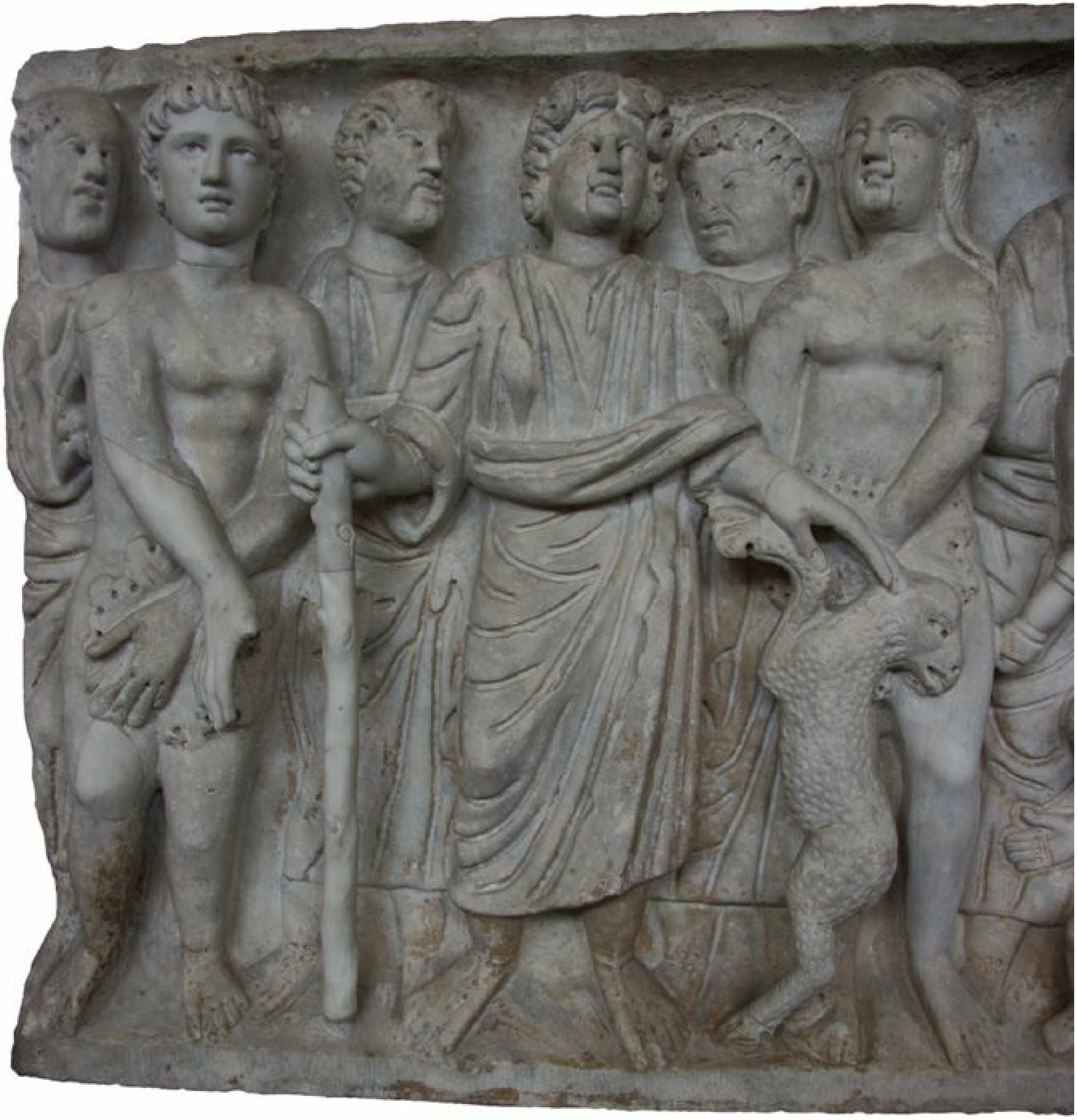
Adam is the center of several significant references in the NT. In particular, passages such as Rom. 5:12–21 and 1 Cor. 15:21–49 establish an Adam/Christ, or First Adam/Second Adam typology. In the Romans passage, Paul draws on the Jewish concept of corporate identity in order to identify the status of death as common throughout all humanity because of the first Adam, and the hope of salvation and grace as available to all humanity because of the second Adam. The 1 Corinthians passage makes its argument along similar lines; however, its interest is in the granting of the possibility of resurrection to humanity in the second Adam, who provides a permanent body, while the first Adam only granted a limited body of dust.

In other places in the NT the priority of Adam and his impact on humanity are the source of theological reflection as well. Luke seems to argue for the solidarity of Jesus with all of humanity by taking his genealogy back to Adam (Luke 3). Paul draws on the priority of Adam being created before Eve, as well as her deception by the serpent, as a rationale for not permitting women certain roles in the church (1 Tim. 2:13–14). The writer of Hebrews draws the connection between humankind and Christ in order to highlight Jesus' unique capacity for dealing with the sinful human condition (Heb. 2). *See also* Adam, Town of; Adam and Eve.

ADAM, TOWN OF A town on the western bank of the Jordan River near Zarethan, just below where the Jabbok River empties into the Jordan. It was here that the waters of the Jordan stopped so that the Israelites under the leadership of Joshua could cross into Canaan further to the south, opposite Jericho (Josh. 3:14–17). One interpretation of Hos. 6:7 takes Adam as the place where Israel broke the covenant ("at Adam"), which makes sense of the adverb *sham* ("there") in this verse but lacks corroboration elsewhere; another interpretation understands Adam here as referring to the first human or to humankind ("like Adam"), which the LXX endorses by rendering *'adam* as "man" (*anthrōpos*).

ADAMAH **(1)** A fortified city in the tribal allotment to Naphtali, in northern Palestine (Josh. 19:36). **(2)** A Hebrew word meaning "earth" or "ground." Since the Hebrew word *'adam* means either "human" or the proper name "Adam," wordplays appear early in Genesis: "there was no one [*'adam*] to work the ground [*'adamah*]" (2:5); "the LORD God formed a man [*'adam*] from the dust of the ground [*'adamah*]" (2:7); "to Adam [*'adam*] he said, . . . 'Cursed is the ground [*'adamah*] because of you' " (3:17). The similarity of the words *'adam* and *'adamah* thus reminds Hebrew readers of the origin of humankind.

ADAM AND EVE The first human beings. According to Gen. 2, God created Adam (whose name means "humanity" and is related to the word for "ground") from the dust of the ground and his own breath, showing that humankind is a part of creation but has a special relationship with God. This description contrasts with the Babylonian account of the creation of the first humans from the clay of the ground and the blood of a demon god (Qingu in the *Enuma Elish*). The Bible thus presents a more dignified understanding of the place of humankind in the world. God placed Adam in a garden in Eden (a name that means "delight" or "abundance"). Even so, God, noting that it was not good for Adam to be alone, created Eve (whose name means "living"), his female counterpart. She was created from Adam's side (or rib), signifying their equality. She was to be his "helper," a word that does not denote subordination, since elsewhere in the Bible God is said to be the psalmist's helper (Pss. 30:10; 54:4). Eve was Adam's wife, and God pronounced that future marriage will be characterized by leaving one's parents, being joined as a couple, and consummating the relationship with sexual intercourse (Gen. 2:24).



A section of a sarcophagus showing God handing the symbols of work to Adam and Eve (AD 330–40)

Adam and Eve were to tend the garden of Eden. They were permitted to eat the fruit of all the trees of the garden except for the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Eating the fruit of this tree, against God’s express prohibition, would be an assertion of moral independence that would meet with God’s punishment.

In Gen. 3 the serpent convinced Eve that it would be good to eat the fruit of the forbidden tree. Adam was present with her as the serpent spoke, but he remained silent. After eating the fruit, Eve gave some to Adam, and he ate without protest. Both Adam and Eve were therefore guilty of the first sin. The results were immediate, including the alienation of Adam and Eve, signaled by the fact that they could no longer stand naked before each other without shame.

Adam and Eve were punished for their rebellion. Eve was punished in her most intimate relationships. She would now experience increased pain when giving birth, and her relationship with her husband would become a power struggle as her desire to control him would be met with his attempt to dominate her (Gen. 3:16). Adam felt the consequences of his action in his work, which now would be tinged with frustration (3:17–19). In addition, although they did not die immediately, they were removed from the garden and access to the tree of life, so death would be their ultimate end.

After Adam and Eve departed from the garden, they had children. We know of Cain and Abel, whose conflict is well known from Gen. 4. After the death of Abel, Eve gave birth to Seth. The genealogies of Cain (Gen. 4:17–24) and Seth suggest that humanity is divided into those who resist and those who follow God (5:1–32). Surprisingly, in the rest of the OT Adam is mentioned only in the first verse of the genealogy in 1 Chron. 1, and Eve not at all (cf. Hos. 6:7).

In the NT, Adam is mentioned in the Lukan genealogy of Jesus (Luke 3:38) and in Rom. 5:12–21; 1 Cor. 15; 1 Tim. 2:13–14; Jude 14. In Romans, Paul associates Adam with the entry of sin and death into the world. Paul contrasts Adam with Christ. Whereas Adam's act introduced sin and death, Christ's act brought reconciliation with God and life. Paul makes essentially the same point in 1 Cor. 15 (see esp. vv. 22, 45). Christians thus read Gen. 3 through the commentary supplied by Paul and believe that it supports the notion of original sin, that all humans are sinners from birth.

Eve is mentioned twice in the NT. In 1 Tim. 2:11–15 Paul argues that women should learn quietly and not teach or have authority over men because Eve was created after Adam and was the one deceived by the serpent. Debate surrounds the issue whether Paul here addresses a local situation or is citing a universal principle. Paul again mentions the deception of Eve in 2 Cor. 11:3, but here he applies it to men and women who are in danger of being deceived by false teachers.

ADAMANT A stone known for its hardness. Twice the KJV uses "adamant," as a metaphor for stubbornness (Ezek. 3:9; NIV: "hardest stone") and hardness of heart (Zech. 7:12; NIV: "flint"). *See also* Flint.

ADAMI NEKEB The NIV and other translations list Adami Nekeb as a single city on the border of the tribal allotment to Naphtali. The KJV lists Adami and Nekeb as two separate cities on Naphtali's border (Josh. 19:33).

ADAR The sixth month of the Hebrew civil calendar and the twelfth of the religious calendar, beginning during February. An extra Adar was sometimes added to synchronize the Hebrew lunar calendar with the solar year (Esther 3:7).

ADBEEL The third of twelve sons of Ishmael, Abraham's firstborn son by his Egyptian maidservant, Hagar (Gen. 25:13; 1 Chron. 1:29).

ADDAN *See* Addon.

ADDAR **(1)** Grandson of Benjamin through Bela (1 Chron. 8:3), probably the same person as Ard (Gen. 46:21; Num. 26:40). **(2)** A city on the southern border of Israel's promised inheritance, also on the southern border of Judah's tribal allotment (Josh. 15:3). Known also as Hazar Addar (Num. 34:4).

ADDI An ancestor twenty-four generations before Jesus in Luke's genealogy. Addi was the son of Cosam and father of Melki (Luke 3:28).

ADDON A town of unknown location from which some Israelites returned from the Babylonian exile to Judah with Zerubbabel in 539 BC or soon after. These returning exiles were among those who could not establish their genealogical connections to Israel. The NRSV and others read "Addan" in Ezra 2:59 but "Addon" in Neh. 7:61, while the NIV reads "Addon" both places.

ADER *See* Eder.

ADIN **(1)** The ancestor of two groups that returned to Judah from captivity in Babylon, one with Zerubbabel in 539 BC or soon after (Ezra 2:15 [cf. Neh. 7:20]), the other, led by Ebed, with Ezra around 458 BC (Ezra 8:6). **(2)** A member of the postexilic community who sealed the covenant renewal led by Ezra (Neh. 10:16). However, the names listed in Neh. 10:14–27 may indicate families rather than individuals.

ADINA A descendant of Reuben through Shiza. Adina was one of "the Thirty," mighty men who strengthened David's kingship. Adina also led a band of thirty soldiers (1 Chron. 11:42).

ADINO A word in the Hebrew text of 2 Sam. 23:8 that some translations (e.g., KJV, NASB) render as the name of a person. Since *'adino* and the following word, *ha'etsno* ("the Eznite"), are awkward in the sentence and absent elsewhere in the Bible, the NIV follows some LXX manuscripts and 1 Chron. 11:11, substituting "raised his spear" for "Adino the Eznite" (cf. ESV, RSV). See the NIV footnotes on 2 Sam. 23:8.

ADITHAIM One of the fourteen towns and villages allotted to the tribe of Judah in the western foothills of southern Canaan (Josh. 15:36).

ADLAI The father of Shaphat, King David's keeper of herds in the valleys (1 Chron. 27:29).

ADMAH One of the cities of the plain, associated with Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. 10:19; 14:2, 8; Deut. 29:23). Admah is not specifically mentioned as being destroyed along with Sodom and Gomorrah, but Deut. 29:23 and Hos. 11:8 mention the city's destruction in passages about divine judgment. Admah traditionally has been located at the southeastern end of the Dead Sea, although current scholarship places it on the northeast side of the Dead Sea.

ADMATHA One of seven top-level officials under King Xerxes (Ahasuerus), who advised him to put away Queen Vashti because of her refusal to obey the king's command to appear before the banquet (Esther 1:14).

ADNA **(1)** A descendant of Pahath-Moab guilty of marrying foreign women (Ezra 10:30). **(2)** The head of Harim's priestly family in the days of Joiakim (Neh. 12:15).

ADNAH **(1)** A man of the tribe of Manasseh who commanded one thousand men and defected to David during Saul's reign (1 Chron. 12:20). **(2)** A man from the tribe of Judah who commanded three hundred thousand of the experienced fighters whom Jehoshaphat stationed in Jerusalem (2 Chron. 17:14).

ADONI-BEZEK The leader of Bezek who was defeated by men of the tribes of Judah and Simeon early in the conquest of Canaan. The Judahites and Simeonites cut off Adoni-Bezek's thumbs and big toes; he viewed the amputations as divine retribution for his taking the same action against seventy kings (Judg. 1:4–7).

ADONIJAH **(1)** David's fourth son, a rival to Solomon for the succession to David's throne. When David became old, Adonijah, whom David apparently did not discipline properly (1 Kings 1:6), strengthened his claim on the throne greatly by garnering the support of Joab and Abiathar (1:7), whose support Absalom had failed to win in his earlier rebellion. When David heard of Adonijah's actions, he instructed his leaders to install Solomon as king in Gihon, which they did so loudly that Adonijah and his supporters were able to hear the commotion at their own feast (1:33–41). Solomon mercifully chose not to kill Adonijah for his treason (1:50–53). The peace between Solomon and Adonijah quickly came to an end when Adonijah requested that Abishag the Shunammite, a virgin attendant of David, be given to him as a wife. Seeing this as another act of treason (2:22), Solomon ordered Benaiah son of Jehoiada to kill Adonijah, which he did prior to killing Joab also.

(2) A man listed as one of those who sealed the postexilic covenant renewal led by Ezra (Neh. 10:16).

ADONIKAM The ancestor of two groups that returned to Judah from captivity in Babylon, one with Zerubbabel in 539 BC or soon after, and one with Ezra around 458 BC. Ezra and Nehemiah list returning descendants of Adonikam with Zerubbabel at 666 and 667 men, respectively (Ezra 2:13; Neh. 7:18). Three "last ones," Eliphelet, Jeuel, and Shemaiah, family heads of Adonikam, returned to Palestine with Ezra, accompanied by sixty men (Ezra 8:13).

ADONIRAM Son of Abda, Adoniram was overseer of forced labor for David and Solomon (2 Sam. 20:24; 1 Kings 4:6). In order to finance and support his huge building campaigns, Solomon "put a heavy yoke" (1 Kings 12:4) on the people of Israel, including the conscription of thirty thousand Israelite men whom Adoniram oversaw (5:13–14). When Rehoboam unwisely threatened to increase the burden on the Israelites (12:13–15), the northern tribes rebelled. Rehoboam sent Adoniram to assert his control over the northern tribes, but they stoned to death the unpopular Adoniram (12:18).

ADONI-ZEDEK The Amorite king of Jerusalem who organized a five-city coalition to attack the city of Gibeon after its capitulation to Joshua (Josh. 10:1–3). After their armies were routed by the Israelites, Adoni-Zedek and his four allies hid in a cave. Joshua captured and executed them (Josh. 10:22–27).

ADOPTION The voluntary process of granting the rights, privileges, responsibilities, and status of child or heir to an individual or group that was not originally born to the adopter. While birth occurs naturally, adoption occurs only through the exertion of will.

At least two significant figures in the OT were adopted. After Moses' birth mother kept him alive despite Pharaoh's command to drown every newborn Hebrew boy in the Nile (Exod. 1:22), Moses was, ironically, adopted by Pharaoh's daughter (2:10). Esther, or Hadassah, was adopted by her uncle (or cousin) Mordecai upon the death of her parents (Esther 2:7)—this adoption plays an important part in Esther's ability to prevent the Jewish extermination intended by Haman.

Although adoption is fairly uncommon in the OT, God's adoption of Israel is of the utmost importance. It demonstrates God's willingness to initiate relationship with humankind, a truth that later culminated in Jesus Christ. God chooses to adopt the nation of Israel as his child (Deut. 7:6; Isa. 1:2; Hos. 11:1) and more significantly as his firstborn son (Exod. 4:22; Jer. 31:9). Thus God singles out Israel among the nations of the earth, bestowing the highest possible honor.

The concept of adoption is more prevalent in the NT, primarily in the apostle Paul's writings. Based on the belief that Israel's exclusive position as the adopted firstborn son of God the Father is no longer deserved, the NT includes those who believe in Jesus Christ as adopted children of God's eternal family (John 1:12; 11:52; Gal. 4:5; Eph. 1:5; Phil. 2:15; 1 John 3:1). The adopted children of God enjoy all the rights of a natural-born child, including the opportunity to call God "Father," as Jesus did (e.g., Matt. 5:16; Luke 12:32). Paul in particular uses adoption to describe the Christian's new relationship with God through the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ (Rom. 8:15–16, 21–23; 9:25–26).

ADORAIM One of fifteen cities in Judah and Benjamin that Rehoboam fortified in the wake of the division of his kingdom (2 Chron. 11:9). Adoraim was situated in Judah, approximately twenty-five miles southwest of Jerusalem. The city was apparently ineffective in halting Pharaoh Shishak's attack on Jerusalem (2 Chron. 12:2–4; 1 Kings 14:25–26).

ADORAM *See* Adoniram.

ADRAMMELECH *See* Adrammelek.

ADRAMMELEK **(1)** A god of the people of Sepharvaim. After the exile of the northern kingdom, the king of Assyria transplanted people from all over his empire into the territory that he had taken from the Israelites. Each of these people groups "made its own gods in the several towns where they settled" (2 Kings 17:29). Those people who had been transplanted from Sepharvaim established worship of Adrammelek and Anammelek in former Israelite territory by sacrificing their own children in fire (2 Kings 17:31). Adrammelek ("Adar is king") and Anammelek ("Anu is king") were related to the Babylonian gods Adar, the sun god, and Anu, the moon goddess.

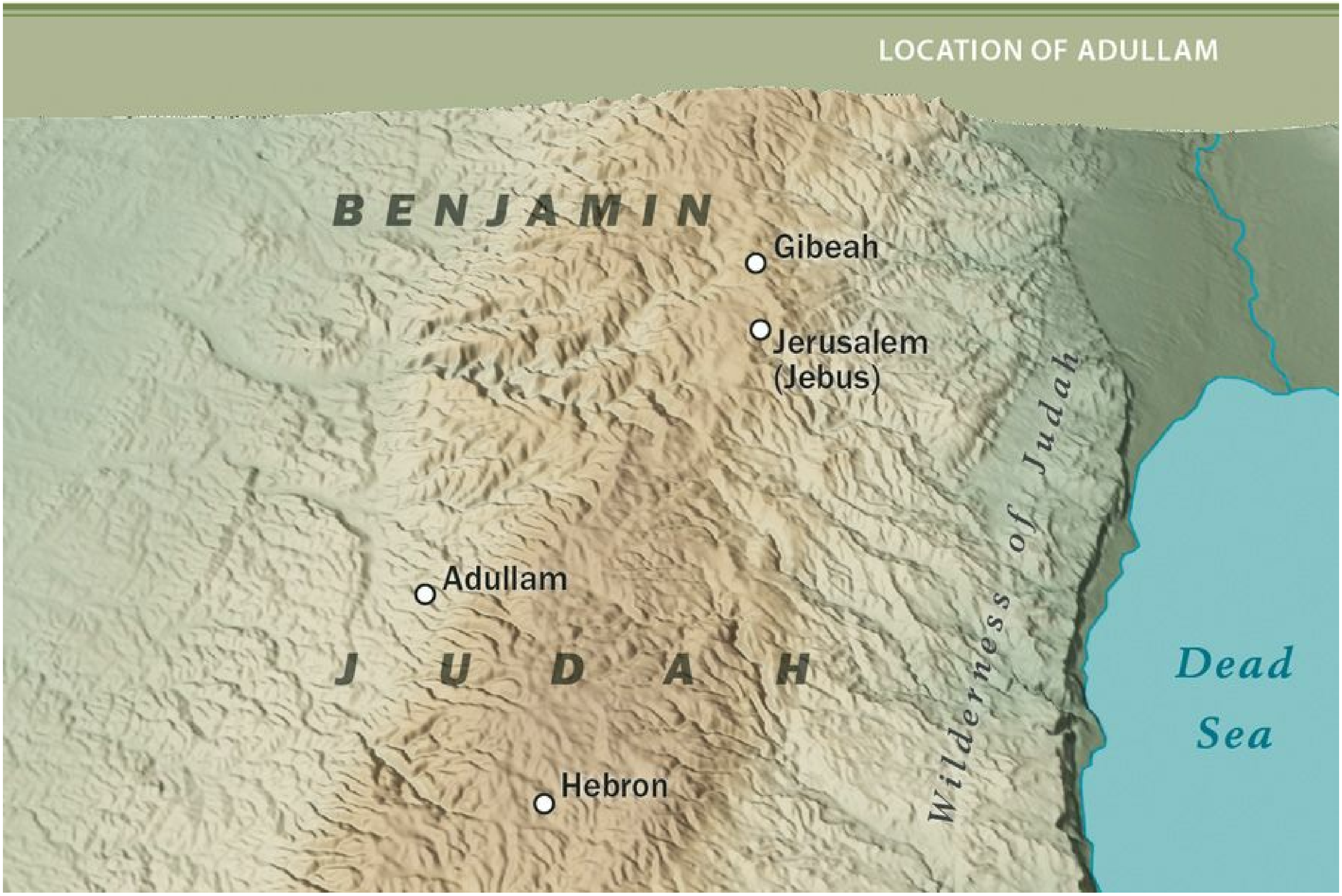
(2) One of the sons of the Assyrian emperor Sennacherib who, along with his brother Sharezer, assassinated his father in the temple of Nisrok and escaped to the land of Ararat. Esarhaddon, another son of Sennacherib, was next on the throne (2 Kings 19:37; Isa. 37:38). *See also* Anammelek.

ADRAMYTTIUM A port city on the northwest coast of modern Turkey. Today the city is known as Karatash. The city was of commercial importance, though its power peaked before the NT period. It was the center for worship of Castor and Pollux, Zeus's twin sons. Paul, Luke, Aristarchus, and Julius the centurion sailed on a ship from this city on their way to Rome (Acts 27:1–2).

ADRIATIC SEA The Adriatic Sea is a portion of the Mediterranean Sea that separates Italy from Greece. According to second-century documents, the extent of this sea may have included waters from Malta to the western coast of Crete. It was in these waters that Paul found himself adrift for fourteen days during his trip to Rome to plead his case before Caesar (Acts 27:27).

ADRIEL Son of Barzillai the Meholathite, who likely resided in Abel Meholah. Adriel married Merab, Saul's oldest daughter, who had previously been promised to David (1 Sam. 18:19), although several manuscripts report that he married Michal (2 Sam. 21:8). The marriage may have sealed a treaty between Adriel's city-state and Saul's kingdom. Five sons from this marriage were among those whom David surrendered to the Gibeonites to be executed for Saul's misdeeds.

ADULLAM A city in the western foothills of Judah, located about fifteen miles southwest of Jerusalem (Josh. 15:35). Prior to the conquest of Canaan, the patriarch Judah lived for some time in Adullam (Gen. 38:1–5). The Israelites conquered the city several hundred years later under Joshua (Josh. 12:15), and Rehoboam fortified the city after the division of Israel (2 Chron. 11:7).



Adullam became a refuge for David both before and after his enthronement. After fleeing from Saul to the Philistine city of Gath, David stayed at a cave in Adullam, and about four hundred men gathered to him, many of whom were discontented and troubled (1 Sam. 22:1–2). King David's battles with the Philistines led him back to the stronghold at the cave of Adullam. In one memorable instance, Philistine forces were stationed near Jerusalem in the Valley of Rephaim and in Bethlehem, and three of David's mighty men broke through Philistine lines and brought water back to David in the stronghold (2 Sam. 23:13–17; 1 Chron. 11:15).

Micah warned the people of Adullam and several nearby cities that disaster was imminent (Mic. 1:10–15); this materialized when Sennacherib captured all the fortified cities of Judah (Isa. 36:1). The Bible does not mention Adullam again until Nehemiah's returnees from exile reestablish an Israelite presence in the city during the time of Artaxerxes (Neh. 11:30).

ADULLAMITE *See* Adullam.

ADULTERESS A translation of the Hebrew word *nokriah*. The KJV translation, “strange woman,” is accurate, but “foreign woman” is an even more literal rendering. The NIV translates it “wayward woman” or “wayward wife” (Prov. 2:17 makes clear that she is guilty of marital unfaithfulness). The term is parallel to “prostitute” in Prov. 23:27 (ESV, NRSV; NIV: “adulterous woman”). Many prostitutes in ancient Israel may have been foreigners; however, the use of this term in the book of Proverbs is nonethnic, describing a woman who defies Israelite moral standards. The young man is promised that wisdom will guard him from the evil woman (2:16–19; 7:5), who by enticing words (5:3) and provocative gestures (7:6–27) seeks to lead him into sexual infidelity. In the teaching of Proverbs she is the competitor of Woman Wisdom (most clearly in 9:1–6, 13–18).

ADULTERY One of the sins forbidden in the Ten Commandments (Exod. 20:14; Deut. 5:18). Narrowly interpreted, the prohibition forbids extramarital relations with a married woman (Lev. 20:10), but it is applied more broadly in Lev. 20 and Deut. 22–24 to cover a variety of sexual offenses.

The prophets invoked the commandment in condemning God’s wayward people (Hos. 4:2; Jer. 7:9). They also used it as a metaphor for spiritual unfaithfulness to the God of the covenant (Hos. 3–4; Ezek. 16:30–34), as does Revelation for succumbing to false teaching (Rev. 2:22).

Jesus brought out the original force of the commandment, saying that a lustful look amounted to adultery (Matt. 5:27–30). He listed this commandment in Mark 10:19 (and pars.) when talking to the rich young ruler. Paul and James also made clear that the prohibition was still in force (Rom. 2:22; 13:9; James 2:11). Jesus taught that adultery springs from the unregenerate heart (Matt. 15:19 pars.), and for Paul adultery was one of “the acts of the flesh” (Gal. 5:19).

The OT penalty for adultery was stoning (Deut. 22:22–24), though it is not clear how rigorously this was enforced. Jesus forgave the woman “caught in adultery” (John 8:3–11) and told her not to repeat her sin. His leniency may have been motivated in part by the hypocrisy of her accusers, who had let the guilty man go free.

The exception clause in Jesus’ teaching that forbids divorce and remarriage (“except for sexual immorality,” which includes adultery) is found in Matt. 5:32; 19:9. Matthew only spells out what is implicit in Mark 10:11–12; Luke 16:18. Jesus stated that if a man divorces his wife so as to marry another woman (more attractive to him for some reason), this is nothing but legalized adultery. The notorious example of Herod’s marriage to Herodias may be part of the background to this teaching (Mark 6:17).

ADUMMIM, PASS OF A place name that occurs twice with respect to defining the border between Judah and Benjamin (Josh. 15:7; 18:17). It derives from the Hebrew word for either “ground” (“earth”) or “red.” Located on the leeward side of the Judean hills, the Pass of Adummim was part of the road from Jerusalem to Jericho that connected the hill country and Transjordan through the Jordan Valley. Its underlying bedrock is cenomanian limestone, whose exfoliation and disintegration yields the red soil (*terra rosa*), from which the slope probably derives its name. Several important biblical events occurred on this route, including the return of Michal to David (2 Sam. 3:14–16) and David’s flight from Absalom (2 Sam. 15–16). On his trips through Jericho to Jerusalem, Jesus traveled this route as well. The ruggedness of this route informs the parable of the good Samaritan, which Jesus told on his final trip along this route to Jerusalem (Luke 10:25–42).

ADVENT, SECOND Jesus will return or come again in power at the end of history to defeat his enemies and establish his kingdom (Heb. 9:28). Different terms are used to describe this event: "parousia" refers to his coming or presence, "revelation" to the disclosure of Christ in his glory, and "epiphany" to his manifestation or appearing. Christians remain divided on the relationship of the second coming to the tribulation: is it before the tribulation (pretribulation), in the midst of it (midtribulation), or after it (posttribulation)? Dispensationalists have distinguished two separate phases to Jesus' return, a secret rapture for the church and a later, public second coming, whereas most others have seen a single unified event. These questions aside, Christ's return remains the focus of Christian hope. *See also* Eschatology; Second Coming.

ADVENTURESS *See* Adulteress.

ADVERSARY A human or heavenly opponent. In Scripture (see esp. KJV, ESV, NRSV, NASB), "adversary" can refer to one who hinders or helps. Adversaries include David's soldiers (2 Sam. 19:22), David (1 Sam. 29:4), and God (Num. 22:22). God both raises up (1 Kings 11:14) and delivers one from (Ps. 107:2) adversaries. In Job, the adversary (Heb. *satan*) works for God (Job 1:7–12). In this passage, many translations treat "the adversary" as if it is the personal name of the Devil.

ADVOCATE Several Hebrew terms in Job 16:19–20 have been translated "advocate" in various English versions. The first (Job 16:19) is the Aramaic *sahed*, parallel to the Hebrew *'ed* ("witness"). *Sahed* appears in Gen. 31:47 in the name that Laban gave to the heap of stones marking the boundary between him and Jacob. Jacob called it "Galeed" ("heap of witness"), and Laban called it "Jegar Sahadutha." The Hebrew word *melits* (Job 16:20) can be translated "intercessor" or "advocate," continuing the thought from v. 19; see also Job 33:23, where a *melits* is like an angel at a person's side, giving instruction in what is right and intervening on the person's behalf. The complication arises because the more common meaning of the root *lits* is to mock or jeer; *melits* would be a related noun. In this case, Job 16:20 is a contrast to the preceding advocacy theme and instead refers to the friends who are deemed mockers. This fits better with the plural grammatical construction, and it also looks ahead to Job 17:2, where Job says that mockers surround him. The comprehensive message of the passage, however, is that Job knows that his advocate is in heaven, a testimony to Job's understanding of the sovereignty of the God who has also afflicted him, and a possible foreshadowing of the ministry of Jesus and the Holy Spirit.

In John 14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:7 the term *paraklētos* (lit., "called alongside" [NRSV, NIV: "Advocate"; RSV: "Counselor"]) refers to the Holy Spirit, sent as the Spirit of truth. The advocacy roles of the Spirit are to remain with God's people, to teach, remind, and testify about Jesus, to convict the world of guilt regarding sin, and to guide into all truth. In 1 John 2:1 Jesus is the *paraklētos* who speaks in defense of his children. Just as Job 16:19–20 hinted at trinitarian implications regarding the divine advocate, so the NT references affirm the advocacy roles of the persons of the Godhead. *See also* Paraclete.

AENEAS A paralytic living in the city of Lydda, near Joppa, in Palestine. Peter ended Aeneas's eight-year confinement to bed by healing him, and as a result, many in Lydda and its environs were converted. See Acts 9:32–35.

AFFLICTION Affliction is a condition of physical, mental, or spiritual distress, or the cause of suffering. Afflictions may be a variety of temporal, physical sufferings, such as infertility (Gen. 25:32; 1 Sam. 1:11), injustice and toil (Gen. 31:42), slavery (Exod. 1:12; 3:7, 17; 4:31; Deut. 26:6–7; Neh. 9:9), military oppression (Judg. 2:18; 10:18), loss (Ruth 1:21), displacement and mocking (2 Sam. 16:12), disease and disorders (Mark 3:10; 5:29, 34; Luke 7:21; John 5:4; Acts 28:8), and famine (Acts 7:11). Affliction may be mental or spiritual, arising from the prospects or effects of physical afflictions, feeling the futility of life (Eccles. 1:13), or concern for others in their afflictions (Isa. 63:9; 2 Cor. 2:4).

There are several different causes and reasons for affliction, but there is no simple formula for determining the cause of one's afflictions, as Job reminds us. Clearly, Job is blameless (Job 1:1, 8; 2:3), but his friends carry on wrongly in their assumptions that his sins are to blame. The agents of affliction include God (2 Kings 17:20; Nah. 1:12), Satan and/or demons (Job 1:12; Acts 5:16), other people (Judg. 10:8; 2 Thess. 1:6), oneself (1 Kings 18:28), or the general condition of life (Job 5:7).

The reasons for affliction also vary. One reason might be called "no reason," in that "man is born to trouble as surely as sparks fly upward" (Job 5:7). Troubles, afflictions, and sorrow just happen. In retrospect, this is a condition of living in a cursed world (Gen. 3). But this is a general consequence for the whole human race, not a punishment directed at a specific sin. The widespread afflictions of the curse appear random. In various forms they prevent us from turning to easy living as a refuge from broken relationships and therefore force us to look elsewhere. The intent is that we look to God (see Hos. 5:15). Multiple specific reasons, however, may lie behind any particular affliction. They include punishment for sin (Deut. 29:22), often to induce repentance leading to restoration (Hos. 5:15; Zech. 10:9; 1 Cor. 11:30). Affliction may be dealt out by people as they sin against others (1 Sam. 1:7; 2 Sam. 16:12; 2 Thess. 1:6). One's own choices may have natural consequences (Prov. 11:24; 13:20; 19:9, 15; 22:3), or consequences come due to a lack of leadership (Zech. 10:2). Some result from being associated with those going through afflictions (Num. 14:28–35; 1 Kings 2:26), suffering afflictions due to following Christ (Matt. 13:21; John 15:18–20; Acts 20:23), or feeling empathy for the afflicted (2 Cor. 2:4). Other afflictions are given as training, prevention, or refining (Isa. 48:10; Rom. 5:3–5; 2 Cor. 12:7; Heb. 12:5–13). Suffering affliction may also be substitutionary, on behalf of others (Isa. 53:4–7; and the substitutionary atonement of Christ generally).

In response to others' afflictions, we are called to sympathy, compassion, comfort, and justice. Appropriate responses to our own afflictions range from patient endurance for the cause of Christ (James 5:11) to lamenting (the psalms and Christ's example, Matt. 27:46).

AFTERBIRTH The discharged placenta after a birth, the eating of which alludes to consequences of disobedience to covenant stipulations (Deut. 28:57).

AGABUS The only church-era prophet whose spoken words are recorded in Scripture. Agabus was one of a company of prophets who traveled from Jerusalem to the fledgling church at Antioch (Acts 11:27–28). While in Antioch, Agabus predicted by the Spirit that a great famine would come upon the world; Luke notes that Agabus's prophecy was fulfilled during the reign of Claudius. Agabus also prophesied at the close of Paul's third missionary journey that Paul would be bound by the Jews at Jerusalem and delivered to the Gentiles (Acts 21:10–11).

Bust of the Roman emperor Claudius (AD 50), during whose reign the famine prophesied by Agabus came to pass

AGAG A title used for the king of the Amalekites, like “pharaoh” was used for the kings of Egypt. When Balak king of Moab hired Balaam to curse the Israelites, Balaam blessed Israel in an oracle, including a prophecy that Israel’s king would “be greater than Agag” (Num. 24:7). This indicates that Agag of the Amalekites was a prominent king at the time of the wilderness wanderings (see also Num. 24:20).

God commanded Saul to wipe out the Amalekites completely as retribution for an attack on Israel (see Exod. 17:8–16), but Saul took Agag alive and spared some of the best of the Amalekites' livestock (1 Sam. 15:7–9). Samuel confronted Saul about this act of disobedience, and Samuel himself then killed Agag (1 Sam. 15:33).

AGAGITE Haman, the opponent of Mordecai, is identified as an Agagite (Esther 3:1, 10; 8:3, 5; 9:24). Given Mordecai's descent from Kish, father of Saul (2:5), the term is intended to recall the Amalekite king (Agag) whom Saul spared (1 Sam. 15). *See also* Agag.

AGAPE *See* Love; Love Feast.

AGATE A semiprecious quartz stone, composed largely of chalcedony, found in various colors, including white, orange or red, pale blue, and black. Agate is often formed in stripes or other patterns. Agate was the eighth stone used on the breastpiece of judgment worn by the high priest in the most holy place (Exod. 28:19; 39:12). Agate also forms part of the foundations of the new Jerusalem (Rev. 21:19).

AGEE A Hararite whose son Shammah, one of the "three mighty men," with divine help, single-handedly defended a field, defeating the Philistines (2 Sam. 23:9, 11–12).

AGE OF ACCOUNTABILITY The Bible says that on judgment day, God will evaluate the deeds done during our lifetime (2 Cor. 5:10; Rev. 20:12). God saves us by grace alone, through faith alone, because of what Christ alone has done; nevertheless, our works serve as the evidence or "fruit" of regeneration (Matt. 7:15–27). Works also become God's standard when the lost are condemned in his heavenly court, since he "will repay each person according to what they have done" and each person has, in fact, sinned (Rom. 2:6; 3:23). But what will God do with young children and the mentally challenged, neither of whom can understand God's moral law well enough to sin against it or obey it consciously? How will God treat people who could never understand the gospel no matter how clearly an evangelist presents it? The received answer to this question appeals to the idea that we must reach an "age of accountability" before God holds us responsible for our own deeds, and that this age varies with the individual person. But does Scripture endorse this idea?

The parents of miscarried children and those whose children have died at an early age have the greatest emotional stake in the answer to this question. They want to hear that they will see their children again; and the position taken here is that they will, though for a different reason than the one commonly given. Specifically, we must not say that the innocence of these children qualifies them for heaven, because Adam's corruption affects us all (Rom. 5:12; cf. Pss. 51:5; 58:3). Their inherited depravity could not show itself in overt sins, at least not at a very early age, but Scripture implies that they suffer from it nonetheless. Consequently, as with every case of salvation, the future of children and the mentally handicapped is decided on the basis of God's grace. They are guilty and stand in need of the cross, as we all do. But would God apply the work of Christ to them by the Spirit before they can function as moral agents and respond consciously to the gospel? A circumstantial case can be made for answering in the affirmative to this question, with this caveat: the argument given applies only to these special cases. It does not encourage the view that unreached sinners are essentially infants in God's sight and thus justified by similar arrangements.

We begin by noting that God claims some people for his own purposes, even in infancy. He does so in John the Baptist's case, filling him with the Holy Spirit from his mother's womb (Luke 1:15). David and Jeremiah also see God's hand upon them from their earliest days (Ps. 22:10; Jer. 1:5), as does the apostle Paul (Gal. 1:15). At a minimum, these texts show us that God can and, in some cases, has dealt with human beings before they could ever respond consciously to him. David also expects to be personally reunited with his deceased son, saying, "I will go to him, but he will not return to me" (2 Sam. 12:23). A final clue is the response of Jesus to children during the days of his earthly life. He rebukes his disciples for keeping children away from him, saying that God's kingdom belongs to "such as these" (Matt. 19:14; Mark 10:14; cf. Matt. 18:3). Of course, these episodes are included mainly to show adults what discipleship means, with special reference to humility and self-forgetfulness. In following Jesus, we must care no more for our social status and dignity than young children typically do. Yet one would not do well to argue that Jesus welcomes children into his company merely for illustrative purposes, as if they mean no more to him than handy visual aids. The disciples place children low on their Lord's list of ministry priorities, and Jesus raises them all the way up. Our answer to this question must be an educated guess, but the safest conclusion seems to be that while children still need the cross, they receive its benefits consistently by other means and thus go to heaven when they die.

AGE TO COME The age to come is the time when Christ will return and establish his kingdom in all its fullness and glory. The Jews living in intertestamental times experienced great persecution and sufferings and looked ahead in hope and anticipation to a future coming age of a messiah, with all its associated blessings. Both John the Baptist and Jesus pointed to how this new age had already drawn near with their message: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near" (Matt. 3:2; 4:17). Jesus taught that "the kingdom of God has come upon you" during his earthly ministry (Matt. 12:28), and he promised that anyone who has been born again can "see" or "enter" the kingdom right then (using present-tense verbs in John 3:3, 5). At the same time, Jesus was equally clear that the kingdom had not come in all its fullness during his earthly ministry, and he instructed his disciples to continue to look ahead and pray specifically, "your kingdom come" (Matt. 6:10). Consequently, many have described the kingdom as being both "already" and "not yet" in the sense that God's kingdom has already begun with Christ's first coming, even though the fullness of the kingdom still lies in the future. Thus, in one sense "the age to come" began with Jesus' earthly ministry, especially his death and resurrection. Peter could also describe the giving of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost as taking place in "the last days" (Acts 2:17), thus marking the beginning of the age to come. Consequently, believers find themselves living in the tension between already experiencing the transforming power of a new life in Christ and still living in what the Bible elsewhere describes as "the present evil age" (Gal. 1:4) under the power of Satan as "the god of this age" (2 Cor. 4:4). The challenge for believers is to look ahead by faith and "lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age" (1 Tim. 6:19), when Christ will return and fully establish his kingdom. *See also* Advent, Second; Eschatology; Second Coming.

AGING In the OT, the law commanded respect for those in advanced years (Lev. 19:32). The fifth commandment (Exod. 20:12) was primarily aimed at the honoring (and supporting) of elderly parents (as implied by Mark 7:9–13). The reward for caring for parents is stated in the motivation clause attached to the commandment: "so that you may live long in the land the LORD your God is giving you" (being an example of the reward matching the good deed).

Especially in OT wisdom literature, old age is viewed as a privilege (Prov. 20:29) and a token of divine favor upon the righteous (Prov. 16:31; cf. Gen. 15:15). It was recognized that a person may be “old but foolish” (Eccles. 4:13), but more often age and wisdom were linked. Since wisdom and insight come with experience (Job 12:20; 15:9–10; 32:7), leaders and advisers were drawn from the ranks of the elderly. Hence, in both Testaments community and spiritual leaders are called “elders” (Ruth 4:2; Lam. 5:14; Acts 14:23; 20:17). Rehoboam’s downfall was due in part to his ignoring the advice of “the elders” who had served his father, Solomon (1 Kings 12:6, 8).

A sign of oppressive conditions in the wake of the fall of Jerusalem was a lack of respect for the old, who, like the very young and women, were vulnerable (Lam. 5:12). On the other hand, the future blessing promised by the prophets included Israel having many elderly people (Isa. 65:20; Zech. 8:4).

The reward of the godly person is to live long enough to see several generations of descendants (Ps. 128:6), examples being Jacob (Gen. 50:23) and Job (Job 42:16). The vindication of the Lord’s servant is phrased in traditional symbols of divine favor: “he will see his offspring and prolong his days” (Isa. 53:10). The frailty of age is recognized (e.g., Ps. 71:9, 18; Eccles. 12:2–7), but the experience shared in Ps. 37:25–26 is that God is faithful in providing and supporting.

AGRAPHA Sayings attributed to Jesus that are outside the NT Gospels. The term is Greek for “unwritten things,” though it is used to indicate that these alleged sayings were written not in the canonical Gospels but in other sources. Agrapha from Jesus appear in the apocryphal Gospels, the church fathers, and in NT books other than the four Gospels (e.g., Acts 20:35; 1 Cor. 7:10; 11:23–25). The authenticity of the many sayings outside the NT is uncertain; each one should be judged on its own merit. The indication in John 21:25 of the wide array of Jesus’ deeds and sayings known in early Christianity should lead one to a point somewhere between blind acceptance of all agrapha and the outright rejection of them.

AGRICULTURE Agriculture is the practice of producing food through cultivation and harvesting. For the biblical Israelites and their ancestors, it was one of the primary expressions of subsistence in their economy and life. The priority of agricultural pursuits for Israel’s worldview is indicated in the fact that it was among the first mandates given by God to man in the garden (Gen. 1:28–29). This primacy of place in agricultural concerns meant that care and stewardship of the land was the prerogative of every member of society. In fact, individuals, the priesthood, and the monarchy could all possess and care for the land (Num. 27:1–8; 35:1–8; 1 Chron. 27:26–28).

The primary produce of the biblical farmer included cereals (wheat, barley, millet), legumes (beans, peas), olives, and grapes. Additional, less predominant crops included nuts (almonds, walnuts, pistachios), herbs (cumin, coriander, sesame), and vegetables (cucumbers, onions, greens). The production of the various crops was largely limited to certain geographic regions of Israel (such as the coastal plain or the plains of Moab) because much of the land was ill suited for agriculture, being rocky and arid.

The entire calendar in most ancient Near Eastern societies centered on the agricultural cycle, and many important biblical feasts included some connection with the seasonal calendar. For Israel, some of the first festivals were linked to the agricultural seasons (Exod. 23:14–16; Lev. 23). Cereals were sown at the Feast of Booths/Tabernacles (late October) and harvested in middle to late spring at the Feasts of Passover (March) and Weeks/Pentecost (May). Grapes and other fruit were harvested in late summer into the fall.

Painted wooden model from the early second millennium BC showing an Egyptian peasant plowing

The actual craft of agriculture involved the three steps of sowing, reaping, and threshing/production. The fields typically were plowed following the first autumn rains, and sowing lasted about two months. Harvest season lasted seven months in all. Cereal products went through the process of threshing, whereas fruits were immediately produced into wine or dried. The practice of threshing the grains mostly took place on threshing floors located adjacent to the fields. The threshing floors were designed as a circle, generally 25 to 40 feet in diameter. Typically animals such as donkeys or oxen were driven around the floor as the grains were fed into their paths and subsequently crushed. The resulting broken husks were then thrown into the air, allowing the wind to carry away the chaff and producing a separated grain that could then be cleaned and processed for home use.

Besides playing a significant role in the practical matters of life, agricultural practices found numerous applications in the images and ideals of the biblical writers (Judg. 8:2; 9:8–15; Ezek. 17:6–10). The medium could be used to express both blessings and curses. Several texts point to the cursing of agricultural endeavors as a punishment from God. Ceremonial defilement was a possibility if proper methodology in sowing seeds was not followed (Lev. 19:19; Deut. 22:9). Similarly, Yahweh’s assessment of Israel’s failure to uphold the covenant commitments could lead to disease, locust attacks, crop failure, and total loss of the land (Deut. 28:40; Joel 1:4; Amos 7:1). Conversely, agricultural bounty and blessings were also a part of covenant stipulations. Indeed, many of the offerings themselves were centered on agriculture (Lev. 2; Num. 18:8–32). Even the Sabbath rest itself was extended to matters of agriculture and care for the land (Lev. 25:1–7). Finally, the covenant saw some of the greatest benefits of life before Yahweh as being blessed through agricultural bounty (Deut. 28:22; Amos 9:13). In a few cases, agricultural imagery cut both ways. For instance, the vine was an image that could express judgment, care, and restoration in both Judaism and Christianity (Isa. 5:1–8; John 15:1–11). Despite the link between agricultural realities and the covenant, the Scriptures are very careful to distinguish Israel from the fertility cults of its Canaanite neighbors (1 Kings

18:17–40; Hos. 2:8–9). This distinction also seems to have found expression in certain NT texts (1 Cor. 6:15–20).

AGRIPPA *See* Herod.

AGUE *See* Fever.

AGUR The son of Jakeh whose oracle is recorded in Prov. 30. Agur directs his oracle to Ithiel and Ukal (Prov. 30:1; see NIV mg.).

AHAB **(1)** Son of Omri, king of Israel, whom he succeeded, reigning for twenty-two years (871–852 BC). His son Ahaziah followed him. The summary of Ahab's reign in 1 Kings 16:29–33 serves as a prologue to the Elijah narrative, identifying the issue that Elijah addressed: Ahab's patronage of Baal at the instigation of his foreign wife, Jezebel. Ahab was not incorrigibly devoted to Baal, since he gave his children Yahwistic names: "Ahaziah," "Jehoram," and "Athaliah" are names that contain the element "Yah." On the other hand, Jezebel was a fanatical persecutor of the Lord's prophets (1 Kings 18:4, 13) and a supporter of the Sidonian brand of Baalism (18:19; 19:1–2).

Ahab is condemned by the writer of 1 Kings in superlative terms: "Ahab . . . did more to provoke the LORD, the God of Israel, than did all the kings of Israel before him" (16:33). His apostasy prompted Elijah to announce to Ahab a divinely induced drought (17:1). During the drought, Ahab displayed his wrong priorities by seeking fodder for "horses and mules" (of military and economic use) while allowing Jezebel free rein in killing God's prophets (18:3–5). Ahab blamed the nation's troubles on Elijah (18:17: "you troubler of Israel"), but it was his own policy that was at fault (18:18).

Ahab was the second king in a relatively stable dynasty of four kings (Omri, Ahab, Ahaziah, Jehoram). It was a period of economic prosperity and military power. He built a lavish palace and fortified important cities (1 Kings 22:39). In 853 BC, at the battle of Karkar on the Orontes, Shalmaneser III of Assyria faced a western coalition. The Israelite contingent supplied by Ahab was the largest (ten thousand foot soldiers, two thousand chariots). On the Moabite Stone, Mesha king of Moab recorded, "Omri was king of Israel and he afflicted Moab for many years" (line 5). Only after Ahab's death did Moab rebel (2 Kings 1:1; 3:5). The dynasty ended in 842 BC with a prophetically inspired overthrow by Jehu. In the account of this bloodbath, the royal house is repeatedly called "the house of Ahab" (e.g., 2 Kings 8:27; 9:7, 8). Micah condemned Israel for following "all the practices of Ahab's house" (Mic. 6:16). By his gross unfaithfulness, Ahab sowed the seeds of the destruction of his family.

The picture of Ahab in 1 Kings is one of a man of weak character who allowed a ruthless wife to dominate him. It is plain that he believed the predictions made by God's prophets, humbling himself when condemned by Elijah (21:27) and making (vain) efforts to prevent Micaiah's prophecy of doom coming true (22:30). Ahab tamely complied with Elijah's instructions both before and after the Mount Carmel contest (chap. 18). Ahab was under prophetic threat of death after he released Ben-Hadad, Aramean (Syrian) king, who was devoted to destruction (20:42). Abuse of royal power by Jezebel (with Ahab's concurrence) meant the dispossession of traditional small landowners such as Naboth and led to Elijah's prophecy of Ahab's gruesome death (21:19). Ahab failed externally (chap. 20) and internally (chap. 21) in his role as king. In 1 Kings 22 (cf. 2 Chron. 18) is a record of the carrying out of the death sentence, for Ahab was killed at the siege of Ramoth Gilead, and as Elijah had predicted, “the dogs licked up his blood” (22:38).

(2) Son of Kolaiah, Ahab was a false prophet whom Jeremiah condemned in his letter to the exiles (Jer. 29:21–23).

AHARAH The third son of Benjamin, son of Jacob, according to 1 Chron. 8:1. He is not listed in the genealogy in Gen. 46:21.

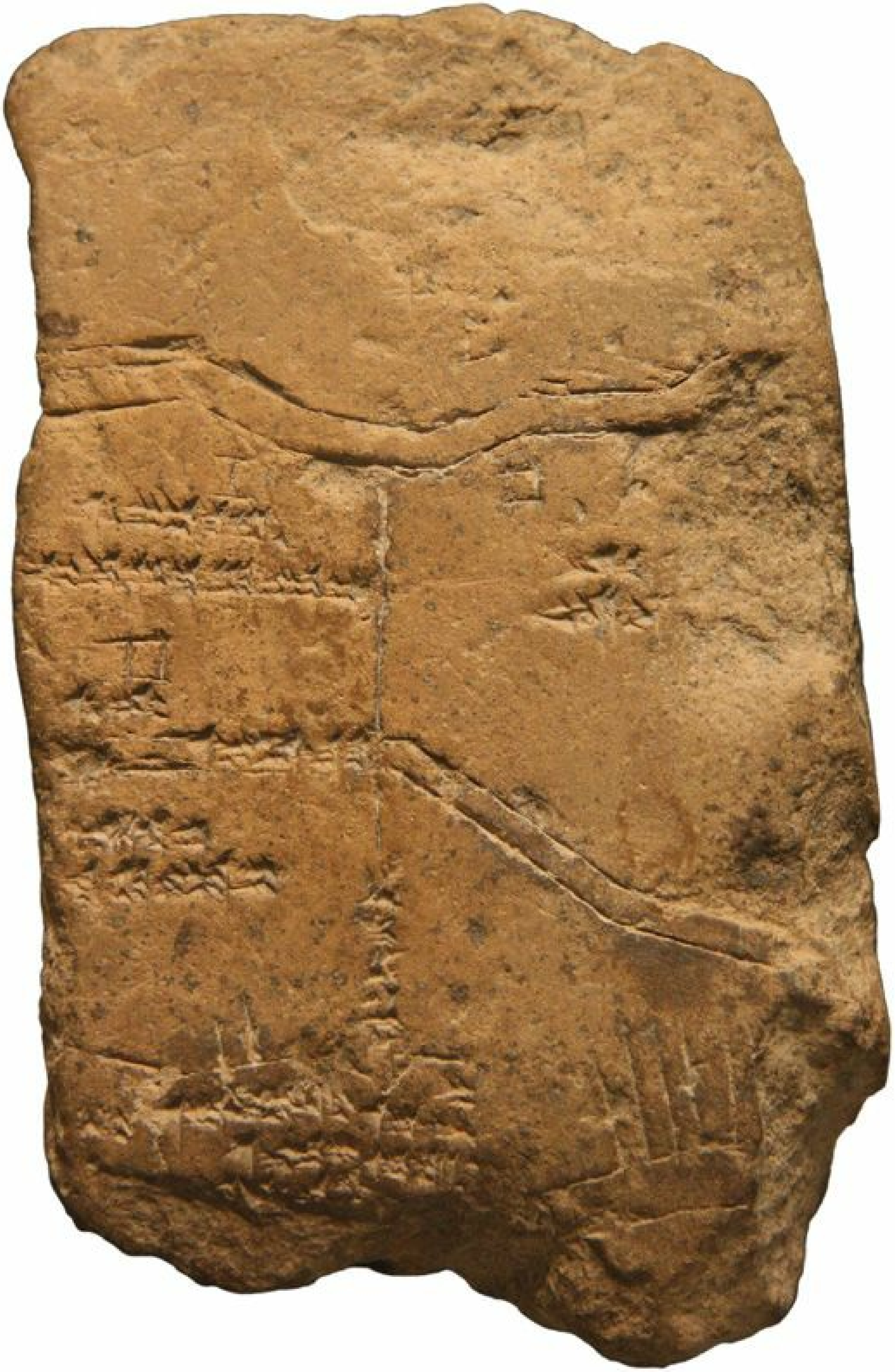
AHARHEL A descendant of Judah through Harum. Aharhel is the named ancestor of several families descended from Koz (1 Chron. 4:8).

AHASAI *See* Ahzai.

AHASBAI Ahasbai is identified in the NIV as “the Maakathite” and in the KJV as “the son of the Maachathite.” He fathered Eliphelet, one of David’s mighty men (2 Sam. 23:34).

AHASUERUS The Hebrew form of King Xerxes’ Persian name. The NIV translates “Ahasuerus” as “Xerxes” and places “Ahasuerus” in a footnote (e.g., Ezra 4:6; Esther 1:1). The LXX of the book of Esther uses “Artaxerxes” for Ahasuerus. *See also* Xerxes.

AHAVA This word appears only in Ezra as the name of a place in Babylonia to which a canal flowed (Ezra 8:15). Ezra’s camp on the Ahava Canal served as the launching point for his expedition to Jerusalem during the reign of the Persian king Artaxerxes (Ezra 8:31).



Cuneiform tablet showing a map of a region east of Babylon that includes irrigation canals (bottom left), such as the canal at Ahava

AHAZ **(1)** Son of Jotham, king of Judah, and father of Hezekiah. His reign is described in 2 Kings 16 and 2 Chron. 28, and his confrontation by the prophet Isaiah in Isa. 7:1–17. Isaiah's oracle against the Philistines is dated the year of Ahaz's death (Isa. 14:28). Hosea and Micah prophesied during his reign (Hos. 1:1; Mic. 1:1). Ahaz reigned for sixteen years (743–727 BC). He followed the syncretistic pagan practices of the Israelite kings. When besieged by the Syrian and Israelite kings, with the aim of replacing him with a puppet ruler (734 BC), he sent a massive tribute to elicit Assyrian protection (2 Kings 16:5–9). This resulted in pro-Assyrian religious compromise (16:10–18). The goal of Isaiah's embassy to the fearful Ahaz was to encourage a response of faith (Isa. 7:9). Though Isaiah offered him any sign of his choosing, Ahaz masked his refusal in a facade of piety about not testing God (Isa.7:10–12; cf. Deut. 6:16). The hypocritical Ahaz did not want a sign because he had no intention of trusting God in this national crisis. The exasperated prophet responded by announcing the sign of Immanuel.

(2) A Benjamite, a descendant of Saul (1 Chron. 8:35–36; 9:41–42).

AHAZ, DIAL OF *See* Sundial.

AHAZIAH **(1)** Ahaziah became the eighth king over the northern kingdom of Israel after his father, Ahab, died in battle (1 Kings 22:40). He reigned for only two years (852–851 BC) and "did evil in the eyes of the LORD," serving and worshiping Baal (22:51–53). Ahaziah died following a fall through the lattice of his upper chamber, but not before being rebuked by the prophet Elijah for having consulted Baal-Zebub, the god of Ekron, about recovering from his injury (2 Kings 1:2–17). Because he had no heir, his brother Jehoram (Joram) inherited the throne (1:17).

(2) Ahaziah the son of Jehoram became the sixth king of Judah around 843 BC. During his one-year reign he received ungodly advice from his mother, Athaliah. He was a king who "did evil in the eyes of the LORD" (2 Kings 8:27). He became an ally of King Jehoram (Joram) of Israel against King Hazael of Aram, but both were killed in Jehu's revolt (8:28–29; 9:16–29).

AHBAN One of two sons of Abishur and Abihail; the other son was Molid. Ahban appears in the genealogical record of the sons of Hezron, who was a son of the patriarch Judah (1 Chron. 2:29).

AHER The ancestor of the Hushites, a clan of the tribe of Benjamin (1 Chron. 7:12).

AHI **(1)** A leader of the clans of the tribe of Gad. Ahi was son of Abdiel and grandson of Guni (1 Chron. 5:15). **(2)** A descendant of Asher through Shomer (1 Chron. 7:34).

AHIAH One of the leaders of the people who sealed Nehemiah's binding agreement of reform (Neh. 10:26).

AHIAM Son of Sharar (or Sakar [see 1 Chron. 11:35]), Ahiam was one of three Hararites among David's mighty men (2 Sam. 23:33).

AHIAN A descendant of Manasseh through Shemida (1 Chron. 7:19).

AHIEZER **(1)** Son of Ammishaddai and leader of the tribe of Dan. Ahiezer assembled the people of Dan when they encamped (Num. 2:25–26) and led them as the tribe served as head of the Israelites' rear guard (10:25). **(2)** The chief of the skilled fighting men from Saul's tribe of Benjamin who allied themselves with David when Saul banished David from his presence (1 Chron. 12:3).

AHIHUD **(1)** A descendant of Asher through Shelomi. Ahihud was Asher's appointed assistant to Moses for assigning the inheritance of the tribes of Israel that settled west of the Jordan River (Num. 34:27). **(2)** A descendant of Benjamin through Gera (1 Chron. 8:7).

AHIJAH **(1)** The prophet from Shiloh who superintended the division of Solomon's united kingdom (928 BC). He predicted to Jeroboam that he would tear away ten tribes from the Davidic house (1 Kings 11:29–39). This prediction was fulfilled after Solomon's death (1 Kings 12:15; 2 Chron. 10:15). Certain events in Solomon's reign were written up in "the prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite" (2 Chron. 9:29). Later, Jeroboam's wife went in disguise to Ahijah to inquire about her sick son. Ahijah predicted the death of the child and the destruction of Jeroboam's entire house as a punishment for idolatry (1 Kings 14:1–16). Both predictions came true (1 Kings 14:17–18; 15:29). **(2)** An Elide priest in the service of Saul (1 Sam. 14:3, 18). **(3)** A secretary to King Solomon (1 Kings 4:3). **(4)** The father of Baasha, who conspired against Nadab, son of Jeroboam, and succeeded him as king of Israel (1 Kings 15:27, 33; 21:22; 2 Kings 9:9). **(5)** Son of Jerahmeel, the brother of Caleb, from the tribe of Judah (1 Chron. 2:25). **(6)** A Benjamite in the ancestry of Saul (1 Chron. 8:7). **(7)** One of David's thirty mighty men (1 Chron. 11:36). **(8)** A Levite who was in charge of the treasuries in the time of David (1 Chron. 26:20 NRSV [NIV mg.]).

AHIKAM One of King Josiah's royal advisers, Ahikam was the son of Shaphan, King Josiah's secretary. Ahikam was part of the delegation that Josiah sent to the prophetess Huldah to inquire about the future of the kingdom of Judah in light of its wickedness before the Lord (2 Kings 22:12–14). Ahikam supported Jeremiah during the reign of Jehoiakim; this support saved Jeremiah from being put to death by the people of Judah (Jer. 26:24). Nebuchadnezzar appointed Ahikam's son Gedaliah as governor over the remnant in Judah after the Babylonian deportation (Jer. 40:5).

AHILUD The father of Jehoshaphat, who was King David and King Solomon's recorder (2 Sam. 8:16; 1 Kings 4:3; 1 Chron. 18:15), and of Baana, one of King Solomon's twelve district governors appointed to supply provisions for the king and the royal household (1 Kings 4:12).

AHIMAAZ **(1)** The father of Saul's wife, Ahinoam (1 Sam. 14:50).

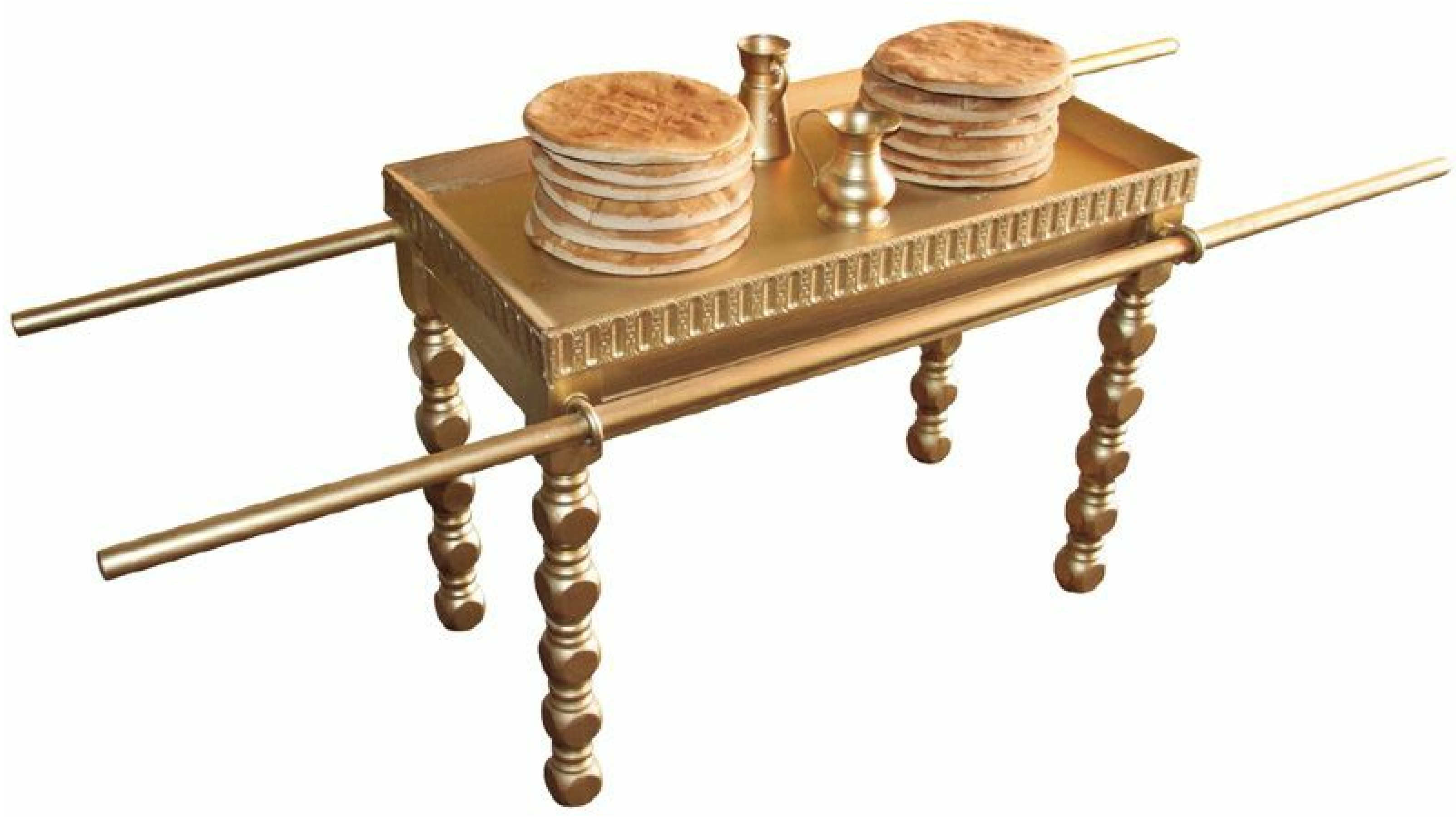
(2) Son of Zadok the priest. As David fled from Jerusalem during his son Absalom's conspiracy, he told Zadok and Abiathar, also a priest, to return with their sons to Jerusalem and to bring him information about Absalom's military plans (2 Sam. 15:27–29). When Zadok and Abiathar learned of Absalom's plans, they informed Ahimaaz and Abiathar's son Jonathan. Ahimaaz and Jonathan had to flee to Bahurim and hide in a well when Absalom's men learned of their presence in nearby En Rogel. After their pursuers could not find them, the two men delivered the news to David (2 Sam. 17:15–22). Ahimaaz was eager to inform David of his son Absalom's defeat and became the first to tell David of his victory by outrunning another messenger. However, Ahimaaz concealed the news of Absalom's death (18:19–33).

(3) King Solomon's district governor over Naphtali and husband of Basemath, Solomon's daughter (1 Kings 4:15).

AHIMAN **(1)** Ahiman, Sheshai, and Talmai, descendants of Anak, lived in Hebron when the Israelite spies explored southern Canaan (Num. 13:22). During Joshua's conquest, Caleb defeated Ahiman in Hebron after his forces had conquered other adjacent territory (Josh. 15:24; Judg. 1:8–10). **(2)** A gatekeeper of the temple who was among the first to return from captivity in Babylon (1 Chron. 9:17).

AHIMELECH *See* Ahimelek.

AHIMELEK A priest who allowed David and his men to eat the consecrated bread of the tabernacle (1 Sam. 21:1–6; cf. Mark 2:25–26). *See also* Abiathar.



Model of the table of the Bread of the Presence from the tabernacle replica at Timnah, Israel

AHIMOTH A descendant of Levi through Elkanah (1 Chron. 6:25). "Elkanah" in 1 Chron. 6:26 may refer either to a son of Ahimoth (NIV, RSV) or to the Elkanah of v. 25 (KJV, NASB).

AHINADAB Son of Iddo, Ahinadab was one of Solomon's twelve district governors "who supplied provisions for the king and the royal household." Ahinadab was governor over Mahanaim, which was east of the Jordan (1 Kings 4:14).

AHINOAM **(1)** Saul's wife, daughter of Ahimaaz and granddaughter of Zadok the priest (1 Sam. 14:50). **(2)** One of David's wives, known as "Ahinoam of Jezreel" (1 Sam. 25:43). When David fled to the Philistine city of Gath, he took Ahinoam and Abigail, his other wife (27:3). Ahinoam and Abigail settled in Ziklag, a Philistine city given to David by Achish. Amalekite raiders later destroyed Ziklag and took Ahinoam and the other family of David and his men, but David recovered Ahinoam by overtaking and defeating the Amalekites (30:1–19). Ahinoam and Abigail accompanied David back to Hebron after Saul's death and settled there (2 Sam. 3:2). Her son Amnon was David's firstborn.

AHIO **(1)** The son of Abinadab who, along with his brother Uzzah, attempted to bring the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem on a cart (2 Sam. 6:3–7; 1 Chron. 13:7–10). When the oxen stumbled, Uzzah reached out and grasped the ark to steady it, and God struck him down for this "irreverent act"

(2 Sam. 6:7). Ahio was in front of the cart at the time. **(2)** A family head within the tribe of Benjamin who lived in Jerusalem (1 Chron. 8:14). **(3)** A descendant of Benjamin through Jeiel who also lived in Jerusalem (1 Chron. 8:31; 9:47).

AHIRA Son of Enan and leader of the tribe of Naphtali. During the desert census (Num. 1:1–4), Ahira was Naphtali's assistant to Moses and Aaron. Ahira assembled the people of Naphtali for encampment (Num. 2:29–30) and led them as they moved (10:27).

AHIRAM A descendant of Benjamin, ancestor of the Ahiramite clan. Ahiram appears in the record of the census that Moses and Eleazar took after the plague on the Israelites for their worship of the Baal of Peor (Num. 26:38).

AHIRAMITES The clan descended from Benjamin through Ahira. They appear in the record of the census of Israel taken after the plague (Num. 26:38).

AHISAMACH *See* Ahisamak.

AHISAMAK A descendant of Dan and father of Oholiab, a skilled craftsman who assisted Bezalel son of Uri in furnishing the tabernacle (Exod. 31:6; 35:34).

AHISHAHAR A family leader descended from Benjamin through Bilhan (1 Chron. 7:10).

AHISHAR One of King Solomon's chief officials, Ahishar was in charge of Solomon's palace (1 Kings 4:6).

AHITHOPHEL A Gilonite from the town of Giloh, he was originally King David's most respected and wise adviser (2 Sam. 15:12; 16:23). Ahithophel allied himself with King David's son Absalom during Absalom's rebellion. When David heard of Ahithophel's defection, he prayed that the Lord would "turn Ahithophel's counsel into foolishness" (15:31).

Upon Ahithophel's suggestion, Absalom pitched a tent on the roof of David's palace in order to sleep openly with David's concubines (2 Sam. 16:20–22). Ahithophel also counseled Absalom to make an aggressive, immediate attack upon his father's forces while David was weary in his flight from Jerusalem (2 Sam. 17:1–4). Absalom decided in favor of the more conservative plan of Hushai the Arkite, who had suggested that Absalom attack after gathering in Jerusalem all available Israelite soldiers (17:7–14). However, Hushai the Arkite was in league with David, and through Hushai's purposefully poor advice the Lord frustrated "the good advice of Ahithophel in order to bring disaster on Absalom" (17:14).

Ahithophel committed suicide in Giloh, presumably anticipating the defeat of Absalom and David's reprisal for his treason (2 Sam. 17:23). Jehoiada son of Benaiah and Abiathar succeeded Ahithophel as counselors (1 Chron. 27:34).

AHITUB Four men, all of the priestly line of Aaron. **(1)** A descendant of Phinehas, brother of Ichabod, and father of Ahijah (1 Sam. 14:3). **(2)** The father of Ahimelek the priest, who aided David and his men (1 Sam. 21:1–6). **(3)** Son of Amariah and the father of Zadok, a priest during David's and Solomon's reigns (2 Sam. 8:17; 1 Chron. 6:7). **(4)** The father of Meraioth and ancestor of Azariah, who was the supervisor of the second temple (1 Chron. 9:11; Neh. 11:11).

AHLAB A Canaanite city in northwestern Galilee that the tribe of Asher did not conquer. Asher's failure to conquer this and nearby Canaanite cities caused the intermingling of the Israelites and the Canaanites within Asherite territory (Judg. 1:31–32).

AHLAI **(1)** A woman descended from Judah through Sheshan (1 Chron. 2:31). According to 1 Chron. 2:34, "Sheshan had no sons—only daughters." However, the Hebrew phrase describing Ahlai in 2:31 literally reads "and the sons of Sheshan: Ahlai." Although the OT normally uses the term *banim* to speak of sons, it can also refer to descendants or children. Thus, Ahlai was a daughter of Sheshan, probably the one whom Sheshan gave in marriage to his servant Jarha (2:35). This would explain the unusual inclusion of a daughter in a genealogy. To eliminate the confusion, the NIV translates 2:31 as "Sheshan was the father of Ahlai." **(2)** The father of Zabad, one of David's thirty mighty men (1 Chron. 11:41).

AHOAH Grandson of Benjamin through Bela (1 Chron. 8:4). Ahoah was the ancestor of the Ahohites Dodai (2 Sam. 23:9), Zalmon (2 Sam. 23:28), and Ilai (1 Chron. 11:29), all of whom were associated with David's military.

AHOHITE A family name used to describe Dodai (2 Sam. 23:9), Zalmon (2 Sam. 23:28), and Ilai (1 Chron. 11:29), descendants of Ahoah (1 Chron. 8:4) and prominent military men during the time of David.

AHOLAH *See* Oholah and Oholibah.

AHOLIAB *See* Oholiab.

AHOLIBAH *See* Oholah and Oholibah.

AHOLIBAMAH *See* Oholibamah.

AHUMAI A descendant of Judah through Jahath (1 Chron. 4:2). The descendants of Ahumai and his brother Lahad were the clans of the Zorathites (see also 1 Chron. 2:52–53).

AHUZZAM A descendant of Judah through Naarah (1 Chron. 4:6). "Ahuzzam" (NIV) and "Ahuzam" (KJV) are forms of the Hebrew word *'akhuzzah*, meaning "possession" or "inheritance" (see Gen. 47:11).

AHUZZATH The personal adviser to King Abimelek, king of the Philistines in Gerar. Ahuzzath accompanied Abimelek and Phicol, the commander of Abimelek's forces, to make a treaty with Isaac after they had ordered him to leave their territory because of his growing power and prosperity (Gen. 26:26–31).

AHZAI A descendant of Levi through Meshillemoth. Ahzai was the grandfather of Amashsai, one of the priestly family heads during the time of Nehemiah who was chosen by lot to live in Jerusalem (Neh. 11:13–14).

AI The Hebrew term behind Ai means “the ruin.” Biblical Ai was situated east of Bethel in the highlands of Ephraim overlooking the Jordan Valley. The commonly accepted location is et-Tell, “the heap,” a mound near present-day Deir Dibwan (ten miles north-northeast of Jerusalem). This determination is based partly on identification of Bethel with Beitin, which is challenged by some.

Excavations at et-Tell reveal two periods of habitation: first, during the Early Bronze Age (c. 3100–2400 BC), followed by an intervening span of more than a millennium during which et-Tell was uninhabited, then again during Iron Age I (c. 1200–1050 BC).

The earliest settlement was an unwalled village. Artifacts reveal a mixture of local and foreign influences, with some early pottery resembling that of nearby Jericho. Later pottery shows traits consistent with northern Syria and Anatolia, suggesting migration of peoples from these regions. Around 3000 BC the village was reconfigured to include an acropolis with a temple and palace complex, and a wall with four gates.

The Early Bronze Age city was destroyed several times, including once by an earthquake (evident from the collapse of the temple wall into a rift opened in its foundation). Each time it was rebuilt and its fortifications strengthened. Beginning c. 2700 BC, et-Tell fell under Egyptian influence, attested by Egyptian building techniques and the presence of imported alabaster and stone vessels. This lasted until c. 2550 BC, when the city’s wall was breached and the citadel fortifications burned. The city was sacked and abandoned c. 2400 BC.

Et-Tell was resettled c. 1200 BC, possibly by persons fleeing the influx of Sea Peoples into the Eastern Mediterranean. The Iron Age I settlement was considerably smaller than the Early Bronze Age city (three versus twenty-seven acres). Settlers built houses on the acropolis and terraced the mound for farming; however, no attempt was made to repair the walls or erect new fortifications. Discovery of multiple grain silos indicates a population increase c. 1125 BC. Lack of all but the earliest Iron Age ware suggests that et-Tell was abandoned c. 1050 BC. Because its houses remained intact, the village clearly was not destroyed.

In the Bible, Ai first appears as a landmark in Abram’s travels (Gen. 12:8; 13:3). In the book of Joshua, it figures prominently as a lesser city in the initial conquest of Canaan (7:3; 10:2; but see 8:25). Following Israel’s initial defeat (7:4–5), Joshua proscribes Ai according to Yahweh’s instruction (8:2), slaying its inhabitants and hanging its king, then reducing the settlement to a ruin (8:25–28). This strikes fear into the neighboring populations (9:3–4; 10:1–2). The disproportionate attention given to its capture sets the conquest within a theological framework: victory depends on obedience to Yahweh. Ai later appears in regard to those who are returning from exile in Babylon (Ezra 2:28; Neh.7:32).

The ruins of et-Tell, the probable location of biblical Ai

Comparison of archaeological evidence from et-Tell with the traditional dating of the exodus (fifteenth century BC) reveals that the site was unoccupied when Ai would have been sacked by Israel. This has led some to conclude that the account in Josh. 7–8 is etiological (a story explaining the source of the ruins at et-Tell) and therefore legendary, or originally pertained to the sacking of another site—for example, Bethel (8:17). Suggesting that Ai was a temporary stronghold during the conquest, though possible, contradicts details of the biblical account (see 8:1, 23, 25).

Even if a late date for the exodus is proposed (thirteenth century BC), the Iron Age settlement at et-Tell was considerably smaller than the narrative describes, populated by several hundred persons, not thousands (Josh. 8:25). Further, habitation persisted at et-Tell into the period of the judges (contrast 8:28). Evidence of this sort leads some to discount the conquest tradition in favor of a settlement (migration) model of Israel’s entry into the land of Canaan (see Judg. 3:5–6).

It remains altogether possible that et-Tell has been incorrectly identified with biblical Ai, or that the evidence excavated at the site is incomplete. In either case, further archaeological investigation may vindicate the biblical account of the conquest of Ai. It is equally possible, though, that the events of the conquest and settlement are more complex than the biblical narrative indicates.

AIAH **(1)** A Horite, the eldest son of Zibeon who lived in Edom (Gen. 36:24; 1 Chron. 1:40). **(2)** The father of Saul’s concubine Rizpah (2 Sam. 3:7).

AIATH A location named in connection with Migron and Mikmash (Isa. 10:28) that may be the feminine form of "Ai."

AIJA A town near Bethel approximately ten miles north of Jerusalem, appearing only in Neh. 11:31 (cf. Ayyah in 1 Chron. 7:28). Perhaps another name for Ai. *See* Ai; Ayyah.

AIJALON The Aijalon Valley provided access from the northern Philistine Plain on the Mediterranean Sea through the foothills to the hill country. The city of Aijalon was near the eastern end of the valley. During Israel's conquest of Canaan, a confederation of Canaanite cities attacked the Gibeonites, who had made an alliance with the Israelites (Josh. 9–10). The Israelites defeated the confederation forces at Gibeon and pursued them west through the Aijalon Valley. En route, God hurled large hailstones on them. Joshua's prayer that the sun "be still" over Gibeon and the moon over the Valley of Aijalon may have involved the darkening of the sun and moon by the heavy clouds accompanying the hailstorm. Some centuries later, after Jonathan and his armor bearer attacked the Philistine outpost at Mikmash in the hill country, the Israelites struck them down from Mikmash to Aijalon in the valley (1 Sam. 14:31).

The city of Aijalon was among those given to the tribe of Dan (Josh. 19:42; 21:24), but it was later affiliated with Ephraim (1 Chron. 6:69) and inhabited by descendants of Benjamin (1 Chron. 8:13). Rehoboam built defensive cities, among them Aijalon, in preparation for the forthcoming attack of Pharaoh Shishak (2 Chron. 11:5–12; cf. 1 Kings 14:26).

AIJELETH SHAHAR In Hebrew *'ayyelet hashakhar*, a phrase found in the title of Ps. 22 and literally translated as "the doe of the morning." It may refer to a song or tune.

AIN **(1)** A city marking the eastern border of the promised land in Num. 34:11. It is located northeast of the Sea of Galilee, possibly associated with Khirbet Ayun or Khirbet Dufna. **(2)** A Levitical city belonging to Simeon (Josh. 15:32; 19:7; 21:16; 1 Chron. 4:32). Some scholars believe that the Josh. 21:16 reference to Ain is a scribal error and should actually read "Ashan." Other scholars consider the remaining three references a scribal error as well and connect Ain with Rimmon, the city immediately following Ain in these three lists, associating it with En-Rimmon.

AIR What fills the space between the earth and heavens, providing a domain for flying birds (Gen. 1:6–8, 20–23; Deut. 4:17). "Birds of the air," or "birds in the sky," is a common biblical expression (e.g., Gen. 1:26, 28, 30; 2:19–20; Pss. 8:8; 79:2; 104:12; Matt. 6:26; 8:20; 13:32). Moses threw soot into the air, which led to the plague of boils on Egypt (Exod. 9:8–12). People threw dust into the air as an expression of mourning (Acts 22:23). Paul uses the images of boxing and speaking "into the air" to express futility (1 Cor. 9:26; 14:9). As the boundary between earth and heaven, the air is where Christ will meet his church at his coming (1 Thess. 4:17). Paul's contemporaries also distinguished between lower, impure air (vapor) and upper, pure air (ether). Spirits haunted the vapor. Paul therefore claims that Satan is the evil spirit who rules the air below where Jesus is seated at the right hand of the Father (Eph. 1:20–23; 2:2).

AJAH *See* Aiah.

AJALON *See* Aijalon.

AKAN Son of Ezer, a descendant of Esau (Gen. 36:27; 1 Chron. 1:42 [NRSV, NASB: "Jaakan"]).

AKBOR **(1)** The father of Baal-Hanan, king of Edom (Gen. 36:38; 1 Chron. 1:49). **(2)** One of Josiah's officials among those sent to inquire of the prophet Huldah regarding the book of the law (2 Kings 22:12, 14). Akbor may have also been called "Abdon" (2 Chron. 34:20). **(3)** The father of Jehoiakim's officer Elnathan (Jer. 26:22; 36:12). Since Jehoiakim came to power shortly after Josiah, the father of Elnathan may be identical with Josiah's official, described above.

AKELDAMA The place where Judas Iscariot met his demise after betraying Jesus. According to the book of Acts, with the money he received for betraying Jesus to the chief priests, he bought a field, where "he fell headlong, his body burst open and all his intestines spilled out"; the inhabitants of Jerusalem called the field "Akeldama," an Aramaic name meaning "field of blood" (Acts 1:18–19). According to Matt. 27:7–8, the field was purchased by the chief priests and subsequently used as a burial place for foreigners. The two passages may be harmonized by supposing that (1) in the Acts account Luke means that Judas indirectly purchased the field because his money was used to purchase it; (2) Judas hanged himself, as Matthew says, but the rapidly decaying body fell from the rope and burst open, as Acts asserts; or (3) as so often with place names, the original of the name was understood differently by different people. Perhaps the place was known as "Field of Blood" because it was purchased with blood money, but the subsequent suicide of Judas at that location caused some early Christians to associate the name with his gory death there.

Traditional site of Akeldama, in the Hinnom Valley of Jerusalem

AKHENATEN The king of Egypt (c. 1379–1362 BC) during the Eighteenth Dynasty. He was also known as Amenhotep (or Amenhotpe) IV. He followed his father, Amenhotep III (1417–1379 BC), on the throne. His best-known queen was Nefertiti, who bore him six daughters. His sons Smenkhare and Tutankhamen, who successively succeeded him on the throne, were the offspring of an unknown queen.

Akhenaten started ruling from Thebes, but he built a new capital, Akhetaten, today known as

Amarna. He was the king of Egypt during the period represented by the Amarna letters. These are letters written by Canaanite kings to their Egyptian overlord around the time Israel entered the promised land. The kings requested help, though apparently Egypt never sent it.

Akhenaten is best known for his religious innovations. He suppressed the worship of traditional cults, particularly that of the god Amun, in favor of the sole worship of the sun-disk, Aten. Scholars differ over whether this move was the result of religious insight and piety or was a political ploy to remove power from the priesthood in favor of his own power. The famous Hymn to Aten, however, shows significant personal piety. This hymn has been compared in content to Ps. 104, and some think that the Hymn to Aten influenced the writing of that psalm.

Almost immediately after Akhenaten's death, his innovations were rejected. His legacy was defaced, and he became known as the "heretic king."

AKIM Son of Zadok and an ancestor of Jesus listed among the fourteen generations between the exile and the birth of Jesus (Matt. 1:14).

AKKAD One of the cities associated with and perhaps founded by Nimrod (Gen. 10:10). Outside of the Bible, Akkad was known as the center of the empire established by Sargon the Great (mid-twenty-fourth century BC). His kingdom became known as the Akkadian Empire.

AKKADIAN Akkadian was the language of the Babylonians and the Assyrians. It is the most widely attested of the East Semitic languages (see below), and its name comes from the identification used by the Babylonians and Assyrians themselves (*Akkadu*, from the name of the Babylonian capital *Akkad* [*e*]). European researchers began the recovery of Akkadian during the seventeenth century. Its interpretation has been considered a relatively well-settled question since around 1857, when Edward Hincks, Jules Oppert, and Henry Creswick Rawlinson were able to produce similar translations of the same unpublished text while working independently.

Linguistically, Akkadian is usually considered to be comprised of two main dialects, Babylonian and Assyrian. Eblaite, the other member of the East Semitic group, is very closely related, however, and is sometimes classed as a third dialect of Akkadian. The various dialects of Akkadian are attested from as early as the middle of the third millennium BC (Old Akkadian [and Eblaite]) until as late as the first century AD (Late Babylonian). The following chronological divisions are usually recognized for Babylonian and Assyrian:

Old Babylonian	2000–1500 BC	Old Assyrian
Middle Babylonian	1500–1000 BC	Middle Assyrian
Neo-Babylonian	1000–600 BC	Neo-Assyrian
Late Babylonian	600 BC–AD 100	

At the present time, as many as one million Akkadian texts have been unearthed. The corpus is known to contain legal, administrative, and economic documents, as well as literary texts, religious material of various types, and personal communications. The majority of these texts remain unpublished, however. Geographically, Assyrian dialects tend to be attested only at sites within the historical boundaries of Assyria, whereas Babylonian texts have been found across a much broader range.

Akkadian is written using cuneiform ("wedge-shaped," from Lat. *cuneus*, "wedge") symbols, which may consist of one or several wedges, and usually it is written from left to right. The writing system is derived from Sumerian, a non-Semitic language predating the rise of Akkadian, and it is by any reasonable evaluation extremely complex. Individual signs may represent several different phonetic values (e.g., /*ba*/, /*bab*/, etc.), an individual word (e.g., "sheep," "chariot," etc.), or even a particular grammatical concept (e.g., grammatical plurality, or the presence of a human or divine name). Signs may have multiple values even within the same text, and the proper reading for any individual sign must be determined by context and knowledge of the literary genre under consideration.

Akkadian tablet describing the birth of Sargon the Great (2334–2279 BC)

For the purposes of biblical studies, some of the more significant Akkadian texts presently known are (1) those texts that resemble the creation and flood accounts (*Enuma Elish*, Atrahasis Epic, Epic of Gilgamesh); (2) ancient Near Eastern treaty documents that are similar to Deuteronomy and pentateuchal legal material; (3) the archives unearthed at Mari and Nuzi that recount various practices in the patriarchal narratives; (4) historical records (e.g., Annals of Sennacherib [cf. 2 Kings 10:34]); (5) city laments written in Sumerian (cf. the book of Lamentations).

AKKO Mentioned once in the OT, Akko is one of the cities that Asher failed to conquer (Judg. 1:31). Renamed “Ptolemais” during the Hasmonean period, this city was home to some believers with whom Paul stayed for a day during his third missionary journey (Acts 21:7). Excavations at Tell el-Fukhkhar uncovered a long history of urban settlement originating in the Middle Bronze Age I (2200–2000 BC). Strategically located at crossroads of coastal and inland roads, eight miles north of modern Haifa, the city played a prominent role as a center of trade.

AKKUB **(1)** A priestly gatekeeper at the time of the early postexilic period (Ezra 2:42; Neh. 7:45). He and his associates were stationed east at the King’s Gate (1 Chron. 9:17). **(2)** One of the temple servants who returned with Zerubbabel (Ezra 2:45). **(3)** A priestly gatekeeper at the time of Ezra and Nehemiah (Neh. 11:19; 12:25). **(4)** A Levitical teacher of the law (Neh. 8:7) at the time of Ezra (conceivably identified with the Akkub of Ezra 2:45). **(5)** A descendant of David through Jehoiakim and Zerubbabel in the period after the exile (1 Chron. 3:24).

AKRABBIM This name (lit., “scorpions”) is actually a shortened form of *maaleh ’aqrabbim* (“ascent of scorpions”). This is a mountain pass (NIV: “Scorpion Pass”) that marks part of the southern boundary of Canaan’s border, according to Num. 34:4; Josh. 15:3; Judg. 1:36. The pass is actually located southwest of the Dead Sea near the Arabah. The area adjacent to this pass is Akrabattene, which is where Judas Maccabeus defeated the Idumeans (1 Macc. 5:3).

AKSAH The daughter of Caleb who was given as a wife to Othniel when he captured the city of Debir (Josh. 15:16–17; Judg. 1:12–13). Caleb gave her land in the Negev and later, at her request, the “upper and lower springs” as well (Josh. 15:18–19; Judg. 1:14–15).

AKSHAPH A city in northern Palestine whose king was a vassal of the king of Hazor. When Jabin went to war against Joshua, he called for the support of the king of Akshaph (Josh. 11:1), who is listed among the thirty-one kings defeated by Joshua (Josh. 12:20). Akshaph was assigned to the tribe of Asher (Josh. 19:25).

AKZIB **(1)** A town (modern Ain Kezbeh) in the territory of Judah (Josh. 15:44). Akzib is also mentioned in a negative context in Mic. 1:14, where the prophet plays on the meaning of *’akzab*, “deceitful.” Akzib may appear in Gen. 38:5 [NIV: Kezib]; 1 Chron. 4:22 [NIV: Kozeba]. **(2)** A town in the territory of Asher (Josh. 19:29) that Asher did not conquer (Judg. 1:31). Phoenician Akzib has been excavated and is located on the Mediterranean coast between Acre (Akko) and Tyre (modern ez-Zib).

ALAMETH *See* Alemeth.

ALAMMELECH *See* Allammelek.

ALAMOTH A term of undetermined meaning that occurs in the heading of Ps. 46 and in 1 Chron.

15:20. Among the suggestions are that it might denote a musical style, pitch, key, tune, change of octave, or female chorus.

ALARM **(1)** A particular sound that came from two silver trumpets that God commanded Moses to make (Num. 10:1–2). The sound functioned as a signal for the Israelites to break camp (10:5–6) and was differentiated from other sounds that functioned as a signal for the Israelites to gather together (10:7). **(2)** A sound used in war so that God would remember Israel and save them from their enemies (Num. 10:9; 31:6). **(3)** A sound signaling imminent war (Jer. 4:19) that was used by the prophets to signal destruction in oracles against Israel (Hos. 5:8). **(4)** A sound associated with the day of the Lord (Joel 2:1).

ALDEBARAN A constellation mentioned in Job 38:32. In Hebrew *ʼayish*, it is most often translated as "the Bear" (cf. *ʼash* in Job 9:9). It is the brightest star in the constellation Taurus. *See also* Arcturus.

ALEMETH **(1)** Son of Beker and grandson of Benjamin (1 Chron. 7:8) who is not mentioned in the genealogies of Benjamin in the Pentateuch. **(2)** Son of either Jehoaddah (1 Chron. 8:36) or Jadah (1 Chron. 9:42). **(3)** A Levitical city in Benjamin (1 Chron. 6:60).

ALEXANDER **(1)** Simon's son (Mark 15:21), a member of a high-priestly family in Jerusalem (Acts 4:6). **(2)** A Jew in Ephesus (Acts 19:33). **(3)** A metalworker who becomes the object of Paul's discipline (1 Tim. 1:20; 2 Tim. 4:14).

ALEXANDER THE GREAT Alexander, born in 356 BC, was the son of Philip, king of Macedon. The amazing, swift conquests of Alexander are alluded to in Daniel. Daniel 8:5–8 (cf. 2:40–43; 7:19–24) portrays Greece as the "goat" from the west, with a notable horn between its eyes (representing Alexander), which defeats the ram (the Medo-Persian army). This prophecy was fulfilled when Alexander led the Greek armies across the Hellespont into Asia Minor in 334 BC and defeated the Persian forces at the river Granicus. Alexander again met and quickly defeated the Persians at Issus ("without touching the ground" [Dan. 8:5]). Alexander then turned south, moving down the Syrian coast and conquering Egypt without a blow. He then moved eastward, again defeating Darius the Persian for the last time, east of the Tigris River. Babylon, Susa, and Persepolis (the last two were capitals of Persia) all fell to the young warrior king. Alexander marched his armies as far eastward as the Hydaspes River in India and won a decisive battle there. Because his armies refused to go any farther, however, Alexander was forced to return to Persepolis and then to Babylon. There he died in 323 BC at the age of thirty-three.

Coin depicting Alexander the Great

Alexander’s chief influence on posterity was Hellenization—the merging of Greek culture with the customs of the peoples he conquered (*Hellas* is the Greek word for “Greece”). Thus, *koinē* (“common”) Greek became a universal trade language of the Mediterranean region from 330 BC to c. AD 300.

ALEXANDRIA Alexandria was a Greek city founded in Egypt in 331 BC by Alexander the Great. It soon became the capital of Egypt. Eventually it became a cultural and educational center for the entire Hellenistic world. After Alexander’s death in 323 BC, the city came under the rule of his successors, the Ptolemies, who ruled until the Seleucid (Seleucus was another of Alexander’s successors) conquest of 200–198 BC.

Alexandria is an important city for both Judaism and Christianity. As early as the sixth century BC, Jews began to make their way down to Egypt to escape the Babylonian captivity and for centuries thereafter. Thus, there was a long-standing Jewish presence in what would become the Greek capital. This resulted in tensions between Jews wishing to maintain their Jewish identity in a world dominated by Greek practices, many of which were detestable to Jews. These tensions are mentioned in numerous writings of the Second Temple period, and the culminating event is the desecration of the temple in 164 BC by the Seleucid ruler Antiochus Epiphanes.

Apart from tensions, Alexandria was responsible for two very important developments in Jewish life. The first was the Greek translation of the Hebrew OT, known as the Septuagint (from Latin for “seventy,” a rounded number referring to the legend that it was produced by seventy-two translators in seventy-two days). The history of the Septuagint is complicated, but the influence of Alexandria, the dominant cultural center populated by Jews, is unquestioned.

Also, Alexandria is the birthplace of one of the best-known Jewish interpreters of Scripture, Philo (whose life spanned the decades before and just after the birth of Christ, c. 20 BC–AD 50). He is known for his philosophical and allegorical interpretations, which influenced the later Christian interpreters Clement (c. AD 150–215) and Origen (c. AD 185–254).

The city, located on a peninsula at the edge of the Nile Delta, is also known for its famous lighthouse, which stood over four hundred feet high. It is remembered today as one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World.

In addition to its importance for Jews and Christians, Alexandria was home to numerous philosophers and mathematicians.

In the Bible, Alexandria is mentioned only in the book of Acts: the home of some of the Jews who opposed Stephen (6:9); the home of Apollos (18:24); the source of ships that helped carry Paul to Rome (27:6; 28:11).

ALGUM, ALGUMWOOD A type of tree used to build the terraces of Solomon’s temple (2 Chron. 9:11). It was imported from Ophir (2 Chron. 9:10) and Lebanon (2 Chron. 2:8). It is the same tree sometimes rendered “almug” or “almugwood” (1 Kings 10:11–12). Some suggest almug to be sandalwood or the clove tree. Its identity remains unknown.

ALIAH *See* Alvah.

ALIAN *See* Alvan.

ALIEN *See* Foreigner.

ALLAMMELECH *See* Allammelek.

ALLAMMELEK A town located in the Plain of Akko. This was part of the territory allotted to the tribe of Asher (Josh. 19:26) during the division of the promised land.

ALLEGORY Allegory is the use of symbolism to express or represent certain truths. It can be understood in two different ways.

First, some writers intentionally express concepts that conceal behind the literal meaning of their words a more significant meaning. For example, in John Bunyan’s *Pilgrim’s Progress*, Hopeful helps Christian see Christ again so that he may avoid the Wicked Gate. Similarly, the dark wood where Dante loses himself at the beginning of the *Divine Comedy* is intended by the author as a symbol of sin, and the three animals that he encounters there are symbols for three particular sins. In both cases, the author intentionally presents the true meaning of the story through figures or symbols. This use of allegory is sometimes described as a prolonged metaphor.

The second way allegory can be understood is as a perspective taken up by the interpreter or reader. Here the reader assumes that the text has a secondary or hidden meaning underlying the primary, literal meaning of the words. Often, but not always, this kind of allegorical interpretation ignores the literal sense of the words and at times denies the usefulness of the literal meaning all together.

Allegory in the Bible. Some passages of Scripture come very close to the first use of allegory: in Ezek. 17:2 God instructs the prophet to “set forth an allegory [NASB, NRSV: “riddle”] and tell the house of Israel a parable." In the account that follows the prophet carefully explains each element of the story: the first eagle is Babylon, the twigs carried to a land of trade are the captive Israelites taken to Babylon, and so forth. In Ezek. 24:2–14 the prophet gives a similar account, this time pointing out Israel's unfaithfulness.

Jesus' parable of the sower (Matt. 13:1–9 pars.) comes very close to this kind of allegory because each feature of the story is explained by Jesus to convey his teaching regarding the kingdom (13:18–23 pars.). However, care must be taken not to confuse the literary category of parable with this type of allegory. A parable is a particular type of story that only at times bears a resemblance to an allegory.

Allegorical interpretation in the early church. The early church fathers, facing the need to distinguish Christianity from Judaism, focused on the person and work of Christ as a means of reading the Bible (one might call this "christocentric" reading). They explained that the Jews could read the OT and yet reject Jesus as the Messiah because they read according to the letter and not according to the Spirit ("for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life" [2 Cor. 3:6]). Therefore, the church fathers claimed that the spiritual interpretation of the Bible conveyed its true meaning—the sense that Jesus is the Son of God.

The Alexandrian fathers and allegorization. Clement, traditionally the third bishop of Rome (c. AD 96), provides a very early example of Christian allegorical interpretation. Referring to the story of Rahab and the Israelite spies in Josh. 2, he argues that the scarlet cord is symbolic of a spiritual reality: "And in addition they gave her a sign, that she should hang from her house something scarlet—making it clear that through the blood of the Lord redemption will come to all who believe and hope in God" (*1 Clem.* 12:7). Another classic example of allegorical interpretation of the OT is the almost universally accepted early Christian understanding of Song of Songs. According to this interpretation, the literal sense of the song (romantic love) could not be its real meaning. Rather, the text refers to the relationship between Christ and his church; thus, the woman represents the church, and the man represents Christ. The passage "He brought me to his banqueting table, and his banner over me is love" (Song 2:4 KJV) refers not to a romantic encounter between lovers but rather to Christ and his delight in the church.

Origen, an early Christian leader and influential biblical scholar from Alexandria, argued that every passage in the Bible had a threefold sense, corresponding to body, soul, and spirit: the literal, moral, and spiritual. Origen usually began with the literal sense of the words, but he insisted that one should move on to the higher sense of the text (moral and spiritual) because it leads the believer closer to Christ. The only way to grasp the spiritual sense of the text, according to Origen, is through revelation. He also was one of the first to claim that Paul himself used allegorical interpretation: in his identification of the wilderness rock with Christ (1 Cor. 10:1–4) and of Sarah and Hagar with two covenants (Gal. 4:22–26). It is debated whether these are examples of allegory or of typology; much depends on how one defines both terms. Many draw a firm distinction between allegory, which derives from a correspondence of ideas, and typology, which derives from a correspondence between historical events. Even in contemporary debate some insist that these passages rely more upon typological connections than allegorical ones.

Allegorical versus typological interpretation. In contrast to those church fathers who followed Origen and others from Alexandria, the fathers of Antioch, especially Theodore of Mopsuestia (AD 350–428) and John Chrysostom (c. AD 354–407), opposed finding the spiritual sense of the text by means of allegorical interpretation. Rather, these interpreters argued that the spiritual sense of the Bible is not allegorical but is to be found in the literal sense itself. Theodore, when challenged to account for the use of the term "allegory" (Gal. 4:24 KJV, RSV, NRSV), argued that Paul used it to indicate a historical correspondence; that is, Paul was interpreting the OT typologically.

Summary. Positively, allegory emphasizes that the Bible should be approached spiritually, and that it should find practical application in the life of the believer. Often allegory made it possible for the church to apply obscure passages of the Bible that otherwise might have been ignored as irrelevant. Negatively, allegory largely removes the text of the Bible from history and fosters irresponsible and fanciful interpretations. *See also* Typology.

ALLELUIA *See* Hallelujah.

ALLEMETH *See* Alemeth.

ALLON **(1)** A descendant of Simeon, grandfather of Ziza (1 Chron. 4:37). **(2)** A species of tree, most likely an oak (Gen. 35:8).

ALLON BACUTH *See* Allon Bakuth.

ALLON BAKUTH A location near Bethel that served as the burial place for Deborah, Rebekah's nurse (Gen. 35:8). The phrase translates literally as "oak of weeping."

ALLOTMENT The allotment of land west of the Jordan among the nine and a half tribes was done by casting lots. The result of a lottery was seen as being under God's direction (Prov. 16:33), so this procedure reflected belief in God's ownership of the promised land. Moses commanded it (Num. 26:52–56), and Joshua carried it out at Shiloh (Josh. 13–19). The use of "lot" in Ps. 16:5–6 as a metaphor recalls that the tribe of Levi was given no allotment, only land from what was allotted to other tribes (Num. 18:20–24).

ALMIGHTY Divine titles using "almighty" indicate God's supreme, incomparable power. God is named "the Almighty" (*shadday*) throughout the OT, most frequently in Job. "God Almighty" (*'el shadday*) is concentrated in the Genesis patriarchal narratives (see also Exod. 6:3; Ezek. 10:5).

In the majority of its occurrences in the NIV, "Almighty" renders *tsebaot* (lit., "armies" [KJV, NRSV, NASB: "hosts"). Across the OT, "the LORD Almighty" connotes overwhelming forces, earthly and heavenly, under command of Israel's divine warrior (1 Sam. 17:45; Judg. 5:20). Especially frequent in Jeremiah, Isaiah, Amos, Zechariah, and Malachi, it bolsters the prophetic message by leveraging God's awesome power and authority (cf. James 5:4). Appropriately, the NT book of Revelation marshals these concepts and repeatedly refers to God as "almighty" (*pantokratōr*).

ALMODAD The firstborn son of Joktan (Gen. 10:26; 1 Chron. 1:20), who lived in a territory in North Arabia.

ALMON A Levitical city within the territory of Benjamin (Josh. 21:18), located northwest of Jerusalem within the immediate vicinity of Anathoth, which was the home of Jeremiah (Jer. 1:1). It is a variant of "Alemeth" (1 Chron. 6:60).

ALMOND A tree found in Palestine as early as patriarchal times producing an edible nut and mild oil. It is among the first of flowering trees to bloom in the spring, with blossoms appearing before leaves. The Hebrew word (*shaqed*) implies “watching,” “hastening,” or “awakening.” Jacob sent almond delicacies to Joseph in Egypt (Gen. 43:11). The almond-tree design of the seven-branched lampstands of the tabernacle and later the tabernacle (Exod. 25:33–34; 37:19–20) included almond blossoms on its “stems” and “bowls” fashioned after the same flower. Aaron’s rod budded, blossomed, and produced ripe almonds (Num. 17:8). In a play on words, God showed Jeremiah an almond branch as a symbol of the dependability of divine forwardness. God was watching and about to act, fulfilling his promises to punish the unfaithfulness of the people (Jer. 1:11–12). The usual allegorical interpretation of “the almond tree blossoms” (Eccles. 12:5) is a reference to an elderly person’s hair turning white like the almond tree.

Almond tree

ALMON DIBLATHAIM An area in Moab where the Israelites camped during their wilderness wanderings located between Dibon Gad and the mountains of Abarim (Num. 33:46–47). Some associate this place with Beth Diblathaim, modern Deleilat esh-Sherqiyeh, located between Dibon and Madaba. Another possibility is that Almon is a daughter settlement of Beth Diblathaim and is located nearby.

ALMS Provision for the extremely needy. Alms provide what is essential to human survival: food, clothing, and shelter (1 Tim. 6:8). Of the three main expressions of Jewish and early Christian piety, which included prayer and fasting (Matt. 6:1–18), giving to the destitute, literally "the practicing of mercy," was the most highly prized and appears to have been broadly practiced (Tob. 12:8; *2 Clem.* 16:4). The rabbis eventually legislated against extreme almsgiving, fixing the limit at 20 percent of one's assets (*b. Ketub.* 50a; cf. 1 Cor. 13:3). The inherent element of mercy suggests that the needy are not necessarily deserving of the gift. Jesus grounded the practice in mindfulness of God's mercy toward those blessed with surplus (Matt. 5:7) but warned against giving for public recognition (6:1–4). Beggars would gather around the temple, appealing to the charity of pilgrims (Acts 3:1–10). The early church took the initiative to care for the destitute, particularly orphans and widows, a practice that James, the brother of Jesus, impressed upon Paul to maintain in the non-Jewish wing of the church—something the apostle was happy to do, even collecting money for the needy in Jerusalem (Gal. 2:10; 2 Cor. 9:1–5 [cf. James 1:27]). A communal fund was collected in the local synagogue (*m. Pe'ah* 8:7). Trumpets were blown on days of fasting as a reminder (*b. Ber.* 6b; *b. Sanh.* 35a; cf. Matt. 6:2). The early church directed most of its giving to the poor (Tertullian, *Apol.* 39.6).

ALMUG, ALMUGWOOD *See* Algum, Algumwood.

ALOE Two types of plants: a tree and a succulent. In the OT "aloe" probably refers to a spice derived from the modern eaglewood tree (*Aquilaria agallocha*), likely brought from India. The soft aromatic wood of the large and spreading tree constituted a drug, fragrant and highly valued for perfume and incense (Ps. 45:8; Prov. 7:17; Song 4:14). In the NT, a different plant is meant, *Aloe vera*. The aloin from the pulp of this succulent aloe leaf is the source of bitter, unpleasant-smelling, purgative medicine. The aloes that Nicodemus brought to prepare the body of Jesus (John 19:38–40) may have been dissolved in water and used with myrrh, creating an expensive product used for embalming.

ALOTH Also rendered as "Bealoth" (Josh. 15:24), it was a city in the extreme southern region of Judah (1 Kings 4:16). "Bealoth" can be translated as "(the dwelling place of the) female Baals." *See also* Bealoth.

ALPHA AND OMEGA The first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. The book of Revelation uses "the Alpha and the Omega" for God or Christ (1:8; 21:6; 22:13) and closely connects it with "First and Last" and "the Beginning and the End" (1:17; 2:8; 21:6; 22:13) to declare God's sovereign control of history.

ALPHAEUS **(1)** The father of the disciple James, who is always identified as "the son of Alphaeus" in order to distinguish him from James the son of Zebedee (Matt. 10:3; Mark 3:18; Luke 6:15; Acts 1:13). **(2)** The father of Levi the tax collector (Mark 2:14). Some have suggested that this individual is also the father of James the disciple, but this is unlikely. Additionally, some have identified Cle(o)pas (Luke 24:18; John 19:25) with one of the Alphaeus persons, but this is doubtful.

ALTAR Altars were places of sacrifice and worship constructed of various materials. They could be either temporary or permanent. Some altars were in the open air; others were set apart in a holy place. They could symbolize either God's presense and protection or false worship that would lead to God's judgment.

OLD TESTAMENT

Noah and the patriarchs. The first reference in the Bible is to an altar built by Noah after the flood (Gen. 8:20). This action suggests the sanctuary character of the mountain on which the ark landed, so that theologically the ark's resting place was a (partial) return to Eden. The purpose of the extra clean animals loaded onto the ark was revealed (cf. 7:2–3). They were offered up as "burnt offerings," symbolizing self-dedication to God at this point of new beginning for the human race.

Abram built altars "to the LORD" at places where God appeared and spoke to him (Gen. 12:7) and where he encamped (12:8; 13:3–4, 18). No sacrifice is explicitly mentioned in association with these altars. Thus, they may have had the character of monuments or memorials of significant events. In association with Abram's altars, he is said to have "called on the name of the LORD" (12:8)—that is, to pray. The elaborate cultic procedures associated with later Israelite altars (e.g., the mediation of priests) were absent in the patriarchal period. Succeeding generations followed the same practices: Isaac (26:25) and Jacob (33:20; 34:1, 3, 7). God's test of Abraham involved the demand that he sacrifice his son Isaac as a burnt offering. In obedience, Abraham built an altar for this purpose, but through God's intervention a reprieve was granted, and a ram was substituted (22:9, 13). Moses erected an altar after the defeat of Amalek at Rephidim, to commemorate this God-given victory (Exod. 17:15–16).

Two incense altars from archaeological excavations at Arad

Moses and the tabernacle. In the context of making the covenant with Israel at Sinai, God gave Moses instructions on how to construct an altar (Exod. 20:24–26; cf. Josh. 8:31). It could be “an altar of earth” (of sun-dried mud-brick construction?) or else made of loose natural stones. The Israelites were expressly forbidden to use hewn stones, perhaps for fear of an idolatrous image being carved (making this prohibition an application of Exod. 20:4; cf. Deut. 27:5–6). Even if the altar was large, it was not to be supplied with steps for the priest to ascend, lest his nakedness be shown to God. The requirement that priests wear undergarments reflects the same concern (Exod. 28:42–43). An altar made of twelve stones, the number representing the number of the tribes of Israel, was built by Moses for the covenant-making ceremony (Exod. 24:4), in which half the blood of the sacrifice was sprinkled on the altar (representing God?) and the other half on the people, the action symbolizing the covenant bond created (24:6–8).

For the tabernacle, a portable “altar of burnt offering” was made (Exod. 27:1–8; 38:1–7). It had wooden frames sheathed in bronze and featured a horn at each corner. There was a ledge around the altar halfway up its sides, from which was hung bronze grating, and it had four bronze rings into which poles were slipped for transport. As part of the cultic ritual, blood was smeared on the horns (29:12). This altar stood in the open air in the courtyard of the tabernacle, near the entrance to the tabernacle. Included among the tabernacle furnishings was a smaller “altar of incense,” with molding around the top rim (30:1–10; 37:25–28). This altar was, however, overlaid with gold, for it stood closer to God’s ritual presence, inside the tabernacle, “in front of the curtain that shields the ark of the covenant law,” the curtain that separated the most holy place from the holy place. The high priest placed fragrant incense on this altar every morning and evening. The fact that this was a daily procedure and the description of the positioning of the tabernacle furnishings in Exod. 40:26–28 (mentioning the altar of incense after speaking about the lampstand) might be taken as implying that the incense altar was in the holy place, but 1 Kings 6:22 and Heb. 9:4 suggest that it was actually in the most holy place, near the ark.

God, through Moses, instructed the people that on entering the promised land they were to destroy all Canaanite altars along with the other paraphernalia of their pagan worship (Deut. 7:5; 12:3). Bronze Age altars discovered at Megiddo include horned limestone incense altars and a large circular altar mounted by a flight of steps. In Josh. 22 the crisis caused by the building of “an imposing altar” by the Transjordanian tribes was averted when these tribes explained to the rest of the Israelites that it was intended as a replica of the altar outside the tabernacle and not for the offering of sacrifices. The worship of all Israel at the one sanctuary both expressed and protected the religious unity and purity of the nation at this vital early stage of occupation of the land. In later narratives, however, Gideon (Judg. 6), Samuel (1 Sam. 7:17), Saul (1 Sam. 14:35), and David (2 Sam. 24) are said to build altars for sacrifice and to have done so with impunity, and in fact with the apparent approval of the biblical author. The established custom of seeking sanctuary from threat of death in the nation’s shrine is reflected in 1 Kings 1:50–53; 2:28–35, where Adonijah and Joab are described as “clinging to the horns of the altar.”

Solomon’s temple and rival worship centers. In the temple built by Solomon, the altar of incense that belonged to the “inner sanctuary” was overlaid with gold (1 Kings 6:20, 22). Solomon’s prayer at the dedication of the temple was made before the bronze altar in the courtyard (1 Kings 8:22, 54). The altar for sacrifices was much larger than the one that had been in the tabernacle (1 Chron. 4:1 gives its dimensions).

Although many of the psalms may originally have been used in worship in the first temple, there are surprisingly few references to the altar in the Psalter (only Pss. 26:6; 43:4; 51:19; 84:3; 118:27). They express the psalmist’s devotion to God and the temple as the place where God’s presence is enjoyed as the highest blessing.

After the division of the kingdom, Jeroboam offered sacrifices at the rival altar that he set up in Bethel (1 Kings 12:32–33). An unnamed “man of God” (= prophet) predicted Josiah’s desecration of this altar, which lay many years in the future (1 Kings 13:1–5). Amos and Hosea, who prophesied in the northern kingdom of the eighth century BC, condemned this and the other altars in that kingdom (e.g., Amos 3:14; Hos. 8:11–13). Ahab set up an altar to Baal in Samaria (1 Kings 16:32), and the suppression of Yahwism by Jezebel included the throwing down of the Lord’s altars in Israel (19:10, 14). The competition on Mount Carmel between Elijah and the prophets of Baal involved rival altars (1 Kings 18), and Elijah’s twelve-stone altar recalls that of Exod. 24, for he was calling the nation back to the exclusive monotheism preached by Moses (1 Kings 18:30–32).

With regard to the southern kingdom, the spiritual declension in the time of Ahaz manifested itself in this king making an altar modeled on the Assyrian prototype that he had seen on a visit to Damascus (2 Kings 16:10–14). He shifted the Lord’s altar from in front of the temple, where it had previously stood. Godly Hezekiah’s religious reform included the removal of the altars at the high places that up to that time had been centers of deviant worship (2 Kings 18:4, 22). The apostasy of King Manasseh showed itself in his rebuilding the high places that Hezekiah his father had destroyed and in erecting altars to Baal (2 Kings 21), thus repeating the sin of Ahab (cf. 1 Kings 16:32). Josiah’s reform included the destruction of all altars outside Jerusalem (2 Kings 23) and the centralizing of worship in the Jerusalem temple.

In Ezekiel’s vision of the new temple of the future, the sacrificial altar is its centerpiece (Ezek. 43:13–17). The altar was to be a large structure, with three-stepped stages and a horn on each corner, and it was to be fitted with steps on its eastern side for the use of the priests.

The second temple. The Israelites’ return from Babylonian exile was with the express aim of rebuilding the temple. The first thing that the priests did was to build “the altar on its foundation” (i.e., its original base; Ezra 3:2–3). The returnees placed the altar on the precise spot that it had occupied before the Babylonians destroyed it along with the temple. They took such care because they wanted to ensure that God would accept their sacrifices and so grant them protection. At the very end of the OT period, the prophet Malachi condemned the insincerity of Israel’s worship that was manifested in substandard sacrifices being offered on God’s altar (Mal. 1:7, 10; 2:13).

NEW TESTAMENT

In the NT, the altar is mentioned in a number of Jesus’ sayings (e.g., Matt. 5:23–24; 23:18–20). In the theology of the book of Hebrews, which teaches about the priesthood of Jesus Christ (in the order of Melchizedek), the role of the priest is defined as one who “serve[s] at the altar” (7:13), and Christ’s altar (and that of Christ’s followers) is the cross on which he offered himself as a sacrifice for sin (13:10). Another argument of Hebrews is that since on the most important day in the Jewish ritual calendar (the Day of Atonement), the flesh of the sacrifice was not eaten (see Lev. 16:27), the eating of Jewish ceremonial foods is not required, nor is it of any spiritual value. The altar in the heavenly sanctuary is mentioned a number of times in the book of Revelation (6:9; 8:3, 5; 9:13; 11:1; 14:18; 16:7). It is most likely the altar of incense and is related to the prayers of God’s persecuted people, which are answered by the judgments of God upon the people of the earth.

ALTASHHETH A transliteration of Hebrew *’al-tashkhet* (KJV: “Altaschith”; NASB: “Al-tashheth”), probably the name of a tune for the singing of several psalms that appears in their superscriptions (Pss. 57; 58; 59; 75). The NIV, NRSV, and ESV translate the phrase as “Do not destroy,” though “Let it not spoil” is another possibility.

ALUSH A wilderness campsite, located between Dophkah and Rephidim, used by the Israelites following their exodus from Egypt (Num. 33:13–14).

ALVAH An Edomite chief from the genealogical line of Esau (Gen. 36:40; 1 Chron. 1:51). At 1 Chron. 1:51 the NRSV and NASB use the variant name “Aliah.”

ALVAN The firstborn son of Shobal, a Horite clan chief from the genealogical line of Seir (Gen. 36:23; 1 Chron. 1:40). At 1 Chron. 1:40 the NRSV and NASB use the variant name “Alian.”

AMAD A city allotted to the tribe of Asher (Josh. 19:26). The location of Amad is unknown.

AMAL Son of Helem, and the head of an Asherite family, he is described as a brave warrior and outstanding leader (1 Chron. 7:35, 40).

AMALEK, AMALEKITES The Amalekites inhabited the Negev territory south of Judah (Num. 13:29). Amalek is described as "first among the nations" (Num. 24:20 [cf. 1 Sam. 27:8]); indeed, one story about it is set prior to the lifetime of its eponymous ancestor, Amalek (Gen. 14:7). The OT represents the Amalekites as descended from Esau and thus related to the Edomites (Gen. 36:12, 16). Several texts refer to "the Amalekites and Canaanites," suggesting that the former were not considered a Canaanite people (e.g., Num. 14:45).

The history of relations between the Amalekites and the Israelites is one of perpetual hostility. The Amalekites attacked the Israelites shortly after the Red Sea crossing. The outcome of the battle included a declaration of perpetual war between the Amalekites and the God of Israel (Exod. 17:8–16; Deut. 25:17–19). There were several subsequent conflicts (Num. 14:45; Judg. 3:13; 6:3, 33; 7:12; 10:12), continuing in the campaigns of Saul (1 Sam. 15:1–9) and David (1 Sam. 27:8; 30:16–20).

The final chapter in the historic struggle between Israel and the Amalekites is Mordecai and Esther's confrontation with Haman, who is identified as an "Agagite"—that is, a descendant of Agag, the Amalekite king spared by Saul (Esther 3:1; cf. 1 Sam. 15:8).

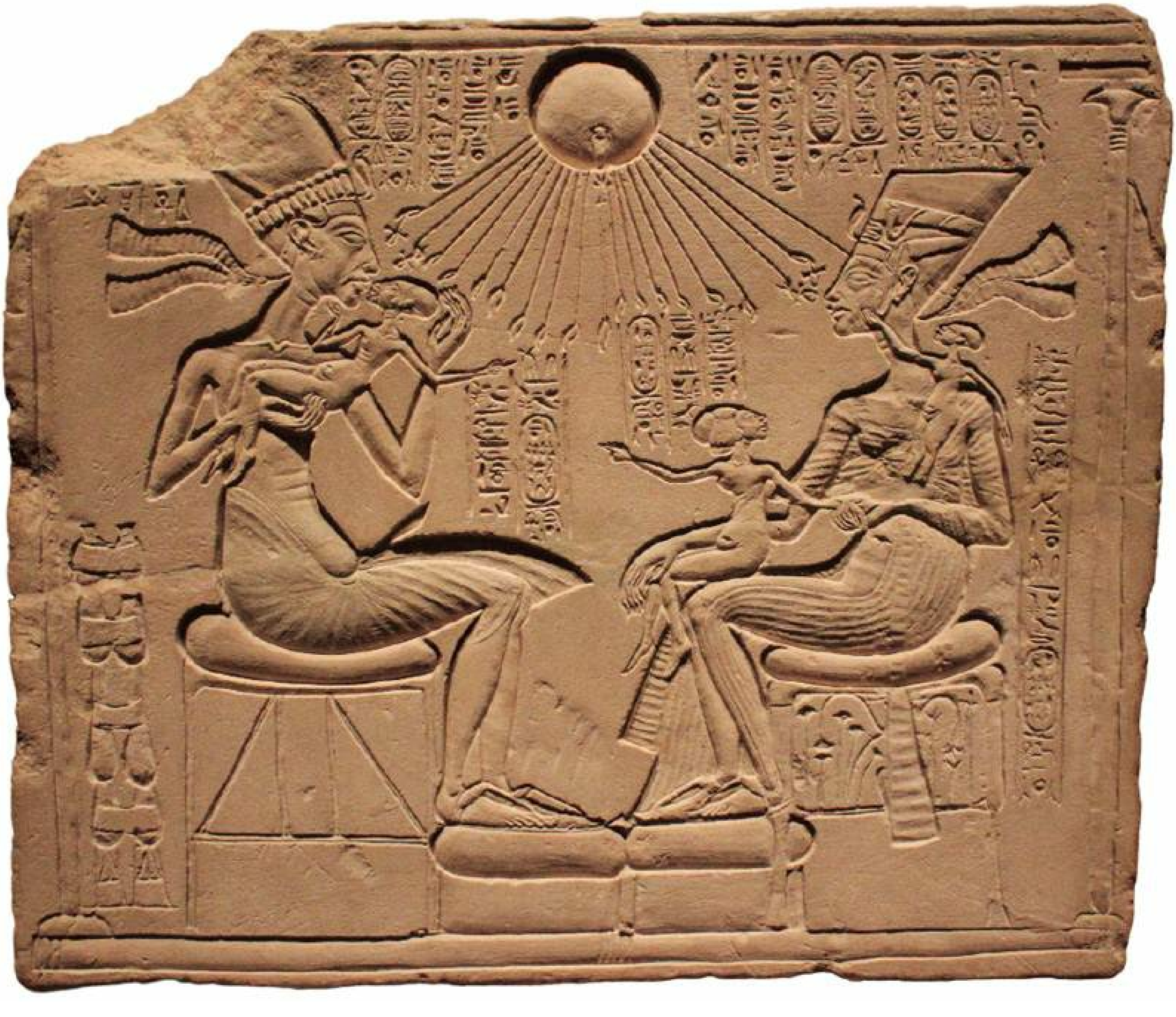
AMAM A southern city allotted to the tribe of Judah (Josh. 15:26). The site has not been definitely located, but it was likely in the Negev region.

AMANA A mountain mentioned in Song 4:8, associated with the more commonly known Hermon. It is typically identified as a mountain at the source of the Abana River (variant "Amana"; the modern Barada River). The modern name of the mountain is "Jebel Zebedani."

AMANUENSIS From Latin *servus a manu* (lit., "servant by hand," a servant with secretarial duties), this term refers to a scribe hired to write from dictation. Jeremiah had a personal scribe, Baruch, who wrote his words by dictation (Jer. 36:4–32). Paul used the scribe Tertius to write Romans (Rom. 16:22). Silas may have served as Peter's amanuensis for 1 Peter (1 Pet. 5:12).

AMARIAH **(1)** Son of Meraioth, a Levite descendant of Kohath through the line of Aaron and Eleazar; the father of Ahitub (1 Chron. 6:7, 52). **(2)** Son of the priest who served in Solomon's temple, Azariah, a Levite descendant of Kohath through the line of Aaron and Eleazar; the father of Ahitub (1 Chron. 6:11; see also Ezra 7:3). **(3)** The second son of Hebron, a Levite; Moses' cousin (1 Chron. 23:19; 24:23). **(4)** The chief priest in Jerusalem during the reign of Jehoshaphat (2 Chron. 19:11). **(5)** A priest who, along with others, assisted Kore with the distribution of the contributions made to God and the consecrated gifts during the reign of Hezekiah (2 Chron. 31:14–15). **(6)** A descendant of Binnui who agreed to divorce his foreign wife during the time of Ezra (Ezra 10:42). **(7)** One of the priests who sealed the covenant to keep the law during the time of Nehemiah (Neh. 10:3). **(8)** An ancestor of the provincial leader Athaiah, who settled in Jerusalem during the time of Nehemiah (Neh. 11:4). **(9)** A priest who returned to Jerusalem with Zerubbabel in the postexilic period (Neh. 12:2). **(10)** An ancestor of Zephaniah the prophet (Zeph. 1:1).

AMARNA Tell el-Amarna is the modern name of a city in Upper Egypt that briefly served as the capital in the Eighteenth Dynasty. It is located on the east bank of the Nile, halfway between Memphis and Thebes. Pharaoh Akhenaten (Amenophis/Amenhotep IV [1352–1336 BC]) moved the capital from Thebes to the virgin site of Tell el-Amarna and named it "Akhetaten" ("Horizon of the Sun Disk"). The religion and iconography of the Amarna period are radically different from both the previous and the following periods. Pharaoh Akhenaten officially demoted the god Amun-Re and elevated the god Aten. The unique artwork of this period emphasized the sun disk (i.e., the Aten) with its beneficent rays of light, the pharaoh with effeminate bodily features, and the royal family in a variety of scenes. Some scholars suggest that Akhenaten's "heretical" religion is an early form of monotheism, but it may be more appropriately identified as henotheism or monolatry, in which a single god is worshiped even though a plurality of gods is acknowledged. After Akhenaten's death, the capital was moved back to Thebes (under Pharaoh Tutankhamen), and the traditional religion was restored.



Egyptian relief showing Pharaoh Akhenaten, Nefertiti, and three of their daughters under the rays of the sun disk. Akhenaten founded Amarna as his capital (c. 1353 BC).

During the Amarna period there was a great deal of correspondence between the pharaoh and rulers of the Levant, Anatolia, and Mesopotamia. Beginning in 1887, clay tablets, written mostly in Akkadian, were recovered from the Amarna archive (381 tablets are now extant). The correspondence covers less than thirty years, beginning in the reign of Amenhotep III and ending under Tutankhamen. Some of the letters were sent from city-states (such as Hazor, Megiddo, Shechem, Gezer, Jerusalem, Gath, Ashkelon, Lachish) to entreat the pharaoh to assist or intervene in regional affairs. One of the common concerns in the letters was the disruptive behavior of a renegade people called the *ʼapiru*. The *ʼapiru* (or *habiru*) are not to be equated with the Hebrews (*ʼibrim*). Although some scholars, defending a fifteenth-century BC exodus, have argued for this equation, the linguistic, historical, geographical, and social evidence militates against it.

The Amarna tablets provide a unique glimpse into the geopolitical situation of the fourteenth century BC, but many of the cities that are prominent in the archive have revealed only scant archaeological remains for that period. It is therefore essential that any historical reconstruction of the period be based on the balanced integration of data from both texts and artifacts.

AMASA **(1)** A relative of David (2 Sam. 19:13) who (according to the Hebrew text; the Versions often harmonize) was the son of either Ithra the Israelite (2 Sam. 17:25; 1 Kings 2:5) or Jether the Ishmaelite (1 Chron. 2:17). Absalom, during the rebellion against David his father, appointed Amasa as the leader of his army. Following Absalom's defeat, which included his death, David requested that Amasa continue to serve as the military commander (2 Sam. 19:13). Upon his arrival in Jerusalem, David ordered Amasa to summon the men of Judah due to an uprising incited by the Benjamite Sheba and to return before the king within three days. Amasa arrived late; as a result, David sent men out under the command of Abishai to pursue Sheba. When Amasa finally met up with the men, he was greeted by Joab, who killed him with a dagger. Once Amasa's body was removed from the road, the men followed Joab in pursuit of Sheba (2 Sam. 20:1–13).

(2) Son of Hadlai who, along with other leaders in Ephraim, advised Israel to release the prisoners and plunder taken from Judah (2 Chron. 28:12).

AMASAI **(1)** A son of Elkanah, the father of one of the Levite clans (1 Chron. 6:25). **(2)** An ancestor of Heman, a Levitical musician at the time of David (1 Chron. 6:35). He may be one of the Levites assigned the task of blowing the trumpet before the ark of the covenant as it entered Jerusalem (1 Chron. 15:24). **(3)** The chief of David's elite troops called the "Thirty" (1 Chron. 12:18). Offering a Spirit-led pledge of allegiance and prayer for success, he joined David at Ziklag when David was banished by Saul. **(4)** An ancestor of Mahath, a Levite who aided Hezekiah in the purification of the temple (2 Chron. 29:12).

AMASHAI, AMASHSAI *See* Maasai.

AMASIAH The son of Zikri who volunteered and was appointed as a commander of Jehoshaphat's army. He was given charge over two hundred thousand warriors (2 Chron. 17:16).

AMAW A land "near the [Euphrates] river" from where Balaam traveled in order to curse the

Israelites (Num. 22:5). “Amaw” appears in the RSV, NRSV, and ESV, which follow an alternate reading of the Hebrew text. Other versions translate the phrase as either “native land” (NIV) or “land of the sons of his people” (NKJV), which follows the Hebrew text. Other ancient sources translate the phrase as “land of the Ammonites.” Some equate Amaw with the Mesopotamian city Amau.

AMAZIAH **(1)** The son of King Joash of Judah who succeeded him on the throne after the murder of his father (2 Kings 12:21). His reign is narrated in 2 Kings 14:1–22; 2 Chron. 25. Amaziah was twenty-five years of age when he became king, and he reigned twenty-nine years (798–769 BC). He was one of the better kings of Judah, though not measuring up to David’s high standard (2 Kings 14:3). He executed those responsible for his father’s death but spared their sons. Although he enjoyed military success against Edom, he was ensnared by Edomite idolatry. He provoked conflict with Jehoash, the Israelite king, but he was humiliatingly defeated and captured. The result was the demolition of the wall of Jerusalem, the looting of the temple, and the taking of hostages. The Chronicler explains this as a divine punishment for seeking the gods of Edom. Like his father, he was assassinated by conspirators, but he was succeeded by his son Azariah (Uzziah).

(2) “The priest of Bethel” (Amos 7:10), which may signal that Amaziah was head priest of this northern shrine, a position also suggested by the authoritative way in which he rebuked and tried to silence Amos. In reporting Amos to King Jeroboam, he acted like a loyal state employee. He accused Amos of conspiracy against the king, but the words that he attributed to Amos distort his message (7:11), for Amos’s words were not personally directed at Jeroboam, and they omit the fact that Amos preached as God’s spokesman (cf. 7:9). In instructing Amos not to prophesy, Amaziah directly contradicted God’s words (7:15–16). Amaziah’s opposition earned him an oracle personally directed at him and his priestly family (7:17), the only oracle of Amos against an individual. Amaziah would die “in an unclean country” (NIV mg.), preventing him from exercising priestly functions.

(3) A member of the tribe of Simeon (1 Chron. 4:34).

(4) A Levite of the clan of Merari (1 Chron. 6:45).

AMBASSADOR An ambassador is the official representative of a king or government outside the realm of that ruler. In terms of the underlying Hebrew and Greek vocabulary, the concept of ambassador in the Bible largely overlaps with that of messenger, for which there are several biblical terms. In other words, ambassadors (in the modern sense) are not easily distinguished from the numerous biblical messengers in terms of vocabulary alone. However, several biblical narratives involve royal or government messengers operating in an official capacity, on behalf of Moses (Num. 20:14), Judah (Ezek. 17:15), Babylon (2 Chron. 32:31), and Egypt (2 Chron. 35:21; Isa. 30:4). Several of these ambassadors were charged with forging a treaty with a foreign power.

Paul twice describes his own evangelistic ministry as an embassy on behalf of God. In 2 Cor. 5:20 he describes himself as one of “Christ’s ambassadors,” and in Eph. 6:20 paradoxically as an “ambassador in chains,” referring to his incarceration.

AMBER The book of Ezekiel is the only place in the OT where this substance is mentioned (1:4, 27; 8:2 KJV, NRSV, NLT; NIV: “glowing metal”). There the prophet uses it to describe the appearance of a cloud and also the divine image. The meaning and etymology of the Hebrew word (*khashmal*) are uncertain. It appears to be a bright, shining substance, possibly an alloy of silver and gold. This is confirmed by the LXX rendering *ēlektron*. Today, amber describes a yellowish brown fossil resin used for making jewelry and other ornaments.

AMBUSH A surprise attack by a party lying in wait in a concealed position, often used in the Bible both literally and figuratively. Actual ambushes frequently appear in military contexts, with those lying in ambush concealing themselves in a field or ravine, at a city gate, or behind hills. God commanded that Israel use an ambush to conquer Ai (Josh. 8). In Judg. 9 Abimelek and the citizens of Shechem each ambushed the other, as the Israelites later did to the tribe of Benjamin (Judg. 20). Later King Saul and his army lay in ambush before attacking the Amalekites (1 Sam. 15:5), and Jeroboam of Israel used an ambush against Judah after the nations sank into civil war (2 Chron. 13:13). Groups also set ambushes to kill individuals, as the Philistines did numerous times against Samson (Judg. 16), and twice the apostle Paul's enemies set ambushes to kill him (Acts 23:21; 25:3).

One also finds numerous figurative references to ambushes and lying in wait, most often where the authors use descriptions of ambushes to describe various kinds of evil that people commit against each other. Evil persons commit acts of injustice and offensive words, described as shooting (Ps. 64:4), bloodshed (Prov. 12:6), and even murder (Hos. 6:9) committed from ambush. The figures also describe scenes from nature and hunting: "Like a lion in cover he lies in wait . . . ; he catches the helpless and drags them off in his net" (Ps. 10:9).

AMEN A transliteration of a Hebrew word from the root meaning "to verify, confirm," therefore expressing support and agreement. The term is used in four ways: (1) To agree with a command (1 Kings 1:36), prophecy (Jer. 11:5; Rev. 1:7), or solemn oath (Num. 5:22), and as a concluding endorsement of an entire book (e.g., Gal. 6:18; Jude 25; Rev. 22:21). (2) To give an affirmative response and express grateful thanks to God in the context of worship (e.g., 1 Chron. 16:36; Ps. 41:13; Gal. 1:5; Eph. 3:21). (3) By Jesus to introduce important sayings. In the Synoptic Gospels a single "amen" is used (Matt. 5:18; Mark 8:12), while in John's Gospel the "amen" is doubled (John 1:51; 3:3; 5:19). Some versions adapt the "amen" construction, translating it as, for example, "Very truly I tell you" (NIV) or "Truly I tell you" (NRSV). The formula points to the unique authority of Jesus' word in contrast to the OT prophets, who spoke in the name of the Lord. The construction has no parallel in OT literature, thus pointing to Christ's exalted status. (4) As a personal name for Christ. He is called "the Amen" in the letter to Laodicea (Rev. 3:14), alluding to Isa. 65:16, where God is twice described as "the God of truth" (lit., "the God of amen"). Jesus is the true and faithful witness of the new creation in contrast to the lamentable failure of the Laodiceans, whose compromise and ineffective witness threatened imminent judgment.

Through habitual use, the "amen" can become nothing more than a liturgical full stop, signifying the conclusion of a prayer. In reality, it signifies wholehearted commitment to what has been said or sung. The seriousness of the "amen" is seen in the instructions of Moses to the people of God (Deut. 27:14–26). The power of the "amen" is rooted in Christ, who is the "Yes" of all God's promises; this in turn becomes the basis for the confident "Amen" of his people (2 Cor. 1:20).

AMETHYST A gem of purple or violet quartz. Amethyst (Heb. *'akhlamah*; Gk. *amethystos*) is the ninth of the twelve stones in the breastpiece of the high priest (Exod. 28:19; 39:12) and is the twelfth gem in the wall of the new Jerusalem (Rev. 21:20).

AMI This man is an ancestor of a family that belonged to the "servants of Solomon" (Ezra 2:57; Neh. 7:59 [under the name "Amon"]) and returned with Zerubbabel in 539 BC or soon after. Little is known about this group except that they likely performed menial functions at the temple, since they are grouped with the "temple servants" (*see* Nethinim). The name of the group suggests that they were formed during the period of Solomon, although they could have been so named because Solomon had the first temple built.

AMITTAI Amittai is twice mentioned as the father of Jonah (2 Kings 14:25; Jon. 1:1). Like his famous son, Amittai may have been from Gath Hepher and lived in the mid-eighth century BC.

AMMAH After Saul's death, Ammah was the site of a battle between David's army and forces loyal to Saul's family (2 Sam. 2:24). David later recovered it from Philistine control (8:1).

AMMI This name occurs only in Hosea as a symbolic name for one of Hosea's children (see 2:1). It means "my people." The term is used particularly of Israel, especially to express the covenant relationship between God and his people. Its negation (1:9) and subsequent affirmation (2:23) seem to make a powerful statement about God's judgment and also his restoration of his unfaithful people.

AMMIEL **(1)** A tribal leader of Dan, he was one of those sent by Moses to reconnoiter the promised land (Num. 13:12). **(2)** A resident of Lo Debar during the reign of David in the territory of Manasseh (2 Sam. 9:4–5; 17:27). **(3)** The father of Bathshua (1 Chron. 3:5 [probably Bathsheba]). **(4)** Son of Obed-Edom and a doorkeeper of the tabernacle in David's time (1 Chron. 26:5).

AMMIHUD Various tribal leaders in ancient Israel had a father with this name, including Elishama of Ephraim (Num. 1:10; cf. 1 Chron. 7:26), Shemuel of Simeon (Num. 34:20), and Pedahel of Naphtali (Num. 34:28). Genealogical tables in 1 Chronicles also give it as the name for a Levitical official (7:26; 9:4). It also is the name of the father of Talmai, the Aramean chieftain to whom Absalom fled for asylum after murdering his half brother Amnon (2 Sam. 13:37).

AMMINADAB This name is found in the family records of both Judah and Levi. He was the father of Nahshon, tribal leader of Judah (Num. 1:7; 2:3; 7:12, 17). His father was Ram (Ruth 4:19; 1 Chron. 2:10). For the Levites, an Amminadab is a descendant of Kohath and family leader (1 Chron. 6:22; 15:10–11). *See also* Amminadib.

AMMINADIB This word occurs only in Song 6:12 (KJV). If it is a proper name (so LXX, KJV), the identity of the person is unknown (NIV mg.: "Amminadab"). The expression seems to mean "my people is princely" or something similar. English Bibles vary widely in their translations, though most seem to take the expression as a reference to magnificent chariots fit for a bridal party. A good translation might be: "Before I knew it, my desire placed me (among) the noble chariots of my people" (cf. NIV).

AMMISHADDAI The tribal leader for Dan in the exodus generation (Num. 1:12; 2:25; 7:66, 71; 10:25).

AMMIZABAD Son of Benaiah ben Jehoiada, he was a military division leader during David's reign (1 Chron. 27:6).

AMMON, AMMONITES Ben-Ammi was the son of Abraham's nephew Lot and the younger of Lot's two daughters (Gen. 19:36–38). He is represented as the ancestor of the Ammonites, a Transjordanian people who were a perennial threat to Israel from the wilderness period through to

David's reign.

The nation of Ammon was located east of the Jordan, just north of the Dead Sea. Its capital was Rabbah, and it bordered Gad to the west, the half-tribe of Manasseh to the northwest, and Moab to the south (see also Deut. 3:16). Much of the source of their contention was over the fertile land of Gilead, which encompassed the Jordan River and bordered Ephraim, the western tribe of Manasseh, Benjamin, and Judah.

The second-century AD ruins of the temple of Hercules occupy the citadel of the ancient city of Rabbah, the capital of Ammon.

The exodus and the period of the judges. According to the biblical record, while moving to enter Canaan, Moses and the Israelites avoided Amman (Rabbah) and marched through Sihon instead (Num. 21:24–35). Later the Israelites were told explicitly not to attack the Ammonites, for that territory was given to the descendants of Lot (Deut. 2:19, 37).

The first conflict between the Ammonites and the Israelites is recorded in Judg. 3:13, where the Moabite king Eglon was allied with the Ammonites (and the Amalekites) against Ehud. In Judg. 10:6–7 the Israelites are punished for their idolatry by being put under the thumb of the Philistines and the Ammonites. Jephthah led the Gileadites against the Ammonites, who had provoked them to battle. This story is perhaps better known with respect to Jephthah's fateful oath to Yahweh to offer up as a burnt offering whatever came out of his door if Yahweh would give him victory over the Ammonites

(Judg. 11). It was his daughter who came out to meet him. In Judg. 12 the Ephraimites voiced their displeasure at not having been asked to join in the battle, so they came to Jephthah, threatening to burn his house down. Jephthah responded that he did call but they did not come. A battle ensued between them, which sparked the famous *shibboleth*/*sibboleth* incident, in which Jephthah's forces could identify Ephraimite opponents by their inability to pronounce the *sh*.

The monarchy. During the early monarchic period, the Ammonite king Nahash besieged Jabesh of Gilead. Rather than negotiate, the Ammonites demanded that the right eye of every Jabeshite male be put out. They appealed to Saul for help, who came and slaughtered many and scattered the rest (1 Sam. 11:1–11). Saul's act was remembered kindly when, after his death at the hand of the Philistines, the men of Jabesh brought back the bodies of Saul and his sons, burned them, buried the remains, and fasted for seven days (31:11–13). In 1 Sam. 12:12 Samuel refers to the Nahash incident as the impetus for the Israelites' desire to be ruled by a king.

In 2 Sam. 10–12 David conquers the Ammonite capital of Rabbah, under the rule of Hanun son of Nahash (see also 1 Chron. 19:1–20:3). This is the context in which David's affair with Bathsheba took place (2 Sam. 11–12). Uriah, her husband, was killed while attacking Rabbah. During the revolt by his son Absalom, David was given material aid from several sources, one of which was "Shobi son of Nahash from Rabbah of the Ammonites" (2 Sam. 17:27).

Solomon's marriages to foreign wives included Ammonites (1 Kings 11:1). As a result, Solomon followed the foreign gods, including "Molek the detestable god of the Ammonites" (11:5). It is not mentioned how many Ammonite wives Solomon had, but one of them, Naamah, was the mother of Rehoboam, the first king of Judah during the divided kingdom (14:31).

The divided kingdom. Later, during the divided monarchy, the Ammonites appear again. Ammon, Moab, and Edom formed a coalition against Jehoshaphat king of Judah (2 Chron. 20:1–30). Jehoshaphat was victorious with God's assistance. Likewise, during the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, a coalition of Babylonian, Aramean, Moabite, and Ammonite forces attacked him, although this time it was at God's direction because "he did evil in the eyes of the LORD, just as his predecessors had done" (2 Kings 23:36–24:6). According to 2 Chron. 26:8; 27:5, the Ammonites had earlier brought tribute to Uzziah and his son Josiah.

The Ammonites appear on the scene again just before the fall of Judah. During the reign of Zedekiah, a coalition of several nations including Ammon was thwarted by God through Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon (Jer. 27:1–7).

The exilic and postexilic periods. Ammonite opposition to Judah continued. According to Jer. 41:10, 15, governor Gedaliah's assassin found refuge among the Ammonites. Later, under Nehemiah, the Ammonites actively resisted the rebuilding of Jerusalem (Neh. 4:1–3). In the postbiblical period, the Ammonites are mentioned as those among whom Jason, who slaughtered his fellow citizens, was given refuge (1 Macc. 4:26; 5:7).

In addition to the historical books, the Ammonites are mentioned numerous times in the prophetic books. Isaiah predicts that Ephraim and Judah will together "swoop down" and subject Edom, Moab, and the Ammonites (11:14). Jeremiah prophesies against them at some length (49:1–6), mainly because of the worship of Molek, although God will "restore the fortunes of the Ammonites" (v. 6). Likewise, Ezekiel prophesies the destruction of Ammon (21:28–32; 25:1–7, 10).

Eventually, Rabbah became a shell of its former self (see Jer. 25:5) and was rebuilt by Ptolemy II Philadelphus (285–246 BC), who renamed the city "Philadelphia." It became a city of the Decapolis (a group of ten Greek cities [see Matt. 4:25; Mark 5:20; 7:31]).

AMNON **(1)** The firstborn son of King David (2 Sam. 3:2). He became infatuated with the beauty of his half sister Tamar. Then he listened to counsel to deceive her and David. When she brought him a meal, he raped her. Afterward, he despised her. Tamar’s brother Absalom cared for her and later deceived Amnon and David by inviting Amnon to a feast. There Absalom had Amnon killed (2 Sam. 13). David is portrayed as an ineffective leader throughout. **(2)** Son of Shimon in the genealogy of Judah (1 Chron. 4:20).

AMOK An Israelite priest who returned to Jerusalem from exile with Zerubbabel (Neh. 12:7) and was the father of Eber (Neh. 12:20).

AMON **(1)** The fourteenth king of Judah (641–640 BC) and the son of Manasseh, he continued unrepentant in idolatrous worship. He was assassinated by his officials in his second year as king (2 Kings 21:19–26; 2 Chron. 33:21–25; Zeph. 1:4; 3:4, 11). **(2)** A governor of the city of Samaria under the kingship of Ahab of Israel (871–852 BC), to whom the king committed the prophet Micaiah for uttering an unfavorable prophecy (1 Kings 22:26). **(3)** One of the descendants of the servants of Solomon who was among the returnees from exile under the leadership of Zerubbabel (Neh. 7:59). **(4)** An Egyptian god whose center was at the city of Thebes (Jer. 46:25).

AMORITES One of the nations that occupied part of Canaan and the Transjordan (by the Jordan River) before Israel’s conquest. They appear in lists of the peoples (up to ten) occupying Canaan (e.g., Gen. 15:21; Exod. 3:8, 17; 23:23; Neh. 9:8). According to the Table of Nations (Gen. 10), they are descendants of Canaan, one of the sons of Ham. This territory was conquered by Abram and his forces (Gen. 14), and in fact Abram was living “near the great trees of Mamre the Amorite” (14:13). Later the Israelites remain enslaved for four generations because the sin of the Amorites has not reached its full measure (15:16).

The name is of Akkadian origin (*amurru*) and refers to the western portion of Mesopotamia. By the end of the third millennium BC, Amorites were abundant in Mesopotamian cities, which eventually led to Amorite control over Babylon around 2000–1595 BC. During this time Babylonian kings had Amorite names, one of whom was the famous Hammurabi (1792–1750 BC).

The Amorites were constantly in conflict with the Israelites. They were to be driven out of Canaan, along with the other Canaanite peoples (Exod. 23:23; 33:2). In Num. 21:21 the Amorites are mentioned as one nation through which Israel would need to go in order to reach Canaan. King Sihon refused, a war ensued, and the Israelites were victorious and settled in the land of the Amorites (Num. 21:31).

The Amorites are mentioned numerous times throughout the OT. At times, the name simply represents the general population of Canaan (like “Canaanites” [e.g., Josh. 24:15]). This illustrates that throughout much of the biblical period Amorites were not so much a specific ethnic or cultural designation, but had become assimilated into the general Canaanite population. This Amorite and mixed influence on Israel is expressed at length in Ezekiel’s allegory of unfaithful Jerusalem (Ezek. 16, esp. vv. 3, 45).

AMOS Amos was the first of the writing prophets, ministering during the long reigns of Uzziah (769–733 BC) and Jeroboam II (784–748 BC). During this period Judah and Israel were prosperous and secure, which made Amos’s threats sound ridiculous; however, they were quickly fulfilled. After Jeroboam’s death the northern kingdom rapidly deteriorated (ending in 722 BC).

Amos was a *noqed* ("sheep raiser"), a word used of Mesha king of Moab (2 Kings 3:4) and indicating a sheep breeder or dealer, not a rustic shepherd (*ro'eh*). Though a champion of the poor (Amos 2:6–7), Amos may have been wealthy, so that it was his own social class that he criticized. His hometown of Tekoa, ten miles south of Jerusalem, was a center for pastoral work. Amos called himself a *boqer* ("herdsman"), a word that does not specify what animals he raised, and said that he cared for "sycamore-fig trees" (7:14). The fruit and leaves of sycamores were used as winter feed for stock, so these were two linked professional activities. Amos was no career prophet, and presumably he eventually went back to his profession.

Amos's Judean origins influenced his preaching to sinful Israel. The book of the prophecy of Amos begins with oracles against eight nations that were once part of the Davidic empire (1:3–2:16) and ends with the promise of a restored Davidic empire (9:11–12). The fact that Amos was from the south yet spoke in the north hinted at a coming Davidic reunification of the twin nations. God's words through Amos are pictured as coming from Zion (= Jerusalem), the Davidic capital (1:2).

Amos's prophecy records what he "saw" (1:1), the word indicating "saw [in a vision]," and climaxes with five visions. The priest Amaziah used the term "seer" in a derogatory sense: "Get out, you seer!" (7:12). The altercation with Amaziah is the one incident of Amos's ministry narrated (7:10–17). Amaziah accused him of sedition because he spoke at the royal sanctuary of Bethel. Amos was told to "eat bread" (literally) back in Judah—that is, earn his living there—with Amaziah implying that Amos was commercially motivated. In response to Amaziah's taunts, Amos said, "I was neither a prophet nor a prophet's son," meaning not a prophet by profession, and he denied being a member of any prophetic guild (cf. "the sons of the prophets" in 2 Kings 2). Instead, Amos stressed the divine initiative and call that alone explained his prophetic activities (7:15).

AMOS, BOOK OF Amos is largely concerned with judgment oracles against the nations, particularly Judah and Israel. Memorable for the numerical parallelisms that begin a series of speeches against various nations ("For three sins of X . . . , even for four . . . [1:3, 6, 9, 11, 13; 2:1, 4, 6]), the book also concludes with a powerful anticipation of the restoration of Israel and "David's fallen tent," which the NT understands to point to Jesus, David's greater son.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The superscription pinpoints Amos's prophecy to a time "two years before the earthquake, when Uzziah was king of Judah and Jeroboam son of Jehoash was king of Israel" (1:1). The precise date of the earthquake is unknown, but we can approximately date the reign of Uzziah to 769–733 BC and of Jeroboam II to 784–748 BC, so it appears that Amos operated sometime in the confluence of Uzziah's reign with Jeroboam's (769–748 BC).

The era of these two kings was a time of great material prosperity (2 Kings 14:25–28; 2 Chron. 26:6–8). Assyria was relatively weak, though it had conquered one of Israel's closer enemies, Syria, with its capital at Damascus. In the absence of these or other major rivals, Israel and Judah could grow. However, along with economic growth came spiritual confusion and ethical darkness, which Amos addresses.

Although Amos preaches during a period of prosperity for Israel, he foresees God's coming judgment against their sins in the form of a powerful enemy (3:11; 5:3, 27; 6:6–14; 7:9, 17; 9:4). This enemy would turn out to be Assyria, which would begin its powerful westward expansion under Tiglath-pileser III (744–727 BC) and eventually incorporate Israel under Shalmaneser V and Sargon II in 722 BC. Judah would find itself under the shadow of this emergent superpower.

Amos came from Tekoa, a town just five miles south of Bethlehem, which itself is four miles south of Jerusalem. Although he was from Judah, his ministry was primarily directed toward the northern kingdom, prompting a northern priest, Amaziah, to tell him to go back to where he came from (7:10–17). Amos describes himself as a shepherd who tended flocks (1:1; 7:15) and as one who took care of sycamore-fig trees (7:14). Debate has been incessant about whether this points to his placement in the lower or upper classes of society.

Amos cared for sycamore trees, like the one shown here.

LITERARY CONSIDERATIONS AND OUTLINE

The book of Amos contains a number of oracles, mostly judgment, but some salvation. These oracles are directed toward the surrounding nations (Damascus, Gaza, Tyre, Edom, Ammon, and

Moab) and then Judah and Israel, and in that order. The order, beginning with foreign nations and then moving to Judah and finally Israel, is intentional. The original audience that Amos addresses was located in Judah and especially in Israel. One can imagine a sympathetic audience to the declaration of violent judgment on the nations, but then Amos skillfully moves to God's own people. As the following structure demonstrates, Israel was the main audience that received the most sustained chastisement:

I. Superscription (1:1)

II. Introduction to the Message (1:2)

III. The Prophetic Oracles (1:3–6:14)
  A. Oracles of Judgment against the Surrounding Nations (1:3–2:5)
    1. Syria (represented by Damascus; 1:3–5)
    2. Philistia (represented by Gaza; 1:6–8)
    3. Tyre (1:9–10)
    4. Edom (1:11–12)
    5. Ammon (1:13–15)
    6. Moab (2:1–3)
    7. Judah (2:4–5)
  B. Oracles of Judgment against Israel (2:6–6:14)

IV. The Prophetic Visions (7:1–9:15)

Notable in the final section is the concluding oracle, which is one of the few salvation oracles in the book. Amos 9:11–15 in particular looks forward to the future restoration of Israel: the restoration of the house of David, which is pictured as a renewal of David's fallen tent.

THEOLOGICAL MESSAGE

Amos has a message of divine judgment against God's people, particularly those in the northern kingdom. God is sovereign and will see to the appropriate punishment. God controls the nations, so he can raise up an enemy to bring destruction on Israel as well as other offending nations. Although the nations are the tool of his anger, there should be no mistake that it is God himself who is behind their punishment (1:4; 3:2, 14; 9:4).

The punishment is for idolatry and ethical violations, particularly social injustice. God's people worshiped false gods (2:8; 5:5, 26; 7:9–13; 8:14). Also, the wealthy classes indulged in sins and oppressed the lower classes (2:7–8; 5:12; 8:6).

Amos is also well known as the first to use the language of the "day of the LORD" (5:18–20). Although this appears to be the first mention of this day in Scripture, the way Amos refers to it indicates that it was already known in his society. The people thought that the day of the Lord would be good for them, but Amos says that because of their sins, it will be horrible. The day of the Lord is the day of God's coming as a warrior to judge sinners.

NEW TESTAMENT CONNECTIONS

The NT shares Amos's concern for social justice (e.g., 1 Cor. 11:22; James 2:1–10). More specifically, Amos is quoted in the NT a number of times, showing that the NT authors believe that his expectations for the future are coming to fulfillment in their time (compare Amos 5:15 with Rom. 12:9; Amos 5:25 with Acts 7:24). Most interesting is the early church's understanding of Amos 9:11–12, quoted by the Jerusalem council in Acts 15:16–17. Here one of the leaders, James, argues that the addition of the Gentiles into the people of God fulfills God's promise to reunify Israel.

AMOZ The father of the prophet Isaiah (2 Kings 19:2; Isa. 1:1). All thirteen occurrences of this name appear in the phrase "Isaiah son of Amoz." An ancient Hebrew seal reads "Amoz the scribe."

AMPHIPOLIS A Greco-Roman city in northeast Greece that Paul passed through on his way to Thessalonica from Philippi on his second missionary journey (Acts 17:1). Amphipolis was the capital of the first district of Macedonia. It was located between Philippi and Thessalonica, near the Aegean Sea.

AMPLIATUS A Christian in Rome who was greeted by Paul as one "whom I love in the Lord" (Rom. 16:8). Since "Ampliatus" typically was a slave name, it is likely that he either was currently a slave or had been one in the past. Because he was known personally by Paul, who had yet to visit Rome, he most likely met Paul before coming to Rome.

AMRAM **(1)** Grandson of Levi, son of Kohath (Exod. 6:16–18; 1 Chron. 6:1–2), and the father of Aaron, Moses, and Miriam (Exod. 6:20; 1 Chron. 6:3). Within various Jewish traditions, Amram receives a generous treatment (see Josephus, *Ant.* 2.210–23; *L.A.B.* 9), but the biblical text includes specific mention of Amram only in genealogical lists. We are told, however, that his descendants, the Amramites, were responsible for the care of the sanctuary in the wilderness (Num. 3:27–28) and later for the treasuries (1 Chron. 26:23–26). **(2)** The son of Bani (Ezra 10:34) who, following the exile, was among those commanded by Ezra to "separate" from his foreign wife.

AMRAPHEL A member of a coalition of four kings who raided Canaan during Abraham's lifetime (Gen. 14:1, 9). They defeated five local kings, plundered the area, and kidnapped Lot along with some other people. According to Gen. 14, Abraham set out and defeated these kings, recovered the plunder, and rescued Lot and the other captives. Amraphel was king of Shinar (i.e., Babylon). At one time, Amraphel was thought to be the famous Hammurabi, an early king of Babylon, but today this identification is doubted. He may be an obscure minor king from the area of Babylon predating Hammurabi.

AMULET A charm made of semiprecious stones, beads, or precious metals, often inscribed with religious symbols or magical incantations. Amulets were worn to keep evil spirits from entering the body, restricting their havoc while assuring physical and material well-being.

This amulet containing incantations against fever would have been rolled into a case and tied around a sick person’s neck.

AMZI **(1)** A descendant of Levi and ancestor of Ethan, a musician appointed by King David (1 Chron. 6:46). **(2)** A descendant of Levi and ancestor of Adaiah, a priest during the time of Nehemiah (Neh. 11:12).

ANAB A city located in the hill country of Judah, one of the cities of the Anakites, along with

Hebron and Debir. Joshua conquered these cities (Josh. 11:21) and gave them to the tribe of Judah as an inheritance (15:50).

ANAH **(1)** One of the sons of Zibeon, he was the father of Oholibamah, one of the wives of Esau (Gen. 36:2; 1 Chron. 1:40). Anah is credited with a discovery in the wilderness (Gen. 36:24). What he discovered is subject to debate (NIV, NASB: "hot springs"; KJV: "mules"; others suggest "spirits in the form of serpents"). **(2)** One of the seven sons of Seir, and a chief among the Horites (Gen. 36:20, 29; 1 Chron. 1:38, 41). The relationship between these two men named "Anah" is unclear due to textual difficulties.

ANAHARATH A city located in the Jezreel Valley that belonged to Issachar (Josh. 19:19). Anaharath appears among the list of cities conquered by Pharaoh Thutmose III (c. 1450 BC). It is identified with modern Tell el-Mukharkhash, five miles southeast of Mount Tabor.

ANAIAH One of thirteen assistants who stood by Ezra during the reading of the law to the assembly of Israelites in Jerusalem (Neh. 8:4). Anaiah is also listed among the "leaders of the people" (Neh. 10:22) who sealed the covenant with God following the hearing of the law.

ANAKITES The descendants of Anak, the Anakites (NRSV: "Anakim"), known for their height (Deut. 2:10, 21; 9:2), inhabited the Judean hill country when Israelite spies entered the land (Num. 13:21–33; Deut. 1:28). The spies viewed them as Nephilim (Num. 13:33; cf. Gen. 6:4). Arba, a hero among the Anakites, gave his name to Kiriath Arba (Josh. 14:15), later Hebron (Josh. 15:13–14; Judg. 1:20). The Anakites were related to the Rephaites, originally from the regions of Moab and Ammon but destroyed by the time of the conquest (Deut. 2:10–11, 20–21). After Joshua completely destroyed Anakite habitations in the hill country, remnants moved westward and lived in the Philistine cities of Gaza, Gath, and Ashdod (Josh. 11:21–22).

ANAMIM *See* Anamites.

ANAMITES One of the sons of Mizraim (Gen. 10:13) and a grandson of Ham. The descendants of Ham became the peoples of North Africa and may be equated with Cyrene in modern-day Libya.

ANAMMELECH *See* Anammelek.

ANAMMELEK One of the gods (along with Adrammelek) worshiped by the Sepharvites. Part of this worship included the sacrifice of children (2 Kings 17:31). Identification of this deity is uncertain, but it is associated with the Mesopotamian god Anu (the name means "Anu is king"). *See also* Adrammelek.

ANAN One of the "leaders of the people" who sealed the covenant with God following Ezra's public reading of the law (Neh. 10:26).

ANANI The son of Elioenai and last recorded descendant of Jehoiachin (1 Chron. 3:24). He is possibly mentioned in a letter from Jews to Bogoas, the Persian governor of Judah in the fifth century BC.

ANANIAH **(1)** The father of Maaseiah and grandfather of Azariah (Neh. 3:23). Some scholars identify him as Anan (Neh. 10:26) or Anani (1 Chron. 3:24) since both names are shortened forms of "Ananiah." **(2)** A location in Benjamin about four miles northwest of Jerusalem (Neh. 11:32).

ANANIAS A Greek form of the common Hebrew name "Hananiah." **(1)** A member of the Jerusalem church whose death was followed by that of his wife, Sapphira, as a result of holding back part of their possessions (Acts 5:1–11). Peter rebuked Ananias and Sapphira's deception as lying to or testing "the Holy Spirit" (vv. 3, 5). This incident is best understood against the background of Acts 2–4, which describes as closely related being "filled with the Holy Spirit" (2:4; 4:31), the spread of the gospel (2:40; 4:4), and the communal sharing of possessions (2:44–45; 4:32–37).

(2) A disciple at Damascus who helped restore Saul's eyesight and baptized him in accordance with the Lord's direction in a vision (Acts 9). In Acts 22:12 Paul describes Ananias as "a devout observer of the law and highly respected by all the Jews living [at Damascus]." He was the one who informed Paul of his calling as a witness for Jesus to all people (22:12–15).

(3) A high priest in Jerusalem during AD 47–58. He presided over the interrogation of Paul at the Sanhedrin of Jerusalem (Acts 23:1–10) and testified against Paul before Felix (24:1). His character is well illustrated in his command to strike Paul on the mouth, upon which Paul calls him a "whitewashed wall" and sees him unfit for the high priesthood (23:2–5). Being a pro-Roman figure, Ananias was assassinated by the Zealots in AD 66.

ANATH The father of Shamgar the judge (Judg. 3:31; 5:6). This name is also associated with a Canaanite war goddess and with Egyptian and Syrian goddesses as well.

ANATHEMA A transliterated Greek word meaning "curse" (see NIV). Paul invokes it upon those who pervert or reject the gospel of God's free grace in Christ. In such instances it is tantamount to pronouncing an outcome of eternal damnation (1 Cor. 16:22; Gal. 1:8–9). Such was Paul's desire that his fellow Jews be saved that he could wish himself anathema on their behalf (Rom. 9:3). In 1 Cor. 12:3 Paul says no one speaking by God's Spirit can pronounce a curse (*anathema*) on Jesus. In the LXX, the anathema refers to what is offered to the deity. Sometimes this offering involved the complete destruction of what had been dedicated, a notable example being the cities of Canaan during the time of Israel's conquest (Num. 21:3; Josh. 7:1, 11–13). This sense is retained in the NT only in Luke 21:5.

ANATHOTH **(1)** Anathoth (near modern 'Anata, which preserves the name) was just a few miles northeast of Jerusalem in the tribal allotment given to Benjamin. This village was assigned to the Levites (Josh. 21:18; 1 Chron. 6:60). It was the village where Solomon sent Abiathar after he was deposed from the priesthood (1 Kings 2:26). Anathoth was also the hometown of Abiezer, one of David's thirty mighty men, as well as another of his warriors, Jehu (1 Chron. 12:3). It was listed as a town that would be the object of judgment because of the sins of God's people (Isa. 10:30). After the exile, men from Anathoth returned from Babylon to Judah (Ezra 2:23), and the town itself was populated again (Neh. 11:32). The city's most famous resident was the prophet Jeremiah (Jer. 1:1). **(2)** A descendant of Benjamin through his son Beker (1 Chron. 7:8). **(3)** One of the leaders who sealed the covenant renewal at the time of Ezra and Nehemiah (Neh. 10:19).

ANATHOTHITE Refers to an inhabitant of Anathoth (1 Chron. 12:3 [KJV: "Antothite"]), a

Levitical city in Benjamin (Josh. 15:24; 1 Kings 4:16).

ANCESTOR A person from whom a person or group has descended in either a physical or a spiritual sense. For Israel, the concept of one's ancestors and their God was of great significance in determining both identity and religious practice. Biblical concepts such as covenant and promise primarily found expression in the OT in terms of the ancestral agreements established with God (Deut. 6:10; 9:5; 29:13; 30:20; cf. Gen. 12:1–7). The effect of ancestors on one's spiritual condition could have either positive or negative implications (Exod. 3:13; Josh. 24:14–15; 2 Tim. 1:5; Heb. 11). The people of Israel are portrayed as suffering judgment both for their sins and for those of their ancestors, but also they could find repentance and hope because of the same relationships (Zech. 1:4–6; Mal. 1:1–5).

There are thirteen primary genealogical lists in the OT and two in the NT, although there are numerous passages that include more limited lineages to identify an individual. Genealogical lists could also function to engender a notion of commonality of relationship outside single family lines, such as when extended family genealogies are given (Gen. 10; 25:12–18; 36:1–30). For priests and kings, it was of utmost importance to be able to establish ancestral identity. This necessity may have played a role in at least two discussions of Jesus. His genealogical lists in both Matt. 1 and Luke 3 established his claim to the line of David, and his spiritual ancestry in the person of Melchizedek in Heb. 7 granted him superior status to the priesthood of Levi.

Worship of ancestors, or the related but distinct cult of the dead, was common in nearly every culture with which Israel interacted and may have even found expression in popular practice among Israelites, as evidenced by the apparent leaving of gifts at several tomb locations throughout Palestine (cf. Ezek. 43:7–9). However, the biblical record is consistent throughout that such practices were prohibited. Among laws centered on the topic of ancestral worship were restrictions on consulting the dead at all (Deut. 18:11), giving offerings to the dead (Deut. 26:14), self-laceration for the dead (Deut. 14:1; Jer. 16:6), and seeking ancestors to foretell the future (Isa. 8:19; 65:4–8).

ANCHOR A device used to secure a ship or other vessel to the bottom of the sea to prevent it from drifting. There is no mention of anchors in the OT, probably because the Israelites were not commonly a seagoing people. This term is, however, used in the NT, specifically in reference to Paul's shipwreck (Acts 27) and metaphorically to describe the security of our hope in Christ (Heb. 6:19).

Ancient anchors on display at Caesarea, Israel

ANCIENT OF DAYS The designation “Ancient of Days” appears as a title for the sovereign God seated on his heavenly throne in Daniel’s vision of Dan. 7:9, 13, 22. In this symbolic image, the God’s white clothing symbolizes purity and righteousness, his white wool-like hair indicates his antiquity, and his fiery throne depicts his awesome power. In Daniel’s vision a second figure, the heavenly “Son of Man” (or, “one like a human being”) comes with the clouds of heaven before the Ancient of Days and receives authority, glory, sovereign power, the worship of all nations, and an eternal kingdom (Dan. 7:13–14). In the Gospels, Jesus identifies himself as this heavenly Son of Man who will come with the clouds of heaven (Matt. 24:30; 26:64; Mark 13:26; 14:62; Luke 21:27, 69).

A passage relevant to the Ancient of Days in Dan. 7 is Rev. 1:14–16, where John sees a heavenly figure in whom is combined the features of the heavenly Son of Man and the Ancient of Days. Imagery characterizing the latter figure (white hair, fiery presence) is now applied to Jesus, indicating that the Son of Man is equal to the Ancient of Days in glory and authority.

ANDREW One of the twelve apostles and brother of Peter, his more famous counterpart. Andrew came from Bethsaida in Galilee (John 1:44), though he lived and worked with Peter in Capernaum as a fisherman (Matt. 4:18). At first a disciple of John the Baptist, he, with an unnamed disciple (possibly John), transferred allegiance to Jesus (John 1:35–40). His first recorded act was to bring his brother to Jesus (1:41–42). Subsequently, he was called by Jesus to become a permanent follower (Matt. 4:19) and later was appointed as an apostle (Matt. 10:2).

ANDRONICUS A Jew greeted as a relative or compatriot of Paul in Romans (16:7). He is linked with Junias (NASB) or Junia (NIV), a man or a woman (his wife), depending on the spelling. A believer before Paul was, Andronicus had been imprisoned and was "outstanding among the apostles," suggesting that he was respected by or was a part of that group.

ANEM A Levitical town allotted to the Gershonites among the tribe of Issachar, meaning "two fountains" (1 Chron. 6:73). Earlier it was known as En Gannim, meaning "fountain of gardens" (Josh. 19:21). It is identified with modern Jenin.

ANER **(1)** An Amorite chief who allied himself with Abraham in the pursuit of the four kings who invaded Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. 14:13, 24). **(2)** A Levitical town allotted to the Kohathites from among the tribe of Manasseh (1 Chron. 6:70).

ANETHOTHITE *See* Anathothite.

ANGEL The English word "angel" refers to nonhuman spirits, usually good. The biblical words usually translated "angel" (Heb. *malak*; Gk. *angelos*) mean "messenger" and can refer to one sent by God or by human beings. A messenger must be utterly loyal, reliable, and able to act confidentially (Prov. 13:17). The messenger speaks and acts in the name of the sender (Gen. 24).

Messengers sent by God are not always angels. Yahweh's prophets were his messengers (Hag. 1:13), as were priests (Mal. 2:7).

OLD TESTAMENT

There are few references to angels (plural) in the OT. In heaven they praise God and worship him (Pss. 103:20; 148:2). God sends his angels to accompany his people (Gen. 28:12; 32:1) and to protect them (Ps. 91:11) and once sent them to destroy Egypt (Ps. 78:49).

An angel in human form was referred to as a "man of God" (Judg. 13:6), the same term used for a prophet (cf. 1 Kings 13:14).

Angels evoked fear and wonder. They are described as shining (Matt. 28:3; Acts 12:7). When humans bowed to worship angels, they were rebuked because God alone is to be worshiped (Rev. 22:8–9).

God himself, not being a part of the created order, cannot be seen. In order to communicate with people, he sometimes speaks through a form called "the angel of the LORD." The angel of the Lord appeared to Abraham in human form (Gen. 18; cf. Josh. 5:13–15), but to Moses as fire (Exod. 3:2). When he spoke, it was God speaking (Exod. 3:4, 14). He guided and guarded Israel out of Egypt and through the desert (23:20–23). He appeared within the pillar of fire or cloud (13:21–22; 14:19), being seen through the pillar on occasion as "the glory of the LORD" (16:7–10; 24:16–17; 33:9–11; 40:17, 34–38), and later as he filled Solomon's temple (1 Kings 8:11).

In a series of visions of the glory of the Lord (Ps. 18:7–15; Ezek. 1; Rev. 4:7) we encounter four "living creatures" called "cherubim" (Ezek. 10:20–22) that are not explicitly identified as angels and whose visible appearance is part human and part animal. Their form was placed on the cover of the ark of the covenant (Exod. 25:18) and embroidered on the curtains of the tabernacle (26:1). Cherubim guarded the eastern entry into the garden of Eden (Gen. 3:24), implying that Eden, the place where God appeared on earth, was now excluded from the area allocated to humankind.

In Isaiah's vision of God's glory, he describes, literally, "flaming ones" (Heb. *seraphim*) located above God and crying, "Holy, holy, holy" (Isa. 6:1–7). All we know of them is that they had six wings, whereas the cherubim had four (Ezek. 1:11). It may be that seraphim are not a separate class of angels but simply a description appropriate to all angels, since elsewhere we are told (Ps. 104:4; Heb. 1:7) that God's angels are "flames of fire."

Angels are also called "holy ones" (Deut. 33:2) and "spirits" or "winds" (Zech. 6:5; cf. Ps. 104:4). Since God's people are also called "holy ones" (Dan. 7:27; NIV: "holy people"), it may be difficult to know if a given reference is to angels or people (e.g., Deut. 33:3).

Angels are first named in the book of Daniel: Gabriel, whose name means "hero of God" (8:16; 9:21; [cf. Luke 1:19, 26]); Michael, whose name means "who is like God?" (10:13, 21; 12:1 [cf. Jude 9; Rev. 12:7]) and who is also called "one of the chief princes," "your prince," and "the great prince." The Hebrew word for "prince" (*sar*) also means "commander" (e.g., 1 Sam. 17:55) and thus might refer to Michael's standing as a commander of God's angelic armies (cf. Jude 9, where he is called "archangel"). During the intertestamental period, texts outside the Scriptures tend to give more attention to angels in elaborate stories, introducing such names as Raphael and Uriel (see Tobit, *1 Enoch*, etc.).

INTERTESTAMENTAL PERIOD AND NEW TESTAMENT

During the intertestamental period some Jews came to think that angels ranked higher than humans, since the Greeks asserted that anything physical was evil and only purely spiritual beings could be holy. Increasingly detailed stories about angels served to distance God from the evils of physical reality. The myth of the fall of the angels arose during this time through a series of writings claiming to come from the pen of Enoch (*1 Enoch*), stimulating a large number of other writings. Some people even went so far as to worship angels (Col. 2:18).

Some references to angels are difficult to understand. In Matt. 18:10 Jesus warns people to treat children well because their angels have constant access to God. The simplest meaning is that angelic messengers will tell God what has happened with these children. Rhoda's reference to Peter's "angel" as if it were his ghost probably reflects a local superstition (Acts 12:15) or a sectarian Jewish belief that the righteous become angels when they die. Paul's comment that a woman should have "authority over her own head" (i.e., her head covered) "because of the angels" (1 Cor. 11:10) remains something of a puzzle, and his unique reference to the language of angels appears to be hyperbole (1 Cor. 13:1).

Paul warns us that Satan can appear as "an angel of light," meaning that he would work through one who claimed to bring a message in accord with the gospel (2 Cor. 11:14). The devil has his "angels/messengers" (Matt. 25:41), although we know little about them.

Angels do not marry, reproduce, or die (Matt. 22:30; Mark 12:25; Luke 20:35–36). The NT affirms that angels rank below God's people and serve them (1 Cor. 6:3; Heb.1:4–14; 2:5, 16), as they did Jesus (Matt. 4:11; Mark 1:13; cf. 1 Kings 19:5–7; Luke 22:43). Angels have limited understanding or knowledge of God's plans and purposes (1 Pet. 1:12), although they reveal God's word (Rev. 1:1). They bring the spirits of God's people to heaven when they die (Luke 16:22) and implement God's judgment on the last day (Matt. 13:39, 49; 16:27; 24:31; 25:31; Mark 8:38; 13:27; Luke 9:26; 2 Thess. 1:7; Rev. 14:15–19). They rejoice when a sinner repents (Luke 15:10). Christians already stand in the greater assembly that includes the angels (Heb.12:22). Eventually, Jesus will welcome his people into the heavenly courtroom in the presence of the angels (Luke 12:8–9; Rev. 3:5). *See also* Archangel.

ANGER *See* Wrath; Wrath of God.

ANGLE, ANGLE OF THE WALL *See* Wall, Angle of the.

ANIAM One of the sons of Shemida listed among the descendants of Manasseh (1 Chron. 7:19).

ANIM A town in the southern Judean hill country approximately twelve miles south of Hebron. Anim appears only in Josh. 15:50 and is identified with Khirbet (ruin) Ghuwein et-Tahta, just north of the Negev.

ANIMAL RIGHTS The Bible does not offer a charter of animal rights, but the Mosaic law does require what the rabbis call *Tsa'ar Ba'alei Chayim*, a prohibition against unnecessarily inflicting pain and suffering on animals. The ox is entitled to food while it works (Deut. 25:4), a principle that Jesus and Paul apply to human beings (Matt. 10:10; Luke 10:7; 1 Tim. 5:18), and along with other livestock, a Sabbath every seventh day and year (Exod. 20:8–10; 23:12; Lev. 25:6–7; Deut. 5:14). An ox or sheep could be sacrificed only after remaining seven days with its mother (Lev. 23:26–27). Killing an ox or sheep and her young on the same day is not permitted (Lev. 23:28). Taking the mother along with the young or eggs from a nest is not permitted (Deut. 22:6–7). The law actually begins with the ideal setting of a garden, in which human beings and animals do not eat one another but rather live in peaceful harmony (Gen. 2:19–20). At the root of these laws is reverence for all life: “The righteous care for the needs [lit., ‘life’] of their animals” (Prov. 12:10). Jesus teaches that not a single sparrow is forgotten by or dies apart from the Father (Matt. 10:29; Luke 12:6). At the time, sparrows were bought and sold in the market as economic commodities, a cheap treat. The singular sacrifice of Jesus Christ has saved not only human beings but also countless lives of would-be sacrificial victims.

ANIMALS Animals play a significant role in both their literal presence in the biblical texts and in their figurative uses. From the beginning of creation, animals were placed under the dominion and care of humanity. The Bible is careful to highlight that humankind is a creation superior to animals and also has a responsibility to see to the betterment of the animal kingdom (Gen. 1:28–30; 2:19–20; Deut. 25:4). Furthermore, the biblical record goes to some lengths to describe the proper means by which humans and animals ought to function in this world and what lines ought not to be crossed (Exod. 22:19; Lev. 18:23; Deut. 27:21).

Regarding the consumption of animals, Genesis suggests that such was not the case before the flood (cf. 1:30 with 9:3). Scripture separates animals into those that are unclean, those that are clean, and those that are permissible to be used in offerings. Although the rationale for such distinctions has been the subject of considerable discussion for some time among scholars, the similarities between their divisions and those of humanity (Gentile, Israelite, and priest) may suggest that God utilized the animal kingdom and Israel's interaction with it as an ongoing reminder of Israel's greater role in the world of humanity. Other proposed rationales for distinguishing between clean and unclean animals include protection of health, abstinence from pagan practices, the symbolic nature of the animal's activities for desirable or unpleasant qualities, and the regulations being simply a test of Israel's faithfulness. Whatever the specific reason, it is clear that God intended the food laws to function more generally as a means of separating Israel from the world (Lev. 11).

Occasionally in the prophetic literature and more regularly in apocalyptic texts, animals serve a symbolic purpose in terms of either their physical characteristics or the demeanor that they exuded (e.g., Isa. 30:6). The lion early on became a symbol of strength and ferocity and so was utilized as a picture of the tribe of Judah, Satan, powerful enemies, and even God (Gen. 49:9; Amos 3:8; Nah. 2:11–12; 1 Pet. 5:8; Rev. 5:5). The lamb was alternately used as a symbol of innocence, sacrifice, and naiveté (Isa. 53:6–7; Jer. 11:19; John 1:29; 1 Pet. 1:19; Rev. 5:6). Other animals symbolically used in Scripture include the serpent (Gen. 49:17), the dog (Isa. 56:10; 2 Pet. 2:22), the deer (Isa. 35:6; Hab. 3:19), the antelope (Isa. 51:20), and the bull or cow (Ps. 22:12; Amos 4:1–4). Daniel used grotesque portrayals of animals to symbolize the corrupted nature of human kingdoms that were in opposition to the cause of God (Dan. 7).

For many animals listed in Scripture there is some level of disagreement about their identity. For instance, the second animal listed in Exod. 25:5; 26:14 is alternatively identified as a badger, a goat, a porpoise, a manatee, and as a reference not to a specific animal at all but rather to a type of leather. The last of these seems most likely because of availability and also because the specific animals identified as an option are unclean and seem ill-suited for use in connection with tabernacle instruments. Behemoth of Job 40:15 has been identified as an elephant, a water buffalo, or a hippopotamus, though the word itself simply means beast or cattle. The animal identified as a chameleon in Lev. 11:30 is sometimes simply viewed as a large lizard or perhaps even a mole. Finally, the debate continues concerning the identity of the beast that swallowed Jonah (1:17), with most translators preferring to go the more reserved route of "huge fish" rather than the more traditional "whale." The identification of animals in antiquity, and even up to the nineteenth century, seems to have centered as much on appearance as actual anatomy. This may explain why names applied loosely to creatures that had a similar general appearance in earlier periods found misapplication in some earlier translations.

From an ecological standpoint, God's care and concern for animals (including but not limited to proper care and humane means of slaughter), as well as his expectations of humankind as stewards of the animal kingdom, leave the clear impression that the biblical ideal for God's people includes investing energy in preservation. Perceptions of humankind as having unrestrained freedom to do with animals as they see fit seem at odds with the more holistic view of human beings as both lords over creation and caretakers of that which actually belongs to someone else.

ANIMALS, UNCLEAN *See* Clean, Cleanness.

ANISE The KJV rendering of the Greek word *anēthon* in Matt. 23:23, more commonly translated as "dill" in other versions. Dill is an herb grown for its seeds, used to add flavor in cooking. As such, it was a consumable produce considered subject to the laws of firstfruits and tithing.

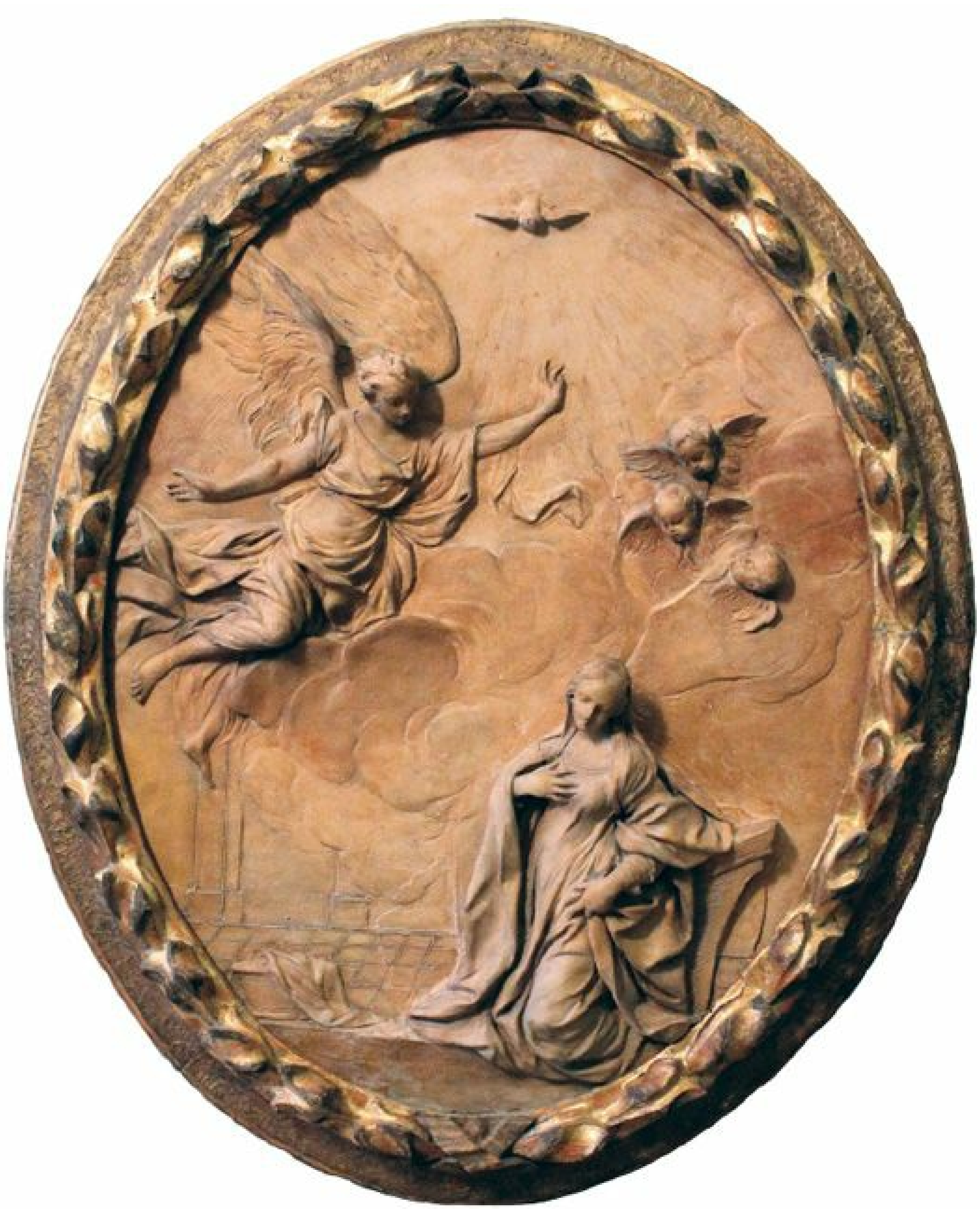
ANKLET A piece of jewelry worn around the ankle and mentioned once in the Bible (Isa. 3:18 [NIV: "bangle"]). During the biblical period anklets were most often made of bronze, although anklets of gold, silver, and iron have been found. Women usually wore them in groups of three or more. This explains the plural form of this term as well as the reference to the women of Zion and the “ornaments jingling on their ankles” (Isa. 3:16).

ANNA An elderly Jewish prophetess at the time of Jesus’ birth. Anna is the daughter of Penuel, and she is from the tribe of Asher (Luke 2:36). She was married for only seven years and then remained a widow either for eighty-four years (NET) or until the age of eighty-four (NIV, NRSV). This devout woman worshiped daily in the Jerusalem temple and committed herself to prayer and fasting (2:37). Anna was present when the baby Jesus was dedicated, and she responded in worship of God and spoke prophetically about the child (2:38).

ANNALS OF THE KINGS In 1–2 Kings there are eighteen references to the “book of the annals of the kings of Israel” (e.g., 1 Kings 14:19; 15:31) and fifteen to the “book of the annals of the kings of Judah” (e.g., 1 Kings 14:29; 15:7). These (now lost) works may identify sources from which information was extracted or at least where further information about a king may be obtained. The titles imply that it was the genius of the biblical author to combine these histories and produce a coordinated history of the two kingdoms.

ANNAS An influential high priest who played a part in the trial and death of Jesus (John 18:12–24). Annas served as high priest in AD 6–15 and continued as high priest emeritus while his son-in-law Caiaphas held that position in an official capacity. Immediately after Jesus was arrested (and before being sent to Caiaphas), he was brought to Annas, who questioned him about his disciples and teaching. His name heads the list of important members of the Sanhedrin when Peter and John were arrested (Acts 4:6), suggesting that he was a dominant figure of the high-priestly party.

ANNUNCIATION The act of announcing, usually associated with the arrival of a significant figure. In church history the term has been specifically applied to the announcement of the arrival of a son to Mary whose name would be called “Jesus” (Luke 1:26–35). More generally speaking, however, notice of the coming miraculous birth of any child can appropriately be called an annunciation. For instance, the reporting of the coming of Isaac to Abraham and Sarah (Gen. 18:10), the arrival of Samson to Manoah and his wife (Judg. 13:2–5), and the birth of John to Zechariah and Elizabeth (Luke 1:11–20) could also be identified as annunciations. In each case, the arrival of the child is to a barren womb, and thus the miraculous intervention of God in the lives of the human families is emphasized. As is often the case when comparing the events of Jesus’ life with earlier events, his coming took on a heightened importance. Only with the annunciation of Jesus did God reveal that the child would be born of a virgin.



Eighteenth-century sculpture depicting the annunciation by the angel Gabriel to the virgin Mary

ANOINT, ANOINTED The OT priests and tabernacle furnishings were “anointed” (or “smeared”; Heb. *mashakh* [Exod. 28:41; 40:9]) as a sign of separation to God (consecration) when Moses set up the cultic institution. A number of times it is stated that kings were anointed (Judg. 9:8, 15)—such as Saul (1 Sam. 10:1), David (1 Sam. 16:13), Absalom (2 Sam. 19:10), Solomon (1 Kings 1:39), Jehu (2 Kings 9:6), Joash (2 Kings 11:12), and Jehoahaz (2 Kings 23:30)—as a sign of appointment to and equipping for sacral office. Anointing is only rarely linked to prophetic office (1 Kings 19:16; Ps. 105:15; Isa. 61:1). David would not agree to slaying Saul because he was “the LORD’s anointed” (1 Sam. 24:6; 26:11). The two “who are anointed” to serve the Lord in Zech. 4:14 (presumably Joshua and Zerubbabel) are, in literal translation of the Hebrew, “sons of oil,” the agents of God’s blessing to Israel.

Though there was no king in Israel at that stage, Hannah prayed in her song that the Lord would give strength to “his king” and “his anointed” (1 Sam. 2:10). The personal pronoun stresses that the king/anointed derives power from and owes obedience to God. The OT never uses the absolute form “anointed” (*mashiakh*), but always “his anointed” (Pss. 2:2; 18:50), “your anointed” (84:9), or “my anointed” (132:17). “Messiah” (“anointed one”) is not a title in the OT, though there is the hope of an ideal Davidic ruler (Isa. 9:6–7; 11:1). Daniel 9:25–26 is no exception, for there is dispute over who or what is so designated. The title “Christ” (Gk. *Christos*) applied to Jesus in the NT is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew word “Messiah” (Matt. 16:16). When Paul uses the word order “Christ Jesus,” it is plainly titular (i.e., “the Messiah Jesus”).

Jesus’ disciples anointed the sick with oil (Mark 6:13), and this became settled practice in praying for the sick (James 5:14).

ANON An archaic word that means “at once” or “immediately” (Matt. 13:20; Mark 1:30 KJV).

ANTEDILUVIANS These were the people who lived before the worldwide flood in Noah’s time. They were divided between two ancestral lines, those of Cain (Gen. 4:17–24) and Seth (Gen. 5). Although it is common to speak of the Cainites and Sethites, the second line is depicted as starting with Adam, not Seth (5:3). To label one line as ungodly and the other as godly is overly schematic. The generation of the flood was wholly wicked (Noah excepted), including the offspring of both Cain and Seth (6:5, 11), and was decimated by the flood as a judgment upon universal sin. The line of Seth survived only because of God’s grace shown to Noah (6:8).

The names in the genealogy of Seth bear a striking resemblance to Cain’s descendants (Cain/Kenan, Enoch/Enoch, Mehujael/Mahalalel, Irad/Jared, Methushael/Methuselah, Lamech/Lamech), again implying that the two lines were quite similar. Genesis 6:1–4, admittedly an obscure passage, may depict intermarriage between the lines, reinforcing the guilt of the entire human race.

The increase in population in Gen. 6:1 fits with the procreation theme of Gen. 5. The 120-year limit decreed by God in Gen. 6:3 cannot lay down the limit of a normal life span, for many people in Genesis lived well beyond this supposed limit, and so it is best understood as an announcement that 120 years remain until the flood.

The first ancestral line climaxed with boastful, violent, and vengeful Lamech, who tried to outdo his forefather Cain (Gen. 4:24). Though morally corrupt, Cain’s descendants are credited with significant cultural and technological achievements.

The genealogy of Seth in Gen. 5 is given a fuller treatment than Cain’s, for his line survived the flood. It focuses on the first (Adam’s [vv. 1–5]), seventh (Enoch’s [vv. 21–24]), and ninth generations (Lamech’s [vv. 5:28–31]), climaxing with another Lamech, Noah’s father.

The longevity of the antediluvians is a notable feature (life spans of 930 years, 912 years, etc.), but so too is the reign of death (note the mournful refrain “and then he died” throughout Gen. 5). The sole exception is godly Enoch (5:24). Sumerian lists show a belief that antediluvian kings reigned for thousands of years each. Figures for age and life span are not supplied so that we can calculate the date of creation, nor are birth notices of “other sons and daughters” (e.g., 5:4, 6) inserted to explain where Cain got his wife. Despite the baneful effect of death, in the providence of God life continued.

ANTELOPE In the list of clean animals in Deut. 14:5, “antelope” (Heb. *te’o*) may refer to the Arabian or desert oryx (NET: “wild oryx”). The oryx was eaten as food and offered in sacrifice; bones have been found at both domestic and religious sites. Although only the size of a donkey, it has long, straight horns that it uses ferociously in self-defense, and this gave it a reputation for strength and bravery. Another possibility is the equally fierce water buffalo. When Isaiah describes Israel as an antelope lying in a net (Isa. 51:20), this image probably portrays the mighty fallen rather than the weak oppressed.

Three other biblical animals belong to the modern category “antelope”: (1) the *dishon* (Deut. 14:5), sometimes translated “ibex” (NIV, NRSV) or “pygarg” (KJV [from the Greek for “white-rumped”]), but probably an antelope (NJB), either the “addax” (NAB) or one of the two white-rumped *Kobus* antelope species known in Israel; (2) the *tsebi*, a gazelle (Deut. 12:15, 22; 14:5; 15:22; 2 Sam. 2:18; 1 Kings 4:23; 1 Chron. 12:8; Prov. 6:5; Song 2:7, 9, 17; 3:5; 4:5; 7:3; 8:14; Isa. 13:14); (3) the *yakhmur* (NIV: “roe deer,” “roebuck”; NRSV: “roebuck”), possibly the Bubal hartebeest (Deut. 14:5; 1 Kings 4:23).

ANTHOTHIJAH One of the sons of Shashak, from the tribe of Benjamin. His name is found in the longer genealogy of Benjamin (1 Chron. 8:24).

ANTHROPOLOGY The study of human beings, their nature and origins. The Christian understanding of anthropology stems from a biblical view of humankind’s relationship to God.

THE ORIGIN OF HUMANKIND

According to Genesis, the creation of humankind took place on the sixth day of the creation week. The amount of narrative space allotted to this day (Gen. 1:24–31) testifies to the special importance of what happened. Human beings were made on the same day as the animals. Human beings were not given a day of their own, showing that they have a certain kinship with the animals, although they are far more than highly successful and adaptive mammals. This has implications for the care of animals and of the environment generally. The value of human beings and their special place in the created order is clear in passages such as Pss. 8:5–6; 104:14–15.

Created in the image of God. When it came to the making of human beings, God deliberated over this crucial step (Gen. 1:26). The plural of exhortation in “Let us make man in our image” signals that the decision to make humankind was the most important one that God had made so far. Genesis 1 says that human beings are like God in some way.

Various opinions have been canvassed as to what the “image” is. We cannot totally exclude the physical form of humans, given God’s humanoid form in OT appearances (theophanies; e.g., Isa. 6:1; Ezek. 1:26; Amos 9:1). The image has sometimes been interpreted as a task, the exercising of dominion (Gen. 1:28), with humanity appointed as creation’s king, ruling under God. But the image is better understood as the precondition for rule rather than rule itself. The image shows human worth (Gen. 9:6) and differentiates humans from all other creatures. It is proper for the Bible to use anthropomorphic language for God, for humans are remarkably like God. Both male and female are in the image of God (“in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them” [1:27]), so that the divine image is not maleness, nor is sexual differentiation the image. Commonly, the image of God is thought to be some peculiar quality of human beings—for example, rationality, speech, moral sense, personality, humans as relational beings.

Every century has its own view of what is the essence of humanity. However, nothing in the passage allows a choice among such alternatives. The point of the passage is simply the fact of the likeness, with no exact definition being provided. The fact of the image is the basis of the divine prohibition of murder and of the strict penalty applied to the transgressor (9:4–6). The fall into sin affected every aspect of the human constitution, and the Bible does not minimize the fact of human sinfulness (Gen. 6:5; 8:21; Rom. 3:10–18); nevertheless, humans are still in the image of God (Gen.

5:1–3; 9:6; 1 Cor. 11:7). God’s plan of salvation is aimed at ridding creation (and especially humanity) of the baneful effects of sin, and this will be achieved through the work of Christ, who is the image of God (2 Cor. 4:4; Col. 1:15–20; Heb. 1:1–3; 2:5–18). The outcome will be the conformity of believers in Christ to his glorious image (Rom. 8:29–30; 2 Cor. 3.18).

Place in the created order. God’s purpose in giving human beings the divine image is “so they may rule” (NET [Gen. 1:26b translated as a purpose clause]). The syntax suggests that the image is a presupposition of dominion. It is plain that such a delegated authority makes humans stewards. The vegetarian diet of Gen.1:29 (there was no eating of meat at first) represents a limitation to the human right of dominion. Adam’s naming of the animals was (in part) expressive of his sovereignty over them (2:19). Later, Noah was charged to bring pairs of animals into the ark to preserve them alive (6:19–20), showing care for other creatures. The patriarchs tended flocks (13:2–9; 26:12–14), and Joseph’s relief measures saved the lives of people and animals (47:15–18). The wanton destruction of the promised land was expressly forbidden (Deut. 20:19–20). Humanity is accountable to God for the stewardship of the earth. The divine command “be fruitful and multiply” (Gen. 1:28 NRSV) shows that God’s purpose is that the human race populate the whole earth.

At Gen. 2:7 the biblical narrative becomes thoroughly anthropocentric, picturing the little world that God establishes around the first man, so this account is quite different from the cosmic presentation of Gen. 1. In Gen. 1 humankind is the apex of a pyramid, the last and highest of a series of creatures; in Gen. 2 the man is the center of a circle, everything else made to fit around him, and his connection to the physical earth is emphasized. In either view, a very special place is given to human beings in the created order. The two pictures are complementary, not contradictory.

The “man” (*’adam*) is formed from the “ground” (*’adamah*), with the related Hebrew words making a pun. Man’s name reminds him of his earthy origins. He is made from the “dust,” which hints at his coming death. He will return to the dust (Gen. 3:19; cf. Job 10:8–9; Ps. 103:14; Isa. 29:16). The reference to “the breath of life” (Gen. 2:7) is due to the fact that this leaves a person at death (Job 34:14–15; Ps. 104:29–30), so man’s (potential) mortality is implied. Ironically, the making of man is described using the language of death. What is described in Gen. 2 is the making of the first man, from whom the rest of the human race has descended, not the making of humankind, though the word *’adam* can mean that in other contexts.

THE NATURE OF HUMANKIND

Body, soul, and spirit. Arguments over whether human nature is bipartite (body and soul) or tripartite (body, soul, spirit) are not to be decided by arbitrary appeal to isolated verses. Verses can be found in apparent support for both the first view (e.g., Matt. 10:28) and the second (e.g., 1 Thess. 5:23), but certainly the first scheme is much more prevalent in the Bible. “Soul” and “spirit” can be used interchangeably (Eccles. 3:21; 12:7; Ezek. 18:31). Death is marked by the parting of soul/spirit and body, but it would be a mistake to think that human beings are made up of separate component parts, or that the physical body is only a dispensable shell and not essential to true humanity. The physicality of human existence in the “body” is owned and celebrated in Scripture, part of that being the positive attitude to sexuality when properly expressed (Song of Songs; 1 Cor. 7) and the nonascetic nature of biblical ethics (1 Cor. 10:31; Col. 2:23). The doctrine of the resurrection of the body is the fullest expression of this (1 Cor. 15), in contrast to ancient Greek thought that viewed the body as inherently evil and understood salvation as the immortality of the liberated, disembodied soul.

The different words used in relation to persons are only intended to refer to and at times focus on different aspects of unified human nature. References to the “soul” may stress individual responsibility (e.g., Ezek. 18:4 NASB: “The soul who sins will die”). In Ps. 103:1–2, “O my soul” expresses emphatic self-encouragement to praise God and is in parallel with “all my inmost being”—that is, “my whole being” (an example of synecdoche: a part standing for the whole [cf. Ps. 35:10]). These are ways of referring to oneself as a person who expresses will and intention (cf. Ps. 42:5–6, 11). The “flesh” is used to stress the weakness of mortal humanity (e.g., Isa. 40:6 RSV: “All flesh is grass”). The “heart” is the volitional center of a human being (Prov. 4:23; cf. Mark 7:17–23). The emotional and empathetic reactions of humans are described by reference to the organs: “liver,” “kidneys,” “bowels.”

Morals and responsibility. In Gen. 2 the complexities of the man’s moral relation to God and his relations with the soil, with the animals, and with the woman are explored. God deposited the man in the garden “to work it and take care of it” (2:15). The words chosen to designate the man’s work prior to the fall have an aura of worship about them, for they are later used in the OT for the cultic actions of serving and guarding within the sanctuary. The priests served by offering sacrifices, and the Levites guarded the gates of the sacred precinct. A theology of work as a religious vocation is presented. The man was a kind of king-priest in the garden of God.

The moral responsibility of humanity is signaled from the beginning. God’s command gives permission for the man to eat from “any tree” except one (Gen. 2:16–17) and as such indicates man’s freedom, so that this command is no great restriction. The wording “you are free to eat” reinforces the point about God’s generous provision. The prohibition is embedded in the description of God’s fatherly care for the man and gracious act in placing him in the garden. The divine restriction is slight and not at all overbearing, though the serpent will seek to make it appear mean-spirited (3:1). The command and prohibition are the very first words of God to the man, marking them out as of fundamental importance for the relationship between them. The prohibition (“you must not eat . . .”) is an absolute one in the style of the Decalogue (Exod. 20:1–17; Deut. 5:6–21). What is placed before the man is a test that gives him the opportunity to express his loyalty to God. A relationship of obedience and trust requires the possibility of choice and the opportunity to disobey (if that is what he wants to do). The moral nature and responsibility of individuals is not a late discovery by the prophet Ezekiel (Ezek. 18); rather, it is the presupposition behind the Mosaic law, for the commands of the Decalogue (“*you* shall not . . .”) are phrased as commands to individuals (as the Hebrew makes clear). On the other hand, the concept of corporate responsibility is also present (e.g., Achan’s punishment in Josh. 7).

Relationships. Human beings are relational by nature, as the creation of the woman as a helper and partner for the first man makes plain (Gen. 2:18–25). Later in Scripture this is put in more general terms, so that friendship and mutual cooperation are shown to be essential to life (Eccles. 4:7–12). The body life of the church reflects the same fact and need (1 Cor. 12). In Psalms, human needs and vulnerability find their answer and fulfillment in God, with the psalmist acknowledging his frailty and his creaturely dependence on God (e.g., Ps. 90). This also shows the folly of sinful human pride, against which the prophets so often inveighed (e.g., Isa. 2:9, 11–17, 22).

ANTHROPOMORPHISM A special type of figure of speech that is quite common in the Bible. Most figures of speech (metaphors, similes, etc.) work by bringing two very separate items into a comparative relationship by using language that is directly appropriate for the one to create colorful imagery for the other. Thus, figures of speech confront the reader with both points of similarity and points of dissimilarity.

Anthropomorphism is a figure of speech in which God is represented with human features or human characteristics. Anthropomorphisms abound in Scripture. Isaiah 59:1, for example, states: “Surely the arm of the LORD is not too short to save, nor his ear too dull to hear.” Likewise, note the colorful anthropomorphic description of God in Ps. 104:2–3: “The LORD wraps himself in light as with a garment; he stretches out the heavens like a tent and lays the beams of his upper chambers on their waters. He makes the clouds his chariot and rides on the wings of the wind.”

In fact, Scripture typically describes God with a wide range of terminology normally associated with people and not with deity. The Bible refers to God as having hands, arms, feet, a face, a nose, breath, a voice, and ears. He walks, sits, hears, looks down, thinks, talks, remembers, gets angry, shouts, lives in a palace, holds court, prepares tables, anoints heads, builds houses, and pitches tents. He has a rod, staff, scepter, banner, garments, cloak, tent, throne, footstool, vineyard, field, chariot, shield, breastplate, helmet, and sword. He is identified as father, husband, king, judge, potter, and shepherd. All these are human actions or human features that are used figuratively to describe God and his actions.

On the other hand, scholars are divided over whether all of these anthropomorphisms are really figures of speech. Perhaps some of them actually describe literal aspects of God. Perhaps some of the “anthropomorphic” similarities between human beings and God are due to the fact that we are created in the image of God (Gen. 1:27). Thus, we reflect similarity to him in some aspects and dissimilarity in many others. Since God is spirit, the description of God as “looking down” or the mention of his face would be anthropomorphism (i.e., figurative language). On the other hand, many of God’s actions and emotions such as anger, love, patience, mercy, hurt, and compassion are probably literal realities. Although we as human beings understand these emotions because we experience them, this does not necessarily mean that in regard to God they are merely figurative. Although God does not have ears, he does, for example, “get angry,” “love,” and “feel sorrow.”

ANTICHRIST The term “antichrist” (Gk. *antichristos*) is used only four times in the Bible (1 John 2:18, 22; 4:3; 2 John 7). John warns his readers that it is already the last hour, and that just as they “have heard that the antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come” (1 John 2:18; cf. 4:3). John defines the antichrist as the one who denies that God has come in the flesh in the person of Jesus Christ (1 John 2:22; 4:3; 2 John 7).

The concept of antichrist-type figures surfaces elsewhere in the NT. Jesus mentions “false messiahs and false prophets” who will “perform signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect” (Mark 13:22). Paul speaks of a “man of lawlessness” who will “oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, so that he sets himself up in God’s temple, proclaiming himself to be God” (2 Thess. 2:3–4). In Rev. 13 John describes the most famous antichrist figure of all: the “beast coming out of the sea.” Throughout the OT the false-prophet tradition (e.g., Deut. 13; 18; Jer. 23; Ezek. 12–14) describes religious individuals from within the community who attempt to deceive God’s people. Also, there was a common belief in an oppressive ruler from outside the community who would persecute the righteous (e.g., Dan. 8; 11). By the late first century, when Revelation was written, people would have been familiar with a host of pagan rulers who had exalted themselves as gods (the king of Babylon [Isa. 14], the pharaoh [Ezek. 29], Antiochus Epiphanes [Dan. 11], and Roman emperors such as Caligula, Nero, and Domitian). The evil-ruler tradition and the false-prophet tradition seem to converge in Rev. 13 as the beast from the sea (the antichrist) and the beast from the earth (the false prophet).

Coin depicting Antiochus Epiphanes IV, who became a model and prototype for the antichrist

Most scholars agree that the original beast described in Rev. 13 was a Roman emperor (either Nero or Domitian) who demanded to be worshiped as God. Supported by a second beast, the cult of Caesar worship enforced by priests throughout the empire, the imperial system demanded that Christians choose between two opposing confessions: Caesar is Lord or Jesus is Lord. More specifically, Revelation indicates that the “beast coming out of the sea” is empowered by Satan (vv. 1–2, 4), masquerades as Christ (vv. 1, 3, 12, 14), accepts worship as a god (vv. 4, 8), wields extensive power (vv. 4, 7), blasphemes and slanders God (vv. 1, 5–6), and ruthlessly persecutes the saints (v. 7). The “beast coming out of the earth” (emperor cult) is also empowered by Satan (vv. 11, 14), promotes the worship of the first beast (vv. 12, 14–15), performs signs and wonders designed to deceive (vv. 13–15), and causes those who refused to worship the first beast to be put to death physically (v. 15) or economically (vv. 16–17). But in spite of their final effort to take God’s place and conquer God’s people, Christ will return to destroy the antichrist and the false prophet in the lake of fire (17:8; 19:19–21).

ANTIMONY A metalloid that was used in the building of the temple in Jerusalem (1 Chron. 29:2 [NIV: “turquoise”]). Stones were most likely set on or within antimony to signify elegance or wealth when building (Isa. 54:11). The Hebrew term comes from the root *pwk*, meaning “to paint.” This reflects the surrounding culture in which Egyptians used antimony’s sulfide compound, antimony trisulfide, as cosmetics for their eyes (i.e., “painting” their eyelids). The stable form of this element has a blue-white color that looks like silver. It was used as early as 3000 BC in Mesopotamia as well as in Egypt from at least 2000 BC onward. In Isa. 54:11 the KJV renders the Hebrew term as “fair colours.”

ANTINOMIANISM Antinomianism, which literally means “opposed to the law,” arose as a reaction against legalism, denying the need for legal or moral restraints. The term itself does not appear in Scripture, but the concept can be found in passages such as Rom. 6:1–2, where Paul asks, “Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase?” He is referring here to those who claimed that the grace of God was a license to live without rules or boundaries. Paul answers with one of his strongest objections: “By no means!” or “May it never be!” He then argues, “We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?” Our new life in Christ frees us to live a life of righteousness before God; we must not return to slavery to sin (see Gal. 5:1).

ANTIOCH Although there were sixteen cities named “Antioch” during the NT era, only two are mentioned in the NT: Pisidian Antioch and Syrian Antioch. Both cities are mentioned in the book of Acts.

Antioch of Pisidia. Pisidian Antioch was visited by Paul and Barnabas during their first missionary journey. The visit would have occurred during the late 40s of the first century and is reported in Acts 13:13–52. The author of Acts records this visit right after reporting on the conversion of a wealthy proconsul, Sergius Paulus, who ruled in Cyprus. There is evidence that Sergius Paulus was from Pisidian Antioch; thus it seems reasonable that his connections influenced the missionaries’ itinerary. After leaving Cyprus, the team traveled directly to Pisidian Antioch, which at the time was the capital of the Roman province of Galatia. It also was an influential Roman colony and as such was populated by veteran Roman soldiers and given special political privileges and prominence. The city was known for its breathtaking architecture and sculptures—the most elaborate honoring Caesar Augustus. A number of Jews also lived in the city, and the missionaries met with them in their synagogue and preached the gospel. Their message created great interest and excitement for the whole city. This response, however, made the Jewish leaders jealous, and they began to speak abusively toward Paul and Barnabas, causing the missionaries to focus their ministry on the Gentiles. The Jews ultimately persuaded their city leaders to expel Paul and Barnabas (Acts 13:45–51). The team, however, did return to the city on their way back to Syrian Antioch in order to encourage and strengthen the new disciples (14:21). It is also probable that Paul returned to the city during his later missionary journeys.

Antioch of Syria. The most important Antioch mentioned in the NT was the capital city of the Roman province of Syria. The city, mentioned frequently in the book of Acts, played a strategic role in the advance of the gospel. Syrian Antioch was an important political, economic, and religious center during the Roman period.

Antioch as a political center. Syrian Antioch maintained a massive population during this period of history (as large as six hundred thousand people, by some estimates) and was the third-largest city in the Roman Empire, behind Alexandria and Rome. Founded by one of Alexander the Great’s generals, Seleucus I Nicanor, in 300 BC, Antioch became Rome’s military headquarters for the eastern part of the empire primarily due to its strategic location.

Antioch as an economic center. Antioch became a very important commercial center during the NT era. The city was located on the Orontes River and within fifteen miles of a strategic commercial port on the Mediterranean Sea. Additionally, its large and diverse population combined with its numerous natural resources and its location on the great trade route connecting Asia with the Mediterranean world made Antioch a powerful commercial hub.

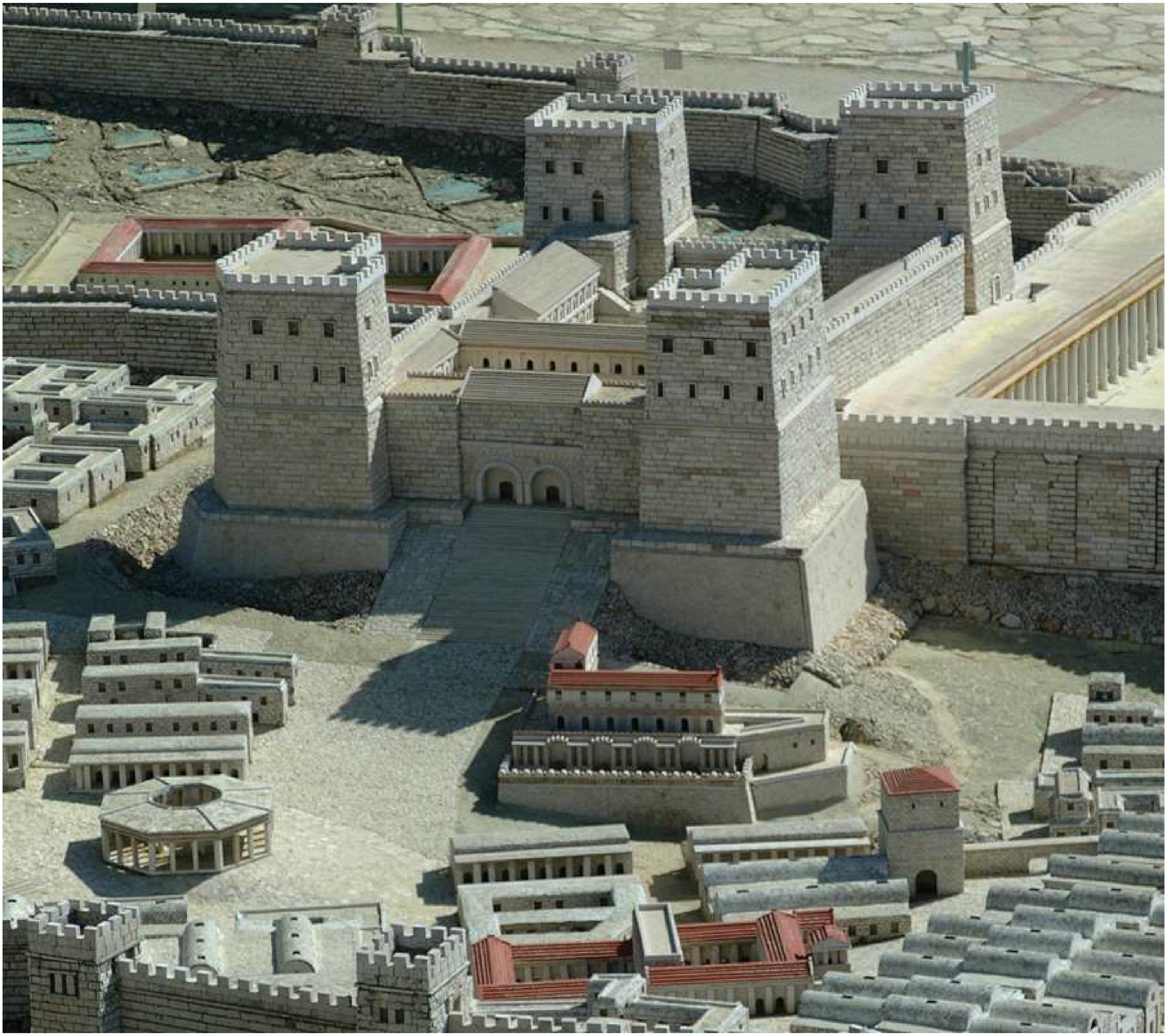
Antioch as a religious center. Antioch's diverse population made for a great diversity of religions connected to the city. Its suburb of Daphne was a major worship site for paganism, and the city maintained a large Jewish population throughout its history. Additionally, it was to Antioch that many Jerusalem Christians fled during the early persecution of the church. Here, for the first time, the Jewish Christians began to intentionally focus on sharing the gospel with Gentiles (Acts 11:19–21). The result was a large, multicultural, and vibrant church. The church at Antioch was known for its ethnic and cultural diversity, its generosity (sending an offering to Jerusalem during a famine [see 11:27–30]), and its heart for missions (serving as Paul's headquarters for his three missionary journeys). Not surprisingly, it was at Antioch that Christ followers were first called "Christians" (11:26).

ANTIOCHUS (EPIPHANES) Antiochus IV Epiphanes (r. 175–164 BC) was the younger son of Antiochus III, ruler of the Seleucid Empire. The name "Epiphanes" means "manifest," implying "manifest as a god." Daniel 8:11; 9:27; 11:31; 12:11; 1 Macc. 1:54–64 speak of his desecration of the Jerusalem temple in 167 BC. Antiochus profaned the holy of holies by placing in it a statue of Zeus and then sacrificing a pig to Zeus on the altar. Daniel 9:27, however, promises that the defiler of the temple (Antiochus) will be defeated, which occurred in 164 BC when Judas Maccabeus led the Jewish revolt that expelled the forces of Antiochus from Jerusalem (see 1 Macc. 4:36–61; cf. 6:1–17).

ANTIPAS A shortened form of the name "Antipater." **(1)** One of the sons of Herod the Great who ruled as tetrarch ("ruler of a fourth [part]") of Galilee and Perea (Luke 3:1). He was responsible for the imprisonment and subsequent beheading of John the Baptist (Matt. 14:1–12). He interviewed Jesus at length following his arrest without getting a response (Luke 23:6–12). **(2)** A faithful witness to the gospel who was martyred at Pergamum during a period of intense persecution when believers in that city were under pressure to renounce their faith in Christ (Rev. 2:13). *See also* Herod.

ANTIPATRIS A city built by Herod the Great to honor his father, Antipater, in 9 BC. The city was built on the site of the ancient city of Aphek. Roman soldiers took Paul to Antipatris from Jerusalem by night to avoid a plot on his life, and cavalry took him on to Caesarea the next day (Acts 23:31–33). The city was forty miles from Jerusalem and twenty-five miles from Caesarea on the Via Maris.

ANTONIA, TOWER OF The primary military fortification of Jerusalem near the Herodian temple, also called the Antonia Fortress. The fortress was built in approximately AD 6 and served as a palatial residence for King Herod and a barracks for the Roman troops. In addition, Herod required the garments of the high priest be housed in the tower. The fortress, named by Herod after his friend Mark Antony, was actually a major renovation of an existing Maccabean fortification. The fortress was strategically located to overlook the temple so that a garrison could easily deal with any disturbance in the temple.



The Tower of Antonia in the model of first-century AD Jerusalem at the Israeli Museum

The tower is not specifically mentioned in the NT, but the Jewish historian Josephus describes it in detail (*J.W.* 5.238–46). The tower was built upon a rock, seventy-five feet high, overlooking the temple and its courtyards. Josephus describes the tower as being lavishly furnished like a palace, containing baths, courtyards, and spacious apartments. It was capable of housing numerous soldiers.

The tower may have served as an official residence for the Roman procurator. Thus, the tower’s courtyard has traditionally been considered the site of Jesus’ trial before Pilate (John 18:28; 19:13). However, Herod’s palace may have been used for the procurator and as a residence of the governor. The pavement beneath the modern convent Notre Dame de Sion was traditionally considered to be from the courtyard of the tower, but it has been dated to the second century by recent archaeological work.

The fortress was destroyed during Titus's siege of Jerusalem in AD 70, and the modern site of the tower has yet to be determined conclusively.

ANTONIA FORTRESS *See* Antonia, Tower of.

ANTOTHIJAH *See* Anthothijah.

ANTOTHITE *See* Anathothite.

ANUB A descendant of Judah, and son of Koz (1 Chron. 4:8).

ANXIETY Anxiety is an inner disposition of restlessness over feared or uncontrollable outcomes, and it can have debilitating effects (Ps. 139:23; Prov. 12:25). Its opposite is not carelessness or apathy but rather confident trust in God (Ps. 37; Isa. 26:3–4). Jesus teaches his disciples to trust God's daily care as a radical alternative to anxiety (Matt. 6:25–34; cf. Eccles. 2:22), and Jesus' instruction and preparation free them from anxiety over future trials (Matt. 24:25; Mark 13:11). Scripture invites us to move from anxiety to peace by means of prayer (Pss. 94:19; 139:23; Phil. 4:6; 1 Pet. 5:7).

APE In 1 Kings 10:22; 2 Chron. 9:21 apes (Heb. *qof*) are listed among the exotic luxuries that Solomon's ships brought to him once every three years from Tarshish. These animals are indicative of his immense wealth. In fact, there is no evidence that true apes in the modern sense (which have no tails) were known in the ancient Near East. The reference probably is to baboons, of which several species were known: the yellow baboon, the Anubis baboon, and the sacred or hamadryas baboon. All have long tails and long faces and make a sound rather like the Hebrew word *qof*. *See also* Baboon.

APELLES A Christian greeted by Paul in Rom. 16:10 as one "whose fidelity to Christ has stood the test." This appellation probably refers to a Christian who has suffered persecution for the faith and has remained faithful.

APHARSATHCHITES The KJV rendering of an Aramaic term used in Ezra 4:9; 5:6; 6:6 (NIV: "officials"). At one time it was believed that the term referred to a tribe of people, but it seems to be a more generalized reference to a Persian bureaucrat or government official ranging in function from a representative of the king to an inspector.

APHARSITES The KJV rendering of an Aramaic term used in a list of the associates of Rehum and Shimshai in their letter to the Persian king Artaxerxes opposing the rebuilding of Jerusalem after the exile (Ezra 4:9). The NIV translates the word "people from Persia" (cf. NRSV, ESV). "Sipporites" and "secretaries" (NASB, NET) have also been suggested.

APHEK **(1)** The most significant Aphek in the Bible is about seven miles east of Tel Aviv. The springs nearby become the headwaters of the Yarqon River, flowing to the Mediterranean Sea. Traffic on the international coastal route passing through Israel was forced between the foothills to the east and the river, making this a strategic location. During the transition to the monarchy, the Philistines were at Aphek when the Israelites attacked them from Ebenezer (1 Sam. 4:1) just east in the foothills. The Philistines won the battle, captured the ark, and continued Philistine control of the international coastal highway. At the end of Saul’s life, the Philistines mustered their troops at this northern “boundary” of the Philistine plain before setting off to challenge Israel for control of the Jezreel Valley (1 Sam. 29:1).

(2) Asher’s tribal boundary, north of Mount Carmel, indicates an Aphek near the Mediterranean Sea (Josh. 19:30) from which the Canaanites were not dislodged (Judg. 1:31).

(3) The Arameans attacked the northern kingdom at a third Aphek on the east side of the Sea of Galilee (1 Kings 20:26–30; see also 2 Kings 13:17). The Arabic Fiq preserves this place name. Herod rebuilt the city on the coastal plain, renaming it “Antipatris” after his father. When Paul was sent to Caesarea after the plot on his life was uncovered, the soldiers with him went as far as Antipatris (Acts 23:31–32).

APHEKAH A town situated in the central hills of Judah near Hebron (Josh. 15:53). Its exact location is unknown.

APHIAH Aphiah was an ancestor of King Saul (1 Sam. 9:1) from the tribe of Benjamin. The meaning of the name is uncertain.

APHIK *See* Aphek.

APHRAH A location literally translated as “dust” (Mic. 1:10). Because of the wordplay in this verse and the lack of evidence for a location with this name, it is possible that it is identical with Ophrah. This would leave three options: (1) a location within the territory of the tribe of Benjamin (Josh. 18:23; 1 Sam. 13:17); (2) a location within the territory of the tribe of Manasseh (Judg. 6:11); (3) the home of the son of Meonothai (1 Chron. 4:14). *See also* Ophrah.

APHSES The KJV rendering of the name “Happizzez” (1 Chron. 24:15).

APIRU *See* Habiru.

APIS A sacred bull worshiped in Egypt, apparently a representation of the Egyptian god Ptah. Jeremiah may mention the bull in his ridicule of the people’s idolatry in his taunt “Why has Apis fled?” (Jer. 46:15 NRSV [following the LXX]), though this would require a textual change from the Hebrew text, which reads “mighty ones” (*’abbirim*).

Bronze statuette of the apis bull

APOCALYPSE *See* Revelation, Book of.

APOCALYPTIC The word “apocalypse” means “revelation.” It is used in Rev. 1:1 to identify what follows as information that would otherwise be known only in heaven. “Apocalyptic” therefore refers to uncovering something that is hidden—revealing secrets. It focuses on the gracious acts of God whereby he informs his servants of his plans and purposes about what is happening and will happen on earth. Scholars have identified those texts that resemble the form of the book of Revelation as “apocalyptic literature,” including the visions of Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and Zechariah.

Apocalyptic texts also appear outside of the Bible, although many of them are inspired by biblical accounts. The record of Enoch’s journey into the heavens (Gen. 5:24) stimulated the imagination of many during the Second Temple period, resulting in the production of a large number of apocalyptic works purporting to record what Enoch learned while in the heavens. These then formed the basis for a distinctive, and ultimately misguided, interpretation of contemporary Jewish experience (see, e.g., *1 Enoch*, *Jubilees*). The popularity of apocalyptic literature grew significantly after the appearance of John's Revelation, particularly in later gnostic literature and the works of various forms of Jewish mysticism.

The genre of apocalyptic literature. For there to be apocalyptic literature, some things must be accepted as true: God exists and is in sovereign control over what happens on earth; God has a plan, and humankind cannot know anything of that plan unless it be revealed. This literature claims to be the result of a gracious act of God. It may be delivered through a vision of God himself. Alternately, it might involve seeing things in the heavens either as a vision or as a guided tour.

God's revelation occurred in many ways on many occasions (Heb. 1:1–2). The entire Bible is, in this sense, an apocalypse—a revelation. Some forms of this revelation, however, are easier to understand than others.

As a literary form, apocalyptic literature might best be described as verbal cartoons. The images that are so graphically portrayed would have had, for the original readers, something of the instant impact that a political cartoon might have on us today. In order to understand such images, one must be familiar with the symbols being used. The cartoons and posters from the two World Wars—in which animals such as the lion of England, the Russian bear, the Uncle Sam character, and bestial monsters depicted the enemy at the time—are a sufficient example to shed light on how the original readers would have read these biblical works. To understand individual pictures such as the beast of Rev. 13 or the four-headed leopard of Dan. 7, one had to know something of the specific historical background.

Earlier images could be adapted and reapplied. So, for example, Joseph's vision of his family as the sun, moon, and stars (Gen. 37:9) is used to identify the woman of Rev. 12:1 as the personification of the nation of Israel—the line from which the Savior would come.

God's revelation to his people. Apocalyptic literature functions in much the same way that Jesus used his parables (Matt. 13:11). It is often used in situations where God's people appear to be under physical threat. The symbols and the patterns used enable those on the inside to follow what is happening while leaving those on the outside none the wiser. The ability of God's people to understand the revelation identifies and discriminates them from God's enemies, who appear confused.

Apocalyptic literature is not always about the future, let alone about the end of the world. Mostly it is designed to enable the believer to see past the confusions and fears of present experience, and to be reminded that God is in control and that everything is going according to his plans and purposes. God's plans may include calling upon his people to face a range of challenges or to suffer persecution. These visions enable believers to see meaning and purpose in these experiences and to keep their focus faithfully on God.

The book of Job offers some insight into the nature of apocalyptic literature, even though it is not usually regarded as such. The narrator (without explaining how he knows these things) begins by informing the reader of the events that transpired in God's heavenly court. This enables the reader (unlike Job or his friends) to put Job's experience in proper context. Eliphaz's challenge then has powerful irony when he asks Job, "Do you listen in on God's council? Do you have a monopoly on wisdom?" (15:8). The resolution of their deliberations is made possible only when God comes to earth in visible form and reveals his judgment on the matter. This is designed to evoke not a blind faith but an informed faithfulness that allows for the reality of God's superior wisdom and his right to determine all things for his glory.

When the king had a dream in Gen. 41:15–16 (cf. Dan. 2:27–28), the point is made that no one can discover the mind of God. However, God has graciously revealed his plans to his servants, who can then explain them to a world that lives in darkness and ignorance of these things.

The one who received such revelations often needs an interpreting angel (Dan. 7:16; Zech. 1:9; cf. Gen. 28:10–17; Exod. 3:1–6). The seer, like the reader, is initially confused. The interpreting angel answers the seer's questions, and the reader can in turn understand what is happening.

Understanding apocalyptic literature. Given the historical distance between the modern reader and the original authors of the biblical apocalyptic texts, we might be tempted to think that they cannot be understood with any certainty. They are nonetheless God's revelation to his people and were given with the intention that they be understood. Comprehending an apocalyptic vision requires us to search the Scriptures to see how these symbols and patterns were interpreted, and then to see how they are again used to give us some insight into God's power, grace, and calling upon his people in each age.

For example, the beasts representing four successive kingdoms (Dan. 7:1–7, 15–23) later are redrawn into a composite symbol of any contemporary human power operating under Satan's rule (Rev. 13:1–3). The similarities between Babylon and Rome identified both as agents of Satan's regime; the connection then became an apocalyptic accusation (1 Pet. 5:13) offering assurance to God's people. Herod's attempt to kill Jesus (Matt. 2:16) follows the pattern of Pharaoh's attempt on Israel (Exod. 1–2), so the picture of Satan as the red dragon attacking the woman giving birth identifies the one behind Herod's actions while pointing to the God who brought his people out of Egypt as the one who will save those who put their trust in Jesus.

APOCRYPHA, NEW TESTAMENT The word "apocrypha" is derived from a Greek word meaning "secret" or "hidden" and refers to texts regarded by some Jews and Christians as religiously valuable but not meeting the criteria of canonicity. The more specific title "New Testament Apocrypha" distinguishes certain writings from those commonly referred to as "the Apocrypha," a collection of works written by Jews (with later Christian editing in places) between approx. 200 BC and AD 90, recognized as Scripture by Roman Catholic and Orthodox Churches but generally rejected by Protestants (*see* Apocrypha, Old Testament). What is loosely called New Testament Apocrypha is no single collection but actually a vast, amorphous corpus that can only be selectively discussed here. (The Apostolic Fathers, texts written mainly in the late first century and second century, and later church fathers are not considered here as part of this grouping.) In broadest terms, these texts concern themselves with Jesus Christ and his apostles, but often from a perspective that differs from the NT portraits. Nevertheless, many of the works appear to be either dependent upon or influenced by the genres and characters of the NT, principally gospels, letters, apostolic acts, and apocalypse.

These writings remain outside of the Christian canon for the following reasons. First, the texts, at least in their final form, were published in the postapostolic period (the second century), whereas all of the NT writings were believed to have been written by an apostle (Matthew, John, Paul, Peter) or an apostolic associate (Mark, Luke). Some apocryphal writings (e.g., *Gospel of Thomas*) may simply adapt earlier, apostolic tradition. Second, the point of view in these writings does not represent a broad constituency in the early church. Some appear to reflect the ideology of various gnostic groups, which became prominent in the second century throughout the Mediterranean, with centers in Antioch in Syria and Alexandria in Egypt. Although a diverse phenomenon, gnosticism generally embraced secret knowledge as a vehicle for salvation from the material world, a development of extreme

Platonism. Therefore, Jesus saves through an esoteric teaching, not his atoning death. The diminution of the cross led to the orthodox rejection of this perspective. In attempting to refute gnostics, Irenaeus of Lyons (died c. AD 195) appropriates what he calls the “rule of faith” (*regula fidei*), which was passed on by the apostles and everywhere accepted by the churches (*Haer.* 1.8.1; 1.9.4). Other apocryphal texts appear to represent a conservative Jewish-Christian perspective. The church gradually shifted from being primarily a Jewish religious group that accepted non-Jews to what Christians themselves described as a “third race” in distinction from Jews and pagans. Relationships between Jews and Christians continued to sour because of mutual persecution, competition, and misunderstanding. By the second century, some Christian writers claimed God had rejected Israel (e.g., the author of *Epistle of Barnabas*). Many texts emphasize celibacy, fasting, and other rigorously ascetic practices, which go beyond the moderate guidelines in the NT. These factors contributed to the marginalization of Jewish believers in Jesus, making their writings suspect. Like the gnostic texts, the primary concern was a diminished Christology. Consequently, many of these writings were not copied (and therefore preserved) by Christian copyists and thus eventually were lost. However, many texts were discovered at Nag Hammadi in Egypt in 1945. Scraps of papyri have also been recovered from various sites in the dry sands of the desert. But many of the apocryphal writings survive only in fragments (e.g., *Acts of Paul*).

The New Testament Apocrypha provide a window into the various ways Christians attempted to live out their faith in Jesus Christ, the rise of ascetic monasticism, and why orthodox Christianity ultimately parted ways with both rabbinic Judaism and gnosticism. The diversity of the church’s past may provide context and insight for the challenges of the present.

GOSPELS

The apocryphal Gospels often amplify or add to material that is more limited in the canonical Gospels. This is especially the case with Jesus’ youth and the passion narrative. The *Infancy Gospel of Thomas* depicts, among other things, the child Jesus making sparrows out of clay and then bringing them to life. The *Gospel of Peter*, which dates probably from the middle of the second century and is likely dependent on Mark’s Gospel, begins with Jesus’ trial and breaks off in what is presumably a resurrection appearance to a group of disciples. According to some scholars, the *Gospel of Peter* is cited by Origen (c. AD 185–255) as evidence that Jesus’ purported brothers were Joseph’s from an earlier marriage, thereby protecting the perpetual virginity of Mary (*Comm. ser. Matt.* 10.17). This gospel reflects a strong anti-Jewish bias. The *Protevangelium of James* relates the miraculous birth of Jesus’ mother, Mary.

Other apocryphal Gospels single out a particular apostle who alone is given special revelation. A complete version of the *Gospel of Thomas* was discovered among the Nag Hammadi writings and is perhaps the earliest apocryphal gospel. The emphasis on Thomas suggests a Syrian provenance. Containing little narrative, the text is primarily a collection of Jesus’ sayings (loosely grouped according to theme), some of which are dependent on the Gospel of Luke (e.g., 47, 104). James, the brother of the Lord, is given prominence (12), but there are also polemics against traditional Jewish piety: prayer, fasting, alms, and circumcision (6, 14, 53, 104). The *Gospel of Judas*, which is dated to around the middle of the second century and survives in one or two copies, consists primarily of dialogues between Judas Iscariot and Jesus during his passion. Judas is presented as the only disciple to recognize Jesus’ true origin and identity. In response, Jesus praises him: “You will exceed all of [the other apostles]. For you will sacrifice the man that clothes me” (43). This text reflects a gnostic point of view (probably Sethian, representing a group that venerated the biblical figure of Seth and viewed Jesus as his reincarnation, as in the *Apocryphon of John*, the *Gospel of the Egyptians*, and the *Apocalypse of Paul*). Whereas Peter makes a confession of faith in the canonical Gospels, Judas says, “I know who you are and where you have come from. You are from the immortal realm of Barbelo” (35). (In gnostic mythology, Barbelo [Coptic for “Great Emission”] is the divine Mother of all, who is often described as the “Forethought of the Father,” the “Infinite One.”) The *Gospel of Judas* has Jesus reject the God of Israel (21) and attack the Christian church and its leadership (26–27).

The church fathers often mention Jewish gospels (*Gospel of the Hebrews*, *Gospel of the Nazarenes*, *Gospel of the Ebionites*), including a Hebrew version of Matthew (Irenaeus, *Haer.* 3.1.1; Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 6.25.4). Clement of Alexandria (c. AD 150–215) cites a saying of Jesus from the *Gospel of the Hebrews*: “He that marvels shall reign, and he that has reigned shall rest” (*Strom.* 2.9.45; 5.14.96). Epiphanius (c. AD 310/320–403) preserves part of the *Gospel of the Ebionites*: “It came to pass that John was baptizing, and Pharisees and all Jerusalem went out to him and were baptized. And John had a garment of camel’s hair and a leather girdle about his waist, and his food, it is said, was wild honey, the taste of which was that of manna, as a cake dipped in oil” (*Pan.* 30.13.4–5). The Ebionites (the “poor”) were a Jewish-Christian group. The wording may reflect a vegetarian perspective, a popular form of asceticism, which annoyed Epiphanius, who claimed that the Ebionites “were resolved to make the word of truth into a lie and to put a cake in the place of locusts.” However, the text only claims that the wild honey had the taste of manna, “*as* a cake dipped in oil.” The discovery of papyri in Egypt has also provided agrapha (unwritten sayings) of Jesus. Oxyrhynchus Papyrus 840 depicts a debate between Jesus and a Pharisaic chief priest over viewing the holy utensils in the temple in an impure state.

APOSTOLIC ACTS

This subgenre typically involves a narrative of an apostle’s missionary activity (e.g., Andrew, Peter, John, Paul, Philip) from the time of Jesus’ resurrection to his own martyrdom (or, in the case of John, simply his death). Books of acts also feature other important individuals in the early history of the church, such as Barnabas and even Pilate. Some function to explain how the Christian faith reached a community. The *Acts of Thomas*, which originates probably in Syrian Christianity, depicts his missionary activity in India. They are partly dependent on Luke’s book of Acts, but they reflect a greater interest in biographical detail. The *Acts of Paul and Thecla* provides a physical description of the apostle: “a man of small stature, with a bald head and crooked legs, in a good state of body, with eyebrows meeting and nose somewhat hooked, full of friendliness.” Contrary to popular assumption and the impression that one gets from Paul’s letters (2 Cor. 10:10), the depiction in its cultural context is flattering. Thecla is presented as a young, engaged woman from a prominent family in Iconium. She believes Paul’s gospel, which emphasizes sexual abstinence (see 1 Cor. 7:1–16). She breaks off her engagement, and the apostle permits her to become a teacher. The details may be a reaction against developments in the early church, which struggled over sexuality and women’s roles in leadership. In the *Acts of Peter*, Luke’s presentation of a conflict between Simon Magus and Simon Peter is greatly expanded; this version describes, among other things, Simon Magus levitating over Rome, only to be grounded by the prayers of Peter (4, 6, 9, 11–18, 23, 31).

LETTERS

The letter genre was not especially popular for those writing Christian apocryphal literature. In one letter, Abgar, king of Edessa, writes Jesus, inviting him to visit his city. Jesus responds with a courteous letter relating that he must fulfill his mission but, following his ascension, will send a disciple (see Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 1.13). There are also fourteen letters between Paul and the Stoic philosopher Seneca (c. 4 BC–AD 65). No one treats these letters as authentic, but they do provide insight into early Christian curiosities. Paul mentions a letter to the Laodiceans, which has not survived (Col. 4:16), so someone in the fourth century or earlier patched together phrases mainly from Philippians and Galatians to provide such a letter. The work known as *3 Corinthians*, which contains a letter from the Corinthian church and Paul's reply, probably serves the same purpose.

APOCALYPSES

An apocalypse features a seer who receives revelation from a supernatural revealer. Apocalypses are attributed to, among others, Paul, Peter, Thomas, Stephen, and James. They typically feature revelations made by Jesus to his disciples in the period between his resurrection and ascension. The book of Revelation appears to have had little influence on these works. Many of them are gnostic. But the *Apocalypse of Peter*, which most likely originated in Palestinian Jewish Christianity during the Bar Kokhba Revolt (AD 132–135), was highly valued, particularly for its depiction of hell, in which twenty-one sinners suffer in ways appropriate to their sin.

APOCRYPHA, OLD TESTAMENT The Greek word *apokrypha* means "hidden" or "concealed," and later it came to refer to religious books considered to be of inferior quality to the OT and the NT. During the third century, several church fathers (e.g., Origen [d. 253], Irenaeus [d. c. 200], Tertullian [d. 220]) used this term to distinguish these works from canonical works. Currently, the phrase "Old Testament Apocrypha" refers to Jewish literary works written between approximately 200 BC and AD 90 that were included in the earliest Greek codices of the LXX.

THE APOCRYPHA AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CANON

By the first century AD, many Jews believed that prophecy continued only until about the time of Ezra, around the end of the fifth century BC, and thus several of the apocryphal works were associated with famous biblical characters such as Jeremiah, Baruch, or Solomon, most likely in order to give them credibility. In Matt. 23:34–35; Luke 11:49–51 Jesus appears to limit the OT canon to the books known to be in the Jewish canon. Both passages record Jesus stating that the Jewish nation will be held responsible for the blood of the prophets from "the blood of Abel" (see Gen. 4:8–10), the first recorded murder, "to the blood of Zechariah" (see 2 Chron. 24:20–22), the last recorded murder. The implication is that biblical history spans from Genesis to Chronicles (most likely the last book in the order of the Hebrew Bible at the time of Jesus), which is equivalent to saying from Genesis to Malachi in the English Bible.

Based upon this evidence, it is doubtful that the early Jews ever considered the apocryphal works part of their canon. In reality, the early Greek codices were Christian collections from the fourth to fifth centuries AD. Apparently, by that time there were significant questions concerning which books made up the OT canon. By the end of the first century AD, Christians had been dispersed all over the Roman Empire, so it is more than likely that few Christians would have had contact with Jews or exposure to their scriptural canon. It is reasonable to assume that during this period of uncertainty, the apocryphal books were thought by some to be part of the Jewish OT canon. A major turning point occurred in the fourth century AD when Jerome (c. 345–420) was asked to write a standardized translation of the Latin Bible. Jerome used original Greek and Hebrew texts to correct his Latin translation. He did not believe that the apocryphal books were part of the OT since they were not included in the Hebrew manuscripts. Nevertheless, some argue that he was coerced into adding them to the Latin Vulgate by Augustine of Hippo (354–430), who believed that at least part of the apocryphal books were to be included in the OT canon. The Latin Vulgate became the standard translation of the Roman Catholic Church for well over a thousand years, and thus the Old Testament Apocrypha were gradually accepted in the church. Another major turning point occurred during the Protestant Reformation when Luther's views were argued at the Council of Trent (convened three times between 1545 and 1563) that the Apocrypha were not part of the OT canon. The Roman Catholic Church had used 2 Macc. 12:43–45 to substantiate its doctrines of purgatory and praying for the dead; likewise Tobit and other apocryphal works were used to substantiate works of righteousness (i.e, not faith alone for salvation). On April 8, 1546, at the Council of Trent, the Roman Catholic Church decreed that the Apocrypha were indeed part of the Christian canon and pronounced anathema upon those who disagreed.

THE

BOOK OF TOBIT

A CHALDEE TEXT

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Opening page from the book of Tobit, part of the Old Testament Apocrypha

Since the time of Luther, Protestants have rejected the canonicity of the Apocrypha. However, the Roman Catholic Church has argued that fifteen apocryphal works are part of their authoritative Scriptures. The Greek Orthodox Church includes two additional works (3 Maccabees; Psalm 151) in its authoritative canon.

ARGUMENTS AGAINST INCLUDING APOCRYPHAL BOOKS IN THE CANON

There are significant arguments for not including these books in the church's authoritative canon.

1. The NT never cites any apocryphal books as inspired; Jesus' usage of Scripture suggests that only the books in the Hebrew Bible were authoritative (Matt. 23:34–35; Luke 11:50–51).

2. None of the apocryphal books claims to be the word of the Lord, as do many OT books (Num. 35:1, 9; Josh. 1:1; Isa. 1:10, 18, 24; Jer. 1:2; Ezek. 1:3; Hos. 1:1; Joel 1:1).

3. The OT canon is confirmed by many sources: 2 Esd. 14:45 (twenty-four books); Josephus, *Ag. Ap.* 1.37–42 (twenty-two books); Melito (all OT books except perhaps Esther); the Jerusalem List (all thirty-nine books); Origen (twenty-two books). All of these sources list the same thirty-nine OT books except that they are grouped differently (with the exception of Melito, who may omit Esther).

4. There is little evidence to suggest that there were two different OT canons, one that developed in Palestine and one in Egypt. In fact, Philo, a Jew from Alexandria, never quotes from an apocryphal book as authoritative.

5. There are significant historical inaccuracies in the Apocrypha. For example, the events in the book of Tobit (1:3–5) are chronologically incompatible: Tobit is said to live in Nineveh about 722 BC and yet also to have seen the division of the united kingdom in about 931 BC.

6. There are theological inconsistencies. For example, 2 Macc. 12:43–45 espouses praying for the dead, but canonical books maintain that decisions about one's eternal destiny can be made only before death (Heb. 9:27). Eleven out of fifteen apocryphal books contain some type of inaccuracies. Those that do not either are very short (i.e., Prayer of Azariah and Song of the Three Young Men; Prayer of Manasseh) or their content makes it difficult to determine if they contain errors (i.e., Wisdom of Solomon; Susanna).

7. Many early church fathers spoke against the canonicity of much or all of the Apocrypha (Melito, Origen, Cyril of Jerusalem, Athanasius, Jerome); no major church father accepted all of the apocryphal books until Augustine. The apocryphal books have never been universally accepted by the church.

8. The earliest list of OT canon by Melito (c. AD 170) does not include them.

9. During the Council of Trent, Martin Luther's views against the canonicity of the Apocrypha were discussed, citing the NT, early church fathers, and Jewish teachers in support. The Roman Catholic Church responded by canonizing the Apocrypha.

THE BOOKS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT APOCRYPHA

Even though the apocryphal books should not be considered part of the authoritative canon, they are useful for understanding Jewish thought and interests in the intertestamental period and the development of certain concepts during this period (e.g., the importance of the Torah, the apocalyptic view of history, the kingdom of God).

Traditionally, the Apocrypha consisted of fifteen books that were included in Roman Catholic Bibles and were usually identified as deuterocanonical (i.e., second canon) works. However, more recently this number has been reduced to thirteen since *4 Ezra* (sometimes called *2 Esdras* or *Apocalypse of Ezra*) and the *Prayer of Manasseh* were never found in the oldest Greek codices of the LXX: Vaticanus (c. AD 350), Sinaiticus (c. AD 400), and Alexandrinus (c. AD 450). These two works are now correctly considered pseudepigraphal books (i.e., false writings that were never thought to be part of the biblical canon).

The list below follows the Roman Catholic canon. In addition to these texts, several other writings are included in the Greek Orthodox, Armenian, Georgian, Syriac, and Ethiopian canons: 3 Maccabees, 4 Maccabees, Psalm 151, Psalms 152–55, *1 Enoch*, *Jubilees*, *2 Baruch* (*Letter of Baruch*), *3 Baruch* (*Apocalypse of Baruch*), *4 Baruch* (*Paralipomena of Jeremiah*), and 1–3 Megabyan (Ethiopic Maccabees).

Books included in the Old Testament Apocrypha. The following thirteen books are included in the Old Testament Apocrypha.

- *Wisdom of Solomon* (latter part of the first century BC): This work contains Jewish wisdom traditions and describes the benefits of wisdom and the joys that accompany righteous living, as well as punishments for the wicked.
- *Sirach* (or Ecclesiasticus; c. 180 BC): This book is very similar to the biblical book of Proverbs, also containing Jewish wisdom traditions. It includes moral and ethical maxims, proverbs, songs of praise, theological and philosophical reflections on life, and customs of the day.
- *Tobit* (c. 180 BC): A romantic story teaching that God comes to the aid of those who remain faithful to his laws. Tobit, a righteous Israelite living in Nineveh, is an example to the rest of the captives even in the midst of great adversities. Tobit becomes blind and prays to God to restore his sight. At the same time in Media, Sarah, Tobit's niece, who had lost seven bridegrooms in succession, prays to God for deliverance from the demon Asmodeus. God sends the angel Raphael to deliver them both.
- *Judith* (c. 150 BC): Nebuchadnezzar sends Holofernes to punish the people west of Babylon for their insubordination. The author exhorts the Jews to remain obedient to the law amid foreign occupation by the Babylonians. The people of Judea pray to God for help; in answer, Judith beguiles Holofernes, gets him thoroughly drunk, and then decapitates him.
- *1 Esdras* (or *3 Ezra*; c. second to first century BC): This book is a retelling of parts of Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah. It begins abruptly describing the reinstitution of the Passover by King Josiah in Jerusalem about 622/621 BC and continues to Ezra's reforms about 458 BC. The majority of the book emphasizes Ezra's reforms.
- *1 Maccabees* (c. latter part of the second century BC): This book describes Judean history and especially the military campaigns of the Maccabees from the accession of Antiochus IV (Epiphanes) in about 175 BC to the reign of John Hyrcanus I (134–104 BC). This work is a very accurate history and is the primary source of recorded events during this period.
- *2 Maccabees* (c. end of second century to beginning of first century BC): This book is much more theologically oriented than 1 Maccabees in recording events of Jewish history from the time of the high priest Onias III and the Syrian king Seleucus IV (c. 180 BC) to the defeat of Nicanor's army (c. 161 BC). It appears to adopt an anti-Hasmonean viewpoint by highlighting concepts such as the resurrection of the body and the efficacious nature of martyrdom.
- *Baruch* (c. second to first century BC): This claims to be a letter from Baruch to those living in Jerusalem. It begins with a confirmation that Jerusalem was destroyed because of Israel's sinfulness

and was to be read on a feast day as a confession of their sin (1:14).

- *Epistle of Jeremiah* (third to first century BC): The date of this work is now confirmed by a first-century BC Greek manuscript from Cave 7 of Qumran. The text contains 72 or 73 verses and is most likely influenced by Jer. 10:1–16. This letter, supposedly from Jeremiah to Jewish captives soon to be taken to Babylon, describes the folly of worshiping idols.
- *Additions to Esther* (c. second to first century BC): These six additions (e.g., Mordecai's dream and its interpretation, prayers of Mordecai and Esther) to the Greek text of Esther apparently were introduced to highlight the religious aspect of the story that the author felt was lacking.
- *Susanna* (c. second to first century BC): This work and the next two were added to the book of Daniel sometime during the first century BC. Susanna is tried and found guilty because of the lies that two elders of Israel told about her after she refused their sexual advances. Daniel, however, inspired by God, cross-examines the two men, proves that they have lied, and exonerates Susanna.
- *Bel and the Dragon* (c. second to first century BC): This work contains two stories demonstrating the wisdom of Daniel. In the first, he outwits the priests of Bel who go each night through a secret entrance to eat the offerings left for Bel. Daniel reveals their deception and proves their great statue of Bel, the patron deity of Babylon, to be a worthless idol. In the second story, Daniel is thrown into the lions' den for killing a dragon that the Babylonians believed to be a god. However, the angel of the Lord protects Daniel and brings Habakkuk from Judea with food for him. On the seventh day, Daniel is removed from the lions' den and his enemies are thrown in.
- *Prayer of Azariah and Song of the Three Young Men* (c. second to first century BC): Before being thrown into the fiery furnace (cf. Dan. 3:23), Abednego ("Azariah" in Hebrew) prays, asking God to bring glory to his name through this ordeal. Then follows the song of the three young men (Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego), who sing praise and glory to God.

Books no longer in the Old Testament Apocrypha. The following two books are no longer included in the Old Testament Apocrypha.

- *2 Esdras* (or *4 Ezra*, *Apocalypse of Ezra*; c. first century AD): An apocalyptic book dealing with the problem of evil in the world, or more specifically why an all-powerful, loving God allows such great evils to befall humankind. The reason why turns out to be human sinfulness.
- *Prayer of Manasseh* (c. second to first century BC): According to 2 Chron. 33:10–13, Manasseh prayed to God while in captivity and asked for forgiveness for his many sins. God responds by forgiving him and allowing him to return to Israel. This work purports to record this amazing prayer.

APOLLONIA A town in eastern Macedonia visited by Paul on his second missionary journey (Acts 17:1). It is located north of the Chalcidian Mountains on the Egnatian Way between Amphipolis and Thessalonica. It is usually associated with the modern city of Pollina.

APOLLOS The most significant role that Apollos plays in the NT is, interestingly, not related to the narrative about him or his service in the advance of the gospel. The name "Apollos" was used by immature Christians in Corinth as a figurehead for their group. They competed with other Corinthian groups for status and honor, following the practices of the secular culture with little Christian discernment. Apollos's outstanding communication skills, knowledge, and skill at argumentation fit the secular Corinthian cultural values of intellect, knowledge, wisdom, and rhetorical skill. The group may have used his name without his approval and not in his presence. Apparently, Apollos was rather put off by the Corinthians; Paul asked Apollos to go to Corinth, but he preferred to minister in Ephesus (1 Cor. 16:12).

The remains of the main Roman road into Corinth. Apollos spent some time ministering in this city.

Apollos was born in Alexandria (Acts 18:24) and probably educated there. He came to Ephesus, perhaps on business, after Paul had left the city during his second missionary journey. In addition to his knowledge of the OT, Apollos had been instructed in the way of the Lord (i.e., partial Jesus tradition) and was teaching accurately his knowledge of Jesus. He knew only the baptism of John—that is, the baptism of repentance. When Priscilla and Aquila "explained to him the way of God more adequately" (18:26), this probably entailed an explanation of the atoning significance of Jesus' death, God's vindication of Jesus in the resurrection, and the personal experience of the Holy Spirit for all believers. After ministering in Ephesus (18:24), he went to Corinth (19:1; cf. 1 Cor. 3), where he was able to overwhelm the Jews in argument that Jesus was the Christ (Acts 18:28). Apollos returned to Ephesus sometime thereafter and was present in that city when Paul wrote 1 Corinthians (1 Cor. 16:8). Apollos probably remained a faithful member of the Pauline missionary band, for he is mentioned later in Paul's letter to Titus and was probably a courier of that letter with Zenas (Titus 3:13).

Some have suggested that Apollos was the author of Hebrews, but this is only speculation.

APOLLYON The Greek name, meaning "destroyer," for the angel of the Abyss, the bottomless pit. The Hebrew form is "Abaddon" (Rev. 9:11). The name may derive from Apollo, an important Greek god.

APOSTASY Although apostasy originally referred to a political revolt or rebellion, in the Bible this term is used specifically to describe rebellion against God. While there is a sense in which every human being has consciously and deliberately sinned and fallen short of God's standards (Rom. 3:23), apostasy is normally used only in reference to those who have known the truth but later flagrantly and high-handedly turn their back on it and reject God.

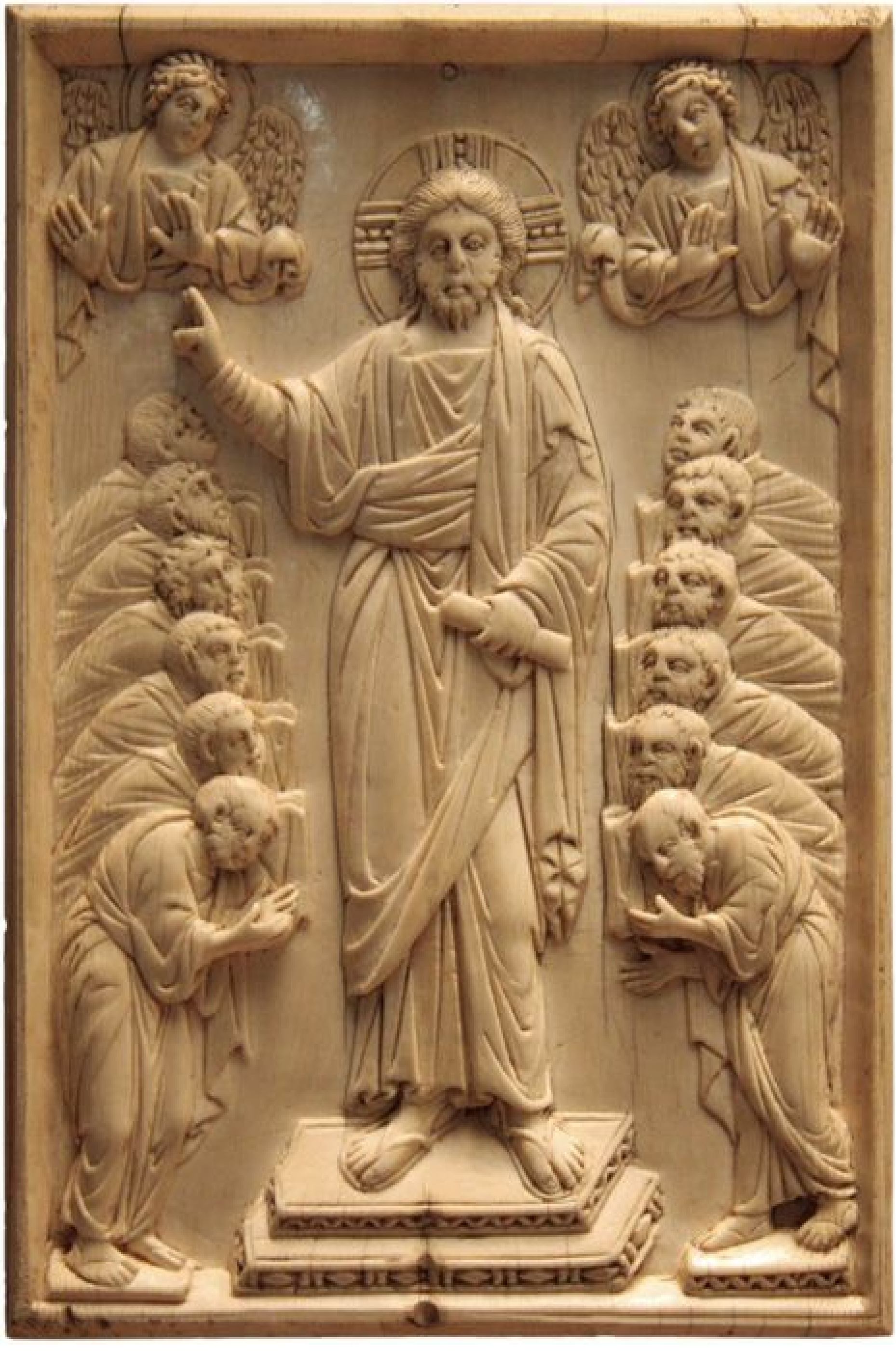
Apostasy involves a turning back from the faith on the part of those who were previously considered believers. Paul warns, "The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons" (1 Tim. 4:1). Peter similarly tells believers, "Be on your guard so that you may not be carried away by the error of the lawless and fall from your secure position" (2 Pet. 3:17). This abandoning or falling away from the faith necessarily involves individuals who at one time appeared to possess faith. The author of Hebrews points out the unlikelihood of restoration of "those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, who have shared in the Holy Spirit, who have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the coming age, and who have fallen away" (6:4–6) and those who "deliberately keep on sinning," since "no sacrifice for sins is left" (10:26).

There are many examples of individuals who began well and ended poorly. Israel's king Saul is a tragic illustration of a downward spiral from being chosen by God to flagrant disobedience. Paul encouraged Timothy to "fight the battle well" by "holding on to faith and a good conscience, which some have rejected and so have suffered shipwreck with regard to the faith." Among them are "Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have handed over to Satan to be taught not to blaspheme" (1 Tim. 1:18–20). Jude wrote his short epistle to encourage his readers to "contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to God's holy people. For certain individuals whose condemnation was written about long ago have secretly slipped in among you" (vv. 3–4). As Paul looked ahead to the future, he warned how the time will come "when people will not put up with sound doctrine," but will have "itching ears" and "will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths" (2 Tim. 4:3–4). Peter similarly spoke of how there would be "false teachers among you" who "will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them," and how "many will follow their depraved conduct and will bring the way of truth into disrepute" (2 Pet. 2:1–2). Jesus warned that in the future "false messiahs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and miracles to deceive, if possible, even the elect" (Matt. 24:24). Jesus did not say that any of the elect will be deceived, but he did say that the false teaching would be so subtle that even the elect could almost be deceived.

The topic of apostasy raises a number of difficult questions, including whether people can lose their salvation, as well as how to minister to friends and loved ones who have rejected the faith they once held dear. Although Christians are divided on the claim "once saved, always saved," it is important to note that only God is able to see into a person's heart and evaluate the person's spiritual condition. God may yet bring those who are still alive back to faith in himself before they die, and even those who have already died may have repented in their final moments of consciousness unbeknownst to any observers. Apostasy is different from backsliding in that it is more serious and permanent, yet we may not always be able to distinguish one from the other until eternity.

Apostasy is clearly presented in Scripture as a possible spiritual danger for believers. Paul warns, "If you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall!" (1 Cor. 10:12). The only appropriate response is to make every effort "to work out your salvation with fear and trembling" (Phil. 2:12).

APOSTLE A title designating members of the group of twelve disciples (Matt. 10:2–4; Mark 3:16–19; Luke 6:13–16) who received Jesus' teaching (Luke 17:5) and to whom he granted authority (Mark 6:7, 30; Luke 9:1, 10). Matthias later replaced Judas Iscariot (Acts 1:24). These apostles provided leadership to the early church in Jerusalem (Acts 15:6), performed miracles (Acts 2:43; 2 Cor. 12:12), and faced persecution (Acts 5:18) as they testified to Jesus' resurrection (Acts 4:33; 5:32). Broader usage of the term includes witnesses to Jesus' resurrection (1 Cor. 15:7), James the brother of Jesus (Gal. 1:19), Barnabas and Paul (Acts 14:14), and possibly Silas (1 Thess. 2:6) and Andronicus and Junias/Junia (Rom. 16:7). Paul regularly speaks of his calling in apostolic terms (Rom. 1:1; 1 Cor. 1:1; 2 Cor. 1:1; Gal. 1:1; Eph. 1:1; Col. 1:1; 1 Tim. 1:1; 2 Tim. 1:1; Titus 1:1), while Peter similarly self-identifies (1 Pet. 1:1; 2 Pet. 1:1). The word is once used of Jesus himself (Heb. 3:1).



Ivory bookbinding plate from Constantinople illustrating the "Mission of the Apostles" (tenth century

AD)

APOSTOLIC COUNCIL Often referred to as the Jerusalem council, this is the meeting recorded in Acts 15 between representatives of the church at Antioch (most notably Paul and Barnabas) and of the Jerusalem church (led by James and Peter). The council was convened to address the question of whether Gentile Christians should be required to be circumcised and to keep the Mosaic law. Certain Jewish Christians who were Pharisees had asked that Gentiles observe the law upon coming to faith in Christ. Paul, Barnabas, and others opposed such a move and called for the meeting in Jerusalem. At the meeting, the council members sided in large measure with the position of Paul and Barnabas, concluding that Gentiles need not be circumcised or submit to Mosaic law, though they still asked Gentile believers to abstain from food sacrificed to idols, blood, meat from strangled animals, and sexual immorality (vv. 19–21). Many scholars have suggested that Paul gives his own account of this meeting in Gal. 2:1–10, though others have maintained that he is describing a different occasion than the events of Acts 15. *See also* Acts of the Apostles.

APOSTOLIC FATHERS An assortment of Christian writings likely from the first through the third centuries AD. In view of their early date and the conjectured association of their authors with the apostles, scholars began labeling these writings the "Apostolic Fathers." Some of these writings enjoyed immense popularity within various parts of the early church. Many early Christians considered different ones among them to be sacred Scripture. Many of them found places in ancient codices with writings of the NT. They remain some of the earliest extant Christian writings, produced around or shortly after the writings of the NT. They constitute an invaluable resource for studying Christianity shortly following the period of the apostles. Concerning the Bible, they offer scholars early evidence of how different early Christians viewed and handled the writings of our Bible. While they attest to the importance or even scriptural status of many of our biblical writings, they also witness to a similar status for other writings among ancient Christians, writings not included within the Protestant canon of Scripture. The traditional contents of the Apostolic Fathers are as follows.

1 Clement. A lengthy letter sent by "the church of God which sojourns in Rome to the church of God which sojourns in Corinth." Later Christian traditions identify the author as a certain Clement, supposedly the third bishop of Rome after Peter. This seems unlikely, however, because the type of bishop conceived of by the later tradition did not exist in Rome around the end of the first century, when *1 Clement* was written by an unknown author. Many other early Christian writings feature or are (falsely) attributed to this Clement as well. Apparently, news reached Rome that some of the younger men in the Corinthian congregation had usurped authority from the older, established leaders. The letter urges the Corinthians to avoid jealousy and to submit to their established leaders. It often uses passages from the OT and from several writings of the NT, including some of Paul's letters. It also quotes Wisdom of Solomon (a writing in the Apocrypha) in addition to another writing unknown to us now. Many early Christians came to hold *1 Clement* itself in high regard. Some considered it to be Scripture.

2 Clement. A short sermon on Isa. 54:1 from the middle of the second century AD by an unknown author, though later tradition attributes it to Clement. It encourages Christians to endurance and repentance so that they may enjoy eternal life and experience the resurrection. It draws from numerous writings that the author considered sacred to persuade the audience: Isaiah, Ezekiel, an unknown writing, and some words of Jesus. It shows awareness of Matthew, Luke, 1 Corinthians, Ephesians, and possibly James, Hebrews, and 1 Peter. Several sayings from Jesus that it deploys are best preserved in the *Gospel of Thomas* and the *Gospel of the Egyptians*.

Letters of Ignatius. A collection of seven letters to different churches and to Polycarp by the bishop Ignatius in the early second century AD as he was being taken to Rome for execution. He commonly stresses the dangers of false teaching, the unity of the church only in the bishop, and the value and necessity of his impending martyrdom. Scholars traditionally understand Ignatius to have been primarily concerned with docetic and Jewish tendencies in his warnings against false teachers. He relied heavily on Paul, especially as a model martyr who shared in the sufferings of Christ and whose martyrdom benefitted the church, but, unlike *1 Clement*, he drew little from the OT. It seems certain that he used Matthew, 1 Corinthians, and Ephesians. Minimal evidence exists for his use of Luke, while echoes from other Pauline letters (Romans, Galatians, Philippians, Colossians, and 1 Thessalonians) are common, as are parallels with *1 Clement*, *2 Clement*, and *Shepherd of Hermas*. It remains unclear whether such echoes and parallels demonstrate literary knowledge or simply widespread traditions ultimately stemming from those documents.

Letter of Polycarp to the Philippians. Ignatius mentored Polycarp, who died as a martyr in the mid-second century, having served as a bishop for forty years. Polycarp wrote this letter, the lone surviving writing from him, to the Philippians in response to their request for a discussion of righteousness and a problem with a certain elder. He stresses the connection between right behavior and right beliefs. He drew heavily from various NT writings, especially Pauline writings. He also seems to have considered *1 Clement* to have the same authoritative status as Paul’s letters.

Martyrdom of Polycarp. A writing of unknown date that describes the martyrdom of Polycarp. Polycarp, an old man, is to be executed unless he renounces Christ. According to the account, Polycarp famously responds, “For eighty-six years I have been his servant, and he has done me no wrong. How can I blaspheme my King who has saved me?” (*Mart. Pol.* 9:3). Most or all of the account is clearly legendary. It also explicitly describes Polycarp’s death through the lens of Jesus’ death as represented in the Gospels.

Didache. This writing, whose title means “teaching,” dates anywhere from the mid-first to the mid-second century AD. It possibly stems from an early group of Christians who wrestled with how to keep the Jewish law as part of their following Jesus. It discusses the “two ways,” of life and of death; baptism and the Lord’s Supper (though focusing on the purifying nature of water and without mentioning Jesus’ words of institution or his sacrificial death); and the necessity of endurance for salvation at the end. Scholars debate whether the Gospel of Matthew used the *Didache*.

Epistle of Barnabas. A writing from the mid-second century AD later falsely attributed to Paul’s traveling companion Barnabas. It wrestles with a common early Christian issue: how to relate God’s new action in Christ to the Jewish Scriptures and to God’s relation to Jews. Especially through engaging in a long-standing Greco-Roman practice of allegorically interpreting sacred writings, Barnabas argues that the OT always “really” pointed to Jesus and Christians. The laws were never meant to be kept literally, and Israel has forfeited its covenant with God because it misunderstood the laws, engaged in idolatry, and was disobedient. The epistle also stresses the urgent nature of the present time and the necessity for Christians to endure and to live rightly in order to experience final salvation. Like Jude in the NT, the author cites the pseudepigraphic work *1 Enoch*. He also cites and uses like Scripture Wisdom of Solomon, *4 Ezra*, and several unknown writings. Many early Christians also considered *Barnabas* to be Scripture and used it as such.

Shepherd of Hermas. A lengthy early Christian apocalypse from the second century AD in Rome. It wrestles with issues of postbaptismal sin, the possibilities of repentance, and the relations of the rich and the poor. It focuses particularly on observing God’s commands and self-control and does not contain much theological speculation about Christ. The Holy Spirit and angels take on many of Christ’s functions. It rarely directly uses the OT, though it does constantly echo Jewish wisdom tradition. Similar to *Barnabas*, many early Christians treated it as a sacred writing.

Epistle to Diognetus. A short second- or third-century apology for Christians, which also stresses the tangible aspects of Christian piety and service toward others.

Fragments of Papias. Fragments of the now lost writings of Papias, an important early Christian leader contemporary with Polycarp. They give us some of the earliest Christian reflection on the authorship and composition of Matthew and Mark, as well as thoughts on the millennium. Papias mentions his preference for the “living voice” of eyewitnesses of Jesus as opposed to the writings of those who were not. He thus participates in a common ancient Mediterranean sensitivity about authentic sources.

APOTHECARY The KJV term for a “perfumer” or “perfume-maker” (see NIV). Perfumers mixed aromatic oils and spices to create ointments for medicinal, cosmetic, or religious purposes. A professional perfumer was required to prepare anointing oils and incense used in worship at the tabernacle (Exod. 30:25, 37; Neh. 3:8). *See also* Perfume, Perfumer.

APPAIM Son of Nadab and the father of Ishi (1 Chron. 2:30–31) in the family of Jerahmeel. He was a descendant of Judah.

APPEAL TO CAESAR In the Roman Empire all citizens possessed the right of appeal to Caesar, stemming from the time of Augustus. There is some dispute as to how long it took for this right to be applied to the provinces, and in some cases Roman citizens were refused their rights. In the NT, Paul availed himself of this right in Acts 25 when he appeared before Festus. Paul was brought to trial by the Jewish leaders on false charges that he had led a Gentile into the temple. Festus asked him to return to Jerusalem for trial, but Paul, wary that the Jews would try to kill him, asked that his case be heard by the emperor. Paul was granted his appeal and sent to Rome, even though it was later determined he had done nothing wrong. Acts ends with Paul awaiting trial in Rome.

APPENDAGE OF THE LIVER *See* Caul.

APPHIA A Christian at Colossae greeted by Paul (Philem. 2). Apphia may be Philemon’s wife and Archippus’s mother. If so, as a wealthier member of the church in her home, she would have served as a patroness (cf. 1 Cor. 16:19). Since Paul addresses her as “sister,” some have concluded that she held a leadership role in the Colossian church.

APPII FORUM *See* Forum of Appius.

APPIUS *See* Forum of Appius.

APPLE, APPLE TREE The Hebrew word *tappuakh* is most often rendered “apple (tree),” though some have suggested other fruits, arguing that the apple was not introduced into biblical lands until after the period of the OT.

In Song of Songs, the man is said to be an apple tree among the trees of the forest (Song 2:3). He provides shade for the woman, who partakes of the tree’s fruit. Later in the same book, the apple tree is also the location of lovemaking; the woman says that the man arouses her under the apple tree (Song 8:5). The apple tree stands out among all the other trees by its fruit and its scent. In love poetry it provides an ideal setting for intimacy because of its shade and the intimations of fruitfulness (fertility). In Song 2:5, apples are mentioned along with raisin cakes as food that will sustain the woman in her lovemaking, thus serving as a kind of aphrodisiac. In an equally sensuous passage (Song 7:8), the woman's breath is said to smell like apples, thus implying that she is pleasant to be near as the man kisses her.

Excluding references to the "apple of the eye," the apple tree occurs outside of Song of Songs only in Joel 1:12 and Prov. 25:11. In Joel 1:12, the apple tree is listed among trees that will be destroyed in the context of God's judgment. In other words, the fertility of the orchards and forests will disappear. Proverbs 25:11 compares words spoken at the right time to golden apples set in a silver basket, a highly desirable combination. *See also* Apple of the Eye.

APPLE OF THE EYE This English and Hebrew idiom (lit., "the little man of the eye," a reference to the pupil) designates a thing of value to the beholder. God values and protects Jacob (Deut. 32:10) and the city of Jerusalem (Zech. 2:8). The psalmist desires to be the apple of God's eye (Ps. 17:8) and to enjoy safety from the wicked. In the father's exhortations to the son in Proverbs, the son is urged to keep the law as the apple of his eye (Prov. 7:2).

APRON KJV and RSV translation of a Hebrew word in Gen. 3:7 (*khagor*, *khagorah*; NIV: "coverings"; NRSV: "loincloth") that refers to a garment that was wrapped around the body's midsection. The garment was very basic in nature and served the purpose of maintaining modesty once maturity had been reached. In the NT, the apron appears to be outerwear of some sort. Aprons (and handkerchiefs) that had touched Paul's skin were used to heal the sick (Acts 19:12).

AQABA, GULF OF A gulf in the northeastern part of the Red Sea. It is bordered by Midian on the east and by the Sinai Peninsula on the west. At the northern tip is Ezion Geber, where Solomon built his fleet (1 Kings 9:26–28; 2 Chron. 8:17–18).

AQUEDUCT A conduit used to transport water from one place to another. It could be either a trough cut into rock or soil, or pipes made from stone or other materials. Aqueducts were used in OT times to transport water into cities from nearby springs. The "aqueduct of the Upper Pool" in Jerusalem is mentioned in 2 Kings 18:17; Isa. 7:3; 36:2. Its location is uncertain, though it is said to be "on the road to the Washerman's Field." Hezekiah's tunnel was an underground aqueduct that took water from the Gihon Spring to the Pool of Siloam (2 Kings 20:20). The conduit was in existence prior to Hezekiah, but he fortified and improved it in preparation for an imminent attack by the Assyrians instigated by his rebellion against them (2 Chron. 32:1–3, 30). (*See also* Tunnel.)

In NT times, the Romans built many aqueducts to carry water from springs and mountain streams to cities. Often these were underground conduits, but also they were constructed as large, arched structures made of stone and mortar that gradually sloped downward. The remains of an impressive Roman aqueduct that transported water from the Carmel Mountains to the coast can still be seen in the ruins of Caesarea Maritima. The reference in Rev. 3:14–22 to the "lukewarm" church at Laodicea likely alludes to the tepid water that arrived via aqueduct from springs five miles south of the city.

Aqueduct built by Herod the Great at Caesarea Maritima

AQUILA AND PRISCILLA Aquila and Priscilla were important coworkers with the apostle Paul in his missionary effort. They joined Paul in cooperative efforts and also worked in relative independence. They were Christian workers in what came to be important centers of early Christianity: Corinth, Ephesus, and Rome.

Aquila was a Jew from Pontus, the husband of Priscilla (the diminutive form, "Prisca," is used by Paul in his letters). Mentioned in six verses in the NT as a pair, four of these list Priscilla first, probably indicating her wealth, social status, or prominence in the Christian community. They probably heard and trusted in the gospel in Rome and left that city after the expulsion edict of Claudius (Acts 18:2). Paul met them in Corinth, where they housed and probably worked their trade with him (18:3) before traveling with Paul to Ephesus (18:18–19). They provided hospitality to Apollos while in Ephesus, also demonstrating knowledge of the faith and teaching skill when they explained the way of God more adequately to him (18:26). People of some financial means, they were able to travel and to house churches in Ephesus (1 Cor. 16:19) and Rome (Rom. 16:3–5). In Rom. 16:4 Paul mentions that they "risked their lives" for him, and that the churches of the Gentiles were grateful to them, probably indicating sponsorship of house churches, teaching ministry, and other missionary work. Since they are first in the list of greetings in Rom. 16:3, it is likely that they were prominent Christians in Rome. They later traveled back to Ephesus (2 Tim. 4:19).

AR A Moabite term used as the name of a city (Deut. 2:18, 29), a region (Deut. 2:9), or both. As a city, Ar is located near the Arnon River (Num. 21:28), the northern border of Moab (Num. 21:15). Isaiah predicts the destruction of Ar (Isa. 15:1). No one site has been associated with this place. *Ar* can also mean "city" in general, not just a specific location. As a region, Ar can be synonymous with Moab.

ARA Son of Jether, and a leader in the tribe of Asher (1 Chron. 7:38). The meaning of the name is uncertain.

ARAB A town located in the hill country southwest of Hebron. This was part of the territory allotted to the tribe of Judah (Josh. 15:52). It is possibly the home of Paarai the Arbite, one of David's men (2 Sam. 23:35).

ARABAH One of several major topographical features of Israel (Deut. 1:7; Josh. 11:16). The Arabah corresponds to the Great Rift Valley running north to south through the land. Situated within it is the Jordan River Valley, which extends southward from the Sea of Galilee (Kinnereth) sixty-five miles to the Dead Sea (Sea of the Arabah). The Dead Sea and its surroundings are also part of it, as is the desert region to the south, which extends 103 miles to the Gulf of Aqaba. Almost the entire region sits below sea level, with the Sea of Galilee roughly seven hundred feet below, and the Dead Sea thirteen hundred feet below.

The Hebrew for "Arabah" (*ha'arabah*), where the term is preceded by the article, refers to the whole or a portion of this territory (see Deut. 1:1; Josh. 12:1; 1 Sam. 23:24). Conversely, the plural form occurs in connection with two specific localities. The first, "the plains of Moab" (*'arebot moab*), lies north of the Dead Sea and east of the Jordan. Here the Israelites encamped prior to entering Canaan (Num. 22:1), and Moab led Israel into apostasy (25:1–3). The second census was taken here prior to the crossing of the Jordan (26:3–4). Moses delivered his final addresses on the plains of Moab and died in its vicinity (Deut. 34:1). The second, "the plains of Jericho" (*'arebot yerikho*), lies opposite the first, west of the Jordan. Here the Israelites entered Canaan (Josh. 4:13). Here too the Israelite males were circumcised and the Passover celebrated (Josh. 5). Finally, it was here that manna ceased (Josh. 5:12). Much later, Judah's last king, Zedekiah, was apprehended in the plains of Jericho while fleeing the Babylonians (2 Kings 25:1–5).

"The way of the Arabah" (*derek ha'arabah*) occurs five times, once indicating a road leading from the Gulf of Aqaba (Deut. 2:8), possibly the King's Highway (see Num. 20:17, 21). Elsewhere the construction indicates a course or direction (2 Sam. 4:7; 2 Kings 25:4). Without the article, *ʾarabah* is rendered “desert,” “wasteland,” or “wilderness” (e.g., Job 39:6), and the Arabah could be conceived of as a desert or lowland generally (Isa. 33:9; Zech. 14:10).

In contemporary usage, “Arabah” applies exclusively to the region south of the Dead Sea. *See also* Valley of the Arabah.

ARABIA A large peninsula lying between the Red Sea on the west and the Persian Gulf on the east. In the Bible the term is actually seldom used (2 Chron. 9:14; Isa. 21:13; Jer. 25:24; Ezek. 27:21; 30:5; Gal. 1:17; 4:25), and when it is, it refers more to the general area than to any specific group of people or geographic location. It seems to stand as a designation for that expanse of land that lies to the south and east of Canaan and the Transjordan peoples. On several occasions the term “Arabs” is used to designate the people from those regions (2 Chron. 17:11; 21:16; 22:1; 26:7; Neh. 4:7; Acts 2:11). Elsewhere they are referred to as “eastern peoples” (Gen. 29:1; Judg. 6:3, 33; 7:12; 8:10) or “people of the East” (1 Kings 4:30; Job 1:3; Jer. 49:28; Ezek. 25:4; 25:10). In Gen. 25:6 Arabia is referred to as the “land of the east,” and in Isa. 2:6 simply as “the East” (although this may refer simply to Syria and Mesopotamia).

Clearly, Arabia is a presence in the Scripture, although its role is not nearly as dominant or even as clear as that of other nations or regions, whether superpowers such as Babylon, Assyria, and Egypt or lesser nations such as the Ammonites or the various Canaanite peoples. Still, the importance of Arabia should not be overlooked.

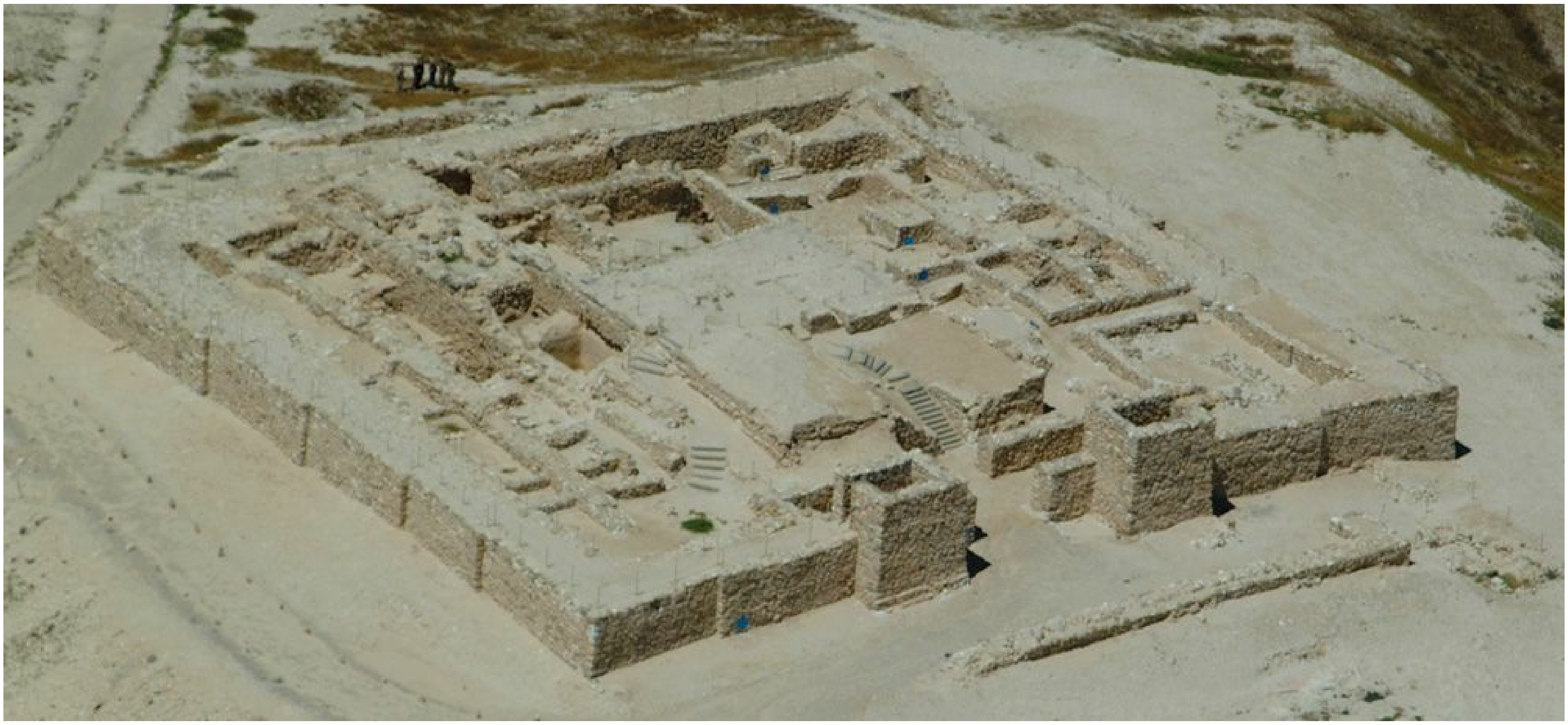
Like many other peoples in the OT, how these people are evaluated by biblical writers is diverse, which is compounded by the fact that the various referents for “Arabs” or “Arabia” can only really be determined, if at all, from a close examination of the context. Nevertheless, we see that “all the kings of Arabia and the governors of the territories” gave gifts to Solomon (2 Chron. 9:14). The Arabs are also said to bring tribute to Jehoshaphat (17:11). Elsewhere in the historical books their relationship with the Israelites is more hostile (e.g., 2 Chron. 21:16; 22:1; Neh. 4:7).

Neither do they escape the attention of the prophets. In Isa. 21:13–16 their troubles are predicted at the hands of other nations (notably the Babylonians and the Assyrians, both of whom waged battles at later points in Israel’s history). Isaiah also refers to Dedanites and Kedar, the first being an Arabian tribe and the second a home of Bedouin tribes. Both references assume their nomadic lifestyle. According to Jer. 25:24, they will be among many nations who will drink of the cup of God’s wrath. According to Ezek. 30:5, Arabia will fall by the sword (Nebuchadnezzar’s) as one of several allies of Egypt.

In the NT, Arabs were among those present at Pentecost (Acts 2:11). After his conversion Paul journeyed to Arabia (Gal. 1:17), by which is meant the Nabatean kingdom, stretching from the Transjordan southwest toward the Sinai Peninsula. Interestingly, Paul’s reference to Mount Sinai as being in Arabia (Gal. 4:25) may suggest a location other than the traditional one of the Sinai Peninsula—for example, across the Gulf of Aqaba (the eastern arm of the Red Sea) in or near Midian (see Exod. 2:11–3:3)—although there is no consensus on this matter.

ARABIM The NASB transliteration of the name of the brook mentioned in Isa. 15:7. The NIV translates it as “Ravine of the Poplars,” the KJV as “brook of the willows,” and the NRSV as “Wadi of the Willows.” This brook may be associated with the wadi el-Chesa in Moab at the southern end of the Dead Sea.

ARAD **(1)** A Canaanite city located in the Negev Desert, approximately eighteen miles northeast of Beersheba. This was the site of the defeat by the king of Arad when the Israelites attempted a southern entrance into Canaan, the result of which was the capture of several of their own people (Num. 21:1; 33:40). Later, the king of Arad is listed among the conquered kings of Canaan (Josh. 12:14). The city was destroyed and renamed "Hormah" (Num. 21:2–3). The area is also mentioned as a reference point for the land of the Kenites, the descendants of Moses' father-in-law (Judg. 1:16).



Aerial view of the remains of the ancient Canaanite city of Arad

A large, fortified city of approximately twenty-two acres existed on this site in the Early Bronze Age II (3000–2700 BC). Apparently, the Arad of this period had extensive trade connections with Egypt, as may be inferred from the discovery of numerous Egyptian ceramic pieces and pottery, or ostraca. The site was abandoned in the Late Bronze Age I (1550–1400 BC) and not resettled until the Early Iron Age (1200–1000 BC), when a squared fortress was built on its ruins. A temple/shrine built during the Iron Age is perhaps the most significant discovery in Tel Arad. There is remarkable similarity between the details of the building plans of this temple/shrine and the description of the tabernacle in Exod. 27 and the Solomonic temple in 1 Kings 6. In addition to this Arad temple, numerous ostraca with inscriptions in Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, and Arabic have been discovered. Although fragmented, the inscriptions found on these ostraca appear to be letters to commanders of Arad with military and administrative instruction. This site was clearly associated with the worship of Yahweh, as one ostraca mentions the "House of Yahweh." It remains unknown, however, if this refers to the Arad shrine or to the Solomonic temple.

(2) Son of Beriah (1 Chron. 8:15).

ARAH **(1)** The head of the family of Babylonian exiles who are listed as returnees under the leadership of several Jewish leaders, one being Zerubbabel (Ezra 2:5; Neh. 7:10). Later in the postexilic period, Tobiah, the adversary of Nehemiah, married a woman from the family of Arah

(Neh. 6:18). **(2)** Son of Ulla, listed in the preexilic genealogy of the tribe of Asher (1 Chron. 7:39).

ARAM **(1)** Shem's son (Gen. 10:22; 1 Chron. 1:17) and ancestor to the Arameans. **(2)** Kemuel's son, grandson of Abraham's brother Nahor (Gen. 22:21). **(3)** Shemer's son in the genealogy of Asher (1 Chron. 7:34). **(4)** The KJV has "Aram" in the genealogy of Christ (Matt. 1:3; Luke 3:33), whereas other translations have "Ram" (consistently in the Luke passage; the Matthew reference has further complications and thus the versions differ, only some having Ram [KJV, NIV, NASB] and others Ami [NRSV, NLT, NET]). **(5)** An important Aramean nation located in modern Syria. Many English translations inaccurately refer to this state as "Syria."

ARAMAIC Aramaic comprises one of the two main branches of the northwest Semitic language group. The language most closely related to Aramaic is Hebrew, although Akkadian and Arabic also show considerable similarities in terms of morphology, grammar, and lexical content.

Historical periods and dialects. Aramaic has been in continuous use for more than 3,500 years (from around 1500 BC until the present day), with extensive textual attestation in ancient times throughout the Near East and the Mediterranean region. Although later dialects eventually developed several different scripts for the representation of Aramaic phonemes, earlier Aramaic texts were written in an alphabet borrowed directly from the Phoenicians and also adopted by writers of Hebrew, from at least the tenth century BC onward.

The division of the extant Aramaic data into discrete historical dialects is a complicated question, although the following distinctions are generally acknowledged as helpful: Old Aramaic (950–600 BC), Imperial or Official Aramaic (600–200 BC), Middle Aramaic (200 BC–AD 200), Late Aramaic (AD 200–700), and Modern Aramaic (AD 700–present).

Key texts from each period. A number of texts from the Old Aramaic through Late Aramaic periods are significant for biblical studies.

Old Aramaic. Here we have inscriptional material, apparently attesting to the historical existence of certain biblical figures or entities. It should be noted, however, that the relation between the figures mentioned in these texts and the traditional understanding of their biblical counterparts is still a matter of some question.

Imperial or official Aramaic. This is the time period during which Aramaic served as the lingua franca of both the Babylonian and the Assyrian Empires. For the purposes of biblical studies, the following extrabiblical texts must be given pride of place. The library of Aramaic documents uncovered at Elephantine is significant for the light that it sheds on life among Diaspora Jews living in Upper Egypt during the fourth century BC. The targumic traditions also appear to have first taken shape during this period, although the texts presently known to exist were not first committed to writing until the period of Middle Aramaic, and the process of dialectical flattening exerted by scribal transmission has rendered their content more or less unrecoverable at the present time.

Middle Aramaic. Where the field of biblical studies is concerned, perhaps the most significant texts from this period are *Targum Onqelos* and *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan*, as well as some fragmentary texts of a biblical nature from Qumran, including the *Genesis Apocryphon* (1QapGen^{ar}) and the *Targum of Job* (11Q10).

Late Aramaic. Syriac (a later dialect of Aramaic) provides a wealth of textual information about interpretation among Aramaic-speaking Christians, particularly in the East. The Palestinian and Babylonian Talmuds were also compiled during this time, and they offer a rich repository of information about biblical interpretation among the Jews during the first several centuries AD. The

Targum tradition preserved in *Targum Neofiti* is somewhat different from those of Qumran or *Targum Onqelos* and *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* and seems to come from this period, based primarily on linguistic criteria.

ARAMEANS Descendants of Shem (Gen. 10:22) and Nahor (Gen. 22:21) identified in the LXX and English translations as "Syrians." According to the patriarchal narratives in Genesis, Arameans originated from Upper Mesopotamia in the early second millennium. Abraham is referred to as a "wandering Aramean" (Deut. 26:5), which suggests that the Hebrews descended from Arameans.

The Arameans gradually grew until increasing numbers, famine, drought, or other agents forced them to spread east and west. Their eastern expansion faced opposition by the Assyrian Empire, whose sources record numerous conflicts between their kings and the "Ahlamu" (the Assyrian reference to the Arameans).

The western expansion impacted ancient Israel as early as the days of Saul (1 Sam. 14:47). David defeated the alliance of the Ammonites with the Aramean king Hadadezer (2 Sam. 8:3–8; 10–12). King Asa of Judah made a treaty with an Aramean king in his war against Baasha of Israel (1 Kings 15:16–22). King Ahab was defeated and killed in his battles with the Arameans (1 Kings 22:1–38). Later, God provided a "deliverer" (possibly an Assyrian king or officer), which relieved Aramean pressures upon Israel (2 Kings 13:3–5). This allowed Jehoash of Israel to defeat the Arameans and regain previously lost territories. In the eighth century BC the Aramean king Rezin, in alliance with Israel and Tyre, attempted to force Ahaz of Judah into their league to oppose the growing Assyrian threat (2 Kings 16:5–9; Isa. 7:1–9). By the end of the eighth century, all Aramean territories had become provinces in the Assyrian Empire.

Very little is known about Aramean society. They were nomadic pastoralists who established tribal states throughout Mesopotamia. By the ninth century BC, these states developed into monarchies, their kings competing for power and greater territories. There was never an Aramean empire. Although the Arameans were polytheistic, Hadad was the most prominent deity and the patron of the kings. The Aramaic language had a long-lasting influence in the ancient world. It was adopted as the official language of international diplomacy during the time of the Persian Empire and remained so even into the Hellenistic era.

ARAMITESS An archaic way of referring to a woman from Aram/Syria (NIV: "Aramean"). The only use of the term is found in the KJV of 1 Chron. 7:14 in reference to the mother of Makir, a son of Manasseh.

ARAM MAACAH *See* Aram Maakah.

ARAM MAAKAH A small buffer state northeast of Israel, it was among a group of Syrian states that combined to attack Israel after David's message of sympathy to the Ammonites was misconstrued (1 Chron. 19:6–7).

ARAM NAHARAIM Literally, "Aram of the Two Rivers." This is a region of the northern Euphrates above the point where it is joined by the River Harbor in the west of what is now Syria, and thus northwest of Mesopotamia proper. Associated with the patriarchs, its proximity to Israel also made it a place from which opposition might come. Genesis 24:10 notes that it was here that Abraham's servant came to the city of Nahor and met Rebekah at the well, while Deut. 23:4 indicates that this was Balaam's home region. Cushan-Rishathaim, Israel's first foreign oppressor in Judges, came from here (Judg. 3:8), while both 1 Chron. 19:6 and the title of Ps. 60 indicate that the Ammonites hired mercenaries from the region when engaged in war against David.

ARAM ZOBAH A minor state in the Anti-Lebanon among a group of Syrian states that attacked Israel after David's message of sympathy to the Ammonites was misconstrued (1 Chron. 19:6), but which he ultimately defeated (2 Sam. 8:3; cf. Ps. 60:1). *See also* Zobah.

ARAN The son of Dishan mentioned in the genealogy of Seir the Horite (Gen. 36:28; 1 Chron. 1:42). Aran became a clan of Edom.

ARARAT Ararat refers to a mountainous region in eastern Asia Minor. The LXX uses "Armenia" for Ararat (except at Isa. 37:38), implying the modern country of Armenia or eastern Turkey (Kurdistan), two hundred miles southeast of the Black Sea around Lake Van (cf. Josephus, *Ant*. 1.3).

As early as the thirteenth century BC, Assyrian texts call this area "Urartu" (inscription of Shalmaneser I). As a kingdom, Urartu reached its peak of power in the eighth century. The same location occurs in 2 Kings 19:37 (cf. Isa. 37:38). These texts show that Ararat could be the enemy not only of Assyria (2 Kings 19:37) but also of Babylon (Jer. 51:27). Along with the kingdoms of Minni and Ashkenaz, Ararat is summoned by God to fight against Babylon and vindicate Zion. In God's hands such nations are instruments, and God's supremacy will be preserved.

The best-known reference to Ararat is as the location where Noah's ark comes to rest after the flood. Genesis 8:4 actually speaks of the "mountains of Ararat," not one particular mountain. In Gen. 8:2–14 the perspective is of the rain stopping and the floodwaters slowly receding in an extended process during which the ark is deposited on the Ararat mountain range. Tradition has favored Agri Dag, an extinct volcano rising 16,916 feet on the northeastern border of Turkey, as a viable site for Ararat. *See also* Armenia.

ARARITE *See* Hararite.

ARAUNAH A Jebusite (called "Ornan" in Chronicles) who sold David a threshing floor on which the king constructed an altar (2 Sam. 24:16–25; 1 Chron. 21:15–27). This story legitimized the locale for the construction of the Solomonic temple (1 Chron. 22:1; 2 Chron. 3:1) by asserting that it was the place where the sacrifice of David averted the destroying angel of pestilence (2 Sam. 24:16, 25).

ARBA A man whose name literally means "four," Arba was the leader of the Anakites, a tribe of giants (Deut. 2:10, 21; 9:2) that lived near Hebron. The town was originally called Kirath Arba ("city of Arba"; Josh. 14:15; 15:13; 21:11).

ARBATHITE A resident of Beth-araba (2 Sam. 23:31) or more generally the Arabah or Jordan Valley. *See also* Abi-Albon.

ARBITE Paarai the Arbite appears in David's list of thirty mighty men (2 Sam. 23:35), showing that he came from the village of Arab, located in the hill country near Hebron (Josh. 15:52). *See also* Arab.

ARBITRATOR *See* Mediator.

ARCH The KJV translation of a Hebrew word (*ʾelam*) more commonly translated "porch" or "portico" (even in its own translation elsewhere) in Ezek. 40:16–36. The word refers to an entrance room or foyer to the main building of the temple (1 Kings 6:3; 7:12–21) and in one place to a covered porch (7:6). This entrance to the temple measured thirty feet wide and fifteen feet deep. The height of the room is generally believed to be thirty feet, though this is uncertain because of a corruption of the original text (compare 1 Kings 6:3 with 2 Chron. 3:4). This vestibule also was the location of the two named pillars, Jakin and Boaz, and was richly adorned with gold.

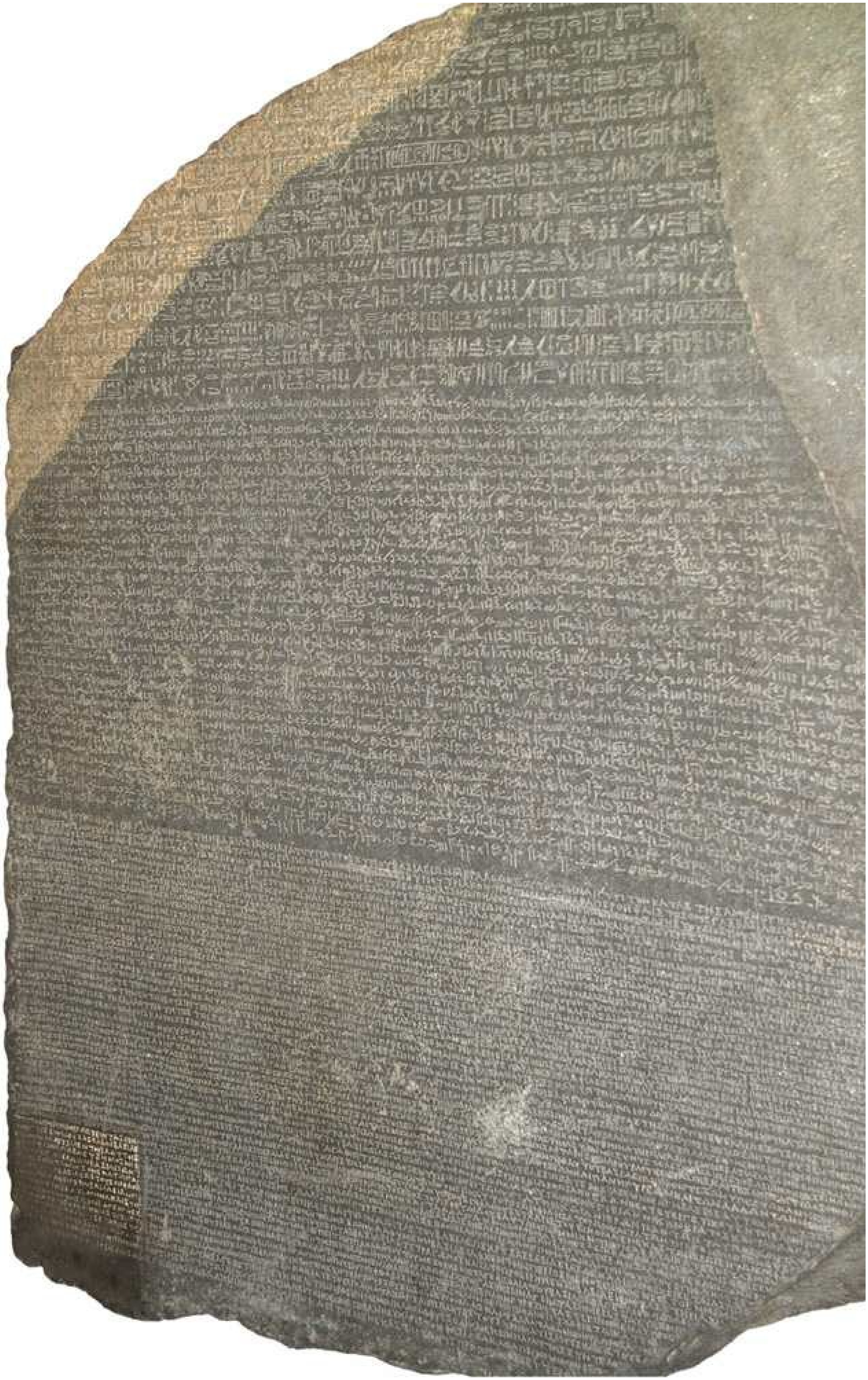
ARCHAEOLOGY AND BIBLICAL STUDIES Archaeology is the scientific study of the material remains of past human life and activities. It can also be described as the procedure by which ancient artifacts are recovered, identified, and interpreted. Archaeology deals with both the prehistorical and historical periods and encompasses both written (epigraphical) and unwritten (artifactual) discoveries. Even though literary remains (inscriptions, ostraca [potsherds], seals) are typically the subject of other disciplines, archaeological investigation usually is responsible for their discovery. Without archaeology much of the available written evidence would have remained buried forever in the ground. Unwritten materials include everything made by humans, such as fortifications, pottery, tools, jewelry, and weapons.

Biblical archaeology more narrowly focuses on the material remains of Israel and its neighboring countries that relate to the biblical period and narrative. For example, ancient texts recovered from sites such as Mari, Ugarit, Ebla, and Amarna shed valuable light on the biblical record and on the history and religion of the ancient Near East. Biblical archaeology may be understood as the process of correlating archaeological evidence with the biblical record. Archaeology and the Bible are closely related because they inform each other. Thus, even though archaeology and biblical studies are independent disciplines, they are certainly interrelated.

THE HISTORY OF BIBLICAL ARCHAEOLOGY

To understand better the meaning of biblical archaeology, it is necessary to briefly trace its history. Before the 1800s little was known about the Bible's background, despite its central role in the religion and culture of the world, because the Bible was the primary source for access to the history of ancient Israel and its neighbors. There were few sources to which the Scripture historians could appeal besides the apocryphal writings and the works of Josephus, because the early Greek historians (Herodotus and Thucydides) were of limited value, given their interest in the "major players" of history.

The discovery of the Rosetta Stone (dated 196 BC) in 1799 and its decipherment in 1822 by J. F. Champollion opened wide the doors to ancient Egypt's history. Within twenty-five years, by the decipherment of Akkadian cuneiform by Henry Rawlinson (1846), the world had the key to reading and interpreting thousands of tablets and monumental texts from ancient Babylonia, Assyria, and even the land of the Hittites. These two major developments allowed the voices from the ancient world of the Bible to speak once more and encouraged historians to look at the Bible as supported by the background data coming from the rest of the ancient Near East. As a result of these developments, a new interest was kindled in ancient Near Eastern cultures and the material remains (realia) that they left behind, coupled with a renewed interest in the setting of the biblical text.



Initial excavations of biblical sites. The beginnings of scientific exploration of Palestine can be traced to 1838 when American Edward Robinson (geographer and explorer) aided by the Arabist Eli Smith undertook a historic trip to the Holy Land and succeeded in identifying over one hundred biblical sites, effectively laying the foundations for biblical archaeology and geography. This led to the establishment of the British Palestine Exploration Fund in 1865 for the purpose of exploring Palestine systematically and scientifically, and to several of the geographic surveys of western Palestine and Transjordan.

The beginning of major excavations of biblical sites was not far behind, and in 1890 William M. F. Petrie (a renowned Egyptologist then) initiated what is widely regarded as the first modern archaeological excavation in the Holy Land. He excavated Tell el-Hesi (identification still uncertain) in the northern Negev, and his work underlies archaeological inquiry in the Holy Land to this day. More specifically, Petrie laid the foundations of modern archaeology by his application of stratigraphy and ceramic typology.

Stratigraphy is the technique of digging a tell (a cone-shaped mound that contains the remains of successive human occupation over a long period of time) layer by layer while carefully separating and recording the contents of each occupational layer. This technique tries to untangle these layers in the reverse order (the older layers of occupation are always below the newer layers) of their deposition and to reconstruct the history of a site period by period.

Typology is the technique of classifying artifacts based on their external characteristics (shape, ware, and decoration). Pottery is considered an accurate tool for dating the occupational layers of a tell, and ceramic typology is the art of charting changes in local pottery styles. By analyzing the pottery lying within successive layers at Hesi, Petrie was able to construct a relative chronological framework for Palestine. To arrive at a more absolute chronology, the researchers from Palestine usually need (especially in the earlier periods) to correlate their findings with similar styles from neighboring areas, such as Egypt and Mesopotamia, where there are available written records and astronomically fixed dates.

Before World War I, the first and only American excavation in Palestine that deserves mention is that of George A. Reisner and architect Clarence S. Fisher between 1908 and 1910 at Sebastiyeh (biblical Samaria). The rest are usually considered to have resembled “treasure hunts.” By the use of systematic digging and recording in Palestine, the Reisner-Fisher method, which was far more comprehensive and meticulous than Petrie’s, greatly improved Palestinian archaeology.

The first golden age. The “golden age” of American excavation in Palestine followed a few decades later, after World War I in the 1920s and 1930s. Numerous and well-financed archaeological digs started at the following biblical sites: Ai, Bethel, Beth-shean, Beth-shemesh, Beth-zur, Debir, Gibeah, Jericho, Mizpah, Samaria, Shechem, and others. All of these excavations, however, were overshadowed by the work of Orientalist W. F. Albright at Tell Beit Mirsim (identity still disputed, but perhaps Debir).

It was Albright and those of the American school in Jerusalem (now the Albright Institute of Archaeology) who dominated the scene in these formative years. Albright refined Petrie’s methodology and integrated very well archaeology, biblical research, and ancient Near Eastern studies, thus establishing biblical (and Palestinian) archaeology as a discipline in its own right. He also envisioned an “archaeological revolution” that would open up the lands, peoples, and lost sites of the ancient Near East so that the Bible would be better understood and also gain new credibility. He certainly was reacting against the spirit of his time, when sterile debates of textual and literary criticism (especially of the skeptical variety) were prevalent in both European and American liberalism, and this seems to have led some to believe that archaeology's primary function was to "prove the Bible true."

The second golden age. A second "golden age" of biblical archaeology is usually considered to have arrived after World War II when various foreign teams worked throughout the Middle East in cooperation with local archaeologists, a trend that continues today. The archaeology of Palestine advanced rapidly, with significant improvements in the techniques of digging and recording. The greatest influence on archaeological method at this time belongs to Kathleen Kenyon (English excavator of Jericho [Tell es-Sultan]), whose stratigraphical method (known as the Wheeler-Kenyon method) is used even today by excavators, with modifications. Other important archaeologists who contributed significantly to the biblical archaeology movement are Yigael Yadin of Israel and G. E. Wright of the United States.

During the height of its prominence and promise, biblical archaeology became an important component for the biblical theology movement and also for Christian apologetics (especially as represented by Joseph Free of Wheaton College). In fact, one of the greatest theologians in the biblical theology movement, G. E. Wright, was also Albright's student. He conducted a major excavation at Tell Balath (biblical Shechem), following the Wheeler-Kenyon method and emphasizing pottery chronology in the tradition of the Albright school. More important, Shechem was a training ground for many American archaeologists where Wright created a new school of field archaeology.

The new archaeology. In the 1960s, under the influence of the social and natural sciences, the "new archaeology" that developed tended to focus on the comprehensive study of humans as species (and not on historical issues). William G. Dever (a student and follower of G. E. Wright at the important Tel Gezer project) argued forcefully and successfully for the "liberation" of Near Eastern archaeology from biblical studies and preferred the term (prevalent today in most American schools) "Syro-Palestinian archaeology." Today, with very few exceptions (e.g., Harvard University), most American universities offer classes in the archaeology of Syria-Palestine (this was apparently Albright's old alternate term for biblical archaeology), not in biblical archaeology. The name of the popular magazine *Biblical Archaeologist* was also changed to *Ancient Near Eastern Archaeology*, despite protests from many of its readers.

The new archaeology began with the realization in the 1960s that much data of potential significance has been overlooked, and perhaps even vital evidence has been discarded. New questions and methods developed from the frustration that old questions have not been answered satisfactorily. The temporal and geographical horizons of the new archaeology broadened to include the Paleolithic period (c. 100,000 BC) through the Ottoman era (AD 1922), and attention is now paid to the neglected periods of Judaism and early Christianity.

More important, the composition of the dig staff broadened considerably to include a much larger body of scientists to assist in answering the new questions posed. Today, the field archaeologists (besides historians, linguists, and ceramic experts) are supported by geologists, anthropologists, paleoethnobotanists, zoologists, climatologists, hydrologists, ethnographers, and, more recently, statisticians and computer experts. It is clear that the new archaeology is done in a very interdisciplinary way. The Tell Hesban and Khirbat en-Nahas excavations (both in Jordan) are good models of this type of interdisciplinary research. Bones, seeds, and other organic materials are now saved and carefully recorded to address questions related to economic strategies, social differentiation, diet, disease, and the like. Soil and pollen samples are taken, extensive regional and environmental surveys are carried out, and material culture samples and artifacts are submitted for sophisticated analysis. It is ironic (according to Dever) that this new and "secular" archaeology, while demanding more autonomy from the Bible, promises to contribute even more to biblical studies as it grows in precision and sophistication.

The new archaeology and Syro-Palestinian archaeology of today have advantages and disadvantages. They have the advantages of staff who are better equipped and trained, as well as educated volunteers who usually have genuine interest in their work. More important, their conclusions have the advantage of being based on data that is more scientifically obtained and analyzed. Many of the digs run field schools modeled on the ones from the Gezer project (1964–1973), which trained hundreds of student volunteers. These are all good and useful for both participants and their projects, but they have led to significant rises in the costs of an excavation. Thus, a typical six-week season is estimated now to cost in excess of one hundred thousand dollars. Since the new archaeology has led to a "secularization" of biblical archaeology and churches and seminaries have gradually stopped sponsoring these projects, the funds have had to come increasingly from federal and public sources of support. The National Endowment for the Humanities (and private donors later) became the major source of funds in the 1970s.

APPROACHES TO THE BIBLE IN MODERN ARCHAEOLOGY

There is no doubt that the new archaeology has introduced many useful scientific improvements in the field. (Of course, these scientific improvements were embraced by both biblical and Syro-Palestinian archaeologists in the 1970s, and the distinction between these two groups has become largely imaginary.) At the same time, however, it has brought new biases against the biblical text. The Bible, in Dever's view, was never intended as a historical document and should be viewed with "considerable suspicion" for reconstructing the history of the ancient Near East. Other archaeologists in the field (and also historians) have an even more negative attitude toward the Bible. However, it must be emphasized that all (or at least most) agree that the Bible has its role in the archaeology of Syria-Palestine. The question has to do with how the Bible should be used.

Maximalist and minimalist approaches. The two schools of thought that seem the loudest in the debate among biblical and/or Syro-Palestinian archaeologists are usually labeled "maximalist" and "minimalist." (To these Kenneth A. Kitchen adds the label "factualist." According to Kitchen, the agenda of a "factualist" is neither to prove nor to disprove any theory concerning the early history of Israel, but simply to examine the facts and let the data speak for itself.)

The maximalist school has a strong view of the historical reliability of Scripture and emphasizes synergy between archaeology and biblical studies. Others consider this to be a naive approach to Scripture and an uncritical acceptance of the information that it tries to communicate. The maximalists follow the scholarship of W. F. Albright and his student John Bright, and they assume that the OT speaks of historical realities. When seeking to reconstruct the history of ancient Israel, they readily and confidently refer to the biblical record as a valid and significant source for their research. They are also confident that when all the data is in, a biblical history of Israel (aided by archaeology) will exhibit a close correspondence with the real history of Israel.

The minimalist school is generally skeptical concerning the historical reliability of the biblical text. Many advocates of this approach argue that the OT was written primarily during the Hellenistic period (it certainly is postexilic), centuries after the events that it claims to describe. A community around Jerusalem created the traditions found in the Bible in order to give account for themselves and their distinctive religious notions and practices. According to this approach, any correlation between the Bible and the archaeological record is suspect a priori. When there are tensions between biblical and extrabiblical records (including archaeology), the extrabiblical records are to be preferred as evidence, and the contradictions are usually emphasized to undermine the reliability of the Bible as a historical source.

The minimalist movement has developed gradually. Although a century ago there were many who questioned the historicity of the first chapters of Genesis, most accepted the essential historicity of the patriarchs, the exodus from Egypt under Moses, the conquest of Canaan by Joshua, the historicity of David and Solomon, and the rest of the OT narrative. During the past forty years, however, serious doubt has been cast on all of these events.

The stance of the minimalists led to peculiar (and rarely settled) controversies over issues such as the legitimacy of reading "the house of David" in the Tel Dan inscription (discovered in 1993), the Siloam Tunnel inscription (which overlaps with 2 Chron. 32 and is traditionally ascribed to Hezekiah), the very existence of Jerusalem during the days of David and Solomon, and even the existence of these two kings.

An archaeological excavation in process

A fresh approach. Is there a way to move beyond the current state of the debate? Some believe that there is hope by using a fresh approach to biblical archaeology, one that follows in the footsteps of Lawrence Stager and Philip King (see their book, *Life in Biblical Israel*). This approach does not try to reconstruct history or simply illuminate the Bible; rather, it seeks to enter into the world of the ancients to acquire a fuller understanding of Israelite society and its literary record through the combined use of artifacts, sociology, and ethnography. Textual and archaeological data are brought into a historical discourse by "selecting and interpreting them through the problematics of social history." Thus, biblical archaeology in the older sense is making a comeback by hearkening back to the integrative works of the nineteenth century, but with vast amounts of new data. This "new biblical archaeology" should not be driven by apologetic purposes and should not aim to "prove the truth of the Bible." It should have more modest and realistic goals, considering the limitations of archaeology (see below).

Evangelical archaeologists, confident in the truth of the Bible (which can stand by itself despite its many attacks from within and without), should have as their goal the understanding of the biblical world in its geographical, cultural, and historical setting. They should use archaeology and linguistics to correlate biblical texts and ancient artifacts against the background of the historical and geographical setting. When historical questions are posed, the cumulative evidence should lead to probability and plausibility rather than a defensive quest for final proof. This attempt to follow historical probability vis-à-vis the Bible is different from setting out a priori with a defensive Bible-proving agenda.

This new approach will not make the Scriptures say more than judicious assessment of the evidence will allow (a problem that plagues some conservative interpreters), but neither will it cast undue skepticism on the Scriptures' historical value (the problem of the minimalists). It endeavors to pay close attention both to the literary nature and intentions of the biblical text and to the fragmentary nature of the archaeological record.

These new biblical archaeologists do not set out again "to prove the Bible." Instead, they seek to situate the texts of the OT in their historical and cultural contexts and to demonstrate how awareness of the extrabiblical world can open new doors into the Bible. Their goals are more modest, not because of a lower view of Scripture, but rather because of a clearer understanding of the limitations and fragmentary nature of archaeology despite its considerable refinement in the recent decades.

THE LIMITATIONS OF ARCHAEOLOGY

Archaeology has limitations because of the vast amount of time and area to be covered and because of the hazards of preservation. Objects of wood, leatherwork, basketry, papyrus, and cloth rarely survive, and metals (especially precious metals) were frequently recycled. It is also important to realize that no biblical site has ever been completely excavated, and most of the excavations tend to pay greater attention to the major buildings (citadels, temples, palaces) rather than the homes of the general population.

Only in recent years have accurate methods of stratification and recording enabled comparisons to be made between sites, and the reliability of some foundational excavations in the Holy Land is rightly questioned by the finds from newer excavations (e.g., Megiddo, Gezer, and Hazor are being reexcavated in part to clarify and answer questions raised by previous excavations and debates). This is understandable because most of the foundational excavations in the Holy Land did not have access to the accurate methods of stratification, recording, and scientific analysis available today. Many useful artifacts and especially organic objects were routinely discarded in the earlier excavations.

In general, earlier levels of a site are more likely to have been disturbed by the activities of later periods, and it was very common for older buildings (and sometimes even monumental inscriptions) to be dismantled and the (stone) blocks reused for later buildings or even roads. The objects that archaeologists discover survive and are most often found by accident. Consequently, given the limitations and pitfalls of archaeology (especially the way it was done in the earliest part of the twentieth century), one must have realistic and more modest expectations about what archaeology can recover, and realize that the further one goes in time, the less archaeological information may be available for comparison and useful analysis. Add to this that some of the central characters of the Bible (e.g., Abraham, Moses, most of the judges, Ezra) were not major players in the world of their time, and that some important sites have never been excavated (e.g., Damascus, Hebron), and it becomes clear that there are considerable reasons to have more realistic and modest expectations about what archaeology can accomplish.

The role and possibility of accurately interpreting archaeological remains should also be taken into consideration, especially since there are well-documented cases in which the interpretation of the excavator has turned out to be false (e.g., the "Degenerated Ashtoreth Plaque" of R. A. S. Macalister from Gezer). Anyone who has ever participated in an archaeological excavation led by a group of experts in the field can remember debates that took place among these experts, not only about the dating of various pieces of pottery, but even about the role and dating of well-defined and visible monumental architecture. While this is understandable and desirable, and many times leads to the refinement and corrections of unwarranted early assumptions, the process shows the difficulty inherent in interpreting the fragmentary remains of a dead civilization far removed from our times and settings.

MATERIAL REMAINS AND WRITTEN SOURCES

It is a sobering fact that archaeology cannot provide the basis for history. Material remains can reveal climate changes and their impact, sequences of human cultures and their products, traces of destruction and desertion, changes in building techniques and art. Nevertheless, the persons involved remain anonymous, their thoughts, motives and faith a mystery, and the specific events of their times largely unknown (e.g., the destruction by fire of Lachish II could not have been accurately dated and related without the biblical report in Jer. 34:7). It is the written documents (many times recovered through archaeology) that can reveal the names of kings and kingdoms, their dates and deeds, and the fruits of their thinking in literature. It is the testimony of these texts, rightly evaluated, that can add the "flesh and features" to the "bones" archaeology discovers (Allan Millard).

On the other hand, the material remains of life (pottery, jewelry, tools, weapons, cultic objects, architecture, etc.) as recovered through archaeology can bring color to the textual references. Nevertheless, the written sources are essential and provide the most valuable information for recovering the history and faith of any ancient nation. It is the duty of the biblical scholar and archaeologist to interpret correctly the available data from Syria-Palestine and to arrive at plausible explanations concerning the biblical world. The combination of texts (biblical and extrabiblical), material culture (archaeology), geography, and history holds considerable promise to help scholars better define the context of Scripture.

There is no doubt that this approach to archaeology holds considerable potential as it is generating more material than is possible for any person (or even school) to encompass. As one of the most quickly changing social sciences today, both in theoretical advances and new data, archaeology is and will be the source of new insights into biblical life and times. It seems that the "archaeological revolution" predicted by W. F. Albright is far from over; it probably has only begun.

The evidence for this revolution from the evangelical field is visible in various ways. The rest of this entry briefly presents some selective archaeological data that helps define the context and that complements (since the writers of the Bible were selective in their reporting), challenges, or confirms the narrative of the Bible. The data should help the interpreter of the Bible bridge the geographical, temporal, and cultural gap that leads to the ancient writer.

THE CANNANITE (BRONZE) AGE (3300–1200 BC)

Early Bronze Age. Towns with mud-brick walls begin to appear in Canaan in the Early Bronze Age I (before 3000 BC). Evidence of occupation in the third millennium is found at Beth-yerah, Beth-shan, Gezer, Jerusalem, Jericho, Arad, Megiddo, and Ai, among others. There was a difference between the pottery of the north (Beth-yerah) and that of the south, while the most striking development was that of the fine "Khirbet Kerak" ware.

Middle Bronze Age. About 2200 BC (Middle Bronze Age I) there arrived a distinctive nomadic people identified with the Amorites of the Bible (Num. 13:29; Josh. 5:1; 10:6). They had distinctive burial customs, pottery, and weapons that show connection with the city-states of Syria. It is most likely that their kings included the Asiatic "Foreign Rulers" (Hyksos) who conquered Egypt in the eighteenth century BC. This was a time of wealth and frequent warfare between cities. It seems that the Middle Bronze Age was a time when seminomadic groups (including a group called "Habiru," who are also found in the Late Bronze Age) infiltrated the land between defended towns. It is possible that the patriarchs were among these Habiru, who infiltrated mostly the hill country and the Negev. In fact, it is demonstrable from a comparison with the eighteenth-century BC texts from Mari (on the Euphrates River) that the pastoral traditions of Genesis fit the early second-millennium BC context much better than later periods.

The towns and houses of the Middle Bronze Age were violently destroyed in the fifteenth century BC, most likely by the Egyptians, who expelled the Hyksos. Despite the trade that seems to have continued with the eastern Mediterranean (Mycenaean pottery), the hill towns of Palestine were now poorer and fewer than the coastal cities. This situation is clearly reflected in the Amarna letters between the kings of Canaan and Egypt. The major cities were reoccupied, but many of them were destroyed later in the thirteenth century.

Late Bronze Age. It is in the Late Bronze Age (c. 1550–1200 BC) that the biblical account is usually challenged by the archaeological discoveries. Even if one accepts the reasonable interpretation that Joshua burned only three cities (Jericho, Ai, Hazor) in his campaign (see Josh. 6:24; 8:28; 11:13), the evidence of destruction from both Jericho and Ai is highly questionable. Thus, while it is widely believed that Jericho was abandoned around 1325 BC, the fallen walls once thought to belong to this period were dated much earlier by Kathleen Kenyon (Early Bronze). The evidence from Ai (et-Tell) is even less promising, unless Bryan Wood is correct in his identification of Ai with Khirbet el-Maqatir.

Based on the apparent lack of change in material culture during the Late Bronze Age, mainstream archaeologists commonly classify the Israelites as dissident Canaanites who moved into the hill country.

Although it cannot be conclusively demonstrated from archaeology that the Israelites were not Canaanites but rather came to Canaan from the outside, the mainstream interpretation has serious problems of its own. There was clearly a new pattern of simple farming in the hills, characterized by four-room houses whose inhabitants used many collared-rim jars, and there is an almost complete absence of pig bones (which usually are found in the Canaanite cities) in the hill-country sites. More important, there is strong evidence that the Israelites were worshiping their own national God (YHWH) by the ninth century BC, in sharp contrast to the polytheistic religion of Canaan (as illuminated by the culture in neighboring Ugarit). The personal names of individuals in the eighth and seventh centuries BC are almost exclusively Yahwistic.

Another very significant change is the abandonment of the shrines in towns of the Late Bronze Age. Not a single site can be identified in which worship continued from the Late Bronze Age well into the Iron Age (it seems that by 1000 BC the Canaanites disappeared as an entity in the area occupied by Israel). It is highly unlikely that the Canaanites who moved from towns into the hill-country sites would have abandoned their divinities (whose need they must have felt greatly while facing the uncertainties of the wilderness), and it is even more unlikely that people who had come from different towns with different deities would have accepted almost universally a new patron deity of obscure provenance. The continuity in material culture of a nation that was to take over the homes and all the equipment of the Canaanites should not be surprising in light of the commands of the Bible (Deut. 6:10–11). The almost universal rise of the worship of the God of Israel, and the mention of Israel as a group of people in the Stela of Merneptah (c. 1208 BC), argue forcefully that the Israelites were not really Canaanites.

The Israelite (Iron) Age (1200–586 BC)

By the twelfth century, the Philistine settlement of southwest Canaan is attested by a new type of pottery with Late Mycenaean affinities. This new type of pottery was found throughout Philistia, the Shephelah, and as far north as Joppa. Wealthy and well-constructed Canaanite cities held out for at least another century (Beth-Shean, Gezer, and Megiddo?). The evidence for Israelites comes from the small villages throughout the hill country and Galilee. Traditionally, as mentioned above, they are recognized by their four-room houses, large number of storage pits for grain, large storage jars with thick-collared rims, and preference for terracing hillsides for farming.

Archaeologically, it is very difficult to attribute the construction of cities to any king of the united monarchy (but see the recent discovery below). Saul had a citadel at Gibeah (Tell el-Fûl), and the first fortification there has been attributed to him. It shows the adoption of a new fortification system of casemate wall, characteristic of this period. Similar casemate walls have been found at Shechem, Beth-shemesh, and Beit Mirsim (and later even in Moab). A small town at Megiddo, whose houses form a defensive ring around the perimeter of the mound, has been attributed to David.

Though 1 Kings 9:15 reports how Solomon built up Hazor, Megiddo, and Gezer, the dating of the six-chambered gates found in all of these sites and the related walls is still being debated. A much more recent excavation from Khirbat en-Nahas in Jordan has found industrial-scale production of copper in a region and at a time that correlates well with the narrative about Solomon (see 1 Kings 7:46).

Another very recent and impressive find comes from Khirbet Qeiyafa (most likely Shaaraim [Josh. 15:36; 1 Sam. 17:52; 1 Chron. 4:31–32]). This site, located in the western part of the high Shephelah (near Azekah), was recently excavated by Yosef Garfinkel and Saar Ganor of Hebrew University, Jerusalem. On the basis of four burnt olive pits tested at Oxford University, the excavators dated this fortified city to the time of David. They concluded that the massive construction of the city wall (which required two hundred thousand tons of stone) supports the existence of a centralized political organization, a state—a conclusion that has far-reaching implications for the disputed chronology of Iron Age IIA (1000–900 BC). They also found a five-line inscription, indicating that writing was practiced in the region. This inscription is important because it seems to be the longest proto-

Canaanite inscription ever found, and the earliest Hebrew inscription known to date.

THE HELLENISTIC-ROMAN PERIOD (332 BC AND FOLLOWING)

Herod the Great (37–4 BC) was the ambitious ruler who carried through most of the grand building projects that still dot the Holy Land today. At Jerusalem, which is still being excavated, the massive walls that he built for the platform of the temple are still visible today both above and below the ground. Other ruins associated with Herod have been found at Caesarea, Jericho, Herodium (near Bethlehem), Masada, and also in Jordan.

One of the most important inscriptions for NT studies (especially the Gospels) was found by the Italian excavators of Caesarea. These excavators found that the inscription refers to Pontius Pilate, prefect of Judea. Other inscriptions from Greece and Turkey are connected with the events described in Acts and Paul's letters. Thus, in Corinth a door inscription ("Synagogue of the Hebrews") may indicate the place where Paul preached (Acts 18:4). Excavations there revealed a text naming Erastus as a benefactor. This may be the city treasurer of Rom. 16:23. Near Lystra inscriptions record the dedication to Zeus of a statue of Hermes by some Lycaonians, and nearby was a stone altar for Zeus and Hermes. This explains the identification of Barnabas with Zeus (Jupiter) and Paul with Hermes (Mercury) in Acts 14:11–12.

It is clear from the selective sample of data presented here that the field of archaeology has contributed considerably to the context and understanding of the biblical world. All the signs and recent excavations suggest that there are continuing and exciting prospects to be found in the newer (biblical) archaeology.

ARCHANGEL A chief or first angel. The word "archangel" refers to a particular class of angels; it also refers to a rank in the angelic hierarchy. In the OT, no particular angel is identified as the highest in the angelic hierarchy. Michael and Gabriel are the two named angels in the OT. In the book of Daniel, Michael is identified as "one of the chief princes," which is taken to mean archangels (10:13). The distinction between Michael and Gabriel in the book of Daniel is that of function, not hierarchy. Michael functions as a warrior (10:13, 21; 12:1), whereas Gabriel functions as a revealer of mysteries (8:16; 9:21). In the NT, Michael is specifically called "the archangel" and is the divine warrior who contends with the devil over the body of Moses (Jude 9); and Michael and his angels engage in a heavenly battle against Satan and his angels (Rev. 12:7). In 1 Thess. 4:16 the imagery used is of God as a divine warrior par excellence who comes down from heaven with a shout, with the voice of his archangel, and with a trumpet declaring his victory as he comes to gather his people.

A bronze statue depicting Michael the archangel defeating Lucifer, by Lorenzo Vaccaro (1655–1706)

Angelology is more developed in Second Temple period (intertestamental) literature, wherein the identities and functions of angels are clarified. The archangels comprise one class of angels within the angelic hierarchy. Scripture refers to other classes of angels, such as cherubim (e.g., Gen. 3:24; Exod. 25:18–22; Pss. 18:10; 80:10; 99:1), seraphim (Isa. 6:2, 6), watchers (Dan. 4:13, 17, 23), Satan and fallen angels (Matt. 9:34; 25:41; Eph. 2:2; 2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6; Rev. 10:12). For example, *1 En.* 6 gives the names of the twenty fallen watchers (cf. Gen. 6:1–4), and *1 En.* 20 has the earliest reference to the seven archangels: Uriel, Raphael, Raguel, Michael, Zerachiel, Gabriel, and Remiel. There are, however, other lists that give alternate names to the seven archangels. In *3 En.* 17:1–3 the archangels are Michael, Gabriel, Shatqiel, Baradiel, Shachaqiel, Baraqiel, and Sidriel. In the *Testament of Solomon* four of the seven archangels are mentioned: Michael, Ouriel, Raphael, and Gabriel (1:6; 2:4; 5:9; 18:6). In the book of Tobit, the angel Raphael disguises himself in human form and finally reveals his identity thus: “I am Raphael, one of the seven angels, who stand ready and enter before the glory of the Lord” (12:15; cf. Rev. 8:2).

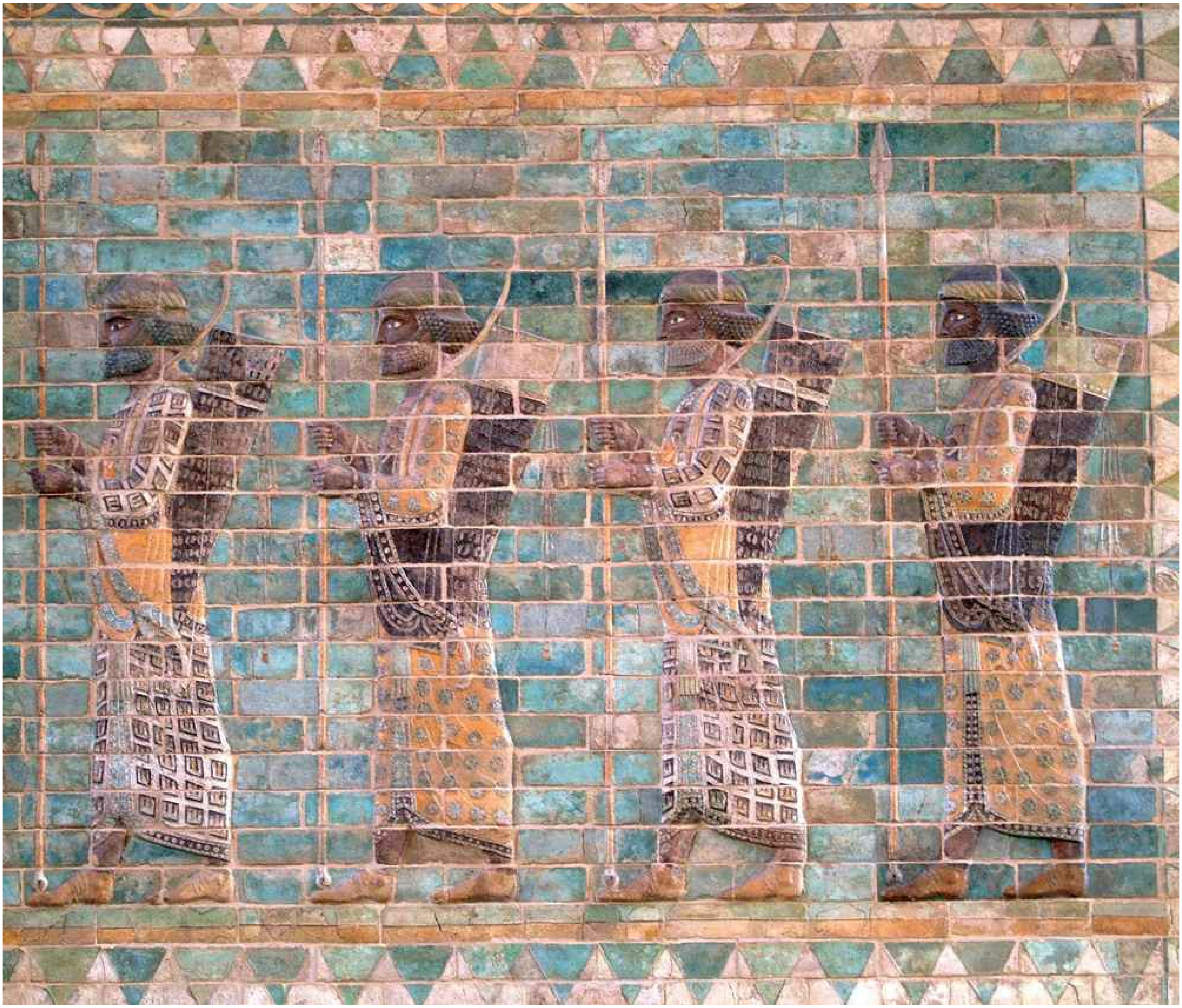
The archangels also perform various other functions. In Tobit, Raphael functions as a protective guide and healer. In *3 En.* 17:1–3 the seven archangels are in charge of the seven heavens, and each is accompanied by 496,000 ministering angels. In Rev. 12:7–9 Michael commands the angel army that battles the dragon and its army. In *T. Levi* 3:3–6 the archangels are regarded as temple personnel; they serve and offer proprietary sacrifices on behalf of all the sins of ignorance of the righteous ones in uppermost heaven, the holy of holies (cf. *Jub.* 2:2; *1 En.* 14:23). In a similar fashion, in Rev. 8:1–10:11 the seven angels appear before God and also serve at the altar to offer incense and to take the prayers of the saints before the throne. *See also* Angel.

ARCHELAUS The son of Herod the Great who, following his father’s death and by permission from the Roman emperor Augustus, ruled over Judea, Samaria, and Idumea (Edom) from 4 BC to AD 6. Archelaus is mentioned once in the NT (Matt. 2:22). Joseph, warned by an angel of the Lord, had taken Jesus and Mary to Egypt to escape the murderous intentions of Herod the Great. After the death of Herod, Joseph was told to return to Israel, but on arriving he discovered that Archelaus now governed Judea. Being afraid of him and warned in a dream, he settled in Nazareth in the district of Galilee, an area ruled by another of Herod’s sons, Antipas.

The reason for Joseph’s apprehension is not explained, but it accords well with what is known of Archelaus from incidents recorded by the Jewish historian Josephus. Archelaus had placed an offensive Roman eagle over the gate of the temple. Two Jewish rabbis, Judas and Matthias, urged their disciples to tear down this idolatrous symbol and were executed. At a Passover festival an insurrection broke out, but in the reprisals that followed many innocent pilgrims were among the three thousand who were executed. Archelaus had inherited his father’s cruelty, and no Jew was safe in his territory. Eventually, he was removed by the Romans for incompetence, and his territories were placed under the direct rule of Rome. This explains why the province of Judea was ruled by Roman procurators during the public ministry of Jesus.

ARCHER Archers were significant to warfare. As early as 2370 BC the composite bow emerged as an adaptation to the equipment of enemies. Usually stationed on city walls (2 Sam. 11:24), archers gained more mobility through chariots (2 Kings 9:24).

In contrast to the shepherding patriarchs (e.g., Isaac, Jacob), the nonchosen line is self-reliant, symbolized by their bows (Ishmael [Gen. 21:16], Esau [27:3]). Except for Jonathan (1 Sam. 20:20), most of the archers of the OT are foreigners (1 Sam. 31:3; 1 Kings 22:34; 1 Chron. 10:3; 2 Chron. 35:23), with some Israelites (1 Sam. 2:4; 1 Chron. 8:40).



Archers from Persia

ARCHEVITES Apparently a group from the area of Uruk who were transplanted to Israel by the Assyrians at the collapse of the northern kingdom. In the KJV of Ezra 4:9 the Archevites (NIV: "Uruk"; NRSV: "people of Erech"; NET: "Erechites") are identified as part of the group that wrote a letter to King Artaxerxes complaining about the rebuilding of Jerusalem. Chronologically, these letters to Artaxerxes belong to a later time than that of Zerubbabel.

ARCHIPPUS A Christian whom Paul encouraged to complete "the ministry you have received in the Lord" (Col. 4:17) and called a "fellow soldier" (Philem. 2). Since he is greeted in Philemon immediately after Philemon and Apphia, he is frequently understood to have been a close relative and a member of their household, perhaps a son or a brother. Archippus's relationship to Philemon and Apphia cannot be verified either way. Paul described him as a "fellow soldier," which probably indicates a position of leadership. The nature of the ministry received from the Lord that Paul refers to in Col. 4:17 is not specified.

ARCHITE *See* Arkite.

ARCHITECTURE Architecture is the technology and the art of design and construction. The technology of architecture includes an understanding of mathematical and engineering principles; the art of architecture focuses attention on interest and beauty in design. The creative imagination of the architect is constantly considering how to artfully manage form and function in the design and construction process.

ARCHITECTURE AND THE BIBLE

The term "architecture" does not occur in most English translations of the Bible. There is, however, evidence of and reference to the architectural activity of God's people. In addition, Israel and the church were contextualized in significant architectural periods (Egyptian, Assyrian, Greek, and Roman), so the major empires of the biblical period often influenced the design and construction of cities, temples, and structures referenced in the biblical text. Architecture offers biblical studies a way to better understand the historical intentions of the Bible. By means of architectural investigation, the history and the heritage of past civilizations are illuminated. As a result, our reading of the biblical text is enhanced.

When we investigate the biblical text with attention to the technology and art of architecture, two perspectives emerge. First, architecture draws our attention to the background of the biblical text. In certain biblical texts we learn about the design and the construction that took place in Egypt, Assyria, and Palestine during major biblical events. For example, the patriarchal and Mosaic periods occurred during times of expansion and development in the Eighteenth to Twentieth Dynasties of Egypt (i.e., New Kingdom, sixteenth to eleventh centuries BC). For these periods, we gain knowledge about capital relocations along with temple and pyramid constructions. We learn that during the conquest, Israel took over existing Canaanite cities in keeping with the Mosaic policies. The architecture of Palestine enables us to better understand the form and function of these infrastructures.

Second, architecture draws our attention to the theological implications of the form and function of structures designed by God. In keeping with the scope of architecture, we are forced to understand that what God designed for altars, the ark, the tabernacle, and the temples of the past and the future included more than just the functional requirements of a nation's religious system. The interpreter of the biblical text must consider how the design of these structures elicits response and communicates meaning. These structures are also windows on the social, political, and economic aspects of the Israelite nation.

OLD TESTAMENT

Cities and fortifications. The biblical record makes reference to architectural structures, materials, and furnishings. Cities are referenced frequently throughout the OT canon. The city is obviously the context for architectural expression. The cities of the Bible are not described in extensive detail. We learn that Cain was a city builder who named his work after his son Enoch. The architectural feature of cities mentioned most often is the city gates (Gen. 19:1; 23:10, 18; Deut. 17:5; Josh. 2:5; 7:5; 20:4; Judg. 5:8). This was an important place for city life and activity (Gen. 23:1;

Prov. 31:31). There was also sinister activity at city gates. Abner, for example, was killed in the city gate (2 Sam. 3:22–30). In addition, executions for covenant violations were carried out at the city gate (Deut. 17:5). There was more than one city gate, as we learn from the postexilic construction activity of Ezra and Nehemiah.

Within the city there was a strong tower. The people of Babel used thoroughly baked bricks instead of stone and tar for mortar in order to build the city and the tower that was designed to reach to the heavens (Gen. 11:3–4). A city tower functioned as a place of refuge for the people within the city limits (Judg. 9:49–51).

Cities were protected by a wall system (Lev. 25:29) that also provided space for housing (Josh. 2:15). The conquest of Jericho recounts the familiar defeat of that city by the very unconventional destruction of its walls (Josh. 6:20). A city square is another feature of the city architecture (Judg. 19:15–17) that served the public needs of the community.

The biblical descriptions of Jerusalem offer a measure of insight into its architecture. During the rebuilding process in the postexilic period, Nehemiah comments on both the construction and the building materials (Neh. 2:8; 13:31; cf. Ezra 6:4) and the spacious nature of the city (Neh. 7:4). From another perspective, the psalmist comments, “Jerusalem is built like a city that is closely compacted together” (Ps. 122:3).

Beyond these textual details we learn through the writings of the prophets that cities are the subject of God’s wrath for covenant violation (Jer. 6:6; Hos. 11:6; Mic. 5:11). Despite this, the nation of Israel is not left without the hope of restoration. The prophets also anticipated the return of the people along with the restoration of the city infrastructure (Amos 9:14; Mal. 1:4).

The temple and sacred structures. The other architectural features referenced by the writers of Scripture include altars, the tabernacle, the tent of meeting, and the temple. The tent and the tabernacle were also outfitted with unique furniture items described in detail and expertly crafted. The construction projects of Solomon are detailed in 1 Kings 5–7. Solomon, like David, pursued his architectural ambitions. The book of Ezekiel gives extensive architectural detail for the construction of a future temple in which God will reign and rule (Ezek. 40–48).

The temple and royal residences were made of stone with cedar roofing. The chamber buildings that surrounded the temple were three stories high. The interior walls and ceilings were lined with cedar to cover all the stone (1 Kings 6:1–10). In all the construction details for the temple, the text does not elaborate on architectural style. Perhaps the builders were influenced to some degree by the styles of the major periods.

What are the theological implications related to the form and function of the sacred structures in the biblical material? The first is that God is the ultimate designer of Israel’s architecture. God’s signature work certainly is not the tabernacle or the Solomonic temple, but rather the created realm. The beauty and the complexities of the created world continue to draw attention to God’s beauty and intelligence. As the psalmist declares, the creation, which God designed, is a constant source of praise (Ps. 19).

God’s skill and artistic beauty as a master architect are reflected also in the revelation of his plans for the sacred structures of Israel to the nation’s artisans. The skill that the artisans manifested in the construction process was also a gift from God (Exod. 35:35; 2 Chron. 2:14).

The structures designed by God for construction were primarily for him. This is understandable because the patriarchal and Mosaic periods included long desert pilgrimages and the related tent dwelling. References to homes and houses in the book of Leviticus are not about design and construction but about function. The domestic home must be free of mildew (Lev. 14:34–41) and thus clean according to the standards of the law. The construction of Davidic and Solomonic homes is given attention in Scripture (2 Sam. 5:11; 7:1; 1 Kings 7:1–12).

The tabernacle and the temple were divine residences (Exod. 30:6; 40:34; 2 Sam. 7:5; 1 Kings 8:11). For this reason, the design and function of each structure reflected the glorious worth of God and reminded the nation of its own uncleanness. Beyond the structures of temple and tabernacle, the city of Jerusalem was privileged to be the resting place of the "Name" (i.e., presence) of the Lord (2 Chron. 6:5–6) and to have David as the chosen ruler (2 Chron. 6:34).

The history of Israel reveals that the sustainability of these sacred structures was influenced by physical and spiritual factors. God occupied the structures or met with Israel at these sacred places as long as Israel conformed to the terms of the Mosaic covenant (1 Sam. 4:21; 1 Kings 9:6–9). During the monarchy, kings who departed from Torah would strip the temple to pay tribute to foreign overlords (2 Kings 24:13) or would modify the function of the structure to accommodate the worship of foreign gods (see 2 Kings 23). Although there were periodic times of rebuilding the sacred structures, sustainability was short lived. The ideology of the sacred structures anticipates a future time when their original function will be replaced with the opportunity to live in God's presence forever.

NEW TESTAMENT

The NT refers only rarely to architects or architecture. Hebrews 11:10 speaks of God as the "architect [*technitēs*] and builder" of the heavenly Jerusalem. Paul refers to the church as the temple of God. Jesus Christ is the foundation, and Christian leaders are building upon that foundation with either gold, silver, and costly stones or wood, hay, and straw (1 Cor. 3:10–17; cf. 6:19; 2 Cor. 6:16).

In terms of physical buildings, the church of the NT was a house church. During the time of Christ the significant architectural structures were the temple and synagogues. Herod the Great was the major builder of the time, whose impressive temple dominated the landscape of the Jerusalem area. Although the synagogue was a central structure during the life of Christ and the early church, function is emphasized over form in the biblical material. The synagogue was a place for prayer, Scripture study, and the administration of justice (Luke 4:16–30; Acts 13:15; 14:1).

The focus of the NT is also on the church's function instead of its architectural form. The church, however, prospered and grew in the context of a significant Hellenistic architectural period (300 BC to AD 300). In this period the Seleucids were responsible for establishing large Greek cities across western and central Asia. The primary construction material continued to be the mud-brick, which resulted in rapidly decaying buildings. Although cities continued to be laid out in a grid format, a more dynamic, hilly format was being introduced. The homes in these cities often were built with courtyards like ones in Mesopotamia and Egypt. The temples of the Hellenistic period were designed with landscaping and terracing, along with porticoed enclosures and stairways.

The book of Revelation closes the canon with extensive detail about the new city of Jerusalem, which God will design and build (Rev. 21) and which will function to serve his sovereign purposes as creator and redeemer.

ARCHIVES *See* House of the Rolls.

ARCTURUS The KJV rendering of a constellation mentioned in Job 9:9; 38:32 (NIV, NRSV, NASB: "Bear"). The constellation in question has been identified alternatively as Ursa Major and Ursa Minor ("the bear") or as the Dipper (TEV). As with other constellations in the Bible, the purpose of its mention is to acknowledge the vast ordering of the universe at the hands of God and the immensity of his power and sovereignty. *See also* Aldebaran.

ARD **(1)** Son of Benjamin (Gen. 46:21). **(2)** Son of Bela and grandson of Benjamin (Num. 26:40), called "Addar" in 1 Chron. 8:3 (erroneously?), who was the progenitor of a significant clan, the Ardites, in the tribe of Benjamin.

ARDON One of three sons of Caleb by his wife Azubah (1 Chron. 2:18).

ARELI The son of Gad who fathered a significant clan, the Arelites, in the tribe of Gad (Gen. 46:16; Num. 26:17).

AREOPAGITE A name used for members of the famous Athenian council, the Areopagus. Dionysius, one of the few converts of Paul's preaching in Athens, held such a position (Acts 17:34 KJV).

AREOPAGUS **(1)** A limestone hill (also known as Mars Hill) in Athens, situated northwest of the famous Acropolis. **(2)** An ancient and prestigious council of Athenians that met on Mars Hill and in former days exercised judicial and legislative authority. Paul was invited to address the Areopagus and explain his teaching about Jesus and the resurrection. Among the converts from this occasion, two are named: Dionysius, himself a council member, and Damaris, a woman about whom nothing else is said (Acts 17:16–34).

The Areopagus in Athens

ARETAS The name of several Arabian kings. Paul mentions Aretas, king of Arabia Petraea and father-in-law of Herod Antipas, who divorced his daughter to marry Herodias, his brother's wife (see Mark 6:17 pars.). This led to war and the subsequent destruction of Antipas's army, which the people blamed on his murder of John the Baptist (Josephus, *Ant.* 8.116). Following the death of Emperor Tiberius (AD 37), Aretas apparently had gained control of Damascus, where Paul, being pursued by the king's ethnarch, escaped in a basket through a window in the wall (Acts 9:25; 2 Cor. 11:32–33).

ARGOB **(1)** A man killed alongside King Pekahiah of Israel during Pekah's revolt (2 Kings 15:25). However, many scholars believe that this is a scribal error and that this reference to Argob is misplaced from v. 29, thus referring to a place instead of a person. Some Bible translations omit this name from this verse altogether. (*See also* Arieh.) **(2)** A region in Bashan in Moab taken over by the Israelites after they defeated King Og (Num. 21:33–35; Deut. 3:4). This region was assigned to half of the tribe of Manasseh (Deut. 3:13–14). Jair defeated the cities in the region and renamed them (1 Kings 4:13). This area is located east of the Sea of Galilee. More specific boundaries are harder to define, and the boundaries of this region may have shifted over time.

ARIDAI One of Haman's ten sons, who were killed by the Jews and whose corpses were hung in public at the request of Esther to King Xerxes (Ahasuerus) of Persia (Esther 9:7–14).

ARIDATHA One of Haman's ten sons, who were killed by the Jews and whose corpses were hung in public at the request of Esther to King Xerxes (Ahasuerus) of Persia (Esther 9:7–14).

ARIEH Arieh, along with Argob, is either one of Pekah's fellow conspirators in the assassination of Pekahiah, king of Israel, or one of his victims (2 Kings 15:25). The text is unclear (s*ee also* Argob).

ARIEL **(1)** One of the men sent by Ezra to Iddo in Kasiphia to bring back ministers for the temple (Ezra 8:16). **(2)** A term used of two Moabite warriors killed by Benaiah (ESV: “two ariels of Moab”; NIV: “Moab's two mightiest warriors”; NRSV, NASB, NET: “two sons of Ariel of Moab”; 2 Sam. 23:20; 1 Chron. 11:22). **(3)** A poetic term used to refer to Jerusalem (Isa. 29:1–10). In Isa. 29:2 (NIV, NET) the prophecy compares “Ariel” (Jerusalem) with an “altar hearth” (cf. *'ariel*, “altar hearth,” in Ezek. 43:15–16).

ARIMATHEA A town of Judea whose exact location is uncertain. It is mentioned in all four Gospels, only in connection with Joseph, a rich man and member of the Sanhedrin, in whose tomb Jesus was laid (Matt. 27:57; Mark 15:43; Luke 23:51; John 19:38).

ARIOCH **(1)** The king of Ellasar who joined a coalition against five kings of the Dead Sea region (Gen. 14:1, 9). Abram was swept up in this conflict because his nephew Lot was captured in Sodom (14:12). Several similar-sounding names (for both Arioch and Ellasar) are known from extrabiblical sources, though none of them can be identified with confidence with the biblical king. **(2)** The captain of the guard in the court of Nebuchadnezzar who was commanded to kill the wise men of Babylon, including Daniel (Dan. 2:14–15). Arioch protected Daniel by warning him of the king's order and then securing an audience for Daniel with the king (2:24–25).

ARISAI One of Haman's ten sons, all of whom were killed by the Jews after their father had been hung on the gallows that he built for Mordecai (Esther 7:10; 9:7–10). King Xerxes granted Esther's request that their corpses be hung in public (9:13–14).

ARISTARCHUS A native of Thessalonica who was a close companion of Paul. Associated with Paul's Gentile mission, he and Gaius were seized by a mob and brought to the theater in Ephesus (Acts 19:29). Later he journeyed to Jerusalem (possibly as one of the delegates of the Macedonian churches) accompanying the collection for poor relief (Acts 20:4). When Paul appealed for his case to be heard by Caesar, Aristarchus sailed with him to Rome (Acts 27:2). Writing from prison in Rome, Paul commends him as a Jewish coworker (along with Mark and Justus) and fellow prisoner (Col. 4:10, 11; Philem. 24).

ARISTOBULUS The head of a household greeted by Paul (Rom. 16:10). According to church tradition, he was the brother of Barnabas and one of the seventy disciples, who eventually became a missionary to Britain. Others have suggested that he was the son of Aristobulus, grandson of Herod the Great and brother of Agrippa I.

ARK God announced to Noah that he was going to destroy all the inhabitants of the earth and commanded him to build an "ark" (Heb. *tebah*; Gen. 6:14–16). Apart from the Genesis flood narrative, Exod. 2:3–5 is the only other passage in the Bible where this word is used, there for the ark of bulrushes in which the infant Moses was placed. Both arks were made waterproof by a coating of pitch (tar). An ark is something built to save people from drowning. It is not the name of a kind of boat as such (e.g., yacht), but rather a geometric boxlike shape. The ark was without rudder, sail, or any navigational aid.

Noah was told to make it of "gopher wood" (Heb. *goper*), which the early Jewish Aramaic translations (Targumim) identified as cedar (NIV, NRSV, NET: "cypress wood"). The Hebrew word *goper* occurs only here in the Bible, but the Akkadian equivalent (*kupru*) is found at a similar point in the Epic of Gilgamesh. It was, then, the right kind of wood for a boat. The ark was to have "rooms"—that is, cubicles (lit., "nests")—for the different animals to be housed in and kept apart from other animals.

After the general description of the ark (Gen. 6:14), details were provided by God on how to build it (6:15). Its length (300 cubits), width (50 cubits), and height (30 cubits) were specified. "Cubit" literally means "forearm" (the distance from elbow to tip of middle finger), so the ark was approximately 450 feet (140 meters) long, 75 feet (23 meters) wide, and 45 feet (13.5 meters) high (see NIV mg.). We cannot be exactly sure if "roof" (6:16) is the correct translation of the Hebrew word *tsohar*, which may refer to a hatchway or skylight (Vulg.: *fenestra* ["window"]; note the NIV 1984 mg.: "Make an opening for light"). Another possibility is "pitched roof." The usual Hebrew word, *gag*, is not used because that refers to a flat roof (see Josh. 2:6, 8; 2 Sam. 11:2). The instruction to "finish it to a cubit above" (RSV) refers to the pitch of the roof or its overhang. The "window" (Heb. *khallon*) that Noah opens in Gen. 8:6 is probably to be equated with this skylight in the roof, not a window in the side (since Noah cannot see out). In Gen. 8:13 Noah removes the "covering" (Heb. *mikseh*) from the ark, so as to see the surface of the earth.

The ark was to have a door in its side, which was closed by God (Gen. 6:16; 7:16). The structure was also to have three decks, which suggests that the ark was viewed as a microcosmos, with its three levels matching sky, earth, and sea. Genesis 6:17 explains why an ark is needed. The destruction will be by means of water, and the ark will carry Noah and his family (eight persons), as well as at least one pair of every living creature. The NT refers to Noah's construction of the ark (Heb. 11:7; 1 Pet. 3:20) and his entering it (Matt. 24:38; Luke 17:27).

ARKITE **(1)** A people group descended from Canaan, Ham's son (Gen. 10:17; 1 Chron. 1:15). These peoples were most likely residents of Irqata, modern Tell Arqa, located eighty miles north of Sidon in Syria. The city was conquered by Tiglath-pileser III of Assyria and by Thutmose III of Egypt. It appears in the Amarna letters and was renamed "Caesarea Libani" during the Roman period. **(2)** A clan located southwest of Bethel that became part of Benjamin (Josh. 16:2). Hushai, David's counselor, was an Arkite (2 Sam. 15:32; 16:16; 17:5, 14; 1 Chron. 27:33). Their territory was the southern boundary marker of the tribe of Joseph (Josh. 16:2) and included the town of Ataroth (Num. 32:3, 34).

ARK OF BULRUSHES The KJV term for the watertight "papyrus basket" (NIV) in which Moses' mother placed him to save him from Pharaoh's decree that all Hebrew infant boys be drowned in the Nile (Exod. 2:3).

ARK OF THE COVENANT A sacred cultic object, in the shape of a box, that represented the presence of God among the Israelites. The ark (Heb. *'aron*), constructed in wood, measured 45 inches long, 27 inches wide, and 27 inches high (Exod. 25:10), and it was transported by means of two poles inserted on either side of the ark. The most important aspects of the ark were the cover and the cherubim attached to the ark cover. Blood was ritually sprinkled on the cover, which was the designated place of atonement. In the earliest accounts, the ark became the place of atonement, meeting, and revelation between God and Israel.

In a few instances the Hebrew word *'aron* also denotes a collection box (NIV: "chest") in the temple (2 Kings 12:9–10; 2 Chron. 24:8, 10–11), and in one case it refers to Joseph's sarcophagus, or coffin (Gen. 50:26). The Scriptures mention the ark 195 times, frequently (82 times) in association with the Lord or God, resulting in expressions such as "the ark of the covenant of the LORD," the "ark of the God of Israel," and the "ark of God."

THE FUNCTION AND LOCATIONS OF THE ARK

The ark was housed first in the portable sanctuary or tabernacle used for worship in early Israelite history, and Exodus and Deuteronomy note that it served as a receptacle for the "testimony" or two tablets of the Ten Commandments. Consequently, the ark is often referred to as the "ark of the testimony," since the Hebrew word for "testimony" is synonymous with the common Hebrew word for "covenant" (Pss. 25:10; 132:12), and the designations of the container as the "ark of the covenant" (Deut. 9:9, 15) and as "the ark of the testimony" (Exod. 27:8; 31:18) seem interchangeable. The NT notes that the ark also contained a gold jar of manna and Aaron's blossoming rod (Heb. 9:4; cf. Exod. 16:32–34; Num. 17:8–10). The location of the ark became associated with the centralized place of gathering and worship by the Israelites. Moses composed what has come to be called the "Song of the Ark" (Num. 10:35–36), signifying the ark's role in preceding the nomadic Israelites in the wilderness and indicating where they should rest.

In the book of Joshua, the ark led the people in conquest (3:1–5:1; 6:1–25). The crossing of the Jordan (3:7–11) amid dry ground, when carrying the ark into the river caused the waters to be swept in a heap, depicts the supernatural relationship between the ark and the presence of God. The ark became so closely associated with the divine presence that the Israelites assumed that the presence of God resided within the ark. Only the consecrated Levitical priests could carry the ark, which was covered by three layers of cloth in order to conceal it from the people (Num. 4:5–6, 15, 18–20), who had to remain at least a thousand yards away. In 2 Sam. 6:2–7 the oxen carrying the ark stumbled, and Uzzah, who was not a priest, reached out and touched the ark to steady it, resulting in his death (cf. 1 Chron. 13:7–10). Following the entry into the promised land, the ark abided at the Gilgal sanctuary, and eventually it shifted from Bethel to Shiloh.

The function of the ark as the place where the tribal confederacy sought divine counsel for holy war led also to employing the ark as a war symbol, carried forth into battle to assure victory (Josh. 6:4–21). This use of the ark most likely originates from ancient Near Eastern religious concepts and practices that associated the presence of a god with an emblematic war throne useful for divination and success in battle. The expression “the LORD Almighty, who is enthroned between the cherubim” links God’s roles as king and warrior, reinforcing the ark as God’s throne or his “footstool” (1 Sam. 4:4), symbolic of the invisibly enthroned deity. Other Canaanite deities, including El, had footstools that resembled gold-plated and ornate boxes upon which to rest their feet, signifying their regal authority and military power. In 1 Chron. 28 the ark is referred to as God’s “footstool,” and the psalmist enjoins the people to gather and worship at God’s footstool (Ps. 99:5). Similarly, Ps. 132, a liturgical poem linked to the formal procession of the ark, refers to the “footstool of [God]” as the centralized place of worship.

The ark of the covenant rested in the Shiloh temple in the custody of Eli until it was captured by the Philistines, who possessed it in their territory for seven months (1 Sam. 4–6). The loss of the ark was mourned as symbolizing the abandonment or departure of God’s presence, and yet its capture emphasized the Israelites’ false presumptions concerning the ark as a guarantor of military success and reinforced the fact that God could not be manipulated. Following a plague inflicted by God upon the Philistines, the ark was returned and remained at Kiriath Jearim for twenty years (6:21–7:2).

Eventually, King David transported the ark to the city of Jerusalem, reinforcing the political and cultic importance of the location. Here it remained in a “tent” until it was placed in Solomon’s temple (2 Sam. 6:17; 7:2). The ark disappeared sometime during the late monarchical period; its capture is not listed in the temple assets seized by Nebuchadnezzar (2 Kings 25:13–17). The ark was never replaced after the return from the Babylonian exile, and Jeremiah declared that the ark should not be remade (Jer. 3:16). The ark is not mentioned in Ezekiel’s description of the new temple (Ezek. 40–48).

The book of Hebrews mentions the ark in relation to its prominence and purpose in the temple (9:4–5). In addition, Heb. 9:1–14 contrasts the application of Christ’s own blood in the heavenly holy place with the priestly sprinkling of blood on the “mercy seat” (NIV: “atonement cover”) of the ark. Revelation 11:19 speaks of the ark of God’s covenant being located in the heavens.

THE ARK AND THE HOLINESS OF GOD

The ark of the covenant underscores the holiness of God and his necessary separation from sin. The holiness or consecration of those who approach God at the ark signifies the importance of cleansing from impurity as a prerequisite to maintaining the covenant relationship with God. Although the ark and the presence of God became inseparably linked in the minds of the Israelites, God’s promise to be present among them did not imply a spatial or corporeal limitation. The law tablets contained in the ark are inextricably linked with the glory of God’s presence and the point of covenant accessibility through the word of God. The portable nature of the ark, and the tent in which it was housed, emphasizes that God’s presence or revelation is not limited to a specific location.

The NT also concretizes the ark to the holiness of God and his law. God is both merciful and just; his holiness requires propitiation for sin, and his mercy provides it through the blood atonement accomplished through the death and resurrection of Christ. Christ’s sufficient and efficacious vicarious sacrifice on the cross replaced the yearly ritual necessary to secure the salvation and forgiveness of God’s people, highlighting the superiority of Christ and salvation by grace through faith in his redemptive work on the cross. The sacrificial death of Christ provides infinite atonement and reconciliation for believers, who affirm God’s immanence while at the same time acknowledging his sovereignty and transcendence. Believers look forward to the literal and physical return of Christ, when they will realize the fulfillment of God’s promise to live with and among them eternally.

ARM Denoting the forearm of human beings or the shoulder of animals, the arm is frequently used as an image of power. Often used with the adjectives “outstretched,” “mighty,” or “holy,” God’s arm represents his power in creating the heavens and the earth (Jer. 27:5; cf. Ps. 89:10) and in redeeming his people in the exodus (Exod. 6:6; Deut. 4:34; Ps. 136:12; Jer. 32:21) and from the exile (1 Kings 8:41; Ezek. 20:33–34). The same image is evoked in describing God’s punishment of the disobedient Israelites (Jer. 21:5) as well as the enemy nations (Isa. 30:30; 48:14).

ARMAGEDDON Commonly believed to be the place of the final, cataclysmic battle that climaxes in the visible return of Christ (Rev. 16:16). The literal rendering “mount of Megiddo” is somewhat problematic, for there is no Mount of Megiddo. The apocalyptic indications relate Zech. 12:11 (the only apocalyptic reference to Megiddo, although there it is the “plain of Megiddo”) with Ezek. 38–39 (where the final battle in history takes place on the “mountains of Israel”). At the least, Armageddon represents the place where the kings of the world will gather for the final battle before God judges the world. The choice of Megiddo may result from the fact that it was the place where the righteous Israelites repeatedly fought off attacks by wicked nations (cf. 2 Kings 23:29).

The tell of Megiddo

ARMENIA In the KJV, the name of the place to which the murderers of the Assyrian king Sennacherib escaped in 2 Kings 19:37 (cf. Isa. 37:38). The NIV and NRSV, following the Hebrew word, have “Ararat.” Armenia connects eastern Asia Minor (today Turkey) to the Iranian plateau. *See also* Ararat.

ARMLET A band worn around the upper arm. These bands were part of the spoil collected by the Israelites during their destruction of certain Midianites (Num. 31:50), and one was taken from Saul after his death by the Amalekite who killed him on Mount Gilboa (2 Sam. 1:10).

ARMONI The son of Saul and Rizpah who, along with his brother Mephibosheth and five of Saul’s grandsons, was handed over to the Gibeonites by David as a form of retribution for Saul’s slaughter of the Gibeonite people (2 Sam. 21).

ARMS, ARMOR The Bible depicts war and warlike acts throughout. The arms are both offensive and defensive in nature. The most common types of offensive weapons are swords, axes, spears, bows and arrows, slings, and stones. Defensive weapons include the shield and the helmet. An army’s arsenal was usually kept in a storehouse called an armory (1 Kings 10:17; Isa. 22:8; Neh. 3:19).

ARMS

Sword. In the OT, the word “sword” (*khereb*) appears for the first time in Gen. 3:24 after Adam and Eve have been evicted from the garden of Eden. A flaming sword was placed there “to guard the way to the tree of life.” Thus, the first use of the sword is defensive. Later in Genesis, Jacob’s sons use swords to avenge the rape of their sister Dinah (Gen. 34:25–26). In most cases the word describes the weapon of choice for most of antiquity. Swords were manufactured of iron (1 Sam. 13:19; Joel 3:10). Some were short and easy to maneuver (Judg. 3:16), while others were long and heavy (1 Sam. 21:9). They could be single- or double-edged, and they were worn in a sheath or scabbard (1 Sam. 17:51; 2 Sam. 20:8). The sword was also supported by a girdle made of leather studded with nails (1 Sam. 18:4; 2 Sam. 20:8). Sometimes, the sword was used figuratively to speak of God’s judgment (Lev. 26:6; Isa. 1:20; Jer. 47:6; 50:35–37; Ezek. 21:9, 28; Hos. 11:6). In the NT, the most common word describing a sword is the Greek *machaira*, which is used to describe the weapons wielded by the mob that came to arrest Jesus (Matt. 26:47, 55; Mark 14:48), as well as the weapon used by Peter to cut off Malchus’s ear (John 18:10). Another Greek word translated “sword” is *rhomphaia*, which describes a longer sword, generally worn over one’s shoulder (Rev. 1:16; 6:8; 19:21). The word “sword” is also used figuratively in the NT. The word of God is designated as “the sword of the Spirit” (Eph. 6:17) and as a “double-edged sword” (Heb. 4:12).

Spear. Four main words in the Bible are translated as “spear” or “javelin.” The Hebrew word *romakh* is translated “spear” or “javelin,” and it appears fifteen times in the OT. The spear was made of iron (Joel 3:10), and those who fell prey to it never survived its penetration (Num. 25:7; 1 Kings 18:28). The other Hebrew word used for the spear is *khanit*, which appears about fifty times in the OT. It is used to describe Goliath’s spear when he fought David (1 Sam. 17:7), Saul’s spear when he hurled it at David (1 Sam. 18:10–11), and the Assyrian-made “glittering” spear (Nah. 3:3). The third word is *khidon*, which appears about ten times in the OT. It describes a weapon in the arsenals of Joshua (Josh. 8:18, 26), Goliath (1 Sam. 17:6), and the Babylonians (Jer. 6:23). In the NT, the word "spear" (Gk. *longchē*) occurs only once, referring to the weapon used to pierce Jesus' side at his crucifixion (John 19:34).

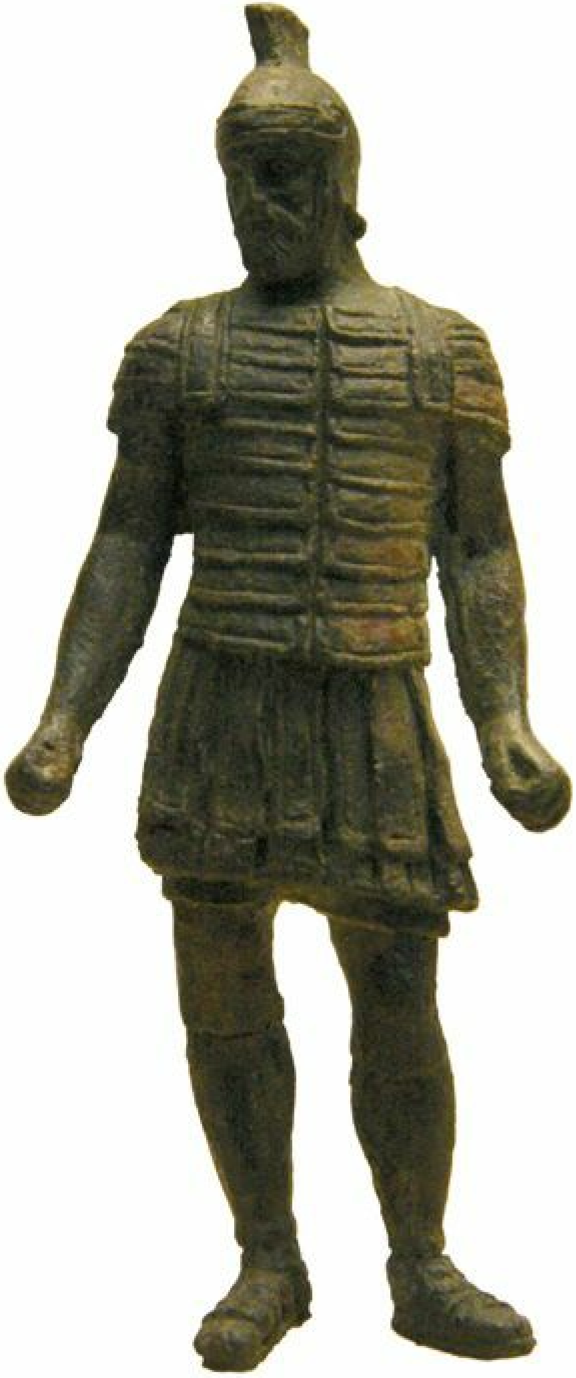
Bow and arrow. The bow and arrow was an important offensive weapon in Israel and the surrounding cultures. In the Bible, bow and arrow, either in combination or individually, appear in both a literal (2 Kings 9:24; Isa. 37:33) and a figurative sense (Pss. 11:2; 64:7; Isa. 49:2; Lam. 3:12; Zech. 9:13). There is extrabiblical evidence suggesting that the Egyptians and the Syrians also used the bow and arrow as part of their military arsenal.

Sling. Primitive but effective, the sling was used not only in Israel but also in Egypt and Babylon. Easy to manufacture, it used stones as ammunition; thus it was the weapon of choice for those lacking raw material to build weapons made of metal. Besides David's use of the sling in his encounter with Goliath (1 Sam. 17:40), men from the tribe of Benjamin used the sling with remarkable accuracy (Judg. 20:16).

Ax. Besides its primary role for cutting down trees (Deut. 19:5; Judg. 9:48; Jer. 10:3), the ax probably was used in war as well. (*See also* Ax, Ax Head.)

ARMOR

Shield. The shield is one of the most ancient defense weapons. Two Hebrew words are used to depict a shield. The *magen* appears for the first time in Gen. 15:1, where it is used figuratively to speak of God's protection of Abraham. It is used in the same manner one other time, in Deut. 33:29. It is frequently used as a figure of speech by the psalmists to denote the same idea of divine protection (Pss. 3:3; 7:10; 18:2, 30; 28:7; 33:20; 59:11; 84:9, 11; 115:9–11; 119:114; 144:2). When used literally, the term refers to a shield made of wood and sometimes overlaid with leather. Solomon used gold to manufacture shields (1 Kings 10:17), while Rehoboam manufactured them of bronze (1 Kings 14:27). This type of shield was used as a defensive weapon by the Israelites throughout their history (Judg. 5:8; 1 Chron. 5:18; 2 Chron. 9:16; 14:8; 17:17; 23:9; Neh. 4:16). It was also used by the Syrians (Isa. 22:6), Assyrians (Isa. 37:33), Egyptians (Jer. 46:3), and Persians (Ezek. 27:10). The other Hebrew term translated "shield" is *tsinnah*. This was larger than the *magen* and was meant to cover the fighter's entire body. It was the type of shield carried by Goliath's shield bearer (1 Sam. 17:7, 41), manufactured by King Solomon (1 Kings 10:16), used by the Gadites who joined David while fleeing from Saul (1 Chron. 12:8), and used by Israel's army during the reigns of Rehoboam (2 Chron. 11:12) and Asa (2 Chron. 14:8). The Greek word *thyreos* is the LXX rendering of the Hebrew *tsinnah*, and it appears only once in the NT. Paul uses the word figuratively when speaking about the "shield of faith" (Eph. 6:16).



Bronze statuette of a second-century AD Roman soldier wearing laminated armor

Helmet. The helmet had the obvious defensive purpose of protecting a combatant's head. It was made of leather or light metal, such as bronze (1 Sam. 17:5, 38). In both Testaments, salvation is spoken of figuratively as a "helmet" (Isa. 59:17; Eph. 6:17; 1 Thess. 5:8).

Coat of mail. Body armor was used for the protection of the warrior not only in Israel but also in other ancient Near Eastern nations. The Hebrew term *shiryon* is variously translated as "coat of mail" (ESV, RSV, NRSV), "coat of scale armor" (NIV), or "habergeon" (KJV). Goliath wore this type of body armor (1 Sam. 17:5, 38), and his was manufactured of bronze. Despite wearing a *shiryon*, Israel's king Ahab was fatally wounded in battle (1 Kings 22:34). In an attempt to strengthen Judah's military power, King Uzziah also provided coats of mail for his army (2 Chron. 26:14). It was also used during postexilic times, Nehemiah's workers having benefited from its protection

(Neh. 4:16). *Shiryon* (Gk. *thorax*) is used figuratively to speak of a “breastplate” of righteousness and of love (Isa. 59:17; Eph. 6:14; 1 Thess. 5:8).

ARMY The army of Israel was primarily a volunteer military force directed by God and his word. Deuteronomy 20 establishes the guidelines for warfare, Num. 1 describes organization, and Num. 2:17 highlights God’s strategic position as commander in the sacred event of war. Israelite warriors were men twenty years and older from the nation’s tribes, clans, and families. The Levites were appointed tabernacle caretakers and not counted in the census for military duties. The priest was responsible for addressing the nation prior to a battle and then leading the battle procession in connection with the ark of the covenant.

The Israelite army structure is not overly developed in the biblical material. Under God as commander in chief was the king, who then worked in connection with his commanders and officers to execute God’s will by means of a tribal confederation. Prior to the monarchy, God worked through Moses and Joshua to rally the men for battle. Samuel warned the nation that the king would abuse the volunteerism of the army and take their sons and make them render military service with his chariots and horses (1 Sam. 8:11–12). This warning was realized under the leadership of Solomon and Rehoboam. Army divisions included a list of family heads, commanders of thousands, commanders of hundreds, and their officers. In addition, a period of their service was noted (1 Chron. 27).

Army size was not a matter of importance for success in battle. God as divine warrior led the nation in battle and determined the outcome in keeping with his sovereign purposes. Only a few Israelites were necessary to defeat thousands (Lev. 26:8; Deut. 32:8). The defeat of Pharaoh and his army in the exodus and the conquest provides the most dramatic premonarchy illustrations of God’s defiance of the numbers. During the monarchy, God orchestrated the defeat of the vast Aramean army with a smaller Israelite army (1 Kings 20:27). On the other hand, when the Israelites were disobedient to the covenant, they would be put to flight (Josh. 7).

The Israelite army fought all kinds of battles under God’s direction. War was a sacred event that involved, for example, the making of sacrifices (1 Sam. 13), consecration of oneself (Josh. 3:5), abstinence (1 Sam. 21:5; 2 Sam. 11:11), the ritual cleanness of the camp (Deut. 23:9–4), the leadership of priest and prophet (Josh. 6; Jer. 34), and the presence of the ark.

ARNAN A descendant of Hananiah mentioned in the genealogy in 1 Chronicles that records the postexilic descent of the line of David (1 Chron. 3:21).

ARNI An ancestor of Jesus mentioned in some manuscripts of Luke 3:33 (followed by NRSV, NET) but thought to be the same descendant of Hezron as Ram (so NIV; KJV has Aram; 1 Chron. 2:9–10; Ruth 4:19) and Aram (Matt. 1:4).

ARNON The wadi and gorge that runs into the east side of the Dead Sea opposite En Gedi. It formed the northern boundary of Moab (Num. 22:36; Judg. 11:18) and southern boundary of the kingdom of Sihon the Amorite (Deut. 2:24, 36). Its first mention in the OT is as a campsite of the migrating Israelites (Num. 21:13–36). The Israelites captured all the territory of the Transjordan north of the Arnon River (Deut. 3:8–17; 4:48; Josh. 12:1–2). This was given as an inheritance by Moses to the tribes of Reuben and Gad and to the half-tribe of Manasseh (Josh. 13:8–33). In the days of Jephthah, the Ammonite king attempted unsuccessfully to regain the territory from the Arnon to the Jabbok Rivers (Judg. 11). During Jehu’s reign, the Syrian king Hazael captured from Israel the

Transjordan territory as far south as the Arnon Gorge (2 Kings 10:32–33). It is also mentioned in prophetic poetry in connection with Moab (Isa. 16:2; Jer. 48:20).

AROD The sixth son of Gad and founder of the Arodites (Num. 26:17). He is called “Arodi” in the parallel genealogy in Gen. 46:16. Despite the different spellings, there is no doubt that the two genealogies list the same person.

AROER **(1)** A settlement on the northern rim of a deep gorge along the Arnon River (modern Wadi Mujib in Jordan), east of the Dead Sea. Because the gorge served as a natural border for surrounding territories, Aroer was a strategically attractive stronghold. The ancient site has been identified with Khirbet ’Ara’ir, and excavations have uncovered a fortress from the Late Bronze Age (1300–1200 BC), with evidence of earlier rudimentary constructions. Aroer was controlled by Sihon the Amorite until Moses defeated him (Deut. 2:36; 4:48; Josh. 12:2) and incorporated the settlement within Reuben’s territory (Deut. 3:12; Josh. 13:9, 16), although Gad was involved in rebuilding it (Num. 32:34). Later, the settlement likely marked the starting point for David’s census (2 Sam. 24:5). The Moabite Stone (line 26) reports that Mesha, king of Moab, rebuilt Aroer after conquering it (c. 940 BC). Later, Hazael of Syria gained dominance over the Transjordan as far south as Aroer (2 Kings 10:33; cf. Isa. 17:2). By Jeremiah’s time, Aroer had once again come under Moab’s control (Jer. 48:19).

(2) A city in Transjordan near Rabbah (modern Amman). This Aroer, part of Gad’s territory, bordered Ammonite land (Josh. 13:25; cf. Judg. 11:33).

(3) A city located fourteen miles southeast of Beersheba in the Negev, where David distributed spoils from his encounter with the Amalekites (1 Sam. 30:28; cf. 1 Chron. 11:44). Excavations at modern ’Ar’arah have not yet confirmed its identification with the ancient city since the earliest remains date only from the seventh century BC.

ARPACHSHAD *See* Arphaxad.

ARPAD The capital city of Bit-Agusi in northern Syria identified with modern Tell Erfad, about twenty-five miles north of Aleppo. It was conquered twice by the Assyrians, once in 740 BC by Tiglath-pileser III and again in 720 BC by Sargon II. The Assyrians taunted Israel with the destruction of this city as proof that their God could not stop the Assyrian advance (2 Kings 18:34; 19:13; Isa. 10:9; 36:19; 37:13). Jeremiah mentions Arpad in a prophecy against Damascus in Syria (49:23). Arpad is spelled “Arphad” in the KJV of Isa. 36:19; 37:13.

ARPHAXAD **(1)** The son of Shem and grandson of Noah, born two years after the flood (Gen. 10:22; 11:11–13; cf. 1 Chron. 1:17–18, 24). Arphaxad fathered Shelah at age thirty-five, although the genealogy in Luke 3:36, following the LXX, inserts Cainan between Arphaxad and Shelah. Arphaxad had other sons and daughters and lived to be 438 years old. Shem’s genealogy in Gen. 11 traces Abram’s ancestry through Arphaxad’s line. **(2)** A ruler of the Medes in Ecbatana (modern Hamadan in Iran), whom Nebuchadnezzar defeated (Jdt. 1:1, 5, 13, 15).

ARTAXERXES Artaxerxes I (Longimanus) was the fourth king of the Persian Empire (464–424 BC), after Cyrus, Cambyses (not mentioned in the Bible), and Darius. It was an appeal by provincial officials to Artaxerxes at the beginning of his reign that brought a halt to an early attempt to repair the walls of Jerusalem (Ezra 4:7–23). Ezra went up to Jerusalem in the seventh year of his reign (458 BC; Ezra 7:7). The appearance of beneficence in Artaxerxes' decree (7:11–26) was spoiled by the revelation of the self-serving political motivation behind its apparent generosity (7:23). Ezra's nonuse of the sweeping powers given to him by Artaxerxes further suggests that Persian royal assistance might not be the kind of help really needed by God's people. Nehemiah returned to Jerusalem in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes' reign (445 BC; Neh. 1:1). The positive impression made on the reader by Artaxerxes' personal favoritism toward Nehemiah, allowing him to return to rebuild the walls of his native city, Jerusalem (Neh. 2:3, 5), is undercut by Nehemiah's disparagement of his royal master (1:11: "this man"). Nehemiah's second mission took place sometime later than the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes' reign (5:14; 13:6) but before the king's death.

Artemis of the Ephesians (first century BC)

ARTEMAS Artemas was an early Greek convert to Christianity. His name reflects that his parents viewed him as a gift from the Greek goddess Artemis. Both he and Tychicus are mentioned as possible substitutes for Titus in Crete so that Titus could join Paul in Nicopolis (Titus 3:12). An ancient tradition suggests that Artemas was one of the seventy-two disciples mentioned in Luke 10:1–20 and that he also became the bishop of Lystra.

ARTEMIS **(1)** In classical Greek mythology, Artemis is the goddess of the hunt, and she has associations with woods, wildlife, and chastity. She was the daughter of Zeus and Leto, and the twin sister of Apollo, born on the island of Delos.

(2) Artemis of the Ephesians is a conflation of several goddess traditions. The Carians and the Lelegians worshiped the "Great Mother" during the Late Bronze Age (1550–1200 BC) in Ephesus. Cybele and Hecate were among other goddesses worshiped in the region. With the arrival of the Iconians at Ephesus around 1000 BC, aspects of these and other Asiatic traditions eventually merged with those of the Greek Artemis. By the NT era, the well-established iconography of the resulting patroness of Ephesus depicts her with several rows of small, egglike ornaments across her chest (thought to be breasts) and a mural crown on her head.

Temples to Artemis at Ephesus included a clay-floored structure from the eighth century BC, later destroyed by flood. A replacement was erected around 550 BC, funded by the Lydian king Croesus. Called the "Artemesion," it was numbered among the seven wonders of the world compiled by Herodotus. However, it was burned by the fame-seeking arsonist Herostratus on July 21, 356 BC, the birth date of Alexander the Great. (Plutarch suggests that Artemis was too preoccupied with the birth of Alexander to intervene.) A spectacular replacement was finally completed about 200 BC, and it persisted into the NT era.

By then Artemis was known as the protector, nurturer, and overseer of Ephesus. Cult practices became a source of civic identity and pride, especially the procession along the Sacred Way, when her statue, dressed by women devotees, was carried to the temple by night, bathed in light. Temple rituals overseen by priestesses involved incense and animal sacrifice; women appealed to her for aid with marriage, childbirth, and child rearing.

The only mention of Artemis in the Bible is in Acts 19:23–41, the incident of the Ephesian riot and demonstration in the amphitheater. This was instigated by Demetrius the silversmith over his concerns that Paul's ministry was creating an economic hazard for him and his tradesmen, who made silver shrines of Artemis. They also feared that the temple and Artemis herself would suffer a decline in stature. The intercession of the city clerk eventually quieted the mob, but not until they had spent two hours chanting, "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!"

ARUBBOTH A city that served as one of Solomon's twelve administrative districts (1 Kings 4:10) under Ben-Hesed, governor of the third district over Sokoh and the land of Hepher. This indicates that the city was southeast of Dor and southwest of Megiddo in the northern Plain of Sharon. It is likely located at the modern site of 'Arrabeh in the territory of Manasseh, nine miles north of Samaria.

ARUMAH A town in which Abimelek lived (Judg. 9:41). Abimelek was Gideon's son who was born to him by his concubine in Shechem (Judg. 8:31). Arumah is where Abimelek remained while Gaal, son of Ebed, was trying to overthrow Shechem (Judg. 9:26–41).

ARVAD, ARVADITES Arvad was the northernmost of the Phoenician cities. With its natural harbor, it became one of the most important Phoenician ports, along with Byblos, Tyre, and Sidon. The Arvadites were a Canaanite tribe (Gen. 10:18; 1 Chron. 1:16) known to provide Tyre with oarsmen and guards (Ezek. 27:8, 11).

ARZA A steward of King Elah who lived in Tirzah. It was in Arza's home that Elah, in a drunken stupor, was assassinated by Zimri (1 Kings 16:9).

ASA **(1)** The third king of Judah (1 Kings 15:8–24; 2 Chron. 14:1–16:14), succeeding his father, Abijah, and reigning for forty-one years (908–867 BC). Early in his life, Asa was a good king, obeying God and removing the worship of foreign gods from the land. He even removed an idolatrous object that his own grandmother Maakah had set up and removed her from leadership in the land. As a result, God blessed him, even providing a tremendous military victory over Zerah, an Ethiopian leader who had attacked Judah with a million-man army (2 Chron. 14:9–15). Later in life, however, he showed a lack of confidence in God when he enlisted the king of Aram to help him against the encroachment of Baasha, the king of Israel, even paying him with gold and silver objects from the temple. Although Baasha withdrew, Asa's actions caught up with him when he developed a serious foot disease, from which he died.

(2) A Levite who resettled in Jerusalem after the exile (1 Chron. 9:16).

ASAHEL **(1)** One of the three sons of Zeruiah. He and his brothers, Joab and Abishai, were nephews of David who served prominently in his army. Asahel was noted as a swift runner (2 Sam. 2:18). His speed and persistence cost him his life at the hands of Abner and led to a division between David and Joab. Abner had been King Saul's general. After Saul was killed by the Philistines, Abner sided with Saul's son Ish-Bosheth for two years. Most of Israel followed Ish-Bosheth, while Judah followed David. In one battle, Abner and the men of Israel were put to flight (2:17). The swift Asahel decided to chase Abner down. Abner warned him off, but Asahel refused to relent, so when he caught up, Abner killed him. When a rift developed between Ish-Bosheth and Abner, Abner determined to bring the loyalty of Israel over to David. He met peaceably with David toward that end. But when Joab heard, he was upset. He tricked Abner into a meeting without David's knowledge and killed him in revenge for Asahel's death.

(2) A Levite who taught in the cities of Judah during the reign of Jehoshaphat (2 Chron. 17:8). **(3)** A Levite who assisted in collecting resources for cleansing the temple during the reign of Hezekiah (2 Chron. 31:13). **(4)** The father of Jonathan, who was one of those who resisted Ezra's attempts to force Jewish men to divorce their pagan wives (Ezra 10:15).

ASAIAH **(1)** A servant of King Josiah and a member of the group sent to Huldah to hear Yahweh's decrees concerning the Book of the Law (2 Kings 22:11–20). **(2)** A clan leader within the tribe of Simeon who participated in the capture of the Valley of Gedor from the Meunites (1 Chron. 4:34–43). **(3)** A Levite descendant of Merari who assisted in moving the ark of the covenant from Obed-Edom to Jerusalem (1 Chron. 6:30; 15:6, 11). **(4)** A leader who returned from the exile (1 Chron. 9:5). There is some debate concerning his ancestry. The normal vocalization suggests that he was from Shiloh; an alternate vocalization proposed is "Shelah," so that all three sons of Judah are mentioned in the text.

ASAPH **(1)** One of the Levites appointed by David to lead in worship. Asaph was part of the procession to bring the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem. Along with Heman and Ethan, also mentioned in the Psalter, he was appointed by the Levites to the bronze cymbals (1 Chron. 15:19). Subsequently, David assigned Asaph continuing duties (16:7, 37). He served further under Solomon at the dedication of the temple (2 Chron. 5:11–14). Asaph is described as singer (1 Chron. 15:17), the chief (15:19), who played cymbals (15:19), gave thanks to God (16:7), ministered before the ark (16:37), prophesied under direction of the king (25:2), and gave direction to his sons (25:2). The sons of Asaph served under his direction (25:2), prophesied and sang with lyres, harps, and cymbals

(25:1, 6), and served as gatekeepers (26:1). The descendants of Asaph continued these duties after the exile (Ezra 2:41; 3:10; Neh. 11:22; 12:46). Twelve psalms are associated with Asaph (Pss. 50; 73–83). They reflect his prophetic ministry by including sections of prophecy or of God speaking. God's covenant and justice are frequent topics of these psalms.

(2) The father of Joah, a secretary to Hezekiah (2 Kings 18:18, 37).

(3) The keeper of King Artaxerxes' forest who provided timber for Nehemiah's building projects in Jerusalem (Neh. 2:8).

ASAREL The last of the four sons of Jehallelel (1 Chron. 4:16). The LXX renders his name as *Eserael*, which some believe to be an alternate form of "Israel."

ASARELAH Son of Asaph (1 Chron. 25:2), he was one of the sanctuary musicians appointed by David. He is most likely identical with Jesarelah (1 Chron. 25:14) and Azarel (1 Chron. 25:18). His name is translated as "God holds."

ASCENSION The visible and bodily ascent of Jesus from earth to heaven concluding his earthly ministry, which then continued through the promised Holy Spirit, given at Pentecost.

A detailed historical account of the ascension is given only by Luke (Luke 24:51; Acts 1:4–11 [cf. Mark 16:19, in the longer ending to Mark's Gospel]). The event, however, was anticipated in John's Gospel (John 6:62; 20:17).

The ascension is frequently implied throughout the NT by reference to the complex of events that began with the death of Jesus and ended with his session at the right hand of God in glory. Paul writes of the divine-human Christ's ascent to the heavenly realms as the beginning of his supreme cosmic reign in power (Eph. 1:20–23) and as the basis for holy living (Col. 3:1–4; 1 Tim. 3:16). In Hebrews, the ascension is a crucial stage that marks off the completed work of Jesus on earth, in which he offered himself as the perfect and final sacrifice for sin (9:24–26), from his continuing work in heaven as our great high priest, which is described in terms of sympathy (4:14–16) and intercession (7:25). Peter makes the most direct reference to the ascension, explaining that Jesus, who suffered, is resurrected and "has gone into heaven" (1 Pet. 3:22). Therefore, just as Jesus, the righteous sufferer, was vindicated by God, so too will his people who suffer for doing good.

Paul understands the OT as predicting Christ's ascension (Eph. 4:7–10; cf. Ps. 68:18) and containing incidents that in some way prefigure it (2 Kings 2:11–12).

The ascension is significant for at least three reasons. First, Christ's death could not have full effect until he entered the heavenly sanctuary. From heaven he acts as advocate and communicates to believers through the Holy Spirit all the gifts and blessings that he died on the cross to gain (Heb. 4:14–16; 1 John 2:1). Second, glorified humanity is now in God's presence, guaranteeing that we likewise will be raised up with body and soul to share the glory yet to be revealed (John 14:2; 17:24; Eph. 2:4–6). Third, the ascension previews the manner of Christ's second coming (Acts 1:11). Jesus' ascension was followed by his enthronement in heaven, where he reigns (1 Cor. 15:25) and from which he will physically return in the same glorified body as judge (Luke 21:27). *See also* Advent, Second; Second Coming.

ASCENTS, SONG OF The titles, or superscriptions, of fifteen psalms include the designation "a song of ascents," also called "a song of degrees." The notion of ascending, or going up, has influenced the understanding of these psalms. The "going up" has been seen as going up to Jerusalem for a holy day, going up to Jerusalem as part of the return from the exile, going up the fifteen steps at the courts of the temple (a Jewish tradition in the Mishnah), or an aspect of their poetic style. These psalms occur together as a group, Pss. 120–134. They include different genres but share an emphasis on Jerusalem, which supports the idea that they were used on pilgrimage for a holy day (see Exod. 24:13; 34:23; Lev. 23:4; and Deut. 16 for religious journeys to Jerusalem). Harvest imagery in some of these psalms and the Mishnah tradition suggest the Feast of Tabernacles, but they need not have been limited to this festival.

ASENATH The daughter of Potiphera, priest of On in Egypt, she was given as wife to Joseph and became the mother of Manasseh and Ephraim (Gen. 41:45, 50–52; 46:20). An ancient fictional novel-like writing, *Joseph and Aseneth*, narrates a story of her conversion to marry Joseph. Its date and authorship remain unknown, though likely it was written between the first century BC and the third century AD.

ASER *See* Asher.

ASH A translation of the Hebrew word *'oren*, a type of tree mentioned in Isa. 44:14 as a source of wood for making an idol. English translations variously identify the tree as a fir, pine, laurel, or, based on alternative manuscripts, cedar.

ASHAN A city in the southern lowlands of Judah, slightly northwest of Beersheba. It was first given to the tribe of Judah (Josh. 15:42) and later reassigned to the tribe of Simeon (Josh. 19:7; 1 Chron. 4:32). It is possibly the same city listed as a city of refuge and given to the Levites (1 Chron. 6:59), although it is elsewhere called “Ain” (Josh. 21:16).

ASHARELAH *See* Asarelah.

ASHBEA At 1 Chron. 4:21, the KJV has “house of Ashbea,” while the NIV has “Beth Ashbea” (similarly, NRSV, NET), in reference to a guild of linen workers. It is uncertain whether the proper name “Ashbea” refers to a person or a place.

ASHBEL The son of Benjamin and head of the Ashbelites who immigrated to Egypt with Jacob (Gen. 46:21; 1 Chron. 8:1). The name literally means “man of Baal.” He is also called “Jediael” in 1 Chron. 7:6.

ASHCHENAZ *See* Ashkenaz.

ASHDOD One of five principal cities of the Philistines (Josh. 13:3). Ashdod was situated in the coastal plane of Canaan, roughly two and one-half miles inland from the Mediterranean Sea, near the main coastal route sometimes called the “Way of the Philistines.” The site has been identified (Tel Ashdod) and extensively investigated.

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Ashdod predates the Philistine presence in the Eastern Mediterranean. The first fortified settlement dates to the Middle Bronze Age (2200–1550 BC). Records from Ugarit (Late Bronze Age [1550–

1200 BC]) reveal that Ashdod participated in the trading of dyed garments and wool (substantiated by the presence of murex shells in situ), and that its population was largely West Semitic. Discovery of part of a stone doorjamb bearing a partial hieroglyphic inscription denoting a high-ranking Egyptian official suggests that Ashdod was additionally the site of an Egyptian stronghold palace. Incursion of Sea Peoples into the region began in the late thirteenth century BC. A layer of ash indicates that Ashdod was partly destroyed at this time. This is followed by evidence of a Philistine presence at Ashdod beginning in the early twelfth century BC.

The Philistines thrived at Ashdod during the Early Iron Age (1200–1000 BC). Expansions of the walls about the acropolis and settlement of the lower city indicate a growing population. Destruction of the city's fortifications during the first half of the tenth century BC may be attributed to Pharaoh Siamon (960 BC) or possibly to a campaign later in David's reign.

Ashdod's fortifications were rebuilt, although they were partly destroyed c. 760 BC (perhaps by Uzziah [2 Chron. 26:6]). In 712/711 BC the Assyrian army, under orders from Sargon II, sacked Ashdod (Isa. 20:1). The remains of some three thousand persons attest to this event, as do three fragments from a victory stela discovered at the acropolis. Ashdod was an Assyrian vassal until Assyria's collapse, at which point Ashdod became vulnerable to Egypt, then to Babylon. Pharaoh Psamtik I sacked the city after a lengthy siege (c. 640 BC), and Nebuchadnezzar II later subjugated it (c. 600 BC). Items bearing Hebrew inscriptions indicate trade with Judah during the latter seventh century BC.

Ashdod declined during the Babylonian period (626–539 BC) but regained prominence under the Persians, becoming an administrative center for the region. Ashdod (now called "Azotus") further prospered during the Hellenistic period (post-332 BC), up to the time it was captured by John Hyrcanus (114 BC). The town again dwindled in significance during the Roman period relative to the nearby port, Ashdod Yam, and was destroyed during the First Jewish Revolt (AD 67), although habitation persisted into the Byzantine period.

ASHDOD IN THE BIBLE

Ashdod is mentioned in relation to both the overall success of the Israelite conquest of Canaan (Josh. 11:22; the feared Anakim remained only in Philistine territory [see Num. 13:28]) and its unfinished nature (Josh. 13:3). Joshua 15:46–47 lists Ashdod in the territory allotted to Judah. That this territory remained largely unconquered by Israel features prominently in the narrative of Judges and Samuel.

When the ark of the covenant was captured by the Philistines (1 Sam. 4), it was taken to Dagon's temple at Ashdod (5:1–2). Excavation of Tel Ashdod has yet to identify this cult site, although an incense stand portraying a procession of musicians may pertain to Dagon's cult (see 1 Sam. 10:5). In 1 Macc. 10:84 is reported Jonathan's burning of Azotus (Ashdod) and destruction of Dagon's temple during the Hellenistic period.

Among the prophets, oracles portend the destruction of Ashdod and the other Philistine cities (Amos 1:6–8; Zeph. 2:4; Zech. 9:5–6). Jeremiah 25:20 mentions "the people left at Ashdod," possibly alluding to Psamtik I's destruction of the city. Conspicuously absent is any mention of Gath, which by this time had been subjugated or destroyed (1 Chron. 1:18; 2 Chron. 26:6; also 2 Kings 12:17).

Reference is also made to Ashdodites. Notably, "the people of Ashdod" were among those opposed to the rebuilding of Jerusalem's walls during the postexilic period (Neh. 4:7). Intermarriage with the "women from Ashdod" was common among returning Jews (Neh. 13:23), and "the language of Ashdod" was spoken by their children (Neh. 13:24).

Overall, the biblical testimony concerning Ashdod coheres remarkably well with the archaeological evidence from Tel Ashdod.

ASHDOTHPISGAH In the KJV this refers to Mount Pisgah, which is in Moab, northeast of the Dead Sea (Deut. 3:17; 4:49; Josh. 12:3; 13:20). In other English translations it is commonly taken literally, "slopes of Pisgah."

ASHER The name of a person, a tribe of Israel, and possibly a city. The relationship of these three grows out of the biblical propensity for identifying groups and places by the ancestor who founded it. **(1)** The eighth son of Jacob. He was born to Jacob by Zilpah, Leah's handmaid (Gen. 30:12–13). **(2)** Some have identified the mention in Josh. 17:7 of Asher as a marker from which Manasseh proceeds in the north as a reference to the city; more likely, however, it simply refers to the shared borders of the two tribes. *See also* Asher, Tribe of.

ASHER, TRIBE OF One of the twelve tribes, descended from the eighth son of Jacob, born to Jacob by Zilpah, Leah's handmaid (Gen. 30:12–13). The tribe of Asher is specifically recorded as participating in the enslavement in Egypt (Exod. 1:4), the rescue from Egypt and the failure to enter the land of promise (Num. 1:40–41; 13:13; 26:44–47), the conquest of the land (Josh. 19:24–31), and the failure to drive out the Canaanites as God had commanded (Judg. 1:31–32). The tribal allotment afforded Asher included the western hills of Galilee and the Phoenician coast north of the Carmel range and south of Sidon. Since the area was coastal, the land there was fertile and used for both olive and grape production (Deut. 33:24). Furthermore, since this area was the only part of Israel's inheritance that included natural harbors, Asher also seems to have participated in some level of naval trade (Judg. 5:17). Interestingly, some Egyptian texts from the first part of the Nineteenth Dynasty (c. thirteenth century BC) apparently mention an Asher in this very region. In the NT, Asher is listed as the tribe of Anna, the prophetess who blessed the infant Jesus (Luke 2:36–38). Asher is also included among Revelation's listing of the tribes sealed for protection (Rev. 7:6).

ASHERAH A cult object as well as a goddess attested throughout the Levant.

In the OT, Asherah refers primarily to a wooden cult object (see Deut. 16:21). That these were objects and not trees is evident from descriptions of their (NIV: "Asherah poles") being "made" (1 Kings 14:15) and "set up" (14:23). The word appears in common cultic settings—upon hilltops and under leafy trees (1 Kings 14:23; 2 Kings 17:10)—and even in Yahweh's temple (2 Kings 23:6). They appear also with other cult objects, notably altars and "sacred stones" (Exod. 34:13), and idols and incense stands (2 Chron. 34:4). Whether the Asherah poles were carved images is uncertain, though presumably they provided a stand-in for the goddess or deity.

Asherah fertility statuette

The Israelites were instructed to destroy the Asherah poles upon entering Canaan (Exod. 34:13; also Deut. 7:5; 12:3). Instead, they fashioned their own (1 Kings 14:15, 23), assimilating them into worship of Yahweh (2 Kings 23:6). Later efforts at removing the poles were sporadic and temporary (compare 2 Kings 18:4 with 21:3, 7). Despite the apparent pervasiveness of these cult objects, archaeologists have yet to retrieve one.

In a handful of instances, “Asherah” denotes a deity. In Judg. 3:7 “the Asherahs” (here indicating "goddesses") is grammatically parallel to "the Baals"; likewise "Asherah" corresponds to Baal and "the starry hosts," designating a specific deity (2 Kings 23:4). In 1 Kings 18:19 Elijah speaks of the "prophets of Asherah," who presumably spoke in the goddess's name.

Twice Asherah is associated with her cult object: 1 Kings 15:13 (= 2 Chron. 15:16) mentions "an abominable thing" made "for Asherah," which the NIV renders as "a repulsive image for the worship of Asherah"; 2 Kings 21:7 mentions "the carved likeness of Asherah," rendered as "the carved Asherah pole" (NIV). In 2 Kings 23:7 the narrator refers to a place where women did "weaving for Asherah." It is unclear what these weavings were, though possibly they were cult garments or coverings for the cult image.

Outside the Bible, Asherah is attested in Mesopotamian, Hittite, and Philistine texts. The most comprehensive portrait of the goddess, however, comes from the Ras Shamra tablets (Ugarit). Designated "Athirat," she was consort to El and Mother of the gods (who are called "the seventy sons of Athirat"). She is further designated as "Lady Athirat of the Sea" (in the Baal myth Sea is Athirat's son); alternate renderings include "the Lady who treads on the Sea," and "Lady Athirat of the Day." In the Kirta Epic, Athirat is portrayed as the patron goddess of Tyre and Sidon (*see* Ashtaroth).

Inscriptions discovered at Khirbet el-Qom and Kuntillet ʻAjrud (associated with Iron Age Israel) mention Yahweh and "his Asherah." Disagreement exists over whether the term here reflects a cult object, a shrine, or the goddess. Also debated is whether this represents a combination of Yahwistic belief or a form of Yahwism predating monotheism.

ASHES Domestic fires, sacrifices, or large conflagrations produced ashes (1 Kings 20:38 KJV; 2 Kings 23:4; Job 2:8; Ps. 147:16). Ashes had physical and figurative significance. With dust and sackcloth, ashes were placed on the head and body to signify mourning and grief (2 Sam. 13:19; Job 2:8), personal or national (Esther 4:3; Isa. 58:5), or repentance (Jon. 3:6; Matt. 11:21). Such grief was associated with prayer and fasting.

Figuratively, persons or things could be viewed as worthless through the imagery of ashes (Isa. 44:20), and ashes could communicate destruction and human mortality when used with dust (Gen. 18:27; Job 30:19; Ezek. 27:30; Mal. 3:19; see also Sir. 10:9; 17:32). Ashes of the red heifer were special and used for ritual cleansing (Num. 19:9–10, 17–19).

ASHHUR Son of either Hezron or Caleb (1 Chron. 2:24). The Hebrew text suggests that he was conceived in Caleb Ephrathah, while other ancient versions suggest that he was born to Caleb and Ephrathah after the death of Hezron. If the latter is correct, he may be identified as the same person as Hur in 1 Chron. 2:19. He also perhaps established the village of Tekoa, since he is identified as the "father" or "founder" of Tekoa (1 Chron. 2:24; 4:5).

ASHIMA A deity of unknown origin made and worshiped by the people in Hamath after being relocated to Samaria by Sargon II (late eighth century BC; 2 Kings 17:30). One possible interpretation of "Ashima" is that it means "the name" and thus refers to Anat or Astarte or Asherah, all manifestations of Baal. A form of this name was found at the Jewish community in Elephantine c. 400 BC as a consort of Yahweh. Another possible reference to Ashima is found in Amos 8:14, where Israel swore oaths by the "sin of Samaria" (NRSV: "Ashimah of Samaria"), "shame" being another possible translation of the word "Ashima."

ASHKELON One of five principal cities of the Philistines (Josh. 13:3). It was situated approximately midway between Ashdod (north) and Gaza (south) on the shore of the Mediterranean Sea.

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Evidence of settlement dates to the Neolithic period (8300–4500 BC), although the earliest references to the city stem from the Middle and Late Bronze Ages (2200–1200 BC). Ashkelon is mentioned among the Egyptian Execration texts (nineteenth century BC) as an enemy of Egypt and in the Amarna tablets (1400 BC), where the city's ruler affirms fealty to the pharaoh. Excavation confirms an Egyptian presence at Ashkelon during the Late Bronze Age; the city remained under Egyptian control until the incursion of the Sea Peoples (early twelfth century BC), after which Ashkelon was occupied by the Philistines.

Ashkelon remained under Philistine control until Tiglath-pileser III's campaigns against Syria and Israel (734–732 BC), when it became an Assyrian vassal. During Sennacherib's reign Ashkelon's king joined Hezekiah in revolt against Assyria and was deported (701 BC). In 604 BC, following Assyria's demise, Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Ashkelon and deported the survivors, several of whom received rations at the Babylonian court (cf. Dan. 1:5).

During the Persian period Ashkelon was reestablished as a Tyrian market city, thus becoming prosperous once more. The city was never conquered by the Hasmoneans (mid-second to mid-first centuries BC; 1 Macc. 10:86; 11:60), and eventually it asserted its independence, signified by the minting of its own coins (beginning 111 BC). Herod the Great was purportedly a native of Ashkelon, and he lavished the city with public works projects. During the First Jewish Revolt, Ashkelon successfully defended itself against Jewish attack.

Excavations have located the council house and an elaborately painted tomb (Roman period), as well as the remains of a church and a synagogue (Byzantine period). Ashkelon came under Muslim control (seventh century AD), then briefly under Crusader control (AD 1153). The city was destroyed by Saladin (AD 1191) as he retreated before Richard the Lionheart.

ASHKELON IN THE BIBLE

Ashkelon was listed among the territory still to be conquered at the end of Joshua's life (Josh. 13:3). Judah took the city but ultimately was unable to keep it (Judg. 1:18–19). The OT subsequently reckoned Ashkelon as part of Philistine territory, beginning with Judg. 14:19, which recounts one of Samson's exploits.

Ashkelon shared in the affliction visited on the Philistines for taking the ark of the covenant, which they attempted to forestall by reparations or "sympathetic magic" (1 Sam. 6:17 [the "gold tumors" were likely meant to bear away the source of the Philistines' suffering]). Ashkelon and Gath represent the Philistines overall as David anticipates their response to news of Saul's and Jonathan's deaths (2 Sam. 1:20).

The remaining references occur in the prophets, who portended the destruction of Ashkelon and the other Philistine cities at various times (Jer. 25:20; 47:5, 7; Amos 1:8; Zeph. 2:4, 7; Zech. 9:5). Notably, Zeph. 2:7 expected that Judah would finally take possession of Ashkelon.

ASHKENAZ The first son of Gomer, who is the first son of Japheth (Gen. 10:2–3); thus Ashkenaz is a great-grandson of Noah. A "kingdom of Ashkenaz" appears along with those of Ararat and Minni, which were called upon to oppose Babylon (Jer. 51:27). The name is associated with the neo-

Assyrian Ishkuza, which Herodotus records as being the Scythians.

ASHNAH (1) A city in the lowlands, probably related to the modern ruin Aslin (Josh. 15:33). (2) A city in the southern lowlands in the district of Libnah (Josh. 15:43). Both of these cities were in the allotment of Judah.

ASHPENAZ The chief eunuch in the court of King Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. 1:3), whom the king charged with the task of bringing in and training some young Israelite men to serve in his court. Ashpenaz changed the names of Daniel and his three friends to Babylonian names. Following the king's orders, he refused to let the four young men follow a strict diet of vegetables and water, but Daniel found a way to avoid the diet required by Nebuchadnezzar.

ASHRIEL *See* Asriel, Asrielites.

ASHTAROTH (1) A goddess attested in Syro-Phoenicia, Palestine, and Egypt. In the Bible, "Ashtaroth" (preceded by the Hebrew article) is generally regarded as the plural form of the deity's name (NIV: "the Ashtoreths"; NRSV: "the Astartes"; NET: "the Ashtars"). It occurs all but once in conjunction with other deities, most often Baal or "the Baals" (Judg. 2:13; 1 Sam. 12:10), but also with the gods of neighboring peoples (Judg. 10:6) or "foreign gods" (1 Sam. 7:3). "Ashtaroth" broadly designates goddesses whom Israel pursued rather than the true God, Yahweh. In 1 Sam. 31:10 is mentioned a Philistine temple devoted to "the Ashtoreths." In this instance, "Ashtaroth" perhaps should be rendered as "Ashtoreth" (but see the following discussion).

The singular form, rendered in the NIV as "Ashtoreth" (NRSV, NET: "Astarte"), occurs exclusively in connection with "the goddess of the Sidonians." Solomon worshiped Ashtoreth (1 Kings 11:5); consequently, the true God, Yahweh, instigated the secession of the northern tribes (1 Kings 11:31, 33). Josiah later destroyed the shrine that Solomon built for Ashtoreth (2 Kings 23:13). "Ashtoreth" may reflect the imposition of the vowels for *bosheth* ("shame") onto the deity's name. Alternately, it is proposed that "Ashtaroth" is the Hebrew vocalization of the deity's name (a singular term that doubles as a plural) while "Ashtoreth" is the Phoenician vocalization.

The Bible refers to this goddess as a foreign deity, and it is no surprise that ancient Near Eastern texts attest her name. In Ugarit, Ashtoreth was known as Astarte. She appears infrequently in the mythological texts and is usually mentioned in conjunction with the goddess Anat. Astarte (like Anat) was El's daughter and is also assumed to have been Baal's consort. Direct evidence for the latter is wanting; however, the designation "Astarte-name-of-Baal" suggests that Astarte embodied Baal's honor or was his counterpart.

A noted attribute of Astarte is her beauty (alluded to in the Kirta Epic), indicating for some a sensual nature. Elsewhere she is portrayed as a hunter, suggesting a martial aspect. Astarte is identified with the Mesopotamian goddess Ishtar in pantheon lists and also in the epithets "Astarte of Mari" and "Astarte of Hur" (though here "Astarte" may be a designation for "goddess"). This, along with the later association with Aphrodite, has furthered perception of Astarte as a fertility goddess. An association with (planetary) Venus is also proposed but is unattested at Ugarit.

In Egypt, adoption of Semitic deities such as Astarte became widespread during the New Kingdom period and following (after 1570 BC). Astarte and Anat were appropriated as daughters of Re and consorts of Seth (identified with Baal). In one text Anat and Astarte are described as pregnant without giving birth, likely a manifestation of their association with Seth, god of disorder. Foremost, though, Astarte was a war goddess, depicted naked on horseback with weapons in hand. Her cult centered on the delta city of Pi-Ramesse, where her temple was located. Astarte's prevalence in Egypt was purportedly comparable to Asherah's in Palestine.

Among the Phoenicians, veneration of Astarte was also widespread. She became the predominant female deity at Tyre and Sidon, overshadowing devotion to Asherah. Several of Sidon's kings bore the title "priest of Astarte."

During the Hellenistic and Roman periods, Atargatis (a combination of Astarte and Anat) received worship throughout Syria. (*See also* Asherah.)

(2) A city associated with Og, king of Bashan (Deut. 1:4). "Ashtaroth" (without the Hebrew article) designates an Amorite city captured by the Israelites en route to the plains of Moab (Num. 21:33–35). The region was allotted to the half-tribe of Manasseh (Josh. 12:30–31), and the city to the Levites (1 Chron. 6:71).

Biblical Ashtaroth is identified with Tell Ashtaroth, situated along the King's Highway, twenty miles east of the Sea of Galilee and twelve miles northwest of Dera (Edrei). The city is mentioned in the Egyptian Execration texts (nineteenth century BC), in records of cities conquered by Thutmose III (fifteenth century BC), and in the Amarna tablets (fourteenth century BC). In 732 BC, Tiglath-pileser III deported Ashtaroth's population.

ASHTEROTH KARNAIM *See* Karnaim.

ASHTORETH *See* Ashtaroth.

ASHUR One of the sons of Shem, Ashur is usually identified as the progenitor of the Assyrian people (Gen. 10:22). The name "Ashur" is also associated synonymously with the nation of Assyria, being applied to the people, capital, god, and whole of the nation itself. According to Gen. 10, the people would have been descendants of Shem and therefore Semitic, like the children of Israel.

ASHURBANIPAL In 668 BC Ashurbanipal succeeded his father, Esarhaddon, in Assyria, while his brother Shamash-shum-ukin became the ruler of Babylon. Esarhaddon had made his vassals swear loyalty to the two sons before his death. They were able to rule peacefully alongside each other for seventeen years, with Ashurbanipal as the superior. Then a civil war broke out between them in 651 BC, which Ashurbanipal won, though at great cost. Less is known of him after this victory, and perhaps the decline of Assyria begins at that point.

Early in his reign he conquered Egypt as far south as Thebes, while to the east he defeated the Medes, which helped pave the way for the rise of the Persians. He may be the king who captured Manasseh (2 Chron. 33:11–12).

Ashurbanipal had not been intended for the throne until an older brother died. This meant that his education had been different than it would have been as a crown prince. Most significantly, he learned to read and write Assyrian cuneiform texts, a formidable task. But as king he collected an impressive library of "canonical" works, which has been invaluable to historians since its rediscovery.

Relief depicting the Assyrian king Ashurbanipal on a lion hunt

ASHURI The Hebrew vocalization of a group identified as part of the brief kingdom of Saul's son Ish-Bosheth (2 Sam. 2:9; several modern versions read "Ashurites"). This vocalization, however, is largely in doubt due to disagreement in ancient texts and the fact that this group would otherwise be unknown to us. Therefore, many interpreters believe that the original reference was to either the Asherites or the Gesherites.

ASHURITES In Gen. 25:3, the Ashurites are listed among the descendants of Dedan, the grandson of Abraham by Keturah. While some think the Ashurites here are to be considered the foundation of the Assyrian kingdom, more likely this is a reference to a tribe near Egypt that is mentioned in South Arabian inscriptions. The KJV also identifies "the company of the Ashurites" (*bat-'ashurim*) in Ezek. 27:6 as ivory workers for Tyre, but most modern translations, using alternate word division and vowels for the Hebrew, take this as a reference to a type of wood, not a people group. *See also* Ashuri.

ASHVATH A descendant of Asher, from the house of Japhlet (1 Chron. 7:33).

ASIA A Roman province in western Asia Minor, not to be confused with the modern designation for the larger continent. The exact boundaries are difficult to determine, but the region, formed in 133–130 BC, and since the time of Augustus ruled by proconsuls, included the older kingdoms of Mysia, Lydia, Caria, and part of Phrygia, as well as several islands. Paul and his companions enjoyed an especially successful mission in Asia (Acts 19:10, 22, 26–27; Rom. 16:5). He later wrote letters to Christians in Colossae and Ephesus (Ephesians; 1 Timothy). Inscriptions attest to the wealth of many Ephesians. Through Timothy, Paul warns those pursuing wealth in the city (1 Tim. 6:9–10; cf. Rev. 3:17). The apostle John eventually settled in Ephesus and later was exiled to the island of Patmos, where he wrote to the seven churches of Asia (Rev. 1:4–3:22).

ASIA MINOR, CITIES OF Asia Minor, the land area of modern-day Turkey, was initially settled by the Hatti people between 2500 and 2000 BC. Toward the end of that period, the Indo-European Hittites, drawn to the mild climate, began a slow settlement alongside the indigenous Hattis, mixing peaceably with them. By 1750 BC, the Hittites had become the dominant people group.

In the twelfth century BC the Hittites fell to the Sea Peoples. They developed coastal cities along the Aegean, which by the eighth century were conquered by the Greeks. The Lydian king Croesus came to power in 560 BC in Sardis and subdued the Greeks, only to fall in 546 BC to Cyrus of Persia. In 334–333 BC Alexander the Great defeated the Persians in two key battles and won Asia Minor. After Alexander's death, one of his generals, Seleucus, took over. Then, in 190 BC the Romans defeated the Seleucids and assumed control. This inaugurated an extended period of peace, during which time Jewish communities of the Diaspora settled throughout the region.

The missionary journeys of the apostle Paul (Saul of Tarsus) took him into and around much of Asia Minor, and directly or indirectly he was responsible for the establishment of most of the first-century churches there. The following cities of Asia Minor are mentioned in the NT.

Eastern Mediterranean

Tarsus. The birthplace of the apostle Paul (Acts 9:11; 21:39; 22:3), Tarsus is located on the Mediterranean coast, nine miles northeast of modern-day Mersin. Tarsus became the capital of the Roman province of Cilicia in 67 BC. Cleopatra and Mark Antony met and built their fleet in this grand city. When his life was threatened after his conversion, Paul was sent to Tarsus from Jerusalem (9:30).

Antioch. Antioch (Antakya) is located just inland from the Mediterranean coast, on the east bank of the Orontes River. Jewish and Gentile believers who fled Jerusalem after the death of Stephen planted a church here, where followers of Jesus were first called "Christians." Barnabas brought Saul from Tarsus to Antioch, where they labored together for a year, teaching the church, prior to setting off on their first missionary journey (Acts 11:19–30). Paul later returned, along with Silas, bearing the requirements for Gentile believers from the Jerusalem council (15:22–35).

Southern Ports

Seleucia. Known today as Samandağ, Seleucia was Antioch's port, the place from which Saul, Barnabas, and John Mark embarked on their first missionary journey in AD 47 (Acts 13:4).

Perga in Pamphylia. Perga is just east of Antalya on the southern Mediterranean coast. Archimedes' student Apollonius the mathematician lived here in the late third century BC. On their first missionary journey, Paul and Barnabas disembarked in Perga for destinations in southwestern Asia Minor, while John Mark left them to return to Jerusalem (Acts 13:13–14). On their return trip of the same journey, Paul and Barnabas stopped in Perga again, this time preaching before heading to Attalia (14:25).

GALATIA

The following cities became part of the politically defined Roman province of Galatia in 25 BC. They are to be distinguished from ethnic Galatia, which is a region further north, around modern-day Ankara.

Pisidian Antioch. Modern Yalvaç, or Pisidian Antioch, is northeast of Isparta in the lake region. On their first missionary journey, Paul and Barnabas preached in the synagogue here and generated enormous interest in the gospel (Acts 13:14–43). The following Sabbath, nearly the entire city came out to listen to them. Jealous Jewish leaders incited a persecution, causing Paul and Barnabas to reorient their ministry to Gentiles and then leave the region for Iconium (13:26–51). They returned on their way back to Antioch to strengthen the disciples and appoint elders (14:21–23).

Iconium. Iconium, today called Konya, is about sixty-five miles southeast of Pisidian Antioch. It is one of the most ancient settlements of the region, dating to the third millennium BC. Paul and Barnabas preached in the synagogue here on their first missionary journey, initially winning Jewish and Gentile converts but angering other Jews. Paul and Barnabas eventually feared for their safety and escaped to Lystra and Derbe (Acts 14:1–6). However, they came back on the return trip to Antioch (14:21–23). Iconium is also noteworthy as the home of the ascetic St. Thecla from the apocryphal second-century Christian text *Acts of Paul and Thecla*.

Lystra. Frequently mentioned with Derbe (Acts 14:6; 16:1), Lystra (modern Hatunsaray) is nineteen miles south of Iconium. Paul and Barnabas fled here from Iconium and preached. Paul healed a lame man, and as a result he and Barnabas were presumed by the enthusiastic crowd to be Zeus and Hermes. At the instigation of Paul's Jewish opponents, the crowd's sentiments turned, and Paul was nearly stoned to death. He and Barnabas left for Derbe the following day (14:6–20), but they came back on their return trip (14:21–23). Paul returned on his second missionary journey, where he met his protégé, Timothy (16:1–2).

Derbe. About fifty miles southeast of Lystra and slightly north of present-day Karaman is Derbe. Paul and Barnabas fled here after Paul's stoning in Lystra on their first missionary journey, preached the gospel, made many disciples, and appointed elders (Acts 14:21–23). Among the disciples likely was Gaius, who later accompanied Paul during his third missionary journey (Acts 20:4).

WESTERN AEGEAN PORTS

Troas. Troas was a major northwest seaport located about twelve miles southwest of Troy. On his second missionary journey, Paul, traveling with Silas and Timothy, was prevented from entering Bithynia by the Spirit of Christ and went instead to Troas. Here he had a vision beckoning him to Macedonia, which he promptly obeyed (Acts 16:6–11). Because this is the first of the so-called "we" passages in Acts, Luke may have joined the group here (16:10). Paul also stopped at Troas on the return to Jerusalem from his third missionary journey. There he raised Eutychus after the latter's traumatic fall (20:4–12). Troas is mentioned twice more, suggesting that Paul spent time here in addition to the above visits (2 Cor. 2:12–13; 2 Tim. 4:13).

Adramyttium. A few miles south of Troas was the port of Adramyttium. It was the origin of the ship that transported Paul from Caesarea to Myra around AD 60 en route to Rome (Acts 27:2).

Assos. Assos is an acropolis sitting 774 feet above sea level, up from the village of Behramkale. It overlooks the Bay of Edremit and has a splendid view of Lesbos. Doric columns from the seventh-century BC temple of Athena are prominent at the site. According to Acts 20:13–14, on his return from his third missionary journey, Paul went overland from Troas to Assos, and there he joined his traveling companions on their ship. From here on the way to Miletus, they made several nearby island stops off the coast of Asia Minor: Mitylene on Lesbos, Chios, and Samos (20:14–16).

Miletus. Located about twenty miles south of Ephesus, at the point where the Meander River met the Gulf of Latmus (now silted over), was the important southwestern seaport of Miletus. The city was significant in the NT era for its four harbors. A center for commerce, scholarship, geometry, and science, it was also the prototype for principles of city planning later applied throughout the Roman Empire. On his third missionary journey, Paul's farewell to the Ephesian elders took place here (Acts 20:15–38). Later he left the ill Trophimus in Miletus (2 Tim. 4:20).

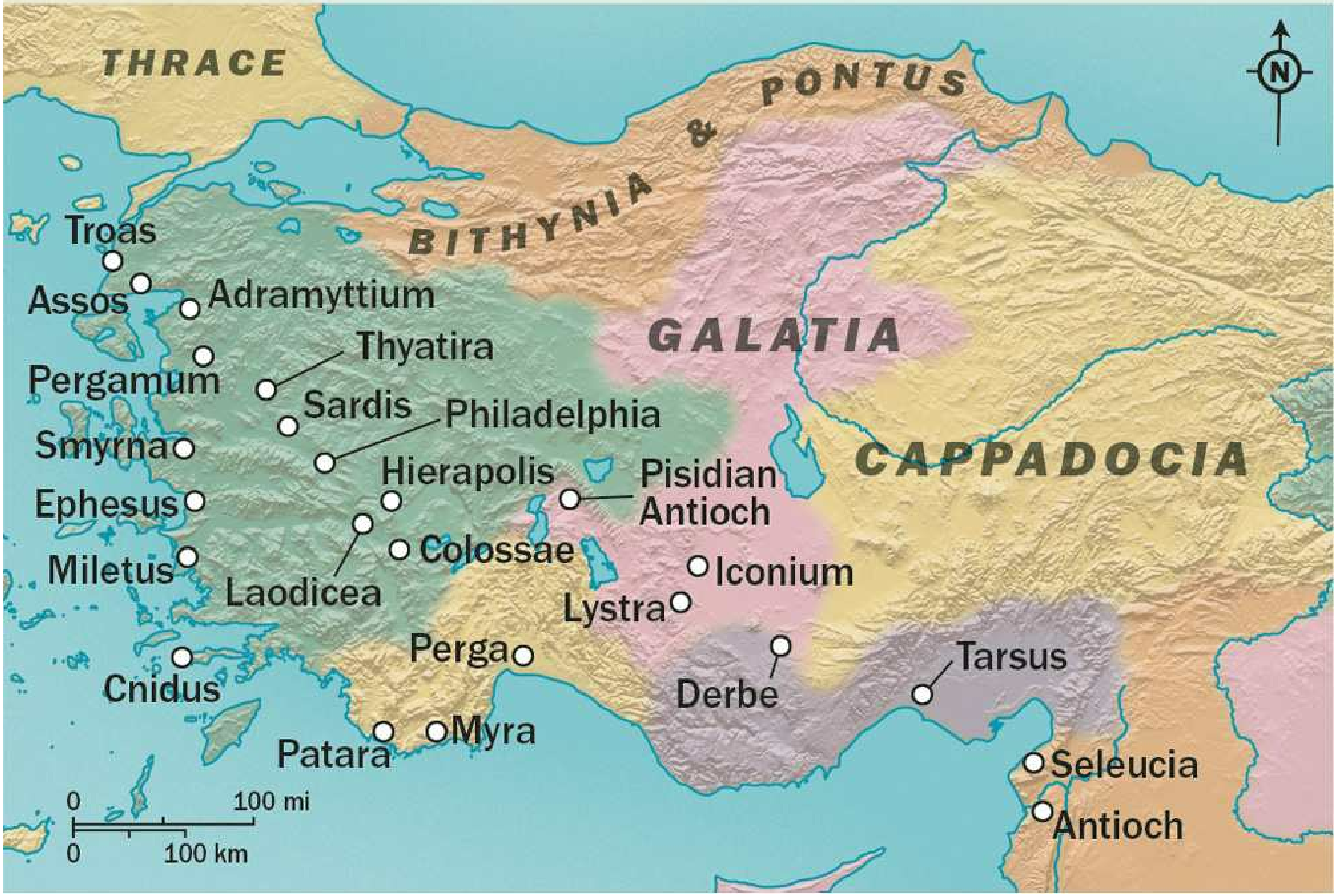
SOUTHWESTERN PORTS

Patara. Sitting on the Mediterranean coast at the mouth of the Xanthus River, about forty miles west of present-day Demre, Patara was a flourishing harbor and commercial center in antiquity. Paul changed ships here as he returned to Jerusalem from his third missionary journey, after island stops in Kos and Rhodes (Acts 21:1–2).

Myra. Myra is a coastal ruin due south of present-day Demre. In the NT era, the seaport featured a Roman theater, Roman baths, and two rock-cut necropolises. Here, Paul changed ships around AD 60 on his way to Rome while in the custody of a centurion (Acts 27:5). Myra is perhaps best known as the home of the fourth-century bishop St. Nicholas, who was from nearby Patara.

Cnidus. At the tip of the long, narrow Datca peninsula on the extreme southwestern corner of Asia Minor lies Cnidus. Founded around 360 BC, the acropolis rises 1,000 feet above sea level. The port included two harbors and four theaters but was most famous for its fourth-century BC statue of Aphrodite, carved by the Athenian sculptor Praxiteles. Around AD 60 the ship carrying Paul to Rome stopped here because of slow winds and changed course (Acts 27:7).

CITIES OF ASIA MINOR MENTIONED IN THE NEW TESTAMENT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Pisidian Antioch
Ephesus
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Seven Churches of Revelation; Lycus Valley

The seven churches of Rev. 1–3 lay along a north-south elliptical route in western Asia Minor. Laodicea, the seventh, forms a tight geographic triangle with Hierapolis and Colossae in the Lycus Valley.

Ephesus. Known today as Selçuk, ancient Ephesus is located on the Aegean coast of Asia Minor at the mouth of the Cayster River. It was founded in the eleventh century BC by the Ionians and later ruled successively by the Athenians, Spartans, Persians, and Greeks. Roman governance began in 190 BC. Later, Ephesus became the capital of the province of Asia, as well as its most important commercial center. During the NT era, the Artemision (*see* Artemis) was an important pilgrimage site.

Paul stopped in Ephesus briefly on his second missionary journey, leaving Priscilla and Aquila. They later encountered and mentored Apollos there (Acts 18:19–26). On his third journey, Paul remained in Ephesus for three years, teaching, performing miracles, and healing the sick (19:1–22) until the riot incited by Demetrius the silversmith (20:1). He wrote 1 Corinthians in Ephesus (1 Cor. 16:8) and later wrote to the Ephesians from his Roman prison cell (Eph. 3:1) as well as to Timothy in Ephesus (1 Tim. 1:3).

In Rev. 2:1–7 the Ephesian church is commended for its perseverance but chastised for having lost its first love.

Smyrna. Smyrna (modern İzmir) is located about thirty-five miles north along the coast from Ephesus. In 195 BC it became the first city in Asia Minor to erect a temple for the imperial cult, and by the next century it was known as "the ornament of Asia." In its letter, which mentions no negatives, the church is encouraged to be faithful in its suffering (Rev. 2:8–11).

Pergamum. About seventy miles north of Smyrna is Pergamum (modern Bergama). The dazzling acropolis sits one thousand feet high and about sixteen miles inland from the Aegean. The Attalids, who ruled 263–133 BC, allied Pergamum with Rome and built it into a major religious and intellectual center, constructing the great altar to Zeus Soter, the temple to Athena Nicephorus, and the large complex dedicated to Asclepius Soter. They also established a ruler cult and built a library containing two hundred thousand volumes, which at its peak was second only to the library at Alexandria.

The letter to the church (Rev. 2:12–17) references Satan's throne, which many believe to be a reference to the altar to Zeus. The church is commended for its faithfulness and yet is admonished for tolerating those advocating pagan practices within the community.

Thyatira. Thyatira (now called Akhisar) is about thirty-five miles southeast of Pergamum. It was mainly noted as having a significant concentration of trade guilds, especially those connected with textiles. Lydia, Paul's disciple and host in Philippi, was a dealer in purple cloth from Thyatira (Acts 16:14). The church is commended for its good deeds but criticized for tolerating the false teacher Jezebel (Rev. 2:18–29).

Sardis. Forty-five miles east of Smyrna, on the banks of the Pactolus, is Sardis, where Croesus, the sixth-century BC Lydian king, was said to have panned for gold. He also built an impressive Ionic temple to Artemis here. Archaeological evidence points to the presence of a significant Jewish community in Sardis, about which the NT is silent.

The letter to Sardis is a stern warning to wake up, highlighting the church's incomplete deeds and impurity (Rev. 3:1–6).

Philadelphia. Philadelphia (modern Alaşehir) is twenty-six miles southwest of Sardis on the Cogamis River. The city was noted for its wine production, and it was nicknamed "Little Athens" during the Roman era. Its letter is thoroughly positive; the church is commended for its deeds and faithfulness (Rev. 3:7–13).

Laodicea. Laodicea is located about a hundred miles east of Ephesus, in a valley where the Lycus River joins the Meander; Hierapolis is just to the north, and Colossae just to the east. Laodicea was founded in the third century BC by the Seleucid king Antiochus II, who named it after his wife. Cicero served as proconsul there in 51 BC.

Laodicea was a prosperous city, a center for banking, eye salve ("Phrygian powder"), and wool production. Its water was supplied via aqueducts from Hierapolis's hot springs, but it arrived lukewarm and heavy with mineral impurities—no match for either its hot source or Colossae's cold springs. The Laodicean letter employs all of this background in its harsh message to the church, which it describes as tepid, poor, blind, and naked (Rev. 3:14–22).

Hierapolis. Eight miles to the north of Laodicea, Hierapolis sits atop dramatic white cliffs created by its hot springs (Col. 4:13). The city was home to the reputed entrance to the underworld, the Plutonium, and had an enormous necropolis.

Colossae. Colossae, ten miles east of Laodicea, was a center for dyed red wool. Although wealthy in the late fourth century BC, it was later eclipsed by Laodicea.

The churches in Laodicea, Hierapolis, and Colossae (the oldest of the three cities) were begun by Epaphras and shared letters, including Paul's letter to the Colossians (Col. 4:13–16). The slave Onesimus carried it, along with the Letter to Philemon, to Colossae, where Philemon hosted the house church (Col. 4:9; Philem. 10–12).

ASIARCH A title of honor given to certain men who resided in the Roman province of Asia. The exact nature of their role and purpose is open to some debate, but it is generally agreed that they were part of an influential ruling class, with possible ties to the emperor cult of Rome. Paul had friends in this class, and they played a role in keeping him from danger in Ephesus by advising him not to go into the theater (Acts 19:31).

ASIEL A prince in the tribe of Simeon during the reign of Hezekiah and the great-grandfather of Jehu (1 Chron. 4:35–40). In intertestamental literature, "Asiel" is the name of an ancestor of Tobit (Tob. 1:1) and of one of the five scribes under Ezra involved in the restoration of the Scriptures (2 Esd. 14:24).

ASKELON *See* Ashkelon.

ASNAH An ancestor of temple servants (Nethinim) who returned to Jerusalem after the Babylonian captivity under the leadership of Zerubbabel in 539 BC or soon after (Ezra 2:50 [missing from the list in Neh. 7]). The fact that many of the names in the list are foreign ("Asnah" appears to be Egyptian) has led to the belief that they were originally prisoners of war who were pressed into service to do menial tasks as they assisted the Levites.

ASNAPPAR *See* Osnappar.

ASP A generic term applied to any number of poisonous snakes in older translations of the biblical text. In its place, most modern versions use "viper" or "cobra" in both Testaments. Whatever the actual species of snake, the creature is used in imagery suggesting severe danger that seeps like poison into every crevice of one's being. This poisonous nature could be applied to a lascivious lifestyle (Deut. 32:33), the temptation of riches (Job 20:14, 16), a lying tongue (Rom. 3:13), or just wickedness in general (Ps. 58:4). In one instance (Isa. 11:8), this danger is utilized to relate the radical transformation of reality that Yahweh's salvation of the world will one day bring, when children will be able to play in the serpent's nest without fear.

ASPATHA One of Haman's ten sons, who were killed by the Jews under a permission of self-defense granted by King Xerxes (Ahasuerus) (Esther 8:11). At the request of Esther to the king, their corpses were hung in public display (9:7–14).

ASRIEL, ASRIELITES Asriel was a great-grandson of Manasseh (Num. 26:31); less likely, he was the son of Gilead (1 Chron. 7:14). The Asrielites were given land on the western side of the Jordan (Josh. 17:2).

ASS *See* Colt; Donkey; Mule.

ASSASSINS Arising when Felix was procurator of Judea (AD 52–60), a group of revolutionary

Jews favored freedom and equality to the point of opposing any kind of human rule (even Jewish). The group is called the Sicarii, after the short dagger they often used (Lat. *sica*). Josephus reports that they would conceal the daggers under their clothing, assassinate their enemies in broad daylight, especially during festivals, and escape in the crowd, sometimes feigning surprise and indignation at the murder and thus removing suspicion against themselves (Josephus, *Ant*. 20.8.5; *J.W.* 2.13.3). This original cloak-and-dagger group is mentioned in the NT only at Acts 21:38, where the commander of the soldiers arresting Paul assumed that he was an Egyptian revolutionary who had led four thousand Assassins (ESV, NASB; Gk. *sikarioi*; NIV: "terrorists"). Although certainly zealous in their actions, the Assassins' relationship to the Zealots is debated. *See also* Zealots.

ASSAYER An archaic term for one who tries or attempts. In the KJV the word refers specifically to one who tries or tests metal in order to determine the amount of precious metal present, and then is applied in a metaphorical sense to those who test the spiritual mettle of people. Jeremiah's call identifies him as one who would test the metals, or purity, of the people of Israel (Jer. 6:27).

ASSEMBLY *See* Congregation.

ASSHUR *See* Ashur.

ASSHURITES *See* Ashurites.

ASSIR **(1)** Son of Korah, and head of one of the Korahite clans (Exod. 6:24). **(2)** Two descendants of Korah several generations into his genealogy (1 Chron. 6:22–23). **(3)** Possibly one of the sons of Jeconiah (Jehoiachin) in 1 Chron. 3:17 (so the KJV), but here the word most likely indicates an appellation of Jehoiachin himself (NIV: "Jehoiachin the captive" [see 2 Chron. 36:9–10]), not a separate proper name (cf. LXX: *Iechonia-asir*).

ASSOS A seaport in the Aegean Sea. Paul met Luke and others there on his return trip following his third missionary journey (Acts 20:13–14).

ASSURBANIPAL *See* Ashurbanipal.

ASSYRIA

Geography and Origins

The geographic center of Assyria consisted of a triangle between the Kurdish mountains, the Tigris River, and the Upper Zab River (which flows into the Tigris). This triangle sits within the modern-day country of Iraq and for the most part contained the four most important cities in the history of ancient Assyria: Ashur, Nineveh, Arbela, and Calah. At the height of its power, the Assyrian Empire stretched far beyond this geographical region, but this heartland served as the political and social base throughout its history.

Although there were some individual city-states such as Ashur and Nineveh in this heartland during the third millennium BC, Assyria as a unified political entity did not arise until the mid-second millennium. Other than a brief alliance of some of the city-states under Shamshi-Adad I in the eighteenth century BC, which was not called Assyria, the first Assyrian political state began with

Ashur-uballit I (c. 1364–1329 BC). From the earliest times the lack of certain resources in the heartland and the location of these city-states along major trading routes made commerce a central component of the Assyrian economy.

POLITICAL AND MILITARY HISTORY

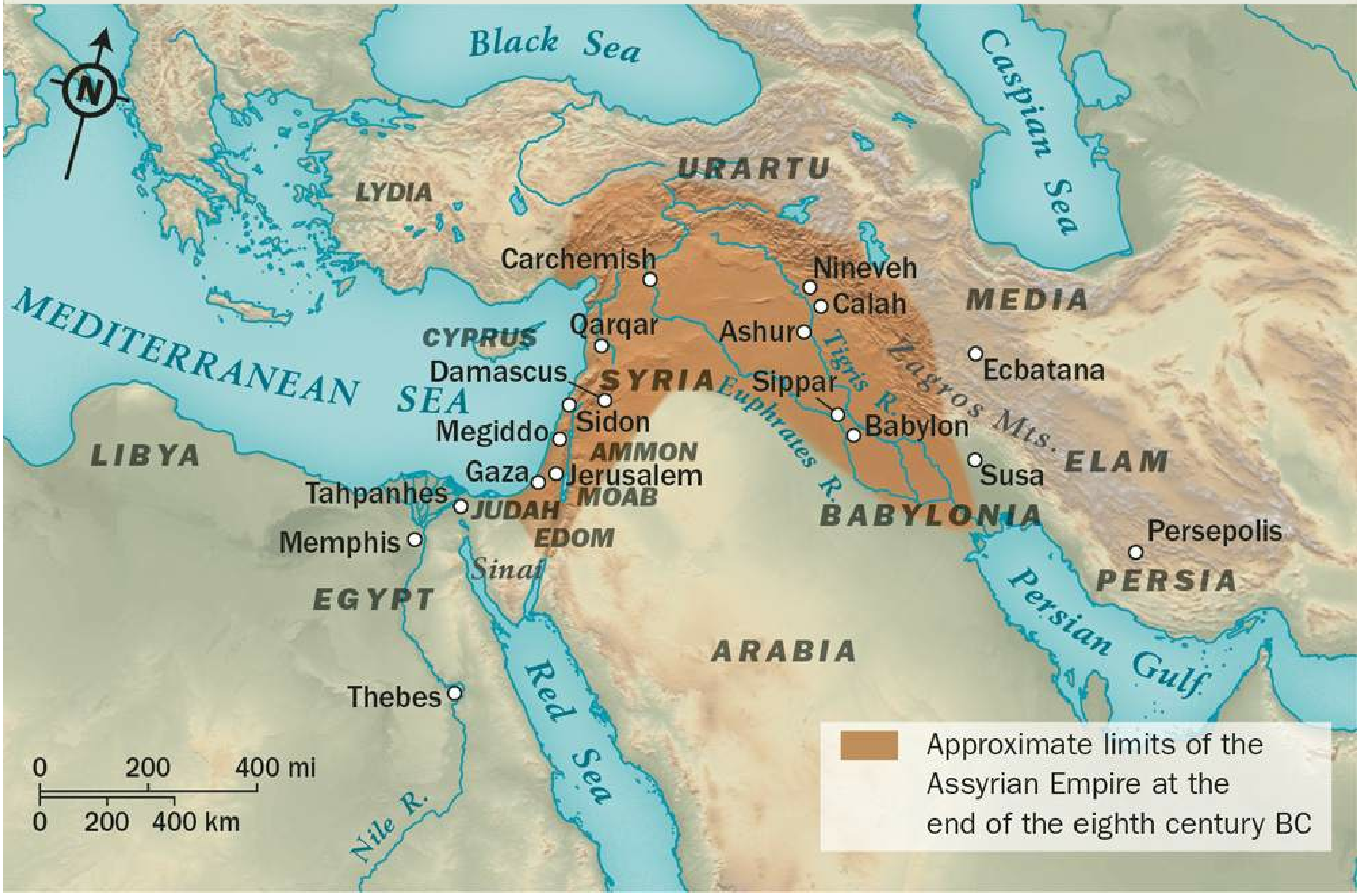
The Middle Assyrian Period (1364–934 BC). The first great ruler of Assyria was Ashur-uballit I, who ruled for thirty-five years. During his reign, he controlled Babylon to the south, but during the fifty years following his death, his descendants lost control of Babylon due to the rise of the Kassite dynasty there. In 1273 BC, with the rise of Ashur-uballit's great-grandson Shalmaneser I, Assyria began to grow into an empire that dominated the ancient Near East. He defeated the Hittites and the Arameans and annexed the territory of Mitanni, to the west. The brutal method of warfare and treatment of captives for which Assyria would become famous can already be seen in Shalmaneser's descriptions of his military campaigns.

After the death of Shalmaneser I, his son Tukulti-Ninurta I (c. 1243–1207 BC) expanded the Assyrian state even more through a series of successful military campaigns. He defeated the resurging Hittites to the west and a number of people groups in the mountains to the north and east. But most important, he conquered and reclaimed Babylon to the south. This had two significant implications. With Babylon now subdued, the only major check on Assyrian power was eliminated, leaving the Assyrians free to expand. Second, elements of Babylonian culture were more easily appropriated into Assyrian culture. It even appears that the statue of the god Marduk was carried from Babylon back to Assyria. Eventually Tukulti-Ninurta was assassinated in a palace revolt led by his son. The internal strife of the empire (which came to fruition in this coup), coupled with external factors that resulted in an increased threat from the west, resulted in a period of decline for the Assyrian Empire that would last a little less than a century.

Although Assyria regained internal stability and prosperity under Ashur-resha-ishi I (c. 1132–1115 BC), the next resurgence of Assyrian power came with the ascension of Tiglath-pileser I (1114–1076 BC) to the throne. At the very beginning of his reign, Tiglath-pileser successfully countered an attack from the west by the Mushku. His successful campaign against the Mushku began an expansion to the west that brought territory and spoils to the Assyrian Empire but also resulted in conflict with the Arameans, who were based in Syria but interested in expanding into Mesopotamia. When Tiglath-pileser's troops clashed with Aramean forces at Jebel Bishri in central Syria, the Assyrian victory resulted in the acquisition of all of Syria and allowed Tiglath-pileser to press the borders of the Assyrian Empire all the way to the Mediterranean Sea. To the south Tiglath-pileser also led successful campaigns that resulted in the capture of major Babylonian cities such as Babylon and Sippar. By the time of his death in 1076 BC, the Assyrian Empire stretched from the Mediterranean Sea in the west to the Arabian Gulf in the southeast, a dominance unrivaled in the previous history of the ancient Near East. This sweeping success of Tiglath-pileser also resulted in cultural developments, including substantial building projects and the compilation of legislation and edicts by professional scribes.

The Neo-Assyrian Empire (934–612 BC). After the death of Tiglath-pileser, Assyria entered another period of decline due to the absence of a sufficient administrative structure to rule the enormous territory of the empire as well as the increasing pressure by the Arameans. However, Assyria again gained stability under Ashur-dan II (c. 934–912 BC). He began to renew military campaigns to recover lands previously held and fortified the capital city of Ashur. His two successors, Adad-nirari II (911–891 BC) and Tukulti-Ninurta II (890–884 BC), continued the successful military campaigns and ambitious building projects. This revival of the Assyrian Empire under Ashur-dan II marks the beginning of what historians call the Neo-Assyrian Empire, an era of power that would last for three hundred years and grow to supersede the accomplishments of all prior Assyrian reigns.

THE ASSYRIAN EMPIRE


Black Sea
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N
URARTU
LYDIA
Carchemish
Nineveh
Calah
MEDIA
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
CYPRUS
Qarqar
Ashur
Tigris R.
Zagros Mts.
Ecbatana
Damascus
SYRIA
Euphrates R.
Sippar
Babylon
Sidon
Megiddo
AMMON
ELAM
LIBYA
Gaza
Jerusalem
Susa
Tahpanhes
JUDAH
MOAB
BABYLONIA
Memphis
EDOM
Persepolis
Sinai
PERSIA
EGYPT
Persian Gulf
ARABIA
Thebes
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Approximate limits of the Assyrian Empire at the end of the eighth century BC

In 883 BC Ashurnasirpal II came to power. Under him the Assyrian army became better organized and thus more efficient and engaged in military campaigns regularly instead of sporadically. There was also an increase in the brutality exercised by the Assyrian army in order to dissuade smaller states from attempting to resist Assyria’s expansion. Ashurnasirpal II also built the small town of Calah into a major city and relocated the capital of Assyria there.

Shortly after inheriting the Assyrian empire in 858 BC, Ashurnasirpal II’s son Shalmaneser III turned his attention to the north and the west and began moving to assert Assyrian control over those territories. In 853 BC he dismantled a northern alliance and then proceeded southward. At Qarqar Shalmaneser’s forces clashed with the Damascus coalition, which consisted of a number of nations, including Israel under King Ahab, that had banded together to resist the Assyrian encroachment. This battle is not mentioned in the Bible, but the lopsided nature of the victory claimed by the Assyrians seems overstated, since Shalmaneser continued to fight against the Damascus coalition over the next decade. By 841 BC, King Jehu of Israel, Tyre, and Sidon had voluntarily submitted to Assyrian control. As Shalmaneser grew old, he delegated more and more authority to those under him, creating friction among his subordinates and sons over the direction of the monarchy. Even though Shalmaneser's son Shamshi-Adad V (823–811 BC) emerged as the monarch after his father's death, instability within the kingdom and the rapidly increasing external threat of the Urartian Empire to the north resulted in a weakening of the Assyrian Empire that would last for almost a century until the rise of Tiglath-pileser III in 744 BC.

With the ascension of Tiglath-pileser III (744–727 BC) to the throne, the empire entered a hundred-year period that would be the golden age of Assyrian rule in the ancient Near East. In addition to reclaiming lands lost in the previous century to Urartu, he reasserted Assyrian control over Damascus, Hamath, Byblos, Tyre, and Samaria. Shortly afterward, King Pekah of Israel and King Rezin of Damascus banded together to resist Assyrian hegemony in what is called the "Syro-Ephraimite coalition." When they tried to force King Ahaz of Judah to join them, he appealed to Tiglath-pileser for help in exchange for fealty, against the counsel of Isaiah (see 2 Kings 16; 2 Chron. 28; Isa. 7). In 734 BC Tiglath-pileser crushed the coalition, captured Gaza, and developed it into a trade center between Assyria and Egypt. In addition to improving the military and restructuring the administration of the empire, Tiglath-pileser instituted the policy of deporting and exiling subjects who rebelled against him, a policy that his successors would continue.

The next king over Assyria, Shalmaneser V, ruled for only about four years (726–722 BC). His chief importance is that he conquered Samaria, the capital of the northern kingdom of Israel (see 2 Kings 17–18), though he was killed around the same time. The next king, Sargon II (721–705 BC), exiled the northern Israelites and settled in their place peoples from Syria and Babylonia. Sargon also built an entirely new capital, Dur-Sharrukin, just a few miles north of Nineveh.

In 704 BC Sargon's son Sennacherib came to the throne and established the Assyrian capital at Nineveh. The kingdom of Judah and its capital, Jerusalem, became a top priority for Sennacherib because Judah was not only refusing submission to Assyria but also allying itself with Egypt and Ethiopia against Assyria. In 701 BC Sennacherib invaded Palestine, and at Eltekeh the Assyrian forces clashed with a coalition of Egyptian and Ethiopian forces that had come to the aid of Hezekiah, king of Judah. After defeating these forces, Sennacherib marched toward Jerusalem. Along the way he laid waste to the Judean countryside and exiled the inhabitants. The brunt of the damage was done in the Shephelah region, especially the city of Lachish. Although Sennacherib is not named explicitly, these are the circumstances that seem to be reflected in Mic. 1:8–16. When Sennacherib's army reached Jerusalem, it laid siege to the capital city. Although Sennacherib had gone to Libnah, he sent his Rabshakeh (a senior official in the Assyrian army) to press his claims. The account of the ensuing standoff between Hezekiah and the Rabshakeh is given in three places in the Bible: 2 Kings 18–19; 2 Chron. 32; and Isa. 36–37. According to the Bible, the angel of the Lord slaughtered much of the Assyrian army, forcing the survivors to retreat and thus delivering Jerusalem. Variant accounts are given by Josephus (*Ant*. 10.1.4–5) and Herodotus (*Hist*. 2.141).

After the death of Sennacherib in 681 BC, his son Esarhaddon took control of the Assyrian Empire until 669 BC. During his reign Assyria gained superficial control of Egypt. Before his death he appointed Ashurbanipal as his heir over Assyria (668–612 BC), but he made Shamash-shuma-ukin the king over Babylonia. This fateful move eventually led to the downfall of Assyria because it resulted in civil war. With its resources already depleted by the vast empire, Assyria crumbled in the late seventh century BC to a coalition of Babylonian, Median, and Scythian forces. The end came quickly, and in 612 BC Nineveh was sacked (see the book of Nahum) and the Neo-Babylonian Empire was born.

CULTURE AND RELIGION

A key characteristic of Assyrian culture was militarism. War was not simply a means of survival but also lay at the heart of the entire Assyrian social structure, from the king down to the poorest peasant. Assyrian inscriptions are replete with boasting about military campaigns and victories, which were a central requirement for a king's reign to be considered successful. Among the general population, the duty of a warrior was held in high esteem, and all men were viewed as potential soldiers.

Because of the militaristic and imperial bent of the culture, the society enjoyed a high standard of living under successful monarchs. In addition to the natural bounty of the Assyrian heartland, the control over a large area of subjected vassal states resulted in enrichment through taxes and tributes. The militaristic character of the culture is also evident in the Assyrian's favorite forms of recreation: hunting, archery, and javelin throwing, among others.

However, even though Assyrian culture could be quite prosperous, there was little literary production. Instead, the Assyrians were largely content to borrow from the Babylonians for works on science, religion, and history. During his reign Ashurbanipal sent servants throughout Babylonia to collect as much Babylonian literature as could be found. He then assembled a library in Nineveh to house these texts. The library contained a large number of reference works on the practice of divination and lexical works. There are also literary works such as myths and epics, hymns and prayers, and some historical accounts.

Assyrian religion was also influenced by Babylonian beliefs and practices. Both cultures were polytheistic, though there are lists that give a hierarchical order of certain gods. The principal god of the Assyrian culture was Ashur, but the goddess Ishtar and the gods Ninurta, Shamash, Adad, and Sin were also important. The Babylonian deities Marduk, Enlil, and Nebo also found their way into Assyrian religious practice, and the most important religious festival in Assyria, the New Year's festival, was heavily influenced by Babylonian religion. Each god or goddess had a cultic center with a ziggurat and priests and a schedule of religious rituals. In Assyrian religion the king played an especially prominent role because he was the chief priest and, though not actually divine, was considered to be the representative of the deity, and his presence was required at some religious ceremonies such as the New Year's festival.

By the time of the Neo-Assyrian period, divination played an important role in Assyrian religion because it was believed that one could read the will of the gods, including the events of the future, through highly developed rituals. Those who had been trained in divination, frequently Babylonians, could discern the signs through extispicy (examining the entrails of sacrificial animals), hepatoscopy (reading animal livers), astrology (studying the stars), or other unusual events such as dreams or birth defects. This religious environment also produced widespread use of witchcraft and magic, which provided an avenue of religious involvement for the commoner not available in the official cults.

ASTAROTH *See* Ashtaroth.

ASTARTE *See* Ashtaroth.

ASTROLOGER A person who studies the stars and their supposed effect on human personality and history. Such individuals were well known in both Mesopotamia and Egypt, though the former is more represented in the biblical texts.

In several places the OT prophets either ridicule or attack astrologers and their practice (Isa.

47:13; Dan. 2:27; 4:7; 5:7, 11; Amos 5:26), and the practice is strictly forbidden in the law codes (Deut. 4:19). Although there are several texts that may apply to astrology in the NT, the only explicit mention of the practice is in connection with the magi (Matt. 2) and Simon, Bar-jesus, and Elymas (Acts 8:9; 13:6, 8). However, in light of admonitions against astrology and the fact that it is an affront to faith in God, the birth narrative of Jesus should not be read as an approval of the practice but rather as an extraordinary event in which the heavens themselves proclaim the coming of the one born “king of the Jews” (Matt. 2:2).

ASUPPIM The KJV transliteration of a Hebrew word in 1 Chron. 26:15, 17 that more-recent versions translate as “storehouse” (NIV) or “gatehouse” (ESV).

ASWAN *See* Syene.

ASYNCRITUS A Roman Christian greeted by Paul at the end of his letter to the church in Rome (Rom. 16:14).

ATAD After Jacob’s death in Egypt, Joseph and a large company with him set out to bury Jacob, according to his instructions, in the cave near the field of Machpelah that Abraham had bought from the Hittites. Along the way, they stopped for seven days and mourned at the threshing floor of Atad (Gen. 50:10–12). “Atad” is likely the name of the owner of the threshing floor (for an analogous phrase, see 2 Sam. 6:6; 24:16, 18), although it could be part of the name of the threshing floor itself. In Judg. 9:14–15; Ps. 58:9, *atad* simply means “thorn.”

ATARAH The second wife of Jerahmeel, and the mother of Onam (1 Chron. 2:26).

ATAROTH **(1)** A town captured by the tribe of Gad from Og of Bashan and Sihon of the Amorites (Num. 32:3, 34). This town is mentioned on the Moabite Stone (lines 10–11) as being defeated by King Mesha around 830 BC. It is most likely identified with modern Khirbet Attarus. **(2)** A border town between Benjamin and Ephraim on the west side of the Jordan (Josh. 16:2, 7). This town was previously controlled by the Archites. It is not clear if this Ataroth is the same as Ataroth Addar mentioned in Josh. 16:5.

ATAROTH ADDAR A city on the southeastern border of Ephraim with Benjamin (Josh. 16:5; 18:13). It is most likely to be identified with Khirbet Attara.

ATBASH A simple code by which letters in a word are exchanged with letters equidistant from the other end of the alphabet (so in English *A* would be replaced by *Z*, *B* by *Y*, etc.). The name derives from the first two letters in the Hebrew alphabet and their encoded equivalents: *aleph* becomes *taw*, *beth* becomes *shin*, hence *a-t-ba-sh*. The code can explain some difficulties in Jeremiah, where *leb qamay*, “Leb Kamai” (51:1), encodes *kasdim*, “Chaldeans,” and *sheshak*, “Sheshak” (25:26; 51:41), encodes *babel*, “Babylon.” Jeremiah’s reason for using the code is debated.

ATER **(1)** The head of a clan that was part of the early return to Judah from Babylonian captivity in 539 BC or soon after (Ezra 2:16; Neh. 7:21). Ater is also listed as one who sealed the covenant renewal led by Ezra (Neh. 10:17). **(2)** A priestly gatekeeper at the time of the early postexilic period (Ezra 2:42; Neh. 7:45).

ATHACH *See* Athak.

ATHAIAH A descendant of Judah who, after returning from the exile in Babylon, settled in Jerusalem (Neh. 11:4).

ATHAK A location to which David sent some of his plunder when he arrived in Ziklag (1 Sam. 30:30). Some associate this location with Ether (Josh. 15:42; 19:7) because the location Ashan is found alongside both Ether and Athak in their respective lists.

ATHALIAH **(1)** Daughter of Ahab and Jezebel, later the wife of the Judean king Jehoram and the mother of the succeeding short-lived king, Ahaziah (2 Kings 8:25–27; 2 Chron. 22:2). On first introduction to the Bible reader, she is ominously described as "a granddaughter of Omri king of Israel," a dynasty that profoundly damaged the spiritual life of the northern kingdom. Through her, this infection entered the southern kingdom. She encouraged her son Ahaziah to follow "the ways of the house of Ahab," promoting the false worship of Baal in Jerusalem (2 Chron. 22:3). On the death of her son at the hands of Jehu, she exterminated the royal family of Judah and reigned over the land (2 Kings 11). Only Joash, the infant son of Ahaziah, escaped the purge and remained hidden for six years. In the seventh year of her reign (836 BC) Jehoiada the priest brought Joash out of hiding and organized a palace coup against Athaliah, and she was executed. The destruction of the paraphernalia of Baal worship and slaying of the priest of Baal followed immediately on her death.

(2) Son of Jeroham, a Benjamite, who returned from exile (1 Chron. 8:26).

(3) The father of Jeshaiah, whose son, with seventy members of this lay family, returned from exile with Ezra (Ezra 8:7).

ATHARIM The route that the Israelites were taking into Canaan when they were attacked by the king of Arad (Num. 21:1). The Israelites prayed and then retaliated, defeating their attackers. This route has been identified as south of the Dead Sea. The meaning of this word is uncertain; some Greek versions translate the word as "spies" (see also the KJV).

ATHENS Athens is located five miles northeast of the port of Piraeus on the Saronic Gulf. It was the chief city of the ancient Greek province of Attica (2 Macc. 9:15; Acts 17:15–18; 18:1; 1 Thess. 3:1) and is the capital of modern Greece. The name "Athens" probably derived from the name of the goddess Athena.

As early as the fourth millennium BC there was already evidence of settlement, and during the Mycenaean period (c. 1300–1225 BC) Athens was a fortified city. However, it was in the fifth century BC, under the reign of Pericles (495–429 BC), that the glory of Athens reached its zenith. During this time the Parthenon was built, and arts, philosophy, drama, and Greek culture were developed to their highest point. The Romans conquered the city in 146 BC, but it continued to be an intellectual and cultural center. With the fall of the Roman Empire, Athens's importance declined as well.

The Parthenon in Athens

Paul visited this city on his second missionary journey. His debate with the Greek philosophers in the agora (the marketplace) brought him before the city council of Athens, the Areopagus, where religious matters were settled (Acts 17:16–34). Traditionally, the site is identified as Mars Hill, located on the west side of the Acropolis. Interestingly, Paul founded no church in Athens.

ATHLAI A Jew who was influenced by Ezra’s admonitions to send away his foreign wife as an act of faithfulness to the covenant (Ezra 10:28).

ATONEMENT The English word “atonement” comes from an Anglo-Saxon word, “onement,” with the preposition “at”; thus “at-onement,” or “at unity.” In some ways this word has more in common with the idea of reconciliation than our modern concept of atonement, which, while having “oneness” as its result, emphasizes rather the idea of how that unity is achieved, by someone “atone-ing” for a wrong or wrongs done. Atonement, in Christian theology, concerns how Christ achieved this “onement” between God and sinful humanity.

The need for atonement comes from the separation that has come about between God and humanity because of sin. In both Testaments there is the understanding that God has distanced himself from his creatures on account of their rebellion. Isaiah tells the people of Judah, “Your iniquities have separated you from your God” (59:2). And Paul talks about how we were “God’s enemies” (Rom. 5:10). So atonement is the means provided by God to effect reconciliation. The atonement is required on account of God’s holiness and justice.

OLD TESTAMENT

In the OT, the sacrificial system was the means by which sins were atoned for, ritual purity was restored, iniquities were forgiven, and an amicable relationship between God and the offerer of the sacrifice was reestablished. Moses tells the Israelites that God has given them the blood of the sacrificial animals “to make atonement for yourselves on the altar; it is the blood that makes atonement for one’s life” (Lev. 17:11). In essence, this is the basic operating principle for atonement in the OT—the offering of the blood of a slaughtered animal in place of the life of the offerer. However, there have been significant scholarly debates regarding whether this accurately portrays the ancient Israelite understanding of atonement.

The meaning of “to atone.” First, there is disagreement over the precise meaning of the Hebrew word *kapar* (“to atone”). Among the more popular suggestions are these: to cover, to remove, to wipe out, to appease, to make amends, to redeem or ransom, to forgive, and to avert/divert. Of late, one very influential theory is that atonement has little or nothing to do with the individual offerer, but serves only to purify the tabernacle or temple and the furniture within from the impurities that attach to them on account of the community’s sin. This theory, though most probably correct in what it affirms, unnecessarily restricts the effects of atonement to the tabernacle and furniture. There are, to be sure, texts that specifically mention atonement being made for the altar (e.g., Exod. 29:36–37; Lev. 8:15). But the repeated affirmation for most of the texts in Leviticus and Numbers is that the atonement is made for the offerer (e.g., Lev. 1:4; 4:20, 26); atonement results in forgiveness of sin for the one bringing the offering. As far as the precise meaning of *kapar* is concerned, it may be that some of the suggested meanings overlap and that a particular concept is more prevalent in some passages, and another one in others.

There has also been debate over the significance of the offerer laying a hand on the head of the sacrificial animal (e.g., Lev. 1:4; 3:2). This has traditionally been understood as an identification of the offerer with the sacrifice and a transference of the offerer’s sins to the sacrifice. Recently this has been disputed and the argument made instead that it only signifies that the animal does indeed belong to the offerer, who therefore has the right to offer it. But again, this is unduly restrictive; it should rather be seen as complementary to what has traditionally been understood by this gesture. Indeed, in the rite for the Day of Atonement, when the priest lays his hands on the one goat, confesses Israel’s sin and wickedness, and in doing so is said to be putting them on the goat’s head (Lev. 16:21), this would seem to affirm the correctness of the traditional understanding. The sacrifice is thus best seen as substitutionary: it takes the place of the offerer; it dies in his stead.

The relationship between God and the offerer. Second, granted that the word *kapar* has to do with the forgiveness of sins, the question arises as to the exact effect that it has on the relationship between God and the offerer. The question here is whether the effect is expiation or propitiation. Does the offering expiate the sin—wipe it out, erase it, remove it? Or does it propitiate the one to whom the sacrifice is offered? That is, does it appease and placate God, so that the threat of God's wrath is removed? In one respect, the distinction seems artificial; it seems logical that expiation naturally results in propitiation. On the other hand, the modern-day tendency to deny that God could possibly be a God of wrath makes the question relevant. In any case, there are certainly, in both religious and nonreligious contexts, passages where something like "appease" or "pacify" appears to be a proper rendering of *kapar* (Gen. 32:20; Exod. 32:30; Num. 16:46–47; 25:1–13; 1 Sam. 3:14). The effect of atonement is that sins are removed and forgiven, and God is appeased.

In conjunction with this last point, it is also important to note that there are a number of places where it is said that God does the *kapar*, that God is the one who makes atonement. Deuteronomy 21:8 calls upon God, literally, to "atone [NIV: "accept this atonement"] for your people, Israel." In Deut. 32:43 God will "make atonement for his land and people." Psalm 65:3 (ESV) states that God "atone[s] for our transgressions" (ESV). Hezekiah prays in 2 Chron. 30:18, "May the LORD, who is good, pardon [atone for] everyone." In Ps. 78:38 (ESV), God is said to have "atoned" for Israel's iniquity. Psalm 79:9 (ESV) asks God to "atone for our sins for your name's sake." In Isa. 43:3 *kapar* is translated as "ransom," and God says to Israel that he gave "Egypt for your ransom." In Ezek. 16:63 God declares that he will "make atonement" for all the sins that Israel has committed. It may be that in most of these passages "atone" is to be understood as a synonym of "forgive." However, as many commentators have noted, in at least some of these passages, the thought is that God is either being called upon to take or is taking upon himself the role of high priest, atoning for the sins of the people. It is important to remember God's declaration in Lev. 17:11 that he has given to the Israelites the blood of the sacrificial animals to make atonement for their sins. Atonement, no matter how it is conceived of or carried out, is a gift that God graciously grants to his covenant people.

That leads to a consideration of one particularly relevant passage, Isa. 52:13–53:12. In this text a figure referred to as "my [the LORD's] servant" (52:13) is described as one who "took up our pain and bore our suffering" (53:4). He was "pierced for our transgressions" and "crushed for our iniquities" (53:5). "The LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all" (53:6). And then we are told, "Yet it was the LORD's will to crush him and cause him to suffer," and that "the LORD makes his life an offering for sin [NASB: "guilt offering"]" (53:10). There are many issues with regard to the proper interpretation of this "Servant Song" (as it is often called), one of them being whether the term translated "guilt offering" should really be thought of along the lines of the guilt offering described in the book of Leviticus (5:14–6:7; 7:1–10). But if the traditional Christian understanding of this passage is correct, we have here a picture of God himself assuming the role of priest and atoning for the sins of his people by placing their iniquities and sins on his servant, a figure regarded by Jesus and the apostles in the NT to be God's very own son, Christ Jesus.

NEW TESTAMENT

The relationship between the Testaments. When we come to the NT, four very important initial points should be made.

First, God's wrath against sin and sinners is just as much a NT consideration as an OT one. God still considers those who are sinful and unrighteous to be his “enemies” (Rom. 5:10; Col. 1:21). Wrath and punishment await those who do not confess Jesus Christ as Lord (John 3:36; Rom. 2:5; Eph. 2:3). Atonement is the means of averting this wrath.

Second, salvation is promised to those who come to God by faith in Christ Jesus, but there is still the problem of how God can, at the same time, be “just” himself and yet also be the one who “justifies” sinners and declares them righteous (Rom. 3:26). God will not simply declare sinners to be justified unless his own justness is also upheld. Atonement is the way by which God is both just and justifier.

Third, as we saw in the OT that, ultimately, God is the one who atones, so also in the NT God is the one who provides the means for atonement. It is by his gracious initiative that atonement becomes possible. If Jesus’ death is the means by which atonement is achieved, it is God himself who “presented Christ as a sacrifice of atonement” (Rom. 3:25). It was God himself who “so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son” (John 3:16). God himself “sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins” (1 John 4:10). God “did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all” (Rom. 8:32). Additionally, Christ himself was not an unwilling victim; he was actively involved in the accomplishing of atonement by his death (Luke 9:31; John 10:15–18; Heb. 9:14).

Fourth, the atoning sacrifice of the Son was necessary because, ultimately, the OT sacrifices could not really have provided the necessary atonement: “it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins” (Heb. 10:4).

Portrayals of Christ’s work of atonement. It has become common of late to refer to the different “images” or “metaphors” of atonement that appear in the NT. This is understandable on one level, but on another level there is something misleading about it. So, for example, when the NT authors speak of Christ as a sacrifice for sin, it is not at all clear that they intend for the reader to take this as imagery. Rather, Christ really is a sacrifice, offered by God the Father, to take away sins, and to bear in his own body the penalty that should have been placed on the sinner. Christ’s sacrifice has an organic connection to the OT sacrificial system, as the “full, final sacrifice.” The author of Hebrews would not have considered this to be imagery. In fact, a better case could be made that, from his perspective, Christ was the real sacrifice, and all the instances of sacrifice in the OT were the imagery (Heb. 10:1). So as we look at the different portrayals of Christ in his work of atonement in the NT, some of these may best be categorized as imagery or metaphor, while others perhaps are better described as a “facet” of, or a “window” on, the atonement. It should also be noted that the individual portrayals do not exclude the others, and in some cases they overlap.

- *Ransom*. Some passages in the NT speak of Christ’s death as a ransom paid to set us free (Matt. 20:28; Mark 10:45; 1 Tim. 2:6; Heb. 9:15). The same Greek word translated “ransom” in these passages is rendered as “redeem” or “redemption” in other passages (Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:14). Other forms of the same word are also translated “redeem” or “redemption” in Gal. 3:13–14; 4:5; Titus 2:14; Heb. 9:12; 1 Pet. 1:18–19; Rev. 14:3. A near synonym of these words is used in Rev. 5:9; 14:4, referring to how Christ “purchased” people by his blood. In most of these cases the picture is that of slaves who have been ransomed, redeemed, or purchased from the slave market. Sometimes this is referred to as an “economic” view of atonement, though this label seems a bit crass, for the purchase is not of a commodity but of human lives at the expense of Christ’s own life and blood. To ask the question as to whom the ransom was paid is probably taking the picture too far. But those who are ransomed are redeemed from a life of slavery to sin and to the law.
- *Curse bearer*. In Gal. 3:13–14, noted above, there is also the picture of Christ as one who bore the curse of the law in our place. The language is especially striking because rather than saying that

Christ bore the curse, Paul says that Christ became “a curse.” This is an especially forceful way of saying that Christ fully took into his own person the curse that was meant for us.

- *Penalty bearer*. Closely related to “curse bearer,” this portrayal depicts Christ as one who has borne the legal consequences of our sins, consequences that we should have suffered; rather, because Christ has borne the penalty, we are now declared to be righteous and no longer subject to condemnation. This idea stands behind much of the argumentation that Paul uses in Romans and Galatians, and it also intersects with the other portrayals. Passages representative of this picture are Rom. 3:24–26; 4:25; 5:8–21; 8:32–34; Gal. 3:13–14; Eph. 2:15. It is also what should be understood by Peter’s description of Christ’s death as “the just for the unjust” in 1 Pet. 3:18 (NASB, NET), as well as in 2 Cor. 5:21, where Paul states that Christ has become “sin for us” so that we might become the “righteousness of God.”
- *Propitiation*. There are four passages where the NIV uses “atonement” or “atoning” in the translation to reflect either the Greek verb *hilaskomai* or related nouns *hilastērion* or *hilasmos*. This is the word group that the LXX regularly uses to translate the Hebrew verb *kapar* and related nouns. There has been much debate about the precise meaning of the word in these four NT texts, in particular, as to whether it means to “expiate” (“remove guilt”) or to “propitiate” (“appease” or “avert wrath”). The better arguments have been advanced in favor of “propitiate”; at the very least, propitiation is implied in expiation. The wrath that we should have suffered on account of our sins has been suffered by Jesus Christ instead. Although the specific word is not used, this is the understanding as well in those passages where it is said either that Christ died “for our sins” (1 Cor. 15:3), “gave himself for our sins” (Gal. 1:4), “bore our sins” (1 Pet. 2:24), or that his blood was poured out “for the forgiveness of sins” (Matt. 26:28; cf. Eph. 1:7).
- *Passover*. In 1 Cor. 5:7 Paul states that “Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed.” Although the Passover has not traditionally been thought of as a sacrifice for sin (though many scholars would argue that it was), at the very least we should recognize a substitutionary concept at play in Paul’s use of the Passover idea. A lamb died so that the firstborn would not. The Gospel of John seems to have the same understanding. Early in the Gospel, Jesus is proclaimed as the “Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world” (John 1:29). And then in his account of Jesus’ passion, John narrates that his crucifixion was precisely at the same time as the slaying of the Passover lambs (John 19:14).
- *Sacrifice*. This theme has already been touched on in the other portraits above, but it is important to recognize the significance of this concept in the NT and especially in the book of Hebrews. There, Christ is portrayed as both sacrifice and the high priest who offers the sacrifice (2:17; 7:27; 9:11–28; 10:10–21; 12:24). He came, not as some have argued, to show the uselessness of the sacrificial system, but rather to be the “full, final sacrifice” within that system, “that he might make atonement for the sins of the people” (2:17).

Of course, it is not just the death of Christ that secures our redemption. His entire earthly life, as well as his resurrection and heavenly intercessory work, must also be recognized. But with regard to the work of atonement per se, Christ’s earthly life, his sinless “active obedience,” is what qualifies him to be the perfect sacrifice. His resurrection is the demonstration of God’s acceptance of Christ’s sacrifice (he “was raised to life for our justification” [Rom. 4:25]). But it was particularly his death that provided atonement for our sins.

ATONEMENT, DAY OF *See* Festivals.

ATONEMENT COVER *See* Mercy Seat.

ATROTH BETH JOAB Its name meaning “crowns of the house of Joab,” this town is listed in the genealogy of Hur, a descendant of Judah (1 Chron. 2:54). Although its exact location is unknown, it was somewhere near Bethlehem.

ATROTH SHOPHAN One of the towns built by the descendants of Gad on the east side of the Jordan River. This is the land that was conquered from Sihon, king of the Amorites, and Og, king of Bashan (Num. 32:35).

ATTAI **(1)** Grandson of Sheshan, a descendant of Judah. He was born to Sheshan’s daughter and the Egyptian slave Jarha (1 Chron. 2:35–36). **(2)** One of David’s warriors from the tribe of Gad who came to help him at Ziklag (1 Chron. 12:11). **(3)** Son of Rehoboam (and grandson of Solomon) by his wife Maakah, whom Rehoboam loved more than any of his other wives (2 Chron. 11:20).

ATTALIA Founded by Attalus I Philadelphus of Pergamum (159–138 BC) on Asia Minor’s southern coast near the mouth of the Cestrus (Aksu) River, Attalia (modern Antalya or Adalia) served as a port city for Perga. Paul passed through Attalia on his first missionary campaign (Acts 14:25–26). *See also* Asia Minor, Cities of.

AUGUSTAN COHORT An auxiliary unit in the Roman army made up of non-Roman citizens who could gain citizenship through their service. This particular unit was stationed in Syria and held some level of favor as related to its association with the famed emperor. The centurions of this cohort escorted Paul on his journey from Caesarea to Rome (Acts 27:1 [NIV: “Imperial Regiment”]).

AUGUSTUS Title given by the Roman senate to the emperor Octavian (r. 31 BC–AD 14) in 27 BC, meaning “august,” “revered,” or “exalted.” Augustus was the ruler of the Roman Empire when Jesus was born and ordered the census that led Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem (Luke 2:1). Octavian was born in 63 BC and later adopted by Julius Caesar as his heir.

Statue of Augustus

He first gained power upon Julius Caesar’s death in 44 BC. Initially, Octavian ruled as part of a triumvirate with Antony and Marcus Lepidus, supposedly in order to avenge the murder of Caesar. He gained sole control of Rome at the Battle of Actium in 31 BC, defeating Antony and Cleopatra, both of whom committed suicide. In the next year, Octavian annexed Egypt into the Roman Empire. The Roman senate bestowed on him the name “Augustus” in 27 BC to honor him for his victories. From that point on, he was known as Caesar Augustus. The title “Augustus” was handed down to

Octavian's successors as emperors.

Augustus appointed Herod the Great to his position of power despite Herod's initial support of Antony. Augustus is known for establishing the Roman Empire and becoming its first emperor. The Senate declared him a god at his death.

AUTHOR, AUTHOR OF LIFE "Author of life" is a title applied to Jesus by Peter in Acts 3:15 (KJV: "Prince of life"), where he uses it ironically to highlight that people had killed the one who was the source of life. Elsewhere, the Greek word behind "author" (*archēgos*) is translated as "prince," "leader," "captain," or "pioneer" (Acts 5:31; Heb. 2:10; 12:2).

AUTHORITY The concept of authority in Scripture includes two distinct elements. First, a person has authority in various settings if he or she has the right to tell others what to do and decide how matters should be arranged. Second, a person has authority if he or she has not only the right to rule, as in the first case, but also the power to control, so that what this person decrees actually happens. When the angel of the Lord tells Hagar, "Go back to your mistress and submit to her," he employs the first aspect of authority (Gen. 16:9). Hagar must do what Sarah tells her to do. The same sense of authority operates in Deut. 1:15, where Moses recalls, "So I took the leading men of your tribes, wise and respected men, and appointed them to have authority over you" (cf. Exod. 18:13–27). On the other hand, when Yahweh says of his word, "It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it," the second sense of authority also plays a role (Isa. 55:11; cf. Heb. 4:12). Likewise regarding the one who "overcomes" in the book of Revelation: the Son gives the church authority, and its people rule the nations "with an iron scepter" (2:26–27). Both ideas—forensic right and power to effect—arise in that context.

The authority of Christ is a prominent theme of the Gospels, being evidence of his deity and messianic status. In Matthew's Gospel, for instance, the Sermon on the Mount concludes with the crowd's wonder that Jesus teaches "as one who had authority," unlike the teachers of the law (7:28–29). Jesus then displays his authority over diseases (8:1–10), natural forces (8:26–27), and demonic entities (8:28–32), culminating in his authority to forgive sins (9:6) and resuscitate the dead (9:18–26). Mark and Luke also include parallel passages that emphasize the authority of Christ over similar domains. John's Gospel highlights the authority of Jesus to judge (5:27), to lay down his life and take it up again (10:18), and to grant eternal life to those who abide in him (17:2). The authority of Christ over all events, even the worst of them, is the grand theme of the book of Revelation. Jesus has the right and power to rule for the sake of his church, overcoming all powers that usurp authority in opposition to him (Rev. 4–5; 13; 20). Finally, even the Great Commission proclaims the supreme authority of Christ (Matt. 28:18; cf. Eph. 1:21; Col. 2:10). With God, we expect authority as right and as power always to coincide in the end.

On this same trajectory, the church must submit to authority, first to God and then to human rulers, in the latter case when it can be done in good conscience. Paul's references to Jesus as "Lord" throughout the Corinthian letters highlight his authority over those whom he has "bought at a price" (1 Cor. 6:9–20). For his own part, Paul can implicitly "pull rank" on the Corinthians, citing his own God-given authority over them (2 Cor. 10:8; 13:10; cf. 1 Tim. 4:2). No one should "lord it over" others (Luke 22:25–26), but even when they do, the servant must respect the master's authority (1 Pet. 2:17–19). Wives must submit to the servant leadership of their husbands (Eph. 5:22), children must obey their parents (Eph. 6:1–3), slaves must yield to their masters (Eph. 6:5–8), and laypersons must obey the church's elders (Heb. 13:17).

Respect for authority also extends to secular governments, whatever the character of their leaders. Even though Saul had intended to kill David (1 Sam. 20:33), David is outraged that anyone would kill Saul (2 Sam. 1:14). The apostle Paul has many reasons to distrust secular governments and defy their authority; yet when he is subjected to official abuse, he respects Rome's laws (Acts 16:16–40; 21–28). In Rom. 13:1–6 Paul commands the church to be subject to governing authorities, assuming that God has established them, so that "whoever rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted" (v. 2). In 1 Tim. 2:1–3 the church is called to prayer for secular rulers. These passages do not require obedience to human authority even when it conflicts with the will of God (Acts 5:29), but they do prevent the church from hindering the gospel with outbreaks of revolutionary enthusiasm.

AVA *See* Avva.

AVEN Meaning "idolatry" or "wickedness," the name of certain locations. **(1)** Abbreviated form of "Beth-Aven," meaning "house of idolatry," Hosea's name for Bethel (10:8). **(2)** "Valley of Aven," where Syria was to be punished, mentioned in Amos's criticism of Syria (Amos 1:5). It may be the plain between Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon. **(3)** Term used by Ezekiel as a derisive pun on the Egyptian city "On" (Heliopolis), center for the worship of the sun god, Re, in his prophecy against the wickedness of Egypt (Ezek. 30:17).

AVENGER The term "avenger" occurs sixteen times in the NIV, usually in the phrase "avenger of blood" (*go'el haddam*). The Hebrew word *go'el* may be translated "redeemer," "avenger," or "near relative" and referred to a kinsman who acted on behalf of a close relative. The term was used of one who avenged (repaid) the death of a murdered relative (Num. 35:12), received restitution for crimes against a deceased relative (Num. 5:7–8), bought back family property that had been sold (Lev. 25:25), purchased a relative who had been sold into slavery (Lev. 25:48–49), or married a relative's widow in order to raise up heirs for her deceased husband (levirate marriage) (Deut. 25:5–10). The "avenger of blood" refers specifically to the first of these functions, a murder victim's near relative who would exact justice by executing the murderer. This was in line with the OT principle of "eye for an eye" and "tooth for a tooth" (Exod. 21:24; Lev. 24:20; Deut. 19:21). Punishment was to be in proportion to the degree and severity of a crime. In the NT, this role of justice is assigned to government authorities (Rom. 13:4).

This procedure for justice for the avenger of blood is found in Num. 35:9–27; Deut. 19:11–13; Josh. 20. If a person was found guilty of intentional murder on the testimony of two or three witnesses (Deut. 17:6; 19:15), the avenger of blood served as executioner.

In cases of accidental manslaughter, the accused could flee to one of six cities of refuge, where the city assembly would judge the case and provide protection from the avenger of blood (Num. 35:6–34; Deut. 4:41–43; 19:1–14; Josh. 20:1–9). Numbers 35:12 designates that "they will be places of refuge from the avenger, so that anyone accused of murder may not die before they stand trial before the assembly" (cf. Josh. 20:9). Deuteronomy 19:4–7 explains the necessity of this protection: the avenger may be filled with rage and take revenge without concern for whether the death was accidental or intentional. If the accused left the city of refuge, the avenger of blood could take his life (Num. 35:27). This held true until the death of the high priest, at which time the accused could leave the city without fear of reprisal. The primary purpose of the laws related to the avenger of blood was to provide consistent justice and so reduce blood feuds and continued cycles of retaliation and revenge.

AVITH The city of the Edomite king Hadad son of Badad (Gen. 36:35; 1 Chron. 1:46). The site has not been identified.

AVIV A month of the Jewish calendar corresponding to late March/early April. It is the month during which the Israelites were delivered from Egypt (Exod. 13:4) and the Passover was celebrated (Exod. 23:15; 34:18; Deut. 16:1). In Neh. 2:1 and Esther 3:7 the month is called "Nisan." *See also* Nisan.

AVVA Geographical location whose residents were deported by the Assyrians and resettled in Samaria shortly after 721 BC (2 Kings 17:24). The biblical text explains that after their resettlement, " each national group made its own gods" (2 Kings 17:29–31). Since the Avvites made Nibhaz and Tartak, it is almost certain that Avva should be identified with the Elamite city Ama, especially since Akkadian *m* is often rendered *w* in Hebrew (the Hebrew *w* often is spelled *v* in English). Their deities were Ibnahaza and Dirtaq. It is possible that this is the same city as Ivvah (2 Kings 18:34; 19:13; Isa. 37:13).

AVVIM, AVVITES Although little else is known about either one, Avvim was a city within Benjamin's borders (Josh. 18:23), and the Avvites were a people who lived in the coastal region prior to the arrival of the Philistines and were destroyed by the Caphtorites (Deut. 2:23).

AWE, AWESOME Awe mingles dread with wonder, especially toward God (Ps. 33:8 KJV). Translations use "awe" almost exclusively for God and his deeds. Modern translations use "awe," "awesome," and "awe-inspiring" to render numerous Hebrew and Greek terms.

The Bible never records a person encountering God without being visibly shaken by God's awesomeness. Awe is a personal disposition more than an emotional state. In God's presence Moses hides his face (Exod. 3:6), and Isaiah declares, "Woe to me!" (Isa. 6:5).

AWEL-MARDUK The son and successor of Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. In Hebrew tradition, he is known by the name "Evil-Merodach" (derived from "Awel-Marduk," a variant of the Babylonian name "Amel-Marduk"). Reigning in the years 562/561–560 BC, he pardoned King Jehoiachin of Judah, who had been imprisoned by Nebuchadnezzar. Thereafter, Jehoiachin dined at the king's table (2 Kings 25:27–30; Jer. 52:31–34; confirmed by Babylonian records). Allegedly because of his ineffective policies, his brother-in-law Neriglissar murdered him and usurped the throne.

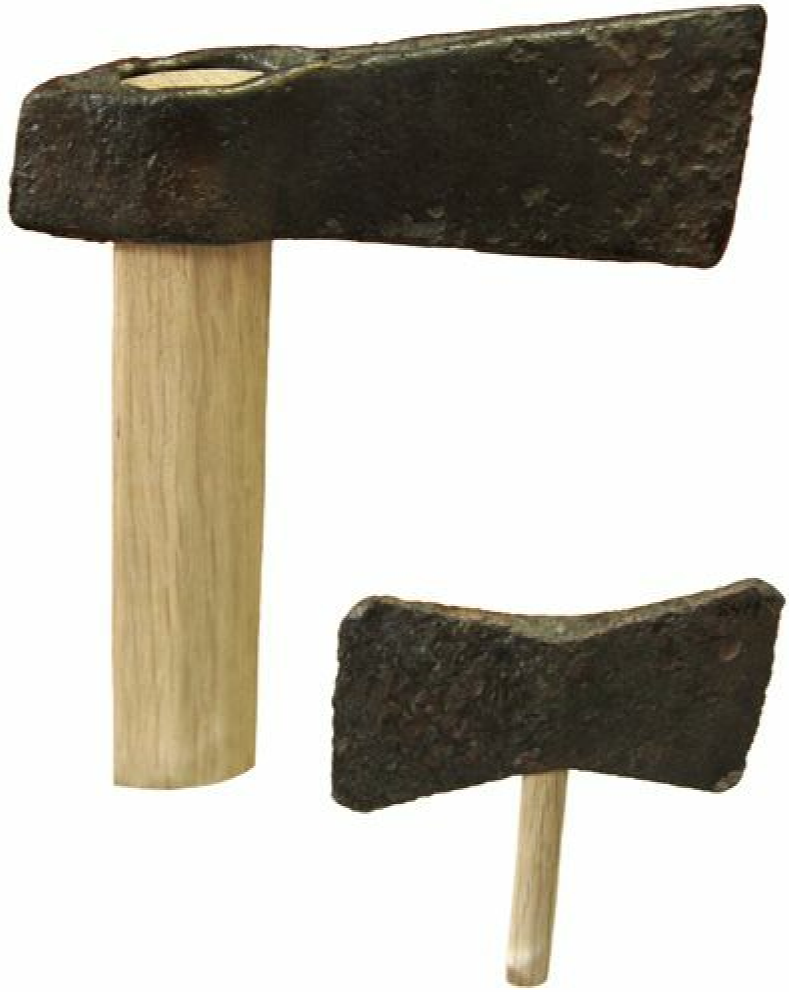
AWL A tool used to bore holes in objects. In biblical times this instrument could have been made out of stone, bone, or metal. One of the uses for this tool in ancient times included the piercing of ears (Exod. 21:6; Deut. 15:17). Such piercing was done to servants as a means of marking them as permanent slaves.

AWNING A deck covering on ships (Ezek. 27:7) used to shield passengers from the sun. A different vocalization of the Hebrew elsewhere also refers to the covering on Noah's ark (Gen. 8:13) and the tabernacle (Exod. 26:14).

AX, AX HEAD The ax is an edge tool comprising a heavy end with a sharpened blade attached to a wooden handle, and it is used for chopping into trees and logs (Judg. 9:48; Isa. 10:34). The ax is one of a complement of metal tools, along with the hammer, saw, plowshare, sickle, pickax, and goad (cf.

1 Kings 6:7). Similar items are the knife, sword, and spear.

The earliest metallic ax heads were copper and date as far back as 4000 BC. As the material culture of the Near East advanced, copper implements were replaced by bronze and finally iron. Bronze Age axes had a bronze hollow cylinder that slid over the wood shaft, with a short mass of bronze off to one side that widened and flattened into a sharp blade. They were dangerous to use. So many accidental injuries and deaths occurred due to the head slipping off the shaft that Israel's law used it as an example of unintentional death (Deut. 19:5).



Bronze ax heads

In 1 Sam. 13:19–20 the Philistines are shown to be controlling metallurgical technology. To prevent Israel from fashioning "modern" weapons of war, they would not permit Israel to work any metal for agricultural or other uses. Thus, Saul and his son Jonathan were the only Israelites of that time to have swords. Much later, well into the Iron Age, the premium value placed on a good iron ax head is seen in the anecdote in which an ax head fell off the handle and into the water, and the workman lamented to God's prophet Elisha that the item was borrowed (2 Kings 6:1–6). Such was its worth that the prophet miraculously restored it.

The ax has symbolic value in the Bible. Axes cut, and "cutting off" is a common theme in the law. Those who break the covenant are "cut off" from the people (Exod. 31:14). Thus, John the Baptist cried, "The ax is already at the root of the trees" to cut off unrepentant Israelites (Matt. 3:10).

AYYAH A city mentioned in 1 Chron. 7:28. It was part of the possessions of Ephraim and, in some traditions, has been equated with Ai. Although the Greek tradition identifies the city with Gaza, this seems unlikely.

AZAL *See* Azel.

AZALIAH The father of Shaphan, Josiah's scribe who played a role in discovering the Book of the Law (2 Kings 22:3; 2 Chron. 34:8).

AZANIAH The father of Jeshua, who was one of the Levites who sealed the covenant with God following Ezra's public reading of the law in Jerusalem (Neh. 10:9).

AZAREL In the KJV, "Azareel" or "Azarael." **(1)** One of David's ambidextrous warriors, who was related to, but rebelled against, Saul (1 Chron. 12:6). **(2)** One of the musicians appointed by David for work in the sanctuary (1 Chron. 25:18). **(3)** Son of Jeroham, commander over the tribe of Dan, appointed by David (1 Chron. 27:22). **(4)** One of the priests guilty of marrying a foreign wife (Ezra 10:41). **(5)** The father of Amashsai, who was appointed to live and serve in Jerusalem when Nehemiah was governor (Neh. 11:13). **(6)** One of the musicians who celebrated the completion of the wall (Neh. 12:36 [perhaps the same person as in 11:13]).

AZARIAH **(1)** An official in Solomon's administration, the high priest (1 Kings 4:2). **(2)** A second official, son of Nathan, in Solomon's administration, in charge of district officers (1 Kings 4:5). **(3)** The king of Judah around 769–733 BC (also known as Uzziah). He likely ruled as coregent with his father starting in 792 BC before he was sole ruler. The account of his rule is recorded in 2 Kings 14:21–22; 15:1–7; 2 Chron. 26:1–23. (*See also* Uzziah.) **(4)** A descendant of Judah through Ethan (1 Chron. 2:8). **(5)** Another descendant of Judah through Obed, whose son is also called "Azariah" (1 Chron. 2:38–39). **(6)** A descendant of Levi through his father, Ahimaaz, and the father of Johanan (1 Chron. 6:9). **(7)** A descendant of Levi through his father, Johanan. This Azariah is said to have served in Solomon's temple and was the father of Amariah (1 Chron. 6:10–11).

(8) A descendant of Levi through his father, Hilkiah, and the father of Seraiah (1 Chron. 6:13–14). Ezra the scribe was the son of Seraiah and a descendant of this Azariah (Ezra 7:1). **(9)** A temple musician, a Kohathite (1 Chron. 6:36). **(10)** A priest, son of Hilkiah (1 Chron. 9:11), likely the same as the Azariah in 1 Chron. 6:13–14. **(11)** A prophet during the reign of King Asa (910–869 BC) who encouraged the king to purify the worship of Judah (2 Chron. 15:1–8). **(12)** Two of King Jehoshaphat's (870–848 BC) seven sons. They were all given many gifts, but the eldest brother, Jehoram, became king of Judah (2 Chron. 21:2). The NIV differentiates by calling one son "Azariahu." **(13)** Son of Jehoram, and a military commander who entered into an alliance with the priest Jehoiada against Athaliah (2 Chron. 23:1) in order to install Joash as king (836–798 BC).

(14) Son of Obed, and a military commander who entered into an alliance with Jehoiada against Athaliah (2 Chron. 23:1). **(15)** A priest who took the lead in confronting King Uzziah when he burned incense to the Lord in the sacred precincts of the temple (2 Chron. 26:17, 20). **(16)** Son of Jehohanan, and an Ephraimite leader who confronted the army of Samaria under Pekah (752–732 BC) and demanded that they return Judean prisoners to their homes (2 Chron. 28:12). **(17)** Son of Jehallelel, and a Gershonite priest from the tribe of Levi who supported Hezekiah's (727–698 BC) religious reforms (2 Chron. 29:12). **(18)** The father of Joel, a Levite who supported Hezekiah's religious reforms (2 Chron. 29:12). **(19)** The chief priest during the reign of Hezekiah (2 Chron. 31:10–13). **(20)** Son of Meraioth, a descendant of Aaron, and an ancestor of Ezra (Ezra 7:3). **(21)** Son of Maaseiah, and a builder of the wall of Jerusalem under Nehemiah (Neh. 3:23).

(22) A man who returned to Jerusalem from Babylonian captivity with Zerubbabel (Neh. 7:7). **(23)** A priest who aided Ezra in teaching the people the law (Neh. 8:7). **(24)** One of those who sealed the covenant that was proclaimed when the wall of Jerusalem was rebuilt (Neh. 10:2). **(25)** A leader of Judah who participated in the ceremony that dedicated the wall of Jerusalem at the time of Nehemiah (Neh. 12:33). **(26)** The son of Hoshaiah who, along with Johanan son of Kareah and others, rejected the word of God through Jeremiah to stay in Judah rather than flee to Egypt (Jer. 43:2). **(27)** One of the three friends of Daniel who experienced captivity in Babylon beginning in 605 BC; he was renamed "Abednego" (Dan. 1:7). He refused to worship Nebuchadnezzar's golden statue and was thrown into the fiery furnace, from which God saved him (Dan. 1:6, 11, 19; 2:17).

AZARIAHU Variant of the name "Azariah," one of the seven sons of Jehoshaphat listed in 2 Chron. 21:2 (see NIV, NASB, NET).

AZAZ A descendant of Reuben (1 Chron. 5:8).

AZAZEL Azazel appears only in Lev. 16 (NIV: "scapegoat"), instructions for the Day of Atonement, on which lots were cast over two goats, one for God and the other for Azazel. After sacrificing the first goat, the high priest confessed the Israelites' wickedness over the second goat and sent it into the desert.

There are multiple interpretations of the Hebrew word *'aza'zel*, one of which is "the goat [*'ez*] of removal." The term "scapegoat" (originally "escapegoat") comes from this interpretation. Nevertheless, a goat "for the goat of escape" is redundant. Instead, "Azazel" is likely the name of a demon of the wilderness. In *1 En.* 8–13 Azazel is developed into a significant malevolent celestial creature.

AZAZIAH **(1)** A lyre player and music leader during the reign of David (1 Chron. 15:21). **(2)** The father of Hoshea, one of the leaders of the tribe of Ephraim during the reign of David (1 Chron. 27:20). **(3)** A Levite and temple overseer during the reign of Hezekiah (2 Chron. 31:13).

AZBUK The father of a Nehemiah, known only from Neh. 3:16. Azbuk's son ruled a half-district in Judah and helped the renowned Nehemiah repair Jerusalem's wall.

AZEKAH Between the protected hill country of Judah and the open coastal plain lies a range of low rolling hills cut through by significant valleys. Toward the western end of the Elah Valley, Azekah stands guard. Because of its strategic location, it played an important role in critical conflicts between Israel and its enemies.

As Joshua and the Israelites routed the Jerusalem confederation (Josh. 10), the enemies of Israel fled westward from the central Benjamin plateau, through the Aijalon Valley, and south beyond Azekah. Some centuries later, the major threat to Israel was the Philistine presence on the coast. The Philistines sought to expand their control into the hill country and camped on the south side of the Elah Valley between Sokoh and Azekah; the Israelites were on the opposite side of the valley. David challenged and killed the Philistine champion, Goliath, and the Philistines fled west past Azekah toward Ekron, one of their own cities (1 Sam. 17).

After Solomon’s death, Rehoboam fortified a ring of cities to protect the southern kingdom. Among them was Azekah (2 Chron. 11:5–12), southwest of Jerusalem. At the end of the Judean monarchy, the Babylonians attacked Jerusalem and the other cities that were still holding out. Lachish and Azekah were the only fortified cities left in Judah (Jer. 34:6–7). A poignant letter discovered in the gate area of Lachish reads, “We were watching for the smoke signals of Lachish . . . because we do not see Azekah” (Lachish letter 4).

The inheritance of the tribe of Judah included Azekah among nearly forty other towns in the Shephelah region (Josh. 15:33–44). These tribal demographics continued into the postexilic period (Neh. 11:30).

AZEL **(1)** A Benjamite and descendant of Saul, through Jonathan, who fathered six sons (1 Chron. 8:37–38). **(2)** In Zech. 14:5 (most versions citing the Greek) the prophet mentions the flight of Israel from Jerusalem to a place outside the city that some translations leave as a proper name, “Azal” or “Azel.” The Hebrew word has a preposition and may be rendered as “near to” or “beside.”

AZEM *See* Ezem.

AZGAD The head of a clan that was part of the early return to Judah from Babylonian captivity in 539 BC or soon after (Ezra 2:12; Neh. 7:17). The same clan sent Johanan and 110 men at the time of Ezra around 458 BC (Ezra 8:12). Azgad is also listed as one who sealed the covenant renewal led by Ezra (Neh. 10:15).

AZIEL A shortened form of the name “Jaaziel” in 1 Chron. 15:20 (KJV, ESV). He was one of the musicians who played when the ark was moved from the house of Obed-Edom to the City of David.

AZIZA One of the Israelites who repented of marrying a foreign woman after hearing Ezra’s charge of guilt concerning the matter (Ezra 10:27).

AZMAVETH **(1)** One of David’s mighty men, part of the thirty mighty men (2 Sam. 23:31; 1 Chron. 11:33). He was from Bahurim near Jerusalem. **(2)** Son of Jehoaddah, a descendant of Saul through Jonathan (1 Chron. 8:36; 9:42). **(3)** The father of Jeziel and Pelet of the tribe of Benjamin (1 Chron. 12:3). This Azmaveth is possibly the same as the Azmaveth of the thirty mighty men. **(4)** The son of Adiel in charge of the palace treasury under David (1 Chron. 27:25). **(5)** A town north of Jerusalem where forty-two men returned from exile (Ezra 2:24; Neh. 7:28). The town supplied singers for the dedication of the wall (Neh. 12:29). The town is also known as Beth Azmaveth and Bethasmoth. This village is identified with modern Hizmeh, five miles north of Jerusalem.

AZMON A place on the southern border of the land promised to Israel and allotted to Judah (Num. 34:4; Josh. 15:4) in the area of Kadesh Barnea. Some identify the site with Ain el-Qoseimeh, while others believe that it should be identified with Ain Muweileh.

AZNOTH TABOR A location in the southwestern region of Naphtali (Josh. 19:34). Some identify the name with a city, while others believe that it was simply a landmark in the area of Tabor.

AZOR An otherwise unknown postexilic ancestor of Jesus mentioned only in Matt. 1:13–14 as the son of Eliakim and the father of Zadok.

AZOTUS The Greek name for the Philistine city of Ashdod, where Philip preached (Acts 8:40).

AZRIEL **(1)** A patriarch of the eastern half-tribe of Manasseh (1 Chron. 5:24). **(2)** The father of Jerimoth, an official in the service of David from the tribe of Naphtali (1 Chron. 27:19). **(3)** The father of Seraiah, who was ordered to arrest Jeremiah and Baruch by Jehoiakim (Jer. 36:26).

AZRIKAM **(1)** A leader in Ahaz's palace who was slain by an Ephraimite along with a prince and the vizier of Ahaz (2 Chron. 28:7). **(2)** A postexilic descendant of David (1 Chron. 3:23). **(3)** A descendant of Benjamin and King Saul (1 Chron. 8:38). **(4)** The grandfather of Shemaiah, a Levite leader who settled in Jerusalem following the return from the exile (1 Chron. 9:14; Neh. 11:15).

AZUBAH **(1)** The wife of Caleb who bore him three sons (1 Chron. 2:18–19). **(2)** The mother of King Jehoshaphat and daughter of Shilhi (1 Kings 22:42; 2 Chron. 20:31).

AZUR *See* Azzur.

AZZAH *See* Gaza.

AZZAN The father of Paltiel, a leader in the tribe of Issachar who represented his tribe when the allotments of the land of Canaan were distributed (Num. 34:26).

AZZUR **(1)** The father of the prophet Hananiah, a contemporary of Jeremiah in the days of Zedekiah (Jer. 28:1). **(2)** The father of Jaazaniah, a figure known to Ezekiel (Ezek. 11:1). Jaazaniah is identified as a wicked leader in Jerusalem. **(3)** One of the signatories of the covenant under Nehemiah (Neh. 10:17).

B

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BAAL A West Semitic weather and warrior deity. There is evidence that “Baal,” meaning “lord,” was a proper name for a deity as early as the third millennium BC and may have been identified with the god Hadad.

Excavations from the city of Ugarit have uncovered second-millennium BC texts dealing with the cult and mythology of Baal. These texts depict Baal as a god of weather and storm whose provision of precipitation ensures the seasonal cycles of crops. The Baal Cycle from Ugarit also depicts him defeating Yamm, the god of the sea, and Mot, the god of death. Some of these associations shed light on polemics against Baal in the OT. Yahweh’s withholding rain at Elijah’s request (1 Kings 17:1), for example, undermines Baal’s claim to control the weather. Further, descriptions of Yahweh as a storm god, such as Ps. 29, may be understood as polemical statements that Yahweh, not Baal, is the one who really controls the storm.

The worship of Baal alongside Yahweh received official sponsorship in Israel under Ahab (1 Kings 16:31–33) and in Judah under Manasseh (2 Kings 10:18–27). The worship of this deity was grounds for the exile of Israel (2 Kings 17:16).

Baal throwing lightning, on a stele from Ras Shamra

BAALAH **(1)** The town where the ark of the covenant was kept before moving it to Jerusalem (2 Sam. 6:2). Sometimes referred to as “Baalah of Judah” (1 Chron. 13:6), it is also known as Kiriath Jearim (Josh. 15:9–11). The city is located on the northern border of Judah, modern Deir el-Azar, eight miles west of Jerusalem. (*See also* Kiriath Jearim.) **(2)** A town on the southern border of Judah (Josh. 15:29). This city may be the same as Balah (Josh. 19:3) and Bilhah (1 Chron. 4:29). It was occupied by the tribe of Simeon. Its location is unknown.

BAALAH OF JUDAH *See* Baalah.

BAALATH A city allotted to Dan (Josh. 19:44). Its probable location is in the coastal plain, about twenty-seven miles west of Jerusalem. Solomon built up this and other cities by using forced labor

(1 Kings 9:18; 2 Chron. 8:6). The Hebrew name of this city (*ba'alah*) is spelled differently from the name of the city referred to in 1 Chron. 4:33 (*ba'al* [some LXX manuscripts supply *Balat* or *Balaad*]), and it is unlikely that they are identical.

BAALATH BEER This city, also known as Ramah in the Negev, was part of the allotment of Simeon (Josh. 19:8) and is located in the south of Israel. Archaeologists have proposed Tel Malhata as a possible location. It is likely that it is the city referred to as Ramoth Negev, where David sent some of the plunder from his defeat of the Amalekites (1 Sam. 30:27).

BAALBEK *See* Heliopolis.

BAAL-BERITH Meaning "Baal/Lord of the covenant," this was Shechem's local manifestation of the Canaanite deity Baal. Like the Baal worshiped at Ugarit, Baal-Berith was likely associated with fertility and vegetation (Judg. 9:27). Soon after the death of Gideon, the Israelites began to worship Baal-Berith (Judg. 8:33), and money from his temple at Shechem was given by the Shechemites to Abimelek (Judg. 9:4). The significance of "covenant" in this name and the relationship to El-Berith of Judg. 9:46 remain uncertain.

BAALE, BAALE-JUDAH *See* Baalah.

BAAL GAD A place whose precise location has not been identified with certainty but is situated somewhere north of the Sea of Galilee below Mount Hermon. It is possible that it corresponds to the modern Banias. Baal Gad was a part of the territory of Og, king of Bashan, and it marked the northern limit of Joshua's conquest (Josh. 11:17; 12:7; 13:5).

BAAL HAMON The location of a vineyard belonging to Solomon (Song 8:11). It might be identical to Hammon of Asher (Josh. 19:28).

BAAL-HANAN **(1)** A king of Edom (Gen. 36:38). **(2)** A man in charge of the olive and sycamore trees in the Shephelah during the reign of David (1 Chron. 27:28).

BAAL HAZOR A city located near the border of Ephraim and Benjamin where Absalom held a feast and invited his brother Amnon in order to assassinate him for the rape of his sister Tamar (2 Sam. 13). It is possible that this city is identical to the Hazor that was resettled in the time of Nehemiah (Neh. 11:33).

BAAL HERMON Also known as Seir, Mount Hermon, and Mount Baal Hermon, this is part of the territory of the half-tribe of Manasseh east of the Jordan (1 Chron. 5:23; cf. Josh. 13:11), which was taken by the Israelites under Moses from Og, king of Bashan (Deut. 3:8–9). Located northeast of Dan, it is the highest mountain in the traditional territory of Israel. According to Judg. 3:3, the Hivites remained in this region following the conquest.

BAALI A Hebrew name (meaning either "my husband/lord" or "my Baal") that occurs only in Hos. 2:16. Apparently, Israelites had been using this name for Yahweh. On the one hand, since *ba'al* can mean "lord" or "husband," this can be construed as an appropriate name for God. Since "Baal," however, is also the name of one of the Canaanite deities whose worship plagued the history of both

Israel and Judah, Hosea saw this name as inappropriate for the God of Israel.

BAALIM A transliteration of the Hebrew plural for "Baal," appearing primarily in the KJV (e.g., Judg. 2:11; 10:10). Most modern translations use the plural form "Baals." The plurality probably refers to various local Canaanite manifestations of a single deity.

BAALIS The king of Ammon at the beginning of the exile of Judah. He conspired with Ishmael to assassinate Gedaliah, the governor of Judah installed by the Babylonians after the destruction of Jerusalem (Jer. 40:14).

BAAL MEON A Transjordanian city allotted to the tribe of Reuben, also known as Beth Meon and Beth Baal Meon (Num. 32:38; Josh. 13:17; 1 Chron. 5:8). Ezekiel 25:9 identifies Baal Meon as a frontier town of Moab, indicating that at some point the Moabites, who bordered Reuben's territory on the south, expanded their borders into the territory of Reuben. Jeremiah also includes this city in the list of cities belonging to Moab that would be destroyed by the Babylonians (Jer. 48:23). This city may be identified with the modern Ma'in, which is about three miles southeast of Heshbon.

BAAL PEOR A Moabite deity, sometimes translated as "Baal of Peor" (see Num. 25), who was a local manifestation of the West Semitic god Baal. While the Israelites were staying in the region of Mount Peor in Moab, they were seduced by the Moabites into sexual immorality and the worship of Baal Peor. This incident is referenced in biblical literature several times as a paradigm of Israel's sin and God's judgment (Deut. 4:3; Josh. 22:17; Ps. 106:28; Hos. 9:10 [where Baal Peor is treated as a place name]).

BAAL PERAZIM The location of David's defeat of the Philistine army (2 Sam. 5:20; 1 Chron. 14:11), about five miles southwest of Jerusalem. The name means "Baal/Lord who breaks out." While "Baal" is also the proper name of a Canaanite deity, David's statement after the defeat of the Philistines clearly intends the title to refer to the God of Israel.

BAAL SHALISHAH A city whose precise location is uncertain; it may border the region of Ephraim (see 1 Sam. 9:4). It could be identified with Khirbet Marjameh, a site located near Mount Baal Hazor. The Bible mentions this city as the hometown of a man who brought bread to Elisha (2 Kings 4:42). It may be the same as Shalisha, an area that Saul passed through when he was searching for lost donkeys (1 Sam. 9:4).

BAAL TAMAR An unidentified location in the territory of Benjamin where the army of Israel took battle positions in their fight against the Benjamites during the period of the judges (Judg. 20:33). The name means "Baal/Lord of the palm tree." It is to be distinguished from the location of the same name that lies on the southern border of Palestine.

BAAL-ZEBUB A deity of the Philistine city Ekron who appears only in 2 Kings 1:2, 3, 6, 16. "Baal-Zebub" probably means "Baal/Lord of the flies," but it is possible that the original name of this deity was "Baal-Zebul," perhaps meaning "Baal the prince." This possibility finds support in the appearance of a similar name for a god in Ugaritic texts, the presence of the root *zbl* in the titles of other gods, and in the NT references to *Beelzeboul* as the name of a demon or prince of the demons (Matt. 10:25; 12:24, 27; Mark 3:22; Luke 11:15, 18–19). It is likely, therefore, that the author of

2 Kings intentionally changed the name “Baal-Zebul” to the similarly sounding pejorative “Baal-Zebub” for polemical reasons, and that by oral or another textual tradition the original name was remembered in the NT. Not much is known about this specific deity other than that it is one of the many local manifestations of the god Baal.

BAAL ZEPHON **(1)** A location near where the Israelites camped before they crossed the Red Sea (Exod. 14:2, 9; Num. 33:7). The exact location of this site is unknown. **(2)** One of the most important gods in the pantheon of Ugarit, who appears throughout the poetic and ritual texts uncovered in that city in the twentieth century.

BAANA, BAANAH **(1)** Son of Rimmon, brother of Rekab, a Benjamite who was a leader of one of Ish-Bosheth’s raiding bands during his kingship. Along with his brother, he assassinated Ish-Bosheth, David’s rival, and brought his head to David. David rewarded him and Rekab with execution (2 Sam. 4). **(2)** One of the leaders who returned to Israel with Zerubbabel after the exile (Ezra 2:2; Neh. 7:7). It is possible that this is the same individual mentioned in Neh. 3:4 as the father of Zadok. **(3)** Son of Ahilud, and one of the twelve district governors appointed by King Solomon to supply provisions for the king and the royal household one month each year (1 Kings 4:12). **(4)** Son of Hushai, and one of the twelve district governors appointed by King Solomon to supply provisions for the king and the royal household one month each year (1 Kings 4:16). **(5)** A signer of the covenant to keep the law of Moses at the time of Nehemiah (Neh. 10:27). **(6)** The father of Heled, one of the mighty men of David’s army (1 Chron. 11:30).

BAARA One of the wives of Shaharaim the Benjamite (1 Chron. 8:8).

BAASEIAH Son of Malkijah, a Levite, included in the genealogy of the temple musician Asaph (1 Chron. 6:40).

BAASHA A king of Israel (906–883 BC) who gained ascendancy to the throne by means of a violent takeover, resulting in the death of his predecessor, Nadab (1 Kings 15:27–28). At the beginning of his reign Baasha killed the entire family of Jeroboam I, thus fulfilling Ahijah’s prophecy concerning the future of the wicked king’s line (14:10–11). Due to Baasha’s wickedness, however, his own family would suffer the same fate, as prophesied by Jehu (16:2–4). Baasha’s evil reign, characterized by continual war against Asa the king of Judah, lasted twenty-four years.

BABBLER A pejorative term used of Paul by a group of Epicurean and Stoic philosophers (Acts 17:18). The Greek term that it translates (*spermologos*) originally applied to birds pecking at grain. It became an expression used negatively for a person whose argument lacked sophistication and simply scavenged parts of several arguments together in order to pass them off with pretense. Thus, the argument would be viewed as worthless. The group of philosophers applied it to Paul because they believed him to be proclaiming both monotheism and the worship of Jesus, which they understood as a contradiction.

BABEL The Hebrew name for Babylon. In standard English translations this name is consistently translated as “Babel” only in Gen. 11:9 and sometimes in 10:10 (NRSV, NET). Although all its other occurrences are translated as “Babylon,” there is no distinction in the Hebrew. In the Babylonian language (Akkadian) the name means "Gate of God"; in Gen. 11:9 the Hebrew author connects the name "Babel" (*babel*) to the similar-sounding Hebrew word for "confused" (*balal*). This connection is best understood as a wordplay rather than an actual etymology.

Located on the Euphrates River about fifty-five miles south of modern Baghdad, the city was a major political and economic power throughout Mesopotamian history. Most significantly in Israel's history, it was the capital of the Neo-Babylonian Empire, which arose in the seventh century BC and brought Judah into exile.

According to Genesis, this city was founded by Nimrod (10:10) and was the site of the division of languages (11:1–9). The tower described in 11:1–9 was most likely a ziggurat, a Mesopotamian temple structure in the shape of a staircase. The intent to build a tower "that reaches to the heavens" (11:4) fits well with the Babylonian view that ziggurats joined heaven and earth. *See also* Tower of Babel.

BABOON A proposed translation of *tukki*, an animal in 1 Kings 10:22; 2 Chron. 9:21. Some prefer the translation "baboon" because of its proximity in those verses to the term translated as "ape" as well as its close relationship to an Egyptian term translated as "ape." Another suggestion is "peacock" because of its close relationship to the Tamil term for "peacock." The exact meaning remains uncertain. *See also* Ape.

BABYLON, BABYLONIA Babylon was the capital city of Babylonia, an ancient kingdom located in Mesopotamia, the region between the Tigris and the Euphrates rivers, an area now in the modern country of Iraq. The city of Babylon was located on the banks of the Euphrates River, about fifty-five miles from the modern city of Baghdad. Babylon plays a major role in the Bible, especially during the time of the OT prophets. Babylon or the Babylonians are mentioned in the books of 2 Kings, 1–2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Psalms, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Micah, Habakkuk, and Zechariah. Babylon also appears at the very beginning of the biblical story (Gen. 10–11) as well as at the very end (Rev. 14; 16–18; cf. 1 Pet. 5:13).

HISTORY

The Sumerian and Akkadian period. Around 3000 BC one of the earliest civilizations of the ancient world developed in the southernmost region of Mesopotamia. The Sumerians developed several innovations that nurtured and contributed to the rise of large, complex, urban civilizations. These developments included irrigation, writing (especially in regard to government documentation), the city-state, the accumulation of capital, the wheel, the potter's wheel, monumental architecture, the number system based on the number sixty (we still use this for time as well as for geometry—e.g., sixty minutes in an hour, 360 degrees in a circle), schools, and the cylinder seal.

The Akkadian king Sargon conquered most of Mesopotamia around 2350 BC. He built his capital at Akkad and established Akkadian as the main language of Mesopotamia, a feature that was to remain characteristic for many centuries. The city of Babylon first appears in nonbiblical literary documents during this time, but only as a minor provincial city.

The Old Babylonian period. At about the same time, a group of people called "Amorites" (lit., "those from the west") started migrating in fairly large numbers eastward into southern Mesopotamia. Embracing much of the old Sumerian-related culture as well as the Akkadian language, these Amorites soon became a regional power, and they built the city of Babylon into one of the most important cities in Mesopotamia. One of the most famous kings to rise to power during this "Old

Babylonian” era was Hammurabi (c. 1728–1686 BC [many scholars now refer to him as Hammurapi]). It was his extensive diplomatic and military skill that enabled Babylon to rise to power so quickly and in such a spectacular fashion. Hammurabi’s actual empire lasted only a brief time, but his legacy was long-lasting, and the entire central-southern region of Mesopotamia continued to be known as Babylonia for over a thousand years.

After Hammurabi died, Babylon declined in power. For the next few hundred years Mesopotamia was characterized by chaos and power struggles. Then around 800 BC the Assyrians (from the northern end of Mesopotamia) rose to power and dominated the entire region. The Assyrians also played a major role in the Bible, appearing frequently in the books of 2 Kings and Isaiah.

Reconstruction of the Ishtar Gate of Babylon (Pergamon Museum, Berlin)

The Neo-Babylonian Empire. In the last quarter of the seventh century BC, however, the Babylonians steadily grew in power. A large migration of Arameans into Babylonia had taken place, and the people in Babylonia had replaced Akkadian with Aramaic as their spoken language. The Chaldeans, a large and powerful group living in the Babylonian region, intermarried with the descendants of these migrating Arameans to develop a civilization now known as Neo-Babylonia. Once again the city of Babylon rose to splendor and prominence. Eventually this new Babylonia wrested control of much of the ancient Near East from the Assyrians and their Egyptian allies, decisively defeating them in 612 BC to become the new superpower empire of the ancient Near East. A powerful dynasty was started by Nabopolassar (626–605 BC) and continued by Nebuchadnezzar (604–562 BC), the most powerful and prominent of Babylon's kings.

Babylon controlled most of the ancient Near East at a critical time in biblical history. Nebuchadnezzar, the most famous Babylonian king of this era, besieged Jerusalem and destroyed it completely in 587/586 BC. Nebuchadnezzar appears in the Bible numerous times, especially in the books of 2 Kings, Jeremiah, and Daniel. He was the one responsible for taking the leadership of Judah into exile in Babylonia after the destruction of Jerusalem.

Surprisingly, this powerful empire did not last very long. As discussed below, several of the OT prophets prophesied the end of Babylon, and indeed Babylon crumbled quickly and eventually disappeared from history. How did this happen?

Persian and Greek rule. First of all, Nabonidus, the last king of Babylon (555–539 BC), tried to revise the religion of the people away from the worship of their main god, Marduk, but he only alienated himself from the powerful nobles of Babylon as well as from the general population. Leaving his son Belshazzar in charge, Nabonidus moved to Arabia for ten years. When he finally returned, the Persians were threatening Babylon, and Nabonidus had little power to stop them. Sealing the Persian victory was the defection of Ugbaru, one of the most powerful Babylonian princes. Thus, Cyrus, king of Persia, conquered Babylon without meeting any substantial resistance from the city (539 BC). Apparently, the Babylonians greeted Cyrus more as a liberator than as a conqueror. Babylon thus became a city within the Persian Empire.

About fifty years later the city of Babylon revolted against the Persians, and the Persian king Xerxes recaptured it (482 BC), sacked it, demolished its spectacular fortifications, burned the great temple of the Babylonian god Marduk, and even carried away the statue of Marduk as a spoil of war. However, the Greek historian Herodotus, writing around 450 BC, indicates that Babylon had not been completely destroyed.

In the next century Alexander the Great conquered the entire region, defeating the Persians in 331 BC. Alexander was welcomed warmly by the remaining citizens of Babylon, and thus he treated the city favorably at first. However, in 324 BC a close friend of Alexander's died, and Alexander tore down part of the city wall east of the royal palace to build a funeral pyre platform in his friend's honor, thus destroying a significant part of the city.

The fall of Babylon. After Alexander died, Seleucus, one of his four generals, seized Babylon (312 BC) and plundered the city and the surrounding area. The next Seleucid king, Antiochus I (281–261 BC), dealt the death blow to the city of Babylon. He built a new capital for the region fifty-five miles to the north and then moved the entire civilian population of Babylon to the new city. The once great city of Babylon, now depopulated and seriously damaged physically by the Seleucid kings, fell into oblivion. Although Antiochus IV (173 BC) tried for a brief period to revive the city, Babylon, for all practical purposes, had ceased to exist.

The ruined site is mentioned a few other times in history. The Roman emperor Trajan spent the winter of AD 116 in Babylon, finding nothing there except ruins. The spectacular fall of Babylon and the city's state of terrible desolation then became proverbial. In the second century AD Lucian wrote that Nineveh vanished without a trace, and that soon people will search in vain for Babylon. In fulfillment of biblical prophecy (e.g., Jer. 50–51), the city of Babylon went from being the most important and most spectacular city in the world to being a desolate, insignificant pile of rubble.

THE SPLENDOR OF BABYLON

During the time of Nebuchadnezzar the city of Babylon was developed into a spectacular city, certainly one of the most impressive cities in the ancient Near East. The city was built on the banks of the Euphrates River with a large, imposing bridge connecting the two banks. Huge public buildings, palaces, and temples lined the banks of the river. The city was enclosed by two walls. The gates of the outer walls have not yet been located, but archaeologists have identified nine large, impressive gates of the inner wall. The most famous of these is the Ishtar Gate, which has been dismantled and reconstructed in the Pergamon Museum in Berlin. The walls of this gate are lined with bright blue glazed ceramic tile and decorated with numerous reliefs of lions and dragons. A major structure in the city was the great temple of Marduk, the central Babylonian deity, but the city also had temples dedicated to numerous other gods. Connected to the great temple was a spectacular processional street running through the heart of the city. The city also contained large residential homes as well as three immense royal palaces.

A fourth-century BC Greek historian mentions that Nebuchadnezzar built an amazing garden for one of his wives. This garden, commonly known as the Hanging Gardens of Babylon, was designated by the ancient Greeks as one of the Seven Wonders of the World. Archaeologists, however, have been unable to locate such a garden in the excavations of Babylon, and some scholars doubt its existence.

BABYLON IN THE BIBLE

The terms "Babylon" and "Babylonian," in addition to the related terms "Chaldea" and "Chaldean," appear over three hundred times in the Bible, indicating the important role that Babylon plays in Israel's history.

Old Testament. Genesis 10:10 states that Babylon was one of the first centers of the kingdom of the mighty warrior Nimrod, but the puzzling nature of Nimrod and the difficulties encountered in interpreting Gen. 10 make it difficult to state much about this reference with certainty.

The better-known incident in Genesis regarding Babylon is the story about the tower of Babel (Gen. 11:1–9). Note that in Gen. 9:1–7 God commands Noah and his family to scatter over the earth and replenish its population. The builders of the tower of Babel are doing just the opposite of the divine injunction, trying to stop the scattering.

Genesis 11:2 locates the tower of Babel on "a plain in Shinar" (cf. 10:10; 14:1), the broad, alluvial plain of the Tigris and the Euphrates rivers south of modern Baghdad. Most scholars suspect that the tower of Babel was a ziggurat, an elevated temple tower. Common in Mesopotamia, these were worship centers where priests climbed up extensive stairways to offer their sacrifices to the gods. A temple shrine usually capped the top of the ziggurat. This elevated shrine was understood to be the "gateway to the gods," a place where human priests and their deities supposedly met. The tower of Babel story in Genesis, however, introduces a humorous wordplay regarding this tradition. “Babel” (as well as “Babylon”) means “gateway to the gods” or “gate of the gods” in the local Mesopotamian languages. Ironically, however, in Hebrew the word *babel* is related to *balal*, meaning “to confuse.” Thus, Gen. 11:9 presents a colorful wordplay or parody on the name of Babel. In a humorous criticism of the future great city, that verse suggests ironically that the name “Babel” does not really refer to the “gate of the gods” as the Mesopotamians intended, but rather to the judgmental confusion that God brought against them.

Thus, the city of Babel/Babylon carried negative connotations from the very beginning of the biblical story. Genesis 11 introduces Babel as a symbol of human arrogance and rebellion against God. Later in Israel’s history the city of Babylon will continue to have negative associations, and once again it becomes a powerful symbol of human arrogance and rebellion against God.

The books of 1–2 Kings tell the tragic story of how Israel and Judah turn away from God to worship idols, ignoring the warnings that God gives them through the prophets. As foretold, the northern kingdom, Israel, is thus destroyed by the Assyrians in 722 BC. However, the southern kingdom, Judah, also fails to take heed and continues to worship pagan gods in spite of repeated warnings and calls to repentance from the prophets. Prophets such as Jeremiah repeatedly proclaim that if Judah and Jerusalem do not repent and turn from their idolatry and acts of injustice, then God will send the Babylonians to destroy them (see esp. Jer. 20–39). Jeremiah refers to the Babylonians 198 times, and the prophet personally experiences the terrible Babylonian siege and destruction of Jerusalem. Jeremiah 39 and 52 describe the actual fall of Jerusalem to Nebuchadnezzar and his Babylonian army. This same tragic story is recounted in 2 Kings 24–25. Thus, in 586 BC Nebuchadnezzar and his army completely destroy Jerusalem, burning the city and the temple to the ground and carrying off most of the population into exile in Babylonia.

Babylon appears in the OT prophetic literature in another context as well. Because of the apostasy of Israel and Judah, the prophets preach judgment on them. But the prophets also preach judgment on the enemies of Israel and Judah for exploiting or attacking and destroying God’s people. Jeremiah, for example, prophesies against numerous nations and cities (Jer. 46–49), but he focuses especially upon Babylon (Jer. 50:1–51:58). Likewise, judgment on Babylon is a central theme in Isa. 13; 14; 21; 47. In the OT, no other foe brought such terrible destruction on Jerusalem. In later literature this particular event thus becomes the prototypical picture of horrendous death and destruction, and Babylon becomes the literary symbol epitomizing all of Israel’s enemies.

New Testament. Babylon appears again at the end of the biblical story. In Rev. 17–18 John describes the enemy of God’s kingdom as a harlot dressed in scarlet and riding on a beast. One of the titles written on her head is “Babylon the Great” (17:5). Some commentators believe that John is describing a literal resurrected city of Babylon. That is, they propose that Babylon will be rebuilt on its original site and become the center of government for the antichrist. Many other scholars, however, maintain that the harlot of Rev. 17–18 symbolizes ancient Rome, not a modern rebuilt Babylon. They argue that the term “Babylon” is used symbolically in Revelation. Supporting this view is the apostle Peter’s apparent use of the term “Babylon” to refer to Rome in 1 Pet. 5:13 (“she who is in Babylon . . . sends you her greetings”). Most NT scholars conclude that in this verse “she” is a reference to the church and that “Babylon” is a coded or symbolic reference to Rome.

BACA *See* Baka, Valley of.

BACHRITE *See* Bekerites.

BACKSLIDING A deliberate turning away from and rejection of God. This language is found most frequently in the OT, especially in Jeremiah, where warnings are often accompanied by God's invitations to his people to repent and return to him from their sinful ways (e.g., Jer. 3:11–12, 22).

BADGER The word "badger" is not found in the NIV but occurs in other translations: in the KJV as a (mis)translation of *takhash*, which the NIV renders as "durable leather" (e.g., Exod. 25:5); and where *shapan* is translated as "rock badger" (NRSV, NET) rather than, as in the NIV, "hyrax" (e.g., Lev. 11:5). The word *shapan* refers to the Syrian hyrax, which fits the description of a vegetarian rock dweller that appears to chew constantly. *See also* Hyrax; Leather.

BADGER SKINS *See* Leather.

BAG Various Hebrew and Greek words are rendered as "bag," representing a flexible container used to carry provisions, money, measuring weights, or spices and other valuables. A bag could be made of animal skins, leather, or cloth. A small bag might be fastened to a belt, while a traveler's bag large enough to carry several days' provisions would be slung over the shoulder. Its construction could range from a simple bundle of cloth tied with string to a more fabricated carrying case. In the OT, Joseph put grain in his brothers' traveling bags (Gen. 42:25); later the brothers were advised to present Joseph with gifts of spices and nuts to be toted in their bags (43:11). David carried a shepherd's provision bag and used it to hold the stones that he chose for his sling when he killed Goliath (1 Sam. 17:40, 49). Bags were used to hold currency or precious metals (2 Kings 5:23; 12:10; Isa. 46:6). Merchants carried measuring weights of metal or stone in a bag. The Bible stresses the importance of carrying honest measuring standards in those bags (Deut. 25:13; Prov. 16:11; Mic. 6:11). Job pours out his hopelessness to God, longing for his sins to be metaphorically tied up in a bag (14:17).

In the Gospels, two kinds of bags are mentioned. One is the traveler's bag used to carry food and clothing while on a journey. Jesus tells his disciples not to take such a bag when he sends them out as apostles to preach, heal, and drive out demons (Matt. 10:10; Mark 6:8; Luke 9:3; 10:4). Just before his arrest, Jesus reverses that advice, instructing his disciples to take not only a bag (for provisions) and purse (for money) but a sword as well (Luke 22:35–36). A different Greek word is used for the moneybag or box that Judas is in charge of and from which he pilfers (John 12:6).

BAGPIPE An aerophone (a musical instrument that produces sound by vibration of air), this instrument pushes air, held in a bag, past reeds. In the NASB it is listed as one of the instruments in Nebuchadnezzar's band that initiated worship of his golden statue (Dan. 3:5, 10, 15). Most versions, however, understand this instrument to be the dulcimer (KJV) or double-pipe (cf. NIV). *See also* Dulcimer.

BAHARUMITE A resident of Bahurim (1 Chron. 11:33; cf. "Barhumite" in 2 Sam. 23:31). *See also* Bahurim.

BAHURIM A village to the northeast of Jerusalem, probably located in Benjamin near Anathoth, it came to prominence during David's reign. After Abner had come over to him, David demanded that Ish-Bosheth arrange for his wife, Michal, to be returned to him, since Saul had taken her and given her to Paltiel (1 Sam. 25:44). Paltiel followed her as far as Bahurim on her return before being dismissed by Abner (2 Sam. 3:16). Later, when David was fleeing from Absalom, he was cursed at Bahurim by Shimei, a member of Saul's family (2 Sam. 16:5–13). On David's return, Shimei was among the first to meet him (19:16–23), but although David promised not to kill him and prevented Abishai from doing so, he later directed Solomon to execute him (1 Kings 2:8). Others in the town remained loyal, including an unnamed householder who hid two of David's spies in a well while they were escaping from Absalom's men, and whose wife misled Absalom's men as to their location (2 Sam. 17:17–20).

BAJITH The KJV rendering of *bayit* as the name of a worship site in Moab (Isa. 15:2). Other versions translate the word in this verse as "house" or "temple."

BAKA, VALLEY OF A valley mentioned in Ps. 84:6. Worshipers are said to pass through this valley on the way to worship in Zion. The translation and significance of the name are debated. The Hebrew word *baka'* may mean "balsam tree," thus "Valley of the Balsam." In 2 Sam. 5:22–24; 1 Chron. 14:13–16, David was to wait until he heard the sound of marching in the balsam trees (NIV: "poplar trees") (signifying the advance of the heavenly army) before he attacked the Philistines. The word *baka'* also is similar to the Hebrew word for "weeping," thus "Valley of Weeping." Perhaps the name of the valley alludes to both words.

BAKBAKKAR A Levite descendant of Asaph who returned to Jerusalem after the exile (1 Chron. 9:15).

BAKBUK Listed in Ezra 2:51; Neh. 7:53 as an ancestor of temple servants (Nethinim) who returned to Jerusalem after the Babylonian captivity under the leadership of Zerubbabel (in 539 BC or soon after). The fact that many of the names in the list are foreign has led to the belief that they were originally prisoners of war who were pressed into service for menial tasks as they assisted the Levites.

BAKBUKIAH A Levite chosen to return and serve in Jerusalem following the exile. Bakbukiah served as a leader of thanksgiving and prayer (Neh. 11:17; 12:9) and as a gatekeeper to the storerooms (12:25).

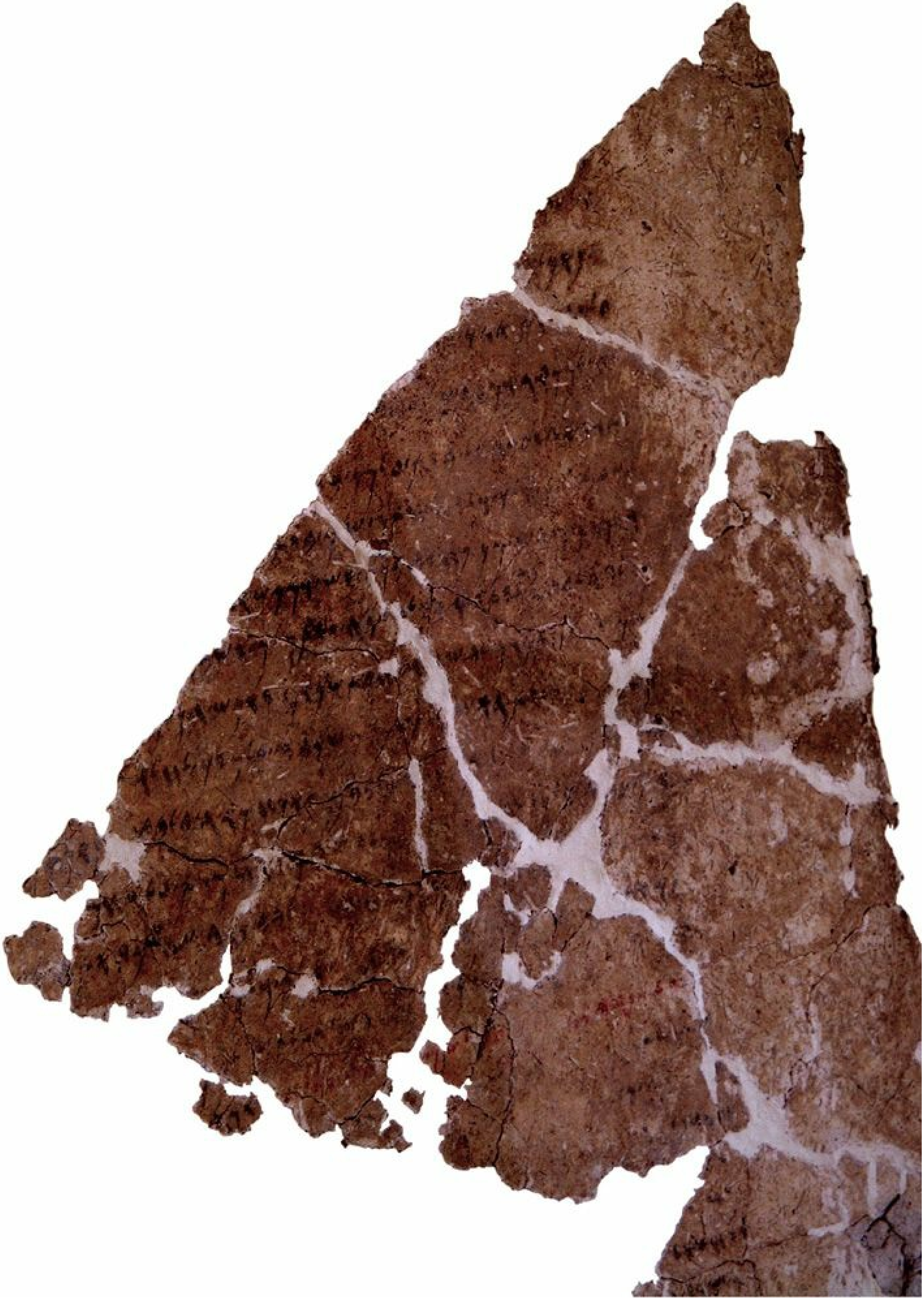
BAKEMEATS The KJV translation of the Hebrew word *ma'akhal* in Gen. 40:17 (NIV: "baked goods"; NRSV: "baked food").

BAKERS' STREET Street in Jerusalem during the time of King Zedekiah (Jer. 37:21; NIV: "street of the bakers"). This street is most likely where the majority of the bakers were located in Jerusalem, as it was common to group trades together in one area. Jeremiah was promised bread from the bakers' street during his imprisonment.

BAKING Usually of bread, a daily household chore typically done by women (Lev. 26:26; 1 Sam. 8:13; 28:24) and an indispensable element of biblical hospitality (Gen. 18:6). Abigail provides two hundred loaves of bread to David (1 Sam. 25:18) to welcome the servants of God. Three methods of baking are over fire-heated coals (1 Kings 19:6), on a griddle over a fire (Lev. 2:5), and in an oven (Lev. 2:4) providing uniform heat (Hos. 7:4).

BALAAM Toward the end of the forty years of wandering in the wilderness, Moses led the people of Israel to the plains of Moab, across the Jordan from Jericho (Num. 22:1). From this place, Israel would soon cross into the promised land. However, Israel had just defeated Sihon and Og (Num. 21:21–35), two Transjordanian kings, putting fear in the minds of the Moabites and their king, Balak.

To counteract the threat, Balak tried to enlist the aid of a well-known diviner, Balaam, who lived in Pethor, a site in northwest Mesopotamia (Num. 22:5). The king wanted to weaken Israel by having Balaam curse the Israelites. However, God made it clear to Balaam that he would not endorse any action against his people. Balaam at first refused to go with the Moabite messengers, but after being enticed by an even bigger payment, he left for Moab. God allowed him to go, but with a warning that Balaam could do only what God himself commanded him to do. God emphasized this last point by famously putting an invisible angel in the path of Balaam's donkey so that it could not pass. In frustration, Balaam whipped the donkey until God gave the animal voice to object to the beating, and then the Lord opened the diviner's eyes to the angel's presence. The episode puts Balaam in a negative light, having his donkey alert him, the diviner, to the angel's presence.



A portion of the Deir ‘Alla inscription, which mentions Balaam

Nonetheless, Balaam continues on his journey, but due to God’s command, he could only bless and not curse Israel. At Balak’s urging, he tries to curse Israel four times, but each time he delivers an oracle of blessing. The final oracle directed to Israel (Num. 23:15–19) contains the most memorable words of Balaam as he predicts, “A star will come out of Jacob; a scepter will rise out of Israel” (24:17), which comes to fulfillment in the rise of the Davidic dynasty.

Thus, Balak of Moab’s attempt to thwart Israel by prophetic curse fails. However, Num. 25 reports that a different tactic does succeed in bringing harm, though not utter ruin, to the people of God. Some Israelites start sleeping with women of Moab and Midian and worshiping their gods. The damage is stopped by the swift action of Phinehas the priest. Although Balaam is not named in this chapter, Num. 31:16 reports that he was the one who originated the plot. Apparently, Balaam was determined to get the payment. Later Scripture holds him up as a negative example of a false teacher who cares only about money (Judg. 11; 2 Pet. 2:15; Rev. 2:14). The Israelites kill him along with many other Midianites (Num. 31:8).

Interestingly, archaeologists have uncovered an inscription on a plaster wall at Deir ’Alla, a site eight miles east of the Jordan River in the country of Jordan, that mentions Balaam the diviner and states that he had night visions. Thus, we have a rare instance of a biblical character attested in an extrabiblical text. The inscription has been dated to the eighth century BC.

BALAC *See* Balak.

BALADAN The father of the Babylonian king Marduk-Baladan (2 Kings 20:12; Isa. 39:1). Marduk-Baladan reigned during the time of Hezekiah, king of Judah (727–698 BC).

BALAH A town allotted to the tribe of Simeon, whose territory was within the tribal boundary of Judah (Josh. 19:3). Also called “Bilhah” (1 Chron. 4:29) and “Baalah” (Josh. 15:29). *See also* Baalah.

BALAK The Moabite king who, after witnessing the Israelite destruction of the Amorites, sent for Balaam the prophet to curse the Israelites (Num. 22:1–24:25). Balak’s actions are recalled throughout the Bible (Josh. 24:9; Judg. 11:25; Mic. 6:5; Rev. 2:14).

BALANCES Three different Hebrew words and one Greek word are translated in the NIV as “balances” or “scales,” and all probably signify the same basic instrument. Balances in the ancient world consisted of two plates or pans suspended from the ends of a horizontal bar that itself was suspended by a cord or rested on a fulcrum. The object to be weighed was placed in one of the pans, and an object of already-known weight, usually a stone, was placed in the other. Economic transactions depended on the use of proper balances and accurate weights. Standards for weights varied, and it was relatively easy for a merchant or trader to cheat by using substandard weights (Lev. 19:36; Prov. 11:1; 20:23; Ezek. 45:10; Hos. 12:7; Amos 8:5; Mic. 6:11).

Most references to balances in the Bible are figurative. Job complains that his misery could be weighed on scales (Job 6:2), and he declares that if God weighed him with honest scales, God would find him blameless (31:6). Belshazzar, on the other hand, was “weighed on the scales and found wanting" (Dan. 5:27). Isaiah declares that God "weighed the mountains on the scales and the hills in a balance" (40:12), and that God regards the nations as "dust on the scales" (40:15). The psalmist asserts that if humans, whether of low or high degree, were placed on scales, they would actually cause the pan into which they were placed to rise (Ps. 62:9; cf. ESV, NRSB, NASB)! The rider on the black horse in the book of Revelation is portrayed as weighing out vengeance against the earth on a pair of scales (6:5; cf. Ezek. 5:1–12).

BALDNESS When done deliberately through shaving the head, baldness is a physical expression of mourning in the OT. In Scripture, most instances of baldness are self-imposed. Often a corporate act, baldness is accompanied by wearing sackcloth, sprinkling dust on one's head, weeping, and rolling in ashes (Ezek. 27:30–31). The prophets declare that God's people will exhibit baldness as their prosperity turns into mourning (Isa. 3:24; Mic. 1:16). Sometimes God commands against baldness and all mourning when he himself has brought the devastation as punishment (Jer. 16:6), or when it is inappropriate for his priests (Lev. 21:5). Apart from an act of mourning, baldness is named as an outcome of extreme exertion in battle (Ezek. 29:18). Baldness is ceremonially clean unless accompanied by leprous-like spots (Lev. 13:40–46). A memorable story concerning baldness occurs when the prophet Elisha curses a group of youths for ridiculing his baldness, leading to the dismembering of forty-two of them by two bears (2 Kings 2:23–25).

BALM Probably the aromatic resin of the terebinth tree, this substance was used as a remedy (Jer. 46:11; 51:8). From centers of production, it was exported throughout the Levant and Egypt (Gen. 37:25; 43:11; Ezek. 27:17). Several biblical texts associate balm production with the region east of the Jordan, including Gilead. Jeremiah's sarcastic question attests to the origin and use of balm: "Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there? Why then is there no healing for the wound of my people?" (Jer. 8:22).

BALM OF GILEAD *See* Balm.

BALSAM A type of shrub producing a fragrant, valuable oil that the ancients refined for use as a perfuming agent. Not native to Israel, balsam had to be imported from Abyssinia (ancient Ethiopia) or Arabia. The NASB translates the Hebrew term *bosem* as "balsam" in Song 5:1, 13; 6:2, although the term is most often translated "perfume" or "spice" (e.g., Exod. 25:6; 1 Kings 10:2; 2 Chron. 9:24 NIV). Balsam served as a perfume in Esther (2:12 GNT) and was counted among the royal treasures of Judah (2 Kings 20:13 GW). *See also* Spices.

BAMAH Hebrew word meaning "height" or "elevation." It is transliterated once in Ezek. 20:29 to refer to a particular high place of unknown location. When translated, the word is used to refer to high places in general, in either a literal or a metaphorical sense. The term can also refer to Canaanite places of worship. Usually, if not always, the *bamah* was condemned as a false place of worship.

BAMOTH Literally, "high places," this is one of the stops along the Israelite journey from Egypt (Num. 21:19–20). It is located north of the Arnon River near Mount Nebo (Pisgah). This place may be identical to Bamoth Baal (Num. 22:41; Josh. 13:17).

BAMOTH BAAL The place where Balak, king of Moab, took Balaam to curse Israel (Num. 22:41). This city was part of the inheritance given to the tribe of Reuben by Moses; it was one of the cities surrounding Heshbon (Josh. 13:17). Bamoth Baal may be identical to Bamoth (Num. 21:19–20), given the similarity of names and geographical location. Although the exact location is unknown, both names are placed in the same region.

BAN *See* Accursed; Anathema; Holy War.

BAND *See* Battalion; Cohort.

BAND, MAGIC *See* Magic Charm.

BANGLES *See* Anklet.

BANI **(1)** An ancestor of Ethan, one of the musicians appointed by David (1 Chron. 6:46). **(2)** An ancestor of Uthai, a Judahite who resettled in Jerusalem after the exile (1 Chron. 9:4). **(3)** An ancestor of men who returned to the land with Zerubbabel and Joshua after the exile (Ezra 2:10). Another group of returnees from the family of Bani came with Ezra (8:10). These families are possibly referred to again in the list of men who had taken foreign wives in the time of Ezra (10:29, 34). **(4)** The father of Rehum, who supervised repairs in Jerusalem in the time of Nehemiah (Neh. 3:17). **(5)** Two Levites who attended Ezra during the reading of the law (Neh. 8:7), led worship (9:4–5), and signed the covenant along with Nehemiah (10:13). Both are mentioned in Neh. 9:4. It is not clear how the various mentions of Bani in this section of Nehemiah should be distinguished. **(6)** A leader of the people who signed the covenant along with Nehemiah (Neh. 10:14). **(7)** The father of Uzzi, a Levite descended from Asaph (Neh. 11:22). *See also* Binnui.

BANKING The basic activities of banking include amassing capital and deposits, extending credit, and brokering the transmission of funds. The Bible describes and comments on such practices in both Testaments but ascribes them to bankers only in the NT.

In ancient Israel trading and mercantilism were facilitated by the use of silver, gold, and livestock as stores of value, media of exchange, and means of payment (Gen. 13:2; 17:12; 23:15). Buying and selling among individuals with payment in silver was particularly common (Gen. 37:28; 1 Sam. 13:21), as was exporting and importing among nations (1 Kings 10:28–29; 2 Chron. 1:16–17; Neh. 13:16). However, livestock was acceptable currency in the settlement of taxes, sacrifices, and other obligations (Num. 31:28–40). What it lacked in portability it made up for in practicality; unlike precious metals, herds grew and multiplied.

By the time of the monarchy, not only was there a treasury of wealth dedicated to God and funded through offerings (Josh. 6:19, 24; 1 Kings 7:51), but also the king maintained his own treasury (1 Kings 15:18; 2 Kings 12:18; 14:14; 16:8; 18:15; 20:13). From both, Judah paid tributes and fines. In times of subjugation both were plundered.

Relief of a money changer (third century AD)

The OT stresses honesty in commercial dealings, which requires both fair scales (Lev. 19:36; Prov. 11:1; 16:11; Hos. 12:7; Amos 8:4–6) and an established system of weights and measures. The basic unit of weight for precious metals was the sanctuary shekel, which equaled twenty gerahs, about ten grams (Exod. 30:13; Lev. 27:25). The largest unit of measurement was the talent, which equaled three thousand shekels (Exod. 38:24–26; Ezra 7:22; 8:26).

The law regulated lending practices primarily to protect the poor against exploitation. It did not permit the charging of interest by Israelite lenders to fellow Israelites, and it set up rules regarding the taking, holding, and return of collateral (Exod. 22:25; Deut. 23:19; 24:6, 10–13, 17; Neh. 5:1–13; Ezek. 33:15). Every seven years creditors were required to release obligors from their debts (Deut. 15:1–3). However, these rules did not apply when the borrowers were foreigners.

By NT times, banking activities were more developed and formalized. The NT describes the depositing of money for interest (Matt. 25:27; Luke 19:23). Coins were in widespread use in the Roman Empire, but locally minted and diverse. For example, the denarius was Roman, and the drachma Greek (Luke 20:24; Matt. 17:24). Thus, the services of money changers were commonplace. They usually set up their distinctive, grid-marked tables in and around temples and public buildings. The NT Greek word for "banker," *trapezitēs*, comes from the word for "table," *trapeza*. At the Jerusalem temple, the practices of the money changers famously provoked the righteous anger of Jesus, causing him to overturn their tables (Matt. 21:12; Mark 11:15; John 2:15).

BANKRUPTCY A person enters bankruptcy upon legally declaring inability to repay debts. God commanded that obligations be repaid, but he also established a type of bankruptcy procedure for Israel's poorest debtors. They could render six years of life in servitude, but creditors had to release their servants every seventh year (Exod. 21:2). Additionally, the liberation at Jubilee (Lev. 25:10) gave the poor some protection against oppressive terms of service (cf. Neh. 5:3–5).

A key biblical theme concerns the kinsman-redeemer, who could buy back close relatives from slavery and restore their land to the family (Lev. 25:25, 47–48). The book of Ruth tells how Boaz redeemed Ruth from poverty and alienation back to Naomi's ancestral land. This theme continues with Jesus Christ, who came as a "ransom for many" (Mark 10:45). With his blood he purchased the freedom of a spiritually bankrupt people, sold into bondage to sin (1 Pet. 1:18–19).

BANNER A flag, streamer, emblem, or carved object raised on a pole. On the ancient battle field, raised banners and blown trumpets served as the primary tools for mass communication. They could indicate troop movements and serve as rallying points (Isa. 18:3). Once the battle was won, banners proclaimed victory. Cloth banners usually were colored and carried symbols to represent a particular group, whether it was a military unit, clan, tribe, or nation (Num. 2:2; Ps. 60:4). The actual appearance of Israelite banners is unknown, but the images of banners from other nations have been found carved into ancient reliefs. For example, the Narmer Palette (c. 3000 BC) shows three different kinds of banners raised above the heads of soldiers.

The earliest reference to a banner in the Bible occurs after the Israelites defeated the Amalekites at Rephidim near Mount Sinai. To commemorate the victory, Moses built an altar and named it *Yahweh nissi*, "The LORD is my banner" (Exod. 17:15). In a sense, Moses' raised hands served as banners to encourage the Israelites by assuring God's presence and victory (17:11–13).

When Moses placed the bronze serpent on a pole, he raised it as a banner for the Israelites to look upon it and be healed (Num. 21:8). Jesus drew a parallel between the raised serpent and the raising up of the Son of Man (John 3:14). Metaphorically, Jesus was a banner lifted up to proclaim salvation for the world.

An interesting use of banner is in Song 6:4, where the woman is described as "majestic as troops with banners." The man is so in awe of his beloved that it mesmerizes him and causes his heart to race. The NIV renders Song 2:4 as "let his banner over me be love," the idea being that the man would make his love for his beloved public.

BANQUET A banquet is a joyful celebration, usually involving wine, abundant food, music, and dancing. Banquets celebrated special occasions such as the forging of a relationship (Gen. 26:26–30), the coronation of a king (1 Chron. 12:28–40), the completion of the temple (2 Chron. 7:8), victory over one's enemies (Gen. 14:18–19; Ps. 23:5), weddings (Gen. 29:22; John 2:1–11; Rev. 19:9), birthdays of royals (Mark 6:21), and the reunion of estranged relatives (Luke 15:23–24). Banquets also symbolized one’s status, since they were by invitation only. One’s seating arrangement corresponded to one’s social status in the group, since there were “higher” and “lower” positions (Luke 14:8–9). During the meal, people reclined on bedlike seats.

In the OT, the image of a banquet anticipates a future occasion when God will remove the reproach of his people (Isa. 25:6). It also becomes a metaphor for special access to God, who protects, blesses, and honors his people (Ps. 23:5).

The plot of the book of Esther revolves around banquets. The book opens with two big banquets held by Ahasuerus (Esther 1) that conclude with the removal of Vashti as queen, soon replaced by Esther. Esther invites the king and Haman to a banquet in order to expose the insidious plot of the latter (Esther 7). The book culminates with a great banquet that is the prototype for an annual banquet celebrating the Jews’ victory over their enemies, Purim (9:2–32).

Jesus uses the banquet as a metaphor for the presence of the kingdom (cf. Matt. 9:14–17). He tells a parable of a king who has planned a wedding banquet for his son. Those who were invited have refused to attend (i.e., the Jewish leaders), so the king commands his servants to go out into the streets and gather as many people as they can find, both good and bad (Matt. 22:1–10).

Jesus also uses the imagery of a banquet to describe the final future manifestation of the kingdom. He exhorts his disciples to be prepared for the unexpected return of the bridegroom, lest they be excluded from the wedding banquet (Matt. 25:1–13). At the Last Supper, he commands the disciples to continue the practice of sharing bread and wine after his departure, to remember his atoning death and to anticipate his future coming (Matt. 26:26–29). This future banquet will celebrate Christ’s final union with his bride, the church (Rev. 19:6–9).

BAPTISM The initiatory ritual of Christianity. This rite is of great significance in connecting the individual both to Christ and to the greater community of believers. Baptism carries an equal measure of symbolism and tradition, evoking a connection between OT covenantal circumcision and ritual cleansing and NT regeneration and redemption. It is the visible response to the gospel, reflecting the internal response to the gospel: the climactic moment in the journey of reconciliation of the believer with God.

The word “baptism” (Gk. *baptisma*) carries with it the sense of washing by dipping (Gk. *baptizō*); the word can also carry the sense of being overtaken or subsumed, or of joining or entering into a new way of life. In either sense, a distinct change in the recipient is envisioned. Through baptism, Christians both demonstrate their desire for and symbolize their understanding of being washed clean of sin; they also proclaim their surrender to and subjugation by Christ. All this intellectual underpinning occurs in what can be a deeply emotional ceremony.

BAPTISM IN THE BIBLE

The immediate precursor of Christian baptism was the baptism of John the Baptist (Mark 1:4 pars.), a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, preparing the hearts of the people for the coming Messiah. But when Jesus himself was baptized by John to “fulfill all righteousness” (Matt. 3:15) and to allow Jesus to identify with sinful humanity, he became the firstfruits of the new covenant. John emphasized that his baptism with water was inferior to the baptism “with the Holy Spirit and fire” that Jesus would bring (Matt. 3:11). Jesus’ disciples continued John’s baptism during his earthly ministry (John 4:1–2).

Baptism was immediately important in the early church. Jesus commanded the disciples to “make disciples . . . , baptizing them” (Matt. 28:19). The disciples replaced Judas from among those “who have been with us the whole time . . . from John's baptism" (Acts 1:21–22). Peter's first sermon proclaims, "Repent and be baptized" (2:38). The apostles baptized new believers in Christ immediately (8:12–13; 8:38; 9:18; 10:48; 16:15, 33; 18:8; 19:5; 22:16).

For the apostle Paul, baptism represents a participation in the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Paul writes, "Don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death" (Rom. 6:3–4); "In him you were . . . buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through your faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead" (Col. 2:11–12).

Though the NT does not explicitly command baptism (the command in Acts 2:38 is understood to be directed toward a specific group), it assumes that all believers will be baptized (Acts 19:2–3). The expectation of baptism is as good as a command, and Christians should understand baptism as a matter of obedience. Accounts of baptism in Acts are always preceded by reports of belief, and new believers are immediately baptized. Baptism also carries the idea of conveyance: no one self-baptizes; rather, believers baptize others as an initiation into the family of believers.

BAPTISMAL PRACTICES

Historically in the church, the manner of baptism involves the application of water to the recipient by pouring, sprinkling, or immersion. These practices vary among Christians, but no one practice has a clear biblical warrant above the others. Paul, however, appeals to symbolism in his discussions of baptism. He describes those baptized "into Christ Jesus" as being "baptized into his death," "buried with him through baptism into death" that they might be raised to a new life "just as Christ was raised from the dead" (Rom. 6:3–4; see also Col. 2:12). Immersion may be the best vehicle to retain this striking symbolism of Paul.

The timing of baptism has caused controversy within the church. Some churches (especially Baptist) believe that baptism is for those who have made a conscious decision for Christ—believer's baptism. Baptism is an expression of both the change in one's life and one's devotion. With this act, the person unites with the church as well as with Jesus himself. This is a deeply moving experience for the celebrant, one to be remembered forever. The celebrant metaphorically is buried with Christ in order to be raised up with him. Baptism does not of itself convey salvation but rather is an act of obedience, and obedience indicates active affirmation of the gospel.

Some churches (e.g., Reformed, Presbyterian) practice infant baptism (paedobaptism). Baptism is at least partly a covenant act similar to circumcision; by this act the child's parents announce their own membership in the body of Christ and their desire that the child be considered a member as well. Baptism does not convey salvation, but it does convey a type of grace. Entering early adulthood, the child will be given a chance to affirm his or her faith through confirmation. Obviously, the child will have no conscious memory of the original baptism, but the child will grow from infancy with the knowledge of having been entered conditionally into the church by his or her parents. Infant baptism is an act of faith by the parents that the child must claim later, at which time some church traditions have a ritual of confirmation. The warrant for infant baptism is the passages where a "household" or other unspecified group is baptized (see Acts 2:38; 16:15, 31, 34). Also, Paul seems to relate Christian baptism to OT circumcision (Col. 2:11–12), an event for the child performed at the parents' request (Lev. 12:3). (*See also* Infant Baptism)

Advocates of believer's baptism also see value in the ceremonial incorporation of infants into the church. These churches offer child dedication, a similar ceremony but without the water component.

Another source of debate is the concept of rebaptism. Some churches require that prospective members who were baptized as infants be baptized anew as believing adults. It is claimed that the previous baptism is invalid, since an infant cannot possess the proper faith. For other churches, rebaptism is strictly forbidden as unscriptural.

Notably, while most Christian groups see baptism as fundamental to their fellowship, many groups also make allowances for baptism received in extraordinary ways. For instance, the Catholic Church allows for "baptism by blood" and "baptism by desire," where in extreme cases baptism is credited though having never been performed. Catholic doctrine also allows for "extraordinary ministers" who may not even be Christians to perform baptism, as long as the intended goal is a valid Christian baptism.

THE FUNCTION OF BAPTISM

Baptism should not be seen as a saving act; Paul tells a jailer, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household" (Acts 16:31). It is later, after the jailer has washed Paul's and Silas's wounds, that the family is baptized. Paul does write to Titus about salvation, saying, "He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit" (Titus 3:5). But here Paul is invoking OT imagery rather than NT baptism, as he nowhere uses these terms to refer to baptism. Peter writes, "And this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also—not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a clear conscience toward God" (1 Pet. 3:21). It is not the baptism that saves, nor the washing, but rather the working of faith in relationship with God.

It is a shame that baptism has become a source of division in today's churches. Paul emphasizes that "we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink" (1 Cor. 12:13). Having been baptized into Jesus Christ should be a unifying element among Christians, not a source of contention.

BAPTISM FOR THE DEAD Baptism for the dead is a mysterious practice mentioned in Paul's argument for the reality of the resurrection in 1 Cor. 15:29–34. There is no mention of this elsewhere in Scripture. Although a number of different explanations have been offered for this practice, the usual understanding is that some people in Corinth had been baptized on behalf of those who had already died. There is nothing in Paul's argument suggesting that he supported or approved of this practice, or even that believers themselves were necessarily involved in this practice (note that in this passage he speaks of "those," not "we"). Paul simply used this illustration as another logical argument against those who denied the bodily resurrection. In essence, Paul argued, "If you do not believe in the resurrection, why are you so concerned about the dead?"

Baptism for the dead has been practiced by a few splinter groups throughout history and since 1840 by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons). The goal of this practice is to provide a means for making a public profession of faith for a friend or loved one who has died without being baptized in order to make possible that person's salvation. Yet this practice is built on a serious misunderstanding of both salvation and baptism. The standard Christian understanding is that one's eternal destiny is set at the time of death (see Luke 16:26).

BAPTISM IN/WITH THE SPIRIT The outpouring of the Spirit that was prophesied in the OT to take place in the last days, in connection with the arrival of the Messiah.

Spirit baptism in the Bible. The OT prophets had spoken of both the Spirit of God coming upon the Messiah (e.g., Isa. 11:2; 42:1; 61:1) and a giving or pouring out of the Spirit in the last days (e.g., Isa. 32:15; 44:3; Ezek. 36:27; 37:14; 39:29; Joel 2:28). Peter connects the giving of the Spirit with

Jesus' being received by the Father and being granted messianic authority (Acts 2:33–38). The experience of Cornelius in particular associates the pouring out of the Spirit (Acts 10:45) with a baptism with the Spirit (11:16).

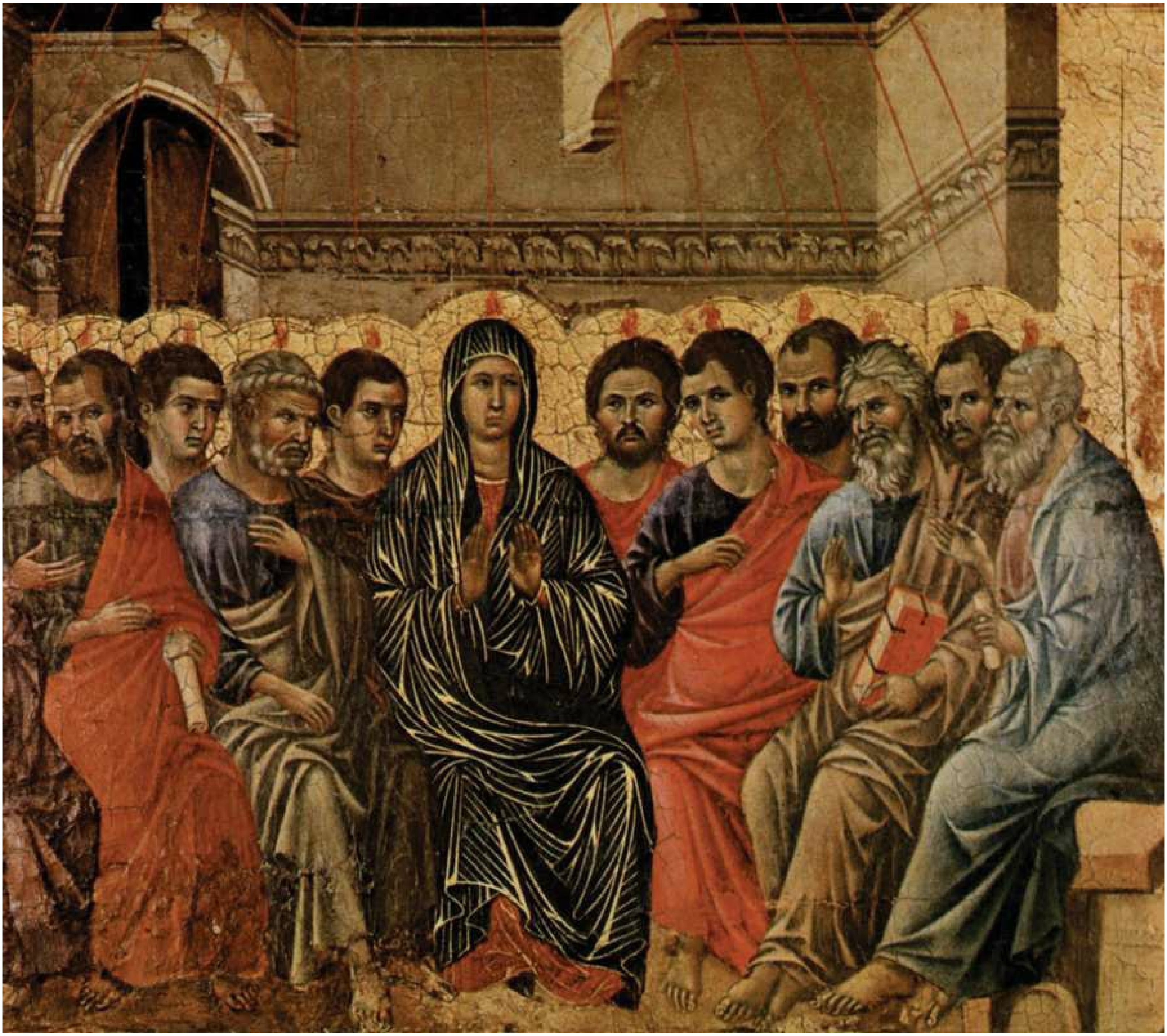
Seven passages in the NT directly speak of someone being baptized in/with the Spirit. Four of these passages refer to John the Baptist's prediction that Jesus will baptize people in/with the Spirit in contrast to his own water baptism (Matt. 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:33). In Matthew and Luke, Jesus' baptism is referred to as a baptism with the Holy Spirit and with fire. Two passages refer to Jesus' prediction that the disciples would receive Spirit baptism, which occurred at Pentecost. As recorded in Acts 2, tongues of fire came to rest on each of them, they were filled with the Holy Spirit, and they began to speak in other tongues. As the disciples spoke to the Jews who had gathered in Jerusalem for the festival, three thousand were converted. Acts 1:5 contains Jesus' prediction of this baptism with the Spirit, which Peter recounts in 11:16.

The final reference occurs in 1 Cor. 12:13, where Paul says, "For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink." Thus, Christians form one body through their common experience of immersion in the one Spirit.

A second baptism? While in 1 Cor. 12 Paul seems to refer to an experience that all Christians undergo at conversion, there are several incidents in Acts where the reception of the Spirit occurs after conversion. The question then arises as to whether there is a separate "baptism in/with the Holy Spirit" distinct from the Spirit's initial work of regeneration and incorporation into the body of Christ at conversion and whether this two-stage process is normative for the church. This belief in a second baptism is particularly prominent in Pentecostal traditions.

Examples such as Acts 2; 8; 10; 19 are commonly used to support the view of a second and subsequent experience of Spirit baptism. In Acts 2 the disciples are already converted and wait for the Spirit, who comes to them at Pentecost. In Acts 8 the Samaritans first respond to Philip's preaching and receive water baptism. However, they receive the Spirit only after Peter and John come from Jerusalem and pray for them to receive the Holy Spirit. In Acts 10 Cornelius is a God-fearing Gentile, and after Peter visits him, the Spirit falls on his household. In Acts 19 Paul finds some disciples in Ephesus. After he lays hands on them, the Holy Spirit comes upon them, and they begin to speak in tongues and prophesy.

In understanding these experiences, it must be remembered that Acts describes a transitional period for the church. Acts 2 in particular recounts the initial giving of the Spirit under the new covenant. It is possible, then, to see the events in Acts 8; 10 as the coming of the Spirit upon two other people groups, the Samaritans and the Gentiles. Acts 2:38 and 5:32 indicate that the apostles expected the reception of the Spirit to accompany conversion, and this appears to be the case in the rest of the book. Acts 19 narrates an incomplete conversion, where the people had only experienced John's baptism and receive the Spirit after Paul baptizes them "in the name of the Lord Jesus."



Reproduction of the painting Pentecost by Duccio di Buoninsegna of Siena

Filled with the Spirit. Although the NT does not support a theology of a second Spirit baptism, it does commonly mention an experience of being “filled” with the Spirit. The concept of being “filled with the Spirit” frequently occurs in contexts referring to spiritual growth, such as in Eph. 5:18, where Paul exhorts, “Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit.” Apparently, this filling can occur numerous times. It can lead to worship of and thanksgiving to God (Eph. 5:19–20). It can also result in empowerment for ministry.

The immediate consequence of the disciples’ filling in Acts 2:4 is speaking in tongues to the various Jews gathered in Jerusalem, and in 4:31 they are empowered to speak “the word of God boldly.” Fullness of the Spirit can also be a characteristic of a believer’s life, such as in Acts 6:3, where the seven men chosen to look after the widows were to be men “known to be full of the Spirit.”

Baptism of Fire John the Baptist announces that one more powerful than he will “baptize . . . with the Holy Spirit and fire” (Matt. 3:11; Luke 3:16). A baptism of fire connotes judgment, yet Luke characterizes this as “good news” (Luke 3:17–18), for judgment signals the arrival of God’s eschatological kingdom in Jesus (cf. 12:49). John’s words evoke Isa. 4:4, which announces that Jerusalem/Zion will be cleansed “by a spirit of judgment and a spirit of fire.” They also resonate with numerous OT and intertestamental texts that predict God’s fiery judgment (e.g., Zeph. 1:18; Mal. 4:1). As a sign of the end times (Joel 2:28; Acts 2), God’s eschatological community, the church, experiences the baptism (1 Cor. 12:23) and fire (1 Thess. 5:19) of the Spirit.

Bar **(1)** Usually occurs in English Bibles as a translation of a Hebrew word (*beriach*) that can refer either to part of the frame of a structure such as the tabernacle (Exod. 26:28; 36:33 [NIV: “crossbar”]) or to a beam used to lock a gate in place (e.g., Judg. 16:3; Job 38:10; Ps. 147:13). Gate bars were made sometimes of wood (Nah. 3:13) and sometimes of metal (1 Kings 4:13; Ps. 107:16; Isa. 45:2). **(2)** *Bar* is Aramaic for “son.” When it appears in names, often in a hyphenated or combined form, it means “son of”; for example, Acts 4:36 explains that “Barnabas” means “son of encouragement.”

BARABBAS A prisoner mentioned in all four Gospels. Barabbas is a prisoner of particular note according to Matthew (27:16), an insurrectionist and murderer according to Mark (15:7) and Luke (23:19), a rebel according to John (18:40). His mention in all four Gospel accounts is significant. Barabbas was being held in prison when the Jewish chief priests and elders brought Jesus before Pilate following Judas’s betrayal in the garden of Gethsemane. After witnessing Jesus’ silence before those who were accusing him, Pilate asked the crowd whether they would rather he release to them Barabbas or Jesus. The practice of releasing a prisoner is described as either Pilate’s custom (Mark 15:8) or a Jewish Passover custom (John 18:39). Persuaded by the chief priests and elders, the crowd demanded the release of Barabbas and the crucifixion of Jesus.

BARACHEL *See* Barakel.

BARACHIAH, BARACHIAS *See* Berekiah.

BARAK A military commander of Israel during the time of the judges, commanded by God through the prophetess Deborah to lead an army in battle against Sisera, commander of the Canaanite forces. Barak agrees on the condition that Deborah accompany him, which she does, but only after passing the honor of killing Sisera from Barak to a woman, the wife of Heber the Kenite (Judg. 4:6–24). Deborah praises the victory (5:19–22). Barak is listed as a hero in 1 Sam. 12:11; Heb. 11:32.

BARAKEL The father of Elihu, one of Job’s four friends who argue with him about the reason for his suffering (Job 32:2, 6).

BARBARIAN An epithet used by Luke and Paul to signify someone who speaks a foreign, unintelligible language (Acts 28:2, 4 [NIV: “islanders”]; 1 Cor. 14:11; cf. Ps. 113:1 LXX [114:1 MT]). The Greek term, *barbaros*, occurs six times in the NT, all of them rendered as “barbarian” by the KJV, whereas more-recent versions tend to use terms such as “foreigner” (though see Rom. 1:14 NRSV; Col. 3:11 NRSV, NIV). However, such terms perhaps miss the negative connotation. The word itself is onomatopoeic, representing the unintelligible sound of a language foreign to the hearer:

bar-bar-bar. The basis for such a distinction was partly overcome at Pentecost (Acts 2:1–36). The term could also be used more generally for a member of another nation, which, before Christ, had not been included in God's covenant (Rom. 1:14). Paul also mentions, as a class of barbarian, the Scythians (Col. 3:11), who had a bad reputation among Romans and Jews (2 Macc. 4:47; 3 Macc. 7:5). Their depiction by Herodotus is particularly terrifying: a nomadic people north of the Black Sea (and therefore not far from the Colossians in Asia Minor) who never washed and who drank the blood of the first enemy killed in battle, making napkins of the scalps and drinking bowls from skulls of the vanquished (*Hist.* 4.19, 46, 64–65, 75). Paul maintains that deeply engrained cultural evil can be overcome in Christ (Col. 3:1–11; see also Gal. 3:28). In subsequent centuries, missionaries were phenomenally successful in reaching the barbarian tribes.

BARHUMITE *See* Baharumite.

BAR-JESUS A Jewish sorcerer (Semitic "Elymas," meaning "wise magician") in the service of the proconsul of Paphos. As Paul predicted, Bar-Jesus became blind as a consequence of his opposition to Paul and Barnabas as they proclaimed the gospel to the proconsul (Acts 13:6).

BAR-JONAH Aramaic for "son of Jonah" (see NIV). This is the surname of Simon Peter, identifying his father as Jonah (Matt. 16:17) or John (John 1:42).

BAR KOKHBA Reputed to have led the Second Jewish Revolt against Rome in Judea, AD 132–135. Originally named "Bar Kosiba," supporters called him "Bar Kokhba" ("son of the star"), giving him a messianic association in connection with Num. 24:17, a text understood in many ancient Jewish sources as referring to one or two messianic deliverer figures. Detractors manipulated his name as "Bar Koziba" ("son of the lie").

We have few sources for Bar Kokhba and his revolt. Evidence indicates that he enjoyed the title *nasi* ("prince") among his followers. The revolt remained confined to a relatively small area in Judea, and though debate continues, it is unlikely that Bar Kokhba captured Jerusalem. A ban on circumcision and Hadrian's desire to reestablish Jerusalem as a pagan city perhaps contributed to unrest leading to the revolt. Ultimately, the Romans crushed the revolt, banned Jews from Jerusalem, and reestablished the city as a pagan city, Aelia Capitolina. Bar Kokhba's fate remains unknown.

BARKOS Listed in Ezra 2:53 and Neh. 7:55 as an ancestor of temple servants (Nethinim) who returned to Jerusalem after the Babylonian captivity under the leadership of Zerubbabel (in 539 BC or soon after). The fact that many of the names in the list are foreign ("Barkos" may be Aramaic for "son of the god Kos") has led to the belief that they were originally prisoners of war who were pressed into service to do menial tasks as they assisted the Levites.

BARLEY An annual cereal grass (genus *Hordeum*). Barley was considered one of the blessings of the promised land (Deut. 8:8), but when the barley crop failed, it produced devastating results (Exod. 9:31; Joel 1:11). Barley was among the grain offerings (Num. 5:15; cf. Ezek. 45:13) and was used for livestock feed (1 Kings 4:28), eaten raw, or made into bread (2 Kings 4:42). Gideon's surprise attack against the Midianites was symbolized in a dream by barley bread (Judg. 7:13), and Hosea used barley to purchase his wife (Hos. 3:2). Jesus used barley bread to feed the multitude (John 6:9, 13).

BARLEY HARVEST Barley harvest began in the spring, prior to wheat harvest (cf. Exod. 9:31–

32). The firstfruits of the harvest were offered to God before the grain was eaten (Lev. 23:9–14). Ruth gleaned in the field of Boaz throughout the barley and the wheat harvests (Ruth 1:22; 2:23).

Partially cut barley field at harvesttime

BARN A storehouse, usually used to store grain. It is better rendered as “granary.” In biblical times it was often underground, a place to keep grain safe from the elements and concealed from tax collectors. In the NT, sometimes buildings were built and used to store grain (Luke 12:18).

BARNABAS A name given by the apostles to Joseph, a Levite from Cyprus, missionary companion of Paul, and cousin of John Mark (Acts 4:36). Luke interprets the name “Barnabas” to mean (in Aramaic) “son of encouragement,” although this etymology is debated. Barnabas was known in the early church for his generosity and reconciling spirit.

Barnabas first appears in the book of Acts as a model of generosity for the Jerusalem church when he sells a piece of property to support the poor in the church (4:36–37). His example contrasts sharply with Ananias and Sapphira, who are judged by God for lying to the Holy Spirit concerning their own gift to the church. Barnabas next appears as the member of the Jerusalem church courageous enough to bring Saul, the former persecutor, to the leaders of the Jerusalem church (9:26–27). Later, when reports of Gentile conversions in Antioch were received in Jerusalem, Barnabas was sent to Antioch to supervise the work there. Barnabas went to Tarsus and brought Saul with him to Antioch

(11:22–26). There they ministered together, at one point delivering famine relief to Jerusalem (11:30).

The church in Antioch received a revelation from the Holy Spirit to send Barnabas and Saul on the first missionary outreach (Acts 13:2). Accompanied by Barnabas's cousin John Mark, they traveled to Barnabas's home island of Cyprus and then to the Roman province of Galatia. Mark deserted the group in Perga and returned to Jerusalem, but Paul and Barnabas established churches in Pisidian Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe (Acts 13–14). After returning to Antioch, Barnabas accompanied Paul to the Jerusalem council to settle the Judaizing controversy concerning whether Gentiles must keep the law and be circumcised to be saved (Acts 15).

Upon returning to Antioch, Paul suggested a return to the churches in Galatia. Barnabas proposed taking John Mark, but Paul refused, and the ensuing conflict resulted in Paul's departure to Galatia with Silas, with Barnabas taking John Mark to Cyprus (Acts 15:36–41). This is the last we hear of Barnabas in Acts.

Paul mentions Barnabas five times in his letters (1 Cor. 9:6; Gal. 2:1, 9, 13; Col. 4:10). He refers to Mark as Barnabas's cousin (Col. 4:10), speaks of their Jerusalem famine visit (Gal. 2:1, 9), and relates an episode of apparent hypocrisy when Barnabas withdrew from Gentile table fellowship under pressure from Jewish Christians (Gal. 2:13).

Later church writings attributed additional traditions to Barnabas. Clement of Alexandria claimed that Barnabas was one of the seventy sent out by Jesus in Luke 10 and also identified him as the author of the *Epistle of Barnabas*. Tertullian said that Barnabas wrote Hebrews, and the fifth or sixth century *Acts of Barnabas* describes his later ministry and martyrdom in Cyprus. None of these later traditions have sufficient evidence to confirm their historicity.

BARREL The KJV rendering of a Hebrew word (*kad*) referring to the container (NIV: "jar") in which the widow of Zarephath had a handful of flour (1 Kings 17:12, 14, 16). Miraculously, the contents of this container did not run out.

BARREN, BARRENNESS A barren woman is one who is infertile and without children. The biblical world placed great value on the blessing of having children. This value and the division of labor between the genders in an ancient agricultural society affected how society esteemed women and how a woman viewed her own identity. Being without children brought despair. This can be seen in Rachel's despondent plea (Gen. 30:1) and in the fact that wives would offer a servant in their place to bear a child (16:3; 30:3, 9).

In most of the stories about women and infertility, God reversed their circumstances: Sarah (Gen. 11:30), Rebekah (25:21), Rachel (30:22), Samson's mother (Judg. 13:2–3), Hannah (1 Sam. 1:2), the Shunammite (2 Kings 4:16), Elizabeth (Luke 1:7). For Michal, barrenness appears as a punishment (2 Sam. 6:23).

Caring for the barren is part of God's praiseworthy caring for the needy (Ps. 113:5–9).

BARSABBAS **(1)** Joseph, having the necessary qualifications, was the unsuccessful candidate when lots were cast to replace Judas Iscariot as one of the twelve apostles (Acts 1:21–26). **(2)** Judas, a leading Christian and prophet (Acts 15:32), was commissioned along with Silas to convey to the newly planted churches (13:1–14:28) the decision of the Jerusalem council not to require circumcision of Gentile believers (15:22).

BARTHOLOMEW A disciple of Jesus, and one of the twelve apostles. His name appears in the Synoptic lists of apostles (Matt. 10:2–4; Mark 3:16–19; Luke 6:13–16) and as a witness to Jesus' ascension (Acts 1:13). Nothing else is known of him unless, as suggested by a ninth-century tradition, his other name was "Nathanael," a disciple mentioned in John's Gospel (1:45). The evidence is not conclusive, but Nathanael was closely associated with the apostles before and after the resurrection (John 1:35–51; 21:1–2); Jesus promised him divine revelation, which would accord well with apostolic status (1:50–51); and he is connected to Philip in John's Gospel (1:45) just as Bartholomew is in the Synoptic lists of the apostles (Matt. 10:3).

BARTIMAEUS Mark 10:46–52 tells of this blind beggar who properly identifies Jesus as the "Son of David" (cf. Matt. 20:29–34; Luke 18:35–43). Because blindness can be a symbol of unbelief (Isa. 43:8), restoring sight was a sign of the coming Messiah (Isa. 29:18; Matt. 11:2–6). The Bartimaeus story is part of a larger unit (Mark 8:22–10:52), framed by Jesus' healing of another blind person (8:22–26). Seeing and believing, Bartimaeus is cast as an ideal disciple, "following" Jesus (10:52). Mark's use of the name implies a well-known disciple (cf. Jairus in 5:22).

BARUCH **(1)** The secretary of Jeremiah the prophet. Baruch performed several services for Jeremiah. He recorded a deed of purchase that was central to a message about return after exile (Jer. 32:12). The transaction process involved two copies signed by witnesses and stored in an earthen jar for preservation. He recorded Jeremiah's dictated messages (36:18). Baruch also read Jeremiah's words of warning to officials and to the people at the temple on a fasting day, when visitors would be coming to Jerusalem (36:10, 14). For this service he had to go into temporary hiding with Jeremiah (36:19, 36). Baruch was also blamed as the supposed source of Jeremiah's oracle telling Judah not to go to Egypt (43:1–3). When he became discontent, he was rebuked but promised basic safety (45:1–5).

Baruch may have edited the arrangement of the material in Jeremiah or other books. His name was also associated with subsequent Jewish and Christian books of pseudepigrapha. Two clay impressions of a seal, similar to others of the sixth century BC, purport to belong to "Berekyahu son of Neriyahu the scribe." These are the long forms of the biblical names "Baruch son of Neriah." Based on the way the letters in "the scribe" were written, these bullae (seal impressions) appear to be modern forgeries.

(2) A Levite who worked to repair the walls of Jerusalem (Neh. 3:20).

(3) The father of a Judahite, Maaseiah, who lived in Jerusalem after the return from exile (Neh. 11:5).

BARZILLAI **(1)** An old man from Rogelim in Gilead who was one of a group of wealthy men from the Transjordan who provided David and his troops with food and equipment when they reached Mahanaim while fleeing from Absalom (2 Sam. 17:27–29). Barzillai's loyalty was recognized when David invited him to join him in Jerusalem on his return, though this was tactfully declined on the grounds of advanced age but with the request that David take his son Kimham instead (19:31–39). This loyalty was further recognized when David instructed Solomon to deal loyally with Barzillai's descendants (1 Kings 2:7).

(2) The father of Merab's husband, Adriel, from Abel Meholah (2 Sam. 21:7–9).

(3) A priestly figure among the returning exiles. Although his wife was descended from Barzillai the Gileadite, he could not prove his identity and was excluded from the priesthood as unclean (Ezra

2:61–63; Neh. 7:63–65).

BASEMATH **(1)** According to Gen. 26:34, the wife of Esau, daughter of Elon the Hittite. However, according to Gen. 36:2, the daughter of Elon who was married to Esau was named “Adah.” Also, 36:3–4 claims that Esau had a wife named “Basemath” who was the daughter of Ishmael and the sister of Nebaioth. This Basemath was the mother of Reuel. However, 28:9 makes the claim that the daughter of Ishmael married to Esau was Mahalath. In light of these differences, two possibilities arise. First, “Basemath” may have been a nickname used to describe both Adah and Mahalath (who were “sweet smelling”). Second, a scribal error may be involved here.

(2) The daughter of King Solomon married to Ahimaaz, one of Solomon’s twelve district governors over Israel, who presided over Naphtali (1 Kings 4:15).

BASHAN Bashan lay in the Transjordan, to the east and northeast of the Sea of Galilee, and north of Gilead. It was a high plateau (Ps. 68:15), proverbial for oak forests (Isa. 2:13; 33:9; Ezek. 27:6; Zech. 11:2) and fat livestock (Deut. 32:14; Ps. 22:12; Ezek. 39:18; Amos 4:1). After Israel’s defeat of King Og of Bashan (Num. 21:31–35; Deut. 3:1–11), Bashan was allocated to Manasseh (Num. 32:33). Israel retained Bashan until Solomon’s time (1 Kings 4:13), but later it became disputed territory (2 Kings 10:32–33). The prophets longed for a permanent return to its pasturelands (Ps. 68:22; Jer. 5:19; Mic. 7:14).

BASHAN HAVVOTH JAIR *See* Havvoth Jair.

BASHEMATH *See* Basemath.

BASIN Various kinds and sizes of hollow bowls were used in biblical times. Common vessels were made of clay, but more luxurious basins were made from brass (Exod. 27:3), silver (Num. 7:13), or gold (1 Kings 7:38). Basins were used for food and wine (Judg. 5:25; Prov. 23:30), for washing (Exod. 30:18; John 13:5), and for collecting the blood from sacrificed animals (Exod. 12:22). The basins in the temple were large vessels that could hold around four hundred liters of water (1 Kings 7:38), whereas the sprinkling bowls were much smaller so that they could be used by a single person (Num. 7:13).

In the apocalyptic literature, bowls indicate something stored up to be distributed later. The twenty-four elders hold golden bowls of incense in the presence of the Lamb, which represent the prayers of believers (Rev. 5:8). The seven angels have golden bowls of God’s wrath, which will be plagues poured out on the earth (16:1; 21:9).

BASKET A woven vessel of various materials and sizes. Of the five OT uses, the most common cane basket carried foodstuffs: baked goods (Gen. 40:16–18), unleavened bread, oiled cakes and wafers, the Nazirite’s offering (Exod. 29:3, 23, 32; Lev. 8:2, 26, 31; Num. 6:15, 17, 19), or meat (Judg. 6:19). A tapered basket was used for carrying field products home (Deut. 28:5, 17) or firstfruits to the priest (Deut. 26:2, 4). A different tapered basket was used for figs (Jer. 24:1–2), clay (Ps. 81:6), and for the heads of Ahab’s sons (2 Kings 10:7). The grape-gathering basket (Jer. 6:9) was differentiated from a loosely woven fruit basket (Amos 8:1), which with a cover could be used to carry captive fowl (Jer. 5:27).

The twelve baskets used after feeding the five thousand (Matt. 14:20; Mark 6:43; Luke 9:17; John

6:13) are distinct from the larger type used after the feeding of the four thousand (Matt. 15:37; 16:10; Mark 8:8). This larger basket could also be the kind in which Paul escaped (Acts 9:25; 2 Cor. 11:33).

BASMATH *See* Basemath.

BASTARD A person of uncertain or questionable parentage (used figuratively in Zech. 9:6 to speak of foreigners as "a mongrel people" [NIV, NRSV]). Bastards were excluded from the assembly of the Lord, even to the tenth generation of descendants (Deut. 23:2 KJV, RSV). They were therefore marginalized and often considered to be under divine condemnation (*1 En.* 10:9). The unusual circumstances behind Jesus' birth perhaps made him vulnerable to this accusation (Mark 6:3; John 8:41), which opponents of Christianity made later (Origen, *Cels.* 1.28, 32; *Gos. Thom.* 105). The author of Hebrews appropriates the concept to explain why God disciplines his legitimate children (Heb. 12:8).

BAT In ancient times the bat was classified with birds (as a "flying thing") rather than with mammals. In the OT food laws, bats were designated unclean (Lev. 11:19; Deut. 14:18). It is thus appropriate that Israel's idols should be abandoned to bats when the nation flees to the cavernous places in which bats lived (Isa. 2:20–21). Over thirty different species of bat are found in Israel, some eating insects and others fruit, but the Hebrew word (*'atallep*) does not distinguish between them.

BATH A measurement used to determine the volume of liquid. According to Ezek. 45:11, 14, a bath is the equivalent of an ephah (a dry measure of 10–20 liters). Also, it was one-tenth of a homer (a dry measure of 100–200 liters). It was used to measure water (1 Kings 7:26) as well as wine and oil (2 Chron. 2:10; Isa. 5:10).

BATHING Bathing was built into the very structure of the culture of the biblical world. Jewish ritual baths, *miqwa'ot*, were found throughout the Mediterranean world in both private homes and public places. Likewise, bathhouses were common in the Greco-Roman landscape of urban life. Ancient literary and archaeological sources attest to the traditions of curative bathing throughout the Mediterranean basin.

Homer wrote of bathing in warm water as a luxury and part of a hero's welcome. Greek philosophers describe taking a hot bath as reserved for the aristocracy. In contrast, the Spartans bathed only in cold water. The Greeks incorporated full bathing facilities into their gymnasium programs. It was customary in the Roman Empire for men and women to bathe separately. Some of Rome's extant public baths have inscriptions indicating separate spaces for the sexes. Some of the emperors, however, tolerated mixed bathing.

In the OT, bathing is often part of purification rituals. The Israelites had cleansing rituals that included bathing in running water (Lev. 15:13). In the NT, washing or bathing (baptizing) can be either literal or metaphorical (Luke 12:50; Rom. 6:3–4; 1 Cor. 10:2; 12:13; Col. 2:12; Rev. 7:14; 22:14). Baptizing is presented as a symbol of purification from sin (Acts 22:16) or spiritual pollution, and water baptism became the initiation rite for the early Christian community. Early Jewish Christian communities had a preference for using the Jewish ritual baths or pools for their baptisms because their water was channeled in from natural sources. *See also* Baptism.

The caldarium section of the bathhouse at ancient Beth Shan, Israel

BATH RABBIM Song of Songs 7:4 compares the female protagonist’s eyes to “the pools of Heshbon by the gate of Bath Rabbim.” Heshbon (modern Tell Hisban in Jordan) was a Transjordanian site in traditionally Moabite territory. Presumably, the gate of Bath Rabbim was a prominent landmark, of comparable fame and beauty to the otherwise unknown “tower of Lebanon” (Song 7:4). Excavations in the 1960s and 1970s uncovered a large pool at Tell Hisban, dated to the ninth or eighth century BC. “Bath Rabbim” means “daughter of the great,” and the epithet may have been applied more broadly to the city of Heshbon itself.

BATHSHEBA Originally the wife of one of David’s senior soldiers, Uriah the Hittite (2 Sam. 11:3), she married David after they committed adultery and he arranged for Uriah’s murder (11:6–27). Bathsheba had become pregnant by David, but the sin’s punishment included the child’s death (12:10). After this, she bore Solomon to David (12:24). In David’s latter days she played a part in Solomon’s succession (1 Kings 1:11–27) and Adonijah’s demise (2:13–25). She is listed in Jesus’ genealogy (Matt. 1:6).

BATHSHUA **(1)** The Canaanite wife of Judah son of Jacob, and mother of Er, Onan, and Shelah (1 Chron. 2:3 NLT [NIV: “daughter of Shua”]; see Gen. 38:1–12). “Bath-shua” literally means “daughter of Shua” (see Gen. 38:2) and is translated as such in Gen. 38:12. **(2)** A variant appearing in 1 Chron. 3:5 (KJV; see NIV mg.) for the name “Bathsheba,” wife of King David and mother of Solomon.

BATTALION The RSV rendering in Matt. 27:27 and Mark 15:16 of the Greek word *speira*, referring to a division of Roman soldiers (NIV: “company”; NRSV, NASB: “cohort”; KJV: “band”; NKJV: “garrison”). This grouping of approximately six hundred soldiers was one-tenth of a Roman legion. In these two texts, they are gathered in the Praetorium, the governor’s official residence in Jerusalem, on the occasion of Jesus’ arrest.

BAVAI In the KJV, one of the Levites who helped rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. Bavai (NIV, NRSV: “Binnui”; NASB: “Bavvai”) was the son of Henadad and governed half the region of Keilah, eighteen miles southwest of Jerusalem (Neh. 3:18). Some textual evidence suggests that Binnui in Neh. 3:24 is the same person. *See also* Binnui.

BAY The KJV translation in Zech. 6:3, 7 of the Hebrew term *’amots*. The KJV understands the word to refer to the color of the fourth set of horses and translates it “bay” in both verses. Modern translations link the word to a Hebrew root meaning “to be strong” and translate it as “powerful” (NIV, referring to all the horses) or “strong” (NASB, referring to the fourth set of horses).

BAY TREE The KJV translation in Ps. 37:35 of the Hebrew term *’ezrakh*, meaning “native.” Although the bay tree (*Laurus nobilis*) is native to the Mediterranean region, there is no indication in the text that it is referring to that tree specifically. The NRSV follows the LXX by reading “cedar,” a word spelled similarly to “native” in Hebrew. The NASB translation, “tree in its native soil,” accurately represents the Hebrew text.

BAZAAR A street converted to a marketplace. The market was divided into various sections, where similar merchants (basket weavers, tanners, etc.) were side by side. Stores generally had an open front, though stalls were clearly distinguishable.

BAZLITH *See* Bazluth.

BAZLUTH Listed in Ezra 2:52; Neh. 7:54 (KJV: “Bazlith”) as an ancestor of temple servants (Nethinim) who returned to Jerusalem after the Babylonian captivity under the leadership of Zerubbabel (in 539 BC or soon after). The fact that many of the names in the list are foreign has led to the belief that they were originally prisoners of war who were pressed into service to do menial tasks as they assisted the Levites.

BDELLIUM A common translation of the Hebrew word *bedolakh* (see esp. KJV, ESV, NASB; NIV: “resin”), which occurs twice in the OT, both times in the Pentateuch. In Gen. 2:12 bdellium is identified as a stone, and it is named in conjunction with gold and onyx as provided in the land of Havilah. In Num. 11:7 bdellium’s color is used to describe the color of wilderness manna.

BEADS A form of jewelry, most likely made of gold or silver, apparently small enough to adorn larger pieces (Num. 31:50; Song 1:11) or to tie together to make a necklace (Song 1:10; NIV: “strings of jewels”).

BEALIAH One of the Benjamite mighty men who came to David’s aid at Ziklag when he was oppressed by Saul (1 Chron. 12:5). Generically, these men are described as ambidextrous and as armed with bows (1 Chron. 12:1–2).

BEALOTH **(1)** A town in southern Judah in the Negev on the border of Edom (Josh. 15:24). The location is unknown. **(2)** A town in the ninth of Solomon's administrative districts under the authority of Baana son of Hushai (1 Kings 4:16). Some translations render this instance "Aloth" (NIV, NET, KJV). This may or may not be a location different from the city in the Negev. *See also* Aloth.

BEAM A large segment of wood cut from logs (Hab. 2:11) for, among other purposes, roofing and upper floors (2 Chron. 3:7; Song 1:17), a weaver's shuttle (Job 7:6), and a spear shaft (e.g., 1 Sam. 17:7; 2 Sam. 21:19; 1 Chron. 11:23; 20:5). The psalmist depicts God laying beams for the upstairs of heaven (Ps. 104:3). Jesus teaches that people often focus on the speck in the eye of another while ignoring the roof beam in their own (Matt. 7:3–5; Luke 6:41–42).

BEANS *See* Plants.

BEAR The only Hebrew term used for this animal in the Bible is *dob*. It refers to the Syrian brown bear (*Ursus syriacus*), which was last seen in the land of Israel in the early twentieth century AD. In the Bible, the bear is often paired with the lion (1 Sam. 17:34–37; Prov. 28:15; Lam. 3:10; Hos. 13:8; Amos 5:19) and is thought to be dangerous especially when bereft of its cubs (2 Sam. 17:8; Prov. 17:12; Hos. 13:8). "Bear" imagery is also employed in apocalyptic visions (Dan. 7:5; Rev. 13:2) and in descriptions of God himself (Lam. 3:10–11; Hos. 13:8; cf. Amos 5:19). The bear is also ironically paired with the cow in Isa. 11:7, and it functions as an agent of divine judgment in 2 Kings 2:24.

BEARD Israelite men, like most of their ancient Near Eastern neighbors, wore full beards, as is plain from casual references to bearded faces (e.g., 1 Sam. 21:13; 2 Sam. 20:9; Ps. 133:2; Jer. 41:5). A way of shaming a man was to forcibly shave him (e.g., 2 Sam. 10:4–5), and Isaiah's threat of an Assyrian invasion of Judah comes in the form of the imagery of shaving the head and pubic hair (lit., "the hair of your legs"; Isa. 7:20). This divinely wrought judgment ("the Lord will use a razor hired from beyond the Euphrates River") will also include the shaving off of the beard. The beards of captives of war were shaved as a sign of disgrace (Isa. 3:17; 15:2; Jer. 48:37); Ezekiel, in one of his prophetic signs, shaved his head and his beard in imitation of what will happen to the inhabitants of Jerusalem when taken captive (5:1–4). The suffering of God's servant included his opponents pulling out his beard (Isa. 50:6). On the other hand, the voluntary shaving off of the beard was one of several traditional signs of mourning and sorrow (Jer. 41:5), as was pulling out hair from the beard (Ezra 9:3). These customs apparently do not come under the ban in Lev. 19:27; 21:5 (the latter especially applied to priests) against clipping the beard in conformity with Canaanite religious practice.

Panel from the Black Obelisk showing three bearded Israelites carrying tribute

BEAST An animal in both the OT and the NT (Gen. 1:24), usually distinct from fish, birds, and insects (Deut. 4:17–18), including domesticated (Num. 31:47) and wild animals (Gen. 37:20; Mark 1:13). Paul uses “beast” as a pejorative for persons (Titus 1:12 KJV, ESV). The figurative use of “beast” appears most prominently in Daniel and Revelation (in the NT, the majority of occurrences of “beast” are in Revelation). In these instances “beast(s)” embody evil kings/kingdoms that oppose God and his people. The “beast” of Rev. 13 has been suggested to represent Nero/Rome, any religious/political ruler in history, the pope/papacy, or the antichrist—the embodiment of a final king/kingdom that persecutes God’s people.

BEATEN GOLD *See* Hammered Gold.

BEATEN OIL *See* Oil.

BEATEN SILVER *See* Hammered Silver.

BEATING *See* Scourge.

BEATITUDES The Beatitudes are a series of “blessings” announced by Jesus in Matthew’s

Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5:3–10) and Luke's parallel Sermon on the Plain (Luke 6:20–22). Matthew's version contains eight beatitudes, with a ninth (5:11–12) expanding on the eighth. Luke has four beatitudes but balances these with "woes" against the rich and powerful. Each beatitude has two parts. The first begins with a statement of blessing followed by the identity of the one being blessed (e.g., "blessed are the poor in spirit"). The second part explains why the person is blessed (e.g., "for theirs is the kingdom of heaven"). In Matthew, the phrase "for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" appears in vv. 3, 10, serving as an inclusio for the central message of the Beatitudes: the kingdom of heaven is present and powerful to those who are in relationship with Jesus.

The Beatitudes introduce a new reality to those who respond to the kingdom offered by Jesus. They present a radical reversal for the downtrodden: the poor in spirit, those who mourn, the meek, and the persecuted. From society's perspective, they are weak and disadvantaged, but Jesus calls them "blessed." The beatitudes in Matt. 5:6–10 reveal attitudes and actions that are pleasing to God: "those who hunger and thirst for righteousness" (v. 6), "the merciful" (v. 7), "the pure in heart" (v. 8), and "the peacemakers" (v. 9).

Luke's beatitudes are shorter and less spiritualized than Matthew's. For example, Luke has "blessed are you who are poor" instead of Matthew's "poor in spirit," and "blessed are you who hunger now" instead of Matthew's "hunger and thirst for righteousness." This is in line with Luke's greater emphasis throughout his Gospel on the danger of riches, the plight of the poor, and issues of social justice.

BEAUTIFUL GATE A gate of Herod's temple where John and Peter healed a lame man (Acts 3:2, 10; NIV: "gate called Beautiful"). This name is used only in the NT, and so its identification and location must be surmised by other names for it. Two temple gates known from other historical sources are the likely candidates for the Beautiful Gate: the Golden Gate or the Nicanor Gate. Josephus describes a beautiful gate located in the east of the temple, known to this day as the Golden Gate. The Nicanor Gate is probably the gate described in the book of Acts. Its construction was funded by a wealthy Alexandrian Jew. It is located either on the east side of the court of women leading from the court of the Gentiles or on the western side of the court of women at the entrance to that court.

BEBAI The head of a clan that was part of the early return to Judah from Babylonian captivity in 539 BC or soon after (Ezra 2:11; Neh. 7:16). The same clan sent Zechariah and twenty-eight men at the time of Ezra, around 458 BC (Ezra 8:11). Four members of this clan were later found guilty of intermarriage (Ezra 10:28). Bebai is also listed as one who sealed the covenant renewal led by Ezra (Neh. 10:15).

BECHER *See* Beker.

BECHERITES *See* Bekerites.

BECORATH *See* Bekorath.

BED A surface to recline on for the purpose of sleep, convalescence, contemplation, and sexual activity. Construction ranged from a portable straw mat (Mark 6:55; Acts 9:34) to raised frames crafted of wood, metal, or stone inlaid with precious metals and jewels (Deut. 3:11; Amos 6:4) and topped with luxurious coverings (Prov. 7:16, 17; 31:22). The mats of poor people might be rolled up and stowed away during the day to save space when they slept in a common room (Luke 11:7). The rich reclined on permanent structures in rooms designated for sleeping (Exod. 8:3; 2 Kings 6:12), but people of more modest means also had bedrooms (2 Kings 4:10).

The most commonly cited use of a bed is not for sleeping (Ps. 132:3; Luke 11:7) but for convalescing (Gen. 48:2; Exod. 21:18; 2 Sam. 13:5; Ps. 41:3; Matt. 8:14; Acts 28:8) or dying (Gen. 49:33; 2 Kings 1:4, 6, 16). Elijah restores life to a boy after placing him on a bed (1 Kings 17:19; cf. Elisha in 2 Kings 4:21, 34, 35). Murder is attempted (1 Sam. 19:13, 15, 16) or accomplished in bed (2 Sam. 4:7, 11; 2 Chron. 24:25).

The bed is for sexual activity, whether honorable (Song 1:16; Heb. 13:4) or not (Gen. 39:7, 10, 12; 49:4; 2 Sam. 13:11). People mope and mourn on beds (1 Kings 21:4; Ps. 6:6; Song 3:1; Hos. 7:14), loaf (Prov. 26:14), plot evil (Ps. 36:4; Mic. 2:1), meditate and rejoice (Pss. 4:4; 63:6; 149:5), and experience visions (Dan. 2:28; 4:5; 7:1). The bed is a metaphor for the grave (Job 7:13; 17:13; Ezek. 32:25).

BEDAD The father of the Edomite king Hadad. Hadad succeeded Husham and defeated the Moabite city of Midian (Gen. 36:35; 1 Chron. 1:46).

BEDAN **(1)** A judge listed in a speech by Samuel in a catalog of judges sent by God to deliver Israel (1 Sam. 12:11). His name comes between those of Jerub-baal (= Gideon) and Jephthah. Presumably because a judge by this name is not found elsewhere in the OT, the LXX and the Syriac Peshitta read “Barak” (so also NIV, NRSV). Since the name means “in Dan,” Jewish tradition understood it as an alternate name for Samson (from the tribe of Dan). He may be an otherwise unknown judge. **(2)** Son of Ulam, a descendant of Manasseh (1 Chron. 7:17).

BEDEIAH An Israelite from the sons of Bani who was forced to send away his foreign wife according to the instruction of Ezra (Ezra 10:35). The name is perhaps a shortened form of Obadiah.

BEELIADA *See* Eliada.

BEELZEBUB, BEELZEBUL Occurs seven times in the Gospels (Gk. *Beelzeboul*), designating “the prince of demons” (possibly Satan himself) (Matt. 12:24). It derives from “Baal-Zebub,” the name of a Philistine deity (2 Kings 1), meaning “Baal/Lord of the flies” (a deliberate Hebrew distortion of the name “Baal-Zebul”). *See also* Baal-Zebub.

BEER **(1)** The Hebrew word *be’er* means “well” and occurs in compound names for key places, for instance, Beer Lahai Roi (“the well of the Living One who sees me” [Gen. 16:14]) and Beersheba (“well of the oath/seven” [Gen. 21:31]). In Israel’s wanderings, the nation came to Beer (Num. 21:16), north of the Arnon River. The name “Beer” commemorates the joyous occasion when God gave the people water in the desert. In celebration, the people sang the so-called Song of the Well (Num. 21:17–18). The site may be Wadi eth-Themed in northeastern Moab and possibly linked with Beer Elim (Isa. 15:8).

(2) An alcoholic beverage produced from grains, such as wheat or barley, through a fermentation process. Beer is mentioned in the Bible only a handful of times (in the NIV, see 1 Sam. 1:15; Prov. 20:1; 31:4, 6; Isa. 24:9; 28:7; 29:9; 56:12; Mic. 2:11; many other versions use terms such as “strong drink” or “liquor”), but it was prevalent in some ancient Near Eastern cultures, especially Egypt. *See also* Strong Drink.

BEERA Son of Zophah of the tribe of Asher (1 Chron. 7:37).

BEERAH A Reubenite leader exiled by Tiglath-pileser III (1 Chron. 5:6).

BEER ELIM A city in Moab (Isa. 15:8). The name means “well of the terebinths.” It is often associated with Beer (Num. 21:16), one of the places where the Israelites stopped during their wilderness journey in Sinai, from which they continued to Mattanah.

BEERI **(1)** The Hittite father of Judith, Esau’s first wife (Gen. 26:34). The marriage displeased Esau’s parents (26:35). **(2)** The father of the prophet Hosea (Hos. 1:1). Rabbinic tradition identifies him as Beerah, a leader of the Reubenites who was sent into exile under Tiglath-pileser (1 Chron. 5:6), but this is uncertain. The name “Beeri” means “my well” or “of a well.”

BEER LAHAI ROI A place in the Negev whose exact location and meaning are uncertain. It appears first in the narrative of Gen. 16, where Hagar is fleeing from Sarai, her mistress. After the death of Abraham, Beer Lahai Roi becomes the residence of Isaac (Gen. 24:62; 25:11). All three narratives that speak of this place support a location toward the Egyptian border (between Kadesh and Bered). The water source that gave rise to the name was located on the way to Shur (Gen. 16:7). The most likely translation is “well of the Living One who sees me.”

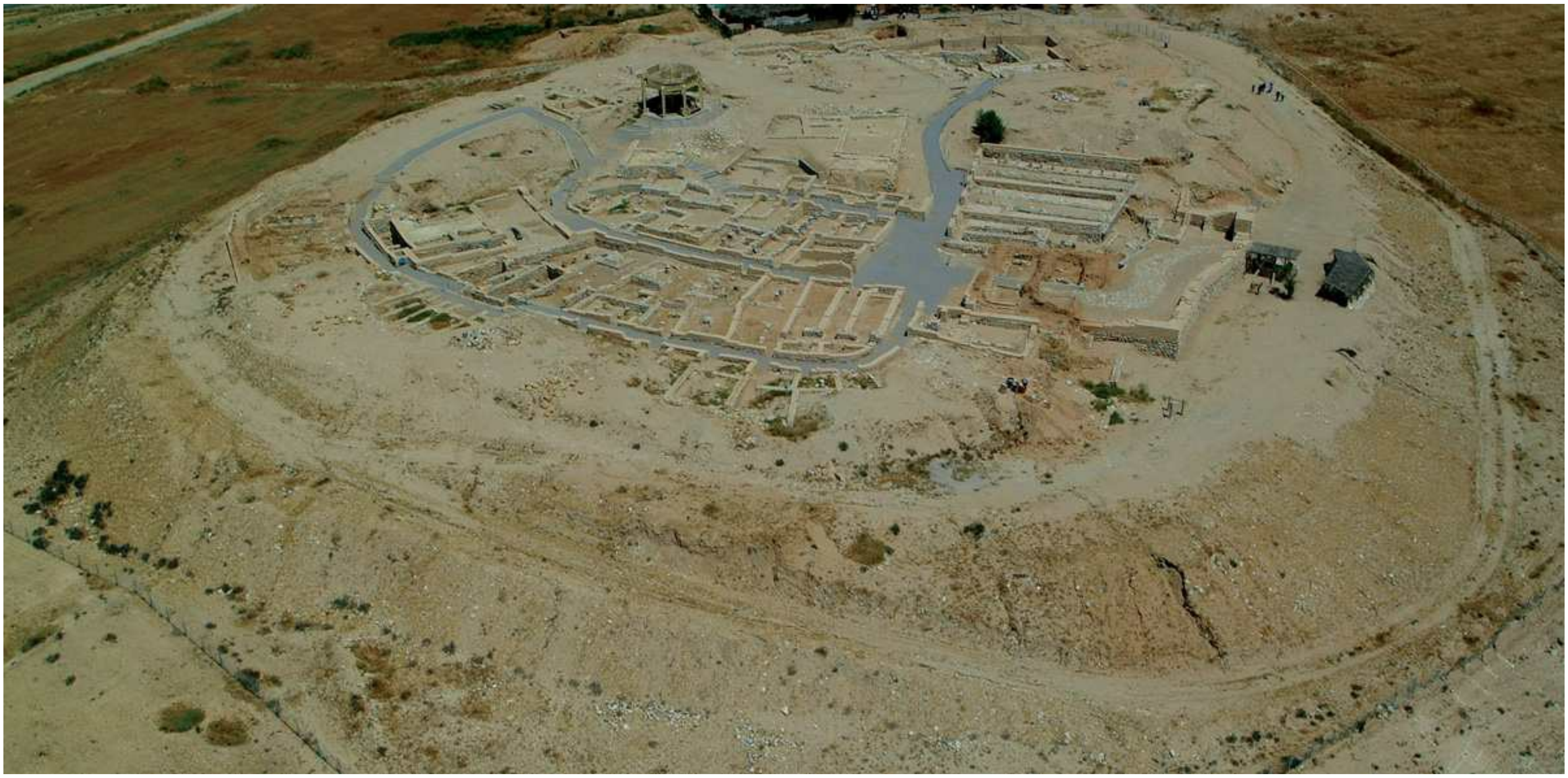
BEEROTH One of four cities (along with Gibeon, Kephirah, Kiriath Jearim) that tricked Joshua into making a covenant with Israel so that they would not be destroyed (Josh. 9:17). When the treachery was discovered, the inhabitants were allowed to live but were forced to become the Israelites’ servants (9:26–27). It later became part of the territory of Benjamin (Josh. 18:25; 2 Sam. 4:2–3). Ish-Bosheth was assassinated by two Beerothites, Rekab and Baanah (2 Sam. 4:2–9), possibly in retaliation for Saul’s persecution of the Beerothites (2 Sam. 4:3). Joab’s armor bearer Naharai was also from Beeroth and was one of David’s thirty mighty men (2 Sam. 23:37). Many men returned to Beeroth after the exile, indicating that the inhabitants assimilated into the Israelite population (Ezra 2:25; Neh. 7:29). The location of Beeroth is contested due to confusion in Eusebius’s *Onomasticon*. Many scholars propose the location of Beeroth as el-Bireh, east of Ramallah.

BEEROTH BENE-JAAKAN A place of unknown location to which the Israelites traveled during their wilderness journey (Deut. 10:6 ESV, NASB [cf. NRSV]; NIV: “the wells of Bene Jaakan”; cf. Num. 33:31–32). *See also* Bene Jaakan.

BEEROTHITE A person who comes from Beeroth (2 Sam. 4:2; 23:37; 1 Chron. 11:39 [NIV: “Berothite”]).

BEERSHEBA Located in the biblical Negev, this city was significant for the patriarchs and continued as the recognized southern boundary of the political entity of Israel. The biblical Negev is shaped somewhat like a bow tie, with Beersheba at its center. Because the Negev receives between eight and twelve inches of rainfall per year, water is a critical issue.

Beersheba (Heb. *be'er sheba'*) means both "well of the seven" and "well of the oath." The encounters between Abraham and the Philistine leaders Abimelek and Phicol had to do with water rights (Gen. 21:22–32). When Abimelek's servants seized a well that Abraham had dug, he, in order to demonstrate that his own claim on the well was valid, offered seven lambs to Abimelek, and the two made a treaty. The narrative incorporates both meanings of *sheba'*. Although Abraham was a formidable presence in the region, it is evident that it was under Philistine control at this time (Gen. 21:33–34). Abraham remained there for a long time, returning to Beersheba after the test on Mount Moriah (Gen. 22:19).



Aerial photograph of the excavations at ancient Beersheba

These same elements and names recur in the interactions between Isaac and the Philistine leaders (Gen. 26:12–33). Isaac grew to be exceedingly wealthy, so the Philistines stopped up the wells that had been dug in the time of Abraham. Abimelek urged Isaac to move away, which he did, but the tensions over water rights continued. Finally, Isaac went to Beersheba, where God reaffirmed to him the covenant with Abraham, and, in a mirror event, he and Abimelek reaffirmed their treaty, complete with an oath and the digging of another well.

Beersheba continued to be a center for the seminomadic patriarchs. Isaac lived there with his family; after Jacob tricked Esau out of Isaac's blessing, Jacob left Beersheba and headed for Harran (Gen. 28:10). Near the end of his life, as he set out for Egypt to rejoin Joseph, Jacob stopped in Beersheba to offer sacrifices to God (46:1–5). Much later, as Elijah fled from Jezebel and made his way back to Horeb, the source of the covenant, he stopped at Beersheba (1 Kings 19:1–8).

Beersheba figured into the inheritance for two tribes. It was listed among the southernmost towns in Judah (Josh. 15:28), but Simeon's inheritance within the allotment of Judah included Beersheba (19:2), and descendants of Simeon lived in Beersheba (1 Chron. 4:28). From the period of the judges until the end of the united monarchy, the expression "from Dan to Beersheba" indicated the extent from north to south of Israel (e.g., Judg. 20:1; 1 Sam. 3:23; 2 Sam. 3:10). After the secession and demise of the northern kingdom, Beersheba still indicated the southern boundary (e.g., 2 Chron. 19:4; 30:5). In the postexilic period the people of Judah inhabited territory from Beersheba to the Hinnom Valley (Neh. 11:27–30).

According to 2 Kings 23:8, Josiah "desecrated the high places, from Geba to Beersheba. . . . He broke down the gateway at the entrance of the Gate of Joshua, the city governor, which was on the left of the city gate." The site of Tel Sheva (identified as ancient Beersheba) has a structure just inside and to the left of the Iron Age gate, where steps indicate a second story, very possibly the governor's house. Of equal importance is the discovery of three stone blocks of a horned altar, found in secondary usage in a storeroom wall. The horn on a fourth block had been broken off. These were seemingly removed from a basement house, a building that had been destroyed, perhaps in Hezekiah's reform and purge of the land (2 Kings 18; 2 Chron. 31).

BE ESHTERAH A city of Manasseh given to the Levites as a city of refuge (Josh. 21:27). The parallel (1 Chron. 6:71) lists Ashtaroth instead (Deut. 1:4; Josh. 9:10), suggesting that "Be Eshterah" was shortened from "Beth Ashtarah" ("house of Ashtarah"), an earlier worship center for the Canaanite goddess. The site apparently survives as Tel Ashtarah, located twenty miles east of the Sea of Galilee on the King's Highway, a major trade route.

BEGINNING AND END *See* Alpha and Omega.

BEHEMOTH Found only in Job 40:15, "Behemoth" is a transliteration of the Hebrew plural word *behemot* (lit., "beasts"), meaning "the Beast" par excellence. The failure to identify the creature with any known animal species is deliberate. Some scholars suggest that it is possibly the hippopotamus or the elephant, but such mundane alternatives domesticate what is meant to be a mysterious, larger-than-life creature of fearsome strength, "which I [God] made along with you [Job]." Job complained that God had treated him like a monster who needed to be guarded (7:12). The poem implies that God can tame both Behemoth and Job.

BEKA A unit in Israel's weight and currency system. It is half a shekel (Exod. 38:26), which means that it weighed around 5.5 grams. The Hebrew root (*bq'*) means "to split." *See also* Weights and Measures.

BEKER **(1)** Son of Benjamin (Gen. 46:21; 1 Chron. 7:6 [NRSV: "Becher"]), and the father of nine sons (1 Chron. 7:8). The name is absent from two other genealogies of Benjamin (Num. 26:38; 1 Chron. 8:1). **(2)** A descendant of Ephraim (Num. 26:35). The name is spelled "Bered" in 1 Chron. 7:20.

BEKERITES Descended from Beker, the Bekerites (NRSV: "Becherites") were a clan from the tribe of Ephraim (Num. 26:35).

BEKORATH Son of Aphiah, and the father of Zeror, he was an ancestor of King Saul (1 Sam. 9:1 KJV: "Bechorath").

BEL This term is technically a title derived from the Akkadian word *belu(m)*, with the meaning "lord" or "master." Initially the term referred to Enlil, the father of the Mesopotamian gods.

Eventually, Marduk, the chief god of Babylon, became the chief god of the pantheon, and he was given the title “Bel.” Consequently, the term became interchangeable with his name. Bel occurs three times in the Bible, all of them within the context of the prophetic condemnation of the Neo-Babylonian Empire (Isa. 46:1; Jer. 50:2; 51:44). Thus, in Scripture Bel stands as a representative of Babylon and its rulers. *See also* Baal.

BELA **(1)** Son of Beor, and the king of Edom who ruled from Dinhabah (Gen. 36:32–33; 1 Chron. 1:43–44). **(2)** Son of Azaz, and one of those who settled in the area of Aroer in the Transjordan most likely in the early ninth century BC (1 Chron. 5:8–9). **(3)** Son of Benjamin (Gen. 46:21; Num. 26:38, 40; 1 Chron. 7:6–7; 8:1, 3). **(4)** An earlier name for Zoar, one of the five cities of the Valley of Siddim (Gen. 14:2).

BELAITES Descendants of Bela, a Benjamite (Num. 26:38).

BELIAL Occuring in the Bible only once (2 Cor. 6:15 [NRSV: “Beliar”]), “Belial” (Gk. *Beliar*) has a mythological connotation in the OT associated with Sheol, chaos, and death (Heb. *beliyya’al* [2 Sam. 22:5; Ps. 18:4; cf. Ps. 41:8]), and it could also mean “worthlessness,” “ruin,” or “wickedness” (1 Sam. 25:25). The term is widely attested in Second Temple Jewish literature, especially in the DSS, referring to God’s archenemy, whose domain is darkness and whose counsel is wickedness (*Mart. Isa.* 1:8–9; 2:4; 4:2; *T. Dan* 1:7; 1QM 1:1–3, 13–15; 13:11; cf. 1QS 2:19; CD-A 4:12–19). Paul employs this conviction to show that the eschatological conflict is between Christ, who is the light, and Belial, who is the darkness (2 Cor. 6:15; cf. 2 Cor. 4:4).

BELIAR *See* Belial.

BELIEF, BELIEVE *See* Faith, Faithfulness.

BELL Small bells are mentioned in the book of Exodus twice (28:33–35; 39:25–26), being used to adorn the hem of the high priest to monitor his movements, particularly when he entered the holy of holies. The prophet Zechariah (14:20) announces that in the future after God destroys evil even the bells on the horses will be inscribed with “Holy to the Lord.”

BELLOWS An instrument used to blow air on a fire and thus make it stronger. In the Bible bellows are mentioned only in Jer. 6:29, where they are part of a figurative portrayal of an intense refining process on Judah that ultimately does not remove the wicked. Ancient Egyptian bellows utilized two bags made of animal skin, which an operator would step on one after the other, thus forcing out air, similar to a modern foot pump. This type of bellows may be in view in Jer. 6:29.

BELOVED DISCIPLE Traditionally identified with John the son of Zebedee, the Gospel of John depicts him as the ideal eyewitness to Jesus and as the ideal author. He first explicitly appears in John 13–21. In representing the Beloved Disciple as the author of the Gospel of John (John 21:24–25), the author thus claims a privileged place for its revelation about Jesus, perhaps in relation to the Gospel of Mark, which many in the early church considered to have Peter as its primary source of testimony.

BELSHAZZAR The regent of Babylon under his father, Nabonidus, during Babylon’s final years

(?–539 BC). Because the first three successors of Nebuchadnezzar were short-lived, and because Nabonidus left Babylon to stay in the Arabian city of Teima for a decade, Belshazzar may be considered the first significant acting king after Nebuchadnezzar. This is probably why Nebuchadnezzar is called Belshazzar's "father" in Dan. 5:2, 18. A prophecy of the doom of Babylon came as "the handwriting on the wall" at a banquet hosted by Belshazzar. Belshazzar was indicted for not having learned to be humble before the Most High God.

BELT *See* Clothing.

BELTESHAZZAR The name assigned to Daniel by King Nebuchadnezzar's chief official, Ashpenaz, when he brought Daniel to Babylon to train and mold him for government service (Dan. 1:6–7). The name may mean "May the lord protect his life."

BEN The Hebrew word *ben* (lit., "son") represents several types of relationships. It can be used to describe a direct male descendant (Gen. 4:17), as well as Israel's relationship to God (Exod. 4:22), a member of a people group (Gen. 42:5), or a member of a specific profession or trade (1 Kings 21:35).

BEN-ABINADAB The husband of Taphath, daughter of King Solomon, he was one of the king's twelve district governors of Israel (1 Kings 4:7, 11). He was responsible for supplying provisions for the king and the royal household for one month out of the year from his location in Naphoth Dor.

BENAIAH **(1)** Son of Jehoiada, and one of David's famed mighty men (1 Chron. 27:34 reverses the names of father and son). He was in command of David's personal guards, known as the Kerethites and the Pelethites. His great feats earned him a reputation like one of David's mightiest three (2 Sam. 20:23; 23:22–23). He was at Solomon's coronation (1 Kings 1). He killed Joab at Solomon's order and became his general (1 Kings 2:25–46). **(2)** An Ephraimite from Pirathon who was one of David's mighty men, one of "the thirty" (2 Sam. 23:30). **(3)** A Levite who was a gatekeeper assigned to play the harp when David brought the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem (1 Chron. 15:18–20). **(4)** A priest who was a trumpeter when David brought the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem (1 Chron. 15:24). **(5)** An ancestor of Jahaziel, who prophesied at the time of Jehoshaphat (2 Chron. 20:14). **(6)** A Simeonite who was one of those who attacked the Meunites in Hezekiah's time and took their pasture (1 Chron. 4:24–41). **(7)** An overseer appointed by Hezekiah (2 Chron. 31:13). **(8)** The father of Pelatiah, a leader who did not believe that God would destroy Judah and was struck down (Ezek. 11:1, 13). **(9)** Four different men who had returned to Jerusalem after the exile and had taken foreign wives (Ezra 10:25, 30, 35, 43).

BEN-AMMI The son born of the incestuous union of Lot with his younger daughter (Gen. 19:38), he is the eponymous ancestor of the Ammonites, longtime enemy of Israel. The name "Ben-Ammi" means "son of my kin/people." Both the Moabites and the Ammonites are associated with the incest of Lot with his daughters (Gen. 19:36–38; Deut. 2:19).

BENCHES This term occurs twice in the NIV (NRSV: "chairs"; NET: "seats") in reference to the sitting places of those selling doves when Jesus cleansed the temple (Matt. 21:12; Mark 11:15). The underlying Greek word (*kathedra*) referred to a seat or chair (cf. Matt. 23:3, where the Greek term is used of “Moses’ seat”). “Benches” occurs in the KJV of Ezek. 27:6, translating the Hebrew word *qeresh*, whereas modern English translations take the word in that verse to refer to the deck of a ship.

BEN-DEKER One of King Solomon’s twelve district governors of Israel responsible for supplying provisions for the king and the royal household for one month each year (1 Kings 4:9). He was governor over Makaz, Shaalbim, Beth Shemesh, and Elon Bethhanan, land recently taken from the Philistines.

BENE BERAK A location inherited by the tribe of Dan (Josh. 19:45). The modern Israeli town Bene-baraq is located about 2.5 miles north of the biblical site, which is identified as the modern town el-Kheirîyah. It is known as being the home of the renowned Rabbi Akiba.

BENEDICTION Authorized by the divine image and example (Gen. 1:26–28), “benediction” is literally the “good word” that activates for its recipients such divine benefits as keeping, favor, grace, and peace (Num. 6:24–27). Whether invoked by fathers (Gen. 27; 2 Sam. 6:20), priests (Gen. 14:18–19; Lev. 9:22), or the community (Ruth 2:4), benedictions signal God’s rule over all of life, as does Jesus’ command to bless our enemies. In the NT, benedictions may be condensed (“Grace be with you”) or expanded with divine references and joined to doxologies or prayers (Col. 1:2–14; 4:13).

BENEDICTUS The prophetic hymn of Zechariah at John the Baptist’s birth (Luke 1:68–79). Opening with the word *Benedictus* (“Blessed”) in the Latin Vulgate, it glorifies God for acting to save his people and prophesies that John will be the Lord’s forerunner.

BENEFACTORS In the first-century Greco-Roman economy, most material resources were held by a small percentage of the population. This fact necessitated the need for the wealthy to provide goods and services for the larger community. Those providing these goods and services were known as benefactors. These socially elite people were expected to share their resources by financing public building projects, assisting individuals with personal needs, and providing public services for the community. Society rewarded these benefactors with honor and goodwill, thus increasing their influence and prestige.

BENE JAAKAN An Israelite campsite during their wilderness journey (Num. 33:31–32). It is possibly located on or near the border of Edom (33:37). In Deut. 10:6 the site is called in Hebrew *be’erot bene ya’aqan*, which the NIV renders as “the wells of Bene Jaakan” (NASB: “Beeroth Bene-jaakan” [cf. NRSV]).

BEN-GEBER One of the twelve district governors of Israel, appointed by King Solomon, responsible for supplying the king and the royal household with provisions for one month each year (1 Kings 4:13). He was the governor over Ramoth Gilead, located in the central Transjordan region, along with the settlements of Jair and the district of Argob.

BEN-HADAD Several kings of Aram Damascus had the name “Ben-Hadad.” The name means “son of Hadad,” Aram’s national god, and it could be taken by any king of Aram. It is debated whether the OT refers to two or three individuals by this name, but most likely it is three.

(1) Ben-Hadad I, son of Tabrimmon, was bribed with a large amount of silver and gold by King Asa of Judah to break his treaty with King Baasha of Israel, thus providing relief for the embattled

Judah. Ben-Hadad I attacked the towns of Israel, successfully conquering several of them as well as the territory of Naphtali (1 Kings 15:16–22).

(2) Ben-Hadad II (but possibly the same person as Ben-Hadad I) attacked Samaria during the reign of King Ahab, who defeated him at Aphek. Ben-Hadad II begged for his life, and Ahab spared him, in the process regaining the cities that Ben-Hadad I had taken from Ahab's father, Omri, and obtaining market rights in Damascus (1 Kings 20). Based on extrabiblical inscriptions, it is possible that Ahab later participated in a twelve-member alliance headed by Ben-Hadad II (also identified as Hadadezer) that defeated Shalmaneser III's Assyrian forces at the Battle of Qarqar in 853 BC. Ben-Hadad II later laid siege to Samaria again (2 Kings 6:24), but a miraculous intervention by God caused his forces to abandon their camp and flee (7:5–7). Later, Ben-Hadad II fell ill and, as prophesied by Elisha, did not recover, since one of his officers, Hazael, suffocated him and seized his throne (8:7–15). Ben-Hadad II is perhaps the king of Aram who sent Naaman to Elisha, via King Joram of Israel, to be cured of his leprosy (5:1–6).

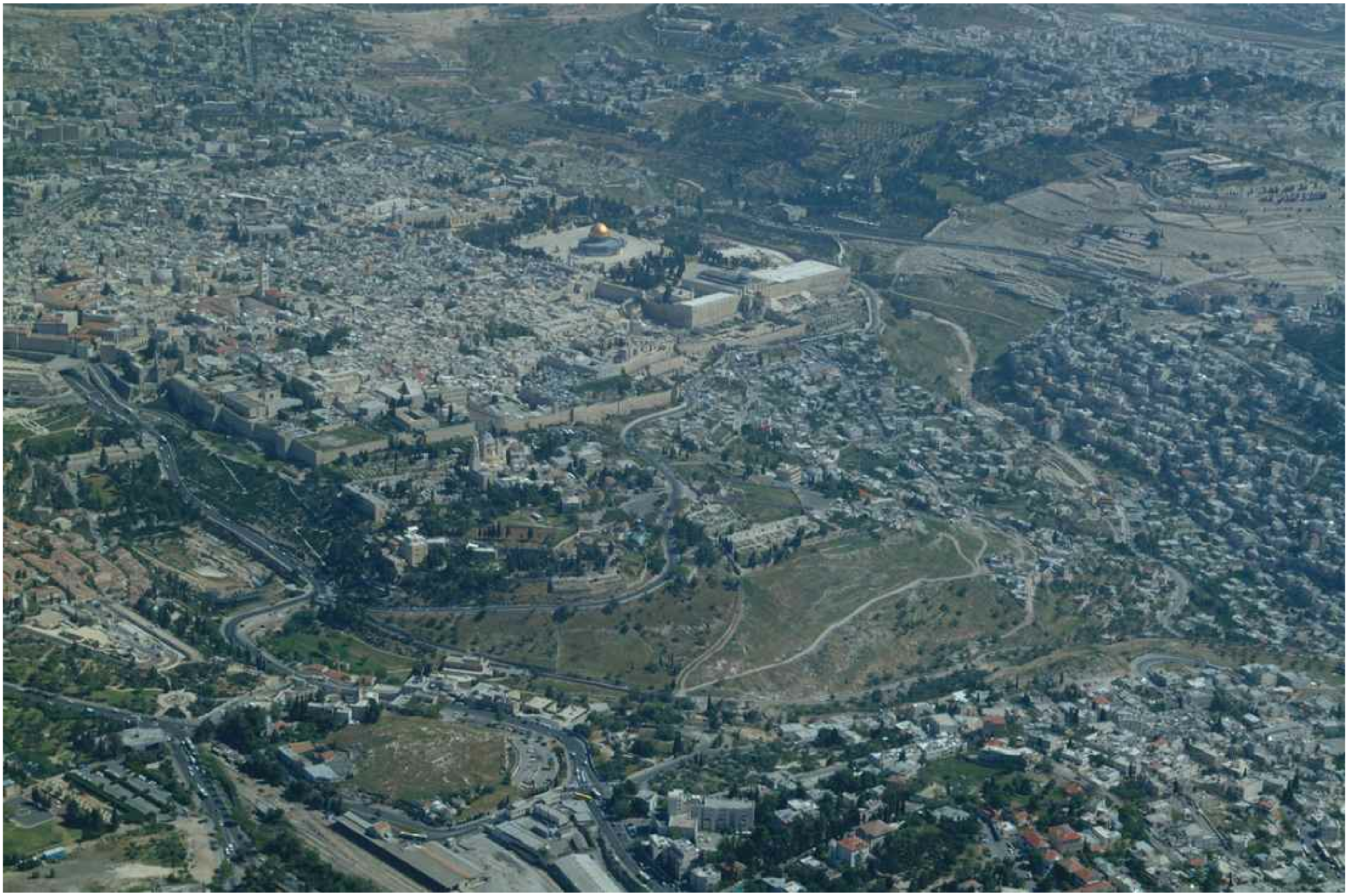
(3) Ben-Hadad III was the son of King Hazael (2 Kings 13:24), who had gained the throne by murdering Ben-Hadad II. As prophesied by Elisha, King Jehoash defeated Ben-Hadad III three times and repossessed several cities that had been taken from his father, King Jehoahaz (13:14–25). Ben-Hadad III's oppressive actions made him the subject of prophetic condemnation (Jer. 49:27; Amos 1:4).

BEN-HAIL One of five royal officials, along with nine Levites and two priests, sent by Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, to teach the Book of the Law to the people in Judah (2 Chron. 17:7). The name "Ben-Hail" means "son of strength."

BEN-HANAN Son of Shimon in the tribe of Judah (1 Chron. 4:20).

BEN-HESED The name of one of King Solomon's twelve district governors charged with supplying provisions for the king and the royal household for one month of the year (1 Kings 4:10). Ben-Hesed's district included Arubboth, Sokoh, and the Hepher region, thus supporting the view that the area probably corresponded with most of Cisjordanian Manasseh.

BEN HINNOM A valley on the southern slopes of Jerusalem, variously referred to as "Valley of Hinnom," "Valley of Ben Hinnom" (lit., "son of Hinnom"), "Valley of the Sons of Hinnom," or even just "the Valley" (e.g., Jer. 2:23). At least two kings of Judah, Ahaz (2 Chron. 28:3) and Manasseh (33:6), sacrificed their own sons in the fire at the Topheth, a site in the valley. The practice, which certainly extended beyond just royalty, was condemned by the prophets, Jeremiah in particular (Jer. 7:31–32; 32:35). King Josiah, as part of his reform movement, defiled the Topheth to prevent further child sacrifice (2 Kings 23:10). Three different gorges south of Jerusalem are candidates for the identified location of this valley. "Valley of Hinnom" becomes in Greek "Gehenna," which in all its occurrences in the NT refers to hell.



In this aerial photo, the Hinnom Valley runs along the west (left) and south (foreground) sides of the old city of Jerusalem.

BEN-HUR One of the twelve district governors appointed by King Solomon to supply provisions for the king and the royal household for one month of the year (1 Kings 4:8). He was in charge of the hill country of Ephraim.

BENINU A Levite of the postexilic community who sealed the covenant renewal led by Ezra (Neh. 10:13).

BENJAMIN **(1)** The youngest son of Jacob and Rachel. Rachel died en route to Ephrath (Bethlehem) while giving birth to Benjamin (Gen. 35:18). Before she died, Rachel named her son “Ben-Oni,” meaning “son of my sorrow.” Jacob later renamed him “Benjamin,” meaning “son of my right hand.” Benjamin is the youngest of Joseph’s eleven brothers (35:22–26), and Joseph specifically requested to see him when the other brothers journeyed without him to Egypt to buy grain during a famine (42:1–16). **(2)** Son of the Benjamite Bilhan (1 Chron. 7:10). **(3)** Son of the Israelite Harim (Ezra 10:32), among those who pledged to divorce a foreign wife. **(4)** One of those who helped to dedicate the wall of Jerusalem (Neh. 12:34). He may be the same Benjamin as the one in Ezra 10:32. *See also* Benjamin, Tribe of.

BENJAMIN, TRIBE OF After Genesis, almost every scriptural reference to "Benjamin" is to the tribe of Benjamin, named after the youngest son of Jacob. Jacob's blessing "Benjamin is a ravenous wolf" (Gen. 49:27) was prophetic, as the tribe of Benjamin came to be known for its prowess in warfare (Judg. 3:15; 1 Chron. 8:40; 2 Sam. 1:22). The land allotted for the tribe of Benjamin was "between the tribes of Judah and Joseph" (Josh. 18:11–20). Although the tribe of Benjamin was the second smallest during the exodus (Num. 1:36–37; Ps. 68:27), several prominent biblical figures are descended from it, including King Saul (1 Sam. 9:1), Queen Esther (Esther 2:5), and the apostle Paul (Rom. 11:1).

BENJAMIN GATE A gate located in the northeast part of Jerusalem. Jeremiah tried to leave for the Benjamin territory during the Babylonian siege of Jerusalem, but he was apprehended at this gate (Jer. 37:13). It should be associated with the People's Gate ("gate of the people" [Jer. 17:19]). "Benjamin Gate" might be a later name for the Ephraim Gate.

BENO A Levite, son of Merari, during David's reign (1 Chron. 24:26–27).

BEN-ONI *See* Benjamin.

BEN-ZOHETH One of the two sons of Ishi (1 Chron. 4:20). It is possible that he was grandson of Ishi and son of Zoheth, since his name literally means "son of Zoheth."

BEON One of several locations east of the Dead Sea that the Gadites and the Reubenites requested as a land allotment in which to raise cattle (Num. 32:3). Later, the Reubenites built up "Baal Meon" (Num. 32:38), probably another name for Beon.

BEOR **(1)** The father of Bela, king of Edom (Gen. 36:32; 1 Chron. 1:43). **(2)** The father of Balaam, who was hired by King Balak of Moab to curse the Israelites (Num. 22:5).

BERA The king of Sodom who, along with four other kings, rebelled against Kedorlaomer, king of Elam, in the valley of Siddim (Gen. 14:2). In their defeat, Abraham's nephew Lot was taken captive by the survivors, who fled to the hill country.

BERACAH *See* Berakah.

BERACHIAH *See* Berekiah.

BERAIAH Son of Shimei in the genealogical account of Benjamin (1 Chron. 8:21).

BERAKAH **(1)** One of the Benjamites who joined David's company after the latter's banishment from Saul's presence (1 Chron. 12:3). **(2)** A valley located near Tekoa in the desert west of the Dead Sea, where King Jehoshaphat of Judah and his army celebrated the victory that God won for them against a coalition of invading Ammonites, Moabites, and Edomites (2 Chron. 20:26). The word *berakhah* means "blessing," and according to the biblical narrative, the valley received its name on account of the praise given to God there. The modern location is uncertain.

BERAKIAH *See* Berekiah.

BEREA A city (NRSV: “Beroea”) in southern Macedonia (modern Veria) forty-five miles southwest of Thessalonica. After fleeing Thessalonica, Paul and Silas preached there to receptive Jews who “examined the Scriptures every day” to confirm Paul’s message (Acts 17:11). Sopater of Berea accompanied Paul (Acts 20:4).

BERECHIAH *See* Berekiah.

BERED **(1)** Son of Shuthelah and grandson of Ephraim, who was Joseph’s youngest son (1 Chron. 7:20). In the account of the census that Moses took of Israel, the same person is apparently listed by the name “Beker” (Num. 26:35). **(2)** One of two places, along with Kadesh, between which the well of Beer Lahai Roi was located (Gen. 16:14).

BEREKIAH **(1)** Son of Zerubbabel, and a descendant of David (1 Chron. 3:20). Berekiah and four siblings are listed separately after two other brothers and a sister, perhaps because they have a different mother or were born after Zerubbabel returned from exile. **(2)** Son of Shimea, and the father of Asaph (1 Chron. 6:39; 15:17). **(3)** Son of Asa, a Levite (1 Chron. 9:16). **(4)** A gatekeeper for the ark of the covenant (1 Chron. 15:23). He may be the same Berekiah as in 1 Chron. 6:39; 15:17 or in 9:16. **(5)** Son of Meshillemoth, an Ephraimite (2 Chron. 28:12). **(6)** Son of Meshezabel, and the father of Meshullam, who helped to repair the wall of Jerusalem under the leadership of Nehemiah (Neh. 3:4, 30; 6:18). **(7)** Son of Iddo, and the father of Zechariah the prophet (Zech. 1:1, 7; Matt. 23:35).

BERI Son of Zophah in the genealogical account of Asher (1 Chron. 7:36). Appearing only once in the OT, he is not the eponym of the Beriites, who come from the same tribe but descend from Beriah (Num. 26:44).

BERIAH **(1)** The fourth son of Asher (Gen. 46:17), and the father of Heber and Malkiel (1 Chron. 7:30–31). He left Canaan and went to Egypt with his father and the rest of Jacob’s family. He is the ancestor of the Beriites (Num. 26:44). **(2)** A son of Ephraim, named “Beriah” because tragedy (*ra’ah*) had come to his family when two of his sons were killed by the men of Gath (1 Chron. 7:23). **(3)** A Benjamite who was a son of Elpaal (1 Chron. 8:13). **(4)** A Levite who was a son of Shimei (1 Chron. 23:10). He and his brother Jeush were considered one family with one responsibility because they did not have many sons (1 Chron. 23:11).

BERIITES The descendants of Beriah, the fourth son of Asher. He is found in all three genealogical accounts of Asher (Gen. 46:17–18; Num. 26:44–47; 1 Chron. 7:30–40).

BERITES The Hebrew text of 2 Sam. 20:14 mentions “Berites,” presumably a group of people otherwise unknown. Some ancient versions appear to support a slight revision of the text to read “chosen ones” or “Bikrites” (see 2 Sam. 20:1).

BERITH *See* Baal-Berith; Covenant; El-Berith.

BERNICE, BERENICE Daughter of Agrippa I, great-granddaughter of Herod the Great, sister of Agrippa II and Drusilla. Bernice was married to her uncle Herod, king of Chalcis, who died in AD 48. In Acts 25–26 she appears as the queen consort of her brother King Agrippa II, who was in

Caesarea visiting Festus, the Roman governor of Judea (AD 59–62). During their stay, Bernice witnessed Paul’s imprisonment defense prior to his being sent to Rome for appeal to Caesar. Later, Bernice was briefly married to Polemo, king of Cicilia. She then resumed her significant role in Agrippa’s reign. In AD 75 she went to Rome as the lover of Titus Vespasian, ten years her junior, until he dismissed her as politically untenable.

BERODACH-BALADAN *See* Marduk-Baladan.

BEROEA *See* Berea.

BEROTHAH A place on the northern boundary of Israel in Ezekiel’s description of the future land (Ezek. 47:16). Berothah is probably the same as Berothai, a city of Hadadezer that David plundered (2 Sam. 8:8). It is possibly to be identified with Bereitan, modern Brital, Lebanon.

BEROTHAI A city in the kingdom of Zobah from which David took a large quantity of bronze (2 Sam. 8:8). However, the parallel passage in 1 Chron. 18:8 identifies this city as Kun, about seven miles north of Berothai. This city is possibly located at the modern site of Bereitan in Lebanon. Berothai is most likely identical to Berothah mentioned in Ezek. 47:16, a city located between Damascus and Hamath as the northern boundary of the restored Israel in Ezekiel’s vision.

BEROTHITE *See* Beerothite.

BESAI Listed in Ezra 2:49; Neh. 7:52 as an ancestor of temple servants (Nethinim) who returned to Jerusalem after the Babylonian captivity under the leadership of Zerubbabel (in 539 BC or soon after). The fact that many of the names in the list are foreign has led to the belief that they were originally prisoners of war who were pressed into service to do menial tasks as they assisted the Levites.

BESODEIAH The father of Meshullam, who helped in Nehemiah’s effort to rebuild the wall of Jerusalem by repairing the Jeshanah Gate with Joiada (Neh. 3:6).

BESOM The KJV rendering of the Hebrew word *mat’ate’* in Isa. 14:23, translated as “broom” in more-recent versions.

BESOR VALLEY A wide ravine that drained a large portion of the western Negev into the Mediterranean and formed a natural boundary between the settled area to the north and the nomadic tribes to the south. The nomadic Amalekites crossed the Besor to raid David’s town at Ziklag, and a third of David’s army of six hundred stayed at the Besor when he crossed it in pursuit (1 Sam. 30:1–2, 9–10, 21).

BESTIALITY Mentioned four times, bestiality refers to sexual acts performed with animals (Exod. 22:19; Lev. 18:23; 20:15–16; Deut. 27:21). Bestiality inverts the created order by mixing image bearers with animals (Gen. 1:27–28) and is condemned as “perversion.” The nations purged from Canaan were guilty of these abominations (Lev. 20:23).

BETAH *See* Tebah.

BETEN A town in the southern portion of the tribal allotment to Asher under Joshua (Josh. 19:25). It is possibly to be identified with modern Abtun, in the vicinity of Mount Carmel.

BETHABARA In John 1:28 many manuscripts name Bethabara as the place where John was baptizing (followed by the KJV), although the oldest and most widely attested reading has it as Bethany. The sixth-century AD Madaba Map corroborates the Bethabara hypothesis.

BETH ANATH A town assigned to the tribe of Naphtali after Joshua's conquest of the promised land (Josh. 19:38). The inhabitants of Beth Anath were not driven away upon Israel's arrival, and by the time of the judges they were required to do forced labor (Judg. 1:33).

BETH ANOTH A city assigned to the tribe of Judah after Joshua's conquest of the promised land. It was located about three miles north/northeast of Hebron (Josh. 15:59).

BETHANY **(1)** A village about two miles east of Jerusalem on the way to Jericho (John 11:18). It is mentioned twice in Matthew (21:17; 26:6), four times in Mark (11:1, 11, 12; 14:3), twice in Luke (19:29; 24:50), and three times in John (11:1, 18; 12:1). Bethany is identified as a place where Jesus lodged several times, primarily because his friends Lazarus, Mary, and Martha lived there (John 11:1; 12:1). It was here that Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead and dined at the house of Simon the leper. Simon's house in Bethany is where Mary anointed Jesus' body before his death and resurrection (Matt. 26:6–13; John 12:1–2).

(2) John the Baptist ministered in a place called "Bethany" beyond/across the Jordan (John 1:28). It was here on the east side of the Jordan that Jesus called his first disciples (John 1:35–42). The modern town of El-'Aziriyeh is traditionally associated with first-century Bethany. *See also* Bethabara.

BETH ARABAH A village in the wilderness of Judah located on the border with Benjamin about five miles north-northwest of the Dead Sea (Josh. 15:6, 61; 18:18, 22).

BETH-ARAM *See* Beth Haram.

BETH ARBEL Appearing only once in the Bible, this city serves as a picture of terrible judgment when "mothers were dashed to the ground with their children" (Hos. 10:14). The city cannot be identified with certainty, but the vast majority of scholars identify it with the Transjordanian city of Arbela (modern Irbid).

BETH ASHBEA The home of linen workers descending from the tribe of Judah. It was probably located in the region of Mareshah (1 Chron. 4:21).

BETH AVEN Beth Aven appears for the first time in the OT in the book of Joshua. It is there that Beth Aven's location is established in close proximity to Ai and Bethel (7:2). The wilderness of Beth Aven also served as a boundary marker for the tribe of Benjamin (18:12). This place, whose name is translated as "house of wickedness" or "house of iniquity," is mentioned three times by the eighth-century BC prophet Hosea (4:15; 5:8; 10:5). By this time, the term "Beth Aven" had become a derogatory epithet used for the pagan shrine built at Bethel. Hosea indicated that because of its idolatry and rebellion against God, Bethel ("the house of God") became Beth Aven ("the house of wickedness/iniquity”).

BETH AZMAVETH A village north of Jerusalem that appears twice in the OT. The location appears in connection with the returnees from exile during the time of Nehemiah (Neh. 7:28). The village was built by singers who served at the dedication of the rebuilt wall (12:29).

BETH BAAL MEON A town in the northern part of Moab (Josh. 13:17). It also appears as Baal Meon (Num. 32:38; 1 Chron. 5:8; Ezek. 25:9) and Beth Meon (Jer. 48:23). The names Baal Meon and Beth Baal Meon appear as well on the ninth-century BC Moabite Stone (lines 9, 30).

BETH BARAH A location near the Jordan River where Joshua led the Ephraimites to capture the fleeing Midianites (Judg. 7:24). Athough some suggest that it could be west of the Jordan River in the vicinity of Wadi Far‘‘ah, its precise location is uncertain.

BETH BIRI Descendants of the tribe of Simeon lived in this town before David was crowned king over Israel (1 Chron. 4:31). The modern town of Jebel el-Biri might be located on the same place as the ancient town of Beth Biri.

BETH CAR *See* Beth Kar.

BETH DAGON **(1)** A town located in the lowland of Judah (Josh. 15:41). The name means “house/temple of Dagon” and is a reference to Dagon, the god of the Philistines (Judg. 16:23; 1 Sam. 5:2–7). **(2)** A city on the southern border of the tribe of Asher (Josh. 19:27), located about five miles southeast of the modern city of Haifa.

BETH DIBLATHAIM Jeremiah mentions Beth Diblathaim in his oracles against the nations and specifically against Moab. It may be that Beth Diblathaim is the same as Almon Diblathaim, a town encountered by the wandering Israelites on their way to the promised land (Num. 33:46–47). If so, Beth Diblathaim was located somewhere on the King’s Highway between Mount Hor and the plains of Moab.

BETH EDEN An important city-state located northeast of Israel on the banks of the Euphrates River. Beth Eden played an important role in the Aramean kingdom. During the time of the eighth-century BC prophet Amos, Beth Eden had recovered from an earlier Assyrian invasion led by Shalmaneser III and again rose to fame. Beth Eden is included in God’s judgment against the nations that neighbor his people, Israel (Amos 1:5).

BETH EKED A town in the northern kingdom of Israel. The town was located between Jezreel and the capital Samaria. It was at Beth Eked that Jehu slaughtered forty-two relatives of King Ahaziah of Judah (2 Kings 10:12–14). The two modern cities that might be located on the ancient ruins of Beth Eked are Beit Qad and Kafr Ro’i.

BETHEL The ancient site of Bethel is probably to be identified with the modern village of Beitin, 10.5 miles north of Jerusalem. Its location is described and pinpointed in Gen. 12:8; Judg. 21:19. Bethel’s situation and importance are explained by its copious springs and its location at the intersection of major ancient highways, the north-south mountain road and the east-west road from

Jericho to the coastal plain.

From the patriarchs to the judges. The first mention of Bethel in the Bible is in Gen. 12:8, where Abram camped "east of Bethel" on his first entry into the promised land. He camped there again on his return from a stay in Egypt (13:3). On the first occasion Abram erected "an altar to the LORD." When Abram returned to that spot, he "called on the name of the LORD."

It was Jacob who gave it the name "Bethel," meaning "house of God," due to the dream he received in that location. In the dream he saw a ladder reaching to heaven, and God spoke to him (28:10–19). Its former name was Luz. God later appeared in Mesopotamia and spoke to Jacob, identifying himself as "the God of Bethel," instructing him to return to his native land. The title taken by God implied that God would be faithful to his earlier promise to bring Jacob back to his land (31:13). Later God specifically instructed Jacob to settle in Bethel (35:1–6). Deborah, Rebekah's nurse, died in Bethel and was buried there (35:8). God appeared to Jacob a second time in Bethel and spoke to him, reiterating the promise to give him the land of Canaan (35:9–15; cf. 28:13). All God's dealings with Jacob are connected to the theophanies and divine promises associated with Bethel.

Bethel is mentioned a number of times in the account of Joshua's capture of Ai, a city that lay to the east of Bethel (Josh. 7). The king of Bethel is listed among the kings defeated by Joshua (12:16). Under Joshua, the city was apportioned to Benjamin (18:13, 22), but the Canaanites repopulated it after the near extinction of the tribe of Benjamin (Judg. 20–21). Bethel was reconquered by the house of Joseph and incorporated into Ephraimite territory (Judg. 1:22–25; 1 Chron. 7:28), and later it became a fortress on its southern tribal border. Deborah held court between Ramah and Bethel (Judg. 4:5). Under the judgeship of Samuel, Bethel was one of his regular stops in his yearly circuit (1 Sam. 7:16). It continued throughout this period to be a sanctuary where offerings were made (see 1 Sam. 10:3).

From the monarchy to the exile. This long-term cultic association explains the choice of Bethel as one of the two chief sanctuaries of the northern kingdom, the other center being in Dan. Jeroboam I built a royal shrine at Bethel to rival Jerusalem and to prevent the Israelites from drifting back to the Davidic dynasty (1 Kings 12:26–33). The prophet Ahijah's criticism of Jeroboam's actions was not due to Ahijah's commitment to a central sanctuary at Jerusalem (14:1–16) but rather arose from the use of bull images (golden calves). This was not an innocent move by Jeroboam, returning to pre-Jerusalem and more ancient cultic symbols. It is not adequate simply to view Jeroboam's calves as a "pedestal" upon which the Lord was believed to be enthroned (as accepted by W. F. Albright), for an explicit link is made with the idolatrous golden calf set up by Aaron in the desert: "Here are your gods, Israel, who brought you up out of Egypt" (1 Kings 12:28 [cf. Exod. 32:8]). This became known as the chief sin of Jeroboam son of Nebat. It tainted the northern kingdom (see 2 Kings 10:29) and eventually led to that kingdom's judgment by God at the hands of the Assyrians (2 Kings 17:21–23).

The southern king Abijah captured Bethel from Israel in the latter part of Jeroboam's reign (2 Chron. 13:19), but then it later returned to northern control. The unnamed "man of God" in 1 Kings 13 predicted the later destruction of the Bethel altar by King Josiah (1 Kings 13:1–3), a prediction subsequently fulfilled (2 Kings 23:4, 15–18). Bethel was visited by Elijah before his translation to heaven (2 Kings 2:2–4), and a company of prophets dwelt there. Elisha revisited Bethel after his master's translation and cursed the forty-two youths who insulted him (2 Kings 2:23–25).

Hosea condemned the great wickedness of Bethel, presumably because of the false worship that went on there (Hos. 10:15), but more positively, he recalled that this was the location where God had talked with the patriarch Jacob (12:4). Jeremiah also explained the sad fate of Israel to be a result of their trust in Bethel (Jer. 48:13). Amos, in his condemnation of the worship system of the northern kingdom, ironically called to the people, “Go to Bethel and sin” (Amos 4:4). Later he dropped the irony and spoke plainly: “Do not seek Bethel” (5:5), predicting its destruction (5:6; cf. 3:14). It was in Bethel that Amos was criticized by the head priest Amaziah (7:10–17) and was told to no longer prophesy there because it was “the king’s sanctuary.”

From the exile to the Roman period. The city was destroyed by the Assyrians about the time of their capture of Samaria (722 BC), but the shrine was revived in the form of a syncretistic cult at the close of the Assyrian period by the foreign peoples deported to the area (2 Kings 17:24–41). Some descendants of the inhabitants of Bethel were among those who returned from Babylonian exile in the first great caravan (Ezra 2:28; Neh. 7:32), and these Benjamite returnees resettled in their hometown (Neh. 11:31). Bethel prospered in the Hellenistic and Roman periods.

BETHELITE A citizen of Bethel. Only Hiel, who rebuilt Jericho in the time of Ahab, is called a Bethelite (1 Kings 16:34 KJV, NET).

BETHEL SHAREZER *See* Sharezer.

BETH EMEK One of the towns allotted to the tribe of Asher, mentioned only in Josh. 19:27. It may be identified with Tel Mimas, located some seven miles northeast of Akko where Upper Galilee descends to the Mediterranean coast.

BETHER A Hebrew word in Song 2:17 that is either a proper noun (KJV, NASB: “mountains of Bether”) or an adjective (e.g., NIV: “rugged hills”; NRSV: “cleft mountains”).

BETHESDA A pool in Jerusalem where Jesus healed a man who had been sick for thirty-eight years (John 5:2). Other names for the pool, including “Bethzatha” and “Bethsaida,” appear in various manuscripts. Eusebius also calls it the “sheep pool.” The name means “house of mercy,” and the pool is associated with the cleansing of the sheep for the temple sacrifice. Some manuscripts of John 5 report that the pool was stirred by angels, which allowed for the healing of whoever entered it first at that time. Archaeology has revealed the location of the pool near St. Anne’s Church. It is a two-pool complex surrounded by five porticoes.

Excavations at the probable site of the Pool of Bethesda

BETH EZEL This town is mentioned only once in the Bible, in Micah’s lament (1:11). Its exact location is unknown, but most of the identifiable towns in this lament are defensive hill forts in the Shephelah, to the southwest of Jerusalem. The name may be derived from the verb “to take away,” in which case Micah’s statement that “its protection is taken from you” (TNIV) involves wordplay.

BETH GADER In 1 Chron. 2:50–51 Beth Gader is identified as son of Hareph, and grandson of Hur, from the tribe of Judah. Some suggest that later Beth Gader was a town located south of Jerusalem, in the vicinity of Bethlehem.

BETH GAMUL A Moabite town named along with Kiriathaim and Beth Meon in Jeremiah’s oracles against the nations (Jer. 48:23). Its site is uncertain, although modern-day Khirbet el-Jemeil has been suggested as a possible location.

BETH GILGAL Appearing only once in the OT, this town is linked with the returnees from exile during the time of Nehemiah. The village, located on the east plain of Jericho, was built by singers who served at the dedication of the rebuilt wall of Jerusalem (Neh. 12:29).

BETH HAGGAN This place, whose name means “place of the garden,” is where King Jehu of Israel fatally wounded King Ahaziah of Judah (2 Kings 9:27). Ahaziah would die at Megiddo. Since the location must be somewhere between Jezreel toward Samaria and Jerusalem, scholars suggest that modern-day Jenin should be connected with ancient Beth Haggan.

BETH HAKKEREM This town, whose name means “place of the vineyard,” appears in the book of Jeremiah when the prophet warns the southern kingdom of Judah of an imminent and horrific invasion from the north. Beth Hakkerem is mentioned along with Jerusalem, Tekoa, and the tribe of Benjamin. The fourth-century theologian Jerome suggested that the city could be seen from Bethlehem. In the book of Nehemiah, Beth Hakkerem is one of the districts of postexilic Judah (3:14). At this time, the district was ruled by Malkijah son of Rekab.

BETH-HANAN *See* Elon Bethhanan.

BETH HARAM A town (or possibly a valley) in the region of Gad and located east of Jordan (Josh. 13:27). The place is identical with Beth Haran, a fortified city taken during the conquest of the promised land (Num. 32:36).

BETH HARAN *See* Beth Haram.

BETH HOGLAH A town located between Jericho and the Jordan River, mentioned as the territories of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin are outlined (Josh. 15:6; 18:19, 21). Today it is identified with modern Deir Hajlah.

BETH HORON A city allotted by Joshua to the Levites (Josh. 21:22). The city was divided into two parts, Lower Beth Horon and Upper Beth Horon. The twin city of Beth Horon, first mentioned in

Josh. 10:10–11, is located in the mountains of Judah in the valley of Aijalon. During the Israelite conquest of the land, many Amorites were killed at Gibeon and others pursued as far as Beth Horon. In the distribution of the land, Lower Beth Horon was allotted to Ephraim, while Upper Beth Horon was on the border between Ephraim and Benjamin (16:3, 5; 18:13–14). During Solomon’s reign, Beth Horon was rebuilt after being burned by the Egyptians during one of their northern incursions (1 Kings 9:15–17).

The Chronicler reveals that the city was built by Sheerah, granddaughter of Ephraim (1 Chron. 7:24). Lower and Upper Beth Horon are described as “fortified cities, with walls and with gates and bars” (2 Chron. 8:5). The last mention of Beth Horon is made in conjunction with some Israelite troops who killed three thousand Judeans from Samaria to Beth Horon (2 Chron. 25:13). Modern-day Beit ’Ur el-Foqa has been identified with ancient Upper Beth Horon, while ancient Lower Beth Horon has been identified with modern-day Beit ’Ur et-Tahta.

BETH JESHIMOTH A geographic location referred to four times in the OT. It is one of the towns in Moab where the Israelites camped as they were poised to enter Canaan (Num. 33:49). It is listed among the territories taken from Sihon by the Israelites (Josh. 12:2–3) and as one of the towns given to the tribe of Reuben by Moses (Josh. 13:20). In Ezekiel’s prophecy against Moab it is mentioned as one of the frontier towns that will be the first to be destroyed (Ezek. 25:9).

BETH KAR A town within the boundaries of the tribe of Benjamin mentioned in 1 Sam. 7:11 in connection with the Israelite defeat of the Philistines at Mizpah. The victory was attributed primarily to Yahweh, who created confusion in the Philistine camp (1 Sam. 7:10).

BETH-LE-APHRAH, BETH LEAPHRAH *See* Beth Ophrah.

BETH LEBAOTH This town is mentioned for the first time in the book of Joshua in its abbreviated form, Lebaoth. Joshua 15:32 identifies Lebaoth as part of the tribe of Judah, while 19:6 has Beth Lebaoth as one of the cities belonging to the tribe of Simeon. Probably due to a scribal error, the city appears as Beth Biri in a Simeonite genealogy (1 Chron. 4:31).

BETHLEHEM There were at least two towns called “Bethlehem” (meaning “house of bread”). **(1)** A town in Zebulun, in the north, about seven miles northwest of Nazareth (Josh. 19:15).

(2) The well-known town about four miles south of Jerusalem in Judah, situated on a couple of hills about 2,300 feet above sea level. The ancient name was “Ephrath” or “Ephrathah” (Gen. 35:16, 19; 48:7; Ruth 4:11; Ps. 136:2; Mic. 5:2; *see also* Bethlehem Ephrathah). With the possible exception of the story of the judge Ibzan (Judg. 12:8–10), most references to Bethlehem are to the town in Judah, which still exists.

Bethlehem first enters biblical history when Jacob’s wife Rachel dies there while giving birth to Benjamin (Gen. 35:16–19). After the conquest, the town was inhabited by Ephrathites descended from Caleb, one of whom was called “father of Bethlehem” (in the sense of civic leader; 1 Chron. 2:51; 4:4; cf. 2:54). Judges mentions two Levites passing though, one who moved from Bethlehem to Ephraim (Judg. 17:7–9), and another who lived in Ephraim but took a concubine from Bethlehem (19:1). The most important references to Bethlehem from this era, however, are in Ruth. It was from Bethlehem that Elimelek’s family set out for Moab (Ruth 1:1), and to Bethlehem that Ruth and Naomi returned (1:22). Two generations later, it was into this same Bethlemite family that the future king

David was born (Ruth 4:18–22; 1 Sam. 16:1).

Bethlehem is mentioned frequently as David's hometown (e.g., 1 Sam. 17:12, 58; 20:6). Several of the mighty men on whom David depended so much were from there, including the brothers Joab, Abishai, and Asahel (2 Sam. 2:18, 32) and Elhanan (2 Sam. 23:24). At one point, when Bethlehem was temporarily garrisoned by Philistines, some of the mighty men risked their lives to fetch David water from the town well (2 Sam. 23:14–17; 2 Chron. 11:16–26). Bethlehem was later fortified by David's grandson Rehoboam (2 Chron. 11:6).

Shepherd's field near Bethlehem

In the eighth century the prophet Micah promised that although Judah's defeat was inevitable, a new king would arise from this otherwise insignificant town to save the whole of Israel (Mic. 5:2). Both the place and the clan retained their identity through the exile, and 123 men of Bethlehem returned to Judah (Ezra 2:21; see also Neh. 7:26).

Luke stresses that Jesus was born in David's city (Luke 2:4; cf. 2 Sam. 7:12–16); Joseph had taken Mary to his ancestral home, Bethlehem, for a Roman census. The angels announced Jesus' birth to some shepherds in the vicinity of town (Luke 2:1–20). Matthew makes a more specific connection to Micah's prophecy; indeed, it was on the basis of this prophecy that Herod decided where to send the magi (Matt. 2:1–8) and where to slaughter the baby boys (2:16). Matthew sees in this slaughter a fulfillment of Jeremiah's prophecy that Rachel, who died at Bethlehem, would mourn her children (Matt. 2:18; Jer. 31:15). Ironically, some Jews rejected Jesus because they thought that he came from Galilee (John 7:42). Constantine the Great, the fourth-century Roman emperor, built a church above a cave in Bethlehem, traditionally believed to be the birthplace of Jesus. Today the city boasts a population of about thirty thousand and is one of the most visited sites in Israel, especially during the Christmas season, when thousands of Christians make a pilgrimage to the traditional place of Jesus' birth.

BETHLEHEM EPHRATHAH "Ephrathah" or "Ephrath" distinguishes Bethlehem in Judah (Gen. 35:16, 19; 48:7, 19; Ruth 4:11; Mic. 5:2) from Bethlehem in Zebulun (Josh. 19:15). Some Ephrathites lived in Bethlehem (Ruth 1:2; 1 Sam. 17:12), but the clan may have been more widespread. *See also* Bethlehem.

BETHLEHEMITE *See* Bethlehem.

BETH MAACAH *See* Beth Maakah.

BETH MAAKAH A city in far northern Israel usually called "Abel Beth Maakah." Located approximately seventeen miles north of Hazor and four miles west of Dan at modern Tell Abel el-Qamh, (Abel) Beth Maakah sat at an important road junction, squarely in the path of northern invaders. Both the Arameans (1 Kings 15:20) and the Assyrians (2 Kings 15:29) destroyed the city when they first entered Israel. *See also* Abel Beth Maakah.

BETH MARCABOTH *See* Beth Markaboth.

BETH MARKABOTH One of the locations inherited by the tribe of Simeon within the territory of Judah (Josh. 19:5). It was occupied by Shimei and his descendants until the reign of King David (1 Chron. 4:31).

BETH MEON A Moabite town (Jer. 48:23) also known as Baal Meon (Num. 32:38; 1 Chron. 5:8; Ezek. 25:9), Beth Baal Meon (Josh. 13:17), and Beon (Num. 32:3). The Moabite Stone (line 9) reports it being rebuilt by a Moabite king Mesha, who also built a reservoir in it.

BETH MILLO Likely a palace or fortress. If "Millo" means "fill," as its Hebrew etymology suggests, it may refer to the foundations of a prominent structure in the upper city. Shechem's Beth Millo is mentioned in connection with the "citizens of Shechem" who crowned Abimelek king (Judg. 9:6, 20). Jerusalem's Beth Millo (2 Kings 12:20) may be identified with a stone structure on the east side of the City of David.

BETH NIMRAH One of the towns constructed by the Gadites in the land given to them by Moses after they defeated the Amorites (Num. 32:3, 36; Josh. 13:27). It is located east of the Jordan Valley, and its name is present at Tell Nimrim. It may be associated with the "waters of Nimrim" (Isa. 15:6; Jer. 48:34).

BETH OPHRAH This town is mentioned only once in the Bible, in Micah's lament (1:10). Its exact location is unknown, but all the identifiable towns in this lament cluster in the Shephelah, a frontier region of foothills to the southwest of Jerusalem. The name "Beth Ophrah" (NRSV: "Beth-leaphrah"; KJV: "house of Aprah") means "house of dust," so Micah's command to its inhabitants to "roll in dust" involves a wordplay.

BETH-PALET *See* Beth Pelet.

BETH PAZZEZ A town found within the territory allotted to the tribe of Issachar (Josh. 19:21). Based on the cities listed with it, the town probably was located east of Mount Tabor, but the exact location cannot be determined.

BETH PELET A southern Judean town located near the boundary of Edom (Josh. 15:21, 27). It was one of the towns reoccupied by Judeans following their return from exile (Neh. 11:26). A proposed location is north of Beersheba, but a definitive location cannot be determined.

BETH PEOR A Transjordanian town located just east of the northern end of the Dead Sea. It was part of the holdings of King Sihon of the Amorites until the Israelite invasion as they passed by on their way to enter Canaan (Deut. 4:46). It is also from the valley near Beth Peor that Moses delivered his speeches in Deuteronomy. Already in Deut. 4:3 Moses refers to the sin of the Israelites in Num. 25:1–9 concerning Baal Peor, whose worship certainly was located in Beth Peor (i.e., "house of Peor"). That incident is referred to again in Hos. 9:10 as the incident that turned Yahweh against his people. Moses was buried in the valley opposite Beth Peor, although "to this day no one knows where his grave is" (Deut. 34:6). *See also* Baal Peor.

BETHPHAGE A location near Jerusalem where Jesus sent his disciples to find a donkey for the triumphal entry (Matt. 21:1; Mark 11:1; Luke 19:29). Later Jewish sources believe it to be a suburb of Jerusalem that was located outside the city wall and surrounded by its own wall. It was located about a mile east of the summit of the Mount of Olives. Frescoes found at that location show two disciples untying both a donkey and a colt (cf. Matt. 21:2). According to archaeologists, the city was occupied from the second century BC until the eighth century AD. Many artifacts have been discovered at this location, including graffiti depicting a cross.

BETH-PHELET *See* Beth Pelet.

BETH RAPHA Son of Eshton from the tribe of Judah, mentioned only in 1 Chron. 4:12. Since this is one of the few cases where a personal name appears in the OT preceded by *beth* ("house, dynasty"), it has sometimes been interpreted as the name of a place (perhaps in the region between Bethlehem and Hebron). "Rapha" appears in other Semitic names and may simply be the short form of "Yahweh/God has healed."

BETH REHOB An Aramean town or district on the road to Hamath. It is probably to be identified with Rehob of Num. 13:21, the northernmost point of the journey of the Israelite spies sent into Canaan by Moses at God's command. It has been conjectured as modern Banias, five miles northeast of Dan, or as Hunin, west of Banias. Danites migrated to the north and captured Laish, in the valley that is part of Beth Rehob (Judg. 18:28). Ammonites hired Syrian soldiers as mercenaries from Beth Rehob and Zobah to fight against David (2 Sam. 10:6).

BETHSAIDA A town located on the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee, near the Jordan River, about five miles east of Capernaum, although the precise location is disputed. The two sites most commonly suggested are el-Araj and et-Tell. The answer may be found in the relationship between the two sites. The ruins of et-Tell are two miles north of el-Araj. In the first century they may have been on opposite sides of the Jordan River, el-Araj on the west and et-Tell on the east. Both were Bethsaida, but el-Araj was the “village” (Mark 8:23) and “Bethsaida in Galilee” (John 1:44; 12:21), and et-Tell was the *polis* (“city”).

The name “Bethsaida” is Aramaic, meaning “house of fishing” or “house of the fisherman.” The Jewish historian Josephus records that Herod the Great’s son Herod Philip built up the city in terms of the number of inhabitants and grandeur and advanced it from a village to a city. He renamed it “Julias” in honor of Augustus Caesar’s daughter (*Ant*. 18.2.1). Philip was buried in the city following his death in AD 33 (*Ant.* 18.4.6).

Bethsaida is the third most mentioned town in the Gospels, and it was at the heart of Jesus’ ministry. It was the birthplace of Peter and Andrew and the home of Philip (John 1:44; 12:21). Jesus performed several miracles at or near the town. Near Bethsaida Jesus walked on water (Mark 6:45–52) and fed the five thousand (6:30–44). In Bethsaida Jesus healed a blind man (8:22–26). Unfortunately, the miracles do not seem to have had much effect on the inhabitants, and in Matt. 11:21 // Luke 10:13 Jesus denounces the city along with Chorazin for its lack of repentance.

BETH SHAN Known as Scythopolis at the time of Jesus, Beth Shan is a town located at the junction of the plain of Jezreel and the Jordan Valley, west of the Jordan River. This strategic site, with fertile lands and abundant water, overlooks major roads running west toward the Mediterranean and north and south through the Jordan Valley. The name also designates the district surrounding the town.

Modern Tel Beth-Shean (Arabic: Tell el-Husn) has been the site of three archaeological excavations. In 1921–33 the University of Pennsylvania began work on the Early Arab and Byzantine levels and later reached the Middle and Early Bronze Age strata, discovering that Beth Shan served as an administrative center for Egypt during the time of the Late Bronze Age and Iron Age I (1550–1150 BC). The most significant finds of this excavation included three basalt stelae with inscriptions from the reigns of the Egyptian rulers Seti I and Ramesses II and a life-size statue of Ramesses II. Excavations in Beth Shan were renewed briefly in 1983 and in earnest between 1989 and 1996 by the Institute of Archaeology of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, with significant artifacts uncovered at almost every stratum. The combined efforts of these excavations have found evidence of continuous occupation from the late Neolithic period (5500–4500 BC) to the Crusader and Ayyubid periods (AD 1099–1291).

Beth Shan is first mentioned in the Bible in connection with Joshua’s division of the land among the twelve tribes of Israel. Although located within the territory of Issachar, it was portioned to the tribe of Manasseh (Josh. 17:11) but remained under the control of the Canaanite inhabitants because they possessed iron chariots. When the Israelites gained strength, they put the Canaanites to forced labor but did not drive them out (Josh. 17:12–13, 16; Judg. 1:27).

Tel Beth-Shean, the site of ancient Beth Shan

During the period of the monarchy, after the Israelites were defeated in battle on Mount Gilboa, the Philistines fastened the bodies of Saul and his three sons to the wall of Beth Shan and placed Saul's weapons in the temple of Ashtaroth. When news of this atrocity spread, men from Jabesh Gilead retrieved the bodies and buried them (1 Sam. 31:7–13). David later retrieved the bones of Saul and his sons and reburied them in Zela (2 Sam. 21:14). Although Beth Shan had been under the control of the Philistines during Saul's reign, it is listed within one of Solomon's administrative districts (1 Kings 4:12).

Not mentioned again in biblical sources, the town continued to play a role in the historical events of the area. After Alexander the Great's conquests, Greeks settled in Beth Shan and changed the town's name to "Scythopolis." It became one of the towns designated as belonging to the Decapolis, a confederation of ten towns primarily situated east and south of the Sea of Galilee. This was the only city of the Decapolis located west of the Jordan River.

Scythopolis was the site of some conflict during the Maccabean revolt (1 Macc. 5:52; 12:40–42). Jews retook control of the area during the reign of the Jewish king Alexander Jannaeus, but its inhabitants were spared from massacre because of kindness shown to the local Jews (2 Macc. 12:29–31). In 63 BC the Roman general Pompey won control of the city from the Jews. The city continued to be occupied during the Roman and Byzantine periods and was conquered in AD 636 by the Arabs, who renamed it "Beisan."

BETH SHEAN *See* Beth Shan.

BETH SHEMESH The name “Beth Shemesh” means “house of the sun,” which suggests the presence of a temple to a sun god at that location.

(1) A city allocated to the tribe of Dan, in Josh. 19:41 it is called “Ir Shemesh,” which means “City of Shemesh.” It is also described as being located on the northern boundary of Judah (Josh. 15:10), as one of the cities that Judah allotted to the Levites (Josh. 21:16), and as being “in Judah” (2 Kings 14:11).

Beth Shemesh is best known for its role in the story of the Philistine capture of the ark of the covenant. After keeping the ark with disastrous consequences for seven months, the Philistines returned it to the border town of Beth Shemesh. The ark’s safe arrival was a joyous occasion for the town until some of the residents looked inside the ark and were struck down by God (1 Sam. 6).

Beth Shemesh belonged to the second administrative district of Solomon (1 Kings 4:9) and was the location where King Jehoash (Joash) of Israel engaged King Amaziah of Judah in battle. The victorious Jehoash then marched on to Jerusalem and plundered the temple (2 Kings 14:11–14; 2 Chron. 25:21–24). During the reign of King Ahaz, the Philistines seized many towns in the lowlands of Judah, including Beth Shemesh (2 Chron. 28:18).

Beth Shemesh has been identified with Tel Beth-Shemesh, located in the northeastern Shephelah (lowland) of Judah, twelve miles west of Jerusalem, overlooking the Sorek Valley. Early excavations, conducted in 1911–12 by Duncan Mackenzie for the Palestine Exploration Fund and in 1928–33 by Elihu Grant from Haverford College, uncovered six levels of occupation. Finds in Stratum VI consisted solely of pottery shards. In Stratum V (Middle Bronze Age, 2200–1550 BC) a massive city wall, a well-preserved house, and several tombs were uncovered. Stratum IV (Late Bronze Age, 1550–1200 BC) finds included several structures, a Ugaritic cuneiform tablet, an ostracon with a Proto-Canaanite inscription, and a spectacular jewelry hoard. Stratum III (Iron Age I, 1200–1000 BC) finds included many residences, bichrome Philistine pottery, and the remains of industrial metalworking. Excavations in Stratum II (Iron Age II, 1000–586 BC) showed that the city had been rebuilt in a concentric layout. Finds included jar handles, seal impressions, tombs, and evidence of olive oil production. Stratum I (Hellenistic to Medieval periods) discoveries included pottery, coins, and architectural remains.

Discoveries of the recent excavations in 1990–2000 by Shlomo Bunimovitz and Zvi Lederman for Tel Aviv University include an elaborate system of fortifications (tenth to seventh centuries BC), an ironsmith workshop, and a unique subterranean water reservoir coated with hydraulic plaster and with a capacity of eight hundred cubic meters. These excavations confirmed that Beth Shemesh was destroyed in 701 BC by the Assyrian king Sennacherib. Although Judean families resettled the city for a short time, they abandoned it when the entrance to the reservoir was deliberately blocked with 150 tons of debris by the Philistines (and/or the Assyrians), who wanted control of the area.

(2) A city within the territory of the tribe of Issachar (Josh. 19:22).

(3) A fortified city within the territory of the tribe of Naphtali (Josh. 19:38). The Israelites were unable to drive out its Canaanite inhabitants, so they used them for forced labor (Judg. 1:33).

(4) A city in Egypt also known as Heliopolis, mentioned in Jer. 43:13 (NRSV). Here the MT has *beth shemesh* and the LXX has *Heliou poleōs* (Jer. 50:1 LXX), but the NIV translates the name literally as “the temple of the sun” and places “Heliopolis” in a footnote.

BETH-SHEMITE *See* Beth Shemesh.

BETH SHITTAH The place where the Midianite army fled after the surprise attack by Gideon and his three hundred men (Judg. 7:22). The exact location is unknown, but it is likely somewhere in the Jordan Valley near Abel Meholah. The name "Beth Shittah" means "house of the acacia tree."

BETH TAPPUAH A town near Hebron allotted to the tribe of Judah in the southern hill country. The name ("house of the apple") appears only in Josh. 15:53 and is preserved by the modern village of Taffuh, located three miles west of Hebron.

BETH TOGARMAH A place mentioned twice in Ezekiel. First, Beth Togarmah appears as one of several trading partners of the Phoenician city of Tyre (27:14); Beth Togarmah's goods were "work horses, war horses, and mules." Second, Beth Togarmah, "from the far north," is named as one of the military allies of Gog of Magog (38:6). Scholars generally identify Beth Togarmah with Armenia. Togarmah, who settled in the area subsequently known as Beth Togarmah, was a son of Gomer and a great-grandson of Noah (Gen. 10:3; 1 Chron. 1:6).

BETHUEL **(1)** Son of Nahor, Abraham's brother, born to him by his wife, Milkah (Gen. 22:20–23), and the father of Rebekah and Laban. He appears at the most significant point in the marriage arrangement of his daughter Rebekah when he hands her over for marriage to Isaac (Gen. 24:50–51). Bethuel and his son Laban are referred to as "the Aramean" (Gen. 25:20; 28:5; 31:20, 24); the same term is used to describe Jacob prior to his settlement in Egypt (Deut. 26:5). **(2)** A place allotted to the tribe of Simeon when Israel took over Canaan under the leadership of Joshua (Josh. 19:4 ["Bethul"]; 1 Chron. 4:30). The possible location of this place is modern Khirbet el-Qarjeten.

BETHZATHA *See* Bethesda.

BETH ZUR A town in the southern Judean mountains twelve miles south of Jerusalem. The ancient site should be associated with Khirbet et-Tubeiqah, a mere quarter mile away from Burj es-Sur. It was a Judean town (Josh. 15:58) associated with the descendants of Caleb (1 Chron. 2:45). Rehoboam fortified it (2 Chron. 11:7). In the postexilic period it ruled a small administrative district (Neh. 3:16).

During the Maccabean revolt it served as a fortress guarding the border with Idumea (1 Macc. 4:61). Judas defeated Lysias in 165 BC and fortified it (4:29) only to lose it in 163 BC (6:50). It remained in Seleucid hands (10:14) until Simon captured it in 144 BC (11:65). It declined and was abandoned in the first centuries AD.

BETONIM A town located on the east side of the Jordan. It was part of the inheritance that Moses allotted to the tribe of Gad (Josh. 13:26). The line from Heshbon to Ramath Mizpah to Betonim possibly marks the border between Reuben and Gad.

BETROTHAL Betrothal is a commitment designed to lead to marriage, comparable to being engaged today. There are a number of instructions in the OT law regarding proper conduct involving a woman who is betrothed or engaged (Exod. 22:16; Deut. 20:7). There are also references to Mary being betrothed to Joseph prior to Jesus' birth (Matt. 1:18; Luke 1:27; 2:5). However, the most significant references are the figurative descriptions of God betrothing himself to his people: "I will betroth you to me forever; I will betroth you in righteousness and justice, in love and compassion. I will betroth you in faithfulness, and you will acknowledge the LORD" (Hos. 2:19–20). Hosea's experience with his unfaithful betrothed and then wife, Gomer, is a classic picture of God's faithfulness to his unfaithful people. On one occasion, Paul uses the imagery of betrothal to picture his commitment to the churches he served: “I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy. I promised you to one husband, to Christ, so that I might present you as a pure virgin to him” (2 Cor. 11:2).

BEULAH A transliteration of the Hebrew word *be’ulah* (“married”), this is a symbolic name promised to the personified Zion (Isa. 62:4). The new names in Isa. 62:4 signify the restoration of the relationship between God and Zion, as husband and wife (cf. 54:1–8), which was lost due to her sons’ iniquities (cf. 50:1). The restoration of Zion’s status is also highlighted with her marriage to her sons (62:5).

BEVELED WORK *See* Hammered Work.

BEWITCH To lead astray by means of deceptive devices, sorcery, witchcraft, or any power unassociated with God and thus demonic or Satanic. God’s response to mediums, spiritists, sorcerers, or witches is one of unconditional rejection (Lev. 19:31; 20:6; 2 Kings 23:24). The apostle Paul asks the churches in Galatia, “Who has bewitched you?” (Gal. 3:1), essentially asking, “Who has led you astray?”

BEYOND THE RIVER In Josh. 24 “beyond the River” (NRSV; NIV: “beyond the Euphrates River”) refers to the land of Abraham’s birth, east of the Euphrates. Because Israel’s ancestors worshiped other gods there, and God took Abraham from there to bring him to Canaan, it signified a threshold in redemptive history. Joshua invoked this place and memory when he called Israel to renew the covenant.

Israel under David defeated Aramean troops from there (2 Sam. 10:16–19; 1 Chron. 19:16–19). Since prophets later said Israel would be exiled there (1 Kings 14:15), and Judah’s punishment would come from there (Isa. 7:20), the place name came to imply threat.

In 522 BC Darius I reorganized the vast Persian Empire into twenty satrapies, each comprised of provinces (Esther 1:1; 8:9). The satrapy of “Beyond the River” (Ezra 4:10–11 NRSV; NIV: “Trans-Euphrates”) extended from the Euphrates to the Mediterranean, and Yehud (Judah) was one of its provinces. In the mid-fifth century Persia built a network of fortresses there to maintain imperial control of local affairs and curtail rebellion.

BEZAI The head of a clan that was part of the early return to Judah from Babylonian captivity in 539 BC or soon after (Ezra 2:17; Neh. 7:23). Bezai is also listed as one of the “leaders of the people” who sealed the covenant renewal led by Ezra (Neh. 10:18).

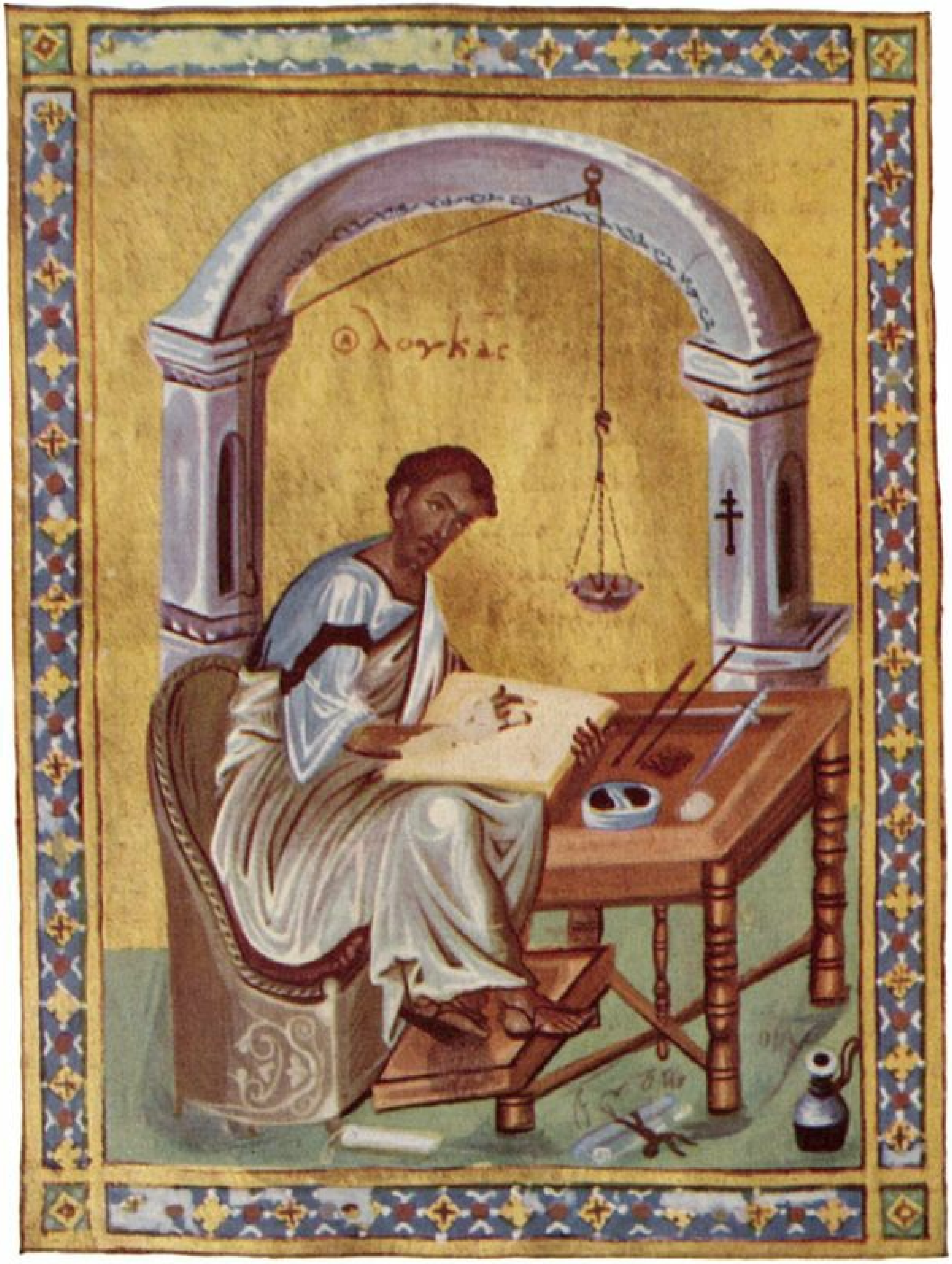
BEZALEL **(1)** Grandson of Uri and son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah, who was equipped by God’s Spirit with skill to engage in all types of craftsmanship needed for the construction of the tabernacle, its furnishings, and the making of the sacred garments of the priests, the anointing oil, and fragrant incense (Exod. 31:1–11; 35:30–35; 36:1–5; 37:1; 38:22). He was given Oholiab as an assistant, and they had artisans to train and work under them. **(2)** A member of the clan of Pahath-Moab, listed as one of those guilty of marrying a foreign woman (Ezra 10:30).

BEZEK **(1)** The location of a battle in which Judah and Simeon defeated the Perizzites and Canaanites under Adoni-Bezek (Judg. 1:4–7). His capital was likely at Khirbet Bezqa, northwest of

Jerusalem. **(2)** The site where Saul took a census of the people and gathered his army to fight the Ammonites attacking Jabesh Gilead (1 Sam. 11:8). This site is affiliated with Khirbet Ibziq, south of Mount Gilboa. Some scholars believe that the two sites are the same, identifying them with Khirbet Ibziq, northeast of Shechem.

BEZER **(1)** A Reubenite town east of the Jordan designated as a city of refuge (Deut. 4:43; Josh. 20:8) and a Levitical city (Josh. 21:36; 1 Chron. 6:78). The Moabite Stone (line 27) lists Bezer as a town rebuilt from ruins by King Mesha of Moab. **(2)** Son of Zophah, a descendant of Asher (1 Chron. 7:37). **(3)** The NIV reading in 2 Pet. 2:15 for the name of Balaam's father. Other versions read "Beor" (ESV, NASB, NKJV), following the OT, or "Bosor" (KJV, NRSV; see NIV mg.), which is a transliteration of the Greek.

BIBLE, METHODS OF STUDY Reading, understanding, interpreting, and properly applying the word of God to life and ministry is the work of Bible study. The essence of this work is the systematic and methodical analysis of the biblical text. The methods that one uses to understand the text of Scripture will vary in keeping with one's presuppositions concerning the nature of the Bible and the preunderstandings of the interpreter. A methodical study of the Bible considers the nature and state of the biblical text, the issues related to the interpreter, and a procedure for discovering authorial intent.



Byzantine illumination (tenth century AD) showing Luke writing

THE NATURE OF THE BIBLE

Revelation. We begin with the assumption (or presupposition) that the Bible is the revealed word of God, the contents of which were progressively made known to authors guided by the Holy Spirit. God guided the authors of Scripture, using their personalities and writing styles, so that the canonical books of the Bible were composed exactly as God intended. These books in their original form are inspired and inerrant. The word of God is true and trustworthy and thus a reliable rule for faith and practice.

The ability of God to communicate with his creation, along with his desire to make himself known to his human creatures, is the essence of revelation. The preservation of God's communication, the revelation of his will to people in the word of God, is what makes the Bible a unique literary document, distinguished from all other literary productions. God manifests himself in a general way to all people through creation and conscience (general revelation) and in a special way to select individuals at particular times (special revelation). These communications and manifestations are available now only by consulting certain sacred writings. The revelation given by God and recorded by people in the canon of Scripture is what God spoke in the past. However, the living and abiding nature of the word (Heb. 4:12) spoken in a past, historical context continues to be relevant. The voice of God can still be heard today. Just as revelation determines how theology is formulated, so revelation determines how a biblical text is to be read in the process of literary analysis.

Given the nature of the Bible's origin, it is historically accurate in what it teaches. This accuracy is not limited to spiritual and doctrinal issues; it is inseparably connected with the historical and factual. Thus, when the Bible makes reference to political and historical figures, it speaks with authority and accuracy.

Accessibility and clarity. The word of God is a written text revealed and inspired by God (2 Tim. 3:16–17), who engaged about fifty authors over a period of approximately eleven hundred years. The OT text was originally recorded in Hebrew and Aramaic (Gen. 31:47; Ezra 4:8–6:18; 7:12–26; Jer. 10:11). The NT text was originally recorded in Koine Greek. Since the text was composed using the languages and literary conventions of the day, it was written to be intelligible and understandable. The biblical text has been distributed throughout the world and translated into just about every major language, so that the text continues to be accessible to many people today.

As Martin Luther observes in *The Bondage of the Will*, the clarity of the Bible is twofold. There is external clarity that can be discerned through the laws of grammar, and there is internal clarity attained through the work of the Holy Spirit illuminating the reader of Scripture. Related to these points is the perspicuity of Scripture, which refers to the clarity of Scripture in its main points. Unnuanced, these principles can create unfortunate misunderstandings. The clarity and perspicuity of Scripture relate to the result or the outcome of Bible study and only to major teachings. The intended message of Scripture is clear, understandable, and accessible.

Historical, literary, and theological aspects. While the Bible is written to be clear and accessible, the process of discerning the clarity is complex and involves a thorough examination of the historical, literary/linguistic, and theological aspects of each biblical text. Since the Bible is a document characterized by literary, historical, and theological impulses, it must be interpreted with these impulses in mind.

The historical character of the text affirms that the historical details (culture, setting, time, people or characters in the story, and readers of the composition) of a narrative are absolutely essential to the meaning and the message of the text. Historical details create the stage for what God is doing with his people in time and space. Historical details remind the reader that the written word has a context. The text is anchored to time and place.

The literary character of the text involves both the rhetorical strategies and the linguistic factors of a written text that are critical to the communication process. The act of literary communication involves the author/sender sending a message or text to the reader/recipient. The Bible must be interpreted in keeping with the act of literary communication: author, reader, and text. Literary types, structural development, and discourse function are formal features of the text that contribute to the communicating author's intended meaning. The OT uses at least five basic literary types or genres: law, historical narrative, poetry, wisdom, and apocalyptic. The NT uses some of the same literary types, as well as parables and the epistolary, or letter, form. Gospel can also be considered a distinct literary form.

Finally, the text has a theological aspect, an ideology, a message, and an intention that God reveals on the historical stage by means of appropriate literary devices.

Unity and diversity. There is a definite unity to the diversity of the Bible that must be grasped in the interpretive process. Opinions vary depending on one's understanding of the origin and nature of Scripture. Some readers stress the diversity of the biblical text, choosing to highlight apparent contradictions and irresolvable situations. Others go to the other extreme and may be in danger of oversimplifying, collapsing contexts, and ignoring the message of the text. Consider, for example, the importance of not reading too much into the discussion of faith and works as developed by Paul and James. The diversity of emphasis in these two authors is not contradictory in the overall message of the Bible.

Diversity obviously exists in the languages, writers, cultures, and message of various books of the Bible. However, given the reality of divine authorship, these diverse pieces are woven together coherently. There are longitudinal themes such as kingdom, covenant, and messiah that run from the OT into the NT. In addition, there is the developed use of terminology across both Testaments with terms such as "redemption" and "the word."

The unity/diversity aspect of the biblical text ultimately contributes to an enriched understanding of both biblical and systematic theology. Biblical theology tends to consider the diversity of the writers and the different time periods and is willing to let diverse themes stand together. Systematic theology, which builds upon the findings of biblical theology, is more attentive to the unity of Scripture. These approaches complement each other and encourage what is called an "analogy of faith." Once again, Luther gave shape to this phrase by opposing the ecclesiastical tradition of the church in favor of Scripture as the basis of dogma. The "analogy of faith" principle advocates that doctrine must cohere and not contradict the holistic teaching of Scripture. Doctrine cannot be a formulation of a few proof texts.

Summary. These summations concerning the nature of Scripture are by no means exhaustive, but they do provide a foundation for determining the nature and use of various interpretive methods. The process of interpretation will be given more attention below, but at this point it is worth emphasizing that methods of Bible study must contribute to the discovery of the author's intended meaning. Since God is the ultimate author, our concern is to know his intended meaning. This goal is not without challenge. Many conclude that original authorial intent is unattainable because of the distance between our present cultural and historical situation and that of the biblical writers. An additional obstacle is the variety of interpretations that arise from community use of the biblical text. The challenges of time, culture, geography, and language can be faced successfully to arrive at the clear meaning of Scripture by means of a methodical analysis of all aspects of the biblical text.

THE ROLE OF THE INTERPRETER

Before considering the relation of the interpreter to the process of Bible study methods, it is helpful to sort out who is the audience of a text. Written texts are composed with someone in mind, an original audience or recipients, who may or may not read the finished product. Beyond the original readers there is an extended audience of readers throughout time, including us, who read and interpret the word of God and seek to apply it to their lives.

Preunderstandings and presuppositions. The readers of the biblical text apply the methods of Bible study in order to understand the intended meaning of Scripture. In addition to the science of methodology there is an art to interpretation that involves recognizing personal preunderstandings brought to the text and presuppositions influencing an interpretation of the textual data.

So how do we differentiate a preunderstanding from a presupposition? "Preunderstanding" refers to the preconceived notions and understandings that one brings to the text, which have been formulated, both consciously and subconsciously, before one actually studies the text in detail. This includes specific experiences and encounters with the text that tend to make us assume that we already understand it. Sensitivity to preunderstanding reminds us that we are never approaching the text for the first time, completely neutral or totally objective. Our personal experiences, cultural influences (music, movies, literature), family background, church, race, and nationality are factors influencing our preunderstanding. These preunderstandings are ultimately corrected or nurtured by the constant influence of the biblical text.

Presuppositions, on the other hand, are the faith commitments held by Christians that do not change each time they study the Bible (in contrast to preunderstanding). This article, for example, began with a statement of presuppositions regarding God and the Bible. The analogy of faith deems such presuppositions to be unchangeable constants.

Approach to the text. How, then, should the interpreter approach the text? Although total objectivity is not a realistic goal, Christian readers do want to understand what God has revealed for them. So, the text is approached through faith and by means of the Holy Spirit, who gives understanding of the word that God authored. In order for this to happen, the reader must stand before the biblical text and allow it to speak rather than standing behind it to push it in a predetermined direction. The goal of Bible study is discovery of meaning, not creation of meaning.

A critical factor in Bible study is the realization that the process is an exercise with sacred dimensions. The primary object in this task is to know God, to understand his will, and to love and trust him, which is Paul's desire for all Christians (Col. 1:9–14; Eph. 1:15–23; 3:14; Phil. 3:8–13). God is glorified when we find our joy and delight in him through an enriched understanding of his word. This can happen when one depends upon the Holy Spirit for understanding (1 Cor. 2:9–16). The study of the sacred text is a delicate balance of thinking, working, and analyzing while reverently and humbly depending upon the Spirit.

THE METHODS OF BIBLE STUDY

Terminology. The activity of interpretation is best described as a spiral, a twist of assorted factors that take the reader from the intention of the original context to the present context of life within the community of the church. The process involves terms and procedures that can be confusing. The word "hermeneutics" is most commonly understood to describe the science and art of biblical interpretation. The goal of hermeneutics is to discern the original intent of the text ("what it meant") and the contemporary significance of the text ("what it means"). Scholars regularly discuss which of these two is primary in hermeneutical process. The term, however, is broad enough to cover both aspects.

The English word "exegesis" is derived from a Greek term meaning "to lead out." When applied to Bible study, it defines the nature of the work as taking meaning out of the text and not reading meaning into it. The exegetical process involves the study of words, syntax, grammar, and theology. Another critical term, "contextualization," refers to an aspect of the interpretive process involving cross-cultural communication of the text's significance for today.

Defining these key terms in hermeneutics brings to the surface an ongoing discussion associated with Bible study, the question of meaning, which is defined in several ways. Meaning is understood by some as the author's intention. Some scholars explain meaning as referent (what the author is talking about), others describe it as sense (what is being said about the referent), and finally it can be understood as significance (a contemporary, cross-cultural significance).

Inductive Bible study. How one gets to meaning involves a process of study, the crux of which is the practice of inductive Bible study. Although this objective process can be defined in several ways, it is distinguished by four key elements.

(1) The first element is *observation*. This involves a careful, close reading of the text to determine exactly what it says. This step makes repeated use of the who, what, when, where, and why questions that enable the reader to become fully saturated with the particulars of the passage. Attention to textual detail will result in accurate interpretation. Observation requires a will to observe, exactness in making observations, and persistence and endurance in the process. Observation is focused on the words of the passage, the structure (the relations and interrelations between terms), the literary form, and the atmosphere or tone. (2) *Interpretation* follows. The goal of this element is to define meaning and to answer the question, What does this text mean? (3) *Correlation*, the third element, asks, How does this text relate to the rest of the Bible (cf. analogy of faith)? (4) The fourth element, *application*, asks, What does this text mean to me?

Each step in the inductive process is elaborate and includes its own particular interests and issues that are critical for determining meaning. Take, for example, the issues of meaning associated with the second step, interpretation. This process must be fully engaged for accuracy in interpretation. The business of interpretation involves a constant interaction of parts. Microaspects are observed in light of macrofeatures, and vice versa.

The interpretive process of the text is fairly standard. Given the nature of inductive analysis, the inductive process begins at the microlevel of examining and interpreting terms, words, and sentences. It then highlights the next structural levels of paragraphs, units of paragraphs, chapters, and then the book itself.

Context and literary type. Since context and literary type are critical elements in the exercise of analysis, attention will be given to each. It is often said that context determines meaning. This statement is a reminder that a term, a theme, or a structural element is ultimately governed by a larger set of factors. The term "trunk," for example, in the context of a family vacation could refer to what is packed, whereas in the conversation of lumberjacks it could be a reference to a tree. Context takes into consideration all historical referents. In addition, context includes all the individual parts of a composition (phrases, sentences, paragraphs, chapters). Examination of a book's particular historical context involves also looking at the geography, politics, economics, and cultural practices of a given audience featured. The danger of ignoring context in biblical study is that original authorial intent is replaced with all kinds of self-centered textual understandings.

Literary type is also a critical factor in the inductive process. Another word for literary form is *genre*, derived from a French term that can be translated "kind, sort, style." It denotes a type or species of literature or literary form. Genre analysis profitably yields an understanding of the author's intention in a given literary composition. For example, genre triggers the reader's expectations and reading strategy. Genre guides the reader in understanding how to read and interpret a given text. For example, we read and interpret a story differently from the way we read and interpret a poem. Each of these genres has its own rules and strategies for communicating meaning. Genre analysis involves observing the form along with the mood, setting, function, and content of the text.

Each literary type has a set of distinctive characteristics that must be examined. To understand what the biblical authors are saying (and what God is saying through them), we must play by the rules of the literary genre that they selected. Genre is a generalization or an abstraction within which variation occurs. Thus, a genre may be defined broadly and include many texts that share fewer traits, while on the other hand it may be defined in a more narrow way and include fewer texts sharing many more traits.

The process of genre analysis is undertaken inductively. The analysis begins with the literary class, continues with the individual texts, and then interacts with both. Genre can be understood only by analyzing the parts of a given text. Although there are plenty of helpful textbooks devoted to virtually every literary type, one must keep in mind that genre descriptions arise out of the details of the text. Genre is not a predescribed form that is imposed on the text for the discovery of authorial intent.

Once the historical, literary, and theological aspects of the particular book are settled, the book is then analyzed in its specific canonical context (NT or OT) and then considered in the overall canon (the Bible). The results of this process are then pursued in relation to the interests of biblical and systematic theology.

Summary. The method of inductive Bible study is not only a specific procedure of analysis, but also a guide for a variety of methodical practices. The process of inductive Bible study encourages a spirit of attention to detail and reminds the reader of the overall goal in interpretation: to know what the text meant and means. In addition, the very nature of the inductive method promotes a curiosity and yields a definite joy of discovery. The inductive process is a guide to the interpreter in an analysis of either the Hebrew or the Greek text.

Other methods of Bible study. There are other methods of Bible study associated with distinct views of the Bible’s nature and origin. These critical methods of interpretation arise out of a discussion regarding how the Bible should be interpreted. The history of this discussion goes all the way back to the third century AD with the debates between the Alexandrians and Antiochians. The sixteenth-century Reformation, the eighteenth-century Enlightenment, and the twentieth century were significant turning points that yielded new ways of conceiving the world and the biblical text. Thus, it is important to understand that there are no neutral methods of biblical interpretation.

Historical-critical approaches. The more-popular critical methods of Bible study came to the forefront in the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries with the rise of deism and rationalism. The prevailing opinion of this time was the fundamental similarity of all historical texts and all historical events. The historical-critical method was founded on the principles of criticism, analogy, and correlation. The supernatural origin of the Bible is denied, and it is considered to be a book like all other historical documents. The biblical text is viewed as a tradition created. It is an artifact of the evolutionary process preserved and passed along to a subsequent generation and must be approached with an attitude of doubt.

In contrast to the approach taken in this article, the historical-critical understanding of the locus of revelation is not the biblical text revealed by God. The locus of revelation shifts outside the text. The reader no longer looks to the text to hear the word of God. The reader now looks behind or beyond the biblical text to another story, one that is independent of the biblical text. Instead of studying a process of progressive revelation, the historical-critical methodologies are committed to sorting out complex historical traditions. Sources are identified, sorted chronologically, and studied for their distinctive themes. The methods are sometimes organized according to the particular interests of schools of thought: history of religions, history of traditions, history of forms, history of redactions.

Literary approaches. Finally, there are methods of Bible study associated with the set of literary presuppositions. First, this approach to the biblical text takes an ahistorical view of the text. In other words, there is no concern for its historical cause and effect. It is concerned only with a synchronic analysis of the finished product. Second, the text is viewed as an autonomous entity. Once a text is completed, it has a life of its own. The interpretive process is then devoted to the text's final form, looking at the whole instead of the parts. Meaning comes from the language and style of the text. Finally, meaning is understood as aesthetics; it is not related to authorial intention or a historical occasion. Theoretically, the literary approach views the text as if it is cut off from an author and from a historical context. In this construct, meaning shifts from the past to the present. Interpretation then is an interaction of text and reader. The methods of interpretation associated with these literary presuppositions include literary criticism, rhetorical criticism, structuralism, narrative criticism, and reader response criticism.

BIBLE CODE A cipher through which supposedly hidden messages are discovered in the OT by taking a sequence of equally spaced Hebrew letters and identifying in them a meaningful message. The chance of finding such a message is enhanced by the lack of vowels in Hebrew writing, which allows greater flexibility when interpreting the results. There are significant problems with the claim that the codes are intentional, including that it has been established that similar messages can be discovered in virtually any text; furthermore, it runs counter to the Bible's claim to clearly reveal God's word (cf. Deut. 29:29).

BIBLE FORMATION AND CANON Bible formation and canon development are best understood in light of historical events and theological principles. In the historical-theological process we learn what God did and how he engaged a variety of people to produce Scripture as the word of God. The Bible is the written revelation of the triune God, who made himself known to his creation. The divine actions of God to reveal himself resulted in a written text recognized to be authoritative and thus copied and preserved for future generations. The process of recognizing and collecting authoritative books of the Scriptures occurred over time and involved consensus.

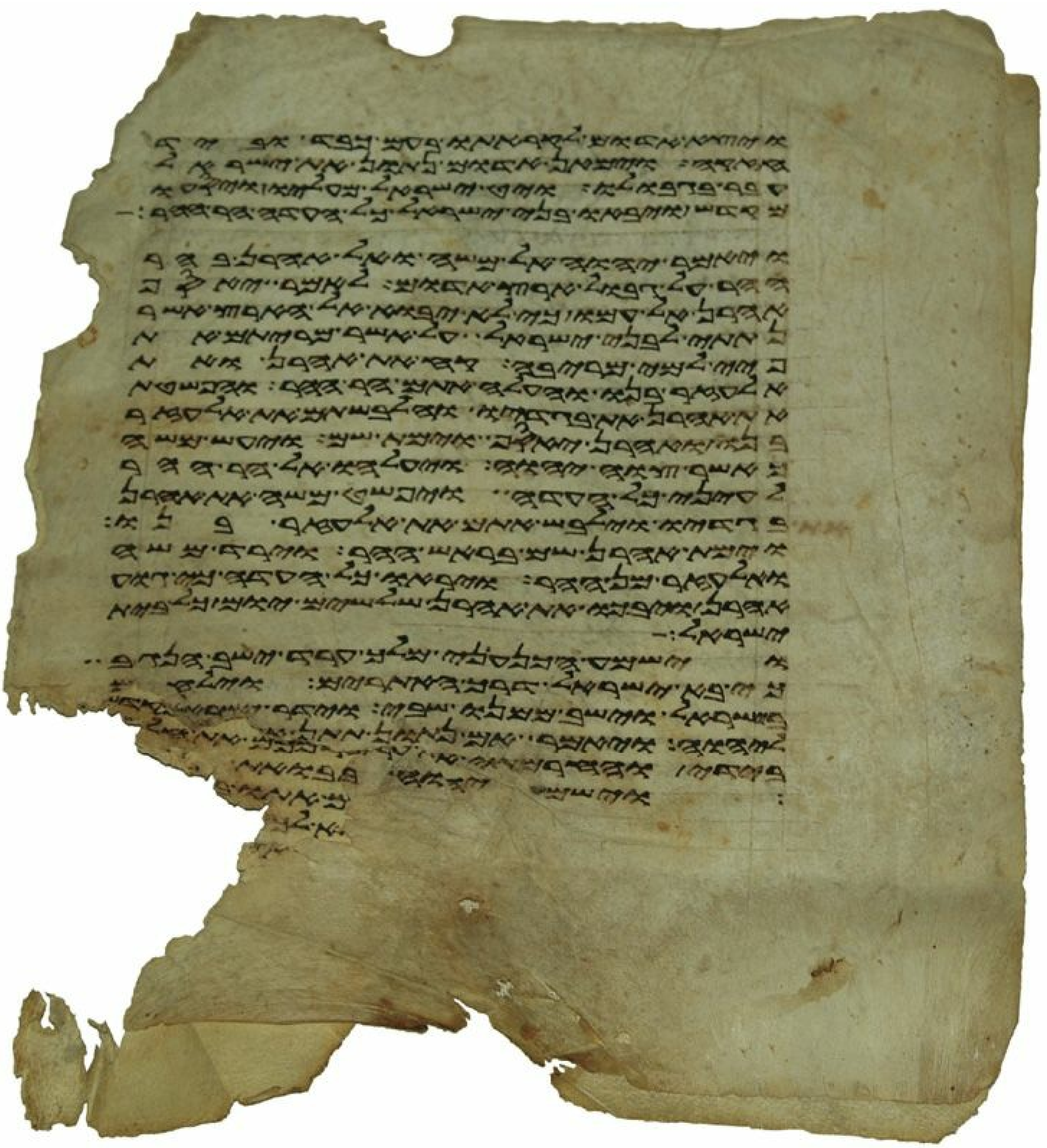
BIBLE FORMATION

Revelation. The process of Bible formation begins with God revealing. The act of revelation involved God communicating truth to the human writers in a progressive and unified manner. Inspiration is the act of God the Holy Spirit, who superintended the biblical authors so that they composed the books of Scripture exactly as he intended. God used the biblical writers, their personalities and their writing styles, in a manner that kept them from error in composing the original written product, the Scriptures. The resulting books of the Bible constitute God's permanent special revelation to humankind.

Both Testaments affirm the work of revelation along with the formation of a body of divine writings. The OT is dominated by the phrase "thus says the LORD" and similar expressions (cf. Gen. 9:8; Josh. 24:27; Isa. 1:2; Jer. 1:7 and contrast Ps. 135:15–19). Every part of the OT is viewed as the word of God (Rom. 3:2). This is confirmed by Jesus' attitude toward the Scriptures (Matt. 19:4–5; 21:42; 22:29; cf. Luke 11:50–51; 24:44).

Four NT passages help us understand the work of inspiration. A factual statement regarding the extent and nature of inspiration is made in 2 Tim. 3:16. According to 2 Pet. 1:19–20, the Holy Spirit purposefully carried persons along to produce the prophetic word, and 1 Cor. 2:10–13 supports the choice of the words in the work of composing the inspired product. Finally, Peter comments that Paul was given wisdom to produce inspired literary documents in the canon of Scripture (2 Pet. 3:14–18).

Authority. Books formed and authored by God in this manner are authoritative. Because the Bible is the divinely inspired word of God reliably composed in the originals, it is binding upon people in their relationship with God and other people. Biblical authority derives from God's eternal character and the content of his word preserved in Scripture. The inscripturated word of God is authoritative and requires obedience.



Page from a thirteenth-century AD version of the Samaritan Pentateuch

The authority of God’s word is affirmed and illustrated in the creation and fall narratives. In the fall, Adam and Eve rebelled against God’s command (Gen. 3:3–4) and were expelled from the garden. In subsequent periods of biblical history, God’s spoken and written word continued to be the basis for belief and conduct. God summarized his will in the Ten Commandments (Exod. 20:1-17; Deut. 5:6–21) and held his people accountable to it (Deut. 6:2; Josh. 1:8; 2 Kings 17:5–23). The authoritative word embraced by faith protects the believer from sin (Ps. 119:11). The fool is the person who rejects God’s authority (Pss. 14:1; 53:1). The apostle Paul acknowledged the authority of the gospel for his own life and ministry (Gal. 1:6–9). God the Holy Spirit impresses upon the believer the authority of the Bible as the reliable rule for faith and practice (John 6:63).

God made provision for a reliable and trustworthy preservation of his authoritative word in the multiplicity of extant manuscripts. God commanded that his revealed word be copied (Deut. 17:8–18; 24:8; 31:9, 25–26; 33:8–10) for administrative and personal purposes (Deut. 6:6; Josh. 1:8; 23:6; Prov. 3:3; 7:3). Through this process of multiplication the word of God was preserved (Ps. 119:152, 160; Isa. 40:8; cf. Matt. 5:17–18; John 10:35; 1 Pet. 1:22–25).

CANONIZATION

Canonization is the next critical step in the development of the Bible. The word “canon” (Gk. *kanōn*) refers to a standard, norm, or rule (Gal. 6:16; cf. Ezek. 42:16), and when applied to the Bible, it designates the collection of books revealed by God, divinely inspired, and recognized by the people of God as the authoritative norm for faith and practice. The presupposition of canonicity is that God spoke to his human creatures and his word was accurately recorded. Since inspiration determines canonicity, the books composed by human beings under the direction of the Holy Spirit functioned authoritatively at the time of writing. The people of God then recognized and collected the books that they discerned to be inspired and authoritative (1 Thess. 2:10–16; 2 Pet. 3:15).

The canonical process. The challenge associated with canon and Bible formation is that the Scriptures do not reveal a detailed historical process for recognizing and collecting inspired works. An understanding of this process is derived from the testimony of Jesus, biblical principles, and historical precedents.

Canonical identification is associated with the witness of the Holy Spirit, who worked in connection with the believers to recognize the written documents given by inspiration (1 Thess. 2:13). The Holy Spirit enabled believers to discern a book’s authority and its compatibility with existing canonical revelation (Isa. 8:20; Acts 17:11). Although the question of authorship cannot be positively settled for every OT or NT book, believers recognized the prophets as the OT authors (Deut. 18:14–22) and the apostles as the NT authors. Canonical books were recognized to bear the power of God and to contain an effective message (2 Tim. 3:15–16; Heb. 4:12; 1 Pet. 1:23).

Over time, the authoritative books of Scripture were collected into a body of literature that today forms one book, the Bible. During this process, some believers struggled with the message, content, and ambiguous authorship of books such as Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon, and Esther in the OT and Hebrews, James, and 2 Peter in the NT. The pattern of composition and canonical process for the OT provided the foundation for the composition and development of the NT canon. Therefore, the NT books that came to be recognized as canonical were those that were composed in connection with an apostle, doctrinally sound, and widely circulated and used by the churches.

In the collection task some texts were recognized (*homologoumena*), some were disputed (*antilegomena*), and others were rejected as unorthodox (*pseudepigrapha*). Historically, there is no evidence for widespread acceptance of the present-day canon of sixty-six books until the third century

AD.

Structure and content. Over the centuries, several canonical lists began to emerge, often influenced by particular theological conclusions. For example, the Samaritan canon, which includes only the first five books of our OT, was compiled by the Samaritans, who were hostile to anything in Israel or Judea outside Samaria. Today, Christian traditions vary in their inclusion or omission of the Apocrypha from their Bibles and in their list of which books are contained in the Apocrypha.

The Babylonian canon, accepted as standard by Jews, contains all the books now recognized as the OT and is divided into three parts: the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings. This canon is also known as the Tanak, an acronym derived from the Hebrew words for "law" (*torah*), "prophets" (*nebi'im*), "writings" (*ketubim*). This canonical list traditionally includes twenty-four books (the twelve Minor Prophets are considered to be one book, as are 1–2 Samuel, 1–2 Kings, 1–2 Chronicles, and Ezra-Nehemiah). The twenty-four books of this canonical list are the same as the thirty-nine OT books in current English Bible editions. The law or instruction section includes the first five books of Moses (Genesis through Deuteronomy). The Prophets section is divided into the Former and Latter Prophets. The Former Prophets are the historical books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings. The Latter Prophets include both the Major and the Minor Prophets. The Writings section contains both poetic and wisdom material, along with some historical material.

Historical references to this canonical format are found in extrabiblical sources as early as the second century BC. The grandson of Jesus Ben Sira referenced a threefold canon in the prologue of the apocryphal book Sirach (c. 190 BC); Josephus referenced it in *Against Apion* (AD 37–95). Jesus acknowledged the threefold division in Luke 24:44 (cf. Matt. 23:34). Among Christian sources, this division is preserved in the oldest extant list of OT books, associated with Bishop Melito of Sardis (AD 170). Tertullian, an early Latin church father (AD 160–250), Origen (AD 254), Hilary of Poitiers (AD 305–366), and Jerome (AD 340–420) affirmed an OT canon of twenty-two or twenty-four books. Most current English versions follow a fourfold structure of law, history, poetry, and prophets.

The twenty-seven books of the NT are attested in lists associated with churches in the eastern and western parts of the Mediterranean world. Two such witnesses are the Thirty-ninth Paschal Letter of Athanasius (AD 367) and the Council of Carthage (AD 397). The canonical list associated with Marcion and the Muratorian list represent fragmentary lists from the early part of the second century AD. In terms of usage, a majority of church fathers recognized and used the twenty-seven NT books in our canon. *See also* Apocrypha, New Testament; Apocrypha, Old Testament.

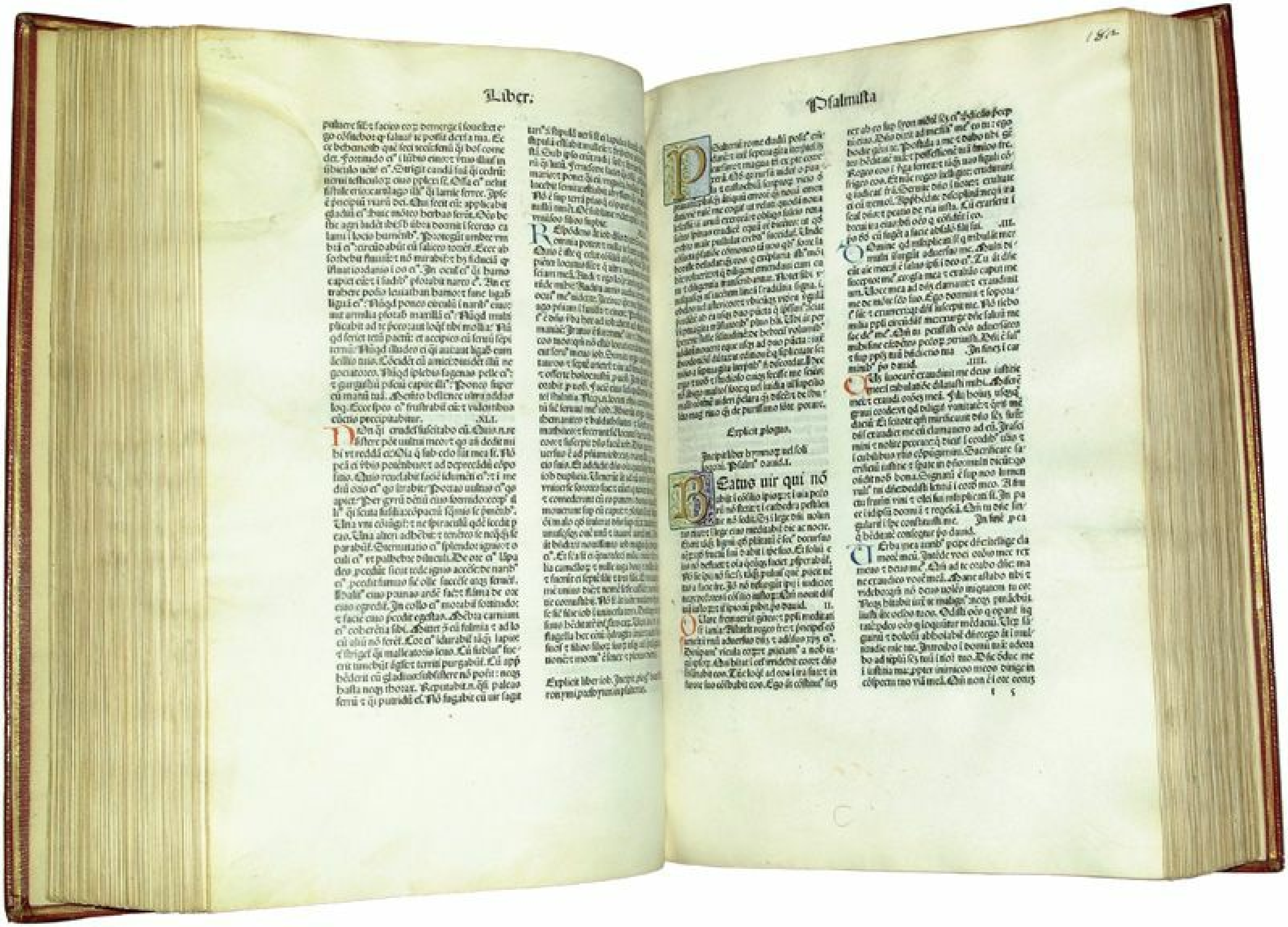
BIBLE TEXTS AND VERSIONS The NT and the OT have considerably different but partially overlapping textual histories. For clarity, it is best to begin with a survey of the NT manuscripts and versions.

New Testament

Greek texts. Although no autographs of the NT books survive, there exist more than five thousand Greek texts covering anywhere from a portion of a few verses up to the complete NT. Traditionally, these texts have been classified into five groups: papyri, uncials, minuscules, lectionaries, and quotations in patristic texts. The most important manuscripts are listed below.

The earliest texts of the NT are those written on papyrus. Ninety-eight of these manuscripts have been identified, and they are represented by a "P" with a numerical superscript. The earliest of these papyri is P^{52}, which contains parts of four verses in John 18 and dates to the early second century. For substantial portions of the NT text, the most important papyri are found in the Chester Beatty and Bodmer collections. P^{45}, P^{46}, and P^{47}, all from the Chester Beatty collection, are from the third century and contain large sections of the four Gospels, eight of the Pauline Epistles, Hebrews, and Revelation. Within the Bodmer collection in Geneva are four very important codices. P^{66} dates to around AD 200 and preserves most of the Gospel of John. P^{72} dates to the third century and contains the earliest copies of 1–2 Peter and Jude, which are preserved in their entirety, as well as Greek translations of Pss. 33–34. P^{74} dates to the seventh century and contains portions of Acts, James, 1–2 Peter, 1–3 John, and Jude. Finally, P^{75}, which dates to the early third century, contains most of Luke and John 1–15. It is the oldest extant copy of Luke. Among the remaining papyri, forty-three have been dated to the early fourth century or before.

The second category of manuscripts is the uncials, which usually were written on parchment and span the fourth through the tenth centuries. About 270 uncials are known, and they range from a few verses up to complete copies of the NT or even the entire Bible. Uncials originally were denoted by capital letters, but when the number of manuscripts grew beyond these limits, a new system was employed whereby each manuscript was given a number always beginning with zero. However, the most important uncials are still usually known by their letter. Among the most important uncials are the following five manuscripts. Codex Sinaiticus (designated by the Hebrew letter א) dates to the fourth century and is the only uncial that contains the entire NT. It also has almost all of the OT as well as the early Christian writings the *Epistle of Barnabas* and the *Shepherd of Hermas*. Dating from the fifth century, Codex Alexandrinus (designated as A) contains the OT, most of the NT—lacking only portions of Matthew, John, and 2 Corinthians—and *1–2 Clement*. Along with Sinaiticus, the most important uncial is Codex Vaticanus (designated as B), which dates to the fourth century. It contains almost all of the OT and the complete NT, except for substantial portions between Hebrews and Revelation. It has been in the Vatican's library for over five hundred years. The fourth important uncial is Codex Bezae Cantabrigiensis (designated as D), which contains Greek and Latin copies of the four Gospels, most of Acts, and a few verses from 3 John. It dates from the late fourth or early fifth century. The fifth important uncial is Codex Washingtonianus (designated as W), which dates to the early fifth century and contains virtually all of the four Gospels.



A page from Codex Vaticanus

The third category of NT manuscripts is minuscules. These texts date from the ninth century and later and comprise approximately 2,800 manuscripts, which are denoted by a number not beginning with zero. Among the more important minuscules are Codex 1, Codex 13, and Codex 33, which, along with their relatives, are considered reliable witnesses to early families of texts such as the Caesarean (1) or the Alexandrian (33). Codex 13 and its relatives are noteworthy for having the story of the adulterous woman at the end of Luke 21 instead of in John 8. The final two groups of NT manuscripts, the lectionaries and quotations in patristic sources, are not manuscripts in the strict sense of the term, but their use of portions of the NT presents important witnesses for the practice of textual criticism.

Versions. With the spread of Christianity during the time of the Roman Empire, the NT was translated into the language of the native peoples. These versions of the NT are important both for textual criticism of the NT and for the interpretive decisions that are reflected in how the text was rendered into a new language. Among the most important early versions of the NT are the following.

As Latin began to displace Greek as the dominant language of the empire, there was a need for a Latin version of the Bible. The earliest translation, known as the Old Latin or Itala, was made probably in the late second century, though the oldest manuscript (Codex Vercellensis) is from the fourth century. With the proliferation of Latin texts a standardized Latin translation became desirable, and in AD 382 Jerome was commissioned by Pope Damasus to provide a new translation known as the Vulgate.

Another family of NT versions is the Syriac texts. Around the late second century the four Gospels were translated into a version known as the Old Syriac. It is extant in two incomplete manuscripts that are probably fifth century. The translation that became the standard Syriac text is the Peshitta, which was produced in the early fifth century. It does not contain 2 Peter, 2–3 John, Jude, or Revelation because these were not considered canonical among the Syriac churches.

Other important versions of the NT from antiquity are the Coptic, Armenian, Georgian, and Ethiopic translations.

OLD TESTAMENT

Hebrew texts. The text that has served as the basis for most modern editions and translations of the Hebrew OT is the Masoretic Text (MT), named after the Masoretes, the Jewish scribes who transmitted the text and added vocalization, accentuation, and notes to the consonantal text. The most important Masoretic manuscripts date from the end of the ninth century to the early eleventh century. Notable among these is the Leningrad Codex (AD 1008), denoted as L, which is the earliest Masoretic manuscript of the entire OT. Also important are the Aleppo Codex (c. AD 925), denoted as A, which preserves all of the OT except for most of the Pentateuch; the British Museum MS Or. 4445 (c. AD 925), denoted as B, which contains most of the Pentateuch; and the Cairo Codex (c. AD 896), denoted C, which contains Joshua through Kings and also the Prophets.

Although these manuscripts are much later than the biblical period, their reliability was largely confirmed with the discovery of the DSS beginning in 1947. Among the Qumran library are many manuscripts of biblical books as well as biblical commentaries, apocrphyal and pseudepigraphal works, and sectarian literature. All the OT books are represented among the scrolls that were found except Esther and Nehemiah, though the latter is usually presumed to have been at the end of Ezra but has not survived. The books with the most manuscripts are, in order, Psalms, Deuteronomy, and Isaiah. One of the striking characteristics of these scrolls is that they reflect a diversity of text types. For example, there is a copy of Jeremiah that is close to the Masoretic version, but also a manuscript of Jeremiah similar to the much shorter version found in the Septuagint (the Greek translation of the OT).

Another Hebrew text of the OT is that of the Samaritan Pentateuch, which is the text transmitted by the Samaritans. It is similar to the MT in some respects but also has differences that reflect theological interests. The main manuscripts for the Samaritan Pentateuch are from the twelfth century.

Versions. Between the third and first centuries BC, the entire OT was translated into Greek. This version, known as the Septuagint (designated by the abbreviation LXX), became the main version of the OT used by the early church. Due to its adoption by the church, the LXX has been preserved in numerous manuscripts, including Sinaiticus, Alexandrinus, and Vaticanus. By the late first century BC or early first century AD, there were two revisions of the Greek text: the Proto-Lucianic version and the Kaige recension. The latter aimed to revise the Greek toward closer conformity with the Hebrew text and derives its name from its peculiar tendency to translate the Hebrew word *gam* (“also”) with the Greek work *kaige*. In the second century AD three other Greek translations were made by Aquila, Theodotion, and Symmachus, all of which revised the Kaige recension back toward the MT.

Another important early version of the OT consists of the Targumim, which are Aramaic translations or paraphrases (and sometimes extensive elaborations) of OT books. The official Targumim for Judaism are *Targum Onqelos* for the Pentateuch (c. second century AD), which is quite literal, and *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* for the Prophets (sometime before the fourth century AD), which ranges from being quite literal to somewhat paraphrastic. Unofficial Targumim for the Pentateuch include Targum Neofiti and Targum Pseudo-Jonathan. There are also various unofficial Targumim for the Writings section of the OT, except for Daniel and Ezra-Nehemiah (which are already written partly in Aramaic).

Besides the Greek and Aramaic translations, there are other important versions of the OT. Sometime in either the third or fourth century AD, the Peshitta of the OT was produced, though there is evidence that there were earlier Syriac translations of some books already circulating. Also important is a group of Latin translations known collectively as the Old Latin. These versions were produced sometime during the second century AD and were primarily made from already existing Greek translations rather than Hebrew texts. As with the NT, a later Latin translation was made by Jerome for the Vulgate.

BIBLE TRANSLATION Every faithful translation of the Bible is the word of God. In this respect, Christianity is very different from Islam, which considers the Arabic version of the Qur'an exclusively holy. It is true that only the original versions of the biblical books, which were written in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek, were verbally inspired, and this means that individual translations, like copies, can contain errors. Translations also necessarily involve some degree of interpretation. However, all language is created by God, and in the incarnation the Word became fully human as well as fully divine. In God's hands, every human language is as capable as any other of expressing his truth.

Since Pentecost, the Holy Spirit has been at work to reverse the effect of human sin at Babel (Gen. 11:9), not by reducing all languages to one, but by redeeming the diversity and richness of the world's languages so that all can hear God speak to them in their own tongue (Acts 2:1–11). Indeed, translations of Scripture themselves transform the languages and cultures in which they are written, endowing them with new or revised concepts of God, humanity, sin, and the means of salvation.

THE HISTORY OF TRANSLATION

Bible translation began long before the Bible as we know it was complete. In the fifth century BC the Israelites who returned from exile spoke Aramaic. Thus, they needed the Levites to translate the Hebrew law for them (Neh. 8:8). This Levitical teaching was probably an early example of a Targum, a translation into Aramaic with interpretation and expansion. We do not know exactly when the Targumim began to be written down, but some of the earliest fragments that have been found are among the DSS.

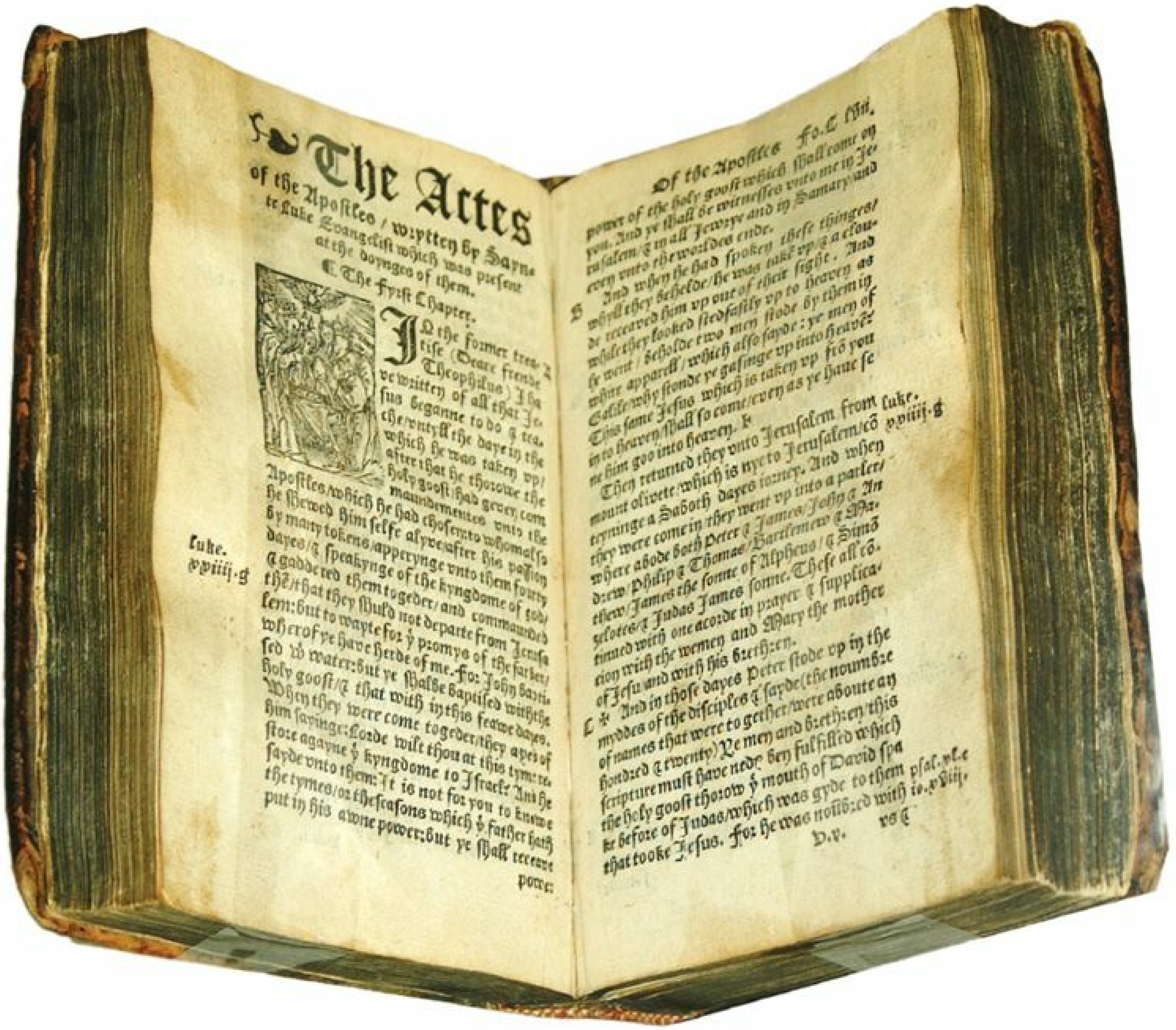
By about the third century BC the dominant languages of Palestine were Greek and Aramaic. Many NT quotations from the OT use an established Greek translation of the OT. This was known as the Septuagint (LXX), after the legend that it was translated by seventy-two men, six from each tribe of Israel, on the orders of Ptolemy Philadelphus of Egypt (285–247 BC). The NT was written in similar "common" (*koinē*) Greek, but in some places the Gospels and Acts translate words that Jesus and Paul originally spoke in Aramaic (Mark 5:41; 15:34; Acts 21:40; 22:2; 26:14; see also John 5:2; 19:13, 17, 20; 20:16).

Until Pentecost, God's revelation was translated only into the languages spoken by the Jewish people in their everyday life. At Pentecost, however, the coming of the Holy Spirit was marked by a display of miraculous linguistic gifts, and a new era of Bible translation had begun (Acts 2). As Christians obeyed Christ's command to take the word of God into all the world, they began to translate it into all the languages used by the growing church.

Within three centuries, Scripture was translated from the original Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek into Syriac, Coptic, and Latin. The earliest translations into these languages were then revised and improved in the subsequent centuries until some, such as Jerome's Latin Vulgate and the Syriac Peshitta, emerged as acknowledged standards. Other early translations included Ethiopic, Armenian, Georgian, and Old Slavonic. Many of these languages were already written, but as missionaries ventured further, they sometimes had to start by reducing spoken languages to writing. Ulfilas, missionary to the Goths, was the first to do this.

All of the thirty-three translations prior to the Reformation had to be copied out by hand, and almost all were "secondary translations" made from the Latin. Moreover, despite the efforts of early reformers such as John Wycliffe (AD 1330–84), the Catholic Church continued to use the Latin text itself, which was accessible only to the educated. In the sixteenth century, however, the printing press was invented, Renaissance scholars rediscovered the value of consulting texts in the original Hebrew and Greek, and Protestantism realized that believers need the Bible in their mother tongue.

The most influential sixteenth-century translator into English was William Tyndale (1494–1536). His work on the NT and parts of the OT was gradually expanded and revised by other scholars, culminating in the 1611 King James Version, which is still widely used. Meanwhile, other European translations were produced in German (by Martin Luther), Spanish, Hungarian, Portuguese, and French.



The Actes of the Apoſtles/wrytten by Saynte Luke Evangeliſt which was preſent at the doynges of them.

The Fyrſt Chapter.

In the former treatiſe (Deare frende Theophilus) I have written of all that Jeſus beganne to do & teache/untyll the daye in the which he was taken vp/after that he thorowe the holy gooſt had geven commaundementes vnto the Apoſtles/which he had choſen: to whom alſo he ſhewed him ſelfe alyve after his paſſion by many tokens/apperynge vnto them fourty dayes/& ſpeakynge of the kyngdome of God/& gaddered them togeder/and commaunded thē/that they ſhuld not departe from Jeruſalem: but to wayte for ŷ promys of the father/wherof ye have herde of me. For John baptiſed w water: but ye ſhalbe baptiſed with the holy gooſt/& that with in this fewe dayes. When they were come togeder/they axed of him ſayinge: Lorde wilt thou at this tyme reſtore agayne ŷ kyngdome to Iſrael? And he ſayde vnto them: It is not for you to knowe the tymes/or the ſeaſons which ŷ father hath put in his awne power: but ye ſhall receave

powe:

Luke. xxiiij.g

Of the Apoſtles Fo.C.lvi.

power of the holy gooſt which ſhall come on you. And ye ſhall be witneſſes vnto me in Jeruſalem/& in all Jewrye and in Samary and even vnto the worldes ende.

B And when he had ſpoken theſe thinges/whill they behelde/he was take vp/& a cloude receaved him vp out of their ſight. And whill they looked ſtedfaſtly vp to heaven as he went/beholde two men ſtode by them in whyte apparell/which alſo ſayde: ye men of Galile/why ſtonde ye gaſinge vp into heavē? This ſame Jeſus which is taken vp frō you in to heaven/ſhall ſo come/even as ye have ſene him goo into heaven. b

Then returned they vnto Jeruſalem from mount olivete/which is nye to Jeruſalem/cōteyninge a Saboth dayes iorney. And when they were come in they went vp into a parler/where abode both Peter & James/John & Andrew/Philip & Thomas/Bartlemew & Mathew/James the ſonne of Alpheus/& Simō Zelotes/& Judas James ſonne. Theſe all cōtinued with one acorde in prayer & ſupplicacion with the wemen and Mary the mother of Jeſu and with his brethren.

C ✠ And in thoſe dayes Peter ſtode vp in the myddes of the diſciples & ſayde (the noumbre of names that were together/were aboute an hondred & twenty) Ye men and brethren/this ſcripture muſt have nede ben fulfilled which the holy gooſt thorow ŷ mouth of David ſpake before of Judas/which was gyde to them that tooke Jeſus. For he was nombred with vs

D.v. vs &

Luke. xxiiij.g

pſal. xl.c

cviij.

Tyndale New Testament (1534)

The Reformation also gave new momentum to mission outside Europe, and by the end of the eighteenth century the number of languages having the Bible had roughly doubled. A much greater global achievement, however, began in the nineteenth century, when the newly formed Bible societies, with other mission agencies, were instrumental in the translation and publication of portions of Scripture in over four hundred languages. Famous translators from this century include William Carey in India, John Robert Morrison in China, Henry Martyn in Persia, and Adoniram Judson in Burma. About five hundred more translations were added in the first half of the twentieth century. Progress was, nevertheless, slow. Many languages were difficult to analyze, and it was particularly hard to produce translations that read smoothly, using the genres and idioms that a native speaker would use.

Since the 1950s, linguistic science has revolutionized the way that translation is carried out, and organizations such as Wycliffe Bible Translators have set themselves the task of giving every person in the world the Scriptures in their everyday language. Increasingly, translation is carried out by linguistically trained native speakers of the target languages, working wherever possible from the original Hebrew and Greek. Translators understand better than before how extended discourses are constructed at levels above the sentence, and how social and pragmatic factors affect meaning. The combination of linguistics and technology has also greatly increased the speed with which translations can be produced; sometimes a first draft in a new language can be generated from a closely related language using a computer program.

TYPES OF TRANSLATION

All translators aim for both accuracy and acceptability, but the work of translation constantly involves compromise between these two factors. There are, broadly speaking, two types of translation: formal correspondence and functional equivalence.

In a formal correspondence translation (also called "literal"), the translator, as far as possible, preserves the word order and structure of the original text and translates each word the same way every time it occurs, even if the result is slightly wooden. This is helpful for word studies, and it preserves patterns of repetition that give structure to the text. There is always a danger, however, that the closest formal match to the original actually conveys a meaning different from the original in a particular context. Literalness is not the same as accuracy. Pushed to its extreme, formal correspondence produces the kind of semitranslation found in interlinear texts (where the English is reproduced word for word below a line of Hebrew, Aramaic, or Greek); it is not grammatically acceptable, cannot be used on its own for public or private reading, and loses many of the nuances of the original. However, formal correspondence translations that avoid such extremes are important for detailed Bible study.

In a functional equivalence translation (also called "dynamic," "idiomatic equivalence," or "meaning-based"), the translator aims to produce the same response in a modern reader as the original text would have done in an ancient reader. To achieve this, the syntactic structures and figures of speech of Greek and Hebrew are replaced by their equivalents in the target language. A word may be translated many different ways in different contexts, even when it has a single basic meaning in the original. While this preserves some nuances, it loses others, obscuring structure and the deliberate echo of one verse in another. In this case there is always a danger that the translator has misunderstood the original meaning and the response that it would have produced. Pushed to its extreme, this type shades into paraphrase, and it may be overly subjective or jeopardize the historical particularity of the text. However, dynamic equivalence translations that avoid such pitfalls are valuable for evangelism, new readers, and public and devotional reading.

In practice most translations sit somewhere on the spectrum between these two extremes. Some intermediate translations are a deliberate compromise, aiming to keep as close as possible to the original while communicating its meaning clearly in a common language that is accessible to all. The NIV is a widely used example. One problem in using such a translation is knowing when form has been preserved at the expense of meaning, and when meaning has been preserved at the expense of form. For serious study, therefore, it is useful to compare intermediate translations with translations of the other two types, and to learn from the introductory material what translation principles have been used.

To illustrate the differences between the types of translation, consider how Rom. 3:21 is rendered by the NASB (formal correspondence), the NIV (intermediate), and the NLT (functional equivalence):

> But now apart from the Law *the* righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets. (NASB)
>
> But now apart from the law the righteousness of God has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. (NIV)
>
> But now God has shown us a way to be made right with him without keeping the requirements of the law, as was promised in the writings of Moses and the prophets long ago. (NLT)

FURTHER CHOICES IN TRANSLATION

Within this spectrum translators have further detailed decisions to make.

First, what are the best available Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek texts, as determined by the discipline of textual criticism?

Second, what style should be used? An elevated or archaic style is sometimes preferred in order to convey the dignity of the word; others use a deliberately colloquial style in order to maximize accessibility. Different books of the Bible themselves have different styles and genres, ranging from vivid stories and evocative poems to precise doctrinal formulations, and a translation may attempt to reflect this diversity. At the same time, the style and range of vocabulary chosen will depend to some extent on the needs of the target audience.

Third, should the translation contain complexity and ambiguity when the original does, or should it clarify and simplify? Some parts of Scripture were never easy reading even in the original (see 2 Pet. 3:15–16). However, it is sometimes necessary to disambiguate in order to produce grammatically acceptable text in the target language. In modern books it is also normal to divide text into paragraphs and chapters, often with subheadings. Ancient texts, however, were written without any such breaks, so this too is an interpretation of the text for the sake of clarity.

Fourth, what should the translator do when there is no equivalent word or phrase in the target language? Many people groups have never seen a sheep! Sometimes a choice must be made between coining a new word and refocusing the meaning of an existing word. This is particularly difficult when deciding how to refer to God in a pagan culture. Translating gesture can also be challenging. For example, in Jer. 31:19 the Hebrew is literally “I slapped my thigh,” which is an indication of distress; but in Western culture slapping one’s thigh would probably mean enjoying a good joke, so the NIV translates the Hebrew as “beat my breast.” Footnotes may be necessary to ensure that the meaning is fully understood.

Finally, in cultures that have possessed the Bible for many generations tradition plays a role. A previous translation of a particular verse may be so well known that, unless it is seriously wrong, it is preferable to let it stand than to “modernize” it. Conversely, tradition may so change the meaning of “biblical” words (such as “saint”) that verses containing them need to be retranslated.

As a result of all these decisions, there is scope for many different translations even in a single language. Where several translations exist, serious study should always include comparison between translations along with the use of commentaries. Where available resources as yet permit only one translation in a language, the type of translation to be produced must be chosen with great care. In either case, new translations will always be needed. On the one hand, although God’s word never changes, scholars can improve our textual, linguistic, and exegetical understanding of the Hebrew and Greek originals. On the other hand, the human languages into which the Bible is translated are in a process of constant change.

GENDER-NEUTRAL TRANSLATIONS

Recent English-language translations have grappled in particular with the question of gender neutrality. All languages differ in the way they denote gender. Until recently, the masculine gender in English was also the inclusive gender; hence, "man" could simply mean "person" or "humanity." In many cases, the biblical languages work the same way, so that the older dynamic translations could, like formal correspondence translations, mirror the original. Feminist concerns, however, have changed English usage. It is increasingly unacceptable to use the masculine gender inclusively, and everyday language now substitutes plurals ("person," or "they" with singular meaning) or expansions ("man or woman," "he or she"). This introduces a divergence between formal correspondence translations, which preserve the gender usage of the original, and functional equivalence translations, which prefer inclusive forms to masculine forms if the meaning of the original is entirely inclusive. To complicate matters further, many careful readers of Scripture disagree on where masculine nuances exist and how important they are, in each specific instance, to the meaning of the text.

BIBLICAL HERMENEUTICS Hermeneutics is the science and practice of interpretation. It can refer more generally to the philosophy of human understanding, or more specifically to the tools and methods used for interpreting communicative acts.

Human communication takes place in a variety of ways: through the use of nonverbal signs, through speech, and through writing. Effective communication requires some degree of shared belief, knowledge, and background between the participants. If the communicators have a significant amount of common ground, they will be able to successfully understand one another with little extra effort. Conversely, individuals with vastly different backgrounds will need to take extra steps to communicate effectively, such as defining special terms, avoiding jargon and colloquialisms, appreciating details about the other's cultural assumptions, or learning a foreign language.

The Bible is not exempt from this process of communication. The Scriptures are meant to be read, understood, and put into practice (Luke 8:4–15; James 1:18), a task that requires effort and study on the part of its readers (Acts 17:11; 2 Tim. 2:15). Everyone who reads the Bible is involved in this interpretative process, though readers will vary in their hermeneutical self-consciousness and skill. Thus, although readers are able to understand and appropriate much of the Bible without any special training in hermeneutical principles, such training is appropriate and helpful, both in attaining self-consciousness in interpretation and in acquiring new skills and insights in the effort to become a better reader.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF HERMENEUTICS

The church has benefited from a long history of thinking about the nature and purpose of interpreting its Scriptures, and that reflection has resulted in a wide variety of hermeneutical theories and practices. How does one determine the meaning of a text? Is meaning the truth embedded within the passage? Or is it the original author's intention in writing? Or does the text act independently of its author and history, either because it stands on its own terms or because it only "means" anything in interaction with readers? The answers to these questions will determine how readers approach a text, the questions they expect that text to answer, and the tools they use in interpretation.

From the early church to the Enlightenment. The early church emphasized the ability of the biblical text to convey heavenly truth, whether that truth was conceived as doctrinal teaching or absolute ethical rules. While the "literal meaning" of many texts could often supply simple truths and maxims, such a reading was at other times inadequate and could appear incompatible with what were considered basic and fundamental beliefs. Various allegorical techniques were therefore employed to explain such problematic texts. Interpreters often viewed the literal and historical features of the text as a starting point in the search for fuller meaning, as symbolic pointers to moral principles, absolute truths, or eternal realities. These practices were systematized throughout the Middle Ages and resulted in an extensive development of tradition. Church tradition, in turn, provided a degree of protection from the potential for arbitrariness in allegorical techniques, insisting that interpretation must be guided by the "rule of faith," the traditional teaching and faith of the church.

Beginning in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, scholarship moved to distance itself from such tradition. The Protestant Reformers, dissatisfied with the rule of church tradition, sought to displace its authority with the direct rule of Scripture. They therefore returned to the original biblical text, engaging in critical study of the text itself and translating the Bible into the vernacular to make it more widely accessible. In the centuries that followed, Enlightenment scholars went a step further in their rejection of the church as the sole repository of knowledge. Instead, they asserted, knowledge was acquired through scientific inquiry and critical study. Such inquiry could be applied to any field: the forces of nature, human anatomy, or the interpretation of texts. The meaning of a text was not some abstract truth or heavenly principle; rather, meaning was determined by the human author's original intention in writing and was therefore a historical matter. The intention of an author could be better exposed and understood through a more complete study of both the language in which a text was written and the historical circumstances that surrounded it. Many of these same emphases had been championed by the Protestant Reformers; yet the Enlightenment thinkers differed on one key point: the Reformers never questioned that the text was the word of God.

From the Enlightenment to the present. This favorable attitude toward historical research dwindled over the centuries. In its place authors emphasized the primacy of the text as text, apart from any connection to its origin and history. Literature, it is argued, ultimately operates independently from its author's intention. All that matters is the text, and it is the reader's job to understand the text on its own terms, apart from the contingencies surrounding its creation. To that end, interpreters should pay careful attention to the text's literary features, including its plot structure, characterization, themes, and use of imagery. An interesting example of this hermeneutical dynamic is found in John 19:22, where Pilate asserts, "What I have written, I have written." Pilate's words quickly take on significance far beyond their author's intention, primarily because they are juxtaposed with other themes in John, such as testimony and the kingship of Christ.

More recent approaches have emphasized the role of the reader in the construction of meaning. Interpretation, it is argued, is determined by the interaction between reader and text; readers bring their own presuppositions to the task of interpretation, and such assumptions determine meaning. The author and the historical context of the text will exert some influence, but the primary determinant of meaning is the present reader in his or her present environment. This is not to say that the text "means" whatever a reader wants it to mean; rather, it makes meaning contingent upon the contemporary environment and not subject to anything external to individual readers. On the one hand, readers must"actualize" the text by applying and appropriating it within an environment alien to the original. On the other, readers have the right, and in some cases the responsibility, of undermining the text, particularly if that text assists in the oppression of others.

ELEMENTS OF AN EFFECTIVE HERMENEUTIC

An effective hermeneutic requires keeping each of these elements in constant balance with one another. God's word is truthful and fully trustworthy, yet it is given to his people through individual human authors, authors who wrote in a particular context to a particular audience at a particular time.

Understanding the Bible therefore requires knowledge of the purposes of these authors in their specific historical contexts. Nevertheless, our primary access to authorial intention is through the biblical text itself. Finally, understanding always requires personal interaction with, and application of, the text of Scripture to each person's own life and circumstances. Thus, hermeneutics involves the simultaneous interaction of a variety of perspectives—truth, author, text, and reader—each of which cannot function properly without the others. What follows here is an outline of the most important hermeneutical tools required for such a weighty endeavor.

LINGUISTICS

An appreciation of the nature, structure, and function of language is fundamental to any interpretative endeavor. Obviously, this applies first of all to the specific languages in which the books of the Bible were originally composed. Each language has its own unique vocabulary, grammar, and syntax, and structures available to a writer in one language often are absent in another. Thus, while it is often necessary and acceptable to rely on translations (Neh. 7:73–8:12), readers should be aware that translation itself involves a degree of unavoidable interpretation.

A more general analysis of language is also useful. Understanding the typical patterns by which authors will string sentences together is necessary for following a writing's train of thought. This tool, called "discourse analysis," operates above the sentence level, attempting to understand and explain how sentences function in conjunction with one another in order to produce meaningful paragraphs, and how those paragraphs in turn operate within the overarching purpose of the discourse. These patterns of discourse can vary on the basis of book, author, language, culture, and literary genre, but there are also features of effective discourse common to all communication. Thus, while the principles and rules of communication are often intuitively grasped, understanding language, both generally and specifically, is foundational to the task of interpretation.

LITERATURE AND LITERARY THEORY

The biblical writers are concerned not only with the informational content of their writing, but also with the manner in which that content is communicated. The words, patterns of speech, style, and imagery of any text provide significant insight into its purpose and message, apart from that text's specific propositional content. The diversity of language used in the Gospels provides an example of this. Each of the four Gospel authors has a slightly different concern in his writing. John's purpose, "that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name" (John 20:31), explains his frequent use of courtroom language, such as "testimony" and "witness" (e.g., John 21:24). Mark, by contrast, sweeps the reader along a fast-paced and intensely personal exposition of Jesus' life and death through the terseness and immediacy of his narration. Attention to these literary details allows the reader to more fully participate in the world of the text.

Such decisions will often depend upon a thorough analysis of genre. A reader naturally interprets historical narrative differently from poetry and didactic material. Furthermore, the conventions of different genres change over time. The book of Acts, for example, despite its essentially historical character, does not appear concerned with recording an exact dictation of the many speeches it reports, despite modern expectations that historical writing should be as precise as possible. The classification of ancient genres and the description of their respective conventions therefore require a good deal of analysis and sensitivity, but often such insights are provided by a careful and open reading of the text.

HISTORY

As the product of a particular author at a particular time, each book of the Bible is situated within its own unique historical context. Paul, for example, while perhaps conscious of the importance of his letters for posterity, wrote to specific churches or individuals with a singular purpose. This particularity of author, audience, and circumstance can often cause interpretative problems. Thus, while background studies are not always necessary to get the general idea of the author's message, they can be invaluable in protecting readers from anachronism and enabling them to better appreciate the author's purpose and perspective.

Historical study is assisted by specialized disciplines. Archaeology, for example, focuses on the beliefs, habits, practices, and history of ancient cultures, harnessing a wealth of evidence to that end. Similarly, anthropology and other social sciences are able to explore facets of modern cultures in order to better assess cross-cultural presuppositions and behaviors, many of which provide insight into ancient civilizations that shared similar attitudes. These methods provide the reader with the information necessary to understand a text in terms consistent with its cultural backdrop, highlighting both the similarities and the differences between the Bible and its environment. Recent discoveries of ancient Hittite treaties, for example, shed light on the "cutting ceremony" recorded in Gen. 15. These treaties detail similar ceremonies in which the vassal of a king would walk between hewed animal carcasses as a symbol of allegiance; if disobedience occurred, the vassal would share the fate of the animals. A similar ceremony occurs in Genesis, but with an interesting twist at the end: God, not Abram, passes through the pieces (15:17).

Archaeological excavations at the western wall of the Temple Mount, Jerusalem

HUMILITY AND THE ATTITUDE OF THE READER

Careful attention in interpretation requires a great deal of humility. It is difficult to overstate the importance of the attitude of the reader for an effective hermeneutic. Being a good reader requires willingness to share and participate in the world of the author and the text, a willingness that postpones judgment and expects personal change. This, in turn, requires a spirit of self-criticism, a commitment to defer one's own presuppositions in favor of those of the text. Although readers are never able to fully distance themselves from their cultural situation and assumptions, the study of hermeneutics, among other things, can provide tools and skills for self-criticism and self-awareness, skills that enable the reader to better understand, appreciate, and appropriate the meaning of a text. Even a peripheral understanding of the complexities of interpretation can help readers develop an attitude of humility, imagination, and expectation as they approach the Scriptures.

Such humility is a prerequisite for application. The depth of meaning embedded in any text, and especially within the Bible, provides the humble reader with a rich and powerful tool for personal growth. Having better understood the world of the text on its own terms, readers are able to "project" that world onto themselves and their environment, to appropriate its meaning in a new and possibly foreign context. Thus, Jesus promises that those who hear, understand, and put his word into practice will yield a crop "some thirty, some sixty, some a hundred times what was sown" (Mark 4:20).

UNIQUE FEATURES OF BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION

Certain unique features of the biblical text can create special opportunities and challenges for the Christian interpreter. These challenges are at work in the Bible's own interpretation of itself. The Bible was written by many different authors over the course of a long period of history; it is therefore not surprising to find later authors reflecting on earlier periods. This innerbiblical interpretation offers the Christian insights into the unique nature of biblical hermeneutics and therefore provides a foundational model in approaching the Bible as the word of God.

The common and preeminent assumption that grounds innerbiblical interpretation is the commitment to ultimate divine authorship. Thus, the writer of Hebrews, though affirming the diversity of human authorship in the Bible (1:1), regularly introduces OT quotations with statements such as "God says" (1:5), "he spoke through David" (4:7), and "the Holy Spirit says" (3:7). Other writers tend to prefer the formula "it is written," but each of these reflects a common presupposition that the Scriptures are ultimately delivered by God (2 Pet. 1:21).

Divine authorship means, at the very least, that there is a depth of meaning and purpose to the text, a depth often hidden even from the human author (1 Pet. 1:10–12). Psalm 2, for example, probably originally served as a coronation hymn used to celebrate the appointment of a new king in Israel. Yet the NT understands this psalm as a prophecy fulfilled in the resurrection of Jesus Christ (Acts 13:33; Heb. 5:5). The intention of the original speaker can even be at odds with God's intention, such as when Caiaphas claims, "It is better for you that one man die for the people than that the whole nation perish" (John 11:50; cf. Acts 5:35–39). In this case, the irony of Caiaphas's statement creates a powerful testimony, contrary to his intent, and is used by John to promote confidence in Jesus.

Furthermore, because the Scriptures are from God, they have a consistent and central focus. The NT unhesitatingly views all of Scripture, in all its diversity, as focused, by virtue of divine inspiration, on the person and work of Jesus Christ. This is seen in, for example, Luke 24:13–35, where the resurrected Jesus, "beginning with Moses and all the Prophets," explains to his disciples "what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself" (cf. John 5:39; 12:41). This central focus on Christ requires the Christian interpreter to understand any individual verse in light of its context within the canon, to operate with the same assumption as the NT apostles, that all the Scriptures are concerned with testifying to Jesus the Christ.

Additionally, Paul views both Testaments as the special possession and once-for-all foundation of God's church (Eph. 2:19–20; cf. Acts 2:42). The church, from a NT perspective, is the primary audience of the entirety of Scripture (1 Pet. 1:12) and is therefore uniquely entrusted with understanding and proclaiming its message (Matt. 28:18–20). While the Scriptures themselves are the only infallible guide for interpretation, believers should not forsake the teaching and tradition of the church (2 Thess. 2:15).

Finally, full understanding of the Bible requires the work of the Holy Spirit in conjunction with the faith of the reader. Belief and understanding go together (John 10:38), and both are the result of the unique work of the Holy Spirit (16:13). The proof that such understanding has taken place is the godly life of the believer (Rom. 2:13; James 1:22–25). The reverse is also true: disobedience works against understanding the riches of God's Word (James 1:21). Such considerations underline the importance of the hermeneutical task. The tools and principles of hermeneutics are valuable only insofar as they enable the reader to better understand and appropriate the biblical message, to hear the word of God and respond appropriately.

BIBLICAL THEOLOGY There is no consensus on the definition of, or preferable method for, biblical theology. This article explores the variety of ways biblical theology has been understood and practiced.

Biblical theology has been defined in various ways: (1) theology based upon Scripture (or theology derived primarily from a study of Scripture), as opposed to theology based upon confessional statements or philosophy; (2) theology in harmony with Scripture; (3) theology that is descriptive of the Bible's contents; (4) a study of the theology found in the Bible; (5) the study of the main themes of the Bible; (6) the formulation of the theology of the entire Bible (in distinction from the theology of the OT, the theology of the NT, or the theology of the various books of the Bible, such as the theology of Isaiah or of Matthew); and (7) the ways the Bible has been studied throughout the history of the church.

One of the major weaknesses with these definitions is that they can function primarily as a way of distinguishing those theologies that are preferred from those that are dismissed. Although they may differ from one another, every Christian theologian formulates theology in reference to the Bible. Biblical theologies have a direct correlation to both the text of Scripture and the ways in which the authors of Scripture thought.

BIBLICAL THEOLOGY AS A RECENT DISCIPLINE

Biblical theology is a relatively recent discipline. There are two reasons for this. First, the term "biblical theology" does not seem to have been used prior to the seventeenth century. Second, the focus on the historical progression of biblical themes did not become a significant part of biblical studies until the eighteenth century. This historical focus characterizes most biblical theologies of the last two centuries.

In his 1787 lecture at the University of Altdorf, Johann Philipp Gabler made a distinction between biblical theology (a historical discipline) and dogmatic theology (a didactic or instructive discipline that is usually called "systematic theology" in our own time). Prior to Gabler, biblical scholars engaged in what was sometimes called "exegetical theology," but this usually was a discipline subordinate to systematic theology rather than a discipline in its own right. It involved showing the relationship between biblical texts and the various doctrines of systematic theology.

Influential writers of the early church such as Irenaeus and Marcion wrestled with issues that would become a significant concern of later biblical theologians, such as the relationship between the Testaments and the Christian's use of the Mosaic law, but they lacked the historical focus in the study of Scripture that would characterize modern biblical scholarship.

THE BIBLICAL THEOLOGY MOVEMENT

Biblical theology as a discipline should be distinguished from the biblical theology movement, a primarily neoorthodox mid-twentieth-century movement in biblical studies that grew out of the controversy between fundamentalism and modernism in America. Neoorthodoxy, as expressed by Karl Barth, was characterized by the idea that the Bible itself is not the word of God but rather is a record of revelation and a witness to the word of God. Through the Scripture we encounter the divine Word in Christ. Biblical scholars of this movement affirmed the value of historical criticism (opposing a literalistic interpretation of the Bible) and at the same time acknowledged the need for a new direction that would affirm the unity of the gospel and make the results of historical criticism more useful for the church.

DEFINING THEOLOGY

Some explanations of biblical theology begin with a definition of theology. This is not a simple task, for there are many different ways that theology has been conceptualized. When Christians speak of theology, they usually are referring to either (1) the study of God (as revealed in Scripture and/or history), (2) the study of Scripture (the teaching that arises from the canonical books), or (3) the study of what the church (or a branch of the church) believes and teaches.

One's understanding of theology is linked with the understanding of revelation. Those who believe that God has revealed himself primarily through Scripture will seek to develop a theology derived from Scripture. Those who believe that God has revealed himself primarily through his actions in history (such as the exodus from Egypt or the resurrection of Jesus Christ) will seek to develop a theology that comes out of understanding those events (keeping in mind that Scripture is often the primary witness to these actions). Those who view theology as a study of what the church believes will combine a study of Scripture and history with a careful analysis of various expressions of theology within a faith community. In spite of varying definitions of theology, with very few exceptions Christian theologians are concerned with working out the implications of the Christian Scriptures (the books of both Testaments) for the life of the church, as well as social analysis and critique.

BIBLICAL THEOLOGY AND OTHER TYPES OF THEOLOGY

Systematic theology. Biblical theology often is defined in distinction from systematic theology. There are a number of ways that students of Scripture have differentiated biblical theology from systematic theology.

Gabler viewed biblical theology as a historical, descriptive discipline, distinct from systematic theology, which is an instructive, prescriptive discipline. From his perspective, biblical theology focuses on what biblical authors said about sacred matters, while systematic theology reveals what current theologians think about sacred matters in light of their own time and church background. This perspective forced recognition of the difference between the teaching of the biblical writers and the systematic theology professed in various churches.

Some later biblical theologians considered biblical theology to be a historical discipline in contrast to systematic theology, which is a logical discipline (using laws of logic to organize and synthesize theology).

A different emphasis is found when biblical theology is viewed as a descriptive task in contrast to systematic theology, which is prescriptive in nature. A distinction has often been made between systematic theology, viewed as a prescriptive task (explaining what the Scripture "means" in the time and situation of contemporary believers), as distinct from biblical theology, which is a study of what the Scripture "meant" at its time of writing.

Another way to contrast the two is to speak of biblical theology as a discipline that studies the Bible diachronically (i.e., with an emphasis on what is revealed throughout various time periods), while systematic theology is a discipline that studies the Bible synchronically (with the goal of producing a unified system by focusing on what the Scripture as a whole teaches). Biblical theology as a diachronic and sequential study has also been contrasted with systematic theology viewed as a logical arrangement of what is observed sequentially in Scripture.

In summary, those distinguishing biblical theology from systematic theology, with various nuances and emphases, describe biblical theology as a historical, descriptive, diachronic, and sequential discipline that focuses on what the Scripture "meant" at its time of writing, in contrast to systematic theology, which is didactic, logical, prescriptive, and synchronic, explaining what the Scripture "means" to contemporary readers.

The results of one's biblical theology can be used to formulate systematic theology in light of the cultural and historical context of the contemporary theologian. Systematic theologians do this in a variety of ways. Roman Catholic theologians have traditionally placed Scripture alongside the tradition of the church in this task, while Protestants value Scripture above tradition when constructing theology. Among Protestants, some interpret Scripture in light of tradition, reason, and experience, while others emphasize the role of the Spirit in helping believers understand the word of God.

Historical theology. Biblical theology is often viewed as a discipline that follows the task of biblical exegesis and precedes historical theology, which itself precedes systematic theology.

Old Testament / New Testament theology. OT theology and NT theology can be viewed as two branches of biblical theology or as intermediate steps between exegesis and biblical theology. Other theological disciplines sometimes considered to be subsequent to systematic theology include ethical theology, homiletical theology, and pastoral theology.

BIBLICAL THEOLOGY AND EXEGESIS

Those focusing on biblical theology as a diachronic study often speak of biblical theology as a study of the progression and development of significant themes throughout Scripture, or throughout the progress of revelation. From this perspective, biblical theologians take the work done by biblical exegetes in their careful study of Scripture and observe themes that appear with regularity. When biblical theology is viewed in this way, it is common to see it as the study of the theology found within each book of the Bible and a comparison, analysis, and compilation of these theologies.

The work of biblical theologians is based upon, and is an extension of, the work done by biblical exegetes. The biblical exegete interprets and explains a passage of Scripture in light of linguistics, semantics (often including philological study), grammar, syntax, textual criticism, literary structure (of both the passage itself and the book within which the passage is found), compositional and rhetorical strategies of the author (including chiasm, plot, theme and character development, and parallelism), genre, historical and sociological background of the text, and geographical setting.

There is always fluidity in the relationship between biblical exegesis and biblical theology, for while the results of biblical exegesis inform biblical theology, the observations of biblical theologians assist biblical exegetes in their understanding of each biblical book as a whole, as well as the relationships between smaller units of Scripture within the book in which they are found. As a result, there is a circular (or spiral) interaction between biblical exegesis and biblical theology. An understanding of each part of Scripture informs one's formulation of biblical theology, while an understanding of biblical theology increases one's understanding of each part. Ultimately, every biblical passage informs the work done by the biblical theologian, while each text of Scripture is understood in a clearer manner by the exegete as the unity and diversity within the canon as a whole is seen with greater clarity.

METHODS OF BIBLICAL THEOLOGY

There are a variety of ways in which biblical theology has been practiced and a number of ways in which these methodologies have been classified. Differences in the way the Bible is understood have resulted in various kinds of biblical theologies. For example, while some have focused on the final form of the biblical text, others have focused on the reconstruction of the biblical text (in light of historical critical methods), and still others have focused on the study of events referred to in the biblical text as reconstructed in light of tradition criticism or historical criticism.

Classifications of the various methods for biblical theology (with some overlap between the categories) include (1) systematic, (2) diachronic, (3) central theme, (4) confessional, (5) descriptive, (6) tradition-history, (7) salvation-historical, (8) christological, (9) promise-fulfillment, (10) allegorical, (11) typological, (12) canonical, (13) literary, (14) cultural-linguistic, and (15) sociological. The first three of these methods for biblical theology will be considered here in greater detail.

The *systematic* (or dogmatic) method organizes biblical theology in light of the structures used by systematic theology, such as the three themes of God, humanity, and salvation. This synchronic approach characterized the earliest biblical theologies. The greatest weakness in this method is that it often leads to imposing on the text of Scripture a framework that is incongruous with the content and teaching of Scripture. This unbalanced distortion leads to overemphasizing some ideas of the biblical writers and underemphasizing others.

The *diachronic* (or historic) method structures biblical theology in terms of the historic progression of themes or ideas communicated by the writers of Scripture. It focuses on the way God's revelation unfolds throughout the canon, with a concern for the historic time periods of revelation. An example of this approach is the salvation-history method, which focuses on the progress and history of redemption. A diachronic study of the Bible is difficult because there is no consensus concerning the time or sequence of writing for most of the books of the OT. For example, some believe that the Mosaic law (as found in the Pentateuch) preceded the OT prophets, while others are convinced that the law was largely written as a response to the teachings of the prophets of Judah and Israel.

The *central theme* (or cross-section) method selects a unifying theme that is prominent in Scripture and observes how this theme is addressed throughout the historic progression of Scripture. Significant themes that can be traced throughout Scripture and that have been suggested as a center of biblical theology (a way of providing unity to the study of Scripture) include (1) God's covenant(s) with his people, (2) the relationship between God and his people, (3) the history of redemption or salvation history (*Heilsgeschichte*), (4) the kingdom or reign of God, (5) promise and fulfillment, (6) reconciliation, (7) the presence of God, (8) the love and mercy of God, and (9) the providence of God. Many have rejected the possibility of finding a center or dominant theme around which each part of Scripture can be organized, and they reject approaches that force a particular theme upon texts that resist such a simplified analysis and classification.

QUESTIONS FOR BIBLICAL THEOLOGIANS

A number of questions have arisen as biblical exegetes have attempted to formulate biblical theology.

1. Is biblical theology a theological endeavor?

This question seems to arise when the biblical text is viewed as an object of study rather than as God's self-revelation to humanity. Biblical theology has often been understood as the discipline that focuses on what a text meant, as distinct from systematic theology, which focuses on what a text means. Emphasizing the descriptive aspect of biblical theology at the expense of its normative role in the community of faith can lead to viewing Scripture as an object of study. If Scripture is viewed as the living word that is understood only by those with a desire to hear and obey the voice of God, a sharp distinction between what the text meant and what it means will be avoided. Those who reject the possibility of a merely cognitive understanding of Scripture will reject the idea of orthodoxy apart from orthopraxis and affirm that attempts at exegetical understanding (what the text meant) are not only incomplete and deficient but also distorted without obedience to God (which is, at the very least, part of what the Scripture means today). Those affirming biblical theology as a theological discipline will emphasize the theological nature of Christian Scripture as it addresses issues of the character and nature of God and the implications of this for human morality.

2. How does one find unity from biblical books that speak with diverse voices? Is there thematic unity? Would biblical theology better be replaced by biblical theologies derived from various portions of Scripture?

As biblical theology came to be understood as a historical discipline, the differences between the teachings of the two Testaments were highlighted. This has led some to reject the possibility of biblical theology.

(a) Some reject biblical theology because they see the differences between the theology of the two Testaments as insurmountable and irresolvable. They view the OT not only as pre-Christian, but also as sub-Christian. Examples include the call of God for Israel to destroy the inhabitants of Canaan (Deut. 7:1–2; 20:16–18) and the prayers of imprecation (cursing) in the psalms (e.g., Ps. 137:8–9). Similarly, when the revelation of Jesus Christ as seen in the NT is viewed as the climax of the progress of God's revelation, how does the OT retain value? Is the OT always secondary and the NT primary?

(b) Those from the history-of-religions school moved away from, and even rejected the idea of, biblical theology, replacing it with a focus on the evolutionary development of Israel's religion in light of the religions of Israel's neighbors.

(c) Some of those who have rejected biblical theology focus on the historical-critical study of the text, often rejecting the historicity of the events described in the text. In response, some have defended the value of the history in the biblical narratives, while others have pursued biblical theology without considering the issue of the historicity of the events described in Scripture, focusing on the theology that comes out of the final form of Scripture.

(d) Recent biblical interpreters have focused on the differences in the theology of the writers of the various canonical books (e.g., the contrast in the way Jesus is presented in the Synoptic Gospels and John's Gospel, or the differences in the way faith is understood by James and Paul, or the varying perspectives on the poor and oppressed seen in Exodus as compared with Proverbs). As a result, the movement has been away from observing similarities and toward highlighting these differences (thus a move away from unity).

3. Is it possible to summarize accurately everything the Bible teaches? Can one produce a biblical theology that values each biblical text?

It appears that all attempts to formulate a biblical theology will, of necessity, be selective, for it is impossible to construct a biblical theology in which all texts are weighted equally. This being the case, which portions of Scripture will be used? Which will be central? Which will be ignored? How will these decisions be made?

4. What is meant by the term "Bible"?

Different faith communities have diverse canons of authoritative Scripture. Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox churches have a canon that includes what Protestants sometimes refer to as the deuterocanonical books, which Protestants reject. Differences in the locus of study for a biblical theology will, of course, affect the biblical theology that is produced.

BICHRI *See* Bikri.

BICHRITES *See* Bikrites.

BICRI *See* Bikri.

BIDKAR Jehu's "chariot officer." Jehu ordered Bidkar to throw Joram king of Israel onto the field of Naboth the Jezreelite after Jehu had shot Joram with an arrow (2 Kings 9:24–26). Bidkar had been with Jehu when they heard Elijah prophesy this event. See also 1 Kings 21:18–24.

BIER An object on which a corpse is laid and taken to the grave. The Hebrew word translated as "bier" (*mittah*) in 2 Sam. 3:31 can also refer to a bed or a couch. In 2 Chron. 16:14 a different Hebrew word (*mishkab*) is used to describe the bier (NASB: "resting place") upon which Asa's body was permanently laid within his grave. Jesus touched the bier of a young man before raising him from the dead (Luke 7:14).

Statuette of a funeral bier for the Egyptian prince Thutmose (c. 1360 BC)

BIGTHA One of the seven personal attendants of the Persian king Xerxes (Ahasuerus), whom he commanded to bring Queen Vashti to his banquet (Esther 1:10). Working with the harem, he was a eunuch.

BIGTHAN *See* Bigthana.

BIGTHANA One of two door guards of the Persian king Xerxes (Ahasuerus) who plotted to assassinate the king. The plot was discovered and reported by Mordecai, after which Bigthana was hanged (Esther 2:21–23).

BIGVAI The head of a clan that was part of the early return to Judah from Babylonian captivity in 539 BC or soon after (Ezra 2:2, 14; Neh. 7:7, 19). The same clan sent Uthai and Zakkur and seventy men at the time of Ezra around 458 BC (Ezra 8:14). Bigvai is also listed as one who sealed the covenant renewal led by Ezra (Neh. 10:16).

BIKRI The father of Sheba, the Benjamite who rebelled against David. Joab's men laid a siege against Sheba in Abel Beth Maakah, and his head was handed to them (2 Sam. 20:1–22). There is no further mention of Bikri in the OT.

BIKRITES Term used in the LXX and the Latin Vulgate of 2 Sam. 20:14 (so RSV, NRSV) for the people group identified in the Hebrew text as the Berites.

BILDAD Bildad is the second of Job's friends introduced in Job 2:11, where he is said to come from an otherwise unknown place, Shuah. Bildad's speeches (Job 8; 18; 25) reflect his staunch conviction that God deals with people (including Job) exclusively through the principle of retributive justice: God punishes sin and rewards good. Although he shares this perspective with his friends, Bildad applies it more vehemently. Bildad incorrectly attributes the death of Job's children to some unspecified sin that they had committed (8:4) and inappropriately encourages Job to seek God's forgiveness for his sin, claiming that it would lead to his restoration (8:5–6).

BILEAM A town of western Manasseh that was given to some of the Levites descended from Kohath (1 Chron. 6:70). Probably the same town as Ibleam (Josh. 17:11), Bileam lay about fifty miles north of Jerusalem.

BILGAH **(1)** The fifteenth of twenty-four heads of priestly families whom David assigned for temple service by lot (1 Chron. 24:14). **(2)** A priest who returned to Jerusalem with Zerubbabel and Joshua (Neh. 12:5, 18), possibly also called Bilgai (10:8).

BILGAI *See* Bilgah.

BILHAH **(1)** The servant of Rachel, given to her by Laban (Gen. 29:29). Rachel gave her to Jacob as a concubine, and Bilhah bore Dan and Naphtali (30:5–8). Later, Reuben has sexual relations with Bilhah (35:22). **(2)** Location in the territory of Simeon (1 Chron. 4:29), probably also in Josh. 15:29; 19:3; 19:44, with alternate spellings.

BILHAN **(1)** A descendant of Seir through Ezer, a Horite chief who lived in Edom (Gen. 36:27; 1 Chron. 1:42). **(2)** A descendant of Benjamin through Jediael, and the father of seven sons (1 Chron. 7:10).

BILL OF DIVORCEMENT *See* Divorce.

BILSHAN One of several leaders who accompanied Zerubbabel and Joshua when the people of

Israel returned from captivity in Babylon to Jerusalem and Judah (Ezra 2:2; Neh. 7:7).

BIMHAL A descendant of Asher through Japhlet, and the head of a family (1 Chron. 7:33).

BINDING AND LOOSING Binding can mean physically restraining a person or people (Judg. 15:13; 2 Kings 25:7; Job 16:8; Pss. 119:61; 149:8), mending, as with a wound (Isa. 61:1; Ezek. 34:16; Hos. 6:1), or taking a legally constraining oath (1 Sam. 14:27–30; Neh. 10:29; Jer. 50:5). The opposite of binding is loosing or setting free, which can describe literally being freed from bonds (e.g., Acts 16:26) or the release from something that is binding.

The law, a binding covenant between Israel and God, is to be literally bound on one's forehead as a reminder (Deut. 6:8; 11:18). Non-Israelites who wish to identify with the God of Israel can bind themselves to his laws (Isa. 56:6). In Num. 30:6, 9, 13, an oath taken by a young woman still in her father's house will be binding only if the father is not against it. If he is against it, it is not binding and she is loosed from it (30:5). This is the same in the case of a married woman, whose approval has to come from the husband. However, for widows or divorced women, all pledges they make are binding since there are no men in their lives to void the pledges (30:9).

While contracts were binding, some had time limits. For example, the seventh year and the fiftieth year (Jubilee) allowed for cancellation of such binding contracts as slavery or land ownership (Lev. 25:10–54; 27:24).

The binding of Isaac (Gen. 22), traditionally known as the Akedah, has theological significance for both Christians and Jews. It is interpreted as a form of resurrection, a coming from the dead for Isaac after Yahweh had instructed his father, Abraham, to sacrifice him (Heb. 11:17–19). God inquires of Job whether he can “bind the chains of the Pleiades” or “loosen Orion's belt” (Job 38:31).

The book of Proverbs encourages the wise to metaphorically bind love and faithfulness around their necks (3:3) and their parents' commands and teachings to the heart (6:21) and the finger (7:3); it also talks of folly being bound up in the heart of a child (22:15), perhaps alluded to by Paul in Rom. 11:32 when he says that God has bound all people to disobedience that he may have mercy on them.

Introducing his ministry in Luke 4:18, Jesus quotes Isa. 61:1, which talks of binding up the brokenhearted, a reference to his healing ministry. Further, binding and loosing are found in Jesus' commissioning of his disciples (Matt. 16:19; 18:18; cf. John 20:23), where it may be referring to the binding of demons and loosing of demoniacs bound or oppressed by demons (cf. Mark 3:14–16; 6:7; Luke 13:6). Since Jesus has the power to bind and loose (John 8:36), he chooses to empower his followers to do the same. Binding Satan is the subject of the ultimate eschatological battle in Jewish lore (*T. Levi* 18:11–12) and becomes central in Christianity. Jesus encounters satanic forces embodied in humans and looses such people from the chains of Satan (Mark 5:3; Luke 13:12, 16). Ultimately, Satan is to be bound for a millennium and loosed only for eternal damnation (Rev. 20:1–3).

Paul invokes Jewish law about marriage by claiming that one is bound in marriage only as long as one's partner is alive (Rom. 7:2). In this way, Paul explains how Christians are dead to the law, because Jesus has died on their behalf, thus setting them free from the law (Rom. 7:4–6; cf. Heb. 9:15). To the Corinthians also he talks of the binding nature of marriage but with a caveat: if the marriage is between a believer and a nonbeliever, and if the nonbeliever leaves, then the believer is not bound (1 Cor. 7). But for Paul, being set free from sin (Rom. 8:2) means being bound to God (6:22).

BINEA A descendant of Benjamin, King Saul, and Jonathan through Moza. Binea's son is called both "Raphah" and "Rephaiah" (1 Chron. 8:37; 9:43).

BINNUI **(1)** The father of Noadiah, a Levitical contemporary of Ezra (Ezra 8:33). **(2)** A descendant of Pahath-Moab who was among those guilty of marrying foreign women (Ezra 10:30). **(3)** The ancestor of thirteen men who were guilty of marrying foreign women (Ezra 10:38 [but see NIV mg.]). **(4)** Son of Henadad, he completed two sections of Nehemiah's wall (Neh. 3:18 ["Bavvai" in some versions; see NIV mg.], 24). He was one of the Levites who ratified the document of rededication (Neh. 10:9). **(5)** The head of a family from which 648 returnees accompanied Zerubbabel to Jerusalem (Neh. 7:15 [probably "Bani" in Ezra 2:10]). **(6)** One of the Levitical leaders who returned to Jerusalem with Zerubbabel (Neh. 12:8). *See also* Bavai.

BIRDS Over 350 species of birds have been recorded in the land of modern-day Israel. The OT employs thirty-five different words for birds (both wild and domestic), but the identification of these words with known species has proved to be very difficult. Like other words for animals, terminology for birds often is employed in personal names (e.g., Jonah, Oreb, Zippor, Zipporah). There is significant evidence for fowling practices in ancient Israel, usually by means of nets and snares (Pss. 124:7; 140:5; Prov. 6:5; 7:23; Lam. 3:52; Hos. 7:12; Amos 3:5). Small birds and chickens are occasionally even depicted on Iron Age II (1000–586 BC) seals and vessels from sites such as el-Jib (Gibeon) and Tell en-Nasbeh (Mizpah).

Stork

Like other animals in the Bible, birds are depicted as agents of God. Divine agency is especially evident in instances such as the ravens feeding Elijah (1 Kings 17:4–6) and the dove bringing an olive leaf to Noah (Gen. 8:11). The Bible also employs bird-related imagery such as in descriptions of divine judgment (Prov. 30:17; Jer. 12:9). Birds may also serve as ominous signs of impending judgment (Hos. 8:1). God's "wings" can offer both healing (Mal. 4:2 KJV, RSV) and protection (Ruth

2:12; Pss. 17:8; 36:7; 57:1; 61:4; 63:7; 91:4). The metaphor of the soul or spirit as a bird is referenced in the description of the Holy Spirit descending like a dove (Matt. 3:16; Mark 1:10; Luke 3:22; John 1:32). The observation that birds "do not sow or reap" is employed as an image of worry-free living (Luke 12:24; cf. Job 38:41; Ps. 147:9). Jesus' reference to "when the rooster crows" (Mark 13:35) is not strictly literal but rather refers to a watch of the night: the quarter of the night after midnight.

The prominence of sacrificial birds (especially doves and pigeons) in ritual literature indicates that they were likely raised for such purposes in ancient Israel. All birds could be eaten except those listed as unclean in Lev. 11:13–19 (twenty species) and Deut. 14:12–18 (twenty-one species). Generally speaking, birds of prey and those that feed on carrion or fish were considered unclean. Birds often served as food for the poor (Matt. 10:29–31; Luke 12:6–7). Poor people could offer birds as a substitute for expensive livestock (Lev. 5:7; 12:8; 14:21–22; cf. Luke 2:24), while the poorest of the poor were permitted to bring grain (Lev. 5:11). Finally, in one purgation ritual a live bird is used to carry away impurities (Lev. 14:52–53; cf. 16:22).

BIRSHA King of Gomorrah, he was part of a five-king alliance that rebelled against Kedorlaomer king of Elam (Gen. 14:1–16). Kedorlaomer defeated Birsha and his allies and plundered the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, but Abram recovered the plunder and captives.

BIRTH Births in the ancient world were the domain of women. The women who bore children were often assisted in the birthing process by midwives (Gen. 35:17; 38:28; Exod. 1:15–20). Although work was forbidden on the Sabbath, Jewish law permitted midwives to assist laboring women with births on the Sabbath because childbirth was viewed as saving a life.

Many women utilized a birthing stool (Exod. 1:16). Upon birth, the newborn often was washed with water, rubbed with salt, and wrapped in cloths (Ezek. 16:4; Luke 2:7, 12). The OT required women to undergo a rite of purification following childbirth (Exod. 13:2, 20; 34:20; Lev. 12:6–8; Luke 2:22–24). This purification lasted forty days after the birth of a son and eighty days after the birth of a daughter and concluded with the sacrifice of both a burnt offering and a sin offering.

Birthing was valued, and women who were considered to be infertile often faced great shame (1 Sam. 1:10–11; Luke 1:25). Jewish tradition drew additional connections between childbirth and a woman's character. For instance, death in childbirth was threatened for women who did not follow the law. Pain in childbirth was associated with the sin of Eve (Gen. 3:16), and conversely, absence of pain was interpreted as a sign that a woman was particularly righteous. According to Josephus, Moses was borne with no pain to his mother, and the *Protevangelium of James* indicates the same about Mary's labor with Jesus.

The birthing process posed significant risk to both woman and child. Estimates of mortality rates for babies vary, but it is thought that as many as 50 percent of children did not survive beyond the age of five, with many failing to live through the first week outside the womb. Conservative guesses place the death rate for mothers around 5 percent. Death rates during childbirth were higher among Greek women, who often married younger than their Jewish counterparts and frequently suffered complications in childbirth due to their youth.

The Bible sometimes employs the language of birth as a spiritual metaphor. In John 3:3–6 Jesus instructs Nicodemus about the need for spiritual birth by explaining that he must be born again. In Rom. 8:22 Paul describes the whole of creation as experiencing the pain of childbirth as it awaits redemption, and in Gal. 4:19 he says that he is in labor for a second time with the Galatians as he desires the formation of Christ in them.

BIRTH CONTROL The predominant form of birth control available to men in the ancient world was coitus interruptus. Onan does this to avoid impregnating Tamar (Gen. 38:8–9) and faces God's judgment for his action, although this may reflect punishment for refusing to fulfill his levirate duty rather than punishment for withdrawing prematurely. However, because large families were an asset in primarily agrarian societies, contraception frequently was condemned. Later Jewish literature forbids the use of birth control by males because of the command to "be fruitful and increase in number" (Gen. 1:28) but sometimes permits contraceptive use by women, particularly those who are nursing an older child. The second-century AD physician Soranus instructed a woman wishing to prevent pregnancy to avoid deep penetration, to hold her breath at the moment of ejaculation, and immediately to squat down, begin sneezing, wipe herself, and drink something cold. Other birth control methods for women in the ancient world included ointments consisting of old olive oil, honey, or cedar resin to be spread on the cervix prior to intercourse. Various plants, including silphium, asafetida, wild carrot, and the seeds of Queen Anne's lace were taken orally to either prevent or terminate pregnancy. Abortion and infanticide, though condemned by Judaism (cf. Exod. 21:22–25), were practiced by some. Acacia gum and dates were among ingredients in vaginal suppositories that were believed to function as abortifacients. Infanticide occurred through exposure at birth (cf. Exod. 1:15–16; Acts 7:19) and often targeted female babies.

BIRTH DEFECTS Congenital defects are treated symbolically in the law of Moses along with crippling diseases and permanent injury. Israelite worship, managed by the priesthood, pointed away from itself to heavenly things. Thus, it was important for sacred things to be undistorted. Dwarfs and hunchbacks were disqualified for priestly work, along with those suffering from various injuries (Lev. 21:16–23).

Along the same lines, some who opposed Israel were genetically defective (2 Sam. 21:20), deviating from the human form in their gigantism and polydactyly. Not only were they in the land promised to Israel, but they were something beyond the ordinary—they physically embodied evil opposition to God.

In the NT, symbols take second place to the spiritual reality of Christ, come to save all peoples. An entire chapter of the Gospel of John, the story of the man born blind (John 9), is devoted to a birth defect and its spiritual meaning. Jesus argues that now those who willfully will not see the truth of the gospel are the real blind ones; the man born blind can spiritually see better than they do and is accepted by Jesus.

BIRTHRIGHT The birthright consists of the material blessings of a father being passed on to his sons. By right, the oldest son received a double portion of the inheritance received by the children (Gen. 25:29–34; Deut. 21:15–17; Luke 15:11–32). The birthright is often connected to, but needs to be distinguished from, the blessing. The blessing generally involved more of a focus on a spiritual allotment, but it crossed paths with the birthright with respect to future leadership and authority of the person (Gen. 27; 49). Royal succession was also a birthright, though God could countermand this privilege (1 Kings 2:15; 2 Chron. 21:3).

In the NT, Jesus' birthright includes the throne of David, a position of honor as God's unique Son, and creation itself (Rom. 8:29; Col. 1:18; Heb. 1:4–6). The low regard with which Esau viewed his birthright is also used as a warning in Hebrews to encourage Christians not to take their spiritual inheritance lightly (Heb. 12:16–17).

BIRTHSTOOL Traditionally, twin rocks upon which midwives would seat women for childbirth. The term appears once in the NRSV (NIV: “delivery stool”), translating a Hebrew word (*’abenayim*) that literally means “two stones” (Exod. 1:16). However, the same Hebrew word means “potter’s wheel” in Jer. 18:3, suggesting that the obstetric understanding could be metaphoric.

BIRZAITH A descendant of Asher through Malkiel, or possibly the name of a place (1 Chron. 7:31 [KJV: “Birzavith”]).

BISHLAM One of the men who wrote a letter to King Artaxerxes in Aramaic (Ezra 4:7). The name could be an abbreviated form of “Ben-Selam,” meaning “son of peace,” or the abbreviated form of the Aramaic name “Bel-Salam,” meaning “Bel is peace.”

BISHOP An older translation of the Greek word *episkopos*, which the NIV translates as “overseer.” The word occurs five times in the NT (Acts 20:28; Phil. 1:1; 1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:7; 1 Pet. 2:25).

The word *episkopos* was used in the Greco-Roman world to describe a large variety of financial, political, and religious officials. The LXX uses the word to describe priestly authorities (2 Kings 11:18), temple inspectors (2 Kings 12:11), and military officers (Num. 31:14; 2 Kings 11:15), among other roles. The DSS evidence an official (Heb. *mebaqqer*) similar to the overseer in the NT. Nearly anyone with duties of ruling and oversight could be called an overseer in ancient Greco-Roman and pre-Christian Jewish writings.

Overseers first appear in the NT in Acts 20:28. This verse is in the context of Paul’s farewell speech to the elders of the Ephesian church, charging them to watch carefully over the welfare of the church. A comparison of Acts 20:17 and 20:28 shows that “elder” (*presbyteros*) and “overseer” (*episkopos*) are basically interchangeable terms (the two are explicitly equated in Titus 1:5–7). The overseer in Acts 20:28 is specifically equipped by the Holy Spirit to rule (shepherd), which is the same job of elders (e.g., Acts 14:23; 15; 16:4; 1 Thess. 5:12–13; 1 Tim. 5:17; Titus 1:5–9; 1 Pet. 5:5). This shepherding function is primarily one of protecting the church from the false teachers who, Paul knows, will sneak in and distort the truth of God’s word once he leaves (Acts 20:29–31). Although overseers are not specifically mentioned in Eph. 4:11, the idea of shepherding (pastoring) the flock of God is one of the gifts given to the church for its edification by Jesus Christ.

In Phil. 1:1 Paul addresses the church in Philippi, making a distinction between the entire body of the saints and the roles of overseer and deacon.

In 1 Tim. 3:2 and Titus 1:7 is found the most information about the roles of overseers, whereas 1 Tim. 3:1 describes the office of oversight. The job of the overseer is defined more in terms of virtues than specific duties (1 Tim. 3:2–7; Titus 1:7–9). In this regard, the qualifications for overseers are quite similar to standard lists of virtues in contemporary Greco-Roman literature. The overseer must be of outstanding moral character, self-controlled in all areas of life, an experienced Christian, and a good leader in his own household. However, two specific Christian duties stand out in the biblical lists: teaching and refuting error (1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:9). These two abilities are especially important in the Pastoral Epistles because false teaching is a particularly pressing threat in the churches addressed. Overseers must also discipline errant church members (1 Tim. 5:20; 2 Tim. 3:16; 4:2). Although it is difficult to draw hard-and-fast distinctions between the various teaching and authority roles mentioned in the NT, an overseer is primarily called to watch over, protect, and teach the church in an official capacity.

Finally, in 1 Pet. 2:25 Jesus Christ is called the "Shepherd and Overseer" of all Christians. Jesus is the paradigm for the loving care and protection of the church that all undershepherds (overseers/bishops) are called to emulate.

There is evidence that in the early church some (such as Clement of Rome) saw an overseer as equal to an elder. As early as the beginning of the second century, others (such as Ignatius) argued that overseers were the chief figures in a detailed church hierarchy, as well as being direct successors to the apostles.

BIT AND BRIDLE A bridle is gear that fits over an animal's head; attached to the bridle is a bit, a metal mouthpiece that allows one to control the animal. The terms "bridle" and "bit" are used metaphorically in both Testaments, demonstrating some manner of control (Job 41:13; Ps. 32:9; James 1:26). For example, James uses this metaphor to challenge believers about the difficulty and importance of controlling their tongue (James 3:1–12).

Horse bridle, discovered at Persepolis in Persia (fifth century BC)

BITHIAH Apparently one of two wives of Mered the Judahite (1 Chron. 4:17–18), though the Hebrew text is unclear on this point. Bithiah may have been a princess, or the phrase "Pharaoh's daughter" may refer only to her Egyptian descent. The name "Bithiah" means "daughter of Yah(weh)" and may indicate that she had converted to the religion of Israel.

BITHRON A translation of the Hebrew word *bitron*, a term of uncertain meaning that appears only in 2 Sam. 2:29. Abner, commander of Ish-Bosheth's army, marched through Bithron while fleeing from David. The most common explanations are that "Bithron" refers to a ravine or a mountain pass, possibly the Jabbok (KJV, TEV), or that it indicates the forenoon (NIV, NRSV, RSV, NASB).

BITHYNIA A region in northern Asia Minor bordering the Black Sea that, along with Pontus, was ruled as one province by the Romans. Paul and his missionary companions desired to enter Bithynia during his second missionary journey but were prevented from doing so by the Holy Spirit, so they traveled to Macedonia instead (Acts 16:7). The Christians in Bithynia received greetings from Peter (1 Pet. 1:1).

BITTER *See* Gall.

BITTER HERBS A food eaten with lamb and unleavened bread at the Passover meal. The herbs were often comprised of whatever bitter greens were available. Though not specifically identified, they included lettuce, endive, parsley, watercress, cucumber, and horseradish, all of which were plentiful in areas of the Sinai Peninsula, Palestine, and Egypt. The bitter herbs recalled the misery of slavery in Egypt (Exod. 12:8; Num. 9:11). They were dipped into a fruit puree (*kharoset* sauce), which represents the mortar that Israelites used for Pharaoh's building projects. In John 13:26–27 Jesus, instead of dipping a "piece of bread" (Gk. *psōmion*), probably dipped bitter herbs, sharing them with Judas Iscariot (cf., in the Greek texts, Mark 14:20, where Jesus does not specify what is being dipped; Matt. 26:23, where Jesus talks about dipping a hand).

BITTERN The KJV translation of the Hebrew *qippod* (Isa. 14:23; 34:11; Zeph. 2:14). Bitterns, a kind of heron, are found in the Middle East and live in marshy reed beds. This fits the biblical association with desolate places, particularly with swampland. Moreover, these verses do seem to refer to different kinds of birds, which makes the translation "hedgehog" or"porcupine" (e.g., RSV) unlikely. However, bitterns roost close to the ground, which conflicts with the behavior that Zephaniah describes of roosting on columns. Most modern translations and commentaries prefer to identify the *qippod* as some kind of owl, although we cannot be sure of the exact species. The NIV translates the term as "owl" (Isa. 14:23) and "screech owl" (Isa. 34:11; Zeph. 2:14).

BITTER WATER Numbers 5:11–31 describes a judicial ordeal for determining whether a wife has been unfaithful. In the course of the ritual, the wife suspected of wrongdoing is to drink water mixed with dirt from the floor of the tabernacle, thus made "bitter" (Heb. *mar*; Num. 5:18), and in which a scroll containing curses has been washed (so that the water also contains the ink of the scroll). In the event that the woman was guilty of unfaithfulness, this concoction was intended to transfer to her body the curses against her. Deuteronomy 21:1–9 may represent a second judicial ordeal involving water, though bitterness is not involved. The names "En Mishpat" ("spring of judgment" [Gen. 14:7]) and "En Rogel" ("spring of inquiry" [e.g., Josh. 15:7]) may also refer to the use of water for divination or ordeal.

Shortly after crossing the Red Sea, the Israelites came to Marah ("bitterness"), where the waters were bitter and not potable. Moses was divinely instructed to throw a piece of wood in the water, rendering it sweet and drinkable (Exod. 15:23–25), the first of several divine provisions of drinking water in the desert. Revelation 8:11 depicts apocalyptic divine judgment in terms of bitter or poisoned water. In both of these passages, bitterness is effected or removed by the combination of wood and water: “wormwood” (Gk. *apsinthos*, a bitter substance derived from the wood of a particular shrub). The image of Rev. 8:11 recalls a similar divine threat in Jer. 9:15; 23:15.

BITUMEN A tarlike substance used as mortar for setting bricks, as in Gen. 11:3 (NIV: “tar”) with the building of a ziggurat. It was also used, along with pitch, as a waterproofing agent for Noah’s ark (Gen. 6:14) and for the reed basket in which Moses was placed as an infant (Exod. 2:3).

BIZIOTHIAH A city in the Negev belonging to Judah (Josh. 15:28). It is on the extreme southern end near Beersheba.

BIZTHA One of the seven personal attendants of the Persian king Xerxes (Ahasuerus), whom he commanded to bring Queen Vashti to his banquet (Esther 1:10). Working with the harem, he was a eunuch.

BLACK Commonly used to denote the color of objects. A sunless sky is “black” (Exod. 10:15; 1 Kings 18:45; Rev. 6:12). Some birds (Lev. 11:13, 14) and horses (Zech. 6:2, 6; Rev. 6:5) are associated with that color. Depending on the context, black may represent death, judgment, and evil. Of special significance is the blackness preceding Jesus’ death (Mark 15:33 pars.). However, when describing hair, the color may also indicate youthful beauty (Song 5:11). *See also* Colors.

BLAINS The KJV rendering of the Hebrew word *’aba’bu’ot* in Exod. 9:9–10 (RSV, NASB: “sores”; NIV, NRSV: “festering”).

BLASPHEMY Any contemptuous expression that rejects God’s authority and questions his nature. In the OT, three words primarily convey this sense of utterly offensive speech or action.

The first, *na’ats*, means “to speak or act with contempt,” rejecting God’s authority (Num. 14:23; Deut. 31:20). Blasphemers include wicked enemies who mock God (Pss. 10:3, 13; 74:18), and God’s people who reject the authority of his word (Isa. 1:4; 5:24). The second, *gadap*, is synonymous with *na’ats*. When Sennacherib’s field commander publically undermined the people’s confidence in God, Isaiah prophesied that Sennacherib would suffer divine punishment for this blasphemy (2 Kings 19:5–7; Isa. 37:6–7). It also refers to actions that defy and thus blaspheme God (Num. 15:30). The third, *naqab*, literally means “to pierce a hole” and indicates the intent to cause damage. It appears twice in Lev. 24:15–16 in conjunction with cursing God; the penalty is death.

This provides the foundation for the NT material. When the Pharisees wrongfully attributed Jesus’ power to drive out demons to Beelzebul, Jesus declared that every sin and blasphemy would be forgiven, even speaking a word against the Son of Man, but not blaspheming or speaking against the Holy Spirit (Matt. 12:22–32). The Spirit’s work was evident in the powerful demonstration they had seen. To attribute Jesus’ work to Satan was a complete affront to the majesty of God.

When this “son of man” claimed divine power and attributes, some of the Jewish leaders accused him of blasphemy. In the OT, blasphemy involved denigrating the majesty, authority, and power of God. Although Jesus did not say anything contemptuous of God, his audience thought that he had blasphemed God on several occasions. Early in his ministry he claimed to forgive sins when he healed the paralyzed man. The response of the Pharisees and teachers of the law was to think, "Who is this fellow who speaks blasphemy? Who can forgive sins but God alone?" (Luke 5:21). The Gospel of John records ongoing tension between Jesus and his opponents. They were prepared to stone him "for blasphemy, because you, a mere man, claim to be God" (John 10:33). Finally, when Caiaphas put Jesus under oath before the Sanhedrin to declare if he was the Christ, the Son of the living God, Jesus responded by referring to Dan. 7:13–14 and Ps. 110:1: they would see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of God and coming on the clouds of heaven (Matt. 26:64–66 pars.). In their minds, this was clearly blasphemous (see John 19:7).

Stephen was accused of speaking words of blasphemy against Moses and God (Acts 6:11), and Saul of Tarsus, in his vendetta against Christians, went from one synagogue to another trying to force early Christians to blaspheme (Acts 26:11). Later, knowing that he was "the worst of sinners," he acknowledged that he was a "blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man" (1 Tim. 1:13–16). Knowing the seriousness of the offense, Paul declared that he handed Hymenaeus and Alexander over to Satan so they would be taught not to blaspheme (1 Tim. 1:20).

The source of all blasphemy will make its appearance in the final eschatological confrontation: on the heads of the beast will be a blasphemous name (Rev. 13:1; cf. 17:3), and it will utter blasphemy against God, his temple, and his people (13:5, 6). Paul describes this same scenario in 2 Thess. 2:3–4, where "the man of lawlessness" sets himself up in God's temple, proclaiming himself to be God. Finally, when the bowls of wrath are poured out on the earth, those who refuse to repent will curse God (Rev. 16:9, 11, 21), the final blasphemy.

BLASTING *See* Blight.

BLASTUS A personal servant of Herod Agrippa I mentioned in Acts 12:20. He was likely the chamberlain in charge of Herod's bed quarters. The citizens of Tyre and Sidon persuaded him to help them make peace with Herod regarding an issue with the supply of food.

BLEACH *See* Fuller.

BLEMISH The physical defect on a sacrificial animal that makes it an unacceptable offering to the Lord (Lev. 22:17–25), or the physical defect on a priest that disqualifies him from performing certain priestly functions (Lev. 21:17–24). In the NT, Christ is the once-for-all sacrificial lamb without blemish or defect. In Christ, Christians are presented to God as holy and without blemish (Eph. 5:27; Col. 1:22; Heb. 9:14; 1 Pet. 1:19).

BLESSING AND CURSING The blessings and curses of Scripture are grounded in a worldview that understands the sovereign God to be the ultimate dispenser of each. Blessings and curses are not the outcomes of magicians who attempt to manipulate the gods for personal gain or retribution. Rather, God is the giver of blessing and ultimately the final judge who determines withdrawal or ban. He is the source of every good gift (James 1:17) and the one who gives power and strength to prosper (Deut. 8:17).

Some view the nature of blessing and curse as simply a gift from God, while others see it as an act in which one party transmits power for life to another party. Perhaps the common thread between views is the idea of relationship.

Terminology. In the OT, the key Hebrew terms for blessing are the verb *barak* and the noun *berakah*. When the context of their use identifies a person or a living creature as the object of blessing, the basic idea is to provide someone with special power that will ultimately enhance his or her life. The blessing theme is also illuminated by means of words such as “grace,” “favor,” “loyalty,” and “happiness.”

In the NT, the Greek term *eulogeō* and its cognates are best understood in terms of the impartation of favor, power, and benefits. The *makarios* word group describes a state or status of being fortunate, happy, or privileged.

The OT curse vocabulary includes the ideas of disgracing, making contemptible, and imprecation. The NT curse terminology comprises the ideas of curse, slander, or consecrated to destruction.

Old Testament. The sovereign God sometimes employs agents of blessing in his creation. The blessing extends to the nations through Abraham (Gen. 12:3), to Jacob through Isaac (Gen. 26–27), and to the people through the priests (Num. 6:24–26).

The theme of blessing/curse is used to structure Deut. 27–28 and Lev. 26 (cf. Josh. 8:34) in the overall covenant format of these books. Scholars have observed that the object of this format is not symmetry or logical unity but fullness. From this perspective, the blessing/curse structure functions to enforce obedience for the purpose of ensuring a relationship. The blessing of Deuteronomy also includes the benefits of prosperity, power, and fertility. The curse, on the other hand, is the lack or withdrawal of benefits associated with the relationship.

The creation narratives are marked with the theme and terminology of blessing (Gen. 1:22, 28; 2:3; cf. 5:2; 9:1). The objects of blessing in Gen. 1:22, 28 (cf. 5:2; 9:1) are the living creatures and human beings created in the image of God. As the revelation progresses, the blessing of God is particularized in the lives of Noah (Gen. 6–8), Abraham (Gen. 12–25) and his descendants, and the nation of Israel and its leadership (Gen. 26–50). In these contexts, the blessing is intended to engender offspring and to prosper recipients in material and physical ways (compare a similar NT emphasis in Acts 17:25; cf. Matt. 5:45; 6:25–33; Acts 14:17).

The blessing of God is also extended to inanimate objects that enhance and prosper one’s quality of life. The seventh day of creation is the object of blessing (Gen. 2:7; Exod. 20:11), perhaps giving it a sense of well-being and health. Objects and activities of life such as baskets and kneading troughs (Deut. 28:5), barns (Deut. 28:8), and work (Job 1:10; Ps. 90:17) are blessed.

God promises to bless those who fear him (Ps. 128:1). Blessing is designed for those who, out of a deep sense of awe of God’s character, love and trust him. The God-fearer confidently embraces God’s promises, obediently serves, and takes seriously God’s warnings. The blessings itemized in Ps. 128 are comparable to those detailed in Deut. 28 relating to productivity and fruitfulness (cf. Ps. 128:2 with Deut. 28:12; Ps. 128:3 with Deut. 28:4, 11). The Deuteronomic concept of blessing and curse is questioned when God-fearers undergo a period of suffering or experience God’s apparent absence (e.g., Joseph, Job; cf. Jesus).

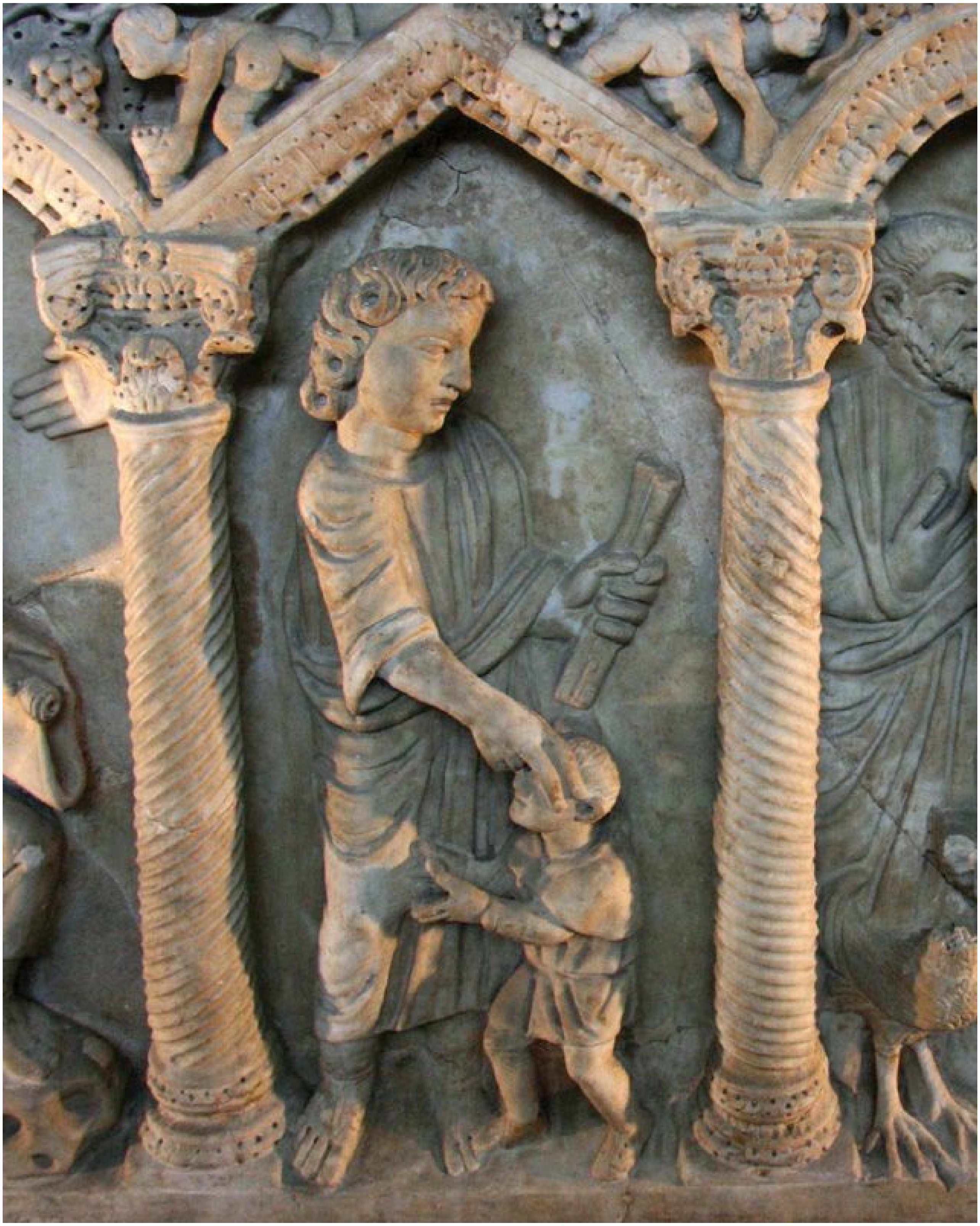
New Testament. In the NT, blessings are not exclusively spiritual. God gives both food and joy (Acts 14:17) and provides the necessities of life (Matt. 6:25–33). The NT does connect blessing with Christ, and it focuses attention on the spiritual quality of the gift that originates from Christ himself and its intended benefit for spiritual individuals.

Regarding curse, the NT explains that Christ bore the curse of the law to free us from its deadening effect (Gal. 3:10–13). Revelation 22:3 anticipates a time when the curse associated with sin will be completely removed and the blessing associated with creation will prevail.

BLIGHT Rendering in the NIV and most modern translations of the Hebrew word *shiddapon*. The term refers to crop destruction caused by hot winds that blow in from the desert east of Palestine. “Blight” accompanies other terms (e.g., “mildew”) denoting unfavorable things that would and did arise in the land of Israel as a result of the people’s disobedience (e.g., Deut. 28:22; 1 Kings 8:37; Amos 4:9). The KJV uses the archaic “blasting.”

BLINDNESS Blindness was a common ailment in the ancient world. Some causes included old age (Gen. 27:1), trauma, or divine punishment (John 9:2). Israel was given special instructions to care for the blind (Lev. 19:14). True love helped the blind (Job 29:15), and misleading them was a serious violation (Deut. 27:18).

Blindness constituted a ritual blemish, but the blind themselves were not rendered “unclean,” though they could not function as priests (Lev. 21:18). Even blind animals were unfit for sacrifice (Lev. 22:22), a barometer of the people’s hearts that the prophets had to remind them of (Mal. 1:8). According to the *Temple Scroll*, the Qumran sect expanded the biblical qualifications and refused entrance to any blind person (11Q19 45:12–13). Now viewed as impurity, blindness in its midst would defile the whole community and dilute the emphasis of the community on “sight” as an eschatological sign (1Q28a 2:3–10; cf. Isa. 29:18; 35:5). Jesus and his disciples’ healing of the blind may have also been a critique against such separatistic practices (cf. Matt. 9:27–31; 12:22).



Panel from a fourth-century AD sarcophagus showing Jesus healing a blind man

In figurative language, the Bible frequently describes the spiritual condition of people in terms of blindness. Isaiah capitalizes on the metaphor of blindness to describe the rebellious and apostate groups: prophets, priests, and rulers who were divinely afflicted with blindness (Isa. 43:8; 56:10; 59:10; cf. Zeph. 1:17). The anthropology represented in the OT posited three “zones” of interactive relationship: hands-feet (action), mouth-ears (speech), and heart-eyes (emotion with thought). The zone of heart-eyes related to blindness, since the notion of a dark heart emanated through the eyes.

This tradition surfaced in Jesus' teaching (Matt. 6:22–23; cf. 1 John 2:9–11).

Jesus highlighted the onset of the messianic age by fulfilling Isaiah's promise to proclaim "recovery of sight to the blind" (Luke 4:18). Forty-six of fifty-two references to blindness in the NT are Gospel stories of Jesus' healing. Because Jesus' ministry was one of opening blind eyes (cf. Isa. 42:7, 16, 18), calling the Pharisees "blind guides" was a sharp description (Matt. 15:14; 23:16, 24). But on others, Jesus would impose blindness, the very reverse of his mission (John 9:39–41), since he came as the "light of the world" (8:12). Spiritual blindness as applied to unbelievers could be used to describe the failure or hard-heartedness of some to accept the true identity of Jesus Christ. Using similar language, Paul describes the pagan unbelievers: "The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel that displays the glory of Christ" (2 Cor. 4:4).

Nearsightedness and blindness can also be used to describe believers who have grown dull to the truth (2 Pet. 1:9) or tepid in their faith (Rev. 3:17). Believers are blind when they fail to grasp their true spiritual condition.

BLOOD The word for "blood" in the Bible (Heb. *dam*; Gk. *haima*) is used both literally and metaphorically. "Blood" is a significant biblical term for understanding purity boundaries and theological concepts. Blood is a dominant ritual symbol in biblical literature. In ancient Jewish, Greco-Roman, and early Christian usage blood had both positive and negative connotations. Blood was used in sacrifices and purification rites, and it was inherently connected to menstruation, animal slaughter, and legal culpability. Among the physical properties of blood are the ability to coagulate, the liquid state of the substance (Rev. 16:3–4), and the ability to stain (Rev. 19:13). Blood can symbolize moral order in terms of cult, law, and power.

JEWISH BACKGROUND

Blood played a major role in the Jewish sacrificial system. The blood of the sacrifice was handled with care and was applied to the sacrificer. This ritual treatment provided indirect contact between the person to be purified and the altar. An example of such indirect treatment is seen in a purification rite involving a pair of birds. One bird is slaughtered in the presence of the impure person. The surviving bird is dipped into the blood of the slaughtered bird, and the person is sprinkled with the same blood. Indirect contact is thus established between the impure person and the living bird. When the bird next was released, the impurities of the person flew away with the bird (Lev. 14:6–7, 49–53).

Sin offerings followed a similar concept of indirect contact. On Yom Kippur, the annual Day of Atonement, the high priest made a series of sin offerings (Exod. 30:10; Lev. 16:3–19). Sin offerings likewise were used to consecrate altars (Exod. 29:35–37; Lev. 6:23; Ezek. 43:18–27). The use of an animal sacrifice for the cleansing of altars meant indirect contact between the altar and the sacrificial animal when the blood of the animal was dotted on the horns and poured out into the trough at the base of the altar. The animal thus received the impurity. The blood effected indirect contact between the impure person and the receiving sacrifice or altar.

GRECO-ROMAN BACKGROUND

Blood played a crucial role in ritualistic sacrifice in ancient Greek culture and was incorporated into the later (Greco-)Roman cults as well. It was used in oath rituals and as an agent of purification in Greek religious practice. Both persons and shrines underwent blood purifications. The use of special utensils for the handling of blood implied the significance of the substance in Greek tradition and the rituals of which it was part.

The mystery cults in the Greco-Roman world attached a broad range of soteriological understanding to blood. In this understanding, the purification function of blood was the most salient concept attached to blood in mystery cult usage. Generally speaking, blood was considered a literal agent of purification. However, within Mithraism, for example, blood had a symbolic function and benefited the cult initiate.

OLD TESTAMENT USAGE

The usage of blood in the OT is predominantly negative. The first direct mention of blood in the biblical text involves a homicide (Gen. 4:10). Henceforward, the shedding of human blood is a main concern (Gen. 9:6). Other concerns pertaining to blood include dietary prohibitions of blood (Lev. 17:10–12), purity issues such as the flow of blood as in menstrual blood (Lev. 15:19–24), and blood as a part of religious rites such as circumcision (Gen. 17:10–11; Exod. 4:24–26).

Leviticus 17:11 contains a central statement in the OT concerning the significant role of blood in the sacrificial system: “The life of a creature is in the blood.” Blood was collected from all animal sacrifices, and blood was poured onto the altar (Lev. 1:5).

The covenant with Abraham was sealed with a covenantal ritual (Gen. 15:10–21). Moses sealed the covenant between the Israelites and God with a blood ritual during which young Israelite men offered young bulls among other sacrifices as fellowship offerings (Exod. 24:5). Moses read the words of the Book of the Covenant and sprinkled the blood of the bulls on the people, saying, “This is the blood of the covenant that the LORD has made with you in accordance with all these words” (Exod. 24:7–8).

During the Passover observance at the time of the exodus, blood was placed on the sides and tops of the doorframes of the Hebrews (Exod. 12:7). Not only altars were sprinkled and thus consecrated with blood, but priests were as well. Aaron and his sons were consecrated by the application of blood to their right earlobe, thumb, and big toe, and the sprinkling of blood and oil on their garments (Exod. 29:20). On the Day of Atonement, the high priest entered the holy of holies and sprinkled blood on the mercy seat to seek atonement for the sins of the people (Lev. 16:15).

Whenever blood is involved in a religious occurrence, one can speak of a ritual, ceremony, or rite. The rite of circumcision likewise was a blood ceremony (Gen. 17:10–11; Exod. 4:24–26). Rabbinic tradition reveals that during circumcision ceremonies Scripture was read with an emphasis on blood. An example of such a reading is found in Ezek. 16:6: “Then I passed by and saw you kicking about in your blood, and as you lay there in your blood I said to you, ‘Live!’ ”

NEW TESTAMENT USAGE

Many events in the passion of Christ include references to blood. During the Last Supper, Jesus redefined the last Passover cup: “This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins” (Matt. 26:28). Judas betrayed “innocent blood” (Matt. 27:4), and the money he received for his betrayal was referred to as “blood money” (Matt. 27:6). At Jesus’ trial, Pilate washed his hands and declared, “I am innocent of this man’s blood” (Matt. 27:24).

The apostle Paul wrote that believers are justified by the blood of Christ (Rom. 5:9). This justification or righteous standing with God was effected through Christ’s blood sacrifice (Rom.

3:25–26; 5:8). The writer of Hebrews stressed the instrumental role of blood in bringing about forgiveness (Heb. 9:22). In the picture of the ideal community of Christ, the martyrs in the book of Revelation are situated closest to the throne of God because “they triumphed over him [Satan] by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death” (12:11). The blood of the Lamb, Christ, is the effective agent here and throughout the NT, bringing about the indirect contact between sinner and God.

THEOLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS

When the phrase “blood of Christ” is used, scholars debate whether it refers to the death of Christ or the life of Christ as released from his body. When, under the old covenant, an animal was killed as part of the sacrificial system, the animal’s blood was shed. Scholars wonder if the shedding of the animal’s blood was an indication that life had ended or that the life of the animal was now released from its body and presented as an offering to God. In the same vein, when Christ died on the cross and his blood flowed, was it an indication that his life had ended or that his life had been released from his body and was presented as an offering to the Father? Scholars who hold the second view contend that OT references to blood as the source of life (Gen. 9:4; Lev. 17:1; Deut. 12:23) are taken up in the NT. Although the death of Christ was unfortunate, the emphasis lies on his life having been set free for the purpose of bringing salvation. Scholars who hold the first view, which is the traditional view, point out that the overwhelming majority of the time when the word “dam” is used in the OT, it has a negative connotation, pertaining to death or violence. Hence, when the Hebrews heard the phrase “blood of Christ,” a correlation with death rather than life likely came to mind. Indeed, Heb. 9:14–15 relates the “blood of Christ” to his death as a ransom.

BLOOD, FIELD OF *See* Akeldama.

BLOODGUILT The guilt that results from the shedding of innocent blood, the taking of an innocent life. The person who incurred bloodguilt was considered not only morally but also ritually impure; this impurity attached not just to the person, for the land was made ritually impure as well. The only way this impurity could be removed was by the execution of the guilty individual (Num. 35:29–34). The person responsible for carrying out the sentence was referred to as the “avenger of blood” (Num. 35:19–27; Deut. 19:6–13 [*see also* Avenger]). This responsibility fell to the slain person’s nearest kin. For those whose taking of innocent life was accidental (manslaughter), there were cities of refuge established to which the accused could flee from the avenger, and a judicial process was set up to determine innocence or guilt (*see also* Cities of Refuge).

In addition to the legal sections of the OT, bloodguilt comes under repeated condemnation in narrative, poetry, and prophecy. Already in Gen. 4 the murder of Abel is narrated, with God declaring that Abel’s blood “cries out to me from the ground” (4:10). Numerous accounts in Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles narrate both the shedding of innocent blood and the ensuing vengeance that was carried out (e.g., 2 Sam. 16:8).

Proverbs warns the young not to join with those who lie in wait to shed innocent blood (1:11–18). The psalms, as well as condemning those who shed innocent blood, also pay special attention to the fact that God himself plays the role of the avenger of blood (Pss. 5:6; 9:12; 79:10). Lamentations attributes the exile directly to the incurrence of bloodguilt (Lam. 4:13–14).

The prophets were especially concerned with bloodguilt. God would not accept sacrifices from those whose hands were “full of blood” (Isa. 1:15; cf. 59:1–7). Their sacrifices were unacceptable for two reasons: (1) since they had incurred bloodguilt, they were ritually impure and therefore not in a position to be able to offer sacrifices; (2) the sacrifices that they were offering had come into their possession as a result of their oppression and murder of the poor; that is, they were not the legitimate owners of that which they were sacrificing (see also Jer. 7:6; 19:4; 22:3, 17; 26:15; Ezek. 22–24).

In the Gospels, the chilling words "His blood is on us and on our children" (Matt. 27:25) are pronounced with regard to perhaps the most heinous instance of bloodguilt in the Bible (see also Matt. 23:30, 35; 27:4–8; Luke 11:50–51; Acts 5:28).

BLUE This color overlaps with purple in the Bible (see Ezek. 23:6) to describe a dye extracted from murex shellfish along the coastline of Palestine. The Hebrew word, *tekelet*, is also sometimes translated "violet" (e.g., 2 Chron. 2:7, 14; 3:14 NET). Blue was used in the tabernacle (e.g., Exod. 25:4; 26:1, 4, 31), the temple (2 Chron. 2:7, 14; 3:14), and the priestly garments (Exod. 28:5–8, 15; 39:1). The color "dark blue" may occur in the NT (Rev. 9:17 NIV), but the Greek word (*huakinthinos*) may also be translated "sapphire" (NRSV). Jewish men, including Jesus, wore blue tassels on the four corners of their cloak as a reminder to obey God's commandments (Num. 15:38; cf. Deut. 22:12; Matt. 9:20; 14:36). *See also* Colors.

Shells from the murex snail, a source of blue or purple dye

BOANERGES A nickname, meaning “sons of thunder,” given by Jesus to the brothers James and John when he appointed them as apostles (Mark 3:17). Mark does not explain the significance of the name, but it may refer to their fiery temperament (cf. Mark 9:38; Luke 9:54). Alternatively, if meant in a positive way like Simon’s nickname, “Peter/Rock” (cf. Mark 3:16; Matt. 16:18), it could signify their future role as thunderous witnesses to the gospel.

BOAR *See* Swine.

BOAT *See* Ships, Sailors, and Navigation.

BOAZ **(1)** One of two bronze pillars erected by Solomon at the portico of the temple (1 Kings 7:15–22). Its name means “in him [is] strength.” Together with the other pillar, Jakin, the names form a prayer: “May he [the LORD] establish strength in him [Solomon].” The pillars may have been engraved with a royal inscription, but they were broken up at the Babylonian conquest of Jerusalem (2 Kings 25:13). **(2)** A man of Bethlehem who married Ruth the Moabite during the time of the judges. Boaz was an older, wealthy landowner who honored God in his words (Ruth 2:4, 12; 3:10) and deeds. He honored the Mosaic custom of allowing the disadvantaged to glean in his fields, but he went beyond this in providing for Naomi and Ruth. He also extended the custom of levirate marriage (see Deut. 25:5–10) to accord Ruth’s son to her deceased husband, although his own name appears in all the genealogies of David.

BOCHERU *See* Bokeru.

BOCHIM *See* Bokim.

BODY The human body has its origin in the act of creation by God depicted in Gen. 2:7, so that it comes under the heading of the “very good” evaluation at the close of the six days of creation (1:31). In neither the OT nor the NT is the body viewed as evil, in contrast to the ancient Greek view that saw the human body as a prison of the soul and viewed death as a release from this bondage. This contributes to the Bible’s positive view of human sexuality when properly expressed in a committed marriage relationship, one notable example being the mutual admiration of the man and the woman who are deeply in love in Song of Songs, where we find a head-to-toe description of the man’s physique (5:10–16) and a corresponding description of the woman’s body (7:1–8).

Old Testament. In the OT, death is regularly described as a returning of the body to the dust/ground from which it was made (e.g., Gen. 3:19; Ps. 90:3). The dignity of the human body is signaled by the importance of proper burial (Deut. 21:22–23), which is a cultic rather than a health regulation in the OT. The outrage committed by the Philistines on the bodies of Saul and his sons (1 Sam. 31), the deliberate desecration of tombs (2 Kings 23:16; Amos 2:1), and leaving an enemy unburied are ways of expressing utter contempt. The ensuring of proper burial (even of strangers) becomes a mark of Jewish piety, as exemplified in Tob. 2:1–10; 12:11–15.

The Hebrew word *nepesh* (often translated “soul”) can be used of a dead body (e.g., Lev. 21:11; Num. 6:6; 19:13; Hag. 2:13), though this word has a wide range of meaning (sometimes it means “throat”). This usage is not to be taken as signifying that the soul/body distinction is not recognized. On the contrary, in OT teaching “body” (whatever the Hebrew word used) always refers to the physical body, not to the whole human person that is bipartite (body/soul) within an overall psychophysical unity. The reference in Mic. 6:7 (NIV: "the fruit of my body") is really to the "womb" (cf. Deut. 28:4), and the Hebrew word in question, *beten*, can refer to a male body insofar as it is involved in procreation (Ps. 132:11).

New Testament. Hebrews insists on the real humanity of Jesus (2:14–18), and the Gospels portray him as having the normal physical requirements of drink, food, and sleep (Mark 4:38; John 4:7–8). To deny that Jesus Christ came "in the flesh" strikes at the heart of the gospel and is the spirit of the antichrist (1 John 4:2–3). For atonement to take place, it was required that Jesus offer himself body and soul to God through death (Heb. 10:5–10, 20). At the Last Supper, when Jesus said, "This is my body" (Matt. 26:26), his meaning was that the bread represented his body, which would be offered on the cross as the sacrifice that makes possible the inauguration of the new covenant (cf. Exod. 24:1–8).

The bodily resurrection of Jesus is evidenced by the empty tomb (Mark 16:4–6) and the appearance of the risen Christ to his followers (e.g., Luke 24:36–43; see the list of witnesses in 1 Cor. 15:5–8). This is a fundamental point of Christian doctrine and gospel proclamation, providing assurance to believers that they too will be physically raised from the dead (1 Cor. 15:42–52), a belief found already in the OT (Dan. 12:2). Salvation in the Bible embraces the redemption of the body and the renewal of the physical creation. At the time of Christ's return, believers will be raised from their graves and meet their returning Lord (1 Thess. 4:13–18).

In what is acknowledged by all to be a difficult passage (2 Cor. 5:1–9), Paul appears to envisage that at the point of death he will not become a disembodied soul but instead will "be clothed with [his] heavenly dwelling" (5:4). The expression "away from the body" (5:8) is not to be taken as an indication of bodiless existence, but rather is explained by "at home with the Lord" and refers to the believer's state upon leaving this earthly life. The nature of the "spiritual body" in 1 Cor. 15:35–49 is only hinted at by means of analogies (e.g., the seed) or contrasts (between the "perishable" and the "imperishable"), but its physicality (though gloriously transformed) is plain. Perhaps our clearest indication is provided by what we are told of the resurrection body of Jesus, which could pass through grave clothes (Luke 24:12; John 20:5–7), appear and disappear in a closed room (Luke 24:31, 36), and ingest food and be touched (Luke 24:37–43).

Paul made use the "body" analogy for the character of the church as the "body of Christ" (1 Cor. 12:12–26), viewing it as an organism consisting of different, mutually dependent members or organs. This teaching was designed to rebuke and correct the self-glorifying and self-serving use and abuse of spiritual gifts in the Corinthian church. So too, the reality of the Christian community as a "body" (1 Cor. 10:17; 11:29) showed that their uncaring attitude toward each other manifested at their suppers was totally inappropriate. In the same letter Paul says that the believer's "body" is united to Christ, making sexual immorality a thing to be shunned (6:12–20). Believers are to glorify God in their bodies. The analogy of the body is used a little differently in Ephesians (1:23; 2:16) and Colossians (1:18, 24), where its point is that Christ is the "head" of the body (the church), which therefore must submit to his direction and rule. Believers are to present their "bodies" as a living sacrifice, serving the master who redeemed them (Rom. 12:1). The verse that follows gives the other side to the equation: serving God with the mind (12:2). Body and mind together make up the complete human being, who is a psychosomatic unity. *See also* Gestures.

BODYGUARD An individual or group employed for the protection and security of a particularly important person or persons. Kings, leaders, and wealthy individuals or families may employ a bodyguard against real or imagined dangers. David was the captain of Saul's bodyguard (1 Sam.

22:14), as well as Achish's bodyguard for life (28:2). After he became king, David made Benaiah son of Jehoiada the captain of his own bodyguard (2 Sam. 23:23; 1 Chron. 11:25).

BOHAN, STONE OF A boundary marker on the south boundary of the territory of the tribe of Benjamin and on the northern border of the territory of the tribe of Judah (Josh. 15:6; 18:17). The exact location of the stone is unknown, although it was most likely west of the Jordan River because the boundary between the tribes of Judah and Benjamin ran west from the Jordan River and the Dead Sea. Although the texts in Joshua have "the Stone of Bohan son of Reuben," Bohan is not mentioned in the genealogies of Reuben.

BOILS A skin disease caused by inflammation of hair follicles. Boils are the sixth plague sent by God upon the Egyptians (Exod. 9:8–12), described as the "festering boils" causing pain. These boils, along with the other plagues, show Yahweh's power so that his name is declared in all the earth (6:1–7; 9:16). As a contracted skin disease, boils are examined by a priest in order to determine if someone who has them is ritually clean or unclean (Lev. 13:18–23). In one case, God hears King Hezekiah's prayers and heals the boil that has afflicted him (2 Kings 20:7; Isa. 38:21). Boils are employed as one of the covenant curses for disobedience (Deut. 28:27, 35).

BOKERU The second son of Azel (1 Chron. 8:38; 9:44), he was a descendant of Saul from the tribe of Benjamin.

BOKIM A place near Gilgal where the angel of the Lord rebuked Israel for not tearing down the altars to foreign gods and proclaimed that the Lord would not drive out all the inhabitants of the land (Judg. 2:1–5). Thereupon the people wept, made sacrifices, and named the place "Bokim," which means "weeping ones."

BOLDNESS An expression for a range of responses to a crisis or difficulty, from courage (Acts 4:29, 31; 2 Cor. 3:12; Eph. 3:12; Phil. 1:20; 1 Thess. 2:2) to shameless persistence (Luke 11:8). After Paul and Silas had been jailed in Philippi, they were willing to endure more persecution to preach to the Thessalonians (Acts 16:16–24; 1 Thess. 2:2). To the Philippians, the apostle reflects on his bold preaching (Phil. 1:20). The Christians' relationship with Christ also gives them boldness to enter into God's presence (Eph. 3:12; Heb. 4:16). The agent of Christian boldness is the Holy Spirit (Acts 4:31).

BOLLED In Exod. 9:31 the KJV rendering of the Hebrew word *gib'ol*, meaning "in bloom" (NIV) or "in bud" (NRSV).

BOLSTER A KJV rendering of the Hebrew word *mera'ashot* (lit., "at the heads"), referring to a long pillow or cushion (1 Sam. 19:13, 16; 26:7–16).

BOND A bond typically represents a close relationship in Scripture. It can carry positive or negative connotations, as do related words such as "bondage." In the sense of "chains," bonds literally hold a slave to the master or a prisoner to the jail. God's exiled people are likewise said to be held in bonds, from which he will rescue them (Jer. 30:8). Spiritually speaking, "bond" may describe the firm covenant relationship between God and his people (Jer. 2:20; 5:5; Ezek. 20:37). In the new covenant, believers are freed from bondage to sin and become Christ's bondspeople (Rom.

6:16–22). This relationship with Christ in turn joins Christians to one another; in Ephesians this unity is called “the bond of peace” (4:3).

BONDAGE, BONDMAN, BONDMAID, BONDSERVANT *See* Slave, Servant.

BONES Of the 206 bones that comprise the adult skeletal structure, the Bible mentions only a few: rib (Gen. 1:21–22), hip (Gen. 32:25), skull (Judg. 9:53), jaw (Isa. 30:28), and legs (John 19:31–33). The Hebrew noun *’etsem* shows evidence of both collective “limbs” (masc. pl.) and an individual sense of bones (fem. pl.). Nevertheless, while bones could be isolated, anatomical description tended more toward a holistic sense so that bones could refer to physical and psychological collapse in laments (Jer. 23:9) or to the entire person as a corpse (Gen. 50:25; 1 Sam. 31:13).

Overwhelmingly, however, anatomical “units” are used metaphorically for human emotions or attitudes: shame becomes “decay in [the] bones” (Prov. 12:4), fear makes “bones shake” (Job 4:14), and a sad spirit “dries up the bones” (Prov. 17:22). The phrase “bone of my bones” is an idiom, a kinship formula used to describe unity and close relatives (Gen. 2:23; cf. 2 Sam. 5:1).

Plastered skulls from Neolithic Jericho

BONNET The KJV rendering of two different Hebrew words: *migba’a*, the headband or cap of priests other than the high priest (e.g., Exod. 28:40; Lev. 8:13); *pe’er*, a headdress (Isa. 3:20) or turban (Ezek. 44:18).

BOOK OF LIFE The phrase “book of life” occurs eight times in the Bible (Ps. 69:28; Phil. 4:3; Rev. 3:5; 13:8; 17:8; 20:12, 15; 21:27). The image may originate from the practice of keeping genealogical records or a registry of citizens in which the names of individuals were recorded. Some have suggested that it is a figurative record of all the living, from which the unsaved are eventually erased. But more likely the phrase metaphorically expresses the omniscience of God, who knows all those whom he has predestined to eternal life. In Ps. 69:28 being "blotted out" of the Book of Life probably refers to the fate of experiencing a premature earthly death (cf. Exod. 32:32–33). But since it applies to God's enemies, it also carries with it the overtones of eternal damnation. The promise made to those who overcome that they will not be blotted out of the Book of Life assures them of their final victory (Rev. 3:5; cf. John 5:24–25). At the final judgment, those not found written in the Book of Life are destined to eternal separation from God in the lake of fire (Rev. 20:12–15). The final use of the phrase in "the Lamb's book of life" indicates that the record belongs to Christ, who purchased the redemption of all those found recorded in the book (Rev. 21:27). For similar phrases and concepts, see Pss. 9:5; 51:1; 139:16; Isa. 4:3; Dan. 7:10; 12:1; Mal. 3:16; Luke 10:20; Heb. 12:23.

BOOK OF THE TWELVE The Book of the Twelve (hereafter, BT) consists of the prophetic books more commonly known as the Minor Prophets: Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. The collection comprises the eighth "book" of the Prophets (Former Prophets: Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings; Latter Prophets: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, BT), known in Hebrew as *Nebi'im*, the second of three divisions of the Hebrew Bible (along with Law [*Torah*] and Writings [*Ketubim*]).

ANCIENT ATTESTATION AND MODERN STUDY

It is well known that ancient traditions from the time of Ben Sira to Jerome (approximately 200 BC to AD 400) attest to treating the Minor Prophets as a single entity. This may be due to the corpus's comparable length to the prophecies of Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, which allowed the writings to fit together on a single scroll. It is likely too that the unity of the BT was not only practical but also homiletical. The teaching of Ben Sira recorded in the book of Sirach shows the BT to reflect a collective message of "confident hope": "May the bones of the Twelve Prophets send forth new life from where they lie, for they comforted the people of Jacob and delivered them with confident hope" (49:10). The BT was a voice of support and encouragement for an exiled people facing a number of challenges to their faith and future.

Reading the Minor Prophets as a unit rather than as twelve independent prophetic messages is a growing discipline in biblical and theological studies. Although it is accepted that the BT has a complex literary history, what attracts particular interpretive interest is the final form of the composition. Scholars also observe that the order of the twelve writings in the MT differs from the LXX as well as that conjectured at Qumran (4Q76). This raises a host of possible explanations for the differences, but for most it does not undermine the value of reading the works as a whole, since it supports the significance of analyzing the deliberate sequence of the MT for theological interpretation.

UNIFYING ELEMENTS

A variety of unifying elements bind these prophetic works to one another. Chronological, intertextual, and theological links throughout the BT buttress the message of confident hope that develops within a general topical movement from judgment to restoration.

Chronology. A fairly clear chronological progression through the BT extends from the eighth century BC to at least the sixth century BC (if not deeper into the Persian period) as one travels from

Hosea to Malachi. Six of the books offer historical superscriptions that relate the individual writings to the reigns of particular Israelite and Judean kings. In this manner, Hosea, Amos, and Micah are linked to the eighth century, Zephaniah to the seventh century, and Haggai and Zechariah to the late sixth century. Out of the six works without superscriptions, four seem to be aware of these historical markers of the BT. If the book of Jonah is to be paired with the prophet who worked in Israel during the reign of Jeroboam II (2 Kings 14:25), then it fits appropriately near its contemporaries Hosea, Amos, and Micah. Nahum and Habakkuk address the anticipated downfall of Assyria (eighth century) and rise of Babylon (seventh century), respectively, which suits their location between Micah and Zephaniah. Malachi ends the BT within the Persian period (539–331 BC) and calls the nation to proper living and worship at the rebuilt temple. Joel and Obadiah are the two works lacking a historical superscription that seem to be placed within the BT most overtly for contextual and thematic reasons than for chronological ones.

Theology and intertextuality. Observing a number of verbal and theological links throughout the BT not only accounts for the placements of Joel and Obadiah (and the other books without historical superscriptions) but also solidifies the BT as a cohesive literary whole. On a general level, the BT moves from sin to judgment to restoration. Hosea and Malachi serve as bookends to the BT, as their messages employ the images of marriage and divorce. Micah 3:12 exists as the literary and theological center of this progression as it castigates Israel’s authorities for leading the people in disobedience that results in the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple (the watershed crisis for the exilic generation). At the risk of oversimplification, it is also worth noting the geographical interchange that exists in the first half of the BT (Hosea through Micah) as the focus of each work alternates between northern and southern kingdoms. This even continues as Nahum addresses the northern enemy (Assyria), and Habakkuk the southern (Babylon).

The broader literary and theological context of the BT provides a backdrop to links observable on the microlevel. For example, while most suspect that Joel was composed in the Persian period, its placement after Hosea and before Amos is deliberate. Hosea ends with a call to repentance that Joel actualizes, continues, and amplifies. Later, Jonah rehearses Joel’s call for repentance by recycling the hope that God may then relent in judgment, ironically exemplified in the Gentile world (Joel 2:14 // Jon. 3:9). In addition, the end of Joel strikingly parallels the beginning and ending of Amos (Joel 3:16, 18 // Amos 1:2; 9:13). Subsequently, Amos also leads the reader into Obadiah by mentioning Edom, the topic of Obadiah as a whole (Amos 9:12).

Traceable themes weave through the individual works of the BT that reveal the robust interpretive benefits of studying the corpus as a whole. Examples of such theological themes include the day of the Lord, fertility and covenant blessings in the land, and issues of theodicy (based on the BT’s use of Exod. 34:6–7).

BOOKS The common Hebrew word for “scroll” is *seper* (Exod. 17:14; Num. 5:23; Deut. 17:18). The later term *megillah* can also refer to a scroll (Jer. 36:6; Ezek. 3:3). In a few cases *megillah* is combined with *seper* and translated as “scroll” (Ps. 40:7; Jer. 36:2; Ezek. 2:9).

The LXX commonly translates the Hebrew word *seper* (scroll) with the Greek word *biblion* (“scroll” or “book”), and the NT uses the same word. When Paul wrote to Timothy asking him to bring the parchments, he also requested that he bring *ta biblia*, “the books” (2 Tim. 4:13; NIV: “scrolls”). English translations often are inconsistent in the way they translate the Hebrew term *seper* or the Greek *biblion*.

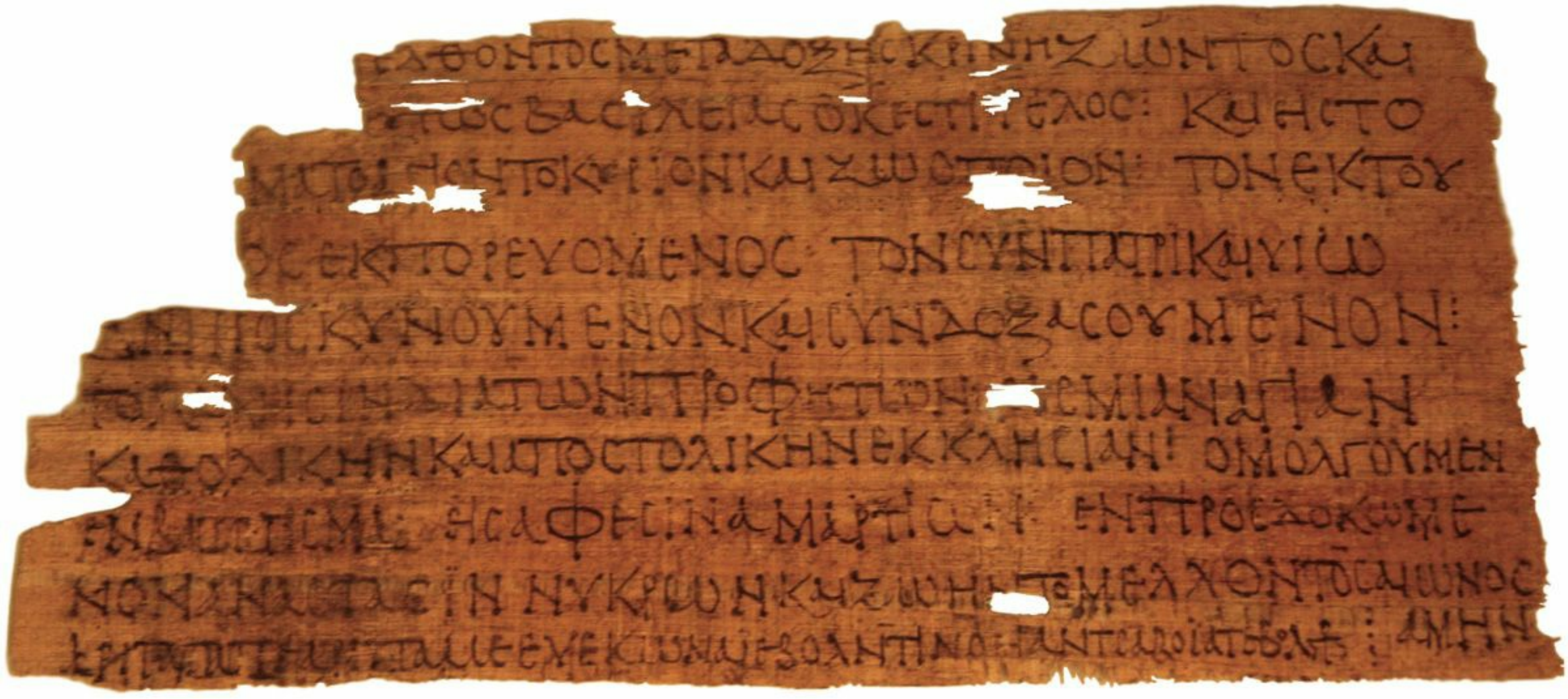
Books and scrolls in antiquity. During Old and New Testament times, the two most common writing materials for ancient books or scrolls were papyrus and parchment. Papyrus was made from the papyrus reed stalk that grew abundantly in Egypt and around the Mediterranean. Two thin layers of the pith were laid at right angles to each other and pressed together, then the sheets or leaves were pasted together to form a roll. The other common type of writing material, parchment, was made of leather that had been scraped and stretched.

Text was written on the parchment or papyrus in columns, and the scroll was unrolled and rolled back up as one read through the columns. Jeremiah's first edition of prophecy was written on a parchment scroll (Jer. 36). Parchment was also the common material used to write documents at Qumran. Scrolls made of parchment were more expensive than those made of papyrus.

It is in fact anachronistic when English translations refer to a scroll as a "book." A "book" with pages (or leaves) and bound along the side did not appear until well after the third century BC. This new type of writing medium was called a "codex," and its origin most likely came from wooden tablets covered with wax and bound together. Later papyrus or parchment leaves were folded and sewn together to form an inexpensive personal "notebook." Letters and notes often were written on this early type of book.

In the Roman world the earliest codex to contain literary works dates to the first century AD. In 1930 the American collector Chester Beatty acquired a group of Greek papyrus manuscripts on the antiquities market. The collection contained portions of seven codices from the OT (Genesis, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, Esther, Ecclesiastes) and three from the NT (the Gospels with Acts, the Pauline Epistles, Revelation). These important codices were copied in the second and third centuries AD.

Perhaps because the papyrus codex was cheaper to make, the early Christian church adopted it and made it popular. No codices have been found among the DSS. Scrolls continued to be the dominant medium for biblical books in the Jewish world until the tenth century AD. Only Torah scrolls are used in synagogues today. (*See also* Writing Implements and Materials.)



A papyrus manuscript

Books mentioned in the Bible. The Bible refers to a large number of distinct books that existed at various times and places. Unfortunately, these extrabiblical books did not survive, but the authors of Scripture knew about them and may have quoted them or employed them in writing biblical history. Below is a list of nonbiblical literary works mentioned in the Bible.

- The Book of the Covenant (Exod. 24:7; 2 Kings 23:2, 21; 2 Chron. 34:30).
- The Book of the Law (Deut. 30:10; 31:26; Josh. 1:8; 8:34; 2 Kings 22:8; Gal. 3:10). This is also called the Book of the Law of Moses (Josh. 23:6; cf. Mark 12:26) and the Book of the Law of God (Josh. 24:26).
- The Book of the Wars of the LORD (Num. 21:14). Quotations from this source may include Num. 21:14b–15, 17–18, 27–30.
- The Book of Jashar (Josh. 10:13; 2 Sam. 1:18). This text contained David’s lament for Saul and Jonathan (2 Sam. 1:19–27) and most likely Joshua’s statement (Josh. 10:12).
- The scroll of Joshua (Josh. 18:9).
- The book of the annals of Solomon (1 Kings 11:41).
- The book of the annals of the kings of Israel (1 Kings 14:19). This source is mentioned eighteen times in 1–2 Kings.
- The book of the annals of the kings of Judah (1 Kings 14:29). This scroll is mentioned fifteen times in 1–2 Kings.
- Genealogical records from the reigns of Jotham king of Judah and Jeroboam king of Israel (1 Chron. 5:17).
- The book of the kings of Israel and Judah (1 Chron. 9:1; 2 Chron. 27:7).
- The book of the kings of Israel, which includes the annals of Jehu son of Hanani (2 Chron. 20:34). This may be the same as the book of the kings of Israel and Judah in 1 Chron. 9:1 (see ESV, NRSV).
- The book of the annals of King David (1 Chron. 27:24).
- The records of Samuel the seer (1 Chron. 29:29).
- The records of Nathan the prophet (1 Chron. 29:29; 2 Chron. 9:29).
- The records of Gad the seer (1 Chron. 29:29).
- The prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite (2 Chron. 9:29).
- The visions of Iddo the seer (2 Chron. 9:29).
- The records of Shemaiah the prophet and of Iddo the seer (2 Chron. 12:15).
- The annotations of the prophet Iddo (2 Chron. 13:22).
- The book of the kings of Judah and Israel (2 Chron. 16:11). This includes information on Hezekiah’s reign in the vision of the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz (2 Chron. 32:32).
- The annotations on the book of the kings (2 Chron. 24:27).
- The annals of the kings of Israel (2 Chron. 33:18).
- The records of the seers (2 Chron. 33:19).
- The genealogical record of those who had been the first to return (Neh. 7:5).
- The book of the annals (Neh. 12:23). This contained genealogical data and possibly other historical material on the returning exiles.
- The book of the annals of the kings of Media and Persia (Esther 10:2; cf. Esther 2:23; 6:1; Ezra 4:15).
- The book of life (Ps. 69:28; Phil. 4:3; Rev. 3:5; 13:8; 17:8; 20:12, 15; 21:27; cf. Exod. 32:32–33; Ps. 139:16).
- The Book of Truth (Dan. 10:21).
- The scroll of remembrance (Mal. 3:16).

BOOT The Hebrew word *seon*, translated "boot," occurs only in Isa. 9:5. Likely related to an Akkadian word, it may have referred specifically to the footgear of the Akkadian-speaking Assyrian army, as opposed to the footgear of the Israelite army.

BOOTH A hut made with branches from a tree. Jacob lived in a booth (NIV: "shelter") on his journey to Sukkoth, a place named after booths (Heb. *sukkot* [Gen. 33:17]). The Feast of Booths, or Festival of Tabernacles (Lev. 23:33–43; Deut. 16:13–17)—known in Hebrew as Sukkoth—takes place on the fifteenth of Tishri (late September to late October) and is one of the three pilgrimage festivals. It commemorates the Israelites' living in temporary shelters in the wilderness following their exodus from Egypt (Lev. 23:43).

BOOTY *See* Plunder; Spoils.

BOOZ *See* Boaz.

BOR ASHAN A variation of the name of Ashan found in 1 Sam. 30:30. Ashan was a town belonging to the tribe of Judah but later given to the tribe of Simeon. The name "Bor Ashan" means "well of Ashan." The location of this site is unknown. *See also* Ashan.

BORN AGAIN *See* New Birth; Regeneration.

BORROW The practice of borrowing and lending was strictly regulated in ancient Israel. Money could be lent to foreigners at interest, but money lent to other Israelites was regarded as charitable giving, and no interest could be charged on this (Lev. 25:35–37; Deut. 23:19–20). Although Israelite law included a system of debt cancellation every seven years, the expectation was that debts normally would be repaid before this time, since borrowing without repayment was the action of a wicked person (Ps. 37:21). Other laws governed a system of restitution related to damage on borrowed property (Exod. 22:15).

Borrowing took place only from a position of dire need, not for commercial purposes. In part, this was because of the perceived relationship between the debtor and the creditor: the one who owed money became like a servant (Prov. 22:7). Those who mortgaged their lands and homes during a time of famine were compelled to send their sons and daughters into slavery (Neh. 5:2–5). By contrast, freedom from borrowing was considered to be a sign of God's blessing (Deut. 15:6; 28:12).

In the NT era, borrowing and lending took place more freely, for commercial purposes as well as in cases of immediate need, as indicated in several of Jesus' parables (e.g., Matt. 25:14–30; Luke 16:1–9). Jesus gave instructions for lending generously without expectation of repayment (Matt. 5:42; Luke 6:33–35), though the issue is not addressed from the perspective of the borrower in the NT.

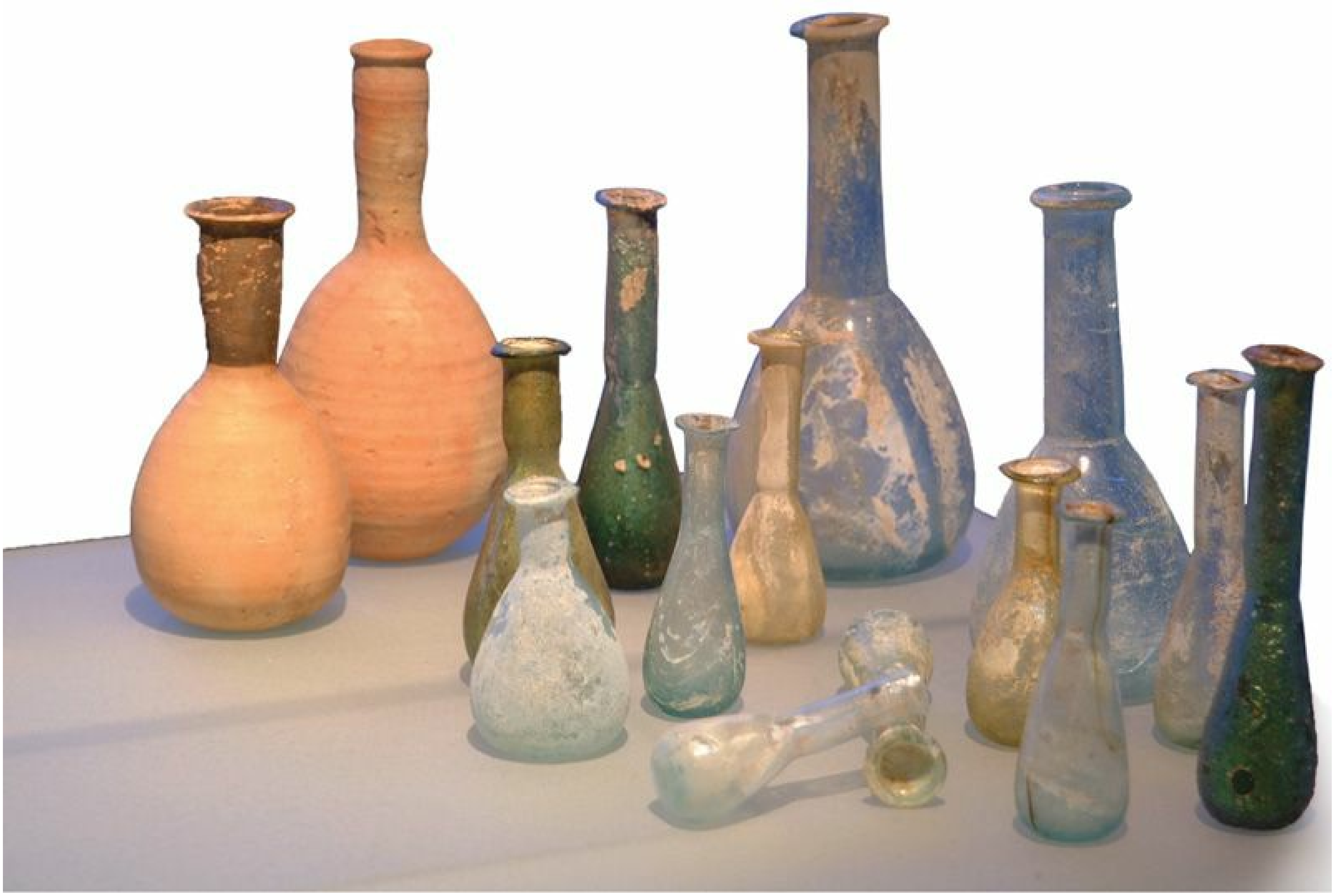
BOSCATH *See* Bozkath.

BOSOR *See* Beor.

BOSSED, BOSSES The word "bossed" (NRSV, RSV, ESV) or "bosses" (KJV) occurs only in Job 15:26 in the description of the shield with which the wicked person "defiantly charg[es] against" God. Bosses are convex projections. Here, "bossed" or "bosses" is a more literal translation of the underlying Hebrew word (*gab*), but some modern versions convey the sense of the text by rendering the Hebrew less literally as “strong” (NIV, NET) or “massive” (NASB [a combination of the Hebrew words for “bosses” and “thick”]).

BOTCH The KJV rendering of the Hebrew word *shekhin*, referring to the Egyptian plague of boils (Deut. 28:27, 35). More-recent versions translate it as “boils” (NIV, NRSV, NET).

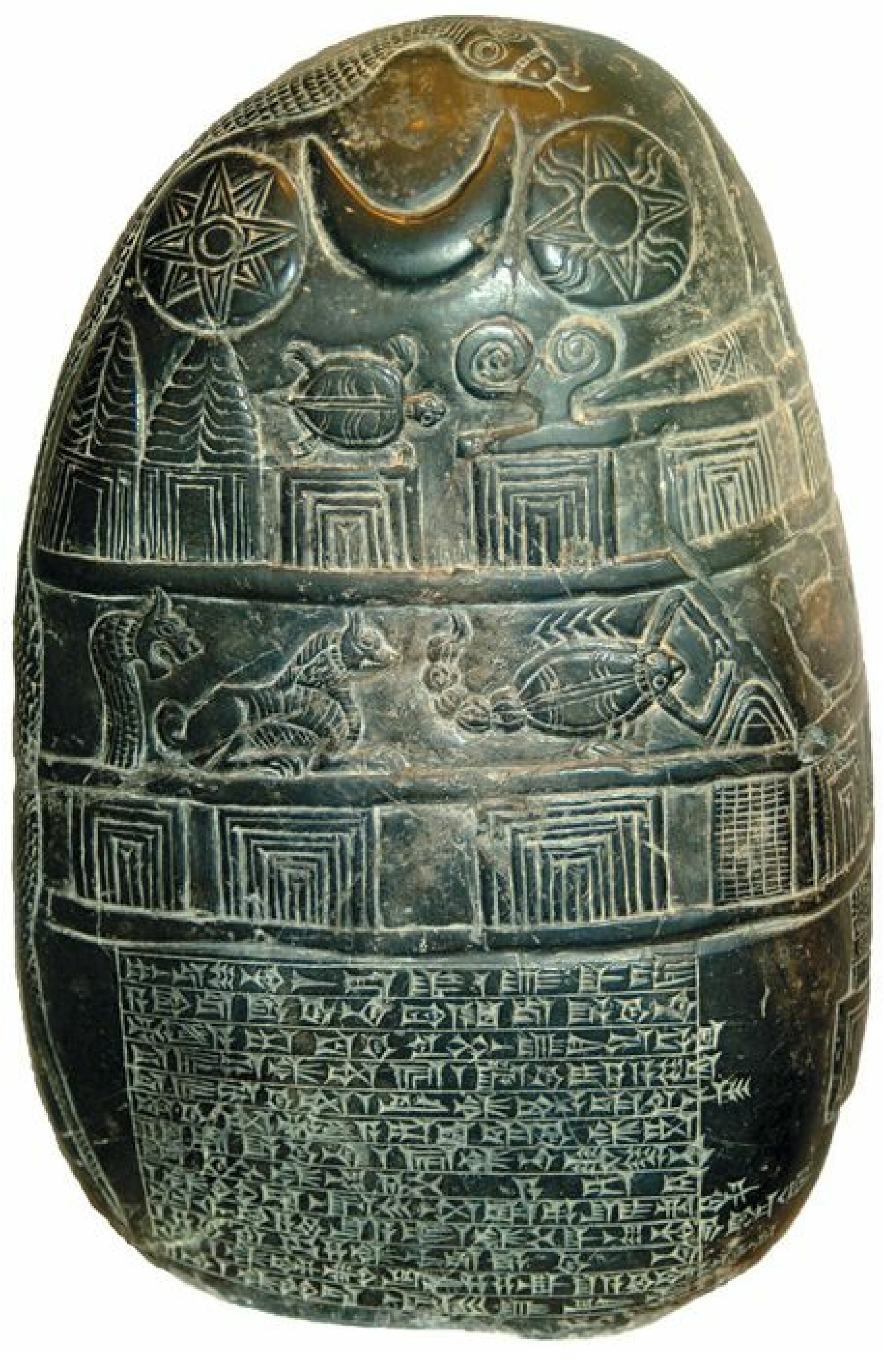
BOTTLE In antiquity, pliable animal skin bottles (for ease of transport) were most commonly used to hold water or wine. Jesus refers to wineskin bottles in the saying about new wine and old wineskins, where fermentation from the wine would have burst the old, dry skins (Matt. 9:17; Mark 2:22; Luke 5:37). Clay or glass bottles were used to hold (often valuable) substances such as oil (Num. 4:9) and perfume (Mark 14:3). Bottles made of harder substances generally consisted of a spherical container with a narrow, elongated, cylindrical opening.



Ointment bottles discovered in graves from a necropolis near Akko (third–first century BC)

BOTTOMLESS PIT Some English versions (NRSV, NLT) use this designation to translate the occurrences in Revelation of the Greek word *abyssos*, otherwise translated in the NIV as “abyss” (Luke 8:31; Rev. 9:1, 2, 11; 11:7; 17:8; 20:1, 3) and once as “the deep” (Rom. 10:7). It can refer generally to the place of the dead (Rom. 10:7), but more often it indicates a temporary sphere of torment and incarceration for demons whose final destination is the lake of fire (Rev. 20:7–10). *See* *also* Abyss.

BOUNDARY STONE A boundary stone (KJV: “landmark”; NRSV: “boundary marker”; Heb. *gebul* literally means “border”) is an object used to mark the boundaries of property. Boundary stones were to remain in place over generations (Deut. 19:14). Moving a boundary stone was a serious offense; those who move boundary stones were cursed in the same breath as those who dishonor their parents and those who lead the blind astray (Deut. 27:16–18). Wisdom literature speaks strongly against those who move boundary stones. Job cites the moving of boundary stones as an indication of the depravity of humankind (Job 24:1–4). Proverbs assures that God will not allow such an act of theft to go unnoticed (Prov. 22:28; 23:10).



Ancient Babylonian stone kudurru recording a gift of land with its boundaries carefully defined

BOWELS An approximate literal meaning of Hebrew and Greek terms used to refer to the seat of the emotions (sometimes translated as "intestines" or "stomach"). The literal meaning is apparent in a few passages (Ezek. 7:19; 2 Chron. 21:15–19; Jon. 1:17; Acts 1:18). More often the terms are used to refer to a variety of strong emotions (Jer. 31:20; Lam. 1:20; 2 Cor. 6:12; Phil. 1:8; Philem. 7). Elsewhere the words refer to the womb or are related to progeny (Gen. 25:23; 2 Sam. 16:11; Isa. 49:1).

BOWL *See* Basin.

BOX The KJV word for the container that held the oil in 2 Kings 9:1, 3 (Heb. *pak*; NIV, NRSV: "flask") and the alabaster container of precious oil in Matt. 26:7 pars. (Gk. *alabastron*; NIV, NRSV: "jar"), and the NRSV word for the container of perfume in Isa. 3:20 (Heb. *bayit*; NIV: "bottle").

BOX TREE A possible identification of two of the types of trees named in Isa. 41:19; 60:13. The KJV renders the Hebrew word (*te'ashur*) underlying the NIV's "cypress" as "box tree/box" in these instances, and the NASB renders the Hebrew words (*berosh tidhar*) underlying the NIV's "fir" as "box tree." Both trees denoted by these Hebrew words were native to Lebanon (see Isa. 60:13) and not to the desert (see 41:19). The various species of the box tree genus are evergreen small trees or shrubs.

BOZEZ A steep cliff along a rocky pass through which Jonathan traveled in order to reach the Philistine garrison. It was located between the Philistine garrison at Mikmash and Saul's camp at Gibeah. The cliff opposite Bozez was called "Seneh" (1 Sam. 14:4).

BOZKATH A city in the Shephelah, the lowlands of Judah. This is part of the territory allotted to the tribe of Judah during the division of the land (Josh. 15:39). This place was home to Jedidah (daughter of Adaiah of Bozkath), the mother of King Josiah (2 Kings 22:1).

BOZRAH **(1)** A city in northern Edom (Gen. 36:33; 1 Chron. 1:44), located thirty miles north of Petra at modern Buseirah. It controlled the traffic on the King's Highway. The city was protected by cliffs on three sides, making it almost unconquerable. It was periodically the capital of Edom. Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Amos prophesied that it would fall pending God's judgment on Edom (Isa. 34:6; 63:1; Jer. 49:13, 22; Amos 1:12). **(2)** A city in Moab mentioned in Jer. 48:24. Jeremiah prophesied that it would fall when Moab did. It is most likely the same place as Bezer, although its exact location is unknown.

BRACELET A piece of jewelry worn on the wrist(s), typically made from precious or semiprecious metal. Bracelets are known from texts, from depictions on statues and figurines, and from archaeological excavations. They might be fashioned as complete loops or with an opening, and crafted from gold, silver, bronze, or even iron. Isaac's bride-to-be, Rebekah, received two golden bracelets as a gift (Gen. 24:22–47), and golden bracelets also appear in Num. 31:50 as plunder offered to God by Israelite army officers for atonement. Ezekiel 16:11; 23:42 includes bracelets as part of the figurative jewelry that God gave to Israel, later used for adornment as a prostitute.

BRAIDING Both Paul and Peter exhort Christian women to adorn themselves not with "braided hair," expensive clothes, and fine jewels, but with an inner beauty expressed in good works and spiritual grace (1 Tim. 2:9–10; 1 Pet. 3:3–4 NASB, RSV). The terms used here refer not to simple hair weaves, but to the elaborate bejeweled coiffures of upper-class Greco-Roman women. The NIV uses the phrase “elaborate hairstyles,” since the point is not the braids themselves but rather the ostentatious behavior and emphasis on outward beauty.

BRAMBLE One of several common thorny or prickly plants, also translated as “brier,” “thorn,” or “thistle.” Brambles grew as weeds in grain fields (Job 31:40) and among ruins (Isa. 34:13). They were considered unattractive (Song 2:2), insignificant (Judg. 9:14–15; 2 Kings 14:9), and unproductive (Luke 6:44).

BRANCH Besides its normal, literal usage, “branch” is often used figuratively in the Bible to refer to descendants. The image that is created is usually that of a tree or tree stump from which new growth (“the branch”) emerges. The branch is thus both connected to the tree and yet still distinct and unique. In several OT passages the term “branch” is used to describe the coming Messiah, often stressing his descent from King David (Isa. 11:1; Jer. 23:5; 33:15; Zech. 3:8; 6:12–13; perhaps Isa. 4:2). Closely connected to the branch imagery of the Messiah is fruitfulness (Isa. 4:2; 11:1) and the dual concepts of justice and righteousness (Jer. 23:5; 33:15). Zechariah 6:12–13 states that “the Branch,” clothed in majesty, will rebuild the temple and take his seat on the throne to rule. In Rom. 11:17–24 Paul uses the branch/tree imagery to explain how Israel (the natural branch) and the Gentiles (the ingrafted branch) both relate to the overall plan and people of God (the tree with its roots).

BRASEN SEA, BRAZEN SEA *See* Molten Sea.

BRASEN SERPENT, BRAZEN SERPENT *See* Bronze Serpent.

BRASS An alloy of copper and zinc that was not widely used in the ancient Near East, although some samples of brass from around 1500 BC have been found at Gezer, about forty miles from Jerusalem. A much more commonly used alloy was bronze, formed from copper and tin. Most of the instances in which the KJV translates “brass” probably refer to bronze or possibly copper.

BREAD Generally made of grain, this staple of foods has been known to be in existence since prehistoric days, being mentioned in the oldest literatures of humanity. Though usually made of wheat, it can be made of any grain and also some kinds of beans or lentils. The Hebrew term, *lekhem*, is first used in Gen. 3:19 (see KJV) and is found throughout the Bible. The NIV uses the English word “bread” over 250 times.

To make bread, grain must be ground into flour, mixed with salt and water, kneaded into a dough, and baked. Most breads included a leaven to add substance. As a food staple, it became a symbol of hospitality (Neh. 13:1–2; Matt. 14:15–21) and community as people ate together (Acts 2:42). Bread was considered a gift from God, so it was treated with special deference. Unleavened bread was required during Passover feasts and in most occasions related to the worship of God. The “bread of the Presence” (KJV: “shewbread”), representing the twelve tribes of Israel in the temple, was made of unleavened bread (Exod. 25:30) with special flour and was carefully eaten by the priests.

Bread was such a basic part of life that it often was used in Scripture to represent the daily aspects of life and people’s most basic needs. During the days of Moses and the Israelites wandering in the desert, God provided for them special bread, manna, which they collected and ate each day, demonstrating God's consistent care for them as they traveled (Exod. 16). Jesus used bread in the Lord's Prayer to represent asking God to meet our basic needs (Matt. 5:11), and he called himself the "bread of life" to show that he is the one who "gives life to the world," our ultimate sustenance (John 6:33–35). During this exchange with the Jews about the bread of life, Jesus foreshadows what takes place at the Last Supper with his disciples, suggesting that believers must "eat [his] flesh" (represented by bread) and "drink [his] blood" (represented by wine) (John 6:53–59; cf. Luke 22:19). Additionally, bread was used symbolically to represent those things that were present in daily life (Pss. 127:2; 80:5; Prov. 4:17; 20:17).

BREAD OF THE PRESENCE Twelve loaves of unleavened bread that were to be on continuous display (replaced every Sabbath) in the holy place of the sanctuary (Exod. 25:30; Lev. 24:8). The loaves were to be placed in two rows of six on the table of pure gold constructed for the holy place. The bread symbolized the covenant between God and his people, with a specific emphasis probably being placed upon his provision and sustenance. The name "bread of the Presence" (lit., "bread of the face") arises from the close proximity in which they were placed to God's presence in the sanctuary. Because of their holy nature, only priests were allowed to consume them (Lev. 24:5–9; 1 Sam. 21:1–6; Matt. 12:4 pars.; Heb. 9:2).

BREASTPIECE OF THE HIGH PRIEST A pouch, nine inches square, woven of the same colorful material as the ephod. Gold rings were attached to each corner so that it could be firmly fastened to the ephod with gold cords at the top and blue cords at the bottom. Mounted on its front, in four rows, were twelve precious stones engraved with the names of the tribes of Israel and mounted in gold settings. Since it held the Urim and Thummim by which God revealed his judgments for Israel, it was sometimes called the "breastpiece of judgment" (NRSV; NIV: "breastpiece for making decisions"). By wearing it, the high priest signified that he bore the names of all the tribes whenever he entered God's presence, and that he would bring God's judgments or announce his will to the people. It is mentioned twenty-three times in Exodus (mainly chaps. 28; 35) and twice in Leviticus.

BREASTPLATE A piece of armor used to protect a soldier against shock sustained from other weapons. This imagery is used figuratively by Isaiah to describe how God wears his righteousness (Isa. 59:17). Paul uses it to describe believers, who put on "the breastplate of righteousness" (Eph. 6:14) and "faith and love as a breastplate" (1 Thess. 5:8).

BREATH In the OT, the Hebrew words *ruakh* ("breath, spirit") and *neshamah* ("blast, spirit") are the standard terms, even collectively translated "wind." Constructively, these terms reflect the vibrant relationship between God and humankind. However, God's "breath" can also be an agent of judgment. So "breath/wind" is the invasive power of God—proof of his supremacy—capable of disruption or transformation of human life.

It is in human creation that God's breath is given one of its most dynamic illustrations. Formed of "dust" (*'apar*), the human being must be enlivened by the Creator's breath. In the OT, human flesh remains dormant and helplessly passive until God breathes; then a living human being (*nepesh*) is animated (Gen. 2:7; 6:17; cf. Pss. 33:6; 104:29). "Soul" (*nepesh*) must be thought of in a holistic way in the OT, not as part of a dualism: "Praise the LORD, my soul; all my inmost being, praise his holy name" (Ps. 103:1). For human existence, "breath" is God's gracious gift that mortals cannot "possess." Reflecting on this, the psalmist writes, "When you take away their breath, they die and return to the dust" (Ps. 104:29; cf. Gen. 7:22). Theologically, Israel understood that life is utterly dependent on God; the "self" has no permanent properties of its own.

"Breath/wind" is also a powerful force in God's anger, when a "blast of breath from his nostrils" can undo and destroy (2 Sam. 22:16). Similarly, a "strong east wind" rolls back the Red Sea for the Israelites' crossing (Exod. 14:21), but the very same force is the undoing of Pharaoh's army, which was destroyed as God, Israel's warrior, "blew" with his "breath" (Exod. 15:10). Whether in the aimless waters of creation (Gen. 1:2; 8:1) or the mighty waters of "un-creation" (Exod. 15:10), the same cosmic might of God's *ruakh* is evident.

Not surprisingly, themes combining breath, wind, and spirit are also used to describe new creation (Ezek. 37:9). The life-generating force of the *ruakh*/spirit emerges in the NT as the Holy Spirit, manifested in wind, a breath, or Spirit (Gk. *pneuma*). At Pentecost "a violent wind came from heaven," enacting another creation (Acts 2:2). John clearly symbolizes Jesus' "breathing" on the disciples (John 20:22). Not only does this illustrate John's theology of being born "from above" (3:3 NRSV), but also "he breathed" reenacts the enlivening of Gen. 2:7. The two creations are connected: God's enlivening in Gen. 2:7 and Jesus' creation of eternal life following his own resurrection.

BREATH OF LIFE The life of all creatures is sustained by breath (Gen. 1:30; Job 12:10; Ps. 104:29). When God formed Adam from dust, God breathed into him the breath of life (Gen. 2:7), infusing the image of God into Adam. In Ezekiel's vision, God put breath into dry bones, symbolizing the resurrection of the house of Israel (37:1–14).

BREECHES In the KJV, linen clothing worn by the Israelite priests (NIV, NRSV: "undergarments"). The clothing sat against the skin, "from the waist to the thigh" (Exod. 28:42). Many believe that the priestly breeches were two separate garments, one for each leg (as the English word "breeches" indicates). They were prescribed for service at the tabernacle (Lev. 6:10; 16:4) and at the temple of Ezekiel's vision (Ezek. 44:18).

BRIBE A gift given in order to influence a decision or judgment. The OT law prohibits giving a bribe with the result that a false judgment (the innocent proclaimed guilty or vice versa) is delivered (Exod. 23:8; Deut. 16:19; 27:25; see also Ps. 15:5). God, as the ultimate giver of justice, accepts no bribes (Deut. 10:17). The prophets condemn God's people for accepting bribes and perverting justice (Isa. 1:23; Amos 5:12; Mic. 3:13). Proverbs 6:35; 17:23 associate the bribe with foolish behavior. Some proverbs (Prov. 17:8; 18:16; 21:14), however, speak more positively about bribes (or gifts). Perhaps the circumstance of a gift is the issue. The giving of a gift in order to circumvent justice is wrong, but there are some situations where bribes can open doors to good ends.

BRICK Bricks are first mentioned in the Bible at Gen. 11:3 (the tower of Babel), which says that "they used brick instead of stone," a note that rings true to geographical differences in the use of bricks. In Mesopotamia, however, fire-hardened bricks could be used for monumental structures; thousands of these have survived, some even being taken for use in modern buildings. But in Canaan, where stone is common, large ashlar stone was preferred to brick for monumental buildings (a contrast evident in Isa. 9:10), and unhewn stone was common in other structures (e.g., Lev. 14:40–42). Brick was commonly used in superstructures atop stone foundations, including defensive structures, such as casemate walls (cf. Nah. 3:14, but note that Nineveh is in view). Iron Age Ashdod features an example of such, and Neolithic Jericho features brick walls, though these may have been for flood retention. Bricks were made of mud or clay, often mixed with straw (Exod. 5:7), and could be dried in the sun for rudimentary purposes. Making bricks was hard labor, fitting for slaves (Exod. 1:14; 2 Sam. 12:31). Brick altars, like those of hewn stone, were not permitted in the worship of God (Exod. 20:24–25; Isa. 65:3).

BRICK KILN An oven used for drying bricks to be used in building projects. David forced the conquered Ammonites to make bricks, the act being described as “putting them to work at the brick kiln” (2 Sam. 12:31 NET). Some believe that only sun-dried bricks were used in Israel and thus translate this text as “brick mold” or “brickwork” instead.

BRIDE In both Testaments of Scripture, marriage is used to illustrate the relationship between God and his chosen people. Isaiah and Jeremiah portray Israel as the bride of Yahweh, sometimes to emphasize his love for her, sometimes to lament her unfaithfulness to him. Isaiah says that Yahweh will one day rejoice over Israel “as a bridegroom rejoices over his bride” (Isa. 62:5; cf. 61:10). Jeremiah expresses God’s disappointment that his bride (Israel) has lost her first love for him and even forgotten him (Jer. 2:2, 32). Hosea uses this metaphor repeatedly to proclaim Yahweh’s undying love for his adulterous wife, the people of Israel (Hos. 1–3).

In the NT, the church becomes the bride of Christ, both in Paul’s letters and in the book of Revelation (Rev. 21:2, 9; 22:17). Paul compares the church to a bride expressly in Eph. 5, where the love of Christ for his church sets an example for ordinary husbands: they must love their wives “as Christ loved the church,” that is, sacrificially (v. 25). In Revelation the church adorns herself with righteous acts for the sake of Christ, her groom (19:6). Further along in Revelation, the new Jerusalem itself becomes the “bride” of Christ, inhabited by his saved people, the church (21:9–10).

Greek vase depicting a bride and groom

The “bride” metaphor communicates powerfully in these contexts because of the duties that ancient marriages presupposed. Husbands were to lead, protect, and provide for their wives, and God does this perfectly for his people. He leads them safely out of Egypt, through the wilderness, and on to victory in battle. They are blessed in faithfulness, and God is slow to anger in spite of their adultery against him. When his people need a savior, he provides the Bridegroom-Messiah, through whom he gives lasting forgiveness, peace, and rest. On the other hand, the church must honor her Savior-Husband, who finds in her obedience the greatest beauty.

BRIDE-PRICE *See* Dowry.

BRIDLE *See* Bit and Bridle.

BRIER Being prickly and hardy, this plant carries negative connotations such as torment (Judg. 8:7; John 19:2), vexing enemies (Isa. 27:4; Ezek. 28:24), and judgment (Isa. 5:6; 7:23–25). It is also planted as a hedge for protection (Isa. 5:5).

BRIMSTONE *See* Sulfur.

BROAD PLACE *See* Spacious Place.

BROAD WALL In Neh. 3:8; 12:38, a section of the rebuilt Jerusalem city wall is called the “Broad Wall.” The name is now also used for the twenty-three-foot wide, eighth-century BC wall apparently constructed by Hezekiah (2 Chron. 32:2–5; Isa. 22:10), excavated in the 1970s.

BROIDERED *See* Needlework.

BRONZE SEA *See* Molten Sea.

BRONZE SERPENT An early, tangible reminder of the goodness of God in rescuing his people from their sins (NIV: “bronze snake”). During the wilderness wanderings, the land of Edom lay in the path of the Israelites. The Israelites requested permission to pass through Edom, which the Edomites strongly denied (Num. 20:14–21). Forced to circle around Edom and head far out of their way, the Israelites began to complain yet again (Num. 21:4–5; see also Exod. 15:22–24; 16:1–3; 17:1–7). God responded by sending venomous snakes that killed many people (Num. 21:6). When the people admitted their sin and asked Moses to pray to God on their behalf, God commanded Moses to do a strange thing: he was to make a snake and put it on a pole. “Then when anyone was bitten by a snake and looked at the bronze snake, they lived” (21:9).

Bronze serpent found in a Midianite temple

This seemingly insignificant and bizarre episode in Israelite history resurfaces twice in the Bible. The good king Hezekiah destroyed the bronze serpent during his purification of the land of Judah from idolatrous worship. The writer of Kings explains that the serpent, which had come to be called "Nehushtan," had itself become an idol, as the Israelites had been burning incense to it (2 Kings 18:4). Jesus also makes mention of the bronze serpent in his famous dialogue with Nicodemus. In speaking of his impending death, Jesus explains to Nicodemus that he, the Son of Man, must be lifted up from the earth, "just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert" (John 3:14). Those who believe in Jesus will have eternal life because of his being lifted up—that is, crucified (see John 12:32–34). Jesus' reference to the bronze serpent emphasizes the simplicity of salvation through Christ. Just as the Israelites needed only to look to the bronze serpent, trusting in God's provision for their salvation from physical death, so also those who are dying in their sins need only look to the perfect sacrifice of Jesus Christ, trusting in God's provision for their salvation from spiritual death.

BROOCH An ornamental or functional piece of jewelry that could act as a clasp to fasten garments. Golden brooches were among the offerings brought by the Israelites to be melted down and used for the tabernacle ornaments (Exod. 35:22). Later versions were made in bronze and iron and had both sprung and hinged pins.

BROOK OF EGYPT *See* Wadi of Egypt.

BROOK OF THE ARABAH *See* Valley of the Arabah.

BROOK OF THE WILLOWS *See* Ravine of the Poplars.

BROOK OF ZERED *See* Zered Valley.

BROOM BUSH, BROOM TREE A bush shrub (KJV: "juniper"; NIV: "broom bush"; NKJV, RSV: "broom tree") commonly found in the arid regions of Egypt, Palestine, and Arabia. Growing up to ten feet, it provides shade in the scorching desert (1 Kings 19:4–6). Its exceedingly long roots, which reach down to groundwater sources, are used to make charcoal (Ps. 120:4). In Job 30:4 the deplorable living situation of the poor is described in terms of feeding on its inedible roots.

BROTHERLY LOVE A kind of love described in the NT. The Greek word for this kind of love is *philadelphia*, from which the city by that name was taken. Some English versions translate this word as "brotherly kindness" or "brotherly affection" to help distinguish it from the other primary word for "love" used in the NT, *agapē.*

The word *philadelphia* is composed of two parts: the first is one of the Greek words for "love" (*philia*), and the second part refers to the idea of a sibling (*adelphē*, *adelphos*). Each of these two parts helps us understand this concept. Sometimes this word for "love" is seen as a lesser kind of love than what the Bible describes as *agapē* love, but this is an oversimplification. The two words can function as synonyms, both involving strong positive commitments of devotion to another person(s).

The "brotherly" component could refer to a male sibling, but particularly in the plural was used of siblings of either gender (i.e., both brothers and sisters). To bring out this point, some English versions render *philadelphia* as "mutual love/affection" (NRSV). Especially with the emergence of the NT church as a family (Gal. 6:10) composed of those who are God's children (and thus brothers and sisters of each other), this expression took on a whole new meaning. "Brotherly love" began to be used to refer to the family-like devotion among fellow believers that should characterize the Christian community. Brotherly love soon became one of the hallmarks of the early Christians, whereby even their enemies were often forced to admit, "Behold how they love one another" (cited by Tertullian, *Apol.* 39.7).

Paul instructs the church at Rome to "love one another with brotherly affection" (Rom. 12:10 ESV) as a part of his description of the Christian life. He recognizes the supernatural origin of this new love among believers (“You yourselves have been taught by God to love each other”), compliments them on their success in this area, and yet appeals to them to continue to “do so more and more” (1 Thess. 4:9–10). The author of the book of Hebrews, writing to a church that was already counting the cost of persecution and was even then being tempted to give up the Christian faith, says simply, “Keep on loving one another as brothers and sisters” (13:1). Peter addresses this same topic (again to a persecuted church), admonishing them to “love one another deeply, from the heart,” but also reminds them how this love needs to be built on a response of the will to the truth of the gospel and to flow from a right heart (or “purified”) attitude (1 Pet. 1:22). Peter also offers still another appeal to press on in this area when he says, “Finally, all of you, have unity of mind, sympathy, brotherly love, a tender heart, and a humble mind” (3:8 ESV).

The most significant usage of *philadelphia* is as the penultimate virtue in the list of eight virtues in 2 Pet. 1:5–7: faith, goodness, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, brotherly kindness, and love. Here brotherly love needs to be built on the foundation of faith, goodness, knowledge, and so on, and at the same time be seen as a stepping-stone leading toward the still higher ultimate goal of *agapē* love. Brotherly love thus involves a life of faith whereby we learn to demonstrate our love for God by ministering to the needs of the specific fellow believers whom God brings into our lives. Brotherly love is not all that is involved in the second great commandment of loving one’s neighbor as oneself, but it is a key component. As Paul says, we are to “do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers” (Gal. 6:10).

BROTHERS

Brotherhood and Israelite Identity

Ancient Israelite society was fundamentally organized along the lines of kinship and family. As a result, relations among brothers figure prominently in the biblical construction of Israelite identity, which is conceptualized through a series of fraternal relationships, often rife with conflict: Isaac and Ishmael; Jacob and Esau; and the twelve sons of Jacob, among whom the relationship between Joseph and his brothers is pivotal in the history of Israel. Long after the lifetimes of the patriarchs, the Israelites continued to understand the structure of their society and the relationships between its constituent tribes as a complex of fraternal relationships. The patriarchal stories of Genesis were a mirror of later social and political realities. If the sibling rivalries of antiquity explained competition between later social groups, the memory of the brotherhood of those groups also provided a basis for solidarity both within Israel (“You may not put a foreigner over you, who is not your brother” [Deut. 17:15 ESV]) and with near neighbors (“You shall not abhor an Edomite, for he is your brother” [Deut. 23:7 ESV]). Similarly, the fraternal relationship between Moses and Aaron endured in later Israelite society as a model for synthesizing distinct strands of the religion into a coherent whole.

For later Israelite readers of the Bible, the brotherly relationships of Genesis and Exodus were not simply stories about dead ancestors; rather, they provided a compelling account of the organization of Israelite society as they knew it (see Zech. 11:14) and of the relationship between Israel and its neighbors, several of which were descended from the brothers of the Israelite patriarchs (see Ps. 83:6; Amos 1:11; Obad. 10; Mal. 1:2–4). Even though Hiram and Solomon did not trace their relationship back to a common ancestor, they extended the language of the brother alliance to their own (1 Kings 9:12–13).

Biblical literature cultivates a predilection for the underdog, elevating a long series of younger, disadvantaged brothers: the heroes of Israel included Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Gideon (Judg. 6:15), and David (1 Sam. 16:11).

The brother's wife represented a special case. Sexual relations with a brother's wife were strictly forbidden (Lev. 18:16; 20:21; see also Mark 6:18), but under certain circumstances one was compelled to marry a brother's widow (Deut. 25:5–9; see variations of this practice in Gen. 38:8; Ruth 4:5–6). This custom underlay a question that Jesus was asked concerning seven brothers, each of whom died, repeatedly widowing the same woman (Matt. 22:24; Mark 6:17; Luke 14:26).

BROTHERS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

Among Jesus' twelve disciples were several pairs of brothers, including Peter and Andrew (Mark 1:16 pars.) and James and John the sons of Zebedee (Mark 1:19). Jesus himself had brothers (Mark 3:31–35; John 7:3–5; Acts 1:14), including James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas (Mark 6:3; see also Gal. 1:19).

In addition to the story of seven brothers mentioned above, several of Jesus' teachings drew illustrations from the relationship of brothers, including the stories of the prodigal son (Luke 15:11–32) and of the rich man and Lazarus (see Luke 16:28). Jesus singled out the belittling of a brother as a particularly heinous sin (Matt. 5:22). In the Sermon on the Mount and elsewhere, "brother" stands not only for a literal brother but also more generally for one's fellow human.

In light of the OT conception of Israel as a nation of brothers (see Deut. 17:15 and the discussion above), it is not surprising that Jesus and the NT authors adopted the language of brotherhood to describe the Christian community. The "brotherhood of believers" (1 Pet. 2:17 NIV 1984) derives from the common brotherhood of Christians with Christ himself. Brotherhood with Christ depends not on physical descent but on a shared commitment to obedience to God (Matt. 12:50; 23:8), and this loyalty is deeper than that of the literal family, such that it can turn "brother against brother" (Mark 13:12).

The predominant form of address in the NT Epistles is "brothers," and in Acts the Christians are most commonly designated as "the brothers." Paul also refers to fellow Jews, including non-Christians, as his "brothers" (Acts 22:1; Rom. 9:3 ESV). *See also* Brotherly Love.

BROTHERS AND SISTERS, JESUS' Jesus' brothers are mentioned several times in the Gospels, Acts, and the Pauline Epistles. In Mark 6:3 (see also Matt. 13:55–56) four brothers are named, and sisters are mentioned, though the name or number of sisters is not given. The people of Nazareth are offended by Jesus' preaching in the synagogue and express surprise that Jesus, given the dramatic claims that he has made about himself in his sermon there (see Luke 4:16–30), is the son and brother of local villagers (Mary and her sons James, Joses [named "Joseph" in Matthew], Judas, and Simon). In the crucifixion scene in Mark, one of the women present is identified as "Mary the mother of James the younger and of Joseph [NIV mg.: "Greek *Joses*"]" (Mark 15:40). It is unlikely, however, that this is Jesus' mother and brothers, since it would be strange to identify Mary as the mother of these two lesser-known siblings rather than of Jesus himself.

In Mark 3:32–35 Jesus redefines what it means to be his brother, sister, or mother in the kingdom of God in response to being notified that his earthly mother and brothers, who at this point in time did not understand his mission (see 3:21), are waiting for him outside the house in Capernaum. Although Mary and Jesus' brothers appear to have traveled around Galilee with him (see John 2:12), John's Gospel makes explicit the brothers' unbelief (7:2–10), which is only implicit in Matthew and Mark. Acts 1:14 shows the dramatic reversal that has taken place in the response to Jesus by his brothers after the resurrection. Mary and Jesus' brothers are gathered together with the entire body of Jesus' disciples in prayer, fellowship, and teaching.

James (apparently Jesus' oldest sibling) became a key leader in the Jerusalem church (Acts 12:17; 21:18) and pronounced the decision at the Jerusalem council (Acts 15:13). He is also traditionally identified as the author of the NT letter that bears his name (James 1:1). Another NT letter may also have been penned by a brother of Jesus, since Jude identifies himself as "a brother of James" (Jude 1), a probable reference to this same James.

In 1 Cor. 9:5 Paul argues (through a rhetorical question) that Christian missionaries have the right to take "a believing wife" along with them in their work, just as the other apostles and Jesus' brothers had done. Finally, while recounting his first trip to Jerusalem after his conversion, Paul mentions a meeting with James, "the Lord's brother" (Gal. 1:19).

According to the Jewish historian Josephus, Jesus' brother James died a martyr's death at the hands of the Jewish high priest Ananus (*Ant.* 20.197–200).

BROWN Not one of the common colors of the Bible and rare as a way of description. The color may occur once to describe horses (Zech. 1:8), although some translations use "sorrel" (NRSV, NASB) or "speckled" (KJV). *See also* Colors.

BUBASTIS The Greek name for a city in the delta region of Egypt, about fifty miles northeast of Cairo. Known in modern Egypt as Tell Basta, the name originates from the hieroglyphic Per-Bast, meaning "house of Bastet." The city was the center of worship for the Egyptian cat-goddess Bastet, who became associated with Artemis and whose cult had developed into a popular and joyous festival for Egyptians and foreigners by the fifth century BC. The sole biblical reference is Ezek. 30:17, where Bubastis (NRSV: "Pi-beseth"; KJV: "Pibeseth") is named in a judgment oracle against Egypt.

BUCKET A vessel made of animal skin used to draw water from a well or cistern. Two sticks used as crosspieces held the top of the vessel open (Num. 24:7; Isa. 40:15). Similar vessels are still used in Palestine today.

BUCKLER A round shield held by a grip, sometimes with straps for the arm. The Hebrew word (*magen*) is usually translated "shield" in the NIV. "Buckler" appears eleven times in the KJV and occasionally in other versions (RSV, ESV, NRSV, NASB, etc.).

BUD An ornamental object, probably part of a flower, on the lampstand in the tabernacle (Exod. 25:31–36 [KJV: "knop"; NKJV: "knob"; RSV: "capital"; NASB: "bulb"; NRSV, JPS, NJB: "calyx"]). Some scholars think that the bud (Heb. *kaptor*) resembled the fruit of the almond tree.

BUGLE A trumpetlike instrument with no valves to control pitch. It appears in some translations of 1 Cor. 14:8 as an instrument used to communicate on the battlefield (NRSV, NASB; NIV: "trumpet").

BUKKI **(1)** A tribal leader of Dan assigned to help in the allotment of Canaan under the direction of Joshua and Eleazar (Num. 34:22). **(2)** Son of the Levite Abishua, a descendant of Aaron through the line of Eleazar (1 Chron. 6:5, 51). Bukki and his son, Uzzi, are also mentioned in the lineage of Ezra (Ezra 7:4).

BUKKIAH The first of fourteen sons of Heman, Levites designated by King David for religious service as musicians, also considered a prophetic role (1 Chron. 25:1, 4). Bukkiah and his sons drew the sixth of twenty-four lots, designating their duties (25:8, 13).

BUL The Hebrew word *bul* has several nuances in the Bible, all of which might be related. In 1 Kings 6:38 "Bul" is a month. In Isa. 44:19 *bul* refers to part of a log that becomes an object of worship, an "abomination," an idol. "Bul" corresponds to "Bel" and "Baal" as a divine appellation. Job 40:20, in describing Behemoth, states that the mountains provide the beast with *bul*. Although English versions translate this as "food," perhaps it is another reference to an idol, with Behemoth being a symbol for wayward humanity.

BULL An uncastrated male bovine. The bull was an important symbol of the divine in Canaanite religion, and the infamous "golden calves" that were worshiped by the Israelites at Mount Sinai and then at Dan and Bethel were manifestations of this theology (see Ps. 106:20). In Ugaritic religion the god El was associated with the bull, and the god Baal with a bull calf. A cult stand found at the Israelite site of Ta'anach features a bull, possibly in connection with the worship of Yahweh, of the type condemned in the Bible. Although the Bible generally condemns the use of the bull as a depiction of the God of Israel, bull images were featured in the furnishings of Solomon's temple, including the twelve metal bulls that supported the Sea (1 Kings 7:25). Ahaz later sent these valuable objects as tribute to the king of Assyria (2 Kings 16:17).

Bulls were used in several important sacrifices, including in the consecration of priests (Exod. 29:1–37), the sin offering (Lev. 4:3), the Day of Atonement (Lev. 16:3), and the festivals of Weeks (Lev. 23:18), New Year (Lev. 28:11), Passover (Lev. 28:19), First Fruits (Lev. 28:27), and Booths (Lev. 29:13).

Bulls are powerful and dangerous animals (Ps. 22:12), and Israelite and Mesopotamian law codes mandated penalties for the owner of a bull that had harmed a person (Exod. 21:28–32) or another animal (Exod. 21:35–36).

BULRUSH *See* Reed.

BULWARK *See* Fort, Fortification.

BUNAH The second son of Jerahmeel, a descendant of Hezron of Judah (1 Chron. 2:25).

BUNDLE *See* Bag.

BUNNI The name "Bunni" is similar to several other Hebrew names derived from "Benaiah." **(1)** One of the "leaders of the people" who sealed the covenant with God following Ezra's public reading of the law (Neh. 10:15). **(2)** One of those who participated in a public act of repentance as part of the postexilic covenant renewal (Neh. 9:4). **(3)** One of those named in a Levite genealogy (Neh. 11:15), several generations before the events narrated.

BURIAL Burial can refer to the ritual, body preparation, or interment.

Burial rites. Genesis in particular uses some formulaic phrases: "died and was gathered to his people" and "rest with [one's] fathers/ancestors" (25:8; 35:29; 47:30; 49:33; cf. Job 14:10). In

Abraham's death (Gen. 25:8), this "gathering" does not refer to his actual burial, since it occurs between his death and burial; nor was Abraham ever buried with his ancestors (cf. Num. 20:26 [Aaron]; Deut. 32:50 [Moses]). This idiom refers to joining one's ancestors in the realm of the dead. With communal notions, the phrase also refers to elements of family burial (similarly, "gathered to your people" [Num. 27:13]; "gathered to their ancestors" [Judg. 2:10]).

In Jacob's obituary he "gathered up" his feet and then was "gathered" to his people (Gen. 49:33 KJV), rich imagery because he had "gathered" his sons (cf. 49:1). This expression is also used of depositing the human remains in a collective family burial site (Judg. 2:10; 2 Kings 22:20; cf. Jer. 25:33).

In the genealogically sensitive books of Kings and Chronicles a formula is used for the kings: "X rested with his ancestors and was buried in Y." Here, "Y" can denote a place such as the City of David (1 Kings 2:10; 11:43; 14:31; 2 Chron. 16:13–14). Authors depart from this formula in order to describe a person's desecration, such as Jezebel; the dogs consumed her except for her skull, hands, and feet (2 Kings 9:37; cf. 1 Kings 21:23–24).

Jacob and Joseph receive specialized Egyptian embalming. Embalming preserved a more holistic persona through use of special fluids and wrappings for seventy days (Gen. 50:2–3, 26). Death usually required immediate burial, even for criminals (Deut. 21:1–9, 22–23; 1 Kings 13:24–30). Outside Israel, the inclusion of grave utensils (e.g., juglets, cooking pots, bowls, and jewelry) with the deceased was indicative of a person's status and needs in the afterlife. The OT prophets forbade certain practices of mourning such as self-mutilation (Lev. 21:1–6; cf. Amos 6:6–7).

In the NT, burial could include treatment with spices for odorific and purification reasons (Luke 23:56; John 19:40). Placed on a bench (*mishkab*, "resting place"), the body was covered in wrappings and a special facecloth (John 11:44). Familial respect required demonstration of grief with laments (Acts 8:2; cf. 1 Kings 13:29–30; Jer. 9:17–22).

Specific locations. In the OT, burial occurred in cemeteries, shaft tombs, rock-hewn tombs, or natural caves. The wealthy procured burial sites for their posterity (Gen. 23:3–20). Middle and Late Bronze Age (2200–1200 BC) examples have been excavated at Jericho, Gibeon, and Hazor. In a process known as secondary burial, older remains were moved to a repository in the rear of the cave to clear room for a new corpse (cf. Matt. 8:21–22). Only Rachel was not buried in the cave of Machpelah (Gen. 35:19–20). Her "stone pillar" may be a rock cairn, in which the body is interred beneath a mound of stones. Well-known landmarks, such as trees, identified the graves of others (Gen. 35:8 [Deborah]; 1 Sam. 31:11–13 [Saul]).

Iron Age I sites (1200–1000 BC) could mark tribal territories (Judg. 8:32), like Joseph's bones at Shechem (Josh. 24:32). Iron Age II sites (1000–586 BC) show the royal tombs of kings in their capitals or ancestral areas, be it a special garden or Samaria (2 Kings 21:18, 26; 13:13). An inscription was found along the Kidron naming the owner, Shebna (Isa. 22:15–16). Such tombs often included a charnel pit. Here, older bones were placed as more recent corpses were laid out on the bench above the pit. The poor usually were consigned to public cemeteries. The Hellenistic period (332–53 BC) saw the use of shaft tombs. With a sloping entry into a burial chamber, a shaft tomb often contained perpendicular niches (*kokhim*) for individual bodies. These tombs were common along the coastal plain and sites such as Dor, Gezer, and Lachish.

In the intertestamental period, elaborate structures, *arcosolia*, were built above or adjacent to the entry, such as Jason's tomb in southwestern Jerusalem. The *loculus* was a second type with a central chamber and three sprawling *kokhim*. The Herodian period employed a strategic entrance guarded with a rolling stone four to five feet in diameter, like that used for Jesus. During the Roman period

(37 BC–AD 367), stone *sarcophagi* (lit., “flesh eaters”) were used, and such have been excavated at Beth She’arim and Jerusalem. Later, bones were placed in ossuaries (boxes for bones) after the corpse had decayed in the burial niche.

Ancient Israelite bone box (ossuary) found near Jerusalem

BURNING BUSH Moses’ encounter with God at the burning bush was the first step in God’s plan to bring his people, Israel, out of slavery. During Moses’ time of alienation from Egypt (Exod. 2:11–15), the angel of the Lord manifested himself to Moses on Mount Horeb (Sinai) from a bush that was on fire but not being consumed. From within the bush, God spoke to Moses and ordered him to lead the Israelites out from Egypt. God further explained that his name is “I AM WHO I AM” (3:1–14). This incident forms the backdrop for the Jews’ anger at Jesus in John 8:59: Jesus’ reference to himself as “I am” (8:58) was an allusion to the encounter at the burning bush and thus a claim to be God.

BURNING SULFUR *See* Sulfur.

BUSHEL *See* Weights and Measures.

BUTLER The KJV and RSV rendering of the Hebrew word *mashqeh*, the term for Pharaoh’s cupbearer (as in most modern versions), who, along with Pharaoh’s baker, was imprisoned by Pharaoh, during which time they were attended by Joseph (see Gen. 40). *See also* Cupbearer.

BUZ **(1)** Son of Nahor, Abraham's brother, and his wife, Milkah (Gen. 22:21). **(2)** The Gadite father of Jahdo (1 Chron. 5:14). **(3)** An Arabian land condemned by Jeremiah and given to drink the "cup of God's wrath" (Jer. 25:23).

BUZI The father of Ezekiel (Ezek. 1:3). His name is associated with the land of Buz, a country in east Arabia.

BUZITE A person from the east Arabian country Buz. Elihu was the son of Barakel the Buzite (Job 32:2, 6).

BUZZARD The Bible mentions many birds of prey (e.g., in Lev. 11:13–19; Deut. 14:11–18, as unclean), but it is difficult to distinguish the species. The NIV does not use "buzzard," but other English versions use it to render various Hebrew words.

BYBLOS An ancient Phoenician city, also known as Gebal (modern Jbeil or Jubayl), situated on a promontory of the foothills of Lebanon, about forty miles north of Sidon. Its historical significance as an international trade hub connecting Egypt, Greece, and Syria-Palestine has been demonstrated by ample evidence. One famous Egyptian tale (Wen-Amon) describes Byblos as the most powerful port and the main exporter of cedar wood to Egypt. Later, Byblos became a major distribution center for the Egyptian papyrus trade and supplied writing materials to the Greek world (thus the Greek name "Byblos," or "book," from which the English word "Bible" derives).

Byblos is mentioned in Josh. 13:5 as part of the land still unconquered. The men of Byblos aided the construction of the Solomonic temple (1 Kings 5:18). In an oracle against Tyre, Ezekiel mentions the men of Byblos as skillful shipbuilders (Ezek. 27:9). Byblos, or Gebal (ESV, NRSV, KJV), in Ps. 83:7 has been taken to denote a different place near Petra, southeast of the Dead Sea (based on statements from Eusebius and Josephus), but it is better understood as referring to the Phoenician city.

BYWORD A traditional or popular saying used to show scorn. It can be used as a taunt or as a preeminent example of something bad, something that has come to ruin (1 Kings 9:7; Joel 2:17).

C

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CAB A unit of dry measure of capacity or volume, mentioned only in 2 Kings 6:25 (Heb. *qab*). This unit was a little less than half an omer and equivalent to about two liters. *See also* Weights and Measures.

CABBON *See* Kabbon.

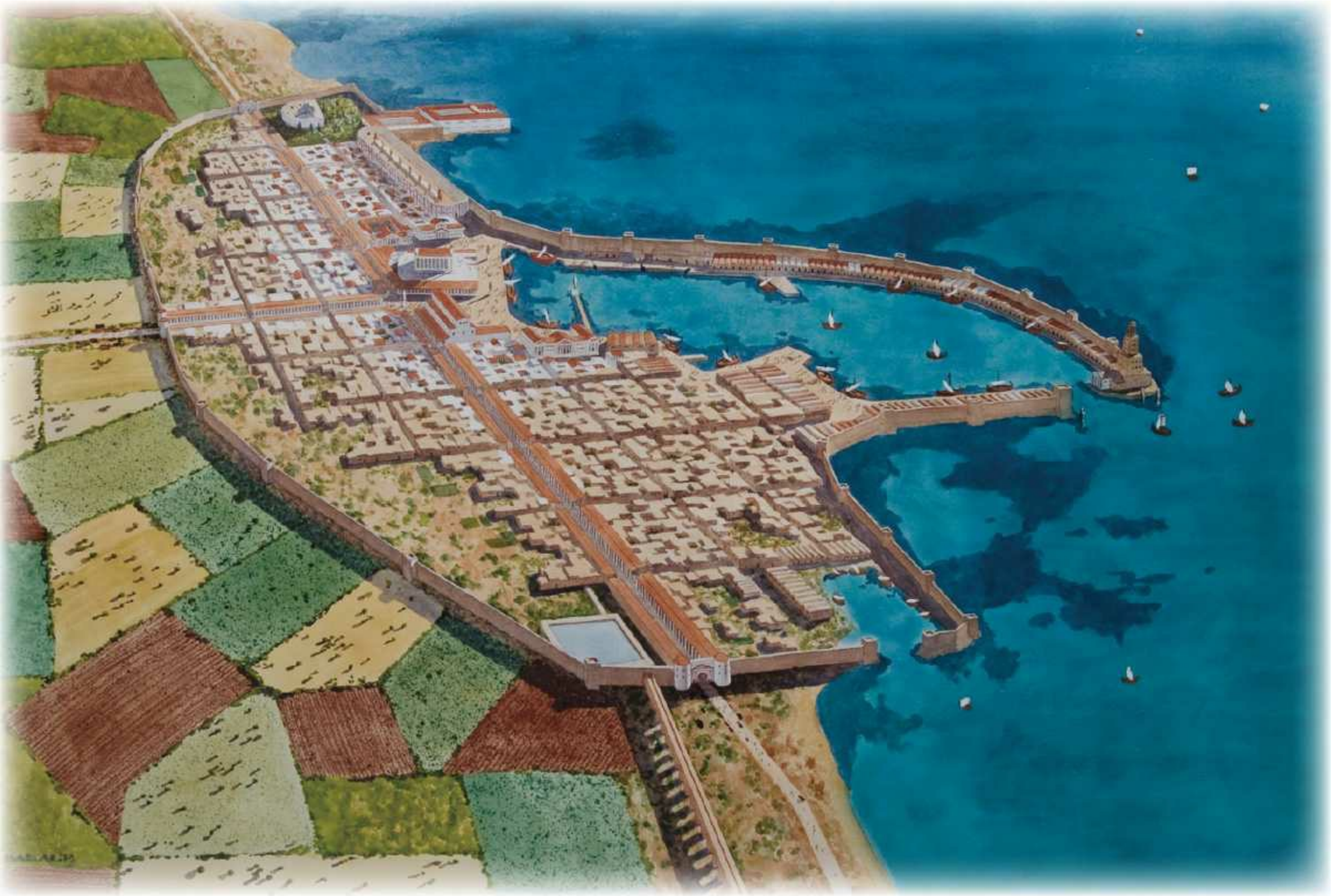
CABIN The KJV translation in Jer. 37:16 of the Hebrew word *khanut*, referring to a compartment within a dungeon (NIV: “vaulted cell”; NRSV: “cells”).

CABUL *See* Kabul.

CAESAR The family name of the Roman emperors following Julius Caesar (100–44 BC). Emperors after Nero retained the title “Caesar,” although they no longer belonged to the family line. The NT alludes to four Caesars: Augustus, also called “Octavian” (r. 31 BC–AD 14), called for the census (Luke 2:1) that brought Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem prior to Jesus’ birth. Tiberius (r. AD 14–37) is named in Luke 3:1 and was the Caesar ruling when Jesus was questioned about paying taxes to Caesar (Matt. 22:17–21; Luke 20:22–25). The famine predicted by Agabus occurred during the tenure of Claudius (r. AD 41–54) (Acts 11:28), the emperor who prompted Aquila and Priscilla’s relocation to Corinth (Acts 18:2) when he expelled the Jewish population from Rome (AD 49). Nero (r. AD 54–68) was the Caesar to whom Paul appealed (Acts 25:10) and from whose household Paul sent greetings to the Philippians (Phil. 4:22).

CAESAREA Built by Herod the Great between 22 and 10/9 BC and named in honor of Caesar Augustus, Caesarea was a major international seaport located on the Mediterranean coast about fifty-five miles northwest of Jerusalem. Also known as Caesarea Maritima or Caesarea Palestinae, it was built on the site of an earlier Phoenician trading station and town known as Strato’s Tower. The ancient historian Josephus describes Herod’s ambitious building program for the city (*J.W.* 1.408–15; *Ant.* 15.331–41), which included palaces, an amphitheater, a theater, a temple dedicated to Caesar, a marketplace, and a great harbor complex called “Sebastos.” The immense harbor complex reflected Herod’s great plans for the city, particularly in regard to its maritime role, and Caesarea did achieve international prominence.

After Herod’s death in 4 BC, his eldest son, Archelaus, succeeded him as king. Augustus removed Archelaus from power in AD 6, and his kingdom, including Caesarea, was absorbed into the Roman Empire. The city was then made the seat of Roman government in the province of Judea. Pontius Pilate governed Judea from Caesarea when he presided over Jesus’ trial.



Caesarea of Herod the Great (first century AD)

Caesarea figures prominently in the establishment of Christianity, according to the book of Acts. Philip, a deacon in the Jerusalem church, appears to have brought Christianity to the city (8:4–40). At the beginning of Paul’s ministry, threats from the Jews in Damascus forced Paul to flee to Caesarea and from there to Tarsus (9:30). Caesarea is where the centurion Cornelius and his household became the first Gentile converts, and where Peter received God’s revelation regarding the acceptance of Gentiles into the kingdom of God (10:1–48).

Caesarea appears to have been an urban center for the early Christian movement. Paul came to the city at the end of his second and third missionary journeys (Acts 18:22; 21:8). On his way to Jerusalem, Paul stayed with Philip, who lived in Caesarea along with his four prophesying daughters (8:40; 21:8–9). It was in Caesarea that Paul made his decision to go to Jerusalem, despite Agabus’s prophecy that the Jews would deliver him over to the Gentiles and the urging of Paul’s companions and the local people for him not to go (21:10–13). Following Paul’s arrest in Jerusalem, he was sent to Caesarea to appear before the governor Felix and remained imprisoned there for two years. When Felix was succeeded by Festus, Paul appealed to Caesar and was sent to Rome (25:11).

CAESAREA PHILIPPI A city located about twenty-five miles north of the Sea of Galilee at the southwest base of Mount Hermon (present-day Jebel esh-Sheikh). Caesarea Philippi was located where the modern city Banias sits, on the northwestern tip of the Golan Heights, about three miles south of Lebanon.

Archaeologists are certain where Caesarea Philippi stood because the location of the cave that gave the town both its ancient and modern names ("Paneus," in honor of the Greek nature deity Pan) has been known since antiquity. There is no known archaeological evidence for settlement of the town prior to the Hellenistic era. Caesarea Philippi was originally the site of a sanctuary dedicated to the worship of Pan. Prior to Herod the Great's reign, the area was sparsely populated.

Sacred pagan sanctuary area at Caesarea Philippi

In 20 BC the Roman emperor Octavian (r. 31 BC–AD 14) gave the area around Caesarea Philippi to Herod the Great, who made the town his capital. Herod's son Philip took control after his father's death, rebuilding the city as Caesarea in honor of Octavian's son Tiberius Caesar (in approximately 1 or 2 BC). During Philip's reign it was commonly called "Caesarea Philippi" (4 BC–AD 34) to avoid confusion, since other cities in the Roman Empire at that time were also called "Caesarea" (such as Caesarea Maritima).

Another of Herod the Great's sons, Agrippa I, ruled Caesarea Philippi for three years (AD 41–44), after which time it reverted to Roman rule until AD 53, when Agrippa II (the son of Agrippa I) was given control of the city (ruling for forty years, until AD 93). Agrippa II built a fortress there and renamed the city "Neronias" (after the emperor Nero), but this name did not become popular and quickly fell into disuse after Nero's reign ended.

The Roman emperor Titus stopped in Caesarea Philippi to rest his army after subduing the Jewish insurrection of AD 66–70. While there, Titus killed many captured Jews in public gladiatorial spectacles. The name of the town reverted back to the older name “Caesarea Paneas” in the second and third centuries AD and then simply to “Paneas” from the fourth century AD onward.

The towns Baal Gad (Josh. 11:17; 12:7; 13:5) and Baal Hermon (Judg. 3:3; 1 Chron. 5:23) were located in the region of what would become Caesarea Philippi. During Jesus’ ministry, the town was populated mostly by Gentiles. The two explicit mentions of Caesarea Philippi in the Bible occur in parallel accounts in the Gospels: it was in the region of Caesarea Philippi that Peter made the memorable confession that Jesus is Israel’s Messiah (Matt. 16:13–30; Mark 8:27–30; see also Luke 9:18–22).

Caesarea Philippi experienced significant expansion and numerous large-scale building projects throughout the reigns of Herod’s descendants, but it dwindled dramatically in size in the following centuries, eventually becoming a small village. During medieval times, the city was refortified as a Crusader outpost.

CAESAR’S HOUSEHOLD Members of the Roman imperial palace staff who carried out the various logistical duties necessary to facilitate the emperor’s rule over the empire. Such persons often were wealthy and influential beneficiaries of imperial favor, but large numbers of slaves were among their number as well. Inscriptions exist naming members of “Caesar’s household,” including many of the same names that appear in Rom. 16. Paul closes his letter to the Philippians with greetings from himself and “Caesar’s household,” thus indicating Rome as the probable origin of that letter (Phil. 4:22).

CAIAPHAS High priest from AD 18 to 36/37. He is best known for presiding over the Jewish trial of Jesus. The Bible mentions him explicitly in Matt. 26:3, 57; Luke 3:2; John 11:49; 18:13, 24, 28; Acts 4:6. Gratus, a Roman prefect of Judea, appointed Caiaphas to the office, and Vitellius, a Roman legate of Syria, removed him from it. According to John 11:49–52, he prophesied about Jesus’ death. He appears several times in the writings of Josephus, though conspicuously rarely considering the length of his tenure.

CAIN The first son of Adam and Eve, initially assigned Adam’s task of working the land. His story is told in Gen. 4: After God favors his younger brother Abel’s offering over his own, he becomes jealous, angry, and downcast (vv. 1–5). God offers him the hope of righteousness and caution against sin, but Cain murders his brother (vv. 7–8). Similar to his parents’ reaction when confronted by God, Cain lies and pleads ignorance when God confronts him about Abel’s death (v. 9), then receives a change in vocational assignment and is banished from God’s presence (v. 14). He becomes a wanderer, and his lineage is prone to arrogance and deceit. The NT use of his name is related to selfishness and wickedness (Heb. 11:4; 1 John 3:12; Jude 11).

CAINAN Greek *kainam* for the Hebrew *qenan*, the name for two different persons in Jesus’ genealogy according to Luke. **(1)** A great-grandson of Adam, a son of Enosh, and the father of Mahalalel (Luke 3:37 [NIV, NET: “Kenan”]; cf. Gen. 5:9–14; 1 Chron. 1:1–2). **(2)** A great-grandson of Noah, a son of Arphaxad, and the father of Shelah (Luke 3:36; cf. Gen. 10:24; 11:12–13 LXX). Since this Cainan does not appear in the MT genealogies, Luke apparently used the LXX for this section of his genealogy for Jesus. It must be remembered that omission of names was an acceptable practice in ancient genealogies for various purposes (e.g., the mnemonic device of Matt. 1:17) so that "son of" can mean "descendant of," and "father of" can mean "ancestor of." *See also* Kenan.

CAKE Various kinds of bread and cakes suitable for offerings appear in Lev. 2. A kind of crisp cake, "cracknel" (KJV), is mentioned in 1 Kings 14:3. Thin cakes were offered in idolatrous worship to the Queen of Heaven (Jer. 7:18; 44:19).

CALAH An Assyrian city built by Nimrod after establishing his kingdom (Gen. 10:11–12). The city is known as one of the four most important Assyrian cities, though it is specifically mentioned only in this one place in the Bible. The city, in modern times known as Nimrud, was situated on the Tigris River, about twenty miles south of Nineveh. Calah only became significant in Assyria during the reign of Ashurnasirpal II (c. 884–859 BC), who made it his capital. His palace included some of the most important reliefs and discoveries ever uncovered concerning Assyria's history.

CALAMUS A word in the OT (Heb. *qaneh*) that sometimes designates a specific scented reed, and sometimes the commercial product made out of that reed. Probably imported from India, calamus was used for its aroma and as a tonic and stimulant (Isa. 43:24; Jer. 6:20; Ezek. 27:19). The aromatic product was an element of various perfumes (Song 4:14) and was used as incense for tabernacle worship (cf. Exod. 30:23). Also known as sweet flag (*Acorus calamus*), it has some carcinogenic properties and hallucinogenic effects at high doses and in modern times has been banned as a food additive in the United States.

CALCOL *See* Kalkol.

CALDRON A cooking vessel, named in 1 Sam. 2:14 as one of the vessels from which Eli's sons took boiling meat. The Hebrew word here, *qallakhat*, is rendered elsewhere as "kettle" or "pot" by some modern versions (Mic. 3:3). The KJV renders the Hebrew *sir*, also a cooking vessel, as "caldron" (Ezek. 11:3, 7, 11).

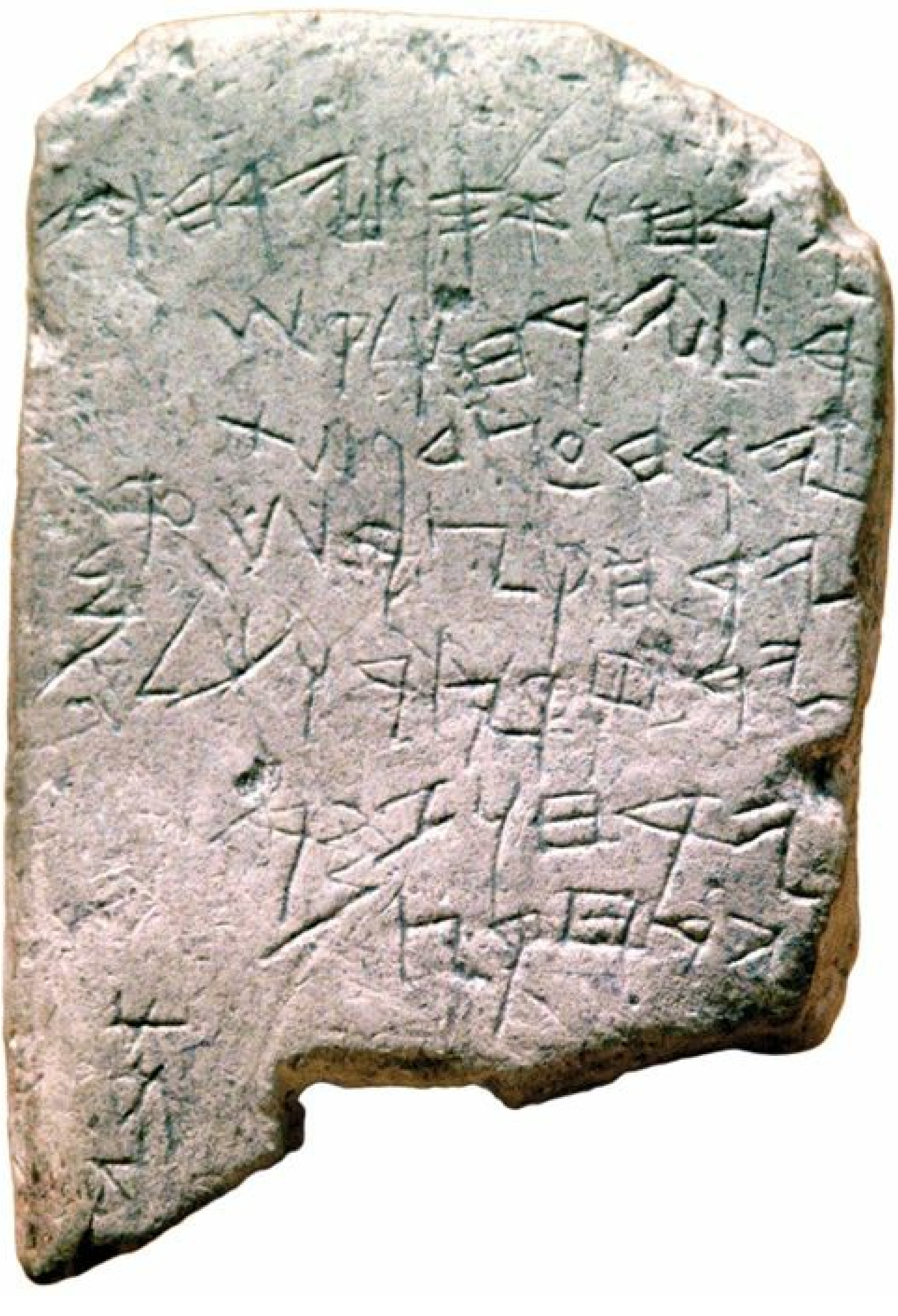
CALEB **(1)** One of the twelve spies sent into the promised land by Moses (Num. 13:1–14:45). He represented the tribe of Judah. When the spies returned, they reported that the land was beautiful and fertile, flowing with "milk and honey." However, they also described the inhabitants as fearsome and dangerous. The majority of the spies gave a counsel of despair, saying, "We can't attack those people; they are stronger than we are" (Num. 13:31). Caleb, supported by Joshua of Ephraim, gave a minority report, advising that they attack the land. The advice of the ten spies convinced the people who lacked faith in God's ability to give them victory. In response to their complaints, God determined that the generation of Israelites who came out of Egypt would die in the wilderness. Thus, they spent forty years wandering before they were permitted to enter the land. The faithful spies, Caleb and Joshua, were exceptions, the only ones in their generation allowed to actually enter the promised land.

Caleb was forty when he served as a spy and eighty-five at the time the land began to be distributed to the tribes. Caleb came forward and asked that Joshua give him the land around Hebron. To actually possess the city, he successfully drove out the dreaded Anakites, who particularly put terror in the hearts of the Israelites (Josh. 14:6–15; 15:13–15).

(2) A descendant of Judah through Perez and Hezron (1 Chron. 2:9, 18–20).

CALEB EPHRATHAH A place mentioned only in 1 Chron. 2:24 as the location where Hezron, the father of Caleb, died. Some have suggested that Caleb Ephrathah may have been the place where Caleb and his wife Ephrath (1 Chron. 2:19) lived, possibly Bethlehem (see Mic. 5:2). Others, however, preferring the LXX reading, see Eprathah as a woman: “After the death of Hezron, Caleb went in to Ephrathah” (cf. ESV, NET).

CALENDAR Because calendars are culturally constructed systems, there are several important differences between the modern calendar and the calendars used in biblical times. When dealing with ancient Jewish and early Christian sources, we can reconstruct complete calendar systems. However, the Bible itself, written over many centuries, employs several calendar systems and systems of dating. No single normative calendar system emerges from biblical materials. Nevertheless, many aspects of life in biblical Israel depended on the use of calendars, which regulated religious festivals, agricultural activity, various aspects of the legal system, and the recording of historical events.



MEASUREMENT OF TIME IN ANTIQUITY

There were several methods of reckoning time in antiquity. Some units of time corresponded to the observation of celestial phenomena (see Gen. 1:14), such as the rising and setting of the sun (defining the day), the waxing and waning of the moon (the lunar month), the ascension of the sun in the sky at noon (the solar year). Other measurements of time were defined by the agricultural cycle, including planting and the beginning and end of the harvest (see Exod. 23:16; Ruth 1:22). An agricultural scheme serves as the basis of the Gezer Calendar, an important archaeological object of the tenth century BC unearthed about thirty miles northwest of Jerusalem. The Gezer Calendar divides the year into eight periods of one or two months, each of which corresponds to the planting, tending, and harvest of various crops. Still other units of time, such as the seven-day week and the lunisolar year (see below), were derived by counting or calculation and did not correspond to any observable celestial or terrestrial phenomena.

The division of days into hours and minutes is possible in modern times because of mechanical and electronic timepieces. Without these devices, divisions of time shorter than the day would have been approximations at best. Biblical texts refer to dawn, morning, noon, evening, night, and midnight. In NT times, the twelve daylight hours were numbered (Matt. 27:45; John 11:9). There was also a system of dividing the night into “watches,” attested in both the NT and the OT.

THE MONTH AND THE YEAR IN THE BIBLE

The Hebrew words for “month” are related to the words for “moon” and “new” (i.e., the “new moon”), which suggests that the ancient Israelite month was a lunar month corresponding to the waxing and waning of the moon over a period of twenty-nine or thirty days. The Bible refers to numbered days in each month, as high as the twenty-seventh day.

There are several systems of naming the months in the Bible. Four “Canaanite” month names appear in the OT: Aviv (the first month), Ziv (the second), Ethanim (the seventh), and Bul (the eighth). Because of the infrequent use of these names, some scholars have questioned whether this system was in widespread use in ancient Israel. The names probably are derived from agricultural terms.

In many cases the months are simply numbered. In this system, the first month began in the spring season. According to biblical narrative, this way of reckoning the beginning of the year was commanded to Moses at the time of the exodus (Exod. 12:1). However, the Bible applies this scheme to events much earlier, as in the story of the flood of Noah, which began in the second month (Gen. 7:11), and scholars have associated the numerical system of months with late biblical sources, around the time of the exile. The system may have come into use around that time and replaced an older system.

In some late biblical texts Babylonian month names are adopted, including Nisan (the first month), Sivan (the third), Elul (the sixth), Chislev (the ninth), Tebet (the tenth), Shebat (the eleventh), and Adar (the twelfth). Following biblical usage, the Babylonian month names were adopted in the ancient Jewish calendar, which is still in use today.

Based on references to the “twelfth month,” the Israelite year apparently consisted of twelve lunar months. Accordingly, the lunar year consisted of approximately 354 days, which means that it would not have corresponded to the solar year of approximately 365¼ days. The beginning of the year would have drifted between eleven and twelve days each year. Presumably, this would have been an unacceptable situation, given the fact that many of the biblical festivals were both assigned to lunar dates and were correlated to agricultural events. The problem probably was solved through the intercalation of "leap months," as was the practice in maintaining the later Jewish calendar. The result is a lunisolar calendar, in which the year is composed of twelve lunar months and is corrected relative to the solar year by the periodic addition of a second Adar (Adar II) seven times in every nineteen-year period. The Bible does not mention this procedure or identify who was responsible for maintaining the calendar in ancient Israel.

BIBLICAL DATES

Modern systems of absolute dating, in which all years are numbered relative to a single historical reference point—for example, the birth of Jesus (Anno Domini), the journey of Muhammad in AD 622 (Anno Hegira 1) from Mecca to Medina in Islamic culture, and the creation of the world (Anno Mundi) in Jewish tradition—were unparalleled in biblical times. Instead, events were usually dated relative to the reigns of kings, Israelite or otherwise. For example, the accession of Abijah is dated to the eighteenth year of Jeroboam's reign (1 Kings 15:1), and the proclamation of Cyrus is dated to his first regnal year (Ezra 1:1). In other cases, events were dated relative to important historical events. The beginning of Amos's career as prophet is dated to "two years before the earthquake" (Amos 1:1), and Exod. 12:41 dates the departure from Egypt to the 430th year of the captivity. In other instances, the fixed points on which relative dates are based cannot be determined. The beginning of Ezekiel's career as a prophet is dated to the otherwise unspecified "thirtieth year" (Ezek. 1:1). The verse may simply refer to Ezekiel's age.

The same practices of dating events are followed in the NT. The birth of John the Baptist is dated to "the time of Herod king of Judea" (Luke 1:5). The census of Caesar Augustus is identified as "the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria" (Luke 2:2). As in the OT, such formulas presuppose that the reader has a basic awareness of the succession and reigns of kings and emperors—an advantage lost to modern interpreters, who continue to debate the absolute dating of these events. Perhaps analogously to Ezek. 1:1, the beginning of Jesus' ministry is dated to his thirtieth year of age (Luke 3:23). Other events and persons reported in the NT can be correlated to extrabiblical historical records to establish absolute dates for biblical events (e.g., the death of Herod Agrippa I in AD 44 [Acts 12:23]). These are distinct from instances in which biblical authors are making a conscious effort to provide dates intelligible to their readers. In contrast to OT historical narrative, for the most part, the NT shows little interest in dating events in its narrative, even according to ancient conventions of relative dating.

CALF Although the calf was not a principal animal used in the sacrificial system, there were significant occasions when a male calf or a heifer was slaughtered. These included the ordination offerings (Lev. 9:2–8) and the ritual for dealing with an unsolved murder (Deut. 21:3–8). A heifer was among the animals that Abram cut in pieces when God made the covenant (Gen. 15:9–18; cf. Jer. 34:18–19). As David brought the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem, a bull and a fattened calf were sacrificed (2 Sam. 6:13). Finally, when the prodigal son returned, the father slaughtered a fattened calf (Luke 15:23). Almost half of the thirty-six occurrences of "calf" refer to an idol.

CALF, GOLDEN *See* Golden Calf.

CALIGULA *See* Rome, Roman Empire.

CALKERS, CALKING *See* Caulkers, Caulking.

CALL, CALLING A call or calling is God's summons to live one's life in accordance with his purposes. At creation God instructed Adam to fill the earth and subdue it, and to have dominion over it. God created Eve to be Adam's lifelong companion and to help him fulfill this task (Gen. 1:28). Thus, in the broader (universal) sense, the notion of calling includes the ordinances that God established at creation: work (Gen. 2:15), marriage (2:18, 24), building a family (1:28), and Sabbath rest (2:2–3).

When Adam and Eve disobeyed God, they became alienated from God (Gen. 3:6–19). Their fall brought the same plight of alienation from God upon all humanity. However, it did not abolish the human duty to carry out God's original creation ordinances. Since God showers his blessings on everyone alike (common grace), all human beings possess gifts and are given opportunities to "fill" the earth and "subdue" it. Thus, everyone participates in the universal call (Acts 17:25–26). This has come to be called the "cultural mandate."

However, God's original intention was to have communion with human beings. This could not be realized unless he made provision for human beings to be reconciled with him. Against this backdrop, God initiated his plan to redeem people from their plight of spiritual alienation.

The general call. The promise of God to bring deliverance through a future descendant of Eve established the provision for individuals (e.g., Adam, Abel, Seth, Noah) to be "called" back into a relationship of favor with him (Gen. 3:15). The first occasion when this call is made explicit is in God's call to Abram to leave his country and go to a land that God would show him (11:32–12:1). God promised that Abram would become the father of a nation (12:2–3). In response to God's call and his promise, Abram believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness (15:6). Abram's call was implicitly twofold. First, it was a general call to acknowledge this God as the true God and yield to his lordship. Second, it entailed a specific call to leave his country and journey toward a new country.

Several generations later, God appointed Moses to lead these descendants of Abraham out of Egypt, where they had lived for four hundred years. God's act of delivering them from slavery in Egypt also symbolized redemption from sin's bondage (Exod. 20:2). God had called the people by means of a covenant to be his own special people, to serve him as a kingdom of priests and a holy nation (19:5–6). This was a call to set their lives apart for God by living according to his commands. This general call was more than a verbal summons; it was also the means God used to bring his people into existence (Hos. 11:1).

The NT indicates there is a general call to all people to believe in Christ (Matt. 11:28; Acts 17:30) that becomes effective in the ones that God has already chosen (Matt. 22:14; Acts 13:48; Eph. 1:4–5). The latter, which theologians identify as the "effectual call," is what Paul refers to when he says, "Those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son. . . . And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified" (Rom. 8:29–30). Thus, this is also a sovereign call.

Particular callings. God has endowed each individual Christian with a particular gift set and calls each one to use those gifts in a variety of ways in service to him (1 Pet. 4:10). These callings include one's occupation, place of residence, status as married or single, involvement in public life, and service in the local church. In the OT, God gifted Bezalel and "filled him with the Spirit of God, with wisdom, with understanding, with knowledge and with all kinds of skills" (Exod. 35:31–32) to beautify the tabernacle. In the parable of the talents, Jesus teaches that God has made each of us stewards of whatever he has entrusted to us; we are to become skilled in the use of our gifts and to seek opportunities to use them in service to him (Matt. 25:14–30). Desire is an important factor in discerning one's particular callings (Ps. 37:4). One's particular calling is progressive, unfolding through the different seasons of one's life (Eph. 2:10; 1 Cor. 7:20, 24). No particular calling is more "sacred" than another in God's eyes.

CALNEH, CALNO *See* Kalneh, Kalno.

CALVARY The name given to the site of Jesus' crucifixion. In the Greek NT the site is called "Golgotha," from the Aramaic term meaning "skull," which is translated in the Gospels as the "place of the skull." The Latin Vulgate then translates this phrase as *Calvariae locum* (Matt. 27:33; Mark 15:22; Luke 23:33; John 19:17–18), from which the English term "Calvary" derives. Golgotha could have been given its name because an outcropping of rock gave the place the appearance of a skull, but it seems more likely that Golgotha was a place habitually used for executions. It is clear then how Golgotha warranted its morbid name. The Bible specifies that Golgotha was outside Jerusalem, but not far from the city boundaries of Jesus' day (John 19:20; Heb. 13:12). Today, Calvary lies within Jerusalem's Old City, as Herod Agrippa I (r. AD 40–44) changed the boundaries of the city walls. The land eventually held a pagan temple, the Capitolium, which was torn down by the Christian emperor Constantine starting in AD 325 and replaced with a building complex meant to honor the holy site. After the crucifixion, Jesus was laid in a tomb in a nearby garden at the request of Joseph of Arimathea (Matt. 27:59–60; John 19:41). Very early Christian tradition claims to have identified this site, which today is inside the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. All the constructions and renovations of the site have changed Golgotha greatly since the first century, so that it bears little resemblance to a garden or an execution ground. The word "Calvary" has become a shorthand for the death of Jesus in Christian worship, so that sinners are called to come "to Calvary" and receive forgiveness. *See also* Golgotha.

CALVES, GOLDEN *See* Golden Calf.

CALVES OF THE LIPS This phrase appears in the KJV at Hos. 14:2. Since calves were offered as sacrifices to God in the OT sacrificial system, the idea is that those who offer the "calves" of their lips are speaking a sacrifice of praise to God. The NIV and NRSV follow an alternate reading from the LXX, "fruit of our lips," while the NET maintains the sense of the Hebrew text by rendering it as "we may offer the praise of our lips as sacrificial bulls." See also Heb. 13:15.

CAMEL A large four-footed mammal that has been used by humans as a pack animal and for transportation since at least the second millennium BC. The camel found its greatest use in caravans, groups of traders that crossed deserts with goods in order to sell them in foreign markets.

There are two kinds of camel, the dromedary (one-humped) camel that was native to the region of Israel, and the Bactrian (two-humped) camel that is indigenous to central and eastern Asia. Called the "ships of the desert," they are ideally suited to life in a hot and arid environment. Camels can close off their nostrils and will do so in a sandstorm. Their long eyelashes are able to protect their eyes from the sun and sand particles.

Perhaps camels' most valuable adaptation is their biological ability to conserve the use of water. In addition to many other water-saving traits, their skin and coats of hair are optimized to reduce the need for sweating, the water content of their waste is well below other animals, and they can retain the amount of plasma in their blood for a remarkable length of time when deprived of water. Camels' humps do not hold water, as is commonly misunderstood, but are made up of a fatty tissue that constitutes the major energy reserve of the animal.

Camels first appear in the Bible in Genesis in the patriarchal narratives, where they are a part of the pastoral assets (12:16). They are also featured prominently in the story of finding Rebekah to be Isaac's wife (24:10–36). Joseph was taken to Egypt by a caravan, which carried balm and myrrh in addition to human cargo (37:25). In the dietary regulations of Mosaic law, the camel is unclean and cannot be eaten (Lev. 11:4; Deut. 14:7). Camels continue to appear as beasts of burden and as livestock throughout the Bible in a number of contexts.

CAMEL'S HAIR The thick coat of hair from a camel shed every spring, often used for weaving into a rough cloth. The camel was considered unclean to eat (Lev. 11:4; Deut. 14:7), but apparently not to wear. John the Baptist and earlier prophets wore camel's hair (2 Kings 1:8; Zech. 13:4; Matt. 3:4; Mark 1:6). The clothing also distinguishes the Baptist from the Essenes, who wore only linen (Josephus, *J.W.* 2.123).

CAMP, ENCAMPMENT Temporary homes for seminomadic peoples as well as military personnel. A number of Hebrew words are translated in the English Bible as "camp" or "encampment."

For example, a *tirah* was a camp protected by a stone barrier or wall (Gen. 25:16; Num. 31:10; Ezek. 25:4), a *ma'gal* was a ring of wagons or a circular camp (1 Sam. 17:20; 26:5, 7), and a *nawah* was perhaps a nomadic pasturage camp (Ps. 68:12 NIV).

Remains of the Roman encampment at Masada

The most frequent word for "camp," *makhaneh*, occurs over two hundred times in the OT and is derived from the verbal root *khanah*, meaning "to set up a camp or encampment." Isaac and Jacob camped during their journeys (Gen. 26:17; 31:25). After leaving Laban and meeting the angel of God, Jacob declared the place of the theophany to be "the camp of God" and named it "Mahanaim," meaning "double camp" (32:1–2). In Gen. 32:21 Jacob's camp is probably a traveling entourage composed of a number of tents.

In many cases *makhaneh* refers to a military camp. After the exodus and during the wilderness journeys, the Israelites resided in this type of settlement (Exod. 14:2, 9; Num. 33; Deut. 2:14–15). Moses led the Israelites out of the camp to meet with God at Sinai (Exod. 19:16–17).

Each tribe had its own camp (Num. 2). Because of the presence of God in its midst, Israel's camp was to be holy. Leviticus and Deuteronomy contain laws regulating camp life (Lev. 14:3, 8; Deut. 23:10–11). Any unclean person or thing was to be put outside the encampment (Num. 5:1–4; Deut. 23:14). The angel of the Lord encamped around them (Ps. 34:7). The Israelite army encamped at numerous places during the conquest of Canaan (Josh. 4:19) and the monarchical period (1 Sam. 29:1).

The NT uses the Greek term *parembolē* to refer to the Israelite camp where animals sacrificed as sin offerings were "burned outside the camp" (Heb. 13:11–13). Since Jesus suffered outside the gate as a sacrifice for us, believers are called to join him outside the camp, "bearing the disgrace he bore.” Revelation 20:9 speaks of “the camp of God’s people.”

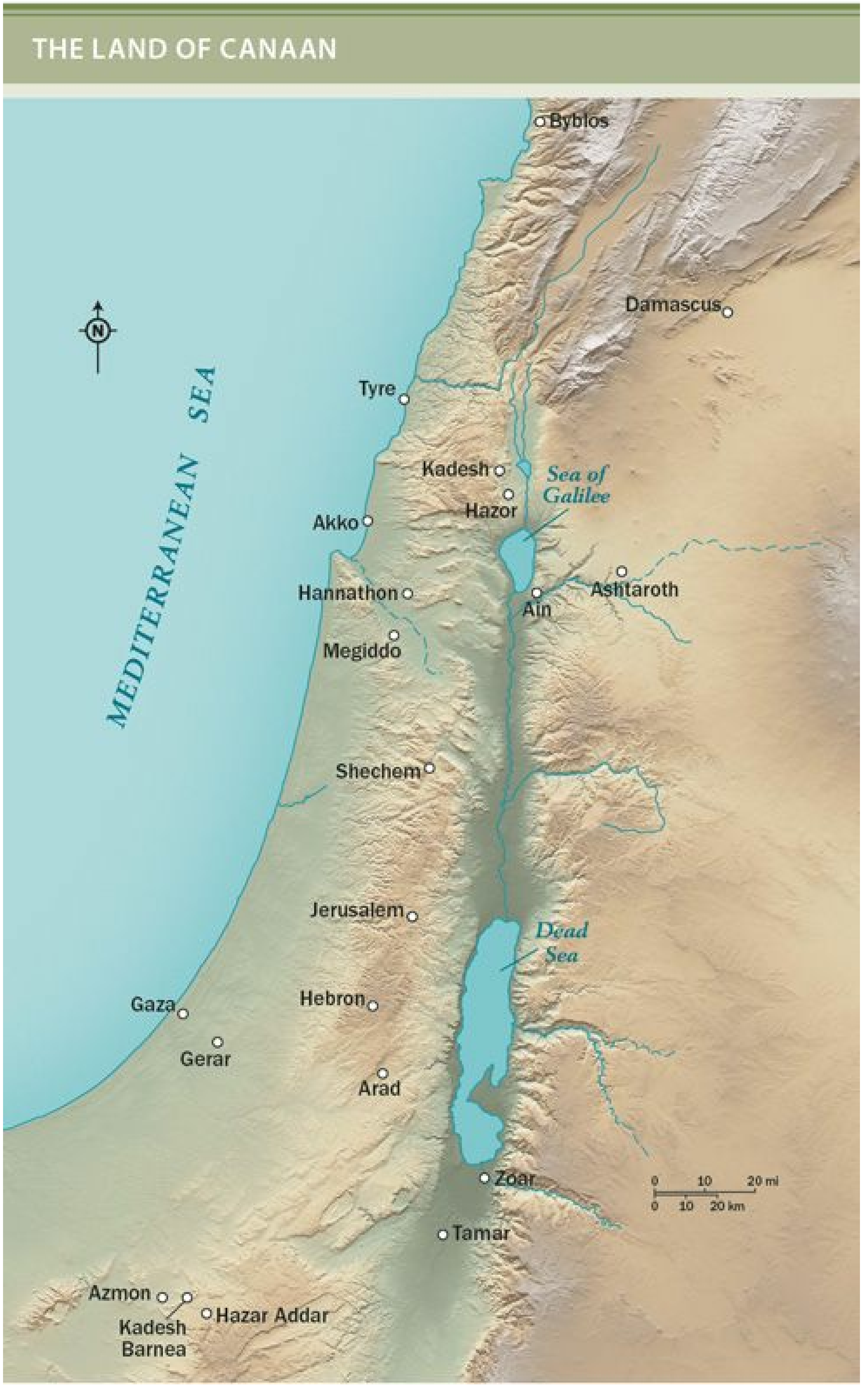
CAMPHIRE The KJV rendering of the Hebrew word *koper* in Song 1:14; 4:13. Most modern versions translate it as “henna,” a shrub known in Palestine and Egypt.

CANA A village of uncertain location near Nazareth, though Khirbet Qana is a possible candidate. Cana is mentioned only in John’s Gospel. Though undistinguished (its name is always qualified as “Cana in Galilee”), it is given prominence as the place where Jesus performed his first and second signs (John 2:1, 11; 4:46). Nathanael, its only known citizen (John 21:2), raises its status further by becoming the first to confess Jesus as the Son of God and King of Israel (John 1:49).

CANAAN Son of Ham, grandson of Noah, and the father of the families that would become known as the Canaanites (Gen. 10:6, 15–19). Oddly, in the account of Ham’s great sin against Noah (seeing his father’s nakedness), Noah cursed his grandson Canaan rather than his son Ham (Gen. 9:18–27). The explanations of such cursing vary, but the passage ultimately establishes the context by which the Bible explains the relationship of the Canaanites to the Israelites in the centuries that followed. The most plausible reasons for why Canaan was cursed rather than Ham center on the irrevocability of God’s blessing of Ham in Gen. 9:1 or that Canaan played some undescribed role in the sinful act. The curse also included a promise of animosity between Canaan and the sons of Japheth (9:27). This element of the curse probably found fulfillment with the entrance of the Philistines (Sea Peoples) into the land at about the same time Israel was entering it under Joshua’s leadership.

CANAAN, LAND OF A region generally identified with the landmass between ancient Syria and Egypt, including parts of the Sinai Peninsula, Palestine from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean, and southern Phoenicia (modern Lebanon). Although there is some discussion about the origin of the name “Canaan” and its meaning, the name apparently arises from the primary inhabitants of the region prior to Joshua’s incursion into the land, since it is primarily used in connection with the phrase “the land of,” indicating that the descendants of Canaan possess it. Because the identity of the land of Canaan was linked as much to its inhabitants as it was to any sort of fixed borders, the boundaries are identified in various ways throughout the biblical text. Such descriptions vary from a rather limited area of influence (as suggested by Num. 13:29) to a larger land spanning an area from the Euphrates to the Nile (Gen. 15:18; Exod. 23:23). Because of its strategic position as a buffer between Egypt and Mesopotamia and between Arabia and the sea, it served as a primary trading outpost and the location of numerous important historical events both prior to and after Israel’s appearance in the land.

In the Bible, the geographical reference “the land of Canaan” finds primary expression, not surprisingly, in Genesis through Judges. The promise to Abraham that his descendants would inherit the land of the Canaanites (Gen. 15:18–21) is the theological focal point of the uses of the term “Canaan” throughout these biblical books. Once that inheritance was achieved and Israel became a viable state, the term’s use seems to serve the double purpose of being both a geographical marker and a reminder of the nature of its former predominant inhabitants. The prophets drew upon the term to remind Israel of the land’s former status, both in its positive (Isa. 19:18) and negative (Isa. 23:11; Zeph. 2:5) connotations. The term is transliterated twice in the NT in the recounting of OT history (Acts 7:11; 13:19). One further connection between Canaan and the perspectives communicated concerning it in the OT is the apparent association of the land with corrupt trade practices. That is, while some believe that the word “Canaan” always meant “merchant” or some similar word, its use in Scripture suggests that the tradesmen of Canaan were of such disrepute in the recollection of ancient Israel that the term became a synonym for “unjust trader” (Job 41:6; Ezek. 16:29; 17:4; Zeph. 1:11; Zech. 14:21).


THE LAND OF CANAAN
Byblos
Damascus
N
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
Tyre
Kadesh
Sea of Galilee
Hazor
Akko
Ashtaroth
Hannathon
Ain
Megiddo
Shechem
Jerusalem
Dead Sea
Gaza
Hebron
Gerar
Arad
Zoar
0 10 20 mi
0 10 20 km
Tamar
Azmon
Hazar Addar
Kadesh Barnea

HISTORY

The proximity of Canaan to Egypt meant that from its earliest periods it found itself beholden to the pharaohs of Egypt. The Egyptian Execration texts from the Old Kingdom era tell of Egypt’s influence over Canaan in the early second millennium. After the expulsion of the Hyksos from Egypt, the pharaohs of the New Kingdom asserted their control over the land. Most famous among these records is Thutmose III's account of his defeat of Megiddo through the implementation of both cunning and skill. This same pharaoh would establish a system of dividing Canaan and its inhabitants for taxation and administration that would be so successful that Solomon would reimplement the same system during his reign (1 Kings 4:7–19). Even in the weaker days of Egypt following the New Kingdom, pharaohs such as Necho and Shishak and their successors the Ptolemies would often seek to revisit the days of glory in campaigns into Canaan.

In addition to Egypt, other outside forces found their way into Canaan and exerted influence on its development. The earliest settlers seem to have come from Mesopotamia, and Semitic influence is witnessed as early as 3000 BC. In the period between Egypt's control of Canaan during the Old Kingdom and its later reassertion after expelling the Hyksos, Canaan witnessed a massive influx of Amorites from the north and also incursions by the Hittites and the Hurrians. As Egypt's power waned toward the end of the New Kingdom, the Philistines came in from the sea and the Israelites from across the Jordan. All these societies were absorbed into the Canaanite culture or were themselves modified by the Canaanites. Israelite success in removing mention of the Canaanites as an identifiable entity would not be firmly established until late in the eighth century under Hezekiah.

The story of Israel's predominance in the area of Canaan begins, of course, with the infiltration into the land under Joshua and persists until the fall of the temple in AD 70 at the hands of the Romans. During that period, Canaan endured as a place of importance as a staging ground for controlling both Mesopotamia and Egypt and therefore witnessed campaigns by most of the great leaders of Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome. Of course, with each campaign came alterations in both the political and the cultural landscape of the land and reinforcement of the view that the area was the center of the world. Indeed, it is in Canaan, in the Jezreel Valley, that Scripture turns its focus for the final battle between God and the forces of Satan at Armageddon.

GEOGRAPHY AND CLIMATE

Geography. Though small in scope, the region of Canaan encompassed a surprisingly wide variety of environments. Within its topography one could find perilous deserts, snow-capped mountains, thick forests, lush plains, coastal beaches, rugged hills, deep valleys, and separate water sources full of both life and minerals. The Shephelah, or coastal plain, lacks any natural harbor areas that would have led to the early exploitation of the Mediterranean in the south that is so well known in the northern areas of Phoenicia. It does, however, provide wide-open, fertile areas fed by the rain runoff from the central hill country, which allowed it to be a useful source of farming and civilization from a very early period.

The central hill country is essentially a ridge that runs parallel to the coast and undulates in elevation from the mountainous north to the rugged but less elevated regions of the south. This ridge served as a natural barrier against travel from west to east, so it is not surprising that important military towns such as Hazor cropped up in places where valleys in this ridge allowed travelers to move from the coast to the inland regions as necessary to reach Mesopotamia from Egypt. One such valley of significance through the history of the land of Canaan is the Esdraelon or Jezreel Valley. It provides a wide swath of land that moves from Akko in the west (just north of the Carmel Range) to the Sea of Galilee in the east, with access points in the north and south. Within this valley were settlements such as Megiddo and Hazor in earlier times, and Nazareth and Tiberias in later times.

Along the eastern edge of the central hill country is the Jordan Rift Valley. The elevation drops dramatically from cities in the hill country, such as Jerusalem at about 2,500 feet above sea level, to cities in the valley, such as Jericho at about 1,000 feet below sea level, within the span of about fifteen miles. The valley itself is part of a much larger rift that starts in southeast Turkey and continues all the way to Mozambique in Africa. Waters from snowy Mount Hermon and a couple of natural springs feed into the Sea of Galilee and then flow into the Jordan River, which snakes its way down into the Dead Sea. The lands around the Jordan River were once very fertile in the north and probably included abundant forests and wildlife. Toward the south of the Jordan River, one approaches the wilderness surrounding the Dead Sea, a region well known for its mineral contents.

The southernmost section of Canaan, known as the Negev, is an unforgiving region with mountains, deserts, and interspersed oases throughout. It opens up into the Arabian Desert to the east and the Sinai Peninsula to the southwest. Its primary cities of importance in biblical times were Beersheba and Raphia. As the gateway from Egypt to Canaan, the Negev played a significant role in biblical history.

Climate. The climate of Canaan played a significant role in its religion and history. It is generally recognized that climate change played a rather momentous role in population movements by nomads, in destabilization of powerful governments, and in the capability, or lack thereof, of nations to participate in the trade that was at the heart of Canaan's growth, spread of influence, and success. Within Canaan itself, because the natural water sources were on the wrong side of the central hill country, most of its water came from rainfall. It is not surprising, therefore, that many of the discussions that take place in both Canaanite and Israelite religious expressions concerning the power of their gods found utterance in terms of a god's ability to grant rain (see 1 Kings 17–18). The rainy season began in October and typically continued through April. The other months of the year witnessed little or no rainfall. Although in a temperate zone within which one might expect high temperatures, the coastal plains were kept relatively cool by winds coming in off the sea. The coastal mountain areas, such as Carmel, were the most likely to receive rainfall, so when they were without it, all the land suffered (Amos 1:2).

CULTURE AND POLITICS

The history of Canaan begins with an archaeological record that travels back into the first signs of human settlement anywhere in the world. Such early attestation exists within the confines of Palestine itself at Jericho and Megiddo, both sites of natural springs that would have attracted settlers. The pre-Israelite civilizations of Canaan are well attested during the Bronze Age (c. 3300–1200 BC). Their culture as represented in the art and architecture of the land demonstrates a developed people who were metropolitan in taste and gifted in style. Furthermore, because of the placement of the land between Egypt and Mesopotamia and the numerous incursions by outside forces throughout its history, Canaan reveals a people with a high tolerance for change and a willingness to absorb other viewpoints into their perspectives and practice. Archaeological finds reveal a mixture of Egyptian, Sumerian, Amorite, Hittite, and Akkadian influences in their literature, material wealth, and religion.

Though unified in terms of a worldview and religious expression, the people of Canaan were politically committed to independent expressions of their power and influence. The greater cities seem to have served as hubs around which smaller communities and cities organized and remained separate from each other. The Amarna letters of the fourteenth century BC reveal leaders who did not trust each other and who sought the Egyptian pharaoh's favor as they vied for position and strength. As one would expect, different city-states held more sway in different eras. Ebla flourished in the period of 2500–2000 BC and then again around 1800 BC. Likewise, Byblos flourished in the period of 2500–1300 BC. It is in the Middle Bronze Age (2200–1550 BC) that cities more directly involved with the biblical narrative started to flourish. For instance, Jerusalem, Jericho, Hazor, and Megiddo reached their height of power and influence around 1700–1500 BC, and each of these is mentioned in various texts of the time that give us some insight into Canaan's role in the greater political history. It is Ugarit/Ras Shamra, which flourished in 1400–1200 BC, however, that has granted us the greatest amount of textual knowledge and information about the religion and literature of Canaan.

RELIGION

The excavations of Ras Shamra (beginning in 1929), and the accompanying discovery of its archive of clay tablets, granted modern scholars a perspective into Canaanite religion that had been hinted at in the biblical text but previously had remained somewhat of a mystery. The tablets themselves date between 1400 and 1200 BC. They reveal a highly developed religion with identifiable, well-defined deities. These deities represent religious practice and thought in the region that go back to at least 2000 BC, and the Mesopotamian religions they are dependent on go back well beyond that.

Canaanite deities. The primary gods identified in the text include El, Baal, Asherah (at Ugarit, Athirat), Anath (at Ugarit, Anat), and Ashtoreth (at Ugarit, Astarte). El was the supreme Canaanite deity, though in popular use the people of Canaan seem to have been more interested in Baal.

The relationship between the Canaanite use of the name "El" for their supreme god and Israel's use of the same in reference to its own God (Gen. 33:20; Job 8:3; Pss. 18:31, 33, 48; 68:21) is something that biblical authors used at various points in their writings (Ps. 81:9–10; Nah. 1:2), never in the sense of associating the two as one and the same, but solely for the purpose of distinguishing their God, Yahweh, from any associations with the descriptions and nature of the Canaanite El (Exod. 34:14). Practically speaking, the coincidence probably resulted from the fact that the Hebrew word *'el* had a dual intent in its common usage, similar to the way a modern English speaker will sometimes use "god" as either a common or a proper noun.

Like "El," the term "Baal" had a dual function in its use. Because the word means "master" or "lord," the people of Canaan could apply "Baal" to either the singular deity of the greater pantheon or to individual gods of a more local variety. Local manifestations included Baal-Peor, Baal-Hermon, Baal-Zebul, and Baal-Meon. The OT acknowledges the multiplicity of Baals in some places (Judg. 2:11; 3:7; 1 Sam. 7:4) but also seems to allude to a singular ultimate Baal (1 Kings 18; 2 Kings 21:3), called "Baal-Shamen" or "Baal-Hadad" elsewhere. The fact that Baal was recognized in the Ugaritic texts as the god of the thunderbolt adds an interesting insight to the struggle on Mount Carmel, in which one would suppose that had he been real, the one thing he should have been able to do was bring fire down from the sky; but he could not (1 Kings 18). Recognition that the term "Baal" could refer to a number of gods or to one ultimate god may also help one understand the syncretism that took place in Israel between Yahweh and Baal addressed by the prophet Hosea (Hos. 2:16). To the common person who recognized the multiplicity of the term "Baal" and yet also heard of his supremacy, the assignment of the name to Yahweh and the resulting combining that would occur would seem a natural progression, though still sinful in the eyes of God.

The synthesis of Baal and Yahweh is demonstrated in Scripture as being a temptation from national Israel's earliest encounters with Baalism. The events at Peor (Num. 25) demonstrate a propensity toward this type of activity, but the confusion between Yahweh and Baal became strongest once Israel entered into the land. Gideon had a second name, "Jerub-Baal" (Judg. 6:32), and the people themselves worshiped Baal-Berith ("Baal of the covenant") as an indication that they believed their covenant to be with Baal, not Yahweh. Saul, Jonathan, and David all had sons named for Baal: Esh-Baal, Merib-Baal, and Beeliada respectively. Jeroboam I made the connection even more explicit in his setting of shrines at Dan and Bethel with the golden calves that were common icons for Baal in the era, but that he apparently viewed as being appropriate representations of Yahweh. By the time of the prophets, such confusion evidently was entrenched into the very heart of both Israel and Judah; however, Yahweh was able to utilize the false assessments of his character to clarify his true character and ultimately bring Israel back to him.

Asherah was the wife of El in Ugaritic mythology, but apparently because of Baal's accessibility and ubiquitous nature, she was ultimately given to Baal as a consort among Canaanites in the south. Apparently, her worship was also linked to trees, and the mentioning of "Asherah poles" (Exod. 34:13; Deut. 7:5; Judg. 6:25) in Scripture suggests that such a linkage had been stylized into representative trees at sacred locations. Asherah had prophets (1 Kings 18:19) and specific instruments of worship in Israel (2 Kings 23:4) and became so ensconced in practice and thought that her form often was replicated in the form of items known as Asherim. The previously mentioned synthesis between Baal and Yahweh seems also to have found expression regarding Asherah within Israel. At Kuntillet Ajrud a famous graffito reads "Yahweh of Samaria and his Asherah." This example of the people granting a consort to Yahweh is yet another instance where the biblical revelation is so distinct among surrounding cultures because of the absence of such imagery regarding God.

Anath was understood as both Baal's sister and his lover in Canaanite mythology. Given her apparent replacement in the thought of the southern Canaanite tribes by Asherah, it is not surprising that the only place we find Anath mentioned is in appellations, such as "Beth Anath" (lit., "the house of Anath" [Josh. 19:38; Judg. 1:33]). She also seems to have played a role in the tone of Baal worship in that she functioned as a goddess of both warfare and sexuality. Her portrayal in Ugaritic texts and in inscriptions from Egypt suggests a lasciviousness that has become the defining characteristic of Canaanite worship and also seems to be at the center of the methodology implemented by Hosea to reach Israel, which had become ensnarled in a similar outlook regarding Yahweh (Hos. 1–3).

The descriptions of Ashtoreth at Ugarit portray her in much the same light as Anath. Some cultures such as Egypt and later Syria seem to have even melded them together into one being. Whether this combining was a part of the Israelite conceptions is difficult to determine, although such a combination may explain why only Ashtoreth is mentioned in the biblical text as an individual deity and not Anath. In any case, Ashtoreth apparently was a primary figure in the corruption of worship during the reign of Solomon (1 Kings 11:5, 33; 2 Kings 23:13).

Summary. By the time the Israelites entered the land, they found a religion that was already well established and accustomed to absorbing various viewpoints into its expression and practice. Additionally, they found a religion that catered to the more base and animalistic tendencies to which all humanity is drawn since the fall. The commonality of such practices among almost all ancient cultures serves as a potent reminder of the distinctiveness and power of the biblical worldview. The narratives, poems, and prophetic oracles of the OT demonstrate a knowledge of these beliefs and an acknowledgment of their place in the lives of everyday Israelites, but they never demonstrate a submission to them in their portrayal of the true God and his expectations of his people.

CANAL An inland waterway. The NIV uses the word to describe tributaries of the Nile (see Exod. 7:19; 8:5; Isa. 19:6) as well as various constructed waterways in Babylonia and Persia (Ezra 8:15, 21, 31; Dan. 8:2, 3).

CANANAEAN A rendering of *Kananaios*, which is a Greek transliteration of the Aramaic word for *zealot*, used as an epithet for the disciple Simon to differentiate him from Simon Peter (Matt. 10:4; Mark 3:18; cf. Luke 6:15; Acts 1:13 [NIV: "the Zealot"]). It is not known whether Simon belonged to the Zealots, the Jewish sect that opposed Roman rule in Palestine, or was zealously devoted to Jewish law (see Acts 21:20).

CANDACE *See* Kandake.

CANDLE, CANDLESTICK The KJV renderings of Hebrew words (*ner*; *menorah*) translated "lamp" and "lampstand" in most modern versions. The terms can refer to a candle, lamp, torch, or other such device that provides light, or to the source to hold such light. The Greek word *lychnos*, usually translated "lamp," sometimes is used figuratively as Christian conscience (cf. Matt. 5:14–15).

CANE *See* Calamus.

CANKER This term appears in the KJV translation of 2 Tim. 2:17; James 5:3, involving two different Greek words. A canker is any source of corruption or debasement. In 2 Tim. 2:17 the word is *gangraina*, referring to a disease involving inflammation and spreading ulcers. Modern translations read "gangrene," the local death of body tissues due to loss of blood supply. In James 5:3 the word is *katioō*, which refers to the corrosion of metal, in this case silver and gold. Modern translations read "corroded" or "rusted."

CANKERWORM The KJV translation in Joel 1:4; 2:25; Nah. 3:15–16 of the Hebrew word *yeleq*, which refers to a species of wingless, creeping locust. In Ps. 105:34; Jer. 51:14, 27 the KJV renders the word as "caterpillar." *See also* Locust.

CANNEH *See* Kanneh.

CANON *See* Bible Formation and Canon.

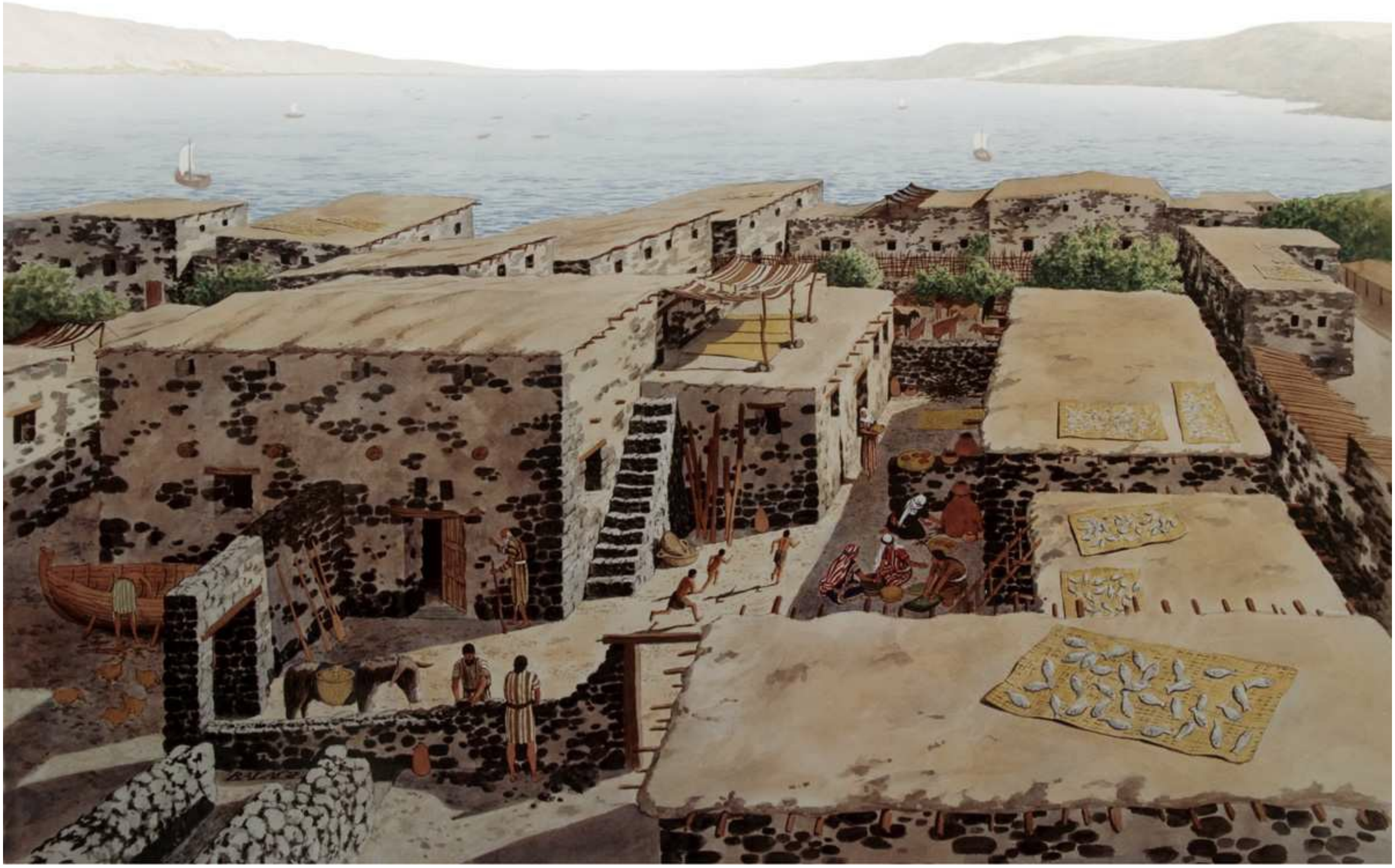
CANTICLES *See* Song of Songs, Book of.

CAP *See* Bonnet.

CAPERBERRY Grown in rock clefts and on walls in Palestine, the caperberry was a common prickly shrub. Its large, white flowers with brightly colored stamens produced small, edible berries. Their repute as excitants of sexual desire is ancient and widespread. The word appears only in Eccles. 12:5 (NASB, NET), where it is used to allude to declining sexual potency that comes with advancing age. Some English versions, picking up on the allusion, simply refer to "desire" waning rather than to the berry itself (NIV, NRSV).

CAPERNAUM A fishing town located on the northwest shore of the Sea of Galilee (Matt. 4:13). Capernaum is referred to in Luke 4:31 as a *polis* ("city" or "town"), so it must have been larger than a typical "village." The town was on an important trade route and was a center for commerce in Galilee. In Capernaum, Jesus called Levi (Matthew) from his "tax booth," probably a customs station for goods in transit (Mark 2:13–17; Matt. 9:9–13; Luke 5:27–32). There may also have been a military garrison in Capernaum, since the town's synagogue was built by a certain centurion whose servant Jesus healed (Matt. 8:8–13; Luke 7:1–10).

Capernaum served as Jesus' base of operations during his Galilean ministry. In Mark's Gospel, Jesus' teaching and healing ministry begins there (Mark 1:21–34), and this is where he returned "home" after itinerant ministry around Galilee (Matt. 9:1; Mark 2:1; 9:33). Although Peter and Andrew were originally from Bethsaida (John 1:44), they lived in Capernaum, and their fishing business was located there. It was here that Jesus healed Peter's mother-in-law (Mark 1:29–31) and a paralyzed man whose friends lowered him through a hole in the roof (2:1–12). Jesus later pronounced judgment against the town, together with Chorazin and Bethsaida, because of the people's unbelief despite the miracles they had seen (Matt. 11:23–24; Luke 10:15). Archaeologists have discovered a first-century home under a fifth-century church in Capernaum. Christian inscriptions in the home indicate that it was venerated by Christians, suggesting to many scholars that this was Peter's residence.



Artist's rendition of the house of Peter at Capernaum

CAPHTOR A place referred to in Deut. 2:23; Amos 9:7 as the original home of the Philistines. Jeremiah refers to the Philistines as "the remnant from the coasts of Caphtor" (Jer. 47:4). The location of Caphtor is uncertain but is widely accepted to be Crete. *See also* Caphtorites.

CAPHTORITES According to Gen. 10:13–14; 1 Chron. 1:11–12 (NRSV: "Caphtorim"), a group of people descended from Noah's son Ham through Mizraim ("Egypt"). Elsewhere they are identified with the Philistines, who inhabited an area north of Egypt on the southern coast of Canaan (Jer. 47:4; Amos 9:7). According to Deut. 2:23, the Caphtorites migrated and dispossessed the land of the Avvites, which reached to the coast of Canaan as far west as Gaza. *See also* Caphtor.

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT The government-sanctioned killing of a perpetrator of a serious offense. The biblical portrayal of capital punishment involves the concept as a God-ordained institution related to the value of humanity and the necessary recompense for the corruption or murder of that ideal (Gen. 9:6).

Methods of capital punishment. The methods of capital punishment listed in the Scriptures are several. The most common method was stoning (Lev. 24:16; Num. 15:32–36; Deut. 13:1–10; 17:2–5), and this required that the primary witnesses for the prosecution be the first to take up stones against the accused. The burning of a person was rare, but it was commanded for certain sexual crimes (Lev. 20:14). In the story of Judah and Tamar, before learning the true nature of her pregnancy, Judah ordered his daughter-in-law to be burned to death outside the city (Gen. 38:24). On occasion, the method of punishment involved being run through by a weapon: Phinehas impaled an Israelite and his Midianite lover with a spear in order to soothe the wrath of God and stop a plague (Num. 25:7–8); Canaanites under the *kherem* (divine command of total destruction) were to be put to the sword (Deut. 13:15), and God commanded that anyone who touched Mount Sinai be shot through with arrows (Exod. 19:13). Beheading seems to have been practiced for crimes against royalty, though there are no mandates concerning it (2 Sam. 16:9; 2 Kings 6:31–32). Other forms of capital punishment included impalement or placement upon a wooden stake (Ezra 6:11; Esther 2:23). Although some understand this to be a form of hanging, archaeological evidence and understandings of the cultures of the time suggest that impalement is more likely. Finally, the Romans took the punishment of crucifixion that they had learned from Carthage and applied it with vigor to those guilty of insurrection (Luke 23:13–33).

Offenses leading to capital punishment. With respect to Israel, the list of offenses deemed worthy of capital punishment primarily focused upon human interrelations, though a few crimes listed did involve the breaking of covenant stipulations involving one's direct relationship with God. From this latter group, crimes such as witchcraft and divination (Exod. 22:18; Lev. 20:27; Deut. 18:20), profaning the Sabbath (Exod. 31:14–17), idolatry (Lev. 20:1–5), and blasphemy (Lev. 24:14–16; Matt. 26:65–66) were included. In these laws one sees the expression of God's wrath and jealousy for his position in the lives of those who claim to be his. Mandates demanding death in response to some sort of corruption of the human ideal included acts such as costing another person his or her life, sexual aberrations, and familial relationships. Anyone who committed murder (Exod. 21:12), put another's life at risk by giving false testimony in a trial (Deut. 19:16–21), or enslaved a person wrongfully (Exod. 21:16) could be considered to have cost someone's life. Sexual aberrations regarded as worthy of death included sexual acts of bestiality, incest, and homosexuality (Exod. 22:19; Lev. 20:11–17), rape (Deut. 22:23–27), adultery (Lev. 20:10–12), and sexual relations outside of marriage (Lev. 21:9; Deut. 22:20–24). The final group of familial relationships primarily applies to the crass rebellion of children against their parents (Deut. 21:18–21).

At times, the righteous faced capital punishment for their beliefs. For example, at the hands of government faithful saints of God were sawn in two (Heb. 11:37 [a Jewish tradition may indicate that the prophet Isaiah died in such a manner]), stoned (Acts 7:58–59), and beheaded (Mark 6:27; Acts 12:2). At other times, attempts were made to inflict such punishment, but God intervened. In these examples, the punishments that God prevented include consumption by lions (Dan. 6), burning in a fiery furnace (Dan. 3), being thrown over a cliff (Luke 4:29–30), and stoning (Acts 14:19).

Capital punishment today. Several opinions persist regarding the appropriateness of continuing the practice of capital punishment in the modern era. For some, passages expressing a command concerning such types of punishment are either descriptive of what was going on or fall under the principle of a culture that no longer exists, so their laws are no longer relevant. Indeed, few today would enforce capital punishment for the same crimes that Israel punished with death. For these individuals, the question then becomes whether Scripture, which required capital punishment at the time it was written, permits capital punishment today. Those who are consistent will admit that if there is no mandate to require it, it must also be admitted that there is no mandate preventing its use as well.

On the other side are those who argue that while one cannot directly apply the laws of the OT to today's situation, the principle expressed, particularly as it pertains to value of humanity, demands the continuation of capital punishment at least in response to heinous crimes that cost an individual his or her life, either literally as with murder, or more figuratively (but just as real) as with rape. For these people, it is significant that the requirements of capital punishment for murder precede the giving of the law (Gen. 9:6). Since the status of humanity in the eyes of God has not altered, neither has his prescribed method of dealing with those crimes been lifted; here the principle requires the practice (Rom. 13:4).

The answers are not easy, but they are important. The biblical text itself regularly balances the expected payment for sins worthy of the death penalty with expressions of grace (Gen. 4:15; Josh. 6:22–23). Furthermore, one must account for the perfect knowledge of God and his execution of his fully justified wrath in contrast to the imperfect knowledge of humanity and the inequalities that sometimes find expression in modern court settings. Finding the balance between holding a biblical worldview that appropriately seeks justice and one regulated by grace is difficult enough in terms of interpersonal relationships; when it is moved to the greater scope of society as a whole, the questions are even more significant and even more difficult to answer. *See also* Crimes and Punishments.

CAPITALS *See* Chapiter.

CAPPADOCIA In ancient times, a sparsely populated region primarily comprised of a large, high-altitude plateau in what is present-day central-eastern Turkey. The geographical region of Cappadocia was bordered in the north by the region of Pontus, in the east by the headwaters of the Euphrates River and portions of the Taurus Mountains, which also served as the region's southern boundary, and in the west by the regions of Pisidia and southwestern Galatia. Cappadocia marks the easternmost boundary of the broader region known today as Asia Minor, and thus it serves as a geographical point of transition between Europe and Asia. The Gospels are set in a time when Cappadocia was a Roman province, which it became in AD 17 under the emperor Tiberius (42 BC–AD 37). During this period, the region had few centers of urban life, and the majority of the population lived in small, widely scattered villages. Residents of Cappadocia are present in Jerusalem at Pentecost (Acts 2:9), and Christians in various regions of the Roman Empire, including Cappadocia, are greeted in the salutations at the beginning of 1 Peter (1:1).

CAPSTONE In the NIV "capstone" appears twice (Zech. 4:7, 10). Zechariah 4:7 uses the phrase *ha'eben haro'shah*, meaning "uppermost stone." In Zech. 4:10, the NIV interprets *ha'eben* as another reference to the capstone, although most other translations understand this as the weight suspended from a plumb line. *See also* Cornerstone.

CAPTAIN **(1)** A leader appointed over a division of soldiers; a commander over the king's bodyguard; the officer in charge of the Jewish guards for the temple (Acts 4:1). **(2)** A sea captain (KJV: "shipmaster"). In Jonah 1:6, a non-Israelite captain asks Jonah to call on God to save their imperiled ship. In John's vision in Revelation (18:17), sea captains are among those who will witness and lament the destruction of Babylon, the source of their wealth.

CAPTAIN OF THE TEMPLE A Jewish priestly officer whose duties included maintaining the purity of the Jerusalem temple. Such officers were agents of the Jewish high priest authorized to engage in basic police and disciplinary functions. In the Gospels, officers of the temple guard were part of the conspiracy to kill Jesus (see Luke 22:4, 52). In Acts, a captain of the temple is mentioned twice in connection with attempts to suppress the popular preaching of the apostles in Jerusalem, usually near the temple (see Acts 4:1; 5:24).

CAPTIVITY A term used to refer to Judah's exile to Babylon in 587–539 BC. *See also* Exile.

CARAVAN Prior to the rise of Roman roads, travel in the ancient Near East was extremely dangerous. For protection, large groups of people and animals traveled together in caravans, especially for trade purposes. Most OT examples are of Arabian caravans of camels carrying spices and other valuables (e.g., Judg. 6:5; 1 Kings 10:1–2; Isa. 21:13; 60:6). Abram travels from Ur to Canaan in a large caravan (Gen. 12). In Gen. 37:25 an Ishmaelite caravan buys Joseph into slavery.

CARAWAY The seeds of the caraway (Heb. *qetsakh*; NRSV: "dill") plant (*Nigella sativa*, not *Carum carvi*) were used as a condiment on bread and were known to ease intestinal gas. As Isa. 28:25–27 describes, light beating freed the seeds without crushing them.

CARBUNCLE In several OT lists of gems, older English versions translate some Hebrew gemological terms as "carbuncle." In Exod. 28:17; 39:10 the word refers to one of the stones set in the priestly "breastpiece for making decisions" (28:15). In Isa. 54:12, translating a different Hebrew term, the restored city of Zion has "gates of carbuncles" (KJV, RSV; NIV: "gates of sparkling jewels"; cf. Rev. 21:21), as does the gem-laden "garden of God" in Ezek. 28:13. The identification in modern terms of gemstones mentioned in the Bible is often difficult. Ancient versional evidence suggests that the biblical carbuncle was a red stone, possibly a garnet.

CARCAS *See* Karkas.

CARCHEMISH An ancient city predating biblical times. It was situated on the very northern portion of the Euphrates River, on its bend southward. The name means "fortress of Chemosh," the god of Moab.

Most relevant to the OT, Carchemish was for a time under Hurrian influence until it came under Hittite control by the thirteenth century BC. Then, in the wake of the sweeping invasions of the Sea Peoples, the Hittite kingdom was destroyed, leaving Carchemish to perpetuate Hittite culture. The kingdom of Carchemish developed into an independent military entity of its own and was able to resist Assyrian expansion until its defeat by Sargon II in 717 BC.

There are three biblical references to Carchemish: 2 Chron. 35:20; Isa. 10:9; Jer. 46:2. In Isa. 10, in the midst of Isaiah's oracles of judgment against Israel, God declares that Assyria is "the club of my wrath" (v. 5), whom he will send to punish his faithless people. Assyria, however, has other plans, "to put an end to many nations" (v. 7). Assyria boasts of its might and compares its defeat of Kalno (in Syria) to the fall of Carchemish (v. 9), likely referring to its defeat at the hands of Sargon II.

The other two texts refer to a very important event in Israel's history. According to Jer. 46:2, it was in the fourth year of Jehoiakim (605 BC). Assyrian dominance of Mesopotamia was about to come to an end at the hands of the Babylonians under Nebuchadnezzar. The Egyptian pharaoh Necho II, wishing to maintain a buffer state between his land and this rising superpower, brought his armies to Carchemish in an effort to save the Assyrians.

According to 2 Chron. 35:20–36:1, King Josiah of Judah met Necho along the way and engaged him in battle. Necho was reluctant, as he had no quarrel with Judah, but Josiah was persistent, apparently thinking that an alliance between Judah and Babylon would be to his advantage. Josiah was shot by archers in battle and died in Jerusalem. Apparently, by the time Necho reached Carchemish, the remnant Assyrian army was defeated, and Nebuchadnezzar proceeded to defeat Necho. As a result, the city of Carchemish never fully recovered. But more important, this battle was decisive in swinging the balance of power away from Egypt and Assyria and toward Babylon, at whose hands Judah would, within a decade, start to be taken into exile. Jeremiah recounts Egypt's defeat in Jer. 49:2–12.

CAREAH *See* Kareah.

CAREER DECISIONS Scripture lays down certain principles for making major life decisions. The key principle that should guide one's decision is the desire to faithfully use one's God-given endowments (see Matt. 25:14–30). Thus, one should be motivated by love for God and a desire to glorify him in one's work (1 Cor. 10:31). In his providence, God has endowed every person with a unique combination of ability, life experience, and temperament. Not every career demands the same degree of creativity, but every job assumes an element of creative ability.

We discover this by first asking, "What types of needs in the community am I drawn to?" To narrow it down a bit more, we ask, "Do I like working with ideas, with things, with people, or with data?" Desire is the initial spark that usually leads one to pursue a particular career path.

Since one's gifting is essential to determining what career would be a good fit, we should also ask, "What am I good at?" For example, it takes a combination of leadership gifts and people skills to work efficiently in a management position.

Finally, since certain opportunities fit one's personality more than others, one should determine what work environment values are most important (e.g., intellectual stimulation, adventure, creativity). A career assessment often is useful in discerning which career is a good fit.

CARITES Mercenaries in the service of the house of David. The priest Jehoiada called on them to rid the land of Athaliah (2 Kings 11:4, 19). At one time they were thought to be foreign mercenaries (the Carians who served the Egyptians in the seventh and early sixth centuries BC), but this view is not widely held today. Although the name also occurs in the Hebrew text of 2 Sam. 20:23, most follow the Qere, which reads "Kerethites."

CARKAS *See* Karkas.

CARMEL Not to be confused with the coastal mountain in northern Israel, Carmel was a city in Judah, near Hebron, and was associated with several stories in the Bible. In 1 Sam. 15:12 Saul visits Carmel and erects a monument. Carmel was the home of Nabal, the first husband of David's wife Abigail (1 Sam. 25:2), and of Hezro, a member of his entourage (2 Sam. 23:35; 1 Chron. 11:37).

CARMEL, MOUNT The wooded mountain promontory on the Mediterranean, near modern Haifa. The name means "the garden." It forms a northern barrier to the coastal plain of Sharon. Mount Carmel provided the perfect stage for its most significant event, the confrontation between Elijah and the prophets of Baal (1 Kings 18), the god of storms and therefore agricultural produce. The mountain's high elevation meant that it was lush until a drought. When the prophets threatened that Carmel would wither, conditions were extreme (Isa. 33:9; Amos 1:2; Nah.1:4).

Mount Carmel

CARMELITE An inhabitant of the city of Carmel in the hill country of Judah (Josh. 15:55). Most notable among those who hail from Carmel is David's wife Abigail (1 Sam. 27:3; 1 Chron. 3:1). The KJV uses the term "Carmelitess" to describe Abigail.

CARMI *See* Karmi.

CARMITES *See* Karmites.

CARNAL The KJV translation of certain Greek constructions referring to "flesh." Most contemporary English versions prefer "of the flesh," "earthly," "worldly," and even "sinful." Occasionally "carnal" simply refers to physical or material things (e.g., Rom. 15:27; 1 Cor. 9:11) or to certain aspects of the OT that have been fulfilled in Christ (Heb. 7:16; 9:10). The notion occurs most frequently in the writings of Paul, who makes special use of "carnal" to contrast it with "spiritual." In Rom. 8:1–11 Paul presents the carnal or worldly person as "Spirit-less" and therefore "Christ-less." By definition, a Christian is spiritual and cannot be carnal ("live according to the sinful nature" [8:4]). That is, those who have Christ necessarily have the Holy Spirit, and therefore they do not follow the pattern of the world, but rather walk by the Spirit and produce spiritual fruit (Gal. 5:16–26).

In other contexts the same apostle can describe Christians as "carnal" (KJV) or "worldly" (NIV). "Brothers, I could not address you as spiritual but as worldly—mere infants in Christ. . . . For since there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not worldly?" (1 Cor. 3:1–3). Here Paul rebukes the Corinthian Christians for their immaturity. The Spirit has sanctified them (6:11), but in their sinful pride and divisiveness they appear to belong to the world, the evil age of sin and death. They must "grow up" so that their conduct befits the Spirit, who now dwells in them.

Although Paul's two uses of "carnal" seem opposed to each other, he is simply calling his Corinthian readers to live consistently with the truths that he expounded in Romans. Christians are fundamentally not carnal, but spiritual. They should therefore act like it in a life marked by faith, hope, and especially love (1 Cor. 13). These are the true signs that someone has the Holy Spirit, even though the Christian may lapse into attitudes and behaviors inconsistent with this new identity in Christ.

CARNELIAN A precious red stone. It is one of the jewels in the high priest's breastpiece (Exod. 28:17; 39:10), as well as in the "covering" (similar to the high priest's breastpiece) for the king of Tyre, who is portrayed as a priest serving in the temple garden of Eden (Ezek. 28:13 NRSV). In the book of Revelation, God, who sits on the throne, has the appearance of carnelian (4:2–3), and carnelian is one of the precious stones in the walls of the new Jerusalem (21:20).

CARPENTER The traditional translation of the Greek term *tektōn*, which refers to someone skilled in working with stone, iron, copper, or wood. Both Jesus (Mark 6:3) and Joseph his father (Matt. 13:55) were "carpenters" (i.e., craftsmen).

CARPUS An acquaintance in Troas to whom Paul had entrusted his cloak, books, and parchments. While imprisoned in Rome, Paul asks Timothy to retrieve them from Carpus (2 Tim. 4:13).

CARRIAGE Solomon appears in a carriage as he arrives for his wedding in Song 3:7, 9. This carriage may be a palanquin (KJV), an enclosed transportation platform without wheels, on poles, carried by porters. The two synonymous underlying Hebrew words may also be translated *sedan chair* or *ornamental litter*.

CARRION VULTURE *See* Vulture.

CARSHENA *See* Karshena.

CART In biblical times, a wheeled vehicle, usually drawn by animals such as oxen and cows and used in agricultural contexts (Num. 7:3; 1 Sam. 6:7; Isa. 28:27; Amos 2:13). The Hebrew word *'agalah* can be translated as "cart" or "wagon." Carts were used to transport objects, but the hilly terrain of Palestine was not conducive to their use (cf. 2 Sam. 6:3–6; 1 Chron. 13:7–9). Thus, they were used primarily in the plains of Palestine (1 Sam. 6:7–8, 10, 11–14). The cart or wagon likely was of Assyrian origin.

CASEMENT Type of wall fortification used during the late Iron Age, popular during the ninth and tenth centuries BC. It is made of a double wall forming a series of rooms that could be filled in quickly with rubble to reinforce them if an attack was looming. In times of peace these rooms were often incorporated into houses built against the walls.

CASIPHIA *See* Kasiphia.

CASLUHITES *See* Kasluhites.

CASSIA A cinnamon-like spice mentioned three times in the OT (Exod. 30:24; Ps. 45:8; Ezek. 27:19 [cf. Gk. *kinnamōmon* in Sir. 24:25]; Heb. *qiddah*, *qetsi'ah*). In the Exodus passage it is prescribed as a component for the sacred anointing oil. In Ps. 45 the king's robes are described as being fragrant with cassia and other spices. Ezekiel speaks of it being an item valuable for trading. The spice is derived from the inner bark of a tree that is native to India and modern-day Sri Lanka. *See also* Cinnamon.

CASTAWAY Someone who is shipwrecked and stranded on land for an extended period of time. In his trial before Porcius Festus, Paul appeals to be tried by the imperial courts in Rome (Acts 25:11–12). Acts 27:6–28:11 tells the story of part of Paul's journey to await this trial. A grain transport ship carrying Paul, a centurion, and additional Roman soldiers, as well as numerous other prisoners, is caught in a severe storm, in fulfillment of Paul's prophetic warning. The ship eventually runs aground on a sandbar on the island of Malta, where it is smashed to pieces by the pounding surf, forcing the passengers to swim to shore using pieces of the wreckage. There they stay as castaways for three months, sustained through the generosity of the island's chief official, Publius. Paul heals many of the sick in Malta during this time. In 2 Cor. 11:25 Paul mentions having experienced three shipwrecks during his ministry.

"Castaway" is also an older translation for the Greek word *adokimos*, which the NIV variously renders as "depraved" (Rom. 1:28), "disqualified" (1 Cor. 9:27), "rejected" (2 Tim. 3:8), "unfit" (Titus 1:16), and "worthless" (Heb. 6:8). It is also used of those who "fail the test" of Jesus Christ living in them (2 Cor. 13:5–7). In each instance the word describes those who live contrary to the gospel.

CASTLE A strict division between fortresses and cities was not possible in much of the ancient world, since many major towns were surrounded with protective walls and fortifications. Royal figures, however, did have stand-alone fortresses built within some towns. In 2 Sam. 5:7–9 David captures Zion, a fortress-city, from the Jebusites (see also 1 Chron. 11:5–7). Solomon further enhances the defensive fortifications of Jerusalem (1 Kings 3:1; 2 Chron. 2:1), as do several kings who come after him (e.g., 1 Kings 15:18; 16:18; 18:3; 2 Kings 11:5; 2 Chron. 26:9, 15).

Royal residences, such as those of the pharaohs (Gen. 12:15) and of the kings of Babylon (2 Kings 20:18; Dan. 1:4), Tyre (2 Sam. 24:7), Samaria (2 Kings 15:25), and Persia (Esther 1:5; 5:1; 7:7–8), also served as castles. In Nehemiah's time, Hananiah is made ruler of the palace fort in Jerusalem (Neh. 2:8; 7:2). Fortified towers also contributed to the defensive equipment of many ancient cities (Gen. 11:1–9; 35:21; Judg. 8:8–9, 17; 9:46, 49; Neh. 3:1; 12:39; Song 4:4; Luke 13:4).

In addition to palaces and fortified cities, numerous smaller castle-type structures are mentioned in the Bible. These forts, usually fairly small, were important for guarding trade routes and major entrance points into a kingdom, and they allowed a ruler to exercise control over a much larger region than would have been possible otherwise. Normally these structures were composed of stone, hardened mud-brick, or a combination of the two, and constituted a tightly packed arrangement of walls, gates, and guard towers. A system of fortresses existed throughout Israel in the time of the unified monarchy, such as those built by David throughout Aram (2 Sam. 8:6) and Edom (2 Sam. 8:14; 1 Chron. 18:13), and those built by Solomon (1 Kings 9:19). Later, Rehoboam expanded this network of forts, which included the strong fortress at Lachish, and further built up the defensive capabilities of many of the towns in Judah (2 Chron. 11:5–11). The later kings Jehoshaphat and Jotham continued this work of fortress building throughout Judah (2 Chron. 17:12; 27:4).

In the four centuries after the conquests of Alexander the Great, new fortresses were built throughout what would become the Roman Empire, including Herod the Great’s palace in Caesarea (Acts 23:35). The Antonia Fortress (see Acts 21:31–37; 22:24; 23:10, 16, 32) overlooked the temple area in Jerusalem and was the headquarters of the Roman army cohort stationed in the city. Herod’s palace on the western hill of Jerusalem may have been the headquarters of Roman governors of Judea, although the Antonia Fortress is also a possible location for this building (see Matt. 27:27; Mark 15:16; John 18:28, 33; 19:9).

The image of a fortress is often invoked in poetic contexts in the Bible to signify God’s unfailing protection (2 Sam. 22:2; Pss. 18:2; 31:2; 46:8; 62:2; 91:2; 144:2; Prov. 14:26; Isa. 25:4; Jer. 16:19). Prophetic denunciation of the fortresses of Israel’s enemies is common in the OT (Isa. 23:11, 13–14; Jer. 49:27; Dan. 11; Amos 1). The destruction of Israel’s own fortresses, especially Jerusalem, is also a common judgment motif in the prophets (Isa. 25:12; Jer. 6:5; 17:27; Hos. 8:14). *See also* Fort, Fortification.

CASTOR AND POLLUX In Greek mythology, the twin sons of Zeus and Leda, and brothers of Helen of Troy. Elevated to the status of gods, they were thought to be responsible for the safety of those who traveled by sea (especially sailors) and thus were commonly represented on a ship’s figurehead (or “ensign”). Acts 28:11 narrates that Paul finished his journey to Rome, via Puteoli, on an Alexandrian ship outfitted with such a figurehead (Gk. *Dioskouroi*, “Twin Gods”).

CATERPILLAR The word “caterpillar” is sometimes used to translate various Hebrew words in English versions of the Bible, although in many or all of these cases it is unlikely that true caterpillars (the larvae of butterflies and moths) are actually referred to. The Hebrew word *gazam* (Amos 4:9; Joel 1:4; 2:25 [NIV: “locusts”]) is the most likely to mean “caterpillar.” The root verb from which this noun is formed means “to devour,” and this creature is described as having great destructive capabilities. The caterpillars are said to devour fig and olive trees and to destroy vineyards, leaving a trail of devastation in their wake. It is possible that caterpillars could have caused such damage, but it is more likely that the creatures referred to were actually locusts or grasshoppers in a particular stage of their life cycle.

In the KJV, a number of other Hebrew terms are rendered “caterpillar” that are now thought to refer more accurately to locusts at various stages in their life cycle, or possibly to different species of locust. *See also* Locust.

CATHOLIC EPISTLES These seven letters include James, 1–2 Peter, 1–3 John, and Jude. The assumption is that these were addressed universally, hence the term “catholic.” Strictly speaking, however, 1 Peter, 2 John, and 3 John are addressed to specific recipients, and all seven likely had specific audiences in view.

CATTLE A collective designation for bovine animals mentioned in passages involving economic, political, military, and religious aspects of life. Cattle are property (Exod. 22:1; 2 Sam. 12:2) and food (Matt. 22:4), with herds of cattle being a sign of wealth and God’s blessing (Gen. 24:35; 1 Kings 4:21–23; cf. Rev. 18:11–13). Cattle are exchanged in business transactions (Gen. 47:16–17) and political treaties (21:27). Military instructions may reference cattle (1 Sam. 15:3). Cattle are to be used for sacrifices (Exod. 22:1; Lev. 22:19; Num. 22:40) unless God says otherwise (1 Sam. 15:14–25). Although kings take the best cattle for themselves (1 Sam. 8:16; 1 Kings 4:21–23), the cattle on a thousand hills belong to God (Pss. 50:10; 104:14). God is concerned for the city of Nineveh based on the number of its people and its cattle (Jon. 4:11). To be called “cattle” is considered an insult to one’s intelligence (Job 18:3; cf. Amos 4:1). King Nebuchadnezzar learns humility after experiencing how cattle live (Dan. 4:25–37). Cattle are among the animals that Jesus drives out of the temple courts (John 2:14–15).

Cattle raised in the Golan (ancient Bashan)

CAUDA A small, sparsely populated island (KJV: “Clauda”) twenty-three miles south of Crete. Modern Gavdos (or Gavdhos) is the southernmost Greek island. En route to Paul’s Roman imprisonment, a hurricane wind blew his ship off course to the lee of Cauda, where the crew girded up for the storm (Acts 27:16).

CAUL In the KJV the “caul of the liver” describes the upper lobe or “covering” of that organ, reserved along with the kidneys and the fat on the kidneys and other visceral organs to be burned upon the altar as food for God (e.g., Exod. 29:13; Lev. 3:10 [NIV: "long lobe of the liver"]). In one text in the KJV "caul" denotes a headband (Isa. 3:18), and in another the covering or encasement of the heart (the pericardium), to be ripped open by God, rampaging like a mother bear robbed of her cubs (Hos. 13:8).

CAULKERS, CAULKING Ezekiel 27:9 refers to those from Gebal who seal (or caulk) the parts of Tyrian ships to make them watertight.

CAVALRY Pictorial evidence suggests that in biblical times Israel and Egypt did not make use of mounted warriors. True cavalry first appear in Assyrian pictures of the ninth and eighth centuries BC (Ezek. 23:12 mentions Assyrian "mounted horsemen"). In this view, biblical references to "horsemen" indicate chariot-mounted warriors (Exod. 15:19; cf. 2 Kings 2:12) rather than riders. According to the Hebrew text of 1 Kings 4:26, Solomon had forty thousand horse stalls for his chariots and twelve thousand charioteers (Heb. *parashim*). Each charioteer (*parash*), then, would be supported by between three and four "stalls" of horses. Based on the understanding of *parashim* as riders instead of charioteers, some English translations prefer to read (with some support from ancient translations) "four thousand stalls" and "twelve thousand horses"; that is, each three-horse stall would support three riders. Cavalry were more mobile than chariots (see Judg. 1:19 on the limitations of chariotry). Lacking the medieval stirrup, both horsemen and charioteers engaged the enemy by throwing missiles rather than through direct engagement.

CAVES In biblical times, caves were used for storage, as tombs (Gen. 23:9–20; 25:9; 49:29–32; 50:13; John 11:38), and as shelter for refugees, warriors, and outlaws (Gen. 19:30; Josh. 10:16–27; Judg. 6:2; 1 Sam. 13:6; 22:1; 24:3–10; 2 Sam. 23:13; 1 Kings 18:4, 13; 19:9, 13; 1 Chron. 11:15; Heb. 11:28). The word "cave" came to be used for a robbers' den (Jer. 7:11; Matt. 21:13; Mark 11:17; Luke 19:46), and in poetry the proud live in clefts of rock like eagles (Jer. 49:16; Obad. 1:3). But although God hid Moses in a cleft to protect him from divine glory (Exod. 33:22), caves, when God judges, will offer no escape from divine wrath (Isa. 2:19–21; Ezek. 33:27; Rev. 6:15).

CEDAR A wood valued for its pleasing fragrance, color, and composition. Cedar was used in cleansing and purification ceremonies described in Jewish law (Lev. 14:4, 6, 49, 51–52; Num. 19:6). King David built his palace from cedar wood (2 Sam. 5:11). King Solomon utilized cedar wood in the construction of God's temple (1 Kings 5:8, 10; 6:9–10, 15–16, 18, 20; 7:2–3). Later, cedar was used to rebuild the temple (Ezra 3:7). The prophets used cedar as a symbol of rarity, strength, and wealth (Isa. 41:19; Jer. 22:7, 14–15; 23:23; Ezek. 17:3, 22–23; 27:5; 31:1).

Cedar tree

CEDRON *See* Kidron Valley.

CELESTIAL BODIES Paul distinguishes celestial (or heavenly) bodies from terrestrial (or earthly) bodies in his comparison between the natural body and the resurrection body (1 Cor. 15:40). Since the celestial bodies are those found in the heavens rather than on the earth, they are understood to be the sun, the moon, and the stars.

CELIBACY A lifestyle in which one abstains from marriage and sexual relations, often for religious reasons. Celibacy is sometimes distinguished from sexual abstinence, which may occur within marriage (e.g., Exod. 19:14–15; 1 Cor. 7:5).

Celibacy was essentially unknown in the OT, even for priests. Rather, the OT stressed the institutions of marriage and family (see Deut. 23:1). In the NT, while marriage is both a sacred choice and a rich metaphor, Paul speaks of celibacy as a "gift" (*charisma* [1 Cor. 7:7]). The celibate have fewer worldly obligations and therefore may focus on "the Lord's affairs" (1 Cor. 7:32–35). They are to be preoccupied with the eternal kingdom schema of God (cf. Matt. 22:30).

In reaction to Greco-Roman decadence and matter-spirit dualism, in the second through fourth centuries celibacy began to be highly prized by some believers who saw it as a more spiritual way of life. While the Roman Catholic church made celibacy a requirement for priesthood, most Orthodox churches did not adopt this practice.

CENCHREAE A seaport named for Cenchrias (a child of Poseidon) and located seven miles southeast of Corinth. Here Paul shaved his head as part of a vow he had made (Acts 18:18). Phoebe is called "a deacon of the church in Cenchreae" (Rom. 16:1).

CENSER A container for burning incense. In ancient Israel censers were bronze or gold vessels used to carry live coals to light fires for tabernacle and temple worship. Powdered incense was burned upon the live coals. Their use (or misuse) sometimes signified holy or unholy behavior. Thus, on the Day of Atonement the high priest preserved his life by obediently burning a censer of incense in the holy of holies (Lev. 16:12). Nadab and Abihu died after they offered incense in an unauthorized manner (10:1–7). Similarly, Korah and his followers died for usurping the priestly task of burning incense (Num. 16). Censers crafted for Solomon's temple were later carried off by the Babylonians who conquered Jerusalem.

CENSUS There are several censuses in Scripture, and their concern is not simply to account for the number of people or the number of men available for military service; they also have a literary and theological function.

In the creation narrative in Gen. 1–11 the fulfillment of the creation mandate is accounted for through the genealogy of Adam (Gen. 5) and the genealogy of the sons of Noah (Gen. 9:18–19; 10:1–32), which serve as a type of census. The creation narrative has a universal scope; it attempts to account for the total human population on earth.

Census lists are given for the Abrahamic family (Abraham-Isaac-Jacob line) as it grows to become a nation in accordance with God's promise to Abraham of a great nation and innumerable offspring (Gen. 12:1–3; 15:5). The total number of Jacob's descendants who went to Egypt was seventy (Gen. 46:8–27; Exod. 1:1–4). This old generation of Israel passed, and a new generation was born that was fruitful, multiplied, and became exceedingly numerous (Exod. 1:6–7). The total number of men of at least twenty years of age who came out of Egypt was 603,550 (Num. 1:1–46; cf. Exod. 12:37–38), and of the new generation that stood on the verge of entering the promised land, 601,730 (Num. 26:1–51).

In the book of Numbers there are two census accounts (actually, military registrations). These are important to the structure and theme of the book. The theme of Numbers has to do with the judgment on the first generation (the object of the census in Num. 1) and the hope for the second generation, which will enter the promised land (the object of the second census).

David conducted a census to measure his military power, but this is condemned by God and regarded as satanic (2 Sam. 24:1–17; 1 Chron. 21:1–30). For the Chronicler, any attempt to account for the total number of Israelite men twenty years and older, similar to the census in the book of Numbers, is regarded as challenging God's promise to make Israel as numerous as the stars (1 Chron.

29:23–26).

Ezra and Nehemiah contain census lists of the returnees from exile: under Zerubbabel, 42,360 men returned (Ezra 2:1–66; Neh. 7:4–73), and under Ezra, 1,496 men (Ezra 8:1–14).

In the NT, Jesus participates in the universal census that encompasses not only Israel but other nations as well—a census of the entire Roman world (Luke 2:1–7). The census motif reaches its fulfillment when a great multitude from every nation, tribe, people, and language will stand before the throne and in front of the Lamb, symbolized by the 144,000 from the twelve tribes of Israel, 12,000 from each tribe (Rev. 7:4–10).

CENTURION A commander of one hundred soldiers (a "century") in a Roman legion, with various tactical and logistical duties, including management of supplies and leadership in battle. Having the best training and most experience in battle, the sixty centurions of each legion served as the backbone of the Roman army. Centurions in the Bible include the centurion who, according to Jesus, had more faith than anyone in Israel (Matt. 8:5–13; Luke 7:2–9); Cornelius the generous God-fearer and supporter of the Jewish people of Caesarea Maritima (Acts 10); the centurion in charge of the soldiers at Jesus' crucifixion (Matt. 27:54; Mark 15:39, 44–45; Luke 23:47); and the various named and unnamed centurions throughout Acts (see Acts 22–27).

CEPHAS *See* Peter.

CEREMONIAL LAW *See* Law.

CERTIFICATE OF DIVORCE *See* Divorce; Family.

CHAFF The tough outer covering of grain removed by threshing. It is inconsequential and of little substance. Biblical passages refer to the wicked as chaff blowing about in the wind (Job 21:18; Pss. 1:4; 35:5; Dan. 2:35; Hos. 13:3) or being burned in a fire (Isa. 5:24; Matt. 3:12; Luke 3:17).

CHAINS Worn around the neck, gold chains were a symbol of honor (Gen. 41:42; Prov. 1:9; Dan. 5:7). The temple and its furniture were decorated with chain-like ornamentation (2 Chron. 3:5); similar motifs are found also in non-Yahwistic cultic paraphernalia (Isa. 40:19).

Prisoners (Ps. 107:10; Acts 12:6; 16:26; 21:33; Heb. 11:36) and war captives (Isa. 45:14; Jer. 40:1) were bound with chains, by the hands (Jer. 40:4) or neck (Isa. 52:2). In one case, the Bible records an unsuccessful attempt to confine a demon-possessed man with chains (Mark 5:3–4). Paul often mentions the chains of his imprisonment (Phil. 1:7, 13–17; Col. 4:3; 2 Tim. 2:9; Philem. 10, 13), once referring to himself paradoxically as an "ambassador in chains" (Eph. 6:20).

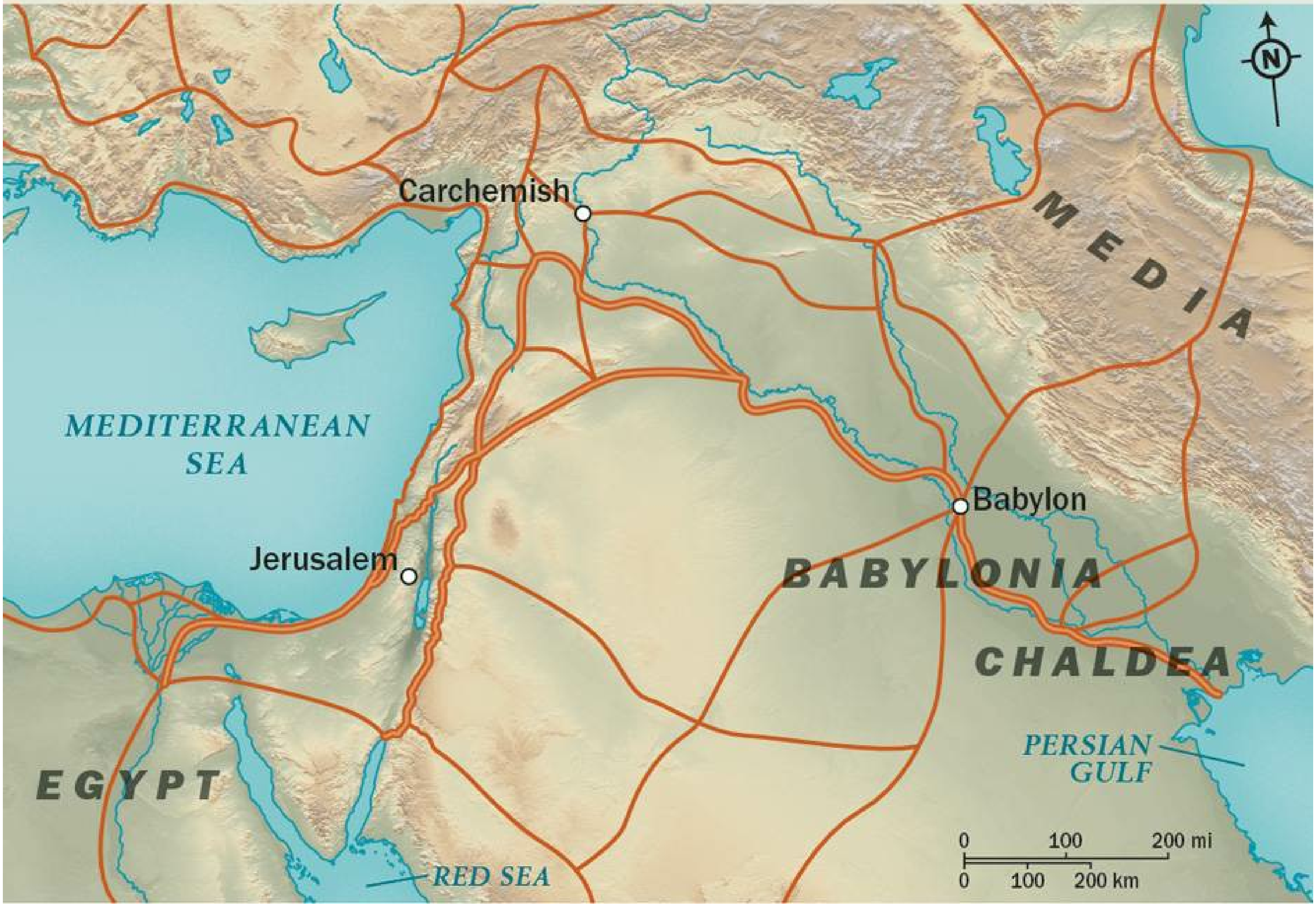
At Lachish four links of an iron chain were found. Extrabiblical records of the siege of Lachish suggest that such a chain was lowered from the city walls in an attempt to foul the Assyrian battering ram.

CHALCEDONY A fine-grained, variably colored quartz identified as the third gemstone decorating the foundation wall of the new Jerusalem (Rev. 21:19). It is alternately translated as "agate," a subset of chalcedony.

CHALCOL *See* Kalkol.

CHALDEA Originally denoting the southern part of Babylonia, “Chaldea” is the name for the whole country of Babylonia. As the Chaldean chief Marduk-apla-iddina II (Marduk-Baladan) seized the Babylonian throne (721–710, 703–702 BC), “Chaldea” became a synonym of “Babylonia” (see Isa. 23:13). When the Chaldean dynasty ruled the Near East (626–539 BC), the name became famous and was used synonymously of the entire Babylonian region (cf. Dan. 3:8; 9:1). Living along the rivers Euphrates and Tigris, the Chaldeans not only enjoyed agricultural fertility but also developed science and arts, including astrology, astronomy, mathematics, mythology, and shipbuilding. Accordingly, the “Chaldeans” are identified as a class of wise men (Dan. 2:2; 4:7; 5:7, 11; cf. 1:4) and as sailors (Isa. 43:14).

CHALDEA AND BABYLONIA



Chaldea or the Chaldeans played an important role in the history of God’s people. Abram came from one of its prominent cities, “Ur of the Chaldeans” (Gen. 11:28). As one of God’s instruments to punish his people for their iniquities, the Chaldeans destroyed Jerusalem and exiled its inhabitants (2 Kings 24–25; Isa. 39:6–7; Jer. 21:4; Ezek. 12:13; Hab. 1:6–10), so the “land of the Chaldeans” is often identified as the place of the exile (Jer. 24:5; Ezek. 1:3 KJV, ESV, NRSV). In the context of the promise of restoration, however, the Chaldeans are God’s primary enemy, to be destroyed for their own pursuit of glory (Isa. 43:14; 47; 48:14; Jer. 50–51; Hab. 1:11). God's destruction of them signals the deliverance of his people out of the exile (Isa. 48:20–21; Jer. 50:8). In Revelation, Babylon is an earthly symbol of the satanic power that will be destroyed in the end time (Rev. 17–19).

CHALDEES A region/people of southern Mesopotamia associated with Ur. They ruled the Neo-Babylonian Empire (626–539 BC). The term is later associated with magicians.

CHALKSTONE In Isa. 27:9 God announces that he will reduce pagan altars to chalkstone (NIV: "limestone"). Chalkstone is easily crushed, and the oracle predicts the destruction of these illegitimate altars.

CHAMBER The KJV uses this term 118 times, usually with reference to a private room in a building. It translates various Hebrew and Greek terms. Today the term is often viewed as archaic, and the same Hebrew and Greek terms are translated by the NIV variously as "tent," "inner room," "upper room," "private room," "room," and so on (Num. 25:8; 2 Chron. 18:24; Ezra 10:6; Neh. 3:30–32; Ps. 19:5; Song 3:4; Ezek. 16:24). Joseph, when he was moved with compassion for his brothers, entered his chamber and wept (Gen. 43:30 KJV). The room that the Shunammite prepared for Elisha is called a "chamber" (2 Kings 4:10–11 KJV). There were chambers within chambers (1 Kings 22:25; 2 Kings 9:2 KJV). "Entering the chambers" is used metaphorically of prayer (Isa. 26:20 KJV).

CHAMBERING The KJV uses this word in Rom. 13:13 to refer to illicit sexual activity (NIV: "sexual immorality"; NRSV: "debauchery").

CHAMBERLAIN A word in the KJV referring to a high-ranking, trusted official in a royal court (2 Kings 23:11), often one who guards the king's bedroom (Acts 12:20) or a eunuch who guards the king's harem (Esther 1:10). The chamberlain Erastus in Rom. 16:23 is the city treasurer of Corinth (NIV: "the city's director of public works"). His name was found on an inscription associated with his service to that city.

CHAMBERS OF IMAGERY The KJV rendering of a Hebrew phrase in Ezek. 8:12 referring to secret rooms in the Jerusalem temple where pagan idols or idolatrous wall paintings were worshiped (Ezek. 8:10; 23:14). God points out to Ezekiel that the "elders" of Israel are worshiping false gods in the darkness, claiming, "The LORD does not see us." The NIV renders the phrase as "shrine of his own idol," and the NASB as "room of his carved images."

CHAMBERS OF THE SOUTH The KJV rendering of a Hebrew phrase in Job 9:9 (so also NASB; NRSV; ESV). It probably refers to some astral phenomenon, since it is listed with other constellations (the Bear, Orion, the Pleiades [though these are also debated]). Some scholars identify it with southerly constellations generally, or perhaps with the southern zodiacal circle of stars. Another possibility is that it refers to chambers where wind, rain, snow, and hail were thought to be stored (cf. Job 37:9; 38:22). The NIV renders the phrase as "constellations of the south," and the NLT as "constellations of the southern sky."

CHAMELEON A species of lizard known for the strength in its claws and its ability to change its skin color. They are abundant in Egypt and the Holy Land, especially in the Jordan Valley, and they are among the unclean animals forbidden as food (Lev. 11:30–31). Because of the contagious uncleanness of a chameleon’s carcass, the Lord forbade any physical contact with it.

CHAMOIS The KJV rendering of the Hebrew word *zemer* in Deut. 14:5 (NIV: “mountain sheep”), an animal pronounced by God as acceptable for food. Found in mountainous terrain, this animal, possibly some type of goat or antelope, is considered to be extremely agile, carrying upright horns with backward-pointed tips.

CHAMPAIGN The KJV rendering of the Hebrew word *’arabah* in Deut. 11:30, meaning “flat, open land” (NIV, NRSV: “Arabah”). *See also* Arabah.

CHAMPION An individual who represents a group of people in a contest or achievement. Goliath is identified as the “champion” of the Philistines (1 Sam. 17:4, 23) who challenges any warrior in Israel. The victory of a champion is the victory of those represented, or his defeat their defeat (Isa. 42:13). Thus, David’s victory over Goliath is a victory for all Israel (1 Sam. 17).

CHANAAN *See* Canaan; Canaan, Land of.

CHANCELLOR A title used in the KJV for Rehum, an officer of Artaxerxes’ court who accused the Jews of rebellion (Ezra 4:7–24). The NIV renders the underlying Hebrew word, *be’el*, as “commanding officer” (NRSV: “royal deputy”).

CHANGERS, MONEY *See* Money Changers.

CHAOS In the Bible chaos primarily refers to an opposite condition to the orderliness of the creation or a mythical force often represented by the sea or the sea monster(s) (translated as “dragon,” “Leviathan,” or “Rahab”). The two related ideas are based on the creation accounts recorded in Gen. 1–2 and other places.

Old Testament. In Gen. 1:2 chaos is the state of darkness and desolation (note the phrase “formless and empty” [Heb. *tohu wabohu*], which probably refers to the state of desolation of water with nothing in it; cf. Isa. 34:11; 45:18). The rest of the chapter describes how God in his absolute sovereignty and power—only with his words—creates order in place of the chaos. God brings light to the darkness, separates the land from the sea, and provides the land with abundance. The portrayal of the garden of Eden (2:4–14) further describes God’s provision of orderliness, fertility, eternal life, and harmony in the original creation.

Although the Genesis account does not directly mention any mythical elements (i.e., the primordial combat between the sea and the prime god), other passages describe creation as the event in which God calmed the raging sea and killed the sea monsters (Pss. 74:12–17; 89:9–12; Job 26:7–14). Still, nowhere are the chaotic forces presented as an independent power that constantly challenges God’s sovereignty. Rather, God always does whatever he pleases with them, lifting up the waves of the sea (Ps. 107:25; Jer. 31:35; cf. Ps. 146:6) and uncovering Death and Destruction (Job 26:6). Isaiah alludes to God’s slaying of the chaotic sea creature not only as the past event (51:9), but also as the promise to be realized in the day of the Lord (27:1).

In Genesis, God’s judgment is frequently described by means of the chaos motif, as a precreation condition reversed—for example, loss of harmony, fruitfulness, and eternal life (Gen. 3:15–24), return of the waters over the land (Gen. 7–8), loss of communication (11:7–9), and desolation of the fruitful land (19:23–28; cf. 13:10).

The chaos motif also plays an important role in the prophetic descriptions of God's judgment against his people and against the foreign nations. Noteworthy is Jer. 4:23–26, which depicts God's judgment upon his people in terms of chaos's return—that is, the condition of "formless and empty," without light, creatures, or fruitful land (cf. Hos. 4:3). In Isa. 34:11 God's judgment upon Edom is expressed with the characteristic phrase in Gen. 1:2: "God will stretch out over Edom the measuring line of chaos [*tohu*, 'formless'] and the plumb line of desolation [*bohu*, 'empty']." In other places Isaiah frequently employs the imageries of desolation (5:6; 7:23–25; 13:19–22; 24:1–13; 34:8–17), darkness (5:30; 8:22; 13:10), and flood (8:7–8).

New Testament. The concept of chaos developed in the OT provides an important background for understanding the NT. The Gospel writers use the chaos motif in describing Jesus' person and work—for example, as light in the darkness (John 1:4–9; 3:19), as provider of abundance and eternal life (John 3:16; 4:14; 5:51; 6:1–15), and as the sovereign ruler of the chaotic sea, who walks on the water (Matt. 14:22–36; Mark 6:47–55; John 6:16–21) and calms the stormy sea with his words (Matt. 8:23–27; Mark 4:35–41; Luke 8:22–25). Jesus' resurrection is his ultimate demonstration of his reign over death (cf. 1 Cor. 15).

Paul further uses the chaos motif to describe the life of sinners or the sinful world. The identity of believers is changed from "darkness" to "light" or "children of light," who now must shine the light in the world (Eph. 5:8; cf. Matt. 5:15–16; Phil. 2:15).

In the book of Revelation the ultimate restoration of the perfect creation order is presented, making allusions to the OT mythical descriptions of the chaotic forces (e.g., Satan as the dragon [12:15–16], Death and Hades as the underground forces [20:13–14]). Particularly, the new Jerusalem is the place of no sea or darkness or death (21:1, 4, 23–25) but of fruitfulness and eternal life (22:1–2).

CHAPITER A word appearing in the KJV to denote an object at the top of something. The word refers to the ornamented capitals of the two bronze pillars of the temple (e.g., 1 Kings 7:16–20; 2 Chron. 3:15; Jer. 52:22), to the tops of posts of the tabernacle (e.g., Exod. 36:38; 38:17), or to a part of the portable bronze stands (1 Kings 7:31). The NIV generally uses the terms "top" and "capital" in such instances.

CHAPMAN In 2 Chron. 9:14 the KJV renders the Hebrew plural participle *tarim* as "chapmen," an archaic English word for "merchants" (NIV) or "traders" (NRSV).

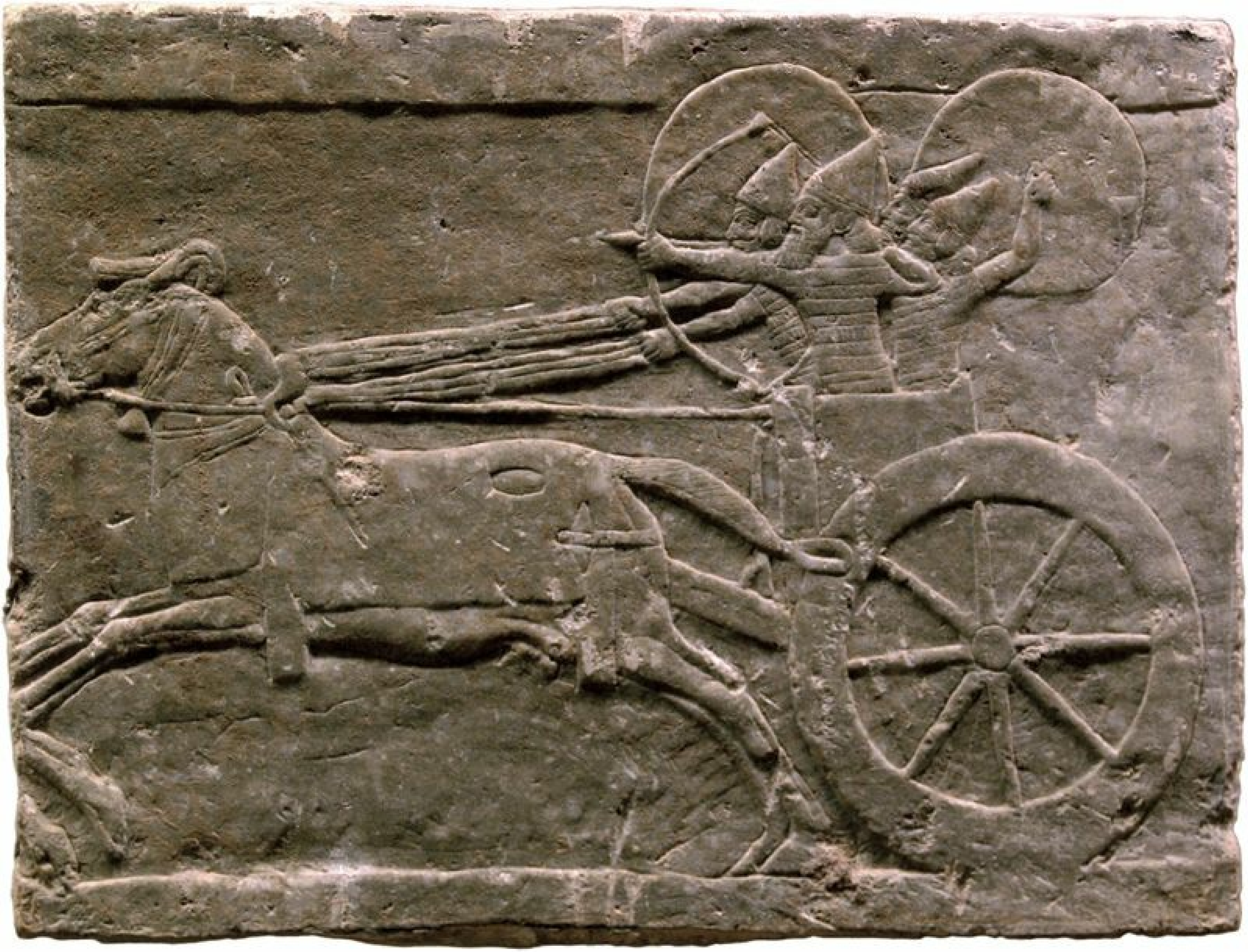
CHARASHIM, VALLEY OF *See* Ge Harashim.

CHARCHEMISH *See* Carchemish.

CHARGER *See* Dish; Platter.

CHARIOT A small, horse-drawn platform with various configurations throughout history with regard to size, construction, and purpose. The earliest known chariots are nearly three thousand years older than the racing chariots of the Roman Empire. They were bulky, four-wheeled carts pulled by mules instead of horses, making them very slow.

The invention of wheels with spokes, along with the use of lighter materials (such as animal skins) to cover the carriage of the chariot, allowed for greater speed and agility. Chariots customarily were pulled by two to four horses and had platforms on which up to three occupants (a driver and one or two archers) could stand during battle.



Relief depicting an Assyrian chariot

In addition to military use, chariots were used historically for municipal transport, distance travel, processions of dignitaries, and religious festivals. War chariots ceased to be effective with the development of light cavalry units.

In the Bible, chariots often symbolize power and status (Gen. 41:43; Acts 8:26–40). For example, the "iron chariots" described in Josh. 17:16–18 evoked dread among the tribes of Israel preparing to enter the promised land. Psalm 20:7 sharply contrasts trust in God and trust in chariots, which are a symbol of human power. Perhaps the most vivid depiction of chariots in Scripture is that of Pharaoh's army descending upon the Israelites fleeing Egypt, and of his chariots' drivers sinking into the sea (Exod. 14–15).

CHARIOTS OF THE SUN Chariots dedicated to the sun god in the temple in Jerusalem that were destroyed by Josiah during his reforms (2 Kings 23:11). Horses and chariots were often dedicated to temples in the ancient Near East in order to transport the sun on its daily journey. It is likely that these chariots were introduced to the Jerusalem temple due to the influence of the Assyrians, who identified their sun god as a chariot rider.

CHARITY The KJV often uses "charity" to translate the Greek word *agapē*, which most modern versions translate as "love." Although in contemporary times the word "charity" is understood to consist of almsgiving (Luke 12:33; Acts 9:36), it often is used to denote a deeper Christian love for people (see, e.g., 1 Cor. 13).

CHARM While the English word "charm" is derived from a Latin word for "incantation," the Hebrew word often translated as "charm" (*lakhash*) refers to a whisper, like that of a snake charmer. In fact, the word frequently conjured up the image of enchanted serpents. For example, Eccles. 10:11 draws upon the image of a snake-bitten charmer whose skill, consequently, has been rendered futile. Further, in Jer. 8:17 God threatens to send out serpents that cannot be enchanted. Moreover, in Ps. 58:5 the psalmist likens wicked people to a cobra that refuses to be tamed. A progression of thought that associated serpents with demons eventually led people to seek magical charms, such as wearing amulets, to protect them from evil. However, Isaiah insists that such charms stand impotent before the evil about to destroy Babylon (Isa. 47:11); likewise, he warns that Israel's religious experts in charms and even their women adorned with amulets will be taken away in judgment (Isa. 3:3, 20). In Prov. 31:30 most English versions translate "graceful appearance" (*khen*) metaphorically as "charm" in order to contrast a woman who has seemingly magical power over a man with a woman who fears God; so also, many translators take license with the precious stone (*'eben-khen*) in Prov. 17:8 to imply that a bribe can "work like a charm." However, any original connotation of actual enchantment in these proverbs is doubtful. *See also* Magic Charm.

CHARRAN *See* Harran.

CHASTE The state of being pure or undefiled. The KJV uses "chaste" three times to translate the Greek word *hagnos* (2 Cor. 11:2; Titus 2:5; 1 Pet. 3:2), rendered in the NIV as "pure" or "purity." It has special reference to sexual purity. Young women are expected to be pure in worship, in general moral behavior, and in sexual matters (Titus 2:5). Likewise, church leaders must be "pure" (*hagnos* [1 Tim. 5:22]). Paul labored over the churches to present them before God pure as virgins: "I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy. I promised you to one husband, to Christ, so that I might present you as a pure virgin to him" (2 Cor. 11:2). Peter encouraged wives to be submissive to their husbands so that they may be won through the wives' chaste character (1 Pet. 3:1–2). God commands purity, and it is an essential element of Christian life (Phil. 4:8; James 3:17). Every Christian is to be pure just as Christ is pure (1 John 3:3).

CHASTEN, CHASTISEMENT Chastening sometimes refers to the discipline of a parent to a child. Parents are to chasten their children (Deut. 21:18), "for in that there is hope" (Prov. 19:18). However, the most frequent and significant biblical references are to God's discipline of his own spiritual children. In Heb. 12 the author encourages his readers not to "grow weary and lose heart" (v. 3), because "the Lord disciplines the one he loves" (v. 6); rather, this discipline should be a reminder that God is treating them as children (v. 7). Furthermore, if people respect their human fathers for administering discipline, "How much more should we submit to the Father of our spirits and live!" (v. 9). Certainly, "No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it" (v. 11). God's lesson is that "those whom I love I rebuke and discipline" (Rev. 3:19), and that we can trust that God knows what he is doing when allowing difficulties in our lives.

CHEBAR *See* Kebar.

CHECKER WORK This appears once in the KJV and NRSV, at 1 Kings 7:17 (NIV: "interwoven chains"), referring to the decorative networks on the capitals of the temple pillars. Israelite priests also wore a "tunic of checkered work" (Exod. 28:4, 39 NASB [NIV: "woven tunic," "weave the tunic"]).

CHEDORLAOMER *See* Kedorlaomer.

CHEESE Cheese and other milk products comprised a staple part of the diet in biblical times. People made cheese from the milk of goats (the richest type), sheep, or cattle (2 Sam. 17:29). Job 10:10 notes curdling in the production of cheese, and 1 Sam. 17:18 illustrates that even soft cheese was easily transported.

CHELAL *See* Kelal.

CHELLUH *See* Keluhi.

CHELUB *See* Kelub.

CHELUBAI The name given to the son of Hezron in 1 Chron. 2:9 (KJV, RSV), otherwise identified as Caleb in 1 Chron. 2:18, 42.

CHELUHI *See* Keluhi.

CHEMARIM A transliteration of the Hebrew word *kemarim* (NIV: "idolatrous priests"), occurring three times in the OT (2 Kings 23:5; Hos. 10:5; Zeph. 1:4). In every instance it refers to priests who have led Israel in idolatrous worship. The KJV translates it as "Chemarims" in Zeph. 1:4.

CHEMOSH The god of the Moabites (Num. 21:29; Jer. 48:46). The biblical evidence is one of the most important sources for information concerning Chemosh and the Moabite religion. Solomon built a high place for Chemosh (1 Kings 11:7), which was later desecrated by Josiah as part of his reforms (2 Kings 23:13). In Jeremiah's judgment of the nations, he condemns the people of Moab and Chemosh (Jer. 48). Important extrabiblical evidence concerning Chemosh is found primarily on the Moabite Stone, a ninth-century BC stela commemorating King Mesha's victory over Israel.

CHENAANAH *See* Kenaanah.

CHENANI *See* Kenani.

CHENANIAH *See* Kenaniah.

CHEPHAR-AMMONI *See* Kephar Ammoni.

CHEPHERIM *See* Kephirim.

CHEPHIRAH *See* Kephirah.

CHERAN *See* Keran.

CHERETHITES *See* Kerethites.

CHERITH *See* Kerith.

CHERUB *See* Cherub, Cherubim; Kerub.

CHERUB, CHERUBIM "Cherubim" (Heb. *kerubim*) is the plural form of "cherub" (Heb. *kerub*), a winged heavenly creature, apparently different from an (or a certain type of) angel. Scholars are uncertain as to the original meaning of the word, but it is probably related to a word that means either "gatekeeper" or "intercessor." Cherubim appear as attendants around the throne of God or in some cases as gatekeepers, guarding the way to the presence of God.

God stationed cherubim to guard the entrance to the garden of Eden after he expelled Adam and Eve from the garden (Gen. 3:24). In this sense, the garden of Eden was a prototype of the temple, where the presence of God could be encountered. Later, in accordance with God's instructions, golden cherubim were constructed and placed on either side of the mercy seat on the ark of the covenant, the place where God declared, "I will meet with you [Moses]" (Exod. 25:18–22).

The decorations of the tabernacle and the later Solomonic temple incorporated artwork depicting representations of cherubim (Exod. 26:1, 31; 1 Kings 6:23–29; 7:29, 36; 8:6–7; 2 Chron. 3:14). Isaiah 37:16 describes God as sitting between the wings of the cherubim, and Ps. 18:10 describes him as flying on the wings of the cherubim.

The prophet Ezekiel gives an extensive description of "four living creatures" flying around the throne of God (1:4–21). Later, the prophet identifies these same creatures but refers to them as cherubim (10:1–22). *See also* Ark of the Covenant.

CHESALON *See* Kesalon.

CHESED *See* Kindness.

CHESIL *See* Kesil.

CHESNUT The KJV rendering of the Hebrew word *'ermon* (NIV, NRSV, NET: "plane" tree), referring to a tall deciduous tree that has leaves with pointed lobes, ball-shaped clusters of flower and fruit, and smooth bark. *See also* Plane Tree; Plants.

CHESULLOTH *See* Kesulloth.

CHEZIB *See* Kezib.

CHICKEN A nesting, brooding bird, usually with brown or black feathers and a fleshy crest on its head. Jesus is responsible for the direct mention of chickens in the Bible. As the metaphorical wings of Yahweh provide protection for his people (Exod. 19:4; Deut. 32:11; Ruth 2:12; Pss. 17:8; 91:4), and as a hen gathers her chicks, so too Jesus desires the gathering of his people (Matt. 23:37; Luke 13:34).

CHIDON *See* Kidon.

CHIEF In the OT, numerous Hebrew terms are translated as "chief" or describe a chief or leader. Although the noun *'ayil* literally means "ram" (the leader of a flock), it is used figuratively to refer to foreign rulers (Exod. 15:15; Josh. 13:21; 1 Chron. 1:51). The basic meaning of *ro'sh* is "head," but context often allows the term to be nuanced as "leader" (Exod. 18:25; Num. 14:4; 25:4; Josh. 23:2). The patriarch of the family was considered to be its *ro'sh* (Exod. 6:14; Num. 7:2), as was the chief priest in relation to the people (2 Kings 25:18; 2 Chron. 19:11; Jer. 52:24). One such chief priest was Amariah, who was involved in reformations during the rule of Jehoshaphat (2 Chron. 19:11). The most common designation, however, is *sar,* which can be used in construct to refer to numerous professions: "prison warden" (Gen. 39:21), "chief cupbearer" (Gen. 40:2), "chief official" (Dan. 1:7). The term *nagid* is used frequently as a designation for a (future) king (1 Sam. 9:16; 10:1; 13:14; 25:30; 1 Kings 1:35). The term *nasi'* is used in reference to tribal chiefs (Gen. 17:20; 23:6; 34:2) and aristocracy (Exod. 16:22; Josh. 9:15; 1 Chron. 2:10).

In the NT, the Greek noun *archōn* belongs to an extended network of words that use the prefix *arch-* and generally convey the meaning of "rule" or "authority." The noun *archōn* is used in reference to humans, demons, and divinity. Jesus spoke of "ruling officials" who assert their authority over Gentiles, but he instructed his followers to seek the posture of servitude to others (Matt. 20:25–26). Even though Satan is called the *archōn* of this world (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11; cf. Eph. 2:2), Jesus is the true *archōn* over all the earth (Rev. 1:5). Various individuals are referred to as "ruler of the synagogue" (*archisynagōgos*) in the NT. These leaders were chiefly responsible for the physical upkeep of the building and the arrangements of worship in the Jewish synagogue. Among the named leadership are Jairus in Galilee (Mark 5:21–43; Luke 8:40–56; cf. Matt. 9:18–26) and Crispus (Acts 18:8; cf. 1 Cor. 1:14) and Sosthenes in Corinth (Acts 18:17). Other administrative authorities may be understood as "eminent rulers" or "officials" (cf. Acts 16:19; 17:6).

CHIEF PRIEST *See* Aaron; Levites; Priests.

CHILD *See* Family.

CHILD ABUSE Broadly speaking, child abuse refers to physical maltreatment and/or sexual molestation of a child. Often both occur together. In child abuse, legal, moral, and psychological domains are affected. A natural dependence, trust, and frailty define a child, with adulthood typically starting around age eighteen.

Child abuse brings chaos where the Creator blessed with fruitful life (Gen. 1:28; 9:7). Children signify one of God's richest blessings (Ps. 127:3–6). Pharaoh's pogrom against the Hebrew children only served to highlight the midwives who "feared God" and chose to foster rather than harm life (Exod. 1:15–22). Orphans lacked parental protection and uniquely came under God's care as the "helper of fatherless" (Ps. 10:14, 18; cf. James 1:27).

Sadly, one in three girls and one in five boys are sexually abused, 14 percent under the age of six. Most sexual abuse is incest, perpetrated by known providers, often the father. But fathers are exhorted not to even “exasperate” their children (Eph. 6:4; cf. Col. 3:21). For an abused child, their bridging metaphors for God (e.g., “father” and “mother”) can be permanently crushed.

Fortunately, the abused child can find a “spiritual family” in the church (cf. Mark 10:28–30). But woe to those who cause “one of these little ones—those who believe in me” to stumble (Matt. 18:1–6).

CHILDREN OF GOD, SONS OF GOD The Hebrew expression “sons of God” (often translated as “children of God” in contemporary usage) is an important biblical concept and is used to describe a range of referents.

In the OT, the term is used to refer to angels (e.g., Job 1:6). They are subordinate divine beings, carrying out God’s mission on earth (Job 2:1). Compared to them, Yahweh’s incomparability is asserted in divine council (Ps. 89:6; cf. Deut. 32:8 NIV mg.). They are called upon to praise Yahweh for his creation (Ps. 29:1). They shout for joy at God’s creation (Job 38:7). In Gen. 6:2 the term refers to beings that are apparently of divine origin and to be contrasted with the “daughters of men” in that same passage. The sin mentioned in this passage refers to the cohabitation of divine beings and humans. This union is one of the impetuses for the flood, an indication of how bad things had gotten. The “order” of creation (Gen. 1), where humans are meant to be fruitful with their own kind, is here transgressed. Hence, God introduces further disorder by bringing back the waters of chaos to flood the earth.

Israel as a covenant nation is called “my son, my firstborn” by Yahweh (Exod. 4:22; Jer. 31:9; Hos. 11:1). As son, Israel is expected to give proper reverence and honor for his father (Mal. 1:6). Although only one of many metaphors for Israel in the OT, Israel’s status as son is important for understanding the movement of the book of Exodus. Israel is to be delivered from Egyptian rule because Israel is God’s son. If Pharaoh continues to mistreat Israel, God will call judgment upon Egypt’s firstborn, as he did in the plague of death and the Red Sea incident.

Sonship is not exclusive to Israel. The Gentiles are also included in the future of God’s program (Isa. 19:25; Zech. 14:16). Likewise, in the NT all humans are God’s children (Eph. 4:6). More often, though, the term refers to those who are in Christ. The bond is spiritual, and often the concept of adoption is used (John 1:12; Rom. 9:6; Gal. 3:26; 4:5–7; 1 John 5:1). *See also* Sons of God

CHILDREN OF THE EAST *See* Kadmonites.

CHILEAB *See* Kileab.

CHILION *See* Kilion.

CHILMAD *See* Kilmad.

CHIMHAM *See* Kimham.

CHINNERETH, CHINNEROTH *See* Kinnereth.

CHIOS A large island with snow-covered mountains in the Aegean Sea, off the coast of Asia Minor to the west of Smyrna. At the end of his third missionary campaign, Paul’s ship anchored off the coast of Chios en route from Mitylene to Samos (Acts 20:15). The chief city of the island was also called Chios.

CHISEL A sharp masonry and carpentry tool used, often with a hammer, for cutting and shaping. Larger chisels were needed to cut blocks of stone for building (1 Kings 6:7) and to hew tablets of stone, such as those on which the commandments were inscribed (Exod. 34:1). Smaller tools were used for sculpting wooden idols (Jer. 10:3), and still finer chisels were suitable for engraving on precious stones and metals (Exod. 28:11, 36). Chisels were made from strong metals, usually iron.

CHISLEV *See* Kislev.

CHISLON *See* Kislon.

CHISLOTHTABOR *See* Kesulloth.

CHITLISH *See* Kitlish.

CHITTIM *See* Cyprus.

CHIUN *See* Kaiwan.

CHLOE A Christian woman who may have resided in either Corinth or Ephesus. Chloe is mentioned just once in the Bible (1 Cor. 1:11), but apparently she was known by name to the Corinthian believers. People from Chloe’s household reported information to Paul about divisions and quarrels in the Corinthian church.

CHOINIX A transliteration of a Greek word for a dry measure equivalent to one quart (NIV: “two pounds”), the daily ration of grain for one person (Rev. 6:6).

CHORASHAN *See* Bor Ashan.

CHORAZIN A city in Galilee that Jesus rebuked, along with Bethsaida and Capernaum, for its unbelief despite the miracles that he had performed there (Matt. 11:21; Luke 10:13). The Babylonian Talmud describes Chorazin as an important location for wheat production. It is identified with modern Khirbet Karazeh, about two miles northwest of Capernaum. The area has extensive ruins, including a third-century synagogue. Many of the buildings were made from black basalt, a local volcanic rock.

CHOSEN PEOPLE *See* Election.

CHOZEBA *See* Kozeba.

CHRIST AND CHRISTOLOGY Jesus Christ is the centerpiece of the Christian Scriptures. The meaning and interpretation of both Testaments is properly grasped only in light of the person and work of Jesus Christ. That is not to say that the Testaments testify to Jesus Christ in the exact same way; they obviously do not, but both Testaments are part of the inscripturated revelation that, in light of the incarnation, proclaims Jesus Christ to be the fullest manifestation of God given to humankind.

OLD TESTAMENT

According to the Scriptures. The early Christians were adamant that the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ happened "according to the Scriptures" (1 Cor. 15:3–4), which meant that these events lined up with Israel's sacred traditions. On the road to Emmaus the risen Jesus explained to the two travelers the things concerning himself "beginning with Moses and all the Prophets," in relation to the death and glorification of the Messiah (Luke 24:27). In one of the major Johannine discourses, Jesus tells the Pharisees that the Scriptures "testify about me" (John 5:39). Early Christian authors could find certain key texts that demonstrated the conformity of the Christ-event to the pattern of Israel's Scriptures, such as Pss. 2; 110; 118; Isa. 53. Yet much of the OT can be understood without mention of Jesus Christ in relation to its own historical context, and there is the danger of overly allegorizing OT texts in order to make them say something about Jesus Christ and the church.

Remains of the third-century AD basalt synagogue at Chorazin

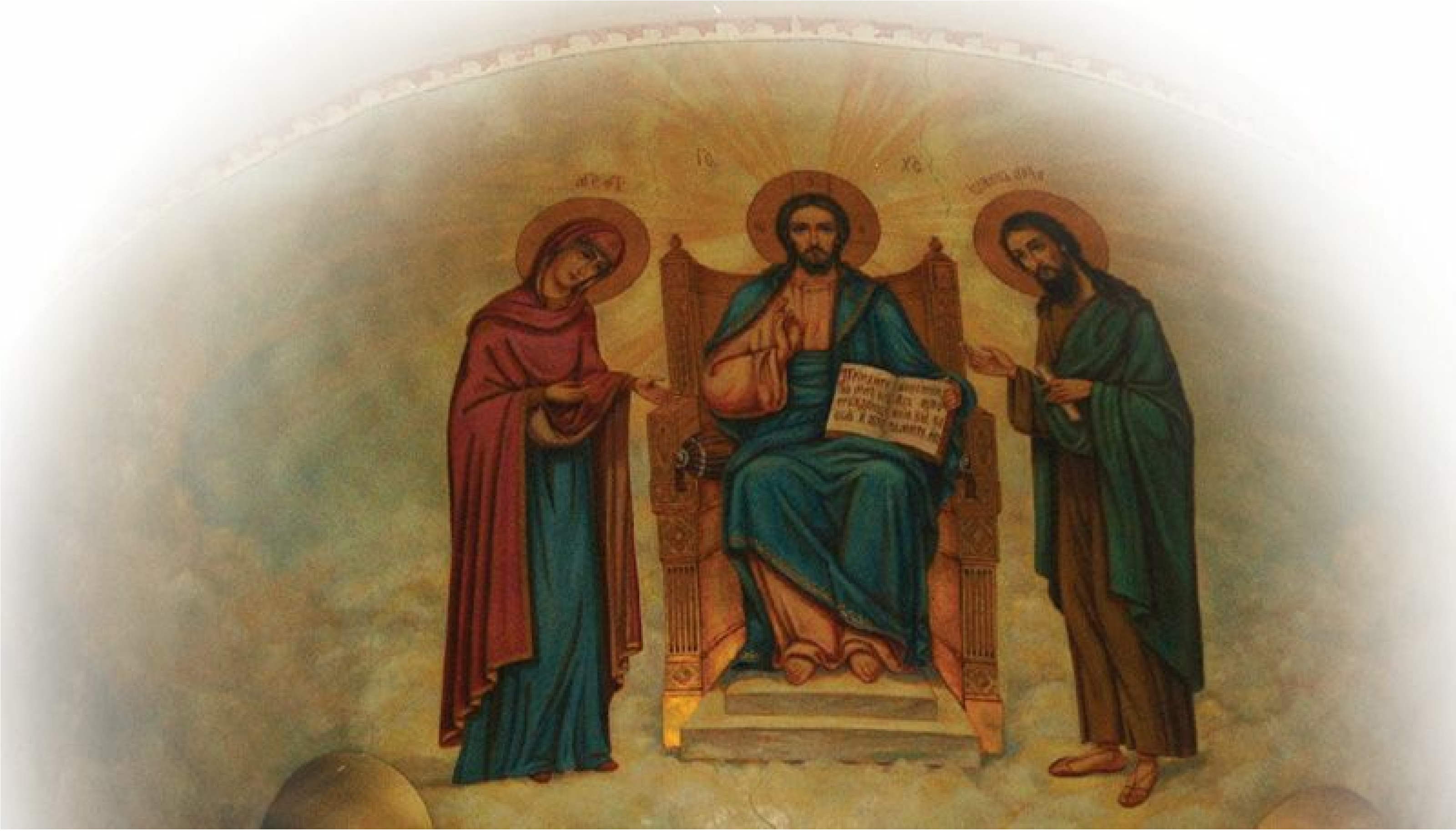
The relationship between the Testaments. The way that the NT authors echo, allude to, quote, and interpret the OT is a complex matter, but at least two points need to be made about the relationship between the two Testaments.

First, the OT anticipates and illuminates the coming of Jesus Christ. “Anticipate” does not mean “predict,” but the law and the prophets foreshadow the offices and identity of Jesus Christ. The offices of prophet, priest, and king in the OT prefigure the ministry of Christ, who is the one who reveals God, intercedes on behalf of humankind, and is the Messiah and Lord. The sacrificial cultus, with the necessity of shedding blood for the removal of sin, prefigures the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ. This is why the law is a “shadow” of the one who was to come (Col. 2:17; Heb. 10:1). “Illuminate” means that certain OT texts, though not referring to Jesus in their historical or literary context, explain aspects of his person and work. This is seen most clearly in the way that the psalms are used in the NT. Texts such as Pss. 2:7; 110:1–4 provided biblical categories that explained the nature of Jesus’ sonship, the quality of his priestly ministry, and his installation as God’s vice-regent.

Second, we should differentiate between prophecy and typology. The prophetic promises in Ezek. 37; Amos 9; and Mic. 4 about a future Davidic king whom God will use to save and restore Israel are genuine prophecies that look forward to a future event yet to be fulfilled. These texts set forth the job description of the Messiah as the renewal and restoration of Israel from bondage and exile. It is unsurprising then that in Acts, James the brother of Jesus could cite Amos 9:11–12 as proof that Gentiles should be accepted into the people of God with the coming of the Messiah (Acts 15:15–18).

Typological interpretation, on the other hand, sees OT persons, places, or events as prototypes or patterns of NT persons, places, or events. For example, in Rom. 5:14 Paul says that Adam is a “type” or “pattern” of the one to come. Similarly, Matthew’s use of Isa. 7:14 in Matt. 1:23 is also typological rather than prophetic. In the context of Isaiah, the promise refers to a child born during the reign of King Ahaz as a sign that the Judean kingdom will survive the Assyrian onslaught. Matthew’s citation does not demand an exact correspondence of events as much as it postulates a correlation of patterns or types between Isaiah’s narrative and the Matthean birth story. The coming of God’s Son, the manifestation of God’s presence, and the rescue of Israel through a child born to a young girl bring to Matthew’s mind Isa. 7 as an obvious prophetic precedent, repeated at a new juncture of redemptive history.

A Christology of the Old Testament. The NT authors interpreted the OT in search of answers to questions pertaining to the identity and ministry of Jesus Christ, the nature of the people of God, and the arrival of the new age. They detected patterns in the OT that were repeated or recapitulated in Jesus’ own person. They proclaimed that the prophetic promises made to Israel had been made good in Jesus Christ, and they found allusions to the various events of his life, death, and exaltation. Jesus and Israel’s Scriptures became a mutually interpretive spiral whereby the Christians began to understand the OT in light of Jesus and understood Jesus in light of the OT. In this canonical setting we can legitimately develop a “Christology of the Old Testament.”



Fresco of Christ on his heavenly throne (Church of the Ascension, Jerusalem)

New Testament

The Gospels. The canonical Gospels are four ancient biographies that pay attention to the history and significance of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. They represent a testimony to Jesus and embody the collective memory of his person and actions as they were transmitted and interpreted by Christians in the Greco-Roman world of the mid- to late first century.

All four Gospels follow the same basic outline by variably detailing Jesus' ministry, passion, and exaltation, and all of them place the story of Jesus in the context of the fulfillment of the story of Israel. At the same time, each Gospel in its plot and portrayal of Jesus remains distinctive in its own right. Yet they are not four different Jesuses, but rather four parallel portraits of Jesus, much like four stained-glass windows or four paintings depict the same person in different ways.

The Gospel of Matthew portrays Jesus as the long-awaited Davidic Messiah of Israel, with a focus on his teaching authority as a type of new Moses. The Gospel of Mark describes Jesus as the powerful Son of God and concurrently as the suffering Son of Man, whose cross reveals the reality of his identity and mission. The Gospel of Luke emphasizes Jesus' role as an anointed prophet with a special concern for the poor and outcasts and his role as dispenser of the Holy Spirit. Without flattening the distinctive christological shape of each of the Synoptic Gospels, we could say that they focus on Jesus as the proclaimer of the kingdom of God and as king of the very same kingdom.

The Gospel of John has its own set of characteristic emphases in which Jesus' consciousness of his divine nature and purpose is heightened. Programmatic for the entirety of John's Gospel is the prologue in 1:1–18 about the "Word [who] became flesh," which gives a clear theology of incarnation and revelation associated with Jesus' coming. There is also much material unique to

John’s Gospel, such as the “I am” statements that further exposit the nature of Jesus’ person and the climactic confession by Thomas that Jesus is “my Lord and my God” (20:28).

The Gospels indicate that mere knowledge that Jesus died for the purpose of salvation is an insufficient understanding of him. What is also needed, and what they provide, is an understanding of his teachings and his mission in light of Israel’s Scriptures and in view of the sociopolitical situation of Palestine. Jesus came to redeem and renew Israel so that a transformed Israel would transform the world.

Acts. The book of Acts contains the story of the emergence of the early church from Jerusalem to Rome. Even though Acts is a repository of apostolic preaching and plots the beginnings of the Gentile mission, it is the sequel to Luke’s Gospel and is very much the story of Jesus in perfect tense (i.e., a past event with ongoing significance). The most succinct summary of the Christology of Acts is in Peter’s speech in Jerusalem, where he states that “this Jesus” whom they crucified has been made both “Lord and Christ [NIV: “Messiah”]” by God (2:36). In the succeeding narratives emphasis is given to “Jesus is the Christ [NIV: “Messiah”]” (e.g., 9:22; 17:3; 18:5), which is a message pertinent to Jews and Gentiles (20:21).

Paul’s Letters. The Pauline Epistles, although they are situational, pastoral, and not given primarily to christological exposition, still exhibit beliefs about Jesus held by Paul and his Christian contemporaries. The high points of Paul’s Christology can be detected in his use of traditional material such as Col. 1:15–20, which exposits the sufficiency and the supremacy of Christ. Philippians 2:5–11 narrates the story of the incarnation as an example of self-giving love. In 1 Cor. 8:6 Paul offers a Christianized version of the Shema of Deut. 6:4. There is a petition to Jesus as “Come, Lord!” in 1 Cor. 16:22. Paul can also refer to Jesus as God in Rom. 9:5 (although the grammar is ambiguous). For Paul, Jesus is both the “heavenly man” (1 Cor. 15:47–49) and the Son to come from heaven (1 Thess. 1:10). This interest in the divine Son of God does not mean that Paul was ignorant of or disinterested in the life and teachings of Jesus. Elsewhere he implies knowledge of Jesus’ teachings (e.g., Rom. 14:14; 1 Cor. 7:10–11) and refers to the incarnation (e.g., 2 Cor. 8:9; Col. 2:9).

A number of titles are used to describe Jesus in Paul’s letters, including “Lord” and “Christ/Messiah” (and variations such as “Lord Jesus Christ” and “Christ Jesus”), “Savior,” and “Seed of David” (Rom. 1:3). But probably the most apt expression of Jesus’ nature according to Paul is “Son of God” (e.g., Rom. 1:4; 2 Cor. 1:19; Gal. 2:20). This language of sonship suggests that Jesus is the means of God’s salvation and glory and is the special agent through whom the Father acts. Referring to Jesus as “Son” also underscores Jesus’ unique relationship to God the Father and his unique role in executing the ordained plan of salvation for the elect.

We might also add that Paul provides the building blocks of what would later become a full-blown trinitarian theology, such as in the benediction of 2 Cor. 13:14 and in general exhortations about the gospel (1 Cor. 2:1–5). It must be emphasized that Paul’s Christology cannot be separated from his eschatology, soteriology, and ecclesiology. The sending of God’s Son (see Rom. 8:3; Gal. 4:4–5) into the world marks the coming of redemption and salvation through the cross and resurrection of the Son, and these are appropriated by faith. Those who believe become members of the restored Israel, the renewed Adamic race, and constituent members of the body of Christ. To that we might add the experiential element of Paul’s Christology as Jesus is known in the experience of salvation, prayer, and worship (e.g., Gal. 2:19–20).

The General Letters. The General Letters (also called the Catholic Epistles) provide a further array of images and explorations into the person and work of Jesus Christ and how they relate to the community of faith. The message of Hebrews is essentially "Jesus is better!" He is better than the angels and better than Moses; he is a better high priest; he offers a better sacrifice, establishes a better law, and instigates a better covenant. This letter is a sermonic exhortation against falling away from the faith (e.g., 2:1–4), and toward that end the author sets before his readers the magnificence of Jesus Christ, who is "the same yesterday and today and forever" (13:8).

James has little christological content and focuses instead on exhortations that bear remarkable resemblance to the teachings of Jesus from the Gospels. Even so, the letter makes passing reference to the "glorious Lord Jesus Christ" (2:1; cf. 1:1).

Central to 1 Peter is the glory and salvation that will be manifested at the revelation of Jesus Christ at his second coming (1:5, 7, 9, 13; 4:13; 5:1). Much attention is given to Jesus' sacrificial death as a lamb (1:19), the example of his suffering (2:21–23; 4:1–2, 13), and the substitutionary nature of his death (2:24; 3:18). He is the Shepherd and Overseer of the souls of Christians (2:25). Peter writes this to encourage congregations in Asia Minor living under adverse conditions, and he sets before them the pattern of Jesus as a model for their own journey.

In 2 Peter we find a mix of Jewish eschatological concepts and Hellenistic religious language, with the author seeking to defend the apostolic gospel in a pagan culture. Jesus is the source of knowledge (1:2, 8; 2:20) and righteousness (1:1). Much emphasis is given to the coming kingdom of Jesus Christ (1:11, 16; 3:10). Jesus is the sustainer and renewer of the church and also the coming judge of the entire world.

Similar themes can be found in Jude, which is addressed to a group of believers who have been infiltrated by false teachers promoting licentiousness. Jude declares the infiltrators to be condemned and calls on the believers to hold fast to the faith. Jesus is the "Sovereign and Lord" (v. 4), Jesus saved people out of Egypt during the exodus (v. 5 [but see marginal notes on the variant reading "Lord"]), the second coming of Jesus will mark the revelation of his "mercy" (v. 21), and the benediction ascribes "glory, majesty, power and authority" to God through Jesus (v. 25). Most characteristic of all is the emphasis upon Jesus/God as the one who keeps the believers in the grip of his saving power (vv. 1, 21, 23).

The Letters of John take up where the Gospel of John left off, focusing on Jesus as the incarnate Word of God. The first of the three Johannine Epistles appears to have been written in a context where a community of Christians was being pressured by Jews to deny that Jesus is the Messiah (2:22) and also by dissident docetists to deny that Jesus had a physical body (4:2; 5:6). The major focus, however, is on Jesus as the Son of God (1:3, 7; 2:23; 3:8, 23; 4:9–10, 15; 5:11) and the incarnation of God's very own truth and love (3:16; cf. 2 John 3).

Revelation. The Christology of the book of Revelation is best summed up in the opening description of Jesus as "him who is, and who was, and who is to come," which underscores the lordship of Jesus over the past, present, and future. John then describes Jesus with the threefold titles "the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth" (1:4–5). In many ways, the story and Christology of Revelation are paradoxical. Jesus is both the victim of Roman violence and the victor over human evil. Jesus is the suffering "Lamb of God" and the powerful "Lion of the tribe of Judah." In Rev. 4–5 we are given a picture of the worship in heaven and the enthronement of Jesus, and yet the realities on earth are a dearth of heavenly goodness, with persecution and apostasy rampant (Rev. 1–3). This tension continues until the final revelation of Jesus, when the heavenly Lord returns to bring the goodness and power of heaven to transform the perils of the earth and bring his people into the new Jerusalem.

SUMMARY

The primary fixtures of a biblical Christology are (1) Jesus Christ is the promised deliverer intimated in Israel's Scriptures, whose identity and mission are anticipated and illuminated by the law and the prophets; (2) the man Jesus of Nazareth is identified with the risen and exalted Lord Jesus Christ; and (3) Jesus participates in the very identity and being of God. *See also* Jesus Christ.

CHRISTIAN A word derived from the Greek term *Christos* ("anointed," "anointed one," "Messiah") with a Latin ending attached. It means "follower of Christ" and is used in the NT three times.

Acts 11:26 notes that the followers of Christ were first called "Christians" in Antioch, Syria, during Paul's initial ministry there. Acts does not elaborate, but the word "Christian" itself likely indicates that pagans coined the term to distinguish Christians from Jews as Christian practices brought increasing separation from the synagogues.

Acts 26:28 narrates the story of Paul's speech defending his ministry during a trial before Herod Agrippa in Caesarea Maritima. Agrippa somewhat sarcastically asks if Paul expects him to become a Christian, one who follows Christ.

Finally, 1 Pet. 4:16 praises suffering brought about through publicly identifying oneself as a Christian, because such suffering is a participation in the suffering of Christ.

CHRISTIAN FESTIVALS *See* Church Year.

CHRISTMAS The holiday marking the birth of Jesus Christ in Bethlehem of Judea in approximately 4 BC (Matt. 1:18–2:12; Luke 2:1–20).

Although Christmas is celebrated on December 25 in the West, neither this date nor the Eastern alternatives (January 6 or 7) are established in Scripture. Indeed, the description of shepherds in the fields with their flocks argues against them, since in Judea such activity does not generally occur in the winter months.

December 25 was first noted as the birthday of Jesus in the *Chronography of 354*, a Roman document also known as the Philocalian Calendar, which incorporates an older reference dating from 336. Close to the winter solstice, December 25 has pre-Christian significance as the observation of the birth of Mithra, a Persian sun deity dating to the sixth century BC, and as the end of the feast of Saturnalia (December 17–24), a ribald agricultural festival. It was co-opted as the observance of Jesus' nativity in the early fourth century when Constantine made Christianity a recognized religion in the Roman Empire. He hoped to ease the transition from pagan practice to Christian by pouring new meaning into existing festivities. The word "Christmas" first appeared in 1038 in Old English, *Cristes Maesse*, meaning "Christ's Festival Day." By the seventeenth century, however, the pagan aspects of Christmas had trumped biblical piety. Carnival excess ruled, and the holiday was staunchly opposed by Puritans for generations.

Aerial view of the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem. Tradition says this church is built upon the site where Jesus was born.

Although our modern Christmas customs have traceable European roots, their appearance and popularization in the United States are more a function of sociological changes in nineteenth-century New York. The Christmas tree, for example, though of German origin, was introduced through literature first, and by the 1830s it had quickly caught on as an appealing tool to help domesticate a boisterous street holiday. Santa Claus evolved among the merchant class Knickerbockers and eventually took recognizable form in Clement Clarke Moore's 1822 poem "A Visit from St. Nicholas."

CHRONICLES, BOOKS OF These books originally formed a single book and were first divided into two in the Greek translation, the LXX. Chronicles tells the history of Israel from the creation of the world to the end of the Babylonian exile, focusing at length on the history of David and Solomon. In Jewish tradition, Chronicles is the last book in the OT, which may be due to its late acceptance into the canon or because it forms a fitting conclusion to the Hebrew Bible. Like Genesis, which opens the canon, Chronicles begins with creation (Gen. 1:1; 1 Chron. 1:1) and ends with a prophecy of a return to the land (Gen. 50:24; 2 Chron. 23) and the hope of redemption.

AUTHORSHIP

Chronicles does not name anyone as its author. Some have suggested that Ezra, Haggai, Malachi, or Zechariah may have written Chronicles, but such suggestions are pure speculation. It is most common to refer to the author simply as the Chronicler (hereafter, Ch). Ch clearly had scribal training, since he was familiar with the biblical books that preceded his work and had access to archival sources. Other than these broad generalizations, the identity of the author remains anonymous, as he intended.

In the past many believed that Ch also wrote Ezra-Nehemiah because of similarities in language and how Chronicles ends by quoting the opening of Ezra (which implies that they were once connected). Common authorship is unlikely, however, since Ezra-Nehemiah stresses Abram's election, the exodus, the conquest of the land, and the fall of northern Israel, while Chronicles does not explicitly mention any of these events. Also Ch emphasizes "immediate retribution" (obedience/disobedience brings immediate blessing/punishment), whereas Ezra-Nehemiah allows that good behavior can bring problems rather than blessing (e.g., those building the wall of Jerusalem are persecuted). Also, some differences in terminology may suggest different authors for these books (e.g., Ezra-Nehemiah calls the high priest "great priest," whereas Chronicles uses the term "head priest").

Ch primarily used previous OT books as sources, drawing on the Pentateuch and Joshua (for his genealogies) and on Psalms (cf. Pss. 96; 105–106 with 1 Chron. 16:7–36) and Ezra (cf. Ezra 1:1–3 with 2 Chron. 36:22–23). However, Ch relied most heavily on Samuel-Kings, as can be seen by his extensive verbatim quotation of them throughout his stories. Noncanonical sources probably also were employed (e.g., the reference to Hezekiah's tunnel in 2 Chron. 32:30, which is unparalleled in Kings but is historically accurate), though they do not survive today.

DATE

An exact date of composition is not known. However, the mention in 1 Chron. 29:7 of Persian darics (coins), which were not minted until 515 BC, makes a date after 500 BC likely (since we must allow time for the spread of darics throughout the empire). Most telling is Jehoiachin's genealogy in 1 Chron. 3:17–24 (since the last names listed must predate or be contemporary with Ch), which extends at least six generations after Zerubbabel, making a date around 450 BC (assuming twenty years per generation) the earliest possible date for the composition of Chronicles. Also, Chronicles is likely to have been written before Alexander the Great's conquest of Palestine in 333 BC, since there is no perceivable Greek influence in Chronicles. Therefore, the date for the composition of Chronicles is most likely between 450 and 333 BC, during the Persian period.

AUDIENCE AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Some historical background is necessary to understand Chronicles' purpose and to identify its original audience. In 586 BC Jerusalem was destroyed, and the bulk of the population was deported to Babylon (2 Kings 25); however, the Jewish community in Babylon retained its identity and longed to return home. When Cyrus of Persia conquered Babylon in 539 BC, he offered to send the exiles back to their homeland to rebuild Jerusalem and their temple. Those who returned faced many challenges and struggled with how to rebuild "Israel" in the land that was given to them by God but now was ruled by the Persians and settled by a mixed population. Even with their temple rebuilt and Jerusalem resettled, this community still questioned how their new life would work and what their relationship to God would be like. Chronicles was written for this beleaguered restoration community.

GENRE

Chronicles is perhaps best known for its long genealogies, which open the book (1 Chron. 1–9). In addition, there are many lists in other parts of the book that seem to detract from its otherwise interesting narratives. The genre of Chronicles is "historiography" (history writing) as it presents an account of Israel's past. The nature of the historiography that Ch wrote has been the subject of much debate due to the difficulty of explaining the considerable freedom that Ch exercised in selecting, arranging, and even changing his source material. All written histories involve creative writing, selectivity, and interpretation of sources. Ch's selectivity can be seen in his omissions—for example, stories that deal only with northern Israel, David's adultery with Bathsheba and murder of Uriah, and Solomon's many wives and idolatry. Ch's selectivity, however, should not be taken as intentional deception on his part, since he probably assumed that his audience knew the full story of David and Solomon's sin.

Ch's interpretation of his sources can be seen in how he rewrote 2 Sam. 24:1. The writer of 2 Samuel describes *God* inciting David to take a census, but Ch holds *Satan* responsible for inciting him (1 Chron. 21:1). Writing at a later time when it was understood that God worked through divine intermediaries, Ch interpreted his source in light of this new revelation. Just as NT writers quoted the OT interpretively, Ch felt free to make explicit what he saw as implied in his sources.

However, it must be admitted that not all the changes that Ch makes to his sources can be easily explained. It must be remembered that, unlike modern historiography, Chronicles was written with mainly theological interests in mind. If omitting certain stories or writing additions to his narrative were necessary to drive home the message that God wanted him to deliver, that is what Ch did. Such practices were standard procedure in history writing in the ancient world and were acceptable in his day. Yet Ch was constrained by his sources. Despite his desire to highlight David's role in the establishment of the temple, he could not present David as temple builder, since history recorded that Solomon built the temple. Historiography is a creative attempt to interpret past events and bring out their significance for the present. In this way, Chronicles is definitely historiography, though not the type of historiography that would be written today.

THEMES

David and the Davidic kings. The main characters in Chronicles are the Davidic kings. Although the narrative begins with Saul as Israel's king (1 Chron. 10:1–3), he is quickly disposed of (10:4). David's kingship is immediately established (without the long struggle to become king as described in 1 Samuel) and is for Israel's benefit (1 Chron. 14:2). David is presented as the ideal monarch, who sought God with his whole heart and also instituted proper worship. Although Solomon builds the temple, in Chronicles David prepares for its construction (1 Chron. 22) and its administration (1 Chron. 23–25).

Presenting David as the founder of proper worship underscores Ch's emphasis on the responsibility of Davidic kings to maintain proper worship in Israel. Some kings turned from proper worship (e.g., Manasseh), while others held true and restored it when it had been forsaken (e.g., Josiah). The Davidic king sat on God's throne (1 Chron. 17:14; 28:5; 29:23) and represented the people in prayer to God (2 Chron. 6:18–42). When northern Israel rejected the Davidic king, they rejected God (2 Chron. 13:4–12). This elevation of the importance of the Davidic monarchy held out hope of a coming Davidic king despite the current situation of Persian rule.

The temple and the Levites. Chronicles focuses on Israel's relationship to God, which is shown in the emphasis on the Davidic king as Israel's representative to God but is best expressed through the focus on the temple and its institutions. Chronicles shows how Israel's relationship to God was dependent on maintaining proper temple worship. The Levitical priesthood together with the Davidic king maintained the worship of God. The Levites even stepped in to preserve the Davidic line when it was threatened (2 Chron. 22:10–23:21), and only they could administer proper worship in the temple (26:16–18). Interestingly, this emphasis on Davidic kings and Levitical priests reflects the conditions of rule under which the original audience lived when they returned from exile (cf. Zech. 2:4).

All Israel. In Chronicles the term "all Israel" is used for northern Israel (2 Chron. 13:4), southern Judah (2 Chron. 11:3), or all the Israelites together (1 Chron. 11:1). For Ch, "Israel" indicates a people who are in a special relationship with God and accountable to him. The Davidic king and the Levitical priests are important, but the people themselves are also accountable to God (e.g., 2 Chron. 11:3–4, 16–17; 13:14; 15:9–15). This allows Ch to emphasize the responsibility of each generation to have a proper relationship with God.

The Persian daric. The mention of darics in 1 Chron. 29:7 helps to establish the date of the book.

PROPHECY

In Chronicles there are many prophets known by the traditional titles "prophet" or "seer," but also others who speak prophetically but are not designated by such titles. These other prophetic speakers mostly address the people rather than kings (like official prophets) and are portrayed as interpreting and applying earlier prophetic tradition to their current situation. Chronicles represents a transitional stage when the "word of the LORD" is beginning to be seen not only as oral prophecy but also as referring to written prophecies (such as those of Moses) or Scripture (e.g., 2 Chron. 34:21 rewrites

2 Kings 22:13, “the words of this book,” as “the word of the LORD”). This development to written Scripture creates the foundation for both Judaism and Christianity as text-based faiths.

THEOLOGICAL MESSAGE

Ch encouraged his community by retelling the old story in new ways. The old story (Samuel-Kings) taught its audience why the exile happened (their sin), but Ch’s audience needed to be assured that God was still interested in them. Chronicles reminds the restoration community of the continuity between preexilic and postexilic times and their heritage as God’s people and heirs of the promises to David. Whereas Samuel-Kings emphasized idolatry as the reason for the exile (2 Kings 17:7–18), Chronicles looks past this surface symptom to the root problem of “forsaking the LORD,” characterized by neglecting their relationship with God through proper worship. “Seeking the LORD” calls for a complete response of his people to him.

Whereas Samuel-Kings explains the exile by the cumulative buildup of the sins of the monarchy (2 Kings 23:26; 24:3), in Chronicles the fate of Israel is never sealed. Any generation can seek God wholeheartedly and thereby receive blessing. The thematic verse for Chronicles is perhaps 2 Chron. 7:14: “If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land.” Ch’s message demands a response in the present. In retelling the history of his people, his audience could see the cause-and-effect relationship between seeking and forsaking God and apply it to their current situation. They themselves were “all Israel” and needed to seek God wholeheartedly in proper worship. Only through faithfulness to God would Israel recapture the glory days of its past. In a message as applicable now as it was millennia ago, Chronicles calls for its readers to have a proper relationship with God and holds out expectation that blessing will follow.

OUTLINE

I. Genealogical Prologue: Adam to the Present (1 Chron. 1–9)

II. United Monarchy: Saul, David, and Solomon (1 Chron. 10–2 Chron. 9)

III. The History of Judah: The Later Davidic Kings (2 Chron. 10–36:16)

IV. The Exile and Return (2 Chron. 36:17–23)

CHRONICLES OF THE KINGS *See* Annals of the Kings.

CHRONOLOGY OF THE BIBLICAL PERIOD

OLD TESTAMENT

Students of biblical history must work with several overlapping systems of chronology. This section defines several approaches and describes how they are interconnected.

Absolute and relative dates. Absolute dates consist of a numerical value falling in one of two eras, BC (“Before Christ”; also referred to as BCE, “Before the Common Era”) or AD (*Anno Domini*, “in the year of our Lord”; also referred to as CE, “Common Era”). For example, Samaria fell to the Assyrians in 722 BC. This system of absolute dating, a commonplace of modern life, was devised only in the sixth century AD, so it is unknown in biblical and other ancient sources. Instead of absolute dates, the Bible and other ancient historiographic sources give relative dates; that is, events are dated in relation to other recorded events, as in 1 Kings 15:1: "In the eighteenth year of the reign of Jeroboam son of Nebat, Abijah became king of Judah." The system of relative dates in the OT can be collated to form a single relative chronology.

Using royal histories. For the purposes of constructing a unified chronology, the royal history in Samuel-Kings and Chronicles is of central importance, with its tabulations of the ages of the kings at accession and the lengths of their reigns. The biblical chronology can then be assigned to absolute dates by establishing synchronisms with other historical chronicles (most usefully, from Mesopotamia), which in turn can be fixed to a handful of absolute dates. Of particular importance are records (all nonbiblical cuneiform texts) of observed astronomical phenomena, the appearance of which in history can now be calculated with a high degree of mathematical certainty. Annalistic sources (documents that record an entry for each passing year, such as the cuneiform eponym chronicles) are particularly valuable. The Bible contains no annalistic sources, but rather is made up of chronistic sources—that is, texts that record and quantify the passage of time, but without a separate accounting of each year. When miscalculations or textual corruptions affect chronistic records, they are difficult to correct (see 1 Sam. 13:1). The biblical data, consisting of summary figures, probably go back to annalistic sources that were compiled from year to year (perhaps the records mentioned in, e.g., 1 Kings 11:41; 14:19).

The assembly of a unified biblical chronology on the basis of the royal histories is further complicated by the fact that several calendars—royal, agricultural, cultic—were in simultaneous use. There may also have been a discrepancy between Israel and Judah with regard to the reckoning of the cultic New Year. Added to this, in several cases the biblical data imply a period of coregency, during which the reigns of the outgoing king and his appointed successor overlapped, creating the potential for the years of the coregency to be counted twice. In biblical times there were two systems of reckoning dates based on royal succession: the "accession-year" system, which omitted from the length of a king's reign any partial year from his accession to the first New Year, and the "nonaccession-year" system, which began counting the years of a king's reign as soon as he acceded. In nonaccession-year dating, any year in which there are two kings gets counted twice: once as the last year of the former king, and once as the first year of the new king. The biblical chronologies appear to use both systems, with a movement from the nonaccession-year system to the accession-year system in later centuries. Obviously, the choice of systems dictates the significance of the figures presented in the Bible and must be taken into account in the collation of data.

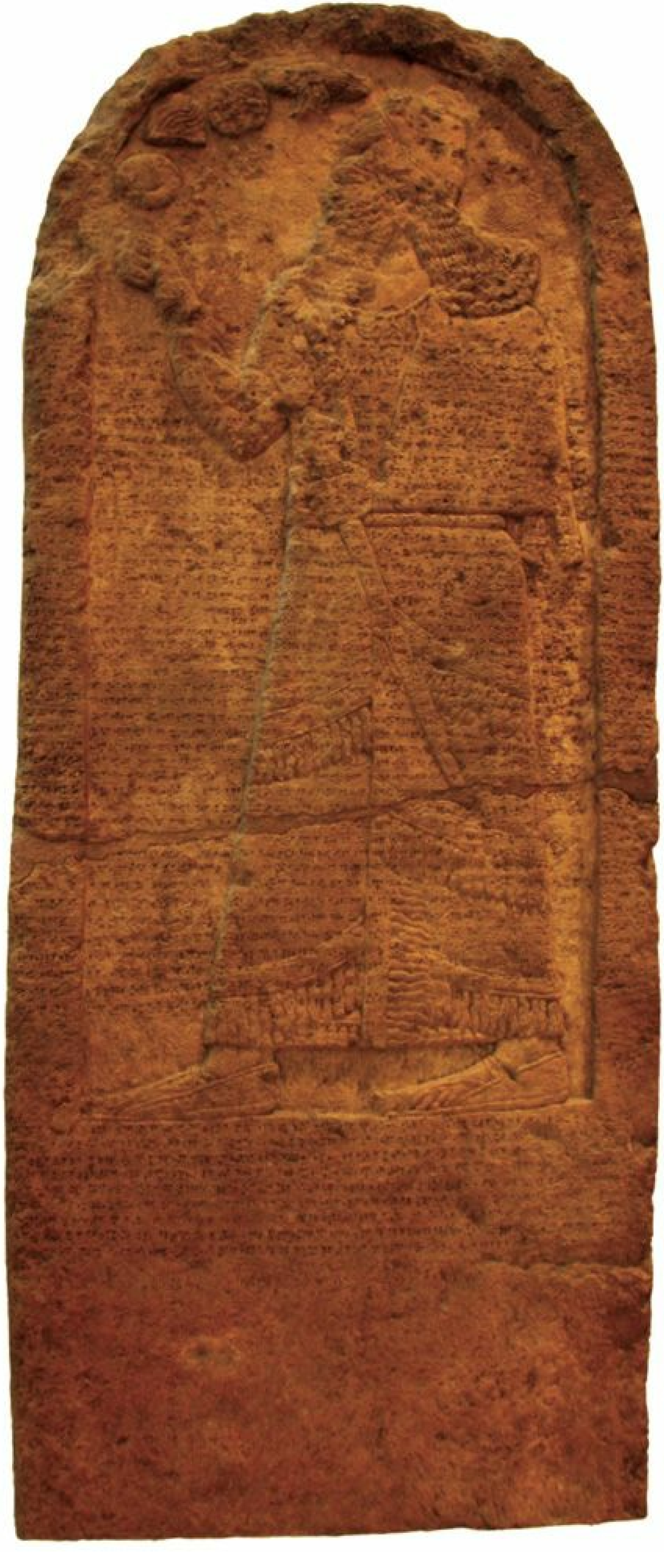
Combining royal regnal data and various genealogical tables (based on, e.g., Gen. 5; 11; the summary figures in Exod. 12:41; 1 Kings 6:1), it is possible to reconstruct a putative world chronology from the creation of Adam to the exile. Famously, in 1650 James Ussher followed this procedure, working backward from absolute dates known from classical sources, to determine that the world was created on the night before October 23, 4004 BC. In its day, this was a work of impressive scholarship, but Ussher's chronology is too short to encompass not only archaeological findings (from the land of Israel itself, there are Neolithic and Chalcolithic artifacts going back ten thousand years), but also findings in all branches of the sciences that corroborate the age of the earth at about 4.5 billion years and the appearance of modern humans approximately two hundred thousand years before the present. Beginning in the first millennium BC, however, the Bible provides chronological data that, with modest adjustments, agree with other historical and archaeological findings.

Weighing the sources. Because of the variety of materials in the OT, it is crucial to determine which sources are of historical value, weighing each in terms of internal and external coherence. As noted above, the backbone of OT chronology is the series of regnal data for the kings of Israel and Judah found in Samuel-Kings and Chronicles. These data are useful because they provide a continuous chronology of several hundred years that can be anchored at several points to datable events in external historical sources. In addition, the history of the kings of Judah and Israel contains references to historical figures known from extrabiblical records. In contrast, the chronology of the OT prior to the period of judges, while internally coherent, cannot be correlated to known absolute dates. Where non-Israelite figures are mentioned, they are often unnamed (e.g., the pharaohs of the eras of Abraham and Moses), anachronistically described (e.g., Abraham's contacts with the Philistines [Gen. 21:34], a group that did not appear in Palestine until long after the ostensible Middle Bronze Age date of Abraham), or do not correspond to known historical figures (e.g., Abimelek, Nimrod). Although cultural-historical investigation may shed light on the patriarchal narratives and their historical setting, such an approach yields nothing more than vague chronological findings. In some cases, the late date of the biblical texts has obscured chronological indicators, interfering with the project of cultural history. Setting aside questions of the historicity of the patriarchal narratives, apart from the reports of their ages, there is little data to work with when it comes to constructing a chronology of the patriarchs.

The story of the exodus from Egypt presents an event that, in principle, should be datable on the basis of external data. The mass migration of millions of persons, the destruction of the army of a geopolitical superpower, and the subsequent conquest of a small but powerful country are events that promise to provide a chronological anchor for the beginning of Israel's history. Unfortunately, the event recorded in the Bible has not left a clear mark, either in the historiography of Egypt or in the archaeology of Palestine. On closer inspection, the biblical text contains a number of features that frustrate any attempt to date the events on their basis. Unlike in the histories of the biblical monarchs, the pharaoh of the Exodus, a figure of international stature in his own day, is never named in the Bible. Some have attempted to fix a date to the exodus on the basis of the occurrence of the name "Rameses" in Exod. 1:11; 12:37. This name was not current in Egypt before the thirteenth century BC. If it provides a clue as to the date of the exodus, it does so only at the expense of broader biblical chronology, according to which the exodus occurred in the fifteenth century BC (in particular, based on the figures given in Exod. 12:41; 1 Kings 6:1). It is not until we get into the monarchic period, when the history of Israel is intertwined with that of named international figures, that absolute dates can be established with certainty.

Biblical events that can be assigned absolute dates based on cuneiform historical records include the following. Ahab was king of Israel at the time of the battle of Qarqar in 853 BC. The Kurkh monolith of Shalmaneser III records his participation in the coalition of Hadadezer, though the event is not mentioned in the Bible. Jehu was on the throne of Judah in 841 BC, when Shalmaneser III recorded that he gave tribute to Assyria. Joash was king of Israel in 796 BC, when he rendered tribute to Adad-nirari III. Menahem was king in 740 and 738 BC (see 2 Kings 15:19), when he paid tribute to Tiglath-pileser III (the biblical Pul). Ahaz paid tribute to Tiglath-pileser in 734 BC, and Manasseh to Esarhaddon around 674 BC. These synchronisms provide in each case upper and lower limits for fixing the reign of the kings of Israel and Judah. In some cases, the chronology of the book of Kings must be adjusted to fit these dates, on the assumption that the Deuteronomistic Historian lacked firsthand knowledge about the history of the northern kingdom, was attempting to work with conflicting sources, or made errors in calculation. Other important synchronisms include Hoshea's coup against Pekah (2 Kings 15:30), dated based on an inscription of Tiglath-pileser III to 732 BC;

the fall of Samaria (2 Kings 17:6), dated based on the Babylonian Chronicle to 722 BC; Sennacherib's Judean campaign in 701 BC (2 Kings 18:13–19:36); the Battle of Carchemish in 605 BC (Jer. 46:2); the capture of Jerusalem in 597 BC (2 Kings 24:12); and the release of Jehoiachin from captivity in 561 BC, coinciding with the accession of Amel-Marduk (2 Kings 25:27).



Kurkh monolith of Shalmaneser III, recording his participation in the coalition of Hadadezer

Periodization of history. In addition to relative and absolute chronologies, biblical scholars refer to several schemes of periodization defined by technological and political developments.

The most ancient scheme of periodization is implied in the Bible itself, which conceives of periods of judges (Judg. 17:6), united monarchy, divided monarchy, and exile. The transitions between phases in this scheme are defined by dramatic social and political discontinuities. Another approach to the periodization of Israelite history involves defining the major transitions in terms of the material culture. Prior to the fall of Jerusalem, modern biblical scholars and archaeologists divide Syro-Palestinian history into several periods, named for developments in metallurgical technology. While there is some variety of opinion among scholars regarding the exact dates used, the following scheme is widely used (given with rough correlations to the biblical periods):

Term	Approximate dates	Biblical periodization
Early Bronze Age	3300 to 2200 BC	(Primeval period?)
Middle Bronze Age	2200 to 1550 BC	Patriarchs
Late Bronze Age	1550 to 1200 BC	Period in Egypt, exodus
Iron Age	1200 to 586 BC	Judges, monarchy

The Iron Age is further subdivided as follows:

Term	Approximate dates	Biblical periodization
Iron Age I	1200 to 1000 BC	Judges
Iron Age IIA	1000 to 900 BC	United monarchy
Iron Age IIB	900 to 700 BC	Divided monarchy
Iron Age IIC	700 to 586 BC	Fall of Samaria to fall of Jerusalem

The divisions between these periods are heuristic and do not correspond to precisely dated developments in metallurgy. For instance, some iron artifacts may be dated to the Bronze Age, though not widespread iron metalworking on an industrial scale. Especially in the various subdivisions of the Iron Age, transitions begin to be defined by political events rather than the metal sequence: Iron IA corresponds to the biblical period of the judges, Iron IIA to the united monarchy, Iron IIB to the divided monarchy, and Iron IIC to the period between the falls of Samaria and Jerusalem, when the southern kingdom alone had political autonomy. Some scholars round off the dates to avoid a periodization based on short-term political events and to emphasize the gradual rate of change in material culture and technology (e.g., using the round dates 900, 700, 600).

For events and dates after the fall of Jerusalem, historians employ a scheme of periodization based heavily on political factors. The series of periods are named for the dominant geopolitical powers in Syria-Palestine:

Term	Approximate dates	Biblical periodization
Neo-Babylonian period	622 to 539 BC	Late Judean monarchy, exile
Persian period	539 to 330 BC	Return from exile

Hellenistic period	330 to 63 BC	
Roman period	63 BC to AD 324	New Testament events

Although there was significant redaction (and, according to some, composition) of biblical texts in the Hellenistic period, no biblical narratives are ostensibly set in the period. Thus, the internal periodization of history in the Hebrew Bible ends with the return from exile (the Persian period).

NEW TESTAMENT

The birth of Jesus. According to Matt. 2:1 (see also Luke 1:5), Jesus was born during the lifetime of Herod the Great, who, as we know from Josephus, died in 4 BC (see Matt. 2:15–19). In his attempt to kill Jesus, Herod ordered the slaughter of male children up to the age of two, based on information that he obtained from the magi concerning the appearance of the star heralding Jesus' birth (Matt. 2:16). Thus, Matthew's account implies a date no later than 4 BC, but possibly several years earlier. Some scholars have attempted to correlate the magi's observance of a star with one of several striking celestial phenomena, including a conjunction of Jupiter, Saturn, and Mars in 7 BC (so Johannes Kepler). Such attempts, however, are weakened by the fact that Matthew's description of the star is vague, unnaturalistic, and difficult to identify certainly with a planetary alignment or any other known phenomenon (in particular, the star is said to move and then come to rest over Jesus' location). Another line of investigation involves Luke's correlation of Jesus' birth with a Roman census that he dates to the time of Quirinius (Luke 2:1–2). This report, however, contradicts the testimony of Josephus, according to whom Quirinius became governor in AD 6 (a decade after the death of Herod). Most likely, Jesus was born shortly before 4 BC, during the reign of Herod.

The beginning and duration of Jesus' public ministry. According to Luke 3:23, Jesus was "about thirty years old" at the time of his baptism and the beginning of his public ministry. In John 8:57, Jesus is challenged: "You are not yet fifty years old." These two round numbers provide reasonable limits for the age of Jesus during his ministry. Owing to a paucity of chronological indicators in the Synoptic Gospels, the ministry of Jesus as depicted in Matthew, Mark, and Luke could have taken place within the space of a single year. In contrast, John narrates postbaptism events during three occurrences of the annual Passover festival (John 2:13; 6:4; 11:55), suggesting that Jesus' ministry lasted for three years or longer. Unfortunately, the chronology of John appears in some instances to be at odds with the other Gospels. Most significantly, he places Jesus' cleansing of the temple at the beginning, rather than the end, of his ministry (John 2:13–22; cf. Mark 11:15–19 pars.). It is unclear to what degree strict chronology has been modified in the interest of other concerns in each of the Gospels. According to John's account, the cleansing of the temple occurred forty-six years after the beginning of its construction, an event that Josephus dates to either the eighteenth or the fifteenth year of Herod's reign (John 2:20), placing the incident in the year AD 28 or 31. Ultimately, there are two sources of uncertainty pertaining to the chronology of Jesus' ministry: the imprecise (and possibly symbolic) report of his age in Luke 3:23 and the indeterminate length of his ministry.

The death of Jesus. All four Gospels agree that Pontius Pilate, the Roman procurator of Judea, was instrumental in the trial and execution of Jesus. Pilate governed from AD 26 to 36; this provides a latest possible date for the death of Jesus. To refine the chronology beyond this, scholars have attempted to date the end of Jesus' life based on its occurrence during the Feast of Passover (15 Nisan in the Jewish calendar) and by trying to determine in which year the feast would have coincided with his crucifixion on a Friday. This approach is complicated by the discrepancy between

John, according to whom the Passover meal was eaten in the evening following the crucifixion (John 19:14), and Mark, who appears to have an imperfect knowledge of Passover customs (Mark 14:12–16) and thus describes Jesus' final supper with his disciples as a Passover meal (i.e., on 14 Nisan). Following John's chronology yields a date for the crucifixion of Friday, April 7 (Nisan 14), AD 30, or Friday, April 3 (Nisan 14), AD 33.

Of these two options, the AD 30 date conforms more closely to Luke 3:23, and it suggests that following a ministry of about three years, Jesus was in his mid- to late thirties at the time of his crucifixion.

Paul's career. The chronology of Paul's career remains a difficult question in biblical studies. There are two major sources for this chronology: the letters of Paul (esp. Galatians) and the book of Acts. When independent chronologies are constructed from each of these sources, several difficulties arise, including the absence of absolute anchors in Paul's letters, lack of clear agreement between Acts and the letters regarding the number of visits to Jerusalem, and, by implication, the periodization of Paul's career into distinct phases of concerted activity or "missionary journeys." These data must in turn be synchronized, sometimes requiring some ingenuity, with other historically documented events such as the dating of Claudius's edict (Acts 18:2), the dates of Aretas's control of Damascus (2 Cor. 11:32–33), the death of Herod Agrippa in AD 44 (mentioned in Acts 12:23), the presence of Sergius Paulus in Cyprus during Paul's first missionary journey (Acts 13:7 [this figure is known from inscriptions, but none of them clearly bears on the question]), and Festus's succession of Felix as the procurator of Palestine (Acts 23–26), which Josephus puts in AD 53.

If we grant a fair measure of historical reliability to the outline of Acts, Paul experienced his conversion around AD 33, visited Jerusalem in AD 36 (Gal. 1:18), completed his first missionary journey and then visited Jerusalem to confer with the other apostles (Acts 15:1–29; Gal. 2:1) in the late 40s, conducted his second and third missionary journeys in the first half of the 50s before being finally arrested in Jerusalem around AD 57, and was taken to Rome in AD 59–60.

CHRYSOLITE The seventh precious stone in the foundation of the new Jerusalem (Rev. 21:20). The Greek *chrysolithos* means "golden stone," referring to a yellow gem, perhaps yellow topaz, yellow quartz, beryl, or zircon. The NIV translates the Hebrew *tarshish* as "chrysolite" (sometimes translated as "beryl"). This is the stone used in the description of wheels in Ezekiel's vision (Ezek. 1:16; 10:9), one of the stones in the high priest's breastpiece (Exod. 28:20; 39:13), and the adornment of the king of Tyre (Ezek. 28:13). It is also used metaphorically to describe the young lover in Song 5:14 and the heavenly being in Dan. 10:6. Modern chrysolite is olive green in color and may be a different stone.

CHRYSOPRASE A semiopaque variety of chalcedony quartz, prized for its apple green color. It is the tenth gemstone in the foundation wall of the new Jerusalem (Rev. 21:20 NASB, ESV). In this verse the NIV translates the Greek word *chrysoprasos* as "turquoise," a different class of mineral.

CHUB *See* Libya.

CHUN *See* Kun.

CHURCH

TERMINOLOGY

The NT word for "church" is *ekklēsia*, which means "gathering, assembly, congregation." In classical Greek the term was used almost exclusively for political gatherings. In particular, in Athens the word signified the assembling of the citizens for the purpose of conducting the affairs of the city. Moreover, *ekklēsia* referred only to the actual meeting, not to the citizens themselves. When the people were not assembled, they were not considered to be the *ekklēsia*. The NT records three instances of this secular usage of the term (Acts 19:32, 39, 41).

The most important background for the Christian use of the term is the LXX (Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures, dated c. 250 BC), which uses the word in a religious sense about one hundred times, almost always as a translation of the Hebrew word *qahal*. While *qahal* does not indicate a secular gathering (in contrast to *'edah*, the typical Hebrew word for Israel's religious gathering, translated by Greek *synagōgē*), it does denote Israel's sacred meetings. This is especially the case in Deuteronomy, where *qahal* is linked with the covenant.

In the NT, *ekklēsia* is used to refer to the community of God's people 109 times (out of 114 occurrences of the term). Although the word occurs in only two Gospel passages (Matt. 16:18; 18:17), it is of special importance in Acts (23 times) and the Pauline writings (46 times). It is found 20 times in Revelation and in isolated instances in James and Hebrews. Three general conclusions can be drawn from this usage. First, *ekklēsia* (in both the singular and the plural) applies predominantly to a local assembly of those who profess faith in and allegiance to Christ. Second, *ekklēsia* designates the universal church (Acts 8:3; 9:31; 1 Cor. 12:28; 15:9; especially in the later Pauline letters: Eph. 1:22–23; Col. 1:18). Third, the *ekklēsia* is God's congregation (1 Cor. 1:2; 2 Cor. 1:1).

THE NATURE OF THE CHURCH

The nature of the church is too broad to be exhausted in the meaning of one word. To capture its significance, the NT authors utilize a rich array of metaphorical descriptions. Nevertheless, there are those metaphors that seem to dominate the biblical pictures of the church, five of which call for comment: the people of God, the kingdom of God, the eschatological temple of God, the bride of Christ, and the body of Christ.

The people of God. Essentially, the concept of the people of God can be summed up in the covenantal phrase: "I will be their God, and they will be my people" (see Exod. 6:6–7; 19:5; Lev. 26:9–14; Jer. 7:23; 30:22; 32:37–40; Ezek. 11:19–20; 36:22–28; Acts 15:14; 2 Cor. 6:16; Heb. 8:10–12; Rev. 21:3). Thus, the people of God are those in both the OT and the NT eras who responded to God by faith and whose spiritual origin rests exclusively in God's grace.

To speak of the one people of God transcending the eras of the OT and the NT necessarily raises the question of the relationship between the church and Israel. Modern interpreters prefer not to polarize the matter into an either/or issue. Rather, they talk about the church and Israel in terms of there being both continuity and discontinuity between them.

Continuity between the church and Israel. Two ideas establish the fact that the church and Israel are portrayed in the Bible as being in a continuous relationship. First, in the OT the church was present in Israel in some sense. Acts 7:38 suggests this connection when, alluding to Deut. 9:10, it speaks of the church (*ekklēsia*) in the wilderness. The same idea is probably to be inferred from the intimate association noted earlier existing between the words *ekklēsia* and *qahal*, especially when the latter is qualified by the phrase "of God." Furthermore, if the church is viewed in some NT passages as preexistent, then one finds therein the prototype of the creation of Israel (see Exod. 25:40; Acts 7:44; Gal. 4:26; Heb. 12:22; Rev. 21:11; cf. Eph. 1:3–14).

Second, Israel in some sense is present in the church in the NT. The many OT names for Israel applied to the church in the NT establish that fact. Some of those are “Israel” (Gal. 6:15–16; Eph. 2:12; Heb. 8:8–10; Rev. 2:14), “a chosen people” (1 Pet. 2:9), “the circumcision” (Rom. 2:28–29; Phil. 3:3; Col. 2:11), “Abraham’s seed” (Rom. 4:16; Gal. 3:29), “the remnant” (Rom. 9:27; 11:5–7), “the elect” (Rom. 11:28; Eph. 1:4), “the flock” (Acts 20:28; Heb. 13:20; 1 Pet. 5:2), and “priesthood” (1 Pet. 2:9; Rev. 1:6; 5:10).

Discontinuity between the church and Israel. The church, however, is not totally identical with Israel; discontinuity also characterizes the relationship. The church, according to the NT, is the eschatological (end-time) Israel incorporated in Jesus Christ and, as such, is a progression beyond historical Israel (1 Cor. 10:11; 2 Cor. 5:14–21). Indeed, significant discontinuity is introduced by the fact that the church includes Gentiles as members of Israel, without requiring them to convert to Judaism first. Gentiles enter as Gentiles. However, a caveat must be issued at this point. Although the church is a progression beyond Israel, it does not seem to be the permanent replacement of Israel (see Rom. 9–11, esp. 11:25–27).

The kingdom of God. Many scholars have maintained that the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus inaugurated the kingdom of God, producing the overlapping of the two ages. The kingdom has already dawned but is not yet complete. The first aspect pertains to Jesus’ first coming, and the second aspect relates to his second coming. In other words, the age to come has broken into this age, and now the two exist simultaneously. This background is crucial in ascertaining the relationship between the church and the kingdom of God, because the church also exists in the tension that results from the overlapping of the two ages. Accordingly, one may define the church as the foreshadowing of the kingdom. Two ideas flow from this definition: first, the church is related to the kingdom of God; second, the church is not equal to the kingdom of God.

The church and the kingdom of God are related. Not until after the resurrection of Jesus does the NT speak with regularity about the church. However, there are early signs of the church in the teaching and ministry of Jesus, in both general and specific ways. In general, Jesus anticipated the later official formation of the church in that he gathered to himself the twelve disciples, who constituted the beginnings of eschatological Israel—in effect, the remnant. More specifically, Jesus explicitly referred to the church in two passages: Matt. 16:18–19; 18:17. In the first passage Jesus promised that he would build his church despite satanic opposition, thus assuring the ultimate success of his mission. The notion of the church overcoming the forces of evil coincides with the idea that the kingdom of God will prevail over its enemies and bespeaks the intimate association between the church and the kingdom. The second passage relates to the future organization of the church, not unlike the Jewish synagogue practices of Jesus’ day.

The church and the kingdom of God are not identical. As intimately related as the church and the kingdom of God are, the NT does not equate the two, as is evident in the fact that the early Christians preached the kingdom, not the church (Acts 8:12; 19:8; 20:25; 28:23, 31). The NT identifies the church as the people of the kingdom (e.g., Rev. 5:10), not the kingdom itself. Moreover, the church is the instrument of the kingdom. This is especially clear from Matt. 16:18–19, where the preaching of Peter and the church become the keys to opening up the kingdom of God to all who would enter.

The eschatological temple of God. Both the OT and Judaism anticipated the rebuilding of the temple in the future kingdom of God (e.g., Ezek. 40–48; Hag. 2:1–9; *1 En.* 90:29; 91:3; *Jub.* 1:17, 29). Jesus hinted that he was going to build such a structure (Matt. 16:18; Mark 14:58; John 2:19–22).

Pentecost witnessed to the beginning of the fulfillment of that dream in that when the Spirit inhabited the church, the eschatological temple was formed (Acts 2:16–36). Other NT writers also perceived that the presence of the Spirit in the Christian community constituted the new temple of God (1 Cor. 3:16–17; 2 Cor. 6:14–7:1; Eph. 2:19–22; see also Gal. 4:21–31; 1 Pet. 2:4–10). However, that the eschatological temple is not yet complete is evident in the preceding passages, especially in their emphasis on the need for the church to grow toward maturity in Christ, which will be fully accomplished only at the parousia (second coming of Christ). In the meantime, Christians, as priests of God, are to perform their sacrificial service to the glory of God (Rom. 12:1–2; Heb. 13:15; 1 Pet. 2:4–10).

The bride of Christ. The image of marriage is applied to God and Israel in the OT (see Isa. 54:5–6; 62:5; Hos. 2:7). Similar imagery is applied to Christ and the church in the NT. Christ, the bridegroom, has sacrificially and lovingly chosen the church to be his bride (Eph. 5:25–27). Her responsibility during the betrothal period is to be faithful to him (2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:24). At the parousia the official wedding ceremony will take place, and with it the eternal union of Christ and his wife will be actualized (Rev. 19:7–9; 21:1–2).

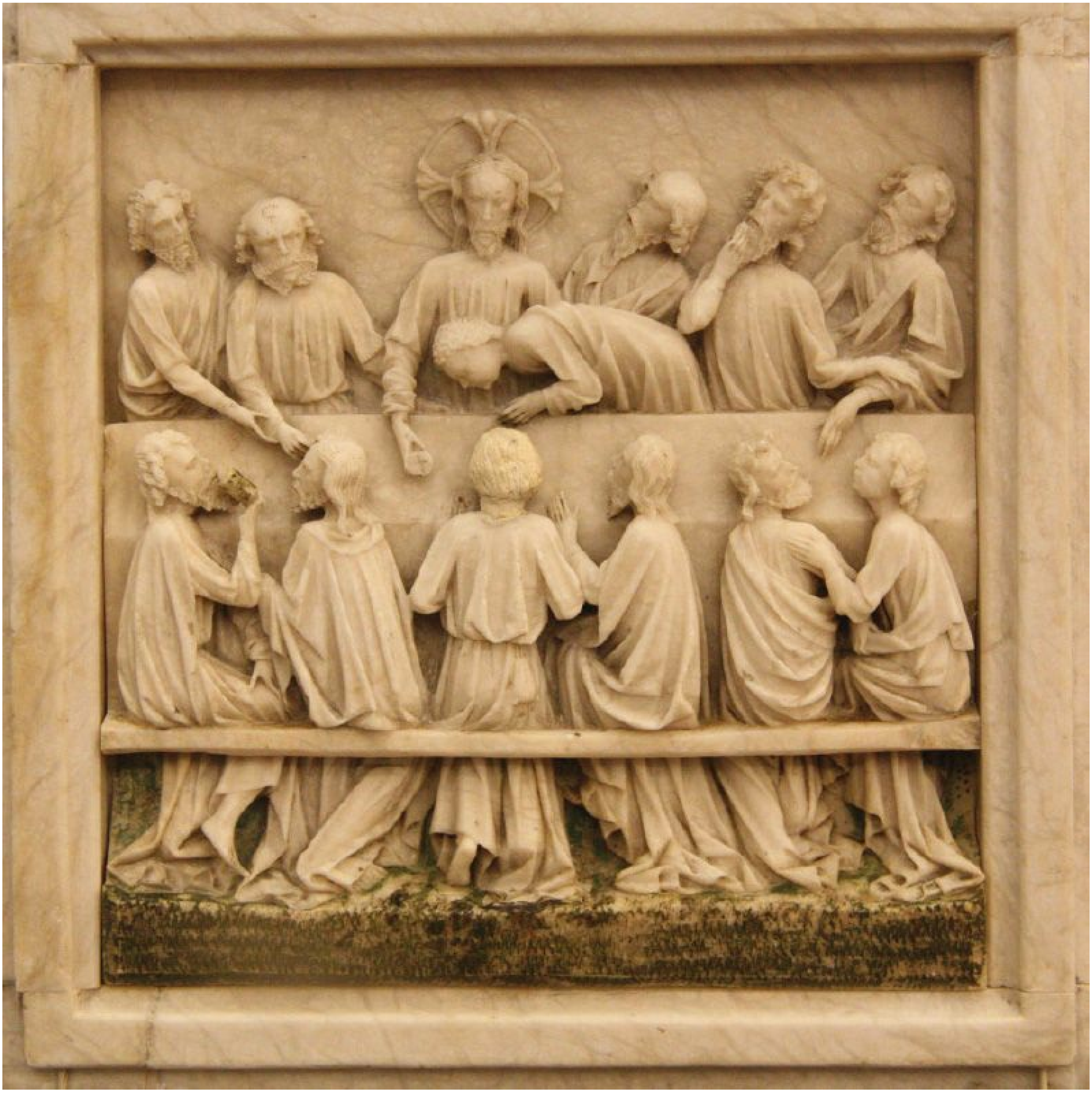
The body of Christ. The body of Christ as a metaphor for the church is unique to the Pauline literature and constitutes one of the most significant concepts therein (Rom. 12:4–5; 1 Cor. 12:12–27; Eph. 4:7–16; Col. 1:18). The primary purpose of the metaphor is to demonstrate the interrelatedness of diversity and unity within the church, especially with reference to spiritual gifts. The body of Christ is the last Adam (1 Cor. 15:45), the new humanity of the end time that has appeared in history. However, Paul’s usage of the image, like the metaphor of the new temple, indicates that the church, as the body of Christ, still has a long way to go spiritually. It is not yet complete.

SACRAMENTS

At the heart of the expression of the church’s faith are the sacraments of baptism and the Lord’s Supper. The former symbolizes entrance into the church, while the latter provides spiritual sustenance for the church.

Baptism. Baptism symbolizes the sinner’s entrance into the church. Three observations emerge from the biblical treatment of this sacrament. First, the OT intimated baptism, especially in its association of repentance of sin with ablutions (Num.19:18–22; Ps. 51:7; Ezek. 36:25; cf. John 3:5). Second, the baptism of John anticipated Christian baptism. John administered a baptism of repentance in expectation of the baptism of the Spirit and fire that the Messiah would exercise (Matt. 3:11 // Luke 3:16). Those who accept Jesus as Messiah experience the baptism of fire and judgment (which may be an allusion to undergoing the great tribulation/messianic woes that lead into the messianic kingdom). Third, the early church practiced baptism in imitation of the Lord Jesus (Matt. 3:13–17 // Mark 1:9–11 // Luke 3:21–22; see also John 1:32–34; cf. Matt. 28:19; Acts 2:38; 8:16; Rom. 6:3–6; 1 Cor. 1:13–15; Gal. 3:27; Titus 3:5; 1 Pet. 3:21). These passages demonstrate some further truths about baptism: baptism is intimately related to faith in God; baptism identifies the person with the death and resurrection of Jesus; baptism incorporates the person into the community of believers.

Lord’s Supper. The other biblical sacrament is the Lord’s Supper. This rite symbolizes Christ’s spiritual nourishment of his church as it celebrates the sacred meal. Two basic points emerge from the biblical data concerning the Lord’s Supper. First, it was instituted by Christ (Matt. 26:26–29; Mark 14:22–25; Luke 22:15–20; 1 Cor. 11:23–25), probably as an adaptation of the Passover meal. If that is the case, then, Jesus will have introduced two changes into the Passover seder: he replaced the unleavened bread with a reference to his body being given for us on the cross; he replaced the cup of redemption with a reference to his shed blood on the cross, the basis of the new covenant. Second, the early church practiced the Lord’s Supper probably weekly, in conjunction with the love feast (see 1 Cor. 11:18–22; cf. Jude 12). A twofold meaning is attached to the Lord’s Supper by the NT authors. First, it involves participation in Christ’s salvation (Luke 22:19; 1 Cor. 11:24–25), and in two ways: participating in the Lord’s Supper looks back to the death of Jesus, in which the believer now shares; participating in the Lord’s Supper looks forward to Christ’s return, the culmination point of the believer’s salvation. Second, the Lord’s Supper involves identification with the body of Christ, the community of faith (1 Cor. 10:16–17; 11:27–33).



Alabaster carving of the Last Supper, representing one of the sacraments of the church

WORSHIP

The ultimate purpose of the church is to worship God through Christ and in the power of the Holy Spirit (see, e.g., Rev. 4–5). The early church first worshiped in the Jerusalem temple (Acts 2:46; 3:1; 5:42) as well as in the synagogue (Acts 22:19; cf. John 9:22; James 2:2). At the same time, and into the near future, believers met in homes for worship (Acts 1:13; 2:46; 5:42; cf. Rom. 16:15; Col. 4:15; Philem. 2; 2 John 10; 3 John 1, 6). Although many Jewish Christians no doubt continued to worship God on the Sabbath, the established time for the church's worship came to be Sunday, the day of Jesus' resurrection (Acts 20:7; Rev. 1:10). The early church most probably patterned its order of worship after the synagogue service: praise in prayer (Acts 2:42, 47; 3:1; 1 Thess. 1:2; 5:17) and in song (1 Cor. 14:26; Phil. 2:6–11; Col. 1:15–20), the expounding of Scripture (Acts 2:42; 6:4; Col. 4:16; 1 Thess. 2:13; 1 Tim. 4:13), and almsgiving to the needy (Acts 2:44–45; 1 Cor. 16:1–2; 2 Cor. 8–9; James 2:15–17).

SERVICE AND ORGANIZATION

Five observations emerge from the NT regarding the service and organization of the early church. First, the ministry of the church centers on its usage of spiritual gifts, which are given to believers by God's grace and for his glory as well as for the good of others (Rom. 12:3; Eph. 4:7–16). Second, every believer possesses a gift of the Spirit (1 Cor. 12:7; Eph. 4:7). Third, it is through the diversity of the gifts that the body of Christ matures and is unified (Rom. 12:4; 1 Cor. 12:12–31; Eph. 4:17–18). Fourth, although there was organized leadership in the NT church, including elders (1 Tim. 3:1–7 [also called "pastors" and "bishops"; see Acts 20:17, 28; 1 Pet. 5:1–4]) and deacons (1 Tim. 3:8–13), there does not seem to have been a gap between the "clergy" and the "laity" in the church of the first century; rather, those with the gift of leadership are called to equip all the saints for the work of the ministry (Eph. 4:7–16). Fifth, spiritual gifts are to be exercised in love (1 Cor. 13).

CHURCH AND STATE SEPARATION The idea that the church and state should remain independent entities in order to preserve religious and civil freedom. While this idea has taken most of its shape from discussions in the United States, the Bible often speaks about the attitudes of God's people toward their government.

After Israel was freed from Egypt, God made it a "holy nation" (Exod. 19:5–6). All ancient Near Eastern nations were theocracies, and Israel was no different. As a theocracy, "church and state" were united under God's rule, but this union was imperfect. Prophets frequently challenged wicked leaders (1 Sam. 2:27–36; 1 Kings 18:2). Then Israel was divided (1 Kings 12). Finally the exile obliterated any "church-state" unity that Israelite society had left. Daniel and his friends had to experience the difficulty of living faithfully in foreign societies.

But the exiles helped Israel to understand that God's kingdom was eternal (Dan. 2:44–45). In the face of Roman rule, Jesus announced its appearing (Mark 1:15), but he did not advocate military revolt as did the Zealots of his day (John 18:36). Following Jesus, Paul taught of a citizenship in heaven (Phil. 3:20) while affirming some loyalty to Rome (Rom. 13:1–7; 1 Tim. 2:1–2). Peter concurred (1 Pet. 2:11–17), though he also emphasized the theme of God's judgment (2 Pet. 3:7), a theme continued against imperial Rome in Revelation. In sum, the church finds itself as a kingdom among kingdoms. While warfare occurs in the spiritual realm (Eph. 6:12), God's people are to conduct themselves as peaceful pilgrims as they look for a better country (Heb. 11:16).

CHURCH YEAR Unlike the OT, which describes and mandates the observation of a number of religious festivals in ancient Israel, the NT does not describe an annual cycle of Christian holidays. Nevertheless, from an early date Christians have observed a liturgical calendar commemorating events of the Gospels, Acts, and later church history. Among other things, the distinctively Christian calendar may have functioned as an important distinction between early Christianity and Judaism (see Gal. 4:10).

In Western Christianity, the church year is organized around two cycles of holidays associated with Nativity (or Christmas) and Easter, respectively (the Eastern Orthodox Church year, which is not discussed here, differs from the Western calendar in several ways). The year begins between November 27 and December 3 (inclusive) on the fourth Sunday before Nativity, the date of which is immovably fixed on December 25. Nativity is thus preceded by an Advent season of approximately four weeks. Christmastide lasts for twelve days, from December 25 to January 6, the feast of Epiphany. In Western tradition Epiphany commemorates the visit of the magi (Matt. 2:1–12).

The second major cycle of holidays revolves around Easter, the date of which is based partly on astronomical observation and thus occurs on a different date from year to year. Easter commemorates Jesus' resurrection and always occurs on a Sunday (see Matt. 28:1 pars.), as early as March 22 and as late as April 25. It is preceded by the forty-day fast of Lent, beginning with Ash Wednesday. The week immediately preceding Easter is Holy Week, beginning with Palm Sunday (Mark 11:8) and including Maundy Thursday (the Last Supper), Good Friday (the crucifixion), and Holy Saturday (or the Easter Vigil). The season of Easter extends fifty days (beginning with Holy Saturday) to Pentecost (Acts 2:1).

The two major cycles are separated by the seasons of Ordinary ("counting") Time, between January 6 and Ash Wednesday, and between Pentecost and Advent. These periods must vary in duration from year to year to account for the moveable date of Easter. They are referred to as Epiphany and Pentecost in some traditions.

In addition to the major holidays described above, the church year includes feasts and commemorations of figures from the NT and early Christian history, the most prominent of which are Trinity Sunday (Sunday after Pentecost), All Saints' Day (November 1), and Christ the King Sunday (last Sunday before Advent). Other days commemorate individual saints or events in the life of Jesus.

CHUSHAN-RISHATHAIM *See* Cushan-Rishathaim.

CHUZA Mentioned only in Luke 8:3, Chuza was an "official" or "steward" (*epitropos* [cf. Matt. 20:8; Gal. 4:2]) under the tetrarch Herod Antipas. He is noted as the husband of Joanna, one of the women who provided support for Jesus' ministry. This name has been found in Nabatean and Syrian inscriptions.

CILICIA A Roman province located in the southeast of modern-day Turkey. Its capital was Tarsus, home of Paul (Acts 21:39; 22:3). Jews from Cilicia participated in the stoning of Stephen (Acts 6:9). The province of Cilicia is often mentioned in the NT as Paul traveled on his journeys (Acts 15:23, 41; 23:34; 27:5; Gal. 1:21). Due to his ministry there, Cilicia became a major center for Gentile Christians.

The province acted as a bridge between Syria and Asia Minor. Cilicia is divided into the mountainous region in the western half and the plains region in the east. The Cilician Pass through the Taurus Mountains allowed access between Asia Minor and Syria. The fertile plain and the abundance of metal in the mountains made this province one of economic importance.

The area was annexed as part of the Roman Empire in 67 BC by Pompey. During the NT period the two halves of Cilicia were split, the mountainous region belonging to Antiochus IV and the western plains to the province of Syria. Vespasian united the two areas in AD 72. There was a significant Jewish population here beginning in the second century BC after two thousand families were moved to Asia Minor by Antiochus the Great.

CINNAMON Cinnamon (Heb. *qinnamon*; Gk. *kinnamōmon*) is a sweet spice that was used in anointing oil (Exod. 30:23), as a perfume (Prov. 7:17), and as a trading commodity (Rev. 18:13). Grown in India, Ceylon, and China, its appearance and use in the Bible demonstrate early trade routes between India and Arabia. Its bark can be harvested as a spice, and coarser parts of the plant, along with its fruit, can be boiled to harvest a sweet-smelling oil. Its uniqueness made it a valuable commodity. *See also* Cassia.

CIRCUIT A routine circular route. Samuel, as judge of Israel, traveled a circuit among its cities from year to year (1 Sam. 7:16). God walks “the circuit of heaven” (Job 22:14 KJV). The sun’s apparent orbit is a circuit from one end of heaven to the other (Ps. 19:6). The wind changes directions seasonally on its course or circuit (Eccles. 1:6).

CIRCUMCISION The custom of cutting the foreskin of the male genitalia as a religious rite. The earliest attestation of circumcision is on depictions of West Semitic Syrian warriors unearthed in Syria and Egypt and dating to the third millennium BC. In addition, an Egyptian stela describing a ceremony in which 120 were circumcised has been dated to the twenty-third century BC. Egyptians practiced circumcision, as did the Ammonites, Edomites, Moabites, and nomadic Arabians (Jer. 9:25–26). Philistines, Assyrians, and Gentiles in general were uncircumcised (Judg. 14:3; Ezek. 32:17–32; Eph. 2:11).

Circumcision is first mentioned in the Bible as a sign of the covenant between God and Abraham (Gen. 17:10). God commanded that every male be circumcised at eight days old (Gen. 17:12; cf. 21:4; Lev. 12:3; Luke 1:59; 2:21). Circumcision was required for a male to participate in the Passover (Exod. 12:48) or worship in the temple (Ezek. 44:9; cf. Acts 21:28–29).

Simeon and Levi used circumcision as a ruse to obtain revenge for the rape of their sister Dinah (Gen. 34:13–31). Zipporah redeemed Moses by circumcising her son on their journey back to Egypt (Exod. 4:24–26). At Gilgal, Joshua circumcised the sons of the Israelites who had disbelieved that God could bring them into the promised land (Josh. 5:2–8). The sons had not been circumcised during the journey through the wilderness (5:7). Saul demanded a dowry of one hundred Philistine foreskins before David could marry his daughter Michal (1 Sam. 18:25). David doubled the bride-price by providing two hundred (18:27).

Metaphorically, circumcision goes beyond the physical sign (Rom. 2:28). Ultimately, the enemies of God, whether circumcised or not, will be slain and laid in the grave with the uncircumcised (Ezek. 32:32). Physical circumcision is of no avail if the heart remains “uncircumcised” (Jer. 9:25–26; cf. Rom. 2:25). Circumcision of the heart is accomplished when one loves God completely (Deut. 10:16; 30:6; Jer. 4:4; Rom. 2:29), but uncircumcised ears are disobedient (Acts 7:51). The circumcision accomplished by Christ occurs when the sinful nature is rejected (Col. 2:11). In him neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has any value; what counts “is faith expressing itself through love” (Gal. 5:6).

Controversy began in the NT church over whether Gentile believers should be circumcised (Acts 15:1–12). Evidently, a group existed that demanded circumcision (Acts 15:1; Titus 1:10). Paul argued that circumcision was not essential to Christian faith and fellowship (Gal. 6:15; Col. 3:11).

CISTERN An artificial underground reservoir designed for collecting and storing water. In Palestine, cisterns were made in various shapes and sizes. Many were bell-like or pear shaped and cut into limestone rock. Smaller private cisterns served family buildings; larger public reservoirs provided for the needs of cities. Great care was taken to drain runoff water from a roof, a courtyard, or a wadi (a dry riverbed) into a cistern. Most cisterns were plastered to help them retain the water.

The region suffers from a limited amount of rainfall and a long dry season. Rain often falls in short, heavy showers capable of creating destructive flash floods unless diverted into cisterns and reservoirs. In this type of climate, not only do cisterns supplement the natural water supply for supporting agriculture, but they are also a necessity for sustaining life.

Joseph was thrown into an empty cistern (Gen. 37:22–29), and Jeremiah was imprisoned in one (Jer. 38:6). Cisterns were good places to hide (1 Sam. 13:6), and one served as a place to dump corpses (Jer. 41:7–9). Like springs, cisterns were considered to be ritually clean (Lev. 11:36). Marriage fidelity is likened to drinking water from your own cistern (Prov. 5:15). On the other hand, Jeremiah describes covenant infidelity as rejecting “the spring of living water” for “broken cisterns that cannot hold water” (2:13).

CITADEL Citadels (Heb. *birah*) appear in postexilic books such as Nehemiah (1:1; 2:8; 7:2), Esther (1:2, 5; 2:3, 5, 8; 3:15; 8:14; 9:6, 11–12), and Daniel (8:2) to refer to the Persian capital of Susa or the royal citadel-palace. It may be another way of describing “towers.” The word *birah* is also used to refer to fortresses (2 Chron. 17:12; 27:4) and the Jerusalem temple (1 Chron. 29:1, 19).

CITIES AND URBAN LIFE Cities, towns, and villages were essential parts of a common civilization pattern shared by the ancient Near East and the Bible. Towns and cities were designed to provide the basic needs of security, shelter, and sustenance to enable their populations to engage in a variety of social, economic, religious, and political activities.

The urban picture of the biblical world is complicated by several factors. The first is the large span of time covered in the Bible. The urban chronology of Scripture begins at the moment of the first attempt at city building (Gen. 4:17) and ends with the revelation of the new Jerusalem, the city of God (Rev. 3:12; 21:2).

Moreover, the Bible is not concerned with providing a detailed commentary on the expansion of city and urban life. It is true that several of the great cities of the ancient Near East and the Greco-Roman world are mentioned in the pages of the Bible; however, many of the religious, social, economic, and political factors involved in the development of urban life are not identified or discussed. The archaeological record often suggests a more complex picture.

In addition, a wide variety of terms are used broadly and interchangeably in the Scriptures to describe settlement patterns and socio-urban structures. For example, the specific differences between a city, a town, and a village are not clearly identified in the biblical text. Normally, a city had a fortified wall or other type of defensive enclosure, while a town or village did not.

Furthermore, city status was not necessarily determined by size. Ancient cities were much smaller. During the reign of Solomon, Jerusalem covered about thirty-three acres. But by the time of Jesus it measured nearly two hundred acres. Jericho, the oldest city in Palestine, was no larger than ten acres. The archaeological record suggests that Jericho was occupied by at least 7000 BC. Hazor, one of the largest cities in the upper Galilee, covered 175 acres. The dimensions of Palestinian cities were minuscule compared to the great pagan cities such as Nineveh, Babylon, and Rome.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

Archaeological evidence suggests that some of the chief concerns of city building remained constant over time. Cities were planted along main highways or trade routes. Often a city sat at important crossroads or intersections. An adequate water supply was necessary, as were raw materials for shelter and industry. The site had to be easy to defend and surrounded by adjacent agricultural land sufficient to sustain the population. All cities in the ancient Near East built walls and city gates. Most featured an acropolis or citadel and a working system of city streets. Many cities contained a sanctuary or high place where individuals could worship.

Ruins of the citadel of Gamla, conquered by the Romans during the Jewish War of AD 66–73

At least four major phases of urbanization in Palestine occurred during the biblical period.

Early Bronze Age II (3000–2700 BC). Although Jericho and other cities had their origin in the Chalcolithic period, the Early Bronze Age produced a significant expansion of urban life. Cities in this period included Megiddo, Ai, Gezer, Arad, Jericho, and others. Larger sites protected by fortifications with gates are characteristic of this period. Temples, fortified citadels, and residential houses were found arranged along streets and thoroughfares inside the city. The water supply became a community concern, and steps were taken to conserve runoff water into large reservoirs or cisterns. Such urban planning presupposes a social hierarchy in the differentiation of labor and need. Farmers, craftsmen, and traders, as well as priests and rulers, worked and lived side by side in the city.

Middle Bronze Age IIB (1750–1650 BC). In the second wave of urbanization, the Canaanites refortified and rebuilt older settlements such as Dan, Hazor, Megiddo, and Shechem. Other sites, such as Bethel and Beth Shemesh, were established as new settlements. Distinctive walls, fortifications, gates, and cultic architecture characterized this period. Mud-brick was a common construction material. Larger city-states controlled agricultural resources and ruled numerous villages and settlements within their immediate vicinity. These city-states often joined together in political alliances. Cuneiform documents from Mari and Hazor provide a glimpse into the social, cultural, and political life in the cities of this period. This wave of urbanization began to decline by the Late Bronze Age.

Iron Age II (1000–586 BC). Early Iron Age settlements developed alongside the declining Late Bronze cities as rough camps, simple enclosures, and villages in the highlands of Palestine. Later, during the monarchial period, some of the villages and cities expanded into full urban centers, following royal hierarchical and administrative blueprints. Cities contained administrative buildings, enhanced fortifications and gates, new water systems, and planned street systems offering systematic drainage. Housing generally followed a typical pattern. Stone became the construction material of choice. Both the united monarchy and the divided kingdoms of Israel and Judah established royal cities, administrative centers, fortified border cities, and fortresses. Urban life gravitated toward the upkeep of a central religious and economic royal administration.

Roman period. As a champion of all things Hellenic, Alexander the Great introduced the Greek city, or *polis*, into the oriental culture of the Levant. This new type of city, with its theaters, gymnasia, statues, and colonnades, served as a beacon of Greek civilization. Such cities attracted Greek settlers, traders, and local natives (Acts 18:1–3, 18–28; Rom. 16:3–5; 1 Cor. 16:19). The Greek *agora* (marketplace) replaced the Palestinian city gate as the center of trade and commerce. Sepphoris and the towns of the Decapolis were examples of this type of city in Palestine. The Romans imitated the Hellenistic city plan but emphasized one main north-south thoroughfare (*cardo*) and east-west streets. Building activity in Palestine flourished under Herod the Great (37–4 BC). He rebuilt, expanded, and renamed many Palestinian sites, such as Caesarea, Sebaste, and the Tower of Antonia in Jerusalem. Herod radically changed the landscape of Jerusalem, rebuilding there on a massive scale not only the palace but also the temple.

Neolithic tower built and destroyed in Pre-pottery Neolithic A. Dated to 8000–7000 BC, Jericho is perhaps the oldest city in the world.

OLD TESTAMENT

The common Hebrew word for “city,” *’ir*, occurs 1,093 times in the OT. English versions normally translate the word as “city,” but sometimes “town” is used. The same term is found outside the Bible in one of the Lachish letters and as a cognate in several Semitic languages. The etymology of *’ir* is not clear, but it may be related to the Sumerian word for “city,” *uru*. The word may have originally designated a fortified or protected place.

In the OT, *'ir* can be applied to a wide range of settlements, including villages, towns, and capital cities regardless of size or location. For example, Deut. 3:5 speaks of cities fortified with high walls, gates, and bars in the same sentence with "rural towns" or "country settlements" [NIV: "unwalled villages"]. On the other hand, a distinction is made between a "walled city" and a "village" in Lev. 25:29, 31. In Num. 13:19 Moses specifically charges the spies with the task of determining whether the Canaanite cities are fortified or more like camps. Cities given to the Levites in Num. 35:1–8 also included the surrounding pasturelands connected with them. A number of times the OT speaks of the fields associated with a city or village (Lev. 25:34; Josh. 21:12; Neh. 11:25, 30).

Cities were also given special designations or names. Cities of refuge are so designated to provide protection for individuals who have committed accidental manslaughter (Num. 35:11; Josh. 20:2; 1 Chron. 6:57). Jericho was called "the City of Palms" (Deut. 34:3; 2 Chron. 28:15). Jerusalem was known as "the City of David" (1 Kings 3:1; 2 Chron. 5:2), "Zion" (Isa. 33:20; Zech. 8:3; Heb. 12:22), and "the holy city" (Isa. 52:1; Rev. 21:1).

Two other Hebrew terms are often translated "city." The noun *qeret* occurs only five times in biblical poetry (Job 29:7; Prov. 8:3; 9:3, 14; 11:11). The noun *qiryah* is found twenty-nine times. It is sometimes translated "town" in the NIV (Deut. 2:36; Job 39:7; Isa. 25:2; Jer. 49:25; Hos. 7:12). The etymology of either word is uncertain, but both may be derived from *qir* ("wall"). In many cases *qiryah* functions as a synonym of *'ir*.

In Deut. 2:36 and 3:4 *qiryah* is used to designate the towns taken by the Israelites in Transjordan. Heshbon is identified in Num. 21:28 as the "town" (*qiryah*; NIV: "city") of Sihon. The word *qiryah* is also found in the names of several towns, such as Kiriath Jearim (Josh. 15:9) and Kiriath Sepher (Josh. 15:15). Hebron was originally Kiriath Arba (Gen. 23:2; 35:27), and Balaam rode to Kiriath Huzoth (Num. 22:39). Shaveh Kiriathaim (Gen. 14:5) and Kiriathaim (Num. 32:37) contain a form of *qiryah*.

Smaller communities were called "villages" or "settlements" (Gen. 25:16; Lev. 25:31; Deut. 2:23). Some of these were connected to a larger city or provincial center. The book of Joshua commonly speaks of a city or town and "its villages" (Josh. 13–19; cf. 1 Chron. 6:26). In addition, the Hebrew phrase "daughters of" (i.e., settlements) is frequently used to identify smaller villages under the jurisdiction of a larger city and dependent upon it (Num. 21:25, 32; 32:42; Josh. 15:45, 47; Neh. 11:25–31).

New Testament

The Greek word *polis* occurs 163 times in the NT and is translated as "town" or "city." Several sites are called *polis*: Nazareth (Matt. 2:23), Capernaum (Luke 4:31), Arimathea (Luke 23:51), Bethlehem (John 7:42), and others. Jerusalem is called "the holy city" (Matt. 4:5; cf. Rev. 3:12), "the city of the Great King" (Matt. 5:35), and "the city of the living God" (Heb. 12:22). During his ministry, Jesus preached in the towns of Galilee (Matt. 11:1) and Samaria (Matt. 10:5). In the book of Acts, Paul served as an evangelist to the Greek and Roman cities in the Mediterranean world.

CITIES OF REFUGE Cities in the OT period that were divinely designated places of asylum to which a manslayer might flee for safety (Exod. 21:12–14). Refuge was provided in these cities for the manslayer from family members of the slain person who were seeking to avenge the death of their relative. According to the principle of *lex talionis* enshrined in OT revelation and subsequent Israelite law (Gen. 9:5–6; Exod. 21:12–14; Lev. 24:17), the death penalty applied to the willful murderer. In ancient Israel the sacred duty of punishing a murderer was placed in the hands of the closest relative of the murdered person ("the avenger of blood"). The manslayer was admitted to the city of refuge only after stating his case before the city's elders at the city gate (Josh. 20:4–5), for this provision applied only to those implicated in an accidental or unintentional death. This institution gave the accused person an opportunity to stand trial before a legal assembly and possibly be acquitted (Num. 35:12). After the death of the high priest (marking the end of an era), the acquitted manslayer was free to return home (Josh. 20). The manslayer who left the city before that time could be killed by the avenger of blood with impunity. In Deuteronomy, with its "holy land" theology, the safety of a person who accidentally killed another prevented the defilement of the land: "Do this so that innocent blood will not be shed in your land, which the LORD your God is giving you as your inheritance, and so that you will not be guilty of bloodshed" (Deut. 19:10). More widely, the provision reflects the moral character of the God of Israel and the humane spirit of OT legislation that sought to limit vengeance and the blood feuds that easily resulted.

They were six cities of refuge, chosen out of the forty-eight Levitical cities (Num. 34:6–15). Three of these cities were on the east side of the Jordan River, and three on the west. The cities were well spaced and centrally located, so that there was ready access to a city of refuge wherever a person happened to live in Israelite territory. Roads were to be built to the cities to assist the person fleeing (Deut. 19:3). The eastern cities were set apart by Moses (Deut. 4:41–43), and the western ones by Joshua (Josh. 20). The three in Cisjordan (the promised land proper) were, from north to south, Kedesh in Naphtali, Shechem in Ephraim, and Kiriath Arba (= Hebron) in Judah. The matching three cities in Transjordan were, from south to north, Bezer in Reubenite territory, Ramoth in the tribal allotment of Gad, and Golan in Bashan.

This institution extended and broadened the primitive custom of a manslayer finding safety in the sanctuary (Exod. 21:14). In the wilderness period, with all Israel encamped around a central sanctuary, this was all that was required. The entrance into the land and the spreading out of the tribes required the establishment of designated cities of refuge. The earlier custom is reflected in 1 Kings 1:50–53; 2:28–35, wherein Adonijah and Joab, who feared for their lives because of the wrath of Solomon, are described as "clinging to the horns of the altar." This drastic procedure did not, however, prevent the death of Joab at the hands of Benaiah, Solomon's executioner. A similar custom of sanctuaries as places of asylum is found in other ancient cultures (e.g., Phoenician, Syrian, Greek, and Roman). This social understanding is also reflected in the Psalter, wherein the temple is described as a place of spiritual refuge (e.g., Pss. 27:5; 31:20; 61:4; 91:1–2).

CITIES OF THE PLAIN Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zeboyim, and Bela (also called "Zoar"), the cities of the plain (Gen. 14:2), were allied together against four kings invading from Mesopotamia. As the battle turned against them, they fled, and some fell into tar pits in the Valley of Siddim. Later, with the exception of Zoar, all these cities suffered cataclysmic destruction as God rained down burning sulfur on the entire plain in judgment against the sins of Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. 19).

The biblical text seems to indicate that these cities were north of the Dead Sea. When Abram and Lot were at Bethel, the land could not support both of their households. Lot was enticed by the well-watered plain of the Jordan Valley, and he moved east and lived near Sodom (Gen. 13:3–13). The sons born to Lot were Moab and Ben-Ammi (19:37–38), whose descendants settled east of the north end of the Dead Sea.

Even so, the traditional view for the past century has located these cities at the southeastern end of the Dead Sea. Surveys of the area near the Lisan Peninsula revealed five cities dating to the Early

Bronze Age, the most prominent of which is Bab edh-Dhra’.

CITIZEN, CITIZENSHIP To be a citizen is to possess all the rights, privileges, benefits, and responsibilities of a locale. Three types of citizenship are prominent in the Bible.

Israelite/Jewish. The existence of citizenship in Israel is clearly implied by the concern expressed for just treatment of the aliens who lived among the Israelites (Exod. 22:21–24; 23:9–12). In such a context the political and religious aspects of citizenship were so intertwined as to be inseparable.

Roman. Roman citizenship could be obtained in several ways: (1) being born to citizen parents, (2) manumission from slavery, (3) completion of military service, (4) rendering a valuable service to the Roman Empire, (5) colonization of a city, (6) payment of money. Citizenship entailed privileges such as full access to the legal system and certain protections, among them the right to appeal to Rome and the prohibition against certain punishments. Although only a small number of the early Christians were Roman citizens, Paul used his Roman citizenship at key points in his ministry (Acts 16:37; 22:25–28; 25:10–12).

Heavenly. In the NT, believers have a citizenship that extends beyond the confines of this world. The ministry and death/resurrection of Jesus inaugurated the kingdom of God, which is not of this world (John 19:36). Believers have entered this kingdom and therefore are citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem (Gal. 4:26–28), who eagerly await the return of Jesus their Savior (Phil. 3:20–21). Such citizenship is available to both Jew and Gentile alike (Eph. 2:11–22) and entails a life worthy of the gospel (Phil. 1:27–30).

Central to citizenship is the expectation of loyalty, a reality that can cause tension when one’s heavenly citizenship conflicts with the expectations of human authorities. In such cases, believers should follow the examples of Jesus (John 19:11) and the apostles (Acts 4:13–22), who remained loyal to their heavenly citizenship at great cost.

CITRON Also called “thyine,” a fragrant wood from the sandarac tree in North Africa used by the Romans for fine furniture. Merchants would no longer be able to market it and other luxuries once Babylon fell (Rev. 18:12).

CITY GATES In the ancient world, gates played a critical role in the defenses of a city. Gates usually were the weakest point in the walls of a city and therefore often the point of attack for siege armies. For a city to be strong, massive walls were not enough; it had to have strong gates. Archaeological excavations of OT-era cities have uncovered the foundations of very elaborate multichambered gates with multiple levels of defense.

In addition, since gates were the entry point into a city, they made a statement about its power and wealth. Thus, the gates of powerful cities often were elaborately decorated in an attempt to make a statement to all visitors about the splendor and strength of the city.

Gates controlled the entrance and the exit to a city and thus were its lifeline. The one who controlled the gates controlled the city. In some cases the gates to Israelite cities were closed on the Sabbath in order to prohibit the transport of any market goods on the Sabbath. Usually, city gates were closed and guarded at night for protection.

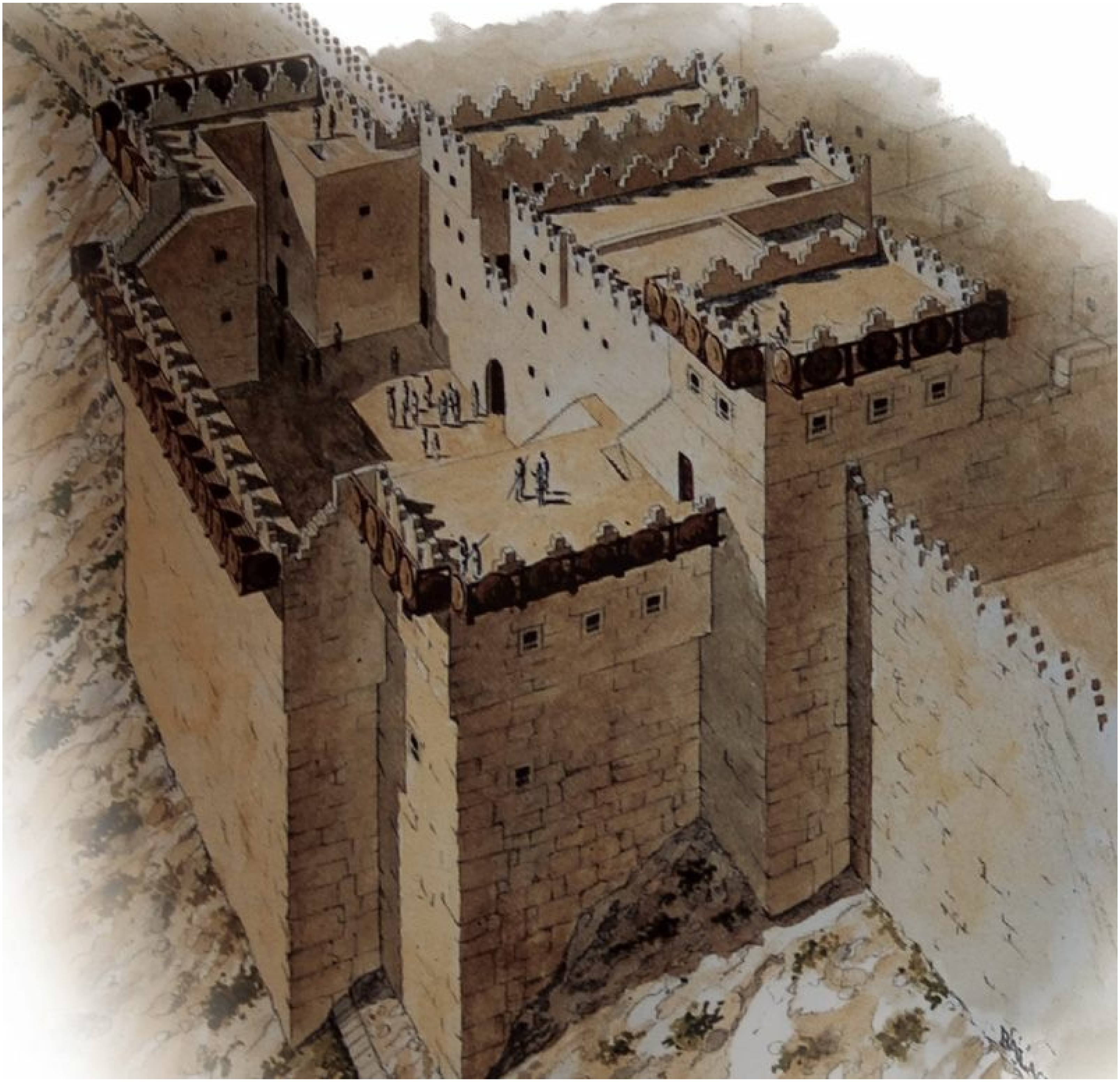
City gates were also the location of judicial courts as well as the place where taxes were collected. Jeremiah 38:7 indicates that the king held court in one of Jerusalem’s gates. When the OT prophets inveigh against injustice, they often refer to the city gates as the place for justice. For example, the prophet Amos cries out, “Hate what is wrong, love what is right! Promote justice at the city gate!” (Amos 5:15 NET).

Thus, the common OT phrase “to sit at the gate” implies that one is ruling the city. For an enemy to “possess the gate” or to “sit at the gate” means that the enemy has captured the city and is currently holding court and ruling over the city. In describing the fall of Jerusalem to the Babylonians, Jeremiah states, “Then all the officials of the king of Babylon came and took seats in the Middle Gate” (Jer. 39:3).

City gates symbolized the critical point of defense of a city as well as the place from which it was ruled and where justice (or injustice) was administered. City gates, therefore, become part of the major prophetic themes running throughout Scripture. Part of God’s promise to Abraham in response to his faithfulness in offering Isaac is that Abraham’s descendants will “possess the gate of their enemies” (Gen. 22:17 NRSV). The prophet Jeremiah stands at a gate in Jerusalem and proclaims to the people that if they will cease profaning the Sabbath by bringing in market produce through the gate on the Sabbath, then God will establish a Davidic king to sit at the gate. But if they persist in violating the Sabbath at the gate, Jeremiah warns, then God will judge them by removing their king from the gate and burning it (Jer. 17:19–27).

In the future, the prophets declare, the situation regarding gates will be very different. When Isaiah looks to the messianic future for Jerusalem, he describes a time when “your gates will always stand open,” implying a time of total peace and safety (Isa. 60:11). Likewise, gates figure prominently in Ezekiel’s vision of the future temple and city of God (Ezek. 40–48).

Gates play a significant role in the book of Nehemiah, combining several of the themes of Isaiah and Jeremiah. After the exile, when Nehemiah returns and rebuilds the walls and gates of Jerusalem, he has to close the gates and guard them tightly at night (7:3), indicating that the time of Isaiah’s promise has not yet come. Likewise, Nehemiah is forced to shut the gates on the Sabbath in order to get the disobedient people to comply with the prohibition of transporting market goods on the Sabbath (13:19). Clearly, this was not the fulfillment of Ezekiel’s prophecy either.



Artist’s rendering of the Jerusalem gate complex on the eastern part of the Ophel, tenth century BC

In the NT, gates continue to carry symbolic significance. When Peter miraculously escapes from prison, the iron gate to the city “opened for them by itself” (Acts 12:10), probably implying that locked city gates cannot stop the powerful spread of the gospel. On the other hand, in a dramatic rejection of the gospel, when the Jews seize Paul and drag him from the temple in order to kill him, Luke adds a dramatic detail: “and immediately the gates were shut” (Acts 21:30). This probably symbolizes the finality of the official Jewish rejection of the gospel.

In contrast, Rev. 21 paints a picture of the future when the very presence of God in the city eliminates any need for a temple. John's vision of Jerusalem includes twelve gates to the city (as in Ezekiel). Furthermore, in fulfillment of Isa. 60:11 and in contrast to Nehemiah's Jerusalem, the gates to the new Jerusalem will remain open perpetually (Rev. 21:25).

CITY OF CHAOS A city mentioned in Isa. 24:10, in Hebrew *qiryat-tohu* (NIV: "ruined city"), as the object of God's judgment and probably representing all such cities and powers that, like Babylon of old and those mentioned in Isa. 13–23, defy God.

CITY OF DAVID According to 2 Sam. 5:6–9 (see also 1 Chron. 11:5), David captured the "fortress of Zion" from the Jebusites and renamed it the City of David since his personal army captured it. The fact that it was the personal domain of the royal family rather than a tribal allotment made it an ideal capital of Israel, since it did not favor a particular tribe. As Jerusalem grew, the title "City of David" came to refer to this ancient part of the city (2 Chron. 32:5; Isa. 22:9; Neh. 3:15). Though today a western hill is called Zion, the original Zion, and thus the City of David, was located to the south and east of the Temple Mount. The Gihon spring provided water for the city. David, Solomon, and a number of their royal descendants, as well as the priest Jehoiada, were buried there.

CITY OF DESTRUCTION *See* City of the Sun; Heliopolis.

CITY OF MOAB The place where Balak, king of Moab, met with the seer Balaam (Num. 22:36; NIV: "Moabite town"). It is located on the Arnon River, sitting on Moab's northern border.

CITY OF PALMS Alternate term for the city of Jericho, located just northwest of the Dead Sea, apparently based on the date palm trees characteristic of the warm region and the oasis at Jericho. The name appears in Moses' visual survey of the land from the heights across from Jericho (Deut. 34:3) and in military contexts that illustrate Jericho's key location (Judg. 3:13; 2 Chron. 28:15).

CITY OF SALT One of six cities with dependent villages listed as possessions of the tribe of Judah "in the wilderness," apparently along the western shore of the salty Dead Sea (Josh. 15:61–62). Some link the name to Qumran, but this is uncertain.

CITY OF THE SUN In Isa. 19:18 most manuscripts of the MT have *'ir haheres* ("city of destruction"), which seems to contradict the affirmative tone of the passage. 1QIsa^a and some medieval Hebrew manuscripts have *'ir hakheres* ("city of the sun"), referring to Heliopolis, an important Egyptian city (so NRSV, NET; see NIV mg.).

CITY OF WATERS A phrase appearing in the KJV of 2 Sam. 12:27 (Heb. *'ir hamayim*), describing what Joab conquered at the Ammonite capital of Rabbah. The NRSV has "water city," but the NIV translates the phrase as "water supply." It perhaps indicates the part of the fortification that protected the city's water supply.

CIVIL LIBERTIES The protection of individual freedoms against government restriction, such as the freedom of expression, press, religion, and assembly (cf. the Bill of Rights in the U.S. Constitution). Those who champion these rights often ground them in liberal ideology, enshrining individual autonomy over against collectivism. However, a Christian worldview better establishes these freedoms and avoids idolizing the self. While God ordains civil authorities as his earthly representatives to restrain evil and administer justice (Rom. 13:1–7; Titus 3:1; 1 Pet. 2:13), only Jesus Christ reigns as Lord and as judge of the living and the dead (2 Cor. 5:10). Civil liberties are therefore those matters of conscience that a government should leave between individuals and God (Acts 4:19; 5:29). These include how, or whether, they worship him (religious freedom) and reflect the divine image in which they were created (expressive freedom; cf. Gen. 1:26). Thus, by violating civil liberties a government commits a greater sin than restraining personal autonomy: it assumes Christ's office for itself.

CIVIL RIGHTS Those individual entitlements protected by a government, such as due process and equal protection under the law (cf. Amendments 13 and 14 of the U.S. Constitution). God gives secular rulers the authority to legislate, enforce, and interpret civil laws; he has therefore entrusted them with administering justice, which includes protecting civil rights (Rom. 13:1–7; Titus 3:1; 1 Pet. 2:13–14; cf. Matt. 22:21). Until Christ returns to rule his kingdom on earth, the church must defer the protection of civil rights to the state (see John 18:36).

Nonetheless, as Christians preach the gospel, they can embody and promote the principles characteristic of God's kingdom. Since God created man and woman in his own image and likeness (Gen. 1:26), Christians ought to practice and promote the respect and dignity of all people. All humans bear God's image regardless of the circumstances of their birth, and whether or not they are Christians. Hence, the Bible explicitly grounds the rights to life (Gen. 9:6) and fair treatment (James 3:9) in the principle of the divine image. For these reasons, believing citizens do well to advocate a society that serves justice regardless of an individual or group's race, ethnicity, religion, sex, or class.

CLAN The word "clan," translating several Hebrew words, designates a social grouping below the level of the nation or (in Israel) the tribe and above that of the (extended) family (Gen. 10:5; Num. 1:2; Josh. 7:14). Originally based on kinship, the Israelite clans may have developed to some extent into groups with a nonkin component. The clans served as the basis of military enlistment (Num. 1:20) and the division of the land (Num. 33:54; Josh. 13:15–21:45).

CLAUDA *See* Cauda.

CLAUDIA A Roman Christian woman and possibly an imperial household slave who, through Paul, sends greetings to Timothy (2 Tim. 4:21).

CLAUDIUS **(1)** A Roman emperor (born 10 BC), Claudius reigned from AD 41 until his death in AD 54. In AD 49 Claudius expelled all Jews from Rome because of Jewish riots instigated on account of "Chrestus" (probably Jesus Christ), which resulted in Aquila and Priscilla's move to Corinth (Acts 18:2). During Claudius's reign the prophet Agabus came to the church in Antioch predicting an empire-wide famine (11:28). **(2)** Claudius Lysias, the commander of the Roman military barracks in Jerusalem, who sent Paul under armed guard to stand trial before Felix in Caesarea Maritima (Acts 23:26).

CLAY Basic manufacturing material of fine-grained soil mixed with impurities. It is pliable when moist and hardens when baked. It was used for pottery (Lev. 6:28; 11:33; 15:12; Num. 5:17; Jer. 19:1; 32:14; 2 Cor. 4:7), building material (Lev. 14:42; Nah. 3:19), molds (1 Kings 7:46), sculpture

(Dan. 2:33), and writing tablets (Ezek. 4:1). Clay is used metaphorically to illustrate weakness (Job 4:19; 13:12; 27:16) or lowliness of purpose (Lam. 4:2; 2 Cor. 4:7; 2 Tim. 2:20). The potter and his clay are likened to God and human creation (Job 10:9; 33:6; Isa. 29:16; 45:9; 64:8; Jer. 18:4; Rom. 9:21).

CLEAN, CLEANNESS A holy God wants a holy people. He had described the nation of Israel as holy (cf. Exod. 19:5–6) but also wanted them to live holy lives and grow increasingly holy. Holiness came, in part, by keeping the law; an important part of the law was the concept of cleanness.

OLD TESTAMENT

Since Israel could become holy only by being clean, it is no surprise that the law's first mention of prohibited food is accompanied by a command to be God's holy people (Exod. 22:31). Nor is it unexpected that when God explains the laws about clean and unclean food, he tells the Israelites twice to "be holy, because I am holy" (Lev. 11:44–47).

Cleanness (Heb. *tahor*) does not refer to good hygiene, nor is it synonymous with morality, since a person could be unclean and still righteous. Cleanness allowed the OT believer to live a holy life and enabled that person to be made increasingly holy by "Yahweh, your sanctifier" (NIV: "the LORD, who makes you holy," Lev. 20:8; cf. 21:8, 15, 23; 22:9, 16, 32; 31:13). Before considering how ritual purity led to holiness, we should summarize the purity laws themselves.

Purity laws. Impurity traveled along four channels: sexuality (e.g., nocturnal emission, menstruation, childbirth), diet (e.g., eating certain types of animals), disease (e.g., skin diseases, mildew), and death (i.e., contact with animal or human corpses). Impurities occurring naturally and unavoidably in the course of life (e.g., menstruation) were tolerated, representing no danger to the person or community as long as they were promptly addressed. Other impurities had to be avoided at all costs or else grave consequences would result to the person and community.

Tolerated impurities. We can further divide tolerated impurities into minor and major. Minor impurities resulted from touching an animal carcass or touching someone with a major impurity. Minor impurities did not make one contagious and could be addressed simply. Major impurities resulted from touching a human corpse, having a skin disease, or experiencing a nocturnal emission or menstruation. With these, one became "contagious," purification took longer, and a sacrifice was required.

In order to become clean, the contaminant must be removed, with removal occurring in different ways. Tolerated impurities were removed by washing (bathing, laundering clothes, and sprinkling with water). What could not be washed away must be physically taken away, whether through burial, burning, or removal from the camp (e.g., scapegoat; Lev. 16:20–22).

Cleansing took time; generally the more serious the impurity, the longer the time, from one day for those who touch a dead animal, up to eighty days following the birth of a female child. Some tolerated impurities required sacrifices, with the animal's blood being sprinkled against the side of the altar and poured out at its base (Lev. 5).

Ritual actions might accompany the sacrifices. For example, a person who had been healed of a contagious skin disease was to bring two live, clean birds to the priest. One bird was to be killed and its blood mixed with water, which was then sprinkled on the person. The other bird was dipped into the blood/water mixture and released, symbolizing the removal of the uncleanness. In the ritual of the red heifer (Num. 19), a combination of water and ashes was used to purify those who had touched a corpse.

Impurities to be avoided. Unlike the tolerated impurities that could not be avoided, certain objects and actions were completely off-limits to the holy people of God. Intentional violation brought more serious consequences, even being "cut off" from the community. Although it is unclear exactly what it meant to be cut off—perhaps excommunication, capital punishment, vulnerability to an untimely death, loss of progeny, or separation from one's ancestors after death—the threat was ominous.

One prohibited impurity arose from eating food declared off-limits by God. All meat had to be thoroughly bled before being eaten (Gen. 9:3–4; Lev. 17:10–14; Deut. 12:16, 23). Edible land animals must both have a completely divided hoof and chew the cud (Lev. 11:3; Deut. 14:6), while water creatures had to have both fins and scales (Lev. 11:9; Deut. 14:9). Most birds were acceptable for food (exceptions are given in Lev. 11:13–19; Deut. 14:11–18), as were most insects (Lev. 11:20–23; Deut. 14:19–20) and some crawling animals (Lev. 11:29–31, 41–42).

Other prohibited impurities included what might be more readily identified as sinful acts. Sexual immorality (Lev. 18:6–25), idolatry (20:2–5), consulting mediums (20:6), and murder (Num. 35:33–34) defiled people and land. If such offenses were not "cleansed," God would judge, whether by natural disaster (Isa. 24:1–13) or exile (Isa. 64:6–7; Mic. 2:10).

Reasons for the laws. Why did God declare certain things clean and others unclean? Some suggest that the distinction is arbitrary; the rules are given as a test of obedience. Others argue that the original audience knew of reasons now lost to us. Still others believe that God was protecting his people from disease. It is true that certain kinds of meat improperly prepared can transmit disease, but not all laws can be explained this way. Some believe that God identified things as clean because they represented a state of normalcy (e.g., fish normally propel themselves with fins, so those lacking fins are abnormal and thus unclean). A related view considers things as clean or unclean based on what they symbolized. So, for example, God identified objects as unclean if they were associated with death (e.g., vultures, corpses) because he is for life. Here again, it is difficult to explain all the laws by appeal to normalcy or symbolism.

The vulture is among the animals the Israelites deemed unclean.

Cleanness and holiness. While we may not know for certain why God chose these particular laws, we can see how they helped his people become holy.

First, these laws made possible access to the sanctuary, where holiness could be expressed and developed. The law of Moses contains repeated and stern reminders that those who are unclean may not "go to the sanctuary" (Lev. 10:10; 12:4; 15:31; Num. 19:13, 20). Only the clean could approach a holy God and participate in the rituals that demonstrated and developed their holiness.

Second, these rituals also fostered holiness by teaching the Israelites about impurity. Israel's neighbors associated impurity with demons, but God indicated that it would be an Israelite's uncleanness, not demonic activity, that kept that person from living a holy life.

Third, these purity laws taught the Israelites about the holy God, whom they were to imitate. If even innocent and otherwise good experiences prevented their association with him, God must be very holy indeed. These laws also reinforced God's authority over every aspect of their lives. He determined when they could come to the sanctuary, but also what they could eat and when they could have sexual intercourse. These laws also reminded Israel that it was this same God who had provided a way to be clean and thereby holy. Cleansing was costly and humbling, but it was possible, coming as a gracious gift from God.

Fourth, a very practical consequence of these laws was to keep the Israelites separate from their neighbors. Not only were the Israelites to avoid pagan practices (e.g., rituals associated with mourning the dead; Lev. 19:27), but also they were to limit social contact with their pagan neighbors.

Laws governing what could be eaten and how those animals must be slaughtered would help see to that. God was concerned that his people not be corrupted by their neighbors (cf. Deut. 7:1–6; 14:1–3).

NEW TESTAMENT

Ceremonial cleansing appears in the opening chapters of the Gospels. Mary underwent the required purification rituals after Jesus' birth (Luke 2:22–24), and Jesus "cleansed" people from leprosy, instructing them to carry out the Mosaic purification rituals (Matt. 8:2–4; Mark 1:40–42; Luke 5:12–14; 17:11–19; cf. Matt. 10:8; 11:5; Luke 4:27; 7:22).

In one of his confrontations with the Pharisees, Jesus signaled a departure from how these laws had been practiced. He announced, "Nothing outside a person can defile them by going into them. Rather, it is what comes out of a person that defiles them" (Mark 7:15), to which Mark adds an explanation: "In saying this, Jesus declared all foods 'clean' " (7:19). Peter's rooftop vision in Acts 10 reflects this same perspective, as do the church's decision regarding Gentile conversion (Acts 15) and Paul's comments to the church at Rome (Rom. 14:14, 20–21).

The NT identifies the church as God's holy people, called to be holy as he is holy (1 Pet. 1:16). Holiness still required purity, now manifested more ethically than physically. That is, one became unclean through sinful actions such as lying (1 Thess. 2:3) and licentiousness (Eph. 4:19) rather than by, for example, contact with a corpse. In the OT, all Israel was declared holy but was to live out that holiness in daily life. Purity came through ritual actions such as sacrifice and washing, with the assistance of a priest. So it is in the NT, though the sacrifice is now the once-for-all offering of Christ on the cross (Heb. 9:13–14; 1 John 1:7) as applied in the waters of baptism (Eph. 5:26; 1 Pet. 3:21) and assisted by Jesus the great high priest and by the priesthood of believers (2 Cor. 7:1; Heb. 4:14; James 4:8; 1 Pet. 1:22). Thus purified, believers can go on to live holy lives and become increasingly holy. Although the Testaments differ on the causes and solutions for uncleanness, they agree that a holy people has always been God's goal, and that cleanness is a means to that end.

CLEMENT One of Paul's fellow workers in Philippi (Phil. 4:3). Origen and Eusebius identify him as the later bishop of Rome by the same name, but this remains uncertain.

CLEOPAS The disciple in conversation with a companion on the road to Emmaus, where they were joined by the risen Jesus (Luke 24:13–35). The name is a shortened form of "Cleopatros" and may be a Greek version of the Semitic "Clopas" (see John 19:25).

CLOPAS Husband of a woman named "Mary," who is mentioned at the crucifixion scene in John 19:25. Depending on how the Greek text is read, "Mary of Clopas" may be in apposition to "his mother's sister," or it may refer to a fourth woman present at the cross. If the former, Clopas was Jesus' relative (uncle, cousin, or grandfather) on his mother's side. According to Hegesippus (as cited by Eusebius), Clopas was Joseph's brother and the father of Simeon (or Simon), who succeeded Jesus' brother James as head of the Jerusalem church. "Clopas" is a Semitic name. "Cleopas," found in Luke 24:18, is a Greek spelling, but it perhaps refers to the same individual.

CLOSET In the KJV, "closet" refers to a private, relatively secure room (Matt. 6:6; Luke 12:3). In contrast to ostentatious, insincere prayer, Jesus urges his disciples to go into their "closet" (KJV) or, better, "inner room" (NASB), so that God receives all the focus (Matt. 6:6). The Greek word, *tameion*, also describes a place for keeping something of value (Matt. 24:26; Luke 12:24; cf. “storeroom” [Gk. *thēsauros*] in Matt. 13:52).

CLOTHING Clothing serves not only the utilitarian function of protecting the body from the elements (1 Tim. 6:8; James 2:15–16) but also a number of socially constructed functions, such as identifying the status of the wearer (James 2:2–3) and expressing cultural values such as modesty and beauty. The full range of such functions is attested in the Bible, and clothing plays a prominent symbolic role in a number of texts. Evidence concerning Israelite and other ancient clothing comes not only from the Bible but also from reliefs, pottery decorations, incised ivories, and, to a limited extent, textile fragments recovered in archaeological excavations.

In biblical lands most clothing was made from the wool of sheep or goats. More expensive articles (such as the garments of priests and aristocrats) could be made from linen, a textile made from the plant fiber flax. Other items, such as sandals, belts, and undergarments, were made from leather. Biblical law forbade the mixture of woolen and linen fibers in Israelite clothing (Deut. 22:11).

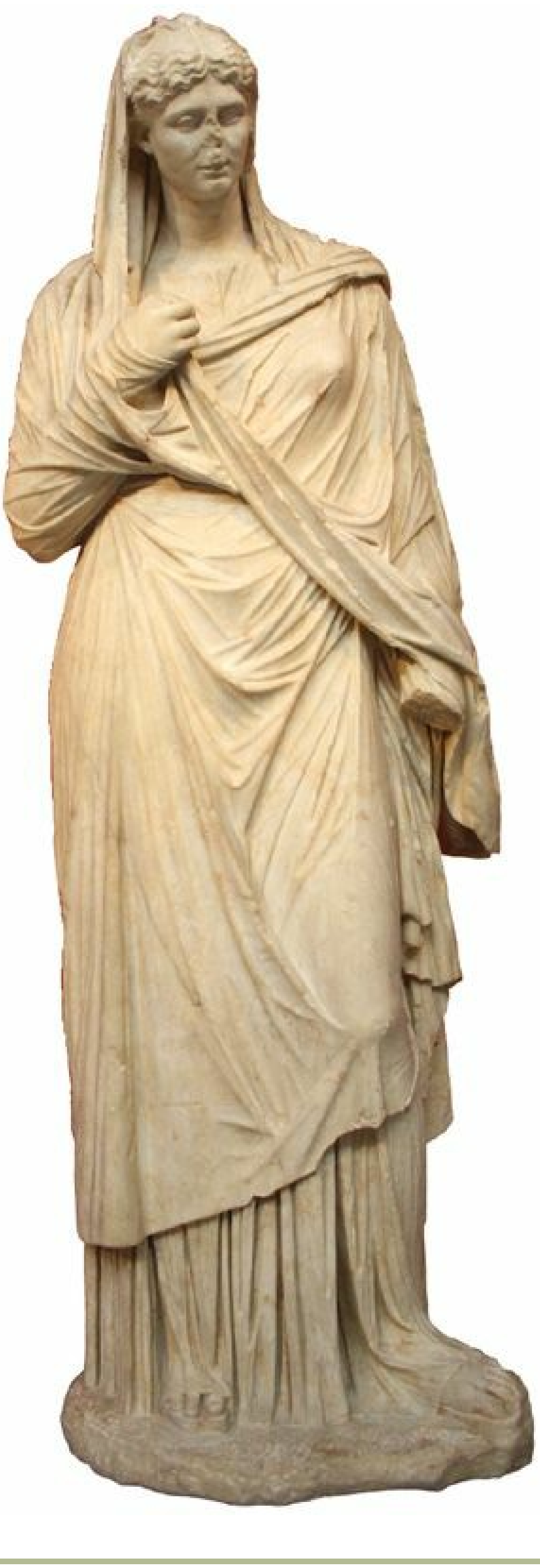
ARTICLES OF CLOTHING

A number of specific articles of clothing can be identified in the Bible. Egyptian and Mesopotamian pictures suggest that in OT times each nation was known for a distinctive costume or hairstyle. Some notion of how Israelite costume was perceived, at least that of royalty, may be derived from the depiction of the northern king Jehu (842–814 BC) and his retinue on the Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser III. In this image Israelites are depicted wearing softly pointed caps, pointed shoes, and fringed mantles.

In OT Israel, men wore an undergarment or loincloth held in place by a belt. This loincloth could be made of linen (Jer. 13:1) or leather (2 Kings 1:8). Over this was worn an ankle-length woolen robe or tunic. The tunic of Joseph, traditionally rendered as his “coat of many colors” (Gen. 37:3 KJV, following the LXX), is perhaps better described not as colorful but as “long-sleeved” (see also 2 Sam. 13:18 NASB). The corresponding garments worn by women were similar in appearance, though sufficiently distinct that cross-dressing could be prohibited (Deut. 22:5).

Outside the tunic were worn cloaks (Exod. 22:25–26), sashes (Isa. 22:21), and mantles (1 Kings 19:19). A crafted linen sash was a marketable item (Prov. 31:24), whereas a rope belt was a poor substitute (Isa. 3:24). Both Elijah and John the Baptist wore a belt of leather (2 Kings 1:8; Matt. 3:4; Mark 1:6).

The characteristic garment of the elite was a loose-fitting, wide-sleeved, often elegantly decorated royal robe (Heb. *me’il*). This garment was worn by priests (Exod. 28:4), nobility, kings, and other highly placed members of Israelite society, such as Samuel (1 Sam. 15:27–28), Jonathan (1 Sam. 18:4), Saul (1 Sam. 24:4), David (1 Chron. 15:27), David’s daughter Tamar (2 Sam. 13:18), and Ezra (Ezra 9:3).



Roman funerary statue of a woman wearing a tunic (*chitōn*) and cloak (*himation*) (first century AD)

In the NT, the inner garment was the tunic (*chitōn*), and the outer garment was the cloak (*himation*). This distinction lies behind the famous command of Jesus: “From one who takes away your cloak do not withhold your tunic either” (Luke 6:29 ESV). The Gospel of John reports that the tunic taken from Jesus at the time of his death was made seamlessly from a single piece of cloth (John 19:23).

Footwear consisted of leather sandals attached to the feet by straps (John 1:27). Sandals were removed as a sign of respect in the presence of deity (Exod. 3:5; Josh. 5:15). The exchange of footwear also played a role in formalizing various legal arrangements (Ruth 4:7–8; see also Deut. 25:9).

SPECIAL FUNCTIONS OF CLOTHING

According to Genesis, the first humans lived initially without clothing or the shame of nakedness (Gen. 2:25). After eating the forbidden fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, Adam and Eve realized that they were naked and fashioned clothing from leaves (3:7). Later, God made "garments of skin" for Adam and his wife (3:21). The significance of this story and the meaning of the divinely fashioned garments have a long history of interpretation going back to antiquity. Clearly, however, the story illustrates that a basic function of clothing is to cover nakedness—a motif that soon after this story is featured again in the story of Noah and his sons (9:21–23).

Rebekah's ploy to secure the birthright for her son Jacob involved disguising him in the clothing of his brother Esau (Gen. 27:15; see also Saul's use of disguise in 1 Sam. 28:8). This tale illustrates how especially in a culture in which individuals owned what would, by modern standards, be considered a limited amount of clothing, clothing itself became an extension of the individual's identity. In the same way, Jacob himself later was tricked into thinking that one of his own sons was dead, based on the identification of an article of clothing (Gen. 37:31–33). That Isaac could detect Esau's distinctive smell on his clothing may also indicate the infrequency with which garments were changed and laundered (Gen. 27:27; see also Matt. 10:10). So closely was clothing identified with its owner that a garment could be used as collateral or a pledge, though biblical law regulates this practice for humanitarian reasons (Exod. 22:26). Perhaps because the production of clothing was labor intensive, making clothes for someone was sometimes considered an act of intimacy or an expression of love, so that descriptions of this aspect of clothing in the Bible are quite poignant (see 1 Sam. 2:19; Acts 9:39). When clothing wore out, it was discarded and replaced (Ps. 102:26; Isa. 51:6; Luke 12:33). During the forty years in the wilderness, as a special provision to the Israelites, their clothes and shoes did not wear out (Deut. 8:4; 29:5; Neh. 9:21).

Clothing was an emblem not only of one's identity but also of one's office. Thus, when the authority of Elijah passed to his disciple Elisha, Elisha received his master's cloak or mantle (2 Kings 2:13–14; see also Isa. 22:21). Examples of this function are multiplied when we consider the significance of clothing in symbolizing the role of priests in ancient Israel (e.g., Exod. 29:5–9; 39:27–31). The story of Tamar illustrates that the status of certain women was expressed by their clothing, including that of the prostitute (Gen. 38:15) and the widow (Gen. 38:14, 19).

Biblical texts reveal a rich gestural language involving clothing. In several biblical accounts, spreading the corner of one's garment over a woman appears as a courtship or marriage ritual (Ruth 3:9; Ezek. 16:8). Giving garments as gifts was a way of honoring or elevating the recipient (Gen. 45:22; Judg. 14:12; Ezek. 16:10; Dan. 5:7), including royal investiture (Pss. 45:8; 93:1; 104:1). The guards who tortured Jesus prior to his crucifixion made light of his status as "king" by dressing him in a royal purple robe (Luke 23:11; John 19:2–3). Grasping someone's garment, especially its hem, signified entreaty (1 Sam. 15:27–28; Zech. 8:23; Mark 5:27–28). Tearing one's garments was a way of expressing despair or repentance (Gen. 37:29; Josh. 7:6; Judg. 11:35) or of lodging an especially strong protest (Num. 14:6; Matt. 26:65; Acts 14:14). In some cases, the tearing clothing was accompanied by the act of donning sackcloth and ashes, which signified a further degree of self-humiliation or mourning (Gen. 37:34; 2 Sam. 3:31; 2 Kings 19:1; Matt. 11:21; in Jon. 3:8 animals are included as well, perhaps to comic effect). In such instances, shoes and headwear were also removed

(2 Sam. 15:30; Isa. 20:2; Ezek. 24:17). A number of these customs can be understood in terms of the correlation of nakedness with shame, and clothing with honor. Military captives often were stripped naked as a form of humiliation (Lam. 4:21; Ezek. 23:10; Amos 2:16). In Luke 8:27 Jesus encounters a demon-possessed man who neither lived in a house nor wore clothing. In this case, the lack of clothing represents the full measure of human degradation.

Clothing stands symbolically for attributes such as righteousness and salvation (Job 29:14; Ps. 132:9; Isa. 61:10), the resurrection (1 Cor. 15:53–54; 2 Cor. 5:2–4), glory and honor (Job 40:10), union with Christ (Rom. 13:14; Gal. 3:27), compassion and other virtues (Col. 3:12; 1 Pet. 5:5), and purity (Rev. 3:18).

CLOUD, PILLAR OF *See* Pillar of Fire and Cloud.

CLOUDS

Clouds and theophany. The storm god Baal occupied a central place in Canaanite religion, and so a cloud, especially a rain cloud, was considered a prominent manifestation of the divine presence. In Ugaritic texts Baal is described as the "rider on the cloud."

The OT depicts the God of Israel in similar terms, as riding on a cloud (Judg. 5:4; Isa. 19:1; Pss. 18:11–12; 68:4; 104:3), and as the creator and sender of clouds: "Ask rain from the LORD in the season of the spring rain; from the LORD who makes the storm clouds, and he will give them showers of rain, to everyone the vegetation in the field" (Zech. 10:1 ESV [see also 1 Kings 18:44; Pss. 135:7; 147:8; Prov. 8:28; Isa. 5:6; Jer. 10:13]). Divine judgment is pictured as a dark storm (Isa. 30:30; Lam. 2:1; Nah. 1:3; Zech. 1:15). In his taunt against the king of Babylon, Isaiah attributes to the king the arrogant intention of ascending "above the tops of the clouds," that is, to the dwelling place of God (Isa. 14:14).

At several crucial points God manifested his presence among the Israelites in the form of a cloud: in the wilderness (the "pillar of cloud" of Exod. 13:21 and elsewhere), on Mount Sinai (Exod. 19:9; 24:15), in the tabernacle (Exod. 40:34), in the temple at Jerusalem (1 Kings 8:10), and frequently in the visions of Ezekiel (e.g., Ezek. 1:4; 10:3).

The NT continues the imagery of the cloud as a manifestation of divine presence in the story of the transfiguration (Matt. 17:5; Mark 9:7; Luke 9:36), and also in depictions of Jesus as a cloud-rider in Matt. 26:64; Rev. 14:14 (see Dan. 7:13). Jesus was hidden by a cloud when he ascended (Acts 1:9), and believers will be caught up by clouds at his return (1 Thess. 4:17; Rev. 11:12).

Clouds in nature. A handful of biblical texts describe clouds appearing in the land of Israel from the west, from the Mediterranean Sea (1 Kings 18:14; Luke 12:54).

Clouds stand for the highest point in the sky (Job 35:5; Jer. 51:9). They were understood to release their rain when full (Eccles. 11:3). Clouds are associated with rainbows (Gen. 9:13; Rev. 10:1).

CLOUT The KJV rendering of the Hebrew word *sekhabah*, referring to the material used by Ebed-Melek to lift Jeremiah from the cistern (Jer. 38:11–12). More-recent versions translate it as "old rags."

CLUB Clubs were used for warfare and hunting (2 Sam. 23:21; Job 41:29). Isaiah describes the Assyrians as a club in the hand of Yahweh (Isa. 10:5; see also Jer. 51:20). Those who arrested Jesus carried clubs (Matt. 26:47).

CNIDUS A Carian city on the narrow peninsula jutting from the southwest corner of Asia Minor between the islands of Kos and Rhodes. Paul sailed past Cnidus en route to Rome (Acts 27:7).

COAL Used both literally and figuratively for the burning embers of a fire. People used coal/embers for baking (Isa. 44:19), heat (Isa. 47:14), and burning incense in worship (Lev. 16:12). Figuratively, hot coals portray God’s anger (2 Sam. 22:9, 13; Ps. 18:8) or purification of sin (Isa. 6:6) and also the discomfort of receiving good after doing evil (Prov. 25:21–22; cf. Rom. 12:20). Dying embers picture the end of a family line (2 Sam. 14:7).

COAT OF MAIL Protective armor typically made of overlapping bronze or iron scales sewn over a leather undergarment. Such armor helped protect combatants from projectiles and other weapons, but it was heavy (1 Sam. 17:5; NIV: “coat of scale armor”) and costly (requiring perhaps between four hundred and six hundred scales). Early in Israel’s history one sees it on a king (Saul, 1 Sam. 17:38; NIV: “coat of armor”) and a foreigner (Goliath, 1 Sam. 17:5). Later, regular soldiers (2 Chron. 26:14; Jer. 46:4; 51:3) were more likely to be supplied with it like their kings (1 Kings 22:34). Isaiah 59:17 uses such armor as a figure for the protection of righteousness (cf. Eph. 6:14).

COBRA A venomous, deaf, hole-dwelling snake (see, e.g., Ps. 58:4; Isa. 11:8). *See also* Serpent; Viper.

COCKATRICE The KJV uses the name of this mythical snakelike monster to translate the related Hebrew words *tsif’oni* (Isa. 11:8; 59:5; Jer. 8:17) and *tsefa’* (Isa. 14:29). However, these words denote a real snake and in modern versions are more commonly translated “cobra,” “adder,” or “viper” (as the KJV does in Prov. 23:32).

COCKCROWING The time at which the cock first crows, usually understood to be the first light of day. In the time of the NT, the Jews adopted the Greek and Roman method of dividing the night into four watches (see Matt. 14:25; Mark 6:48; Luke 12:38 KJV). Each watch consisted of three hours. The first began at six o’clock in the evening. The more ancient division was only two watches: one after midnight and one at first morning’s light.

COCKLE The KJV rendering of the Hebrew word *ba’eshah* in Job 31:40, referring to a weed. The type of weed in view here is uncertain (if any particular type is intended), but the Hebrew word implies a weed with a noxious odor (NRSV: “foul weeds”; NIV, NASB: “stinkweed”).

CODEX A codex (Lat. *caudex*, *codex*, “block of wood”) is a book with separate pages bound together and given a cover. It was a Roman invention that gradually replaced the scroll.

Early codices were wooden tablets that ranged in size but typically were 6–8 inches wide and 10–12 inches high. By Roman times, tablets were commonly stacked (as many as a dozen) and tied on one side by leather thongs run through holes bored near the edge, hinged to form a codex, denoting a book composed of leaves (wooden or otherwise) attached on one side. Modern books are direct descendants of tablet books (*tabellae*, *pugillares*).

With thinly cut sheets of wood, the surface was rubbed to lighten the color. Ink was written directly on the leaf. The tablets were often washed and reused. With thicker, and thus more durable, sheets of wood, a depression was cut in the center and filled with wax. Writing was lightly scratched on the wax with a stylus. Tablets were reused merely by rubbing the wax smooth. The reusability of tablets led to their common use for rough drafts, notes, and other unpublished writings (see Luke 1:63).

The first Christian century saw a new codex. Sheets of parchment, specially treated to be erasable, were used, making thicker codices lighter. Fifty sheets could be stacked, making one hundred leaves and two hundred pages. These parchment notebooks, commonly called *membranae* (“parchments”), were still used for personal purposes. Writers such as Luke and Paul (see 2 Tim. 4:13) may well have used notebooks to keep excerpts of OT texts, drafts of their own writings, and, in Paul’s case, copies of letters.

Unlike their contemporaries who viewed codices as inappropriate for publication (biblical references to a book meant a scroll), the early church fully adopted the codex. *See also* Books; Writing Implements and Materials.

COFFER The KJV rendering of the Hebrew word *’argaz* (1 Sam. 6:8, 11, 15), referring to a container (NIV: “chest”; NRSV: “box”) used to hold items of value such as coins, jewels, or gold.

COHORT One-tenth of a Roman army legion, led by a captain, usually consisting of six hundred soldiers. Some auxiliary cohorts, with more infantry and cavalry than regular cohorts, were recruited from, and permanently stationed in, one specific imperial region.

In John 18:1–13 Judas leads a number of soldiers from the cohort stationed in Jerusalem, along with some priestly authorities, to arrest Jesus. When Jesus is arrested and taken into Pilate’s headquarters, the entire cohort is gathered together to maintain civic order and to carry out the tasks associated with Jesus’ public execution (Matt. 27:27).

Acts 10:1 refers to the centurion Cornelius, an officer in the Italian Cohort (NIV: “Italian Regiment”). In 21:31 the captain of the cohort stationed in Jerusalem rescues Paul from an angry mob that is convinced that he has brought a Gentile into the temple. Another centurion, Julius, of the Augustan Cohort (NIV: “Imperial Regiment”), is responsible for escorting Paul to his trial in Rome (27:1).

COINS Pieces of metal stamped with a particular impression, used as a medium of exchange. From time immemorial people used animals, grain, or other commodities to barter (Hos. 3:2), pay taxes (1 Sam. 8:15), or as a measure of wealth (Job 1:3). Substituting smaller, more easily handled pieces of precious metal had obvious advantages. Gradually people used precious metal such as silver or gold along with commodities (Gen. 20:14–16) and then in place of them (37:28) as a means of payment. Such metal had been refined, but it could have been in most any form (rings, bars, ingots, dust) as long as it weighed the appropriate amount. Local and international standards developed to regulate the weights, and later the concept grew in popularity to use standard, authorized, clearly stamped pieces of precious metal—coins.

Old Testament. Minting of coins may have begun as far back as the late eighth century BC, and it gradually spread throughout the known world. The first coins apparently were made in Asia Minor using electrum, a natural alloy of gold and silver.

When the Persians took over much of the ancient Near East in the sixth century BC, the use of coins spread, and Persian coins came to the land of the Bible. At the end of the Hebrew Bible there is mention of large quantities of Persian coins called “darics” (1 Chron. 29:7; Ezra 8:27), also translated as “drachmas” (NASB) or “drams” (KJV) (Ezra 2:69; Neh. 7:70–72). These darics were stamped with the likeness of Darius the Great (521–486 BC) and were minted from gold and occasionally silver. At about the same time, silver tetradrachmas (four-drachma coins) from Athens made their way to the western shores of the Mediterranean. Local imitations of this coin were stamped with “YHD” to represent the province of Judah.

New Testament. Coins appear dozens of times in the NT; some have Hellenistic roots, while others come from the periods of Hasmonean or Roman rule.

For several centuries after Alexander the Great conquered the ancient Near East (fourth century BC), coins with the images of Alexander or his Seleucid or Ptolemaic successors were circulated in Judea. In particular, silver shekels from the Phoenician port cities of Tyre and Sidon enjoyed wide usage for a long time. Also called a “stater,” the shekel or four-drachma coin recovered by Peter from the fish’s mouth (Matt. 17:27) may have been such a Tyrian coin. Many or all of the thirty silver coins that the chief priests gave Judas for betraying Jesus (Matt. 26:15; 27:3) probably were Tyrian shekels as well, since this coin came to be the accepted currency at the temple in Jerusalem and the priests would have had a good supply of them.

After the Hellenistic rulers lost control of Judea during the rebellion led by the Maccabean or Hasmonean family in the second century BC, the Jews could mint their own coins for the first time. The honor of producing the first Jewish coin apparently goes to John Hyrcanus I (134–104 BC), son of Simon and nephew of Judas Maccabeus. Simon’s modest bronze lepton (pl. lepta), or prutah, has an inscription on one side and two cornucopias and a pomegranate on the other. Use of such agricultural symbols apparently fulfilled two purposes: it portrayed the fertility of the land that God had given his people, and it helped the Jews avoid depicting people on coins, as the Greeks and later the Romans would do. During this period devout Jews avoided such images in order to help fulfill the second commandment (Exod. 20:4), to avoid graven images. Hyrcanus I’s son Alexander Jannaeus (103–76 BC) minted great quantities of different types of bronze lepta, still often found in excavations in Israel today. These coins remained in circulation for many years, probably through the ministry of Jesus. Thus, the two small coins for which Jesus commended the widow for donating to the temple treasury (Mark 12:42; Luke 21:2) may well have been lepta of Alexander Jannaeus. The tiny lepton, typically smaller than a dime and worth only 1/400 of a shekel, also appears in Luke 12:59.

Coins minted by various Roman emperors

It is also possible that the aforementioned lepta were not minted by Alexander Jannaeus, since later rulers, including the Jewish king Herod the Great (40–4 BC), also minted large numbers of similar small bronze coins. Though not known for his piety, Herod continued to avoid human representations on his coins. For the most part, so did his sons and the later Roman procurators (including Pontius Pilate [governed AD 26–36]), who ruled Judea before the revolt in AD 66.

Other Roman coins, such as the silver denarius (pl. denarii) minted outside Judea, clearly did not avoid human representation, however. Jesus' request for a coin with Caesar's image and inscription (Matt. 22:15–22) refers to the denarius. The denarius in Jesus' day could have portrayed the emperor Tiberius (r. AD 14–37) or even Augustus (r. 27 BC–AD 14), whose coins were probably still in circulation. The silver denarius came to represent the daily wage of a common laborer, as clearly shown in the parable of laborers (Matt. 20:1–16). The denarius also appears in many other passages, although modern translators sometimes use a more interpretive expression ("two silver coins" for "two denarii" in Luke 10:35; "a year's wages" for "three hundred denarii" in Mark 14:5).

Although many of the references discussed above contain specific terms that can be identified with coins known from history, others cannot. General terms meaning "coins" or "pieces of money" sometimes appear, as when Jesus scattered the coins of the money changers (John 2:15), or the rather common term for silver that appears frequently and is often translated as "money" (Matt. 28:12; Luke 9:3) or "silver" (Acts 3:6; 1 Pet. 1:18) as well as "silver coins" (Matt. 27:3 GW).

COL-HOZEH *See* Kol-Hozeh.

COLLAR Occurs in various English versions when the biblical text denotes something that goes around a neck. Sometimes "collar" translates the Hebrew word for "mouth" when the "mouth" of a garment around the neck is in view, as in Job 30:18 (KJV, NRSV, NET, NASB, ESV) or Ps. 133:2 (NIV, NRSV, ESV). The "(iron) collar" was used for punishment (Jer. 29:26 NRSV, NET, NASB; see also Ps. 105:18 NRSV, NET, ESV), and the camels of the Midianites wore valuable ornamental "collars" (Judg. 8:26 NRSV, ESV; NIV "chains"; NET: "necklaces").

COLLECTION FOR THE POOR An action initiated by the apostle Paul to help poor Christians in Judea. For Paul, it expresses the core of the gospel: unity of Jew and Gentile in Christ and the nations coming to the God of Israel. He references it in Rom. 15:25–32; 1 Cor. 16:1–4; 2 Cor. 8–9; and possibly Gal. 2:10. Paul gives instructions to his predominantly Gentile churches to set aside funds for him to take to the Jewish Christians in Jerusalem. Doing so expresses the sacrificial other-oriented giving of Christ. Participating in this practice, especially in the midst of hardship, and giving of one's relative abundance to equalize the material situation with other Christians who have less manifests the saving grace of Christ at work among the givers (2 Cor. 8–9). Paul does not separate such material acts of grace from others associated with Christ's salvation.

For Paul, it also enacts the end-time salvation of the Gentiles, as they stream to Jerusalem and bring their wealth to the Jews (cf. Isa. 2:1–4; 60:3–16; 61:5–6; 66:20; Hag. 2:7). For Paul, of course, Gentiles now relate to Jews as equals. Since they have come to participate in the ultimate blessings of the God of Israel by being grafted into Israel, they must serve the Jews in need of relief (Rom. 15:27). This expresses the unity and real connection between Gentiles and Jews in Christ. We do not know for certain whether the Jewish Christians of Jerusalem accepted the money, since some considered Paul to have rejected the God of Israel in his marginalizing of the law.

COLLEGE The KJV rendering of the Hebrew word *mishneh* in 2 Kings 22:14; 2 Chron. 34:22, referring to the part of Jerusalem in which Huldah lived. More-recent versions translate it as "Second District"/"Second Quarter" (ESV, NKJV) or "New District"/"New Quarter" (NIV).

COLONY Although evidence of Greek colonies exists both prior to and during the conquests of

Alexander the Great, it is the Roman colony that impacted the NT world most. A Roman colony was considered to be Rome in microcosm with reference to governance, architecture, and citizenship (cf. Acts 16:21). Colonies typically modeled their administrative system after Rome, electing new executive officials annually (cf. 16:35). The central forum of a colony often contained a temple to Jupiter and a *curia* building, where the town council met. Colony citizens, because of their Roman citizenship, were exempt from tribute and most forms of taxation, and their governance was based on a Roman model. Among the Roman colonies mentioned in the NT are Philippi, Corinth, Antioch of Pisidia, Iconium, Lystra, and Troas.

COLORS The Bible does not have a generic term for the idea of color, but it does use various colors for descriptive and symbolic purposes, and it also refers to different coloring processes. Items can be described as “dyed” (Exod. 25:5), “multicolored” (Ezek. 27:24), or “speckled” (Gen. 30:32) to indicate changes or variety of color.

Certain colors are commonly used in the Bible (listed below), while others occur rarely (e.g., brown and yellow) or not at all (e.g., orange), reflecting the range of colors and dyes available in the ancient Near East. Colors are most often used for two purposes: to describe luxury items indicating wealth and power, and to describe the earthly and heavenly dwelling places of God. Ordinary people and places are not usually described in terms of the colors of their appearance. Exceptions to this include Esau (Gen. 25:25), David (1 Sam. 17:42), and the male lover in Song of Songs (5:10–11).

The following colors have particular significance or symbolic meaning in the Bible:

White. Used to describe the symptoms of leprosy (Lev. 13:3–4), white much more commonly has a positive association, being the color of purity (Isa. 1:18; Rev. 3:4) and glory (Dan. 7:9; Matt. 17:2; Rev. 1:14). Angels appear white (Matt. 28:3) or are dressed in white (Mark 16:2; Acts 1:10). The multitude of worshipers in heaven will wear white robes (Rev. 7:9), having been washed in the blood of the Lamb.

Black. The female lover in the Song of Songs admires the raven black hair of her beloved (Song 5:11). However, black things usually have less positive connotations: storm clouds (1 Kings 18:45), diseased skin (Job 30:30), and the effects of the plague of locusts (Exod. 10:15). Blackness can also be a sign of judgment (Rev. 6:5, 12).

Red. Red is the color of the earth, the color of wine, and the color of blood. Red dyes could be made from crushed insects, plants, and minerals, giving a wide range of different shades (red, scarlet, and crimson are common in the Bible). Scarlet yarn and red-dyed animal skins were included in the offerings made for the construction of the tabernacle (Exod. 25:3–5). Red was used to symbolize sin (Isa. 1:18) and was also associated with warfare (Nah. 2:3; Rev. 6:4).

Blue. Blue tassels adorned every Hebrew garment as a reminder of God’s commandments (Num. 15:38). In the Persian court the royal colors were blue, white, and purple (Esther 1:6; 8:15), and blue garments were worn by the young Assyrian governors (Ezek. 23:6).

Purple. Purple dye was very expensive, so purple cloth was used as a sign of wealth (Prov. 31:22; Acts 16:14) and a sign of authority: the kings of Midian wore purple garments (Judg. 8:26); the wedding carriage of King Solomon was upholstered in purple (Song 3:10); the Babylonian king Belshazzar offered purple robes as a reward for service (Dan. 5:7). Purple robes were put on Jesus before his crucifixion in a mockery of his kingship (John 19:2–5).

Blue, purple, and scarlet were each separately associated with wealth and power, but when used together these three colors were the epitome of opulence and, as such, were associated with the divine presence. The tabernacle curtains were woven from blue, purple, and scarlet yarn (Exod.

26:1), as were the high-priestly garments (28:4–15, 33). The same colors were later used in the temple curtains (2 Chron. 3:14). Blue, purple, and red cloths were used for covering the ark of the covenant and its furnishings (Num. 4:6–12). Jeremiah describes idols adorned in blue and purple, an attempt to conceal their worthlessness (10:9).

Gray. Gray hair indicated old age and thus wisdom (Ps. 71:18; Prov. 16:31).

Green. Green is the color of plants and thus was associated with life-giving food and therefore God's blessing. Green plants were given by God for food (Gen. 1:30), so their removal or destruction was a devastating judgment (Exod. 10:15; Ezek. 17:24; Rev. 8:7). People could be symbolized as green plants when they were fruitful and blessed (Ps. 92:14; Jer. 17:8) or when they were easily destroyed (2 Kings 19:26; Ps. 37:2).

COLOSSAE, COLOSSE *See* Asia Minor, Cities of; Colossians, Letter to the.

COLOSSIANS, LETTER TO THE Colossians is a letter sent by Paul to a church in Colossae when he was in prison. The letter was Paul's first direct contact with the church, which may have been started by one of his missionary associates, Epaphras (Col. 1:7). Epaphras was from Colossae (4:12), a city of Asia Minor located in the Lycus Valley, known for its fertile soil and green pastures. Some commentators suggest that Epaphras also started churches in Hierapolis and Laodicea (4:13), neighboring cities in the valley that were situated around the Lycus River about ten miles apart. Colossae was a free city located on the main Roman road that ran from Ephesus and Sardis toward the east, and it was populated by native Phrygians, as well as Greeks, Romans, and Jews. More than likely, the church was founded during Paul's extended ministry in Ephesus, where persons from the region heard Paul's gospel and from where Paul sent missionary associates such as Epaphras into the surrounding cities (Acts 19). Tychicus, the letter carrier (Col. 4:7–8), was also one of Paul's associates from the same region; he decided to accompany Paul to Macedonia after the team left Ephesus (Acts 20:4).

The close association of these churches in Asia Minor and the time frame when the letters were written may explain why Paul's letter to the Colossians is so similar in content to his letter to the Ephesians. Paul was in prison (probably in Rome) when he sent both of these letters (Eph. 3:1; Col. 4:10, 18). The instructions regarding Tychicus, the carrier for both letters, are identical, nearly verbatim (Eph. 6:21–22; Col. 4:7–8). The letters share the same outline, following some of the same themes, especially toward the end, where Paul gives instructions regarding the household. An affinity also exists between Colossians and Philemon, a letter sent to the patron of one of the house churches in Colossae. Most of the names mentioned by Paul appear in both letters: Timothy, Onesimus, Archippus, Epaphras, Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, and Luke (Col. 1:1; 4:9–17; Philem. 1, 10, 23–24). Paul was also in prison, along with Epaphras, at the time he sent his letter to Philemon.

Site of ancient Colossae in the Lycus Valley, in modern Turkey

All of this indicates that these letters were written about the same time, from the same place, to the same region. Why did Paul send three letters to the same region, especially since letter production was so expensive? Why not send one letter to the entire region (like Galatians), to be read by all the house churches? Obviously, the problems of each church were so different that they required a separate authoritative word from their apostle.

QUESTIONABLE PRACTICES IN COLOSSAE

The Colossians were doing several things that Paul found troublesome, as we learn from Col. 2. They were judging each other for not keeping certain dietary regulations and holy days (2:16). Some were claiming superiority through personal worship experiences that involved visions of angels (2:18). Some subscribed to strict discipline of the human body, punishing themselves through various acts of self-abasement in order to curb fleshly appetites (2:23) and enhance their worship experiences (2:18). It seems that many of them were trying to live by an expanded version of the divine command given in the story of Adam, Eve, and the forbidden fruit: “Do not handle! Do not taste! Do not touch!” (2:21). Paul recognized that all these claims and rules had the “appearance of wisdom” but in reality were nothing more than traditions based on “self-imposed” religion, and that such ascetic practices were useless in denying fleshly appetites (2:22–23). Where did the Colossians get all these strange ideas that led to such bizarre behavior?

Paul described the false teaching as an imprisoning “through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the elemental spiritual forces” in opposition to the teachings of Christ (2:8). Because the Colossian church was made up primarily of Gentile converts (1:27), many interpreters argue that the problems resulted from the meshing of the gospel with local, pagan ways. The Phrygians were known for their fascination with magical rituals, the ability to manipulate the powers (earth, wind, fire, spirits, angels, often referred to as “elementary principles of the world”) for human purposes. Paul’s description of the false teaching as a “hollow and deceptive philosophy” based on the "human tradition" may also reveal the influence of Greek ideas and Roman ways in the church. The Greeks operated with a dualistic worldview of spirit versus flesh, leading some philosophers to argue that punishing the body ensured purity of the soul. Furthermore, the Romans believed that the gods had given them power to rule the world, bringing fertility to the lands of conquered peoples. Worshiping Caesar brought economic rewards to devoted subjects of the empire. In other words, all this talk in the Colossian letter about power and sovereignty, philosophy and self-discipline was Paul's way of dealing directly with the root of the problem: the syncretism of pagan ways and the gospel according to Paul.

Some interpreters believe that all these peculiar teachings derive not from pagan religions but rather from Judaism. After all, Paul's references to observing the Sabbath, keeping commandments, and angelic worship point toward a Jewish context. Paul also affirmed that his Gentile converts were "circumcised with a circumcision not performed by human hands" (2:11), perhaps revealing his concern that Jewish ways were creeping into his Gentile church. He even put the church on notice, identifying those among "the circumcision" (Jews) who were trustworthy ministers of the gospel (he mentions only three, Barnabas, John Mark, and Jesus called Justus [4:10–11]). The implication, of course, was to ignore the rest of "the circumcision." But if the troublemakers in Colossae were Jewish opponents of Paul, how does one explain all the mystical and ascetic elements of this false teaching? Some argue that the expression "worship of angels" was not an idolatrous practice of venerating angelic beings. Instead, the phrase should be translated "angelic worship," implying that some Colossians claimed to have been transported to heaven and joined the angels in worship of God. This may have been similar to the experiences of an obscure form of Judaism: Jewish mystics who claimed to preserve esoteric revelations through out-of-body experiences of heavenly visions and auditions (see Paul's description in 2 Cor. 12:1–7). Furthermore, the strict dietary code and sexual ethic of Jewish law were often interpreted by first-century pagans as promoting an ascetic lifestyle. In other words, Paul was countering a more cryptic branch of Judaism that flourished in a region known for its affinity for the mysterious.

OUTLINE AND CONTENT

I. Introduction (1:1–14)
    A. Greeting (1:1–2)
    B. Thanksgiving (1:3–8)
    C. Prayer (1:9–14)

II. The Person and Work of Christ (1:15–23)

III. Paul's Role in Christ's Mission to the Gentiles (1:24–2:5)

IV. False Teaching versus the Work of Christ (2:6–23)

V. Instructions on Life in Christ
    A. In the church (3:1–17)
    B. In the home (3:18–4:1)

VI. Generic Exhortations (4:2–6)

VII. Specific Instructions (4:7–9)

VIII. Final Greetings (4:10–17)

IX. Paul’s Signature (4:18)

Whatever the source of the false teaching referred to in Colossians, Paul attempts to correct the misbehavior of his Gentile converts by building an argument that the work of Christ is all-sufficient. Paul begins the letter by describing the person and work of Christ in cosmic terms (1:15–23). Next he recounts his role in the mission of Christ to bring the riches of the kingdom to Gentiles (1:24–2:5). After reminding the Colossians of their reception of the gospel, Paul juxtaposes the deceptive practices of the false teaching with the evidence of the work of Christ in them (2:6–23). Then he gives a number of instructions on what life in Christ is supposed to look like: in the church (3:1–17) and in the home (3:18–4:1). He concludes the letter with generic exhortations (4:2–6), specific instructions (4:7–9), and greetings (4:10–17). Finally, Paul signs the letter, obviously written by a secretary, with the simple request: “Remember my chains” (4:18)—a curious signature that makes the argument of his letter even more appealing.

THE POWER AND PEACE OF CHRIST’S KINGDOM

It is ironic that Paul chose to describe the work of Christ in such grandiose terms, picturing him as a mighty ruler over all creation, even while the apostle was in prison—an undeniable sign of Roman sovereignty. In Col. 1, in some of the loftiest language Paul ever used to describe Christ’s kingdom authority, the apostle reminds his converts that the Lord is “the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation” (v. 15), an obvious reference to Christ’s deity. Then Paul piles on the attributes, presenting Christ as the creator of all things, even angelic creatures (v. 16), the sustainer of all things (v. 17), the head of the church, the eternal one, the guarantor of the resurrection (v. 18), the fullness of God (v. 19), the reconciler of all things—the one who made peace with the enemies of God through his blood on the cross (vv. 20–22). Despite Paul’s circumstances and what Rome may claim, the apostle holds fast to the irrepressible sovereignty of Christ’s kingdom, displayed by Paul’s perseverance in the midst of suffering and the full assurance that every Colossian believer is “fully mature in Christ” (vv. 22–29). Indeed, all the treasures of Christ’s kingdom—love, knowledge, wisdom, discipline—are to be found in the life of his converts (2:1–5), unless someone “deludes” them into thinking otherwise.

Paul’s rhetorical strategy of extolling the power of Christ’s kingdom makes perfect sense in light of the false teaching that was plaguing the Colossian church. Apparently, the Colossians were persuaded to feel inadequate about their faith, vulnerable to the imposition of legalistic standards that ensured victory over fleshly indulgences. To counter his opponents, Paul unpacks the significance of the incarnation and the cross (2:9–15). Because Christ was God in flesh (in whom “all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form” [v. 9]), his death on the cross was a cosmic event that defeated all the powers that oppose God. Using military imagery, Paul argues that Christ canceled every debt against humanity when he nailed all “decrees” (even Caesar’s) to the cross. In that singular act of sacrifice, Christ disarmed the foes of God, humiliating them publicly by making a spectacle of them, triumphing over all powers (v. 15)—something that Caesar loved to do after successful military campaigns. Therefore, if Christ’s victory over all powers has been secured through his death, and since he rules as the firstborn of the dead (resurrection) over all creation, and since the Colossians are “fully mature in Christ” (1:28) because of their faith in him, then no pretense of self-abasement or angelic visions can diminish what Christ has done and will continue to do in the lives of Paul’s converts in Colossae.

Christ is all they needed to overcome the powers.

In Col. 3, Paul tells how the Colossians draw upon the power of Christ when they “set [their] minds on things above, not on earthly things” (v. 2). The things on the earth are “sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed” (v. 5). Paul believes that his converts died with Christ (“hidden with Christ in God” [v. 3]) and therefore had set aside all these idolatrous practices when they put on the “new self,” being conformed to the image of Christ (vv. 8–10). This renewal will be found in all believers, regardless of ethnicity (v. 11), and will result in peace for all. Indeed, Paul sees the “peace of Christ” as the undeniable evidence of his reign exhibited in the hearts of those who believe (vv. 12–15). And what would that peace look like? Believers will be patient, forgiving one another with hearts full of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and love resulting in unity (vv. 12–14). Their worship of God will be characterized by songs of thankfulness and admonition, receiving the word with wisdom (v. 16). In their homes husbands, wives, and children will model deference and love, and masters and slaves will seek justice and fairness, as if they were serving Christ (3:18–4:1). The Colossians will be devoted to prayer, will treat outsiders fairly, and will be known for always speaking graceful words (4:2–6). In other words, where Caesar’s empire has promoted Roman peace by enforcing Roman law in provinces, cities, and households, Paul believes that the peace of Christ will rule the hearts of his subjects, establishing a kingdom of love and unity, in word and deed, in the home as well as the church. So, in his final greetings, Paul talks about faithful slaves and beloved siblings as sources of encouragement in the ever-expanding work of the kingdom of God (4:7–17), making his simple request, “Remember my chains” (4:18), sound more like an act of defiance than a pitiful plea.

COLT This animal appears in the accounts of Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem (Matt. 21:1–11; Mark 11:1–11; Luke 19:28–44; John 12:12–16). The term “colt” is a translation of the Greek word *pōlos*, which designates a “young animal.” These Gospel accounts fulfill and allude to OT passages such as Gen. 49:11; Zech. 9:9, where the LXX employs *pōlos* to translate the Hebrew word *ʾayir*. Although *ʾayir* does not technically denote a “colt” or a “foal” (rather, it designates a “male donkey” or “jackass”), it is usually translated that way due to the employment of *pōlos* in the LXX and the Gospels. While two donkeys—a mother and her foal—appear in Matthew’s account (21:2, 7), Zechariah’s prophecy refers only to a single “purebred male donkey.”

COMFORTER *See* Paraclete.

COMMANDER *See* Chancellor.

COMMANDMENTS, TEN *See* Ten Commandments.

COMMERCE The practice of buying, selling, and trading goods is well attested in both Testaments. Listed among the items of trade in the Bible are textiles (Ezek. 27:24), metals (1 Kings 9:28; Ezek. 27:13; Rev. 18:12), spices (Jer. 6:20; Rev. 18:13), corn (1 Kings 5:11; Ezek. 27:17), animals (1 Kings 10:29), and wine (2 Chron. 2:15; Rev. 18:13).

OLD TESTAMENT

Palestine rests in a strategic position between Egypt and Mesopotamia. Thus, major trade routes that predate the biblical writings are found throughout Palestine. That certain forms of commerce seem to just appear on the scene in the biblical narrative attests to the significance of commerce during the OT era. One such incident involves a caravan of Ishmaelites traveling from Gilead to Egypt (Gen. 37:25). Although the narrative is primarily interested in showing how Joseph ended up in Egypt, the reality that Ishmaelites (later called "Midianites" [Gen. 37:28]) travel at such great lengths for goods attests to the far-reaching impact of commerce at that time.

Traveling by land. By biblical times, three major north-south highways crossed Palestine. On the coast was the international coastal highway, sometimes referred to as the Way of the Sea (Lat. *Via Maris*) (see Isa. 9:1), although this is somewhat of a misnomer. This route began in Egypt and continued through to Gaza, Aphek, Megiddo, Hazor, Dan, and Damascus. Mentioned three times in the Bible (Num. 20:17; 21:22; Deut. 2:27), the King's Highway began in the Gulf of Aqaba at Elath (northernmost point of the Red Sea) and ran north to Damascus. A major trade route in ancient times, the road eventually was lined with fortresses and rebuilt by the Roman emperor Trajan during the second century AD. The third major road was interregional but not international. This central interregional route ran from Shechem in the north to Beersheba in the south, making stops in Shiloh, Bethel, Ramah, Jerusalem, Bethlehem, and Hebron along the way.

The indication that Solomon had "seven hundred wives of royal birth and three hundred concubines" (1 Kings 11:3) evidences various lines of commerce, both regionally and internationally. Marriage, particularly for kings, was arranged often for strategic purposes. One way to formalize an agreement of peace, safe passage, or commerce agreements was to offer a daughter in marriage. Solomon's wives from Egypt, Moab, Ammon, Edom, Sidon, and Hittite areas (1 Kings 11:1) probably served both political and economic functions.

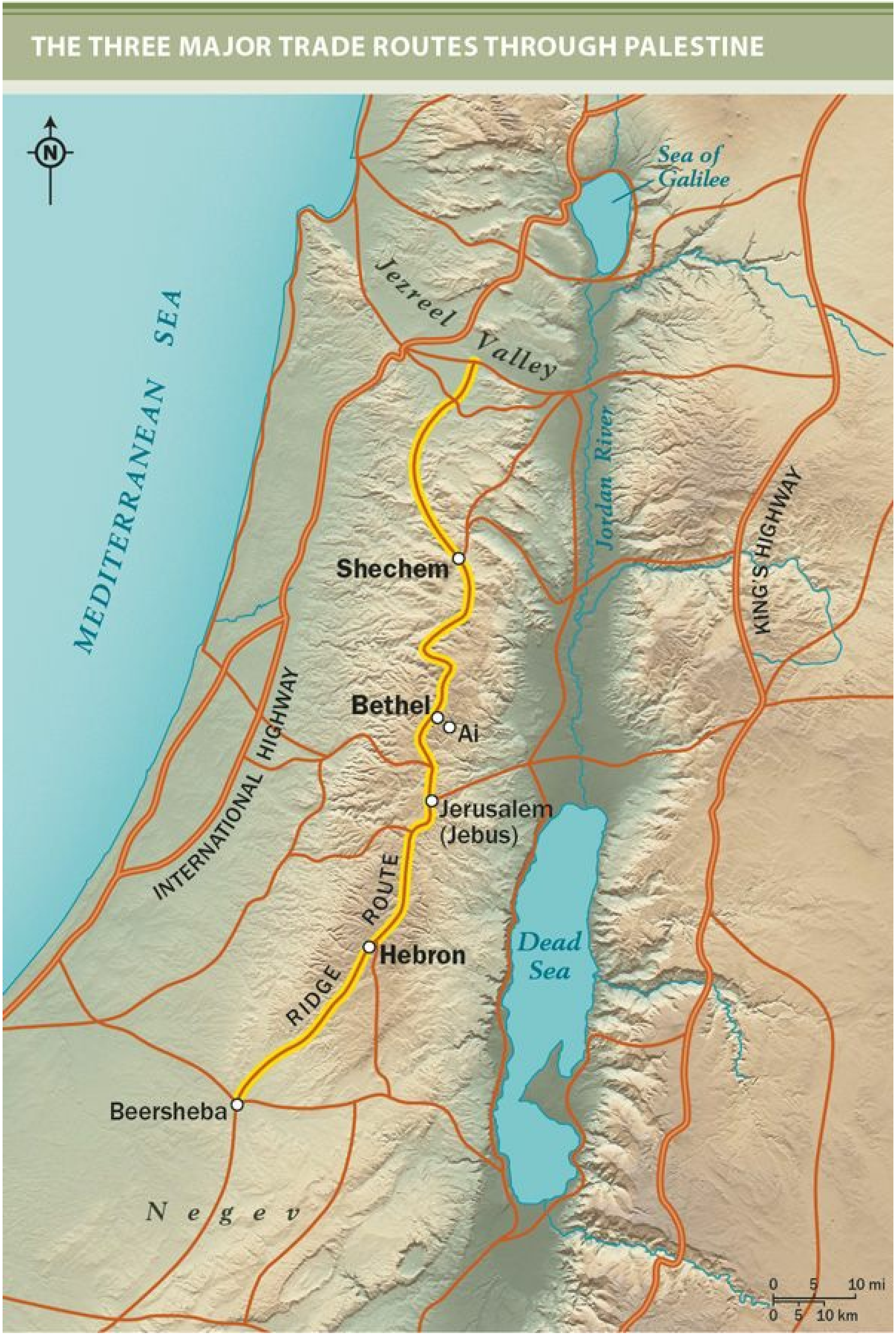
Traveling by sea. Although travel and trade by water (rivers and sea) cannot be ruled out, particularly in Egypt, the most significant commercial endeavors in the OT concern the main trade routes through Palestine. However, numerous examples of maritime commerce are evidenced in the OT. Among the most interesting examples of maritime commerce are the ships of Solomon, which would return intermittently with "gold, silver and ivory, and apes and baboons" (1 Kings 10:22). Despite the admonition given to the Israelite kings (Deut. 17:15–20), Solomon acquired horses and chariots from Egypt (1 Kings 10:28–29) by way of Kue (cf. Cilicia in the southeast of present-day Turkey). Thus, trade appeared to be international by both land and sea (cf. Gen. 37:25–28; 1 Kings 10:15; Isa. 23:8; Ezek. 27).

Revelation. The centralized geographical orientation of Palestine ensured that it had a unique role in the commercial trade of the ancient Near East. Perhaps this is why God gave specific revelation to Israel that applied to commercial affairs. The exhortation to "use honest scales and honest weights" when conducting business would have demonstrated the integrity of both Israel and Israel's God (Lev. 19:35–36).

NEW TESTAMENT

The conquests of Alexander the Great catalyzed trade relationships between West and East (c. fourth century BC). Yet it would not be until the Roman consolidation of power in the western Mediterranean (Third Punic War, 149–146 BC) that commerce was greatly improved. The two-century period of peace, referred to as the Pax Romana (cf. Philo, *Embassy* 47; Plutarch, *Mor.* 317B), was one of the abiding legacies of the emperor Augustus (r. 27 BC–AD 14). Among the positive outcomes of Augustus's rule were economic prosperity, improved communications, and stabilized government. The growing network of Roman roads and strict regulation on the seas improved the quality and conditions of travel between locations, thus improving communications and commercial opportunity throughout the empire (cf. Pliny the Elder, *Nat.* 14.1.2).

Contributing to the development of commerce was the creation of a fully monetized economy throughout the Roman Empire. Although bartering continued to function, coinage had come into heavy usage after and on account of the policies of Alexander the Great. Strabo even goes so far as to mention that the lack of the use of coinage was a characteristic of barbarism (*Geogr.* 7.5.5).



THE THREE MAJOR TRADE ROUTES THROUGH PALESTINE

N
Sea of Galilee
Jezreel Valley
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
Jordan River
KING'S HIGHWAY
Shechem
Bethel
Ai
INTERNATIONAL HIGHWAY
Jerusalem (Jebus)
RIDGE ROUTE
Hebron
Dead Sea
Beersheba
Negev
0 5 10 mi
0 5 10 km

Merchants include shippers, entrepreneurs, and their agents, who traveled about making contracts and supervising the shipment of goods. Although the typical source of income for an aristocrat was agriculture, the enticement of potential profits of commerce led some to engage in the merchant trade or appoint their slaves to do so. Jesus seems to allude to the latter practice in Matthew's Gospel when he tells a parable of a master who goes on a long journey and expects his servants to handle his affairs (Matt. 25:14–27). A slave might be entrusted with a message or a business transaction abroad. Thus, it would not have been uncommon to see a slave traveling and handling his master's business. Perhaps this gives insight into Onesimus, the slave whom Paul encounters, who belongs to Philemon (see Philem. 10–18).

Due to slow travel times, most foods were not transported very far. But the high demand for grain grew the commerce industry from a generally localized phenomenon to an international operation. Aside from the well-documented import/export of grain, items such as wine, dried fruits, spices, and other luxury items were shipped longer distances. Commerce was undertaken by both land and sea.

Traveling by land. Nothing like the massive infrastructure of modern nations existed in antiquity. Yet, by the time of the NT, Roman roads made shipping and land travel more efficient and possible than ever before. The extent of these road systems expanded from modern-day Scotland to the Euphrates and provided strategic value for the empire but also profoundly revolutionized commerce and travel. Many of these roads are still in use. Even with the improved conditions of the road systems, however, land commerce was slow and costly. Most commercial traffic, therefore, was localized. Maritime commercial enterprise, however, allowed for quicker, more economical shipping.

There were two principal land trade routes in the Roman world. First, the Appian Way (Lat. *Via Appia*) ran south from Rome to Capua, crossing Italy and extending to Brundisium on the Adriatic coast. Stretches of this road were traversed by Paul and his companions as they went to Rome (Acts 28:15–16). The second, the Egnatian Way (Lat. *Via Egnatia*), begins in Dyrrachium and spans across Macedonia and eventually to Byzantium (Istanbul). A stretch of Paul's second and third missionary journeys would have used this path as he traveled to Thessalonica (cf. Acts 17:1).

To the east, in Asia Minor (present-day Turkey), the well-traveled east-west roadway was known as the Common Way. Anyone familiar with Paul's missionary journeys will recognize some of the stops along the Common Way: Ephesus, Laodicea, Pisidian Antioch, Iconium, and Tarsus (to name a few).

Traveling by sea. The presence of maritime commerce is well documented in the NT. Virtually no travel industry existed in its own right; rather, travel followed the established trade routes. If one wished to travel by sea, one sought a cargo vessel heading to the appropriate locale. Thus, when the NT records sea travel, it is in the context of commerce ships (cf. Acts 27:38). Most ships stayed close to land and ventured between ports (cf. 20:13–15; 21:1–8; 27:2), although if the prevailing western winds could be utilized, a large ship would take to the open sea.

Although commerce was not an industry of the elite (cf. Cicero, *Off.* 1.150–151; Homer, *Od.* 8.14ff.), the importance of maritime trade cannot be overlooked. This industry provided a way to redistribute essential resources and goods throughout the Roman world, potentially eliminating temporary shortages. Both Athens and Rome depended highly upon imports of grain from Egypt to feed their urban population and maintain armies. In fact, much of the large commercial travel on the Mediterranean was undertaken to supply grain to Rome. The book of Acts mentions two such grain ships from Alexandria (27:6, 38; 28:11).

Large-scale sea commerce could transport vast amounts of goods between locations. Acts mentions

276 persons traveling on a grain ship destined for Rome (27:37). Likewise, Josephus records his ill-fated journey to Rome on a ship carrying 600 passengers (*Life* 15). This number of passengers provides some insight into the size of these sea vessels and the amount of cargo that could be carried. It is thought that an Alexandrian commerce ship could be up to two hundred feet long.

There were two principal maritime trade routes in the Roman world. First, the sea route from Puteoli (southeast of Rome) to Alexandria was used by merchant ships that took advantage of the prevailing winds on the Mediterranean as they traveled to Egypt for grain. This passage, of nearly one thousand nautical miles, could be made in less than two weeks. Conversely, the journey back could take up to three months and followed the Palestinian coast north, passing several significant ports: Lydda, Joppa, Caesarea, Ptolemais, Tyre, Sidon, and Antioch.

Although Roman peace ushered in an era of safer travel by land and by sea, maritime transit remained quite dangerous. Paul is recorded to have undergone four shipwrecks (see Acts 27:39–44; 2 Cor. 11:25–26). Josephus records his own journey to Rome "through a great number of hazards, by sea" (*Life* 14). Weather patterns and sea conditions could change quickly, and it was generally acknowledged that certain times of the year were better for traveling (*Cod. theod.* 13.9.3.3; Tacitus, *Hist.* 4.81; Acts 27:9–12; cf. 2 Tim. 4:13). Nevertheless, the Roman imperium offered generous incentives to merchants who risked the season and brought supplies of grain to Rome from Egypt (Suetonius, *Claud.* 18–19; Cassius Dio, *Hist.* 60.11). Such a ship provided the context for the apostle Paul's journey to Rome, which ended in shipwreck and the loss of the grain product, but remarkably without any loss of life (see Acts 27:13–44).

Trade associations. Trade associations of various kinds existed in the ancient world. Such a group consisted of merchants or artisans who shared a common trade. These groups typically exerted no political, social, or economic influence. Rather, they existed to protect the merchants and artisans and their economic interests. Such was the case when the artisans of Ephesus incited a riot over the actions of Paul and his companions when they preached against the idolatry of Artemis worship (Acts 19:26). The statement that "all Asia and the world" worship Artemis (19:27) certainly is hyperbolic; yet the pervasiveness of the Artemis cult is recorded in other sources (Pausanias, *Descr.* 4.31.8; Strabo, *Geogr.* 4.1.5) and suggests that the artisans who fashioned these silver shrines made good money in the local economy.

Likewise, the bronze trade from Corinth is well documented in antiquity (e.g., Vitruvius, *De arch.* 8.41; Pliny the Elder, *Nat.* 34.6). Bronze was used to produce various goods: bowls, jewelry, and sound-enhancing vessels for the theater at Corinth. The latter may be what Paul alludes to when he writes of a "resounding gong" (1 Cor. 13:1). The recognition of the beauty and value of Corinthian bronze resulted in it being sought after by other markets. Pliny the Elder reports, "There has been a wonderful mania among many people for possessing this metal" (*Nat.* 34.6). Located on the Greek Peloponnesus, Corinth was in a strategic position to distribute its goods throughout the Roman Empire. It was to this port city that Paul came and spent significant time planting a church (Acts 18:1, 18).

COMMON The quality of being shared by all, such as a "common speech" (Gen. 11:1) or the human condition (Ps. 73:5; Eccles. 9:2), but also anything outside the sphere of the holy. God requires Israel to distinguish common from holy (Lev. 10:10; Ezek. 22:26; 42:20). By the first century, many Jews (e.g., the Pharisees) attempted to extend this sphere, which radiated from the temple, to their homes. They only ate tithed produce, used clean vessels, and shared their table with the ritually clean (Matt. 23:23; Mark 7:3–4; John 2:6; 4:9; Gal. 2:11–21; see *m. Demai* 1:2–3). Like the prophets (e.g., Isa. 1:16), Jesus emphasizes the quality of the heart (Matt. 5:8; Mark 7:14–23) and brings the common into the sphere of the holy by sharing the indwelling Holy Spirit with them (Mark 5:25–34). This practice anticipates the inclusion of non-Jews in the early church (Acts 10:9–16; 11:1–18; Gal. 3:1–9).

COMMONWEALTH The language of "commonwealth" (Gk. *politeuma*) is used by Paul to denote heavenly citizenship in opposition to earthly citizenship (Phil. 3:20). Although the Philippians belonged to an elite Roman colony, Paul appeals to them to live as citizens of a heavenly commonwealth, urging them to live worthy of such honor (1:27). Similar language is used elsewhere to refer to citizenship within Israel (Eph. 2:12).

COMMUNION **(1)** The word "communion" (Gk. *koinōnia* and cognates) is used to describe the fellowship of God's people in experience and action. Paul uses the terminology with reference to the believer's fellowship with Christ (1 Cor. 1:9), which may result in sharing Christ's sufferings (Phil. 3:10). John uses *koinōnia* to speak of Christian fellowship shared among believers, rooted in God's fellowship with Christ (1 John 1:3, 6–7). Early believers shared within the faith community (Acts 2:42; Rom. 15:26; 2 Cor. 8:4). **(2)** Communion, or the Eucharist, celebrates fellowship between Christ and his people (1 Cor. 10:16) by participating in the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. 11:17–34). *See also* Lord's Supper.

COMMUNITY OF GOODS (COMMON LIFE) In the book of Acts, after describing the coming of the Holy Spirit, the author provides an important summary of the Spirit-led life of the early church. This summary provides a picture of the church in a spiritual revival characterized by worship, sharing, and unity. These characteristics are illustrated by saying that "all the believers were together and had everything in common" (Acts 2:44). This theme of commonality is also mentioned in the next major summary of Acts when the author describes the believers as being "one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of their possessions was their own, but they shared everything they had" (Acts 4:32). These passages describe the early church as experiencing a special type of community of goods or common life.

However, the early church's practice of holding "all things in common" was not unique to the Jerusalem church described in Acts. In fact, similar types of common life are described in the Jewish sect at Qumran, Greco-Roman concepts of friendship and kinship, and Greek utopian ideals. It also finds close parallels to Jesus' teaching and his relationship with his disciples.

Archaeological remains of the site used by the community of Qumran

Based on these similarities, one must ask what the author's intention was for including the "community of goods" description of the early church in the book of Acts. Is he promoting a form of Christian communism intended to be practiced by Christians of all ages, or does he have something else in mind? The immediate context of these passages helps to answer this question.

First, the church in Acts is not advocating that its members participate in a compulsory communism such as was found among the Essenes at Qumran. By contrast, the text makes it clear that the early believers of Acts maintained their rights to own private property (Acts 4:34; 5:4). Instead of compulsory communism, the early church of Acts presents a model of voluntary sharing motivated by love for God and among its members.

Second, the larger context of the community-of-goods passages in Acts is the *kōinonia* mentioned in Acts 2:42. Most versions translate *kōinonia* as "fellowship," but it involved more than mere association. Devotion to *kōinonia* by the early church involved participation together in worship activities as well as in the sharing of possessions. It was the result of the Spirit's presence among the people, and it produced a beautiful unity within the church. The community of goods described in the early chapters of Acts illustrates the intimacy of the church's *kōinonia*. It was a life of following the teaching and example of Jesus. It was a life among friends in the family of God. It was a life that actually fulfilled the highest longings of the Greeks. It was true utopia.

COMPANY *See* Cohort.

COMPASSION Love for those who suffer. If we love others by denying ourselves for their sake, so that they might please God and live abundantly, we show them compassion by doing this when they are in pain. We respond with friendship, healing, and encouragement just when others might keep their distance. The compassionate person also turns sin-sick people away from evil, longing to see Christ formed in their character and life. Accordingly, compassion, like love in general, is an active force. It does not merely "feel someone's pain"; it gets involved whenever and wherever possible.

COMPASSION SHOWN BY GOD

The OT often refers to God's compassion, especially toward those who, because of their sinfulness, deserve the opposite treatment. In Exod. 33:19 Yahweh takes pity on the Israelites after they have rebelled, making an idol for themselves and praising it for their deliverance. He renews his covenant with them, but he reminds them of his sovereignty in doing so: "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion" (cf. Rom. 9:15). No one deserves God's mercy, yet the people often receive it, even when suffering from deserved harm. In the book of Judges, Israel's history cycles from sin and wrath to compassion and deliverance, thus emphasizing Yahweh's patience and love. The people "wouldn't listen to their judges; they prostituted themselves to other gods—worshiped them!" but God later "was moved to compassion when he heard their groaning because of those who afflicted and beat them" (2:17–18 MSG). David's plea for mercy in Ps. 51 relies on Yahweh's compassion for the self-destructive sinner: "Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions" (v. 1). In fact, God's tendency to show mercy appalls Jonah, who complains, "Isn't this what I said, LORD, when I was still at home? . . . I knew that you are a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abounding in love, a God who relents from sending calamity" (Jon. 4:2). Isaiah 40–66 dwells frequently on this aspect of God's nature (e.g., 49:10–15; 54:7–10; 63:7, 15).

The NT points to God's compassion at significant junctures in the Gospels and the Epistles. Jesus himself has compassion for the crowds who "were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd" (Matt. 9:36). He takes pity on the crowds, healing their sick and feeding them miraculously (14:14–21; cf. 15:32). The same connection between compassion and healing occurs in Matt. 20:34; Mark 1:41, this time on an individual level. The apostle Paul underscores this attribute of God, raising it to a title of sorts. The Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is "the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort" (2 Cor. 1:3). James says that the Lord is "full of compassion and mercy" (5:11), and John depicts God as one who will wipe away every tear caused by persecution and trial (Rev. 7:17; 21:4). Because God is always dealing with broken sinners, his compassion for them coincides with his love (see Ps. 145:8); and this rescuing of the guilty sets an example for his people. They must go and do likewise, loving the unlovely, unwise, and even unrighteous.

COMPASSION REQUIRED BY GOD

Because God loves the suffering person, even those with self-inflicted wounds, he calls upon his people to show similar compassion. Parents ought to show compassion toward their own children, as 1 Kings 3:26; Ps. 103:13 imply (cf. Ezek. 16:5). No one must keep a debtor's garment in pledge, Yahweh says, "because that cloak is the only covering your neighbor has. What else can they sleep in? When they cry out to me, I will hear, for I am compassionate" (Exod. 22:27). According to Hos. 6:6, a familiar verse quoted by Jesus, God requires compassion: "For I desire mercy, not sacrifice, and acknowledgment of God rather than burnt offerings" (cf. Matt. 12:7). Micah 6:8 draws the same contrast between outward formalism and genuine righteousness, including displays of compassion: “He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.” Given the OT emphasis on the compassion of God, we might have expected it to become Israel’s duty as well, though it is sometimes withheld in judgment (see Deut. 7:5–6; 13:8; 19:13; Ps. 109:12).

The NT also portrays mercy or compassion as a duty. Matthew 5:7 is a familiar example: “Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.” Of course if Jesus demonstrates compassion toward those who suffer, we ought to do so as well. In 2 Cor. 1 the “Father of compassion” comforts us (v. 3) “so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God” (v. 4). Ephesians 4:32 is a direct command that associates compassion with mercy toward sinners: “Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.” The comfort given to us by Christ sets the tone for each believer in Phil. 2: if there is any “tenderness and compassion” in him (v. 1), we must follow his example. Similarly, we must “clothe [ourselves] with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience” (Col. 3:12). Peter makes the same connection between humility and compassion: “Finally, all of you, be like-minded, be sympathetic, love one another, be compassionate and humble” (1 Pet. 3:8).

The Bible connects compassion and mercy with humility for understandable reasons, given the common association of distress and dishonor. We want always to keep up appearances, since others might be affected by our own troubles and the troubled company we keep. Suffering people are burdensome and sometimes unlovely. Their sins may provide a ready excuse to keep one’s distance, but just as God the Savior has shown us compassion, we must love others when they hurt.

CONANIAH *See* Konaniah.

CONCISION The KJV rendering of the Greek word *katatomē* in Phil. 3:2 (NIV: “mutilators of the flesh”). Paul uses it in a wordplay contrasting self-mutilators with the true circumcision (*peritomē*; Phil. 3:2–3; cf. Gal. 5:12). *Katatomē* is related to the LXX verb used for pagan self-mutilation, *katatemnō* (see Lev. 21:5; 1 Kings 18:28; Isa. 15:2).

CONCUBINE A concubine is a woman whose status in relation to her sole legitimate sexual partner is less than primary wife. The Hebrew loan word *pilegesh* (“concubine”) is notably non-Semitic (not linguistically related to Hebrew). Its cognates appear in Latin (*paelex*) and Greek (*pallakis*).

One view is that *pilegesh* referred to non-Hebrew women, while another view sees it as describing a female partner in a matrilocal marriage (contra patriarchal). Although some see the treatment of concubines addressed in the slave rules of Exod. 21:7–11, *pilegesh* is not used there. It is better to understand the function of concubines more broadly within marriage terminology. Following Gideon’s death, both concubines and wives laid claim to his authority (Judg. 8:30–9:2).

Reference to concubines is largely found in the Pentateuch (e.g., Gen. 22:24; 36:12) and monarchial texts (e.g., 2 Sam. 5:13; 1 Kings 11:3). The genealogies show that succession could move through concubines (Gen. 22:24; 1 Chron. 3:9). It is the kings who had concubines (1 Chron. 11:21), often guarded by eunuchs (2 Sam. 20:3; Esther 2:14). Therefore, access to the royal concubines functioned as a daring claim to the throne, exploited by interlopers (2 Sam. 12:11–12; 1 Kings 2:22–25). It took Nathan’s allegorical story to show David his own greed of stealing another’s “lamb” even though he already had many wives and concubines (2 Sam. 12:8; 16:21).

While concubines did care for the household (2 Sam. 20:2), their lower status is observed when David flees into exile, leaving the concubines "to take care of the palace" (2 Sam. 15:16), a role too dangerous for the royal wives.

CONCUPISCENCE A word that appears in the KJV and also in the Douay-Rheims Bible (an English translation of the Latin Vulgate), translating the Greek word *epithymia*, and is generally, and incorrectly, understood as lust. More accurately, it describes an intense desire for anything, and it is not limited to sexual desire, as the contemporary definition of lust implies. Furthermore, there are some significant differences between Catholic and Protestant theological definitions of concupiscence. Most simply put, Catholics tie their understanding of concupiscence to the concept of the inclination to sin, but concupiscence itself is not sin. Protestants, on the other hand, generally tie concupiscence to their understanding of original sin; that is, concupiscence is original sin. Outside of theological conversation the word has fallen out of general public use.

One use of the term in the KJV occurs in Rom. 7:8, where Paul discusses the relationship between sin and the law. These verses in Romans are notoriously difficult for interpreters to explain, but in 7:8 Paul says that sin, which was defined by the commandment (Paul here means the Torah or Hebrew Bible), produced concupiscence (NIV: "coveting"). For Paul, sin is a force that becomes active only when the law is made known, because without the law, Paul says, sin is dead.

The KJV uses the term again in Col. 3:5 in another Pauline discussion about sin. In this passage Paul encourages his readers to "set your minds on things above" rather than on "earthly things." Continuing in this line of reasoning, Paul says that his readers are to "put to death" a list of things, including concupiscence (NIV: "evil desires").

The last use of the term by the KJV is in 1 Thess. 4:5, where Paul again admonishes his readers to live a holy life and to avoid concupiscence (NIV: "passionate lust").

The Douay-Rheims Bible does not use the term in 1 Thess. 4:5, but it does (in addition to Rom. 7:8; Col. 3:5) in Rom. 7:7; James 1:14–15; 2 Pet. 1:4; 1 John 2:17.

CONDEMN To pass judgment on someone and, usually, elicit some form of punishment. The word is used throughout the Bible, especially in reference to the acts of God toward those who choose not to obey him. Other uses usually involve a political leader passing judgment on some person.

There are only a couple of references in the Pentateuch. One is in Deut. 13:17, which refers to the required condemnation of all things within a city that are captured and destroyed during the invasion of the promised land. Everything in specific cities was to be condemned as an offering to God.

The book of Job carefully focuses on the question of condemnation in light of Job's troubles. While Job questions God's seeming condemnation of him (10:2), he realizes that his claims of innocence before God might be, ironically, worthy of condemnation (9:20). Nevertheless, he continues to maintain his own innocence before both God and his friends. Later, God asks Job whether his claim of innocence would imply a condemnation of God's actions (40:8). Ultimately, Job is vindicated in his claim of innocence before God, but not before God reminds Job that divine methods and plans are ultimately beyond human understanding.

Psalm 34 highlights the fact that those who serve God will not be condemned (v. 22). The psalms also emphasize that God actively pursues and condemns some because of their actions (37:33). Proverbs strongly criticizes those who work to pervert justice in the courts by condemning the innocent (Prov. 17:15).

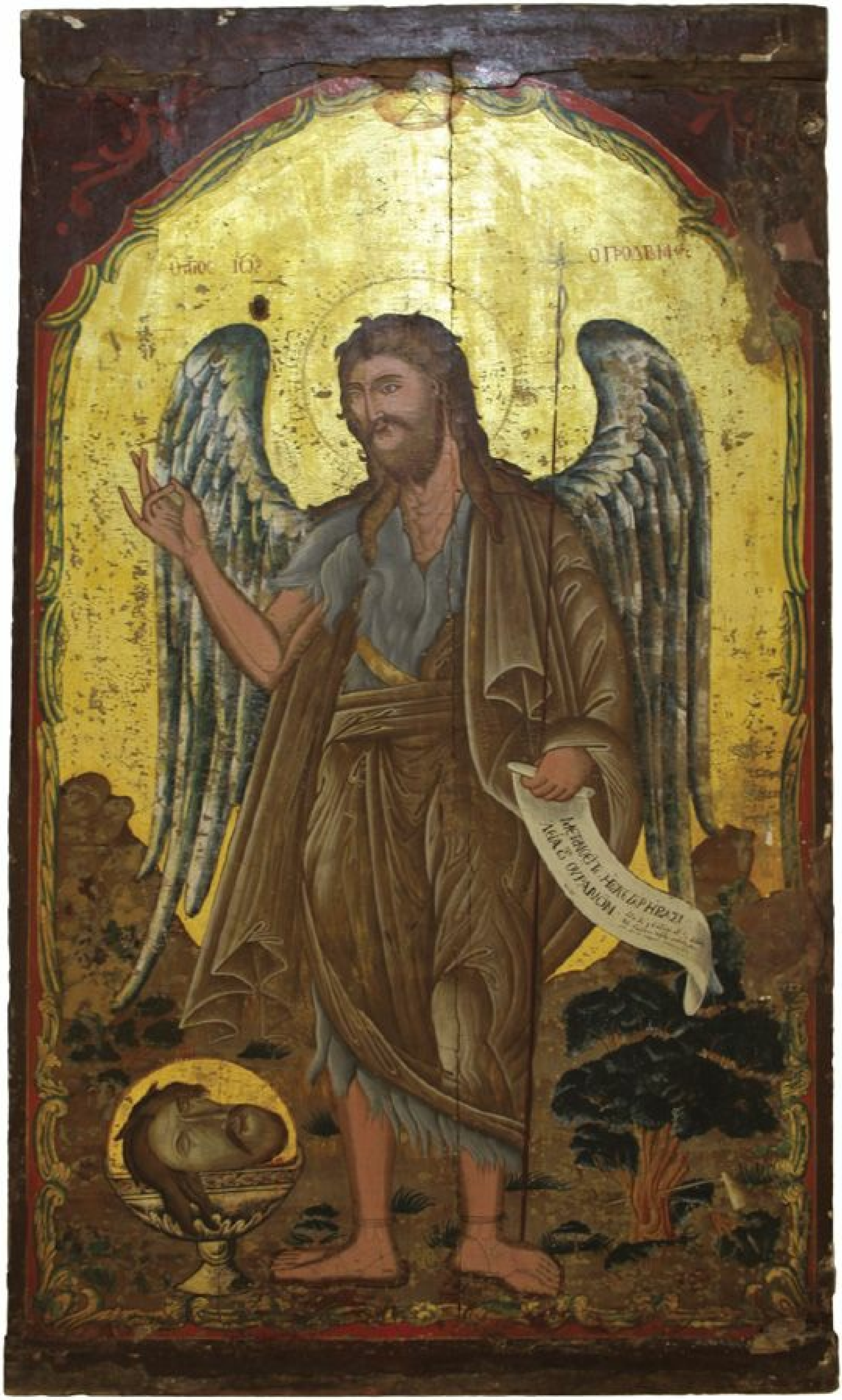
In the Gospels the word "condemn" is often used in connection with Jesus. Usually it is found in a reference to the impending condemnation of Jesus to the cross (Matt. 20:18; 27:3). Interestingly, John highlights the fact that followers of Jesus are not condemned on account of their sin (John 3:18; 5:24). In a similar display of compassion, when a woman caught in the act of adultery is brought before Jesus, he, after challenging her accusers so severely that they leave, tells her that he does not condemn her (8:1–11).

One of the best-known verses about condemnation is Rom. 8:1, where Paul states, "There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus." Paul bases his claim on Jesus' dying and removing, by his death, the power that the law had in condemning those who could not follow the law. In Rom. 14 Paul also argues that it is one's own conscience that condemns a person. When discussing the issue of eating meat offered to idols, Paul observes that some Christians who believe that eating meat offered to idols is not sinful condemn those who do not eat meat and vice versa. Paul's solution is to say that in this case the condemned person is condemned because of violating his or her conscience, not because of eating or not eating meat (14:22–23).

CONDUIT *See* Aqueduct; Tunnel.

CONEY *See* Hyrax.

CONFESSION In the OT, "to confess" is used in reference to verbal acknowledgment of one's sin or of God's name in faith. An object of confession is one's sins. Confession results in the cleansing of sin and the restoration of one's relationship with God (Lev. 5:5; Ps. 32:5). Solomon prays that God may forgive people's sin when they confess God's name (1 Kings 8:35). Moses, on the Day of Atonement, commands Aaron to lay "both hands on the head of the live goat and confess over it all the wickedness and rebellion of the Israelites" (Lev. 16:21).



Icon of John the Baptist (nineteenth century AD), who exhorted people to confess their sins

Another object of confession is God’s name. To confess the name of God means “to give thanks/praise” to God (Josh. 7:19). It involves not only negative matters such as sins and wrongdoings (Lev. 26:40; Prov. 28:13), but also positive ones such as God's name (1 King 8:33, 35; 2 Chron. 6:24, 26; Dan. 9:4). In this respect, confession conceptually involves a double function: to remove obstacles to fellowship with God, and to recover fellowship in covenantal faithfulness to God (1 Kings 8:33). Through its double function, therefore, confession often occupies the center of the cultic service of worshiping God (Neh. 9:3). Israelites made fellowship offerings and gave praise to God (2 Chron. 30:22). Coming back from Babylon, Ezra prayed, confessing, weeping, and throwing himself down before the house of God (Ezra 10:1).

The double function of confession continues in the NT. John the Baptist exhorted people to confess their sins (Matt. 3:6). Epistles also emphasize the importance of confession of sins as a basis of atonement and purification (1 John 1:9; James 5:16). In the NT, the positive aspect of confession as confessing God's name is recast in terms of Jesus, who fulfilled the OT prophecies. Therefore, to "confess" Jesus as Lord is reckoned as confessing God's name so as to obtain salvation (Rom. 10:10 ESV, NRSV; NIV: "profess"). Verbal confession of Jesus in public is a means for spreading the gospel and witnessing to people about him. Thus, Paul regards his confession of God through Gentile evangelism as singing praises to God's name (Rom. 15:9).

Refusal to confess Jesus' name constitutes as grave a sin as denying God. John teaches that "every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God" (1 John 4:3), but those who confess that "Jesus is the Son of God" live in God and God in them (4:15). Public confession of Jesus functions to test one's faith. Many Jewish leaders believed in Jesus but failed to confess him in public for fear of excommunication (John 12:42). Their halfhearted faith is sharply contrasted with the faith of the blind man excommunicated for his confession of Jesus to the council of Pharisees (John 9). Jesus teaches that anyone who denies him in public will be denied by him on the judgment day (Matt. 10:32).

CONFESSIONS AND CREEDS A confession or creed is a summary of doctrine (and sometimes practice) that has several uses. First, it allows like-minded believers to cooperate by identifying their like-mindedness. Everyone promises to advance the same doctrines and practices by subscribing to a common confession. Quality control and accountability then follow, and resources collected are used for agreed-upon purposes. Second, confessions make the doctrinal positions of individual churches transparent to outside observers and seekers. Third, confessions establish the "core curriculum" of the church. They keep both clergy and laity on track theologically and practically, knowing where the outer boundaries lie and which doctrines should receive special emphasis. Indeed, one can hardly imagine a ministry partnership functioning well without a confessional platform of some kind, even a minimalist one.

Nevertheless, some Christians decline to use confessions or creeds, concerned that these might dilute the Bible's unique authority. Evangelicals who do not want their church leaders and laypersons to dwell more on confessions than on Scripture are concerned that biblical exegesis might lose its priority over creedal affirmations. But no Christian subgroup can define itself without some resort to doctrinal affirmations. One has to go beyond "We favor Jesus Christ, the Bible, and evangelism" to define how Jesus will be preached, Scripture interpreted, and missions conducted. Some boundaries must be established to keep the church "on message," "on mission," and therefore intact.

Confessions in the Bible. Both the OT and the NT contain statements that function as confessions, or doctrinal summaries, even if these are not comprehensive. The Decalogue serves this purpose: it defines who Yahweh is and sets forth the absolutes of Israel's conduct, but without doing so exhaustively (Exod. 20:2–17; Deut. 5:6–21). The Shema is another OT example (Deut. 6:4–5). In the NT, 1 Cor. 15:3–8 contains a confessional statement regarding the death, burial, and resurrection of

Christ, perhaps the earliest surviving one. The same conclusion follows regarding Phil. 2:6–11; 1 Tim. 3:16, both of which have a recognizably formulaic structure and capture some of the faith "entrusted to God's holy people" (cf. Jude 3). As Jude 4 indicates, summaries of this kind prove especially useful in confronting the rise of error.

The ecumenical confessions. The pressure of doctrinal confusion and the need to safeguard orthodoxy gave rise to the four great ecumenical (i.e., universally binding) confessions.

The first of these statements, the Apostles' (or Old Roman) Creed, was composed sometime around AD 150, primarily to refute the heresies of Marcion and the gnostics, both of whom despised the material world. Its reference to belief in "God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth" rules out the idea of a material world falling outside God's rule. God made everything and rules over all of it. Likewise, its statements regarding Jesus tie him directly to the Father and also underscore his materiality. He was born in this world, and he suffered under a historical figure, Pontius Pilate.

The Nicene Creed (AD 325) answers the heresy of Arius, who argued that God the Father created Jesus, his Son, so that the Son is merely of "like" substance with the Father, but not the "same." This creed declares the Son to be "very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father."

The Chalcedonian Creed (AD 451) addresses the more complex issue of Christology, outlining the sense in which God could become incarnate in the person of Jesus; in doing so, it rejects three additional heresies. Apollinarius (c. AD 315–393) suggested that Jesus was essentially half human, with the Spirit of God indwelling a human body. Nestorius (c. AD 381–451) espoused a Christology that left the church with two persons, God and Jesus, occupying the one Savior, so to speak, with the result that he ceases to be the God-man. Eutyches (c. AD 378–454) fell into the contrary error, called "Monophysitism," which asserts that when God became incarnate in Christ, his humanity almost disappeared into his deity. The two natures mingled, and a third sort of person resulted, being neither God nor human, but something different, though mostly like God. The Chalcedonian Creed incorporates language that rules out each of these substandard views, insisting that Jesus Christ is "to be acknowledged in two natures, inconfusedly, unalterably, indivisibly, inseparably in two natures; the distinction of natures being by no means taken away by the union, but rather the property of each nature being preserved."

The Athanasian Creed, from the fourth or fifth century AD, reiterates the Christology of Chalcedon and offers a succinct statement of the Trinity: "So the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God. And yet they are not three Gods, but one God." In these ways and others down through the ages, the church has summarized what it has taken God to reveal in his uniquely authoritative word.

CONFIRM The language of confirmation is used in the OT in reference to confirming a covenant (Lev. 26:9; Deut. 8:18; 9:5; 27:26; Dan. 9:27), an oath (Gen. 26:23; Ps. 119:106), or a people (Deut. 29:13). Gideon sought confirmation of success when he laid a fleece on the threshing floor (Judg. 6:36–40). God honors his request, not once, but twice. Israel's language of "confirmation" of God's revelation is distinct from the cultural backdrop in the ancient Near East. Whereas God would confirm his covenant relationship with his people, the gods of the ancient world were elusive and acted on whims, making them difficult and problematic to understand.

In the NT, the verb *martyreō* is used to refer generally to "attestation" (Acts 13:22; Rom. 10:2; 2 Cor. 8:3). Although both humans (Gal. 4:15; Col. 4:13) and God engage in this action, "God's testimony is greater because it is the testimony of God, which he has given about his Son" (1 John

5:9).

CONFISCATION The seizure of private property by military or government authority for public or official use. In the OT, the Israelites confiscated land, livestock, and goods by God's decree (Deut. 2:35; 20:14; Josh. 6:17–19; 22:8). Samuel warned the Israelites that the king they desired might exercise the power of confiscation (1 Sam. 8:14), as King Ahab later did, incurring punishment from God (1 Kings 21:16, 19). God used a pagan king's decree of confiscation to protect Ezra against those who might hinder his journey from Babylon to Jerusalem (Ezra 7:26). Ezekiel prohibits confiscation in his vision of the restored Jerusalem (Ezek. 46:18). In the NT, the writer of Hebrews calls for the perseverance of the Jewish Christians suffering insult, imprisonment, and property confiscation (Heb. 10:34).

CONFLICT, INTERPERSONAL Interpersonal conflicts are found throughout the Scripture, having begun when sin entered the world at the fall of humankind. One of the earliest recorded interpersonal conflicts was that between Cain and Abel (Gen. 4:2–9). Both presented sacrifice to God, who looked with favor on Abel's sacrifice (v. 4) but was not pleased with Cain's (v. 5). When Cain responded with anger, God warned him, "If you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must rule over it" (v. 7). Unfortunately, Cain did not heed this warning, and eventually he killed Abel in the field, becoming the first murderer.

A notable interpersonal conflict in the NT was that between Paul and Barnabas, who had a "sharp disagreement" over whether to take John Mark on their second missionary journey, eventually resulting in their parting of ways (Acts 15:36–41). Fortunately, resolution eventually took place, and in 2 Tim. 4:11 Paul calls for Timothy to bring Mark to Rome with him "because he is helpful to me in my ministry." Another interpersonal conflict is seen in Phil. 4:23, where Paul appeals to a leader in the church at Philippi to help resolve a conflict between two women, Euodia and Syntyche.

A key principle for the resolution of personal conflict appears in Matt. 5:23–24, where Jesus states, "If you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift." Reconciliation of relationships is made an even higher priority than offering sacrifices. We cannot be in a right relationship with God if we are in constant conflict with other people.

CONGREGATION Primarily, the Israelite community united by a common bond to (or in covenant with) their God (Deut. 33:4; Josh. 8:35; 18:1; 1 Kings 8:5). Previous scholarship distinguished congregation (*'edah*) from assembly (*qahal*), defining the former as the gathering of Israelites for a specific goal and the latter as the gathering of Israel as the special (covenant) people of God. This viewpoint was anchored in the LXX's preponderant rendition of *'edah* as *synagōgē* and *qahal* as *ekklēsia*. This sharp distinction between the two terms can no longer be sustained. The difference in the frequency of the two terms in the Hebrew Bible corresponds to the growth of the Scriptures: *'edah* predominates in Genesis through Numbers, whereas *qahal* occurs more often in Deuteronomy, the Former Prophets, the Latter Prophets, and the Writings. The association of the verbal form of *qahal* with both nouns (*'edah* and *qahal*) further buttresses the point (Exod. 35:1; Lev. 8:3; Num. 1:18; 10:7; Judg. 20:1; 21:5–8; 1 Chron. 13:2–5).

The terms also refer to Israelite gatherings for special purposes such as worship, war, lawcourt, and councils. They also refer to the assemblage of other peoples or beings such as divine beings, evildoers or enemies, beasts, and bees.

The NT uses both *ekklēsia* and *synagōgē* to refer to synagogue gatherings (Acts 7:38; 13:43). English versions translate both terms as either “congregation” or “assembly.” These translations render the *ekklēsia* in Heb. 2:12 as either “assembly” or “congregation,” whereas they translate *synagōgē* in James 2:2 as “assembly” or “meeting.” *See also* Church.

CONGREGATION, MOUNT OF THE *See* Mount of Assembly.

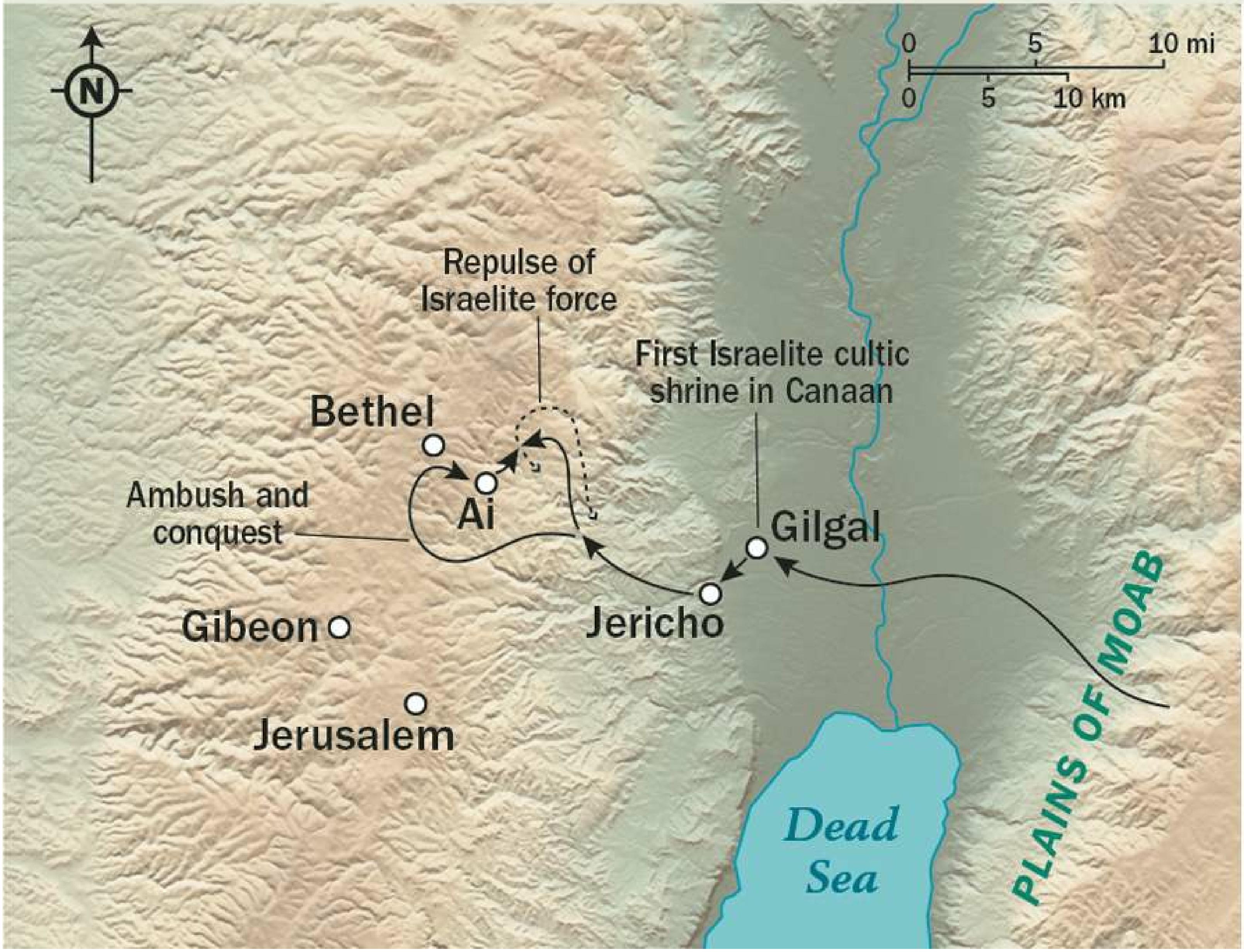
CONIAH *See* Jehoiachin.

CONQUEST OF CANAAN The Israelite conquest of the promised land is narrated in Numbers through 2 Samuel and includes key figures such as Moses, Joshua, Samuel, Saul, and David, although the main events of the conquest are described in Joshua and Judges. There is considerable scholarly debate about the very complicated details of the conquest. Much of this debate centers on archaeology and the dating of sites and artifacts that have been excavated in the last century. Further complicating things is the fact that many of the events recorded in the Bible are not recorded anywhere else, making verification of events challenging.

Dating the conquest (using the destruction of Jericho as a fixed point) is notoriously difficult. Scholars who accept the biblical account as historically reliable tend to date the conquest of Jericho in the early twelfth century BC. This dating is based on the identification of the pharaoh in the exodus story as one of the Ramesses (who reigned in the Nineteenth or Twentieth Egyptian Dynasty, or roughly the thirteenth to tenth centuries BC). Some archaeologists, however, have argued that during this time Jericho was no more than a small, unwalled village with little or no military significance, thus making the story of Jericho’s destruction in the Bible impossible. Thus, other scholars have suggested a fifteenth- or sixteenth-century date for the conquest (when Jericho was known to be fortified). This solution, however, makes identification of the exodus pharaoh difficult and requires spreading out the events in Judges over four centuries instead of two. Both sides have different theories of how to accommodate the statement in 1 Kings 6:1 that it was 480 years after the exodus that Solomon began to build the temple. This controversy involving biblical scholars, historians, and archaeologists promises to continue for many years to come.

The background for the Canaanite conquest is found in the Pentateuch narratives that describe the Israelites’ exodus from Egypt and their trek toward Palestine. Indeed, the conquest is anticipated already in God’s promise to Abraham that his descendants will become a mighty nation (Gen. 12:1–3; see also 15:16). The story describes God’s initial command to quickly conquer the land after meeting them on Mount Sinai (Num. 13), and the people’s rebellion caused by fear of the Canaanites, who are described as “giants in the land” (NLT). As a result, the Israelites are forced to wander in the Sinai wilderness until the entire generation dies (with the exception of Joshua and Caleb).

THE FIRST STAGE OF THE CONQUEST OF CANAAN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Repulse of Israelite force
First Israelite cultic shrine in Canaan
Bethel
Ai
Ambush and conquest
Gilgal
Jericho
Gibeon
Jerusalem
Dead Sea
PLAINS OF MOAB

As narrated in the Bible, the conquest begins with defeat of the Midianites on the eastern side of the Jordan River under the leadership of Moses (Num. 31–32). Then, after Moses' death, the Israelites cross the Jordan River to attack Jericho (Josh. 1–7). After the miraculous destruction of Jericho, the Israelites move to Ai and encounter initial defeat due to one man's sin (Josh. 8). Later, after being tricked by the Gibeonites, the Israelites engage in battle with the five kings of the Amorites (Josh. 9–10). Finally, Josh. 11 describes the conquest of the northern part of the land and especially the military and strategically important city of Hazor.

The book of Judges relates fewer, more concentrated battles against different enemies, sometimes in offensive attacks and other times as defensive battles to preserve land control. The final stage of the conquest under David's kingship is described in 2 Sam. 1–8. After Saul's death, a short and violent confrontation takes place between Israelite forces still loyal to Saul's family and those loyal to David. Political power is consolidated with a few key assassinations, rather than through full-fledged war, orchestrated by David's men (there is some debate about how involved David was in these events). As a result, David, with the full support of the army (both the forces previously loyal to Saul and his own), takes the city of Jerusalem and then finally conquers the areas of the Philistines, the Ammonites, and the Moabites (areas that Saul had been unable to subdue). Thus, large-scale fighting for territory ends during David's reign.

The tribal boundaries are described in Josh. 14–22. How closely these boundaries describe land actually conquered and how much of it was a territorial stake that required further warfare in order to be obtained are subject to intense debate. By the time of David, however, the allotment (described in Joshua) fairly closely reflects the largest reaches of the united kingdom under David (described in 2 Samuel).

The descriptions of the Israelites' total destruction of their enemies, often including women, children, and livestock, have created theological difficulties for interpreters trying to reconcile the seeming incongruity of God's love for humankind, especially the innocent, and his commands to completely destroy these cultures. Some scholars have sought to justify these actions by describing the horrific religious practices of these people (such as child sacrifice and ritual sexual perversions), but there are questions about how widespread these practices actually were and doubt about how they would justify a response involving the death of innocents. Currently, there is no strong scholarly consensus on how to resolve this difficult theological issue.

CONSCIENCE An innate awareness of wrong, with an inclination toward thinking and acting rightly. The OT describes moral awareness as a willingness to obey God's revealed will (Deut. 30:14; Ps. 1:1–2; Prov. 1:7). People are not presented as morally perfect, but, to the degree of their knowledge, they are expected to act rightly (Gen. 4:1–16; 1 Sam. 25:31). Abimelek, king of Gerar, appeals to ignorance because of Abraham's deception (Gen. 20:1–7). Job appeals to the purity of his conscience (Job 27:6).

A fuller revelation of God's will is given in the Mosaic law. God gives commandments in part to heighten the Israelites' awareness concerning right and wrong, so that with their obedience they might enjoy a covenant relationship within God's holy presence (e.g., Deut. 28:1–14). This informed social conscience was intended to curb evil behavior (Gal. 3:19). The author of Judges anticipates the need for the law by complaining that "everyone did as they saw fit" (17:6; 21:25).

However, the biblical narrative also makes room for paradoxical situations and competing values, which complicate moral reasoning (e.g., Gen. 38; Judg. 11:29–40). In the law, God expressly forbids child sacrifice, but he commands Abraham to present his son Isaac as a burnt offering (Gen. 22:1–14). On a rooftop Peter receives a vision in which the Lord commands him to kill and eat unclean animals (Acts 10:1–8). In both cases, God tests faith by commanding the believer to betray personal conscience, to open his heart to a fuller revelation of the divine plan. Even the moral reasoning of God is not always straightforward. God is committed to doing right, but he also weighs decisions with compassion and mercy. Abraham and Moses appeal to God's character, and they are able to intercede on behalf of sinful people (Gen. 18:22–33; Exod. 32). Jonah even comes to despise this quality of God's character, which appears to compromise justice (4:1–11).

These tensions anticipate the gospel, which claims that God loves sinners and has provided a means to express mercy toward them without compromising justice (Rom. 3:21–26). Like the Mosaic law, the gospel also provides further revelation into God's will and therefore a more informed conscience. With citations drawn from throughout the OT, Paul claims that all people suffer from a distorted conscience (Rom. 3:9–20). God has spoken to all people through their conscience, but despite this innate awareness of right and wrong, both Jews, who possess God's commandments, and non-Jews, who know something about God from nature (creation), have compromised their own ethical stance, so that they have only themselves to blame (1:18–32). This universal inner conflict, emphasized by Jesus and Paul, removes appealing to one's conscience as a means of justification at the future judgment (Mark 7:1–23; Luke 13:1–5, 22–30). Furthermore, this habitual compromising leads to present self-deception and a skewed perception of the world.

But through repentance and faith in the gospel, returning to God (the Creator), a person's conscience may be renewed and aligned with the mind and actions of Jesus Christ (Rom. 12:1–2; 1 Cor. 2:16). Despite this restoration, the complexity of moral reasoning is not always overcome. Indeed, living in Christ with others from different cultural backgrounds and values often requires deeper reflection. Paul acknowledges that there can be different perceptions by believers, which can lead to different practices. Eating meat that may have been sacrificed to idols is neutral or wrong depending upon one's conscience and that of the observer (1 Cor. 8:1–3). He applies the same perspective to Jewish calendar observance and food laws (Rom. 14:1–23; but see Gal. 4:8–11). But the apostle also presumes that personal conscience can grow in knowledge. Ultimately, believers' consciences should be informed by relating everything to the lordship of Christ (Rom. 2:15; 9:1; 2 Cor. 1:12; 4:2; 5:11), meditating on the goodness of all creation (Titus 1:10–16), and placing the well-being of others before their own (Phil. 2:1–11).

CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR A person exempted from military training and service on the basis of deeply held religious convictions against participating in warfare.

Jesus' call to "not resist an evil person" and to "turn to them the other cheek" (Matt. 5:39; Luke 6:29–36) makes the clearest case for Christian conscientious objection. Jesus also blessed peacemakers (Matt. 5:9), commanded love of enemy and neighbor (Matt. 5:44; 22:39; Mark 12:31), and refused to build his kingdom by force (John 6:15; 18:36). Beyond violence, war may violate the Christian's conscience because it often necessitates deception and breeds fear, hatred, greed, and pride, be it individual, national, ethnic, or otherwise.

Conversely, Christians are obligated to obey civil authorities (Rom. 13:1–6; Titus 3:1; 1 Pet. 2:13–14), for whom Scripture reserves the right to wield the sword (Rom. 13:4). Some argue that these verses allow or oblige believers to fight when called to duty. Furthermore, this sinful world may require loving one's neighbors by using violence to protect them. If Christians enjoy the freedoms and well-being defended by a military, should they not contribute to it in combat, provided the war is just?

If Jesus condemns violence, however, the conscientious objector may invoke Peter's claim, "We must obey God rather than human beings!" (Acts 5:29; cf. 4:19). Many nonviolent forms of resistance exist, so conscientious objectors may still help defend their country by serving in the military or elsewhere in noncombatant roles.

CONSECRATION The process of effecting a transition to holiness, the state of being fit for the presence of God. Separation, or being set apart, while not the core meaning of consecration, is an associated notion (Num. 6:8; 1 Chron. 23:13). True consecration is not merely outward and symbolic but rather involves genuine covenantal obedience to God (Num. 15:40).

Consecration is closely related to purification—the removal of defilement (Exod. 29:36), dedication (particularly of buildings), and sanctification (particularly of people). God's glorious presence alone may render something holy (29:43–44). More commonly, a ritual act, such as washing (19:10) or anointing (29:36), serves to mark the transition to the new state.

Because God is holy (Lev. 11:44), persons or things that come into his presence must share his holiness. In Israel, the tabernacle or temple was a representation of God's heavenly sanctuary, so this space and everything associated with it had to be consecrated (Exod. 29:36–37; 40:9), including gifts or sacrificial animals brought to the altar (Exod. 28:38; 2 Chron. 29:33). Certain times were also to be consecrated to God (Lev. 25:10). Priests, with their special garments, were to be consecrated for their role in representing the people before God (Exod. 28:3; 29:21).

Replica of the tabernacle at Timnah, Israel. Everything associated with the tabernacle needed to be consecrated.

At Mount Sinai, the Israelites were consecrated as God's royal priesthood (Exod. 19:6, 10) to prepare for their encounter with God. In addition to this declaration concerning the whole people, all firstborn males in Israel were in principle to be consecrated (Exod. 13:2), though this was modified by the special role allocated to the approximately equal number of Levites, who were to belong to God (Num. 3:45).

CONSOLATION The act of alleviating sorrow and distress. The word "consolation" is used more often in the KJV than in the NIV. Several times in Job (e.g., 15:11; 21:2) the word is used as Job looks for consolation from his suffering. His friends push him to find consolation in the confession of his sin. Luke tells of Simeon, who was waiting in the Jerusalem temple for the consolation of Israel. Upon seeing the baby Jesus being presented at the temple, he claimed that he had received that consolation (Luke 2:25–32). Paul says that the Christian's consolation (NIV: "comfort") is found in

Christ, and this produces endurance and gives the Christian the opportunity to console and comfort those who need it (2 Cor. 1:3–7). In 2 Thess. 2:16 Paul says that it is Jesus who has given Christians “everlasting consolation” (NIV: “eternal encouragement”).

CONSTELLATIONS *See* Stars.

CONSUMMATION Appearing only in the KJV of Dan. 9:27 (used in Daniel’s prophecy of the seventy weeks), the word “consummation” refers to the “end” or completion of events that is decreed for an unnamed enemy of God. In the NT, God’s purposes in history find their consummation or “fulfillment” (Gk. *telos*) in the work of Jesus (Luke 22:37), especially in his sacrificial death “at the culmination of the ages to do away with sin” (Heb. 9:26). This present age will come to its “end” (Gk. *telos*) when the gospel reaches all nations (Matt. 24:14). There will be a final judgment (Matt. 13:49), and all will be subjected to God and Christ (1 Cor. 15:24).

CONTAINERS AND VESSELS *See* Vessels and Utensils.

CONTENTMENT General satisfaction with one’s situation or status in life. Contentment is an attitude of the heart that stems from humility, and an attitude for which believers should strive (1 Tim. 6:6–10). Paul emphasized that true contentment was found in being satisfied with God’s provision (Phil. 4:11). The Greek words *autarkēs* (“content”) and *autarkeia* (“contentment”) refer to recognizing that what one has is sufficient or to being satisfied with one’s circumstances or lot in life.

CONTRITE An attitude of penitence. In the Bible, to be contrite means to have an attitude of being sorry for the sinful actions that one has done. The term “contrite” is relatively rare within the Bible, but expectations for this attitude are not. In Ps. 51, traditionally attributed to David when the prophet Nathan exposed his adultery with Bathsheba, David says that a contrite heart, in response to sin, is one that God will not reject. Furthermore, Ps. 51 is a great example of how a person with a contrite attitude, acknowledging personal sinfulness toward God, might speak. God says that although he lives in “a high and holy place,” he also lives with those who are “contrite and lowly in spirit” (Isa. 57:15), and that he esteems the person who is “humble and contrite in spirit” (66:2).

CONVERSATION In the KJV the word “conversation” appears often, carrying the archaic meaning “conduct, behavior, way of life,” usually translating the Hebrew word *derek* or the Greek word *anastrophē* (e.g., Pss. 37:14; 50:23; Gal. 1:13; Eph. 4:22; 1 Tim. 4:12; 1 Pet. 1:15). In Phil. 3:20 it refers to “citizenship” in heaven, translating the Greek word *politeuma* (which involves one’s conduct with proper regard for obligations to others in community).

CONVERSION Conversion, signifying “to turn around” or a change of course in life, is closely related to repentance, although the two are by no means synonymous.

Conversion as part of God’s saving work. Both the OT and the NT present conversion as a crucial stage of God’s saving work for people. The leading metaphor for conversion in the OT is turning back (from sin, to God), mostly conveyed by the Hebrew word *shub* and its derivatives (turning from immorality and injustice and toward God in Isa. 55:7; turning away from idols in Ezek. 14:6). The NT likewise uses the metaphor of turning. Another metaphor for conversion is that of birth, evidenced in concepts such as becoming God’s children (Matt. 18:3), rebirth (1 Pet. 1:3), and being born again or born from above (John 3:3).

Although the rich concept of conversion may reflect an enormous range of events and actions in one's life, what is central to the claim of conversion appears to be a definitive and radical change in one's beliefs and practices. Conversion typically accompanies or, in some accounts, follows repentance of one's sinful life. The call for repentance permeates the prophetic teachings in the OT, and it is significant that both John the Baptist and Jesus began their public ministry with their own prophetic call for repentance (Matt. 3:1–2; Mark 1:14–15). What distinguishes the NT teaching on repentance from its OT counterpart is that in the OT the prophets operated with the assumption that their audience was already in the covenantal relationship with God ("return to your God" [often using the Hebrew word *shub*]), whereas in the NT the invitation is extended to the Gentiles to "turn to God" (see Acts 26:20). In this regard, conversion is more distinctively a NT and Christian idea, firmly rooted in the broader sense of repentance.

The idea that humans need conversion to get right with God implies that the status quo of human existence, characterized by sin, is inadequate. God therefore has taken initiative to change it radically. In this sense, conversion is fundamentally God's work applied to humans. In addition, conversion clearly requires a human response, which can take many different forms. The emotional component of one's conversion experience can vary: both exuberance resulting from knowing the merits of redemption and sorrow prompted by recognizing the seriousness of one's destitution are part of the complex spectrum of emotions relating to conversion. In the account of the Philippian jailor's conversion (Acts 16), the jailor shows his desperation to escape his present crisis, a desire to be saved, and the joy that follows his decision to turn to Christ. Zacchaeus's conversion is noteworthy for his willful reversal of his wrongdoings at a high personal and financial cost (Luke 19:8).

The conversion experience. It will be fruitful to use the most famous conversion account in the Bible as a template to understand the conversion experience in general. The biblical record of Paul's conversion (Acts 9:1–27; 22:1–21; 26:9–23; see also 1 Cor. 9:1; 15:8–10; Gal. 1:15–17) demonstrates at least these distinct elements: (1) encountering the unknown yet powerful (mysterious, divine, etc.) being; (2) realizing one's wrongdoings in the past; (3) surrendering to that being; (4) hearing the call for one's life and gaining a renewed sense of direction.

Probably echoing OT metaphors of conversion and drawing from his own conversion experience, Paul describes the experience of Gentile believers as "turn[ing] to God from idols to serve the living and true God" (1 Thess. 1:9). Paul himself had a radical "turning around" on the road to Damascus, and he explained in his account before King Agrippa that his mission, as spoken to him by the risen Jesus, was to turn Jews and Gentiles "from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God" (Acts 26:18). Although the accounts of individual conversion experiences show rich variations, all converts essentially have made this transition.

CONVICTION In its more prominent use, "conviction" refers to the experience of becoming aware of one's guilt before God. Isaiah's vision of the throne of God provides a dramatic illustration of conviction. He describes the feeling of dread and self-revulsion that he experienced in the presence of God, who is holy: " 'Woe to me!' I cried. 'I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, . . . and my eyes have seen the King, the LORD Almighty' " (Isa. 6:5). After a miraculous catch of fish, when Peter recognized that Jesus was the Christ, his initial response was similar: "Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!" (Luke 5:8).

Jesus said that after his departure he would send the Spirit, who would convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment (John 16:8). Sin has the effect of dulling one's conscience to its pervasiveness. God is light, and his presence exposes our darkness. To be convicted is to become aware of one’s need for forgiveness and cleansing from sin. Confession, or inward agreement, is the only appropriate response. The initial fulfillment of this promise occurred at Pentecost, when in response to the miracle that drew crowds, Peter preached the resurrection of Christ to the multitudes, who only recently had handed Christ over to be crucified. Upon hearing Peter’s sermon, they were “cut to the heart” and asked, “What shall we do?” Peter then commanded them to repent so that they might receive forgiveness for their sins (Acts 2:37–38). This illustrates that the Spirit works through the proclaimed word of God, which is able to expose the thoughts and intents of the heart (Heb. 4:12). It is, however, possible to resist conviction, which eventually leads to the hardening of one’s heart (Acts 7:51).

The book of Hebrews uses “conviction,” in its secondary meaning, to refer to the internal persuasion that characterizes faith (11:1 ESV, NRSV, NASB).

COOKING AND HEATING In the ancient Near East the type of cooking and heating utilized within a household depended upon the family’s socioeconomic status and lifestyle. A nomadic or seminomadic pastoral lifestyle demanded portability; permanent ovens or heating installations would have been impractical. A stable urban lifestyle made possible the construction of more complex heating and cooking equipment.

COOKING WITHIN THE SEMINOMADIC LIFESTYLE

Seminomadic groups, such as Abraham and his family or the Israelites before the settlement of Canaan, probably used an open fire or fire pit. A campfire was kindled on top of the ground or on flat stones. An open fire of this nature could also be ringed with a small stone circle. Shallow holes or fire pits were also dug into the ground near the front of a tent or outside, in the encampment. Since tents did not have chimneys, the smoke from a fire would escape through the door. The seasonal climate dictated whether a fire was kindled inside or outside the tent.

Fires were ignited with twigs or kindling by friction or sparks (Isa. 50:11; 64:2; 2 Macc. 10:3), a skill learned during the early Stone Age. Once lit, the burning embers of the fire could be moved around, kept smoldering, and fanned into a blaze with fresh fuel (Isa. 30:14; cf. Lev. 6:13). Abraham carried some type of an ember or fire with him when he went to sacrifice Isaac (Gen. 22:6). The “smoking firepot with a blazing torch” that symbolized God’s presence before Abraham may refer to a portable device for transporting fire (15:17).

Fuel for fire was gathered from the materials most readily available to seminomadic groups. Potential fuels included thorns and briers (Isa. 10:17), dried grass (Matt. 6:30; Luke 12:28), charcoal (John 18:18 NRSV), twigs or sticks (Isa. 64:2), wood (Gen. 22:6), and dried animal dung (Ezek. 4:15). Fire pits provided some means for keeping a family warm, as well as being used for cooking.

COOKING WITHIN THE URBAN LIFESTYLE

The sedentary urban lifestyle of the monarchial period provided the opportunity to construct permanent cooking and heating installations. In the four-room Israelite house, cooking normally was done in a fire pit or clay oven in the courtyard of the home. The baking oven ordinarily was located outside, but archaeologists have found cooking utensils and ovens in the central room of the house. This indoor oven also served as a means of heat during the colder wet season. The family most likely utilized the courtyard oven during the hotter dry season.

Egyptian and Mesopotamian reliefs provide illustrations of the structure of ancient ovens. Archaeologists have uncovered scores of examples of different types and sizes all across the ancient Near East. Small domestic ovens (Exod. 8:3) were made of clay in two basic forms. The first had an open top and was cylindrical in shape. It ranged from two to three feet in height and was about two feet in diameter. The second, about the same size, was more egg-shaped, with small openings at the base and in the top.

Some ovens were covered with a plastered layer of potsherds on the outside to improve insulation. They could be embedded in the ground or raised above it. The oven floor was lined with pebbles, and the fire was built upon it. Commercial ovens were larger and were concentrated in specific areas of a city (Neh. 3:11; 12:38).

Ovens and fire pits were used for cooking and heating in the home. Other hearths or heating ovens were employed to warm larger buildings or to perform specific tasks not related to food preparation. A large oval hearth was discovered in the central room of an Iron Age II house at Shechem. Jeremiah 36:22–23 speaks about a "firepot" or hearth used by Jehoiakim to warm his winter apartment. This hearth may have been a raised copper or bronze basin on a three-legged stand. A "fire basin" (NIV: "firepot") is also mentioned in Zech. 12:6.

COOKING UTENSILS

Many types of pottery utensils, which were undoubtedly associated with cooking and eating, have been discovered in archaeological excavations in the ancient Near East. Although rare, metal and stone implements have also been found. One area in the tent or the home would be employed as a "kitchen." A kitchen in the palace of Ramesses III is depicted on an Egyptian wall, and Ezekiel mentions the kitchens located in the new temple (46:24). Cooking and serving vessels included platters, bowls, chalices, jugs, juglets, and cooking pots. Storage vessels and grain pits also were needed to contain spices, oils, grains, and other foodstuffs.

Larger bowls designed specifically for cooking were in common use during the Bronze and Iron Ages. These "cooking pots" often were placed directly into the fire or on hot coals and were used to boil meat or make soups and other similar types of food. Iron Age II cooking pots from Palestine generally bore the trademark of the potter. Cooking pots had a short life and were replaced often. Because the style of these types of pots changed systematically over time, they have become very important in helping archaeologists date the particular level or stratum of a tell in which they were found.

Cooking pot from the Hellenistic Age

THE COOKING OF FOOD

The type of food eaten by families also depended on their socioeconomic status and lifestyle. Food staples included milk products, wine, bread, and occasionally meat. Richer families could afford vegetables, fruits, dates, figs, and other less common foods. All types of households ate bread.

Grains. The most common grains used in bread making were wheat, barley, and spelt (Isa. 28:25). Wheat grew wild in Palestine, and there is evidence that seminomadic people stayed in one place long enough to cultivate small plots of grain. Grain could also be acquired in trade for other agricultural products such as goat's milk or wool. Grain was winnowed to separate the chaff from the kernels (Matt. 3:12; Luke 3:17). Roasted grain was grain that had been "popped" in the fire instead of being milled (1 Sam. 25:18).

After being winnowed, wheat and other grains were ground initially in a hand mill. Hand mills, or querns, were of two types. The first was a simple device of two stones. The base, or "saddle," was a flat, elongated stone that became curved through the backward and forward motion of the upper stone. The upper, or "rider," stone was flat on one side and curved on the top to allow the user to grip the stone with both hands. The grain was placed on the saddle, and the rider stone was run repeatedly over it to grind it. This was considered menial work (Lam. 5:13). This type of grinding may have been assigned to the blinded Samson (Judg. 16:21).

The second, later type of hand mill consisted of two stone disks approximately twelve inches in diameter. The lower stone, or base, had an upright wooden stake at the center. A hole in the upper stone allowed it to fit over the base, and a handle on the upper stone was used to rotate it against the lower stone (Matt. 24:41). Grain was fed through the central hole, and the milled flour exited along the sides. The millstone mentioned in Matt. 18:6; Mark 9:42; Luke 17:2 is a larger example of this type.

Milling grain was a necessary task of the household (Jer. 25:10). Course grain was further milled into fine flour with a mortar and pestle. Course grain could be used to make boiled porridge or gruel. Finely ground flour was used in sacrificial offerings (Exod. 29:40; Lev. 2:4).

The flour was mixed with water and kneaded (Gen. 18:6; 1 Sam. 28:24; 2 Sam. 13:8; Jer. 7:18), small amounts of leaven and salt were added, and then the bread was baked. Three methods of baking bread are mentioned in the OT: over hot coals (1 Kings 19:6; Isa. 44:19), on a griddle (Lev. 7:9; cf. Ezek. 4:3), and in an oven (Lev. 26:26). Leaven was withheld from the dough if the bread was to be made and eaten in haste (Exod. 12:39; Judg. 6:19; 1 Sam. 28:24). Griddle "cakes" were also made in this fashion (Hos. 7:8; cf. Ezek. 4:12).

Bread often was baked in different shapes. Thin bread was used to scoop food from a common pot (Matt. 26:23). Other breads were formed into loaves (John 6:9). In one man's dream a round loaf of barley bread is described as rolling down a hill and striking and overturning a tent (Judg. 7:13). Both men and women baked bread (Gen. 19:3; 1 Sam. 28:24), and priests baked bread for ritual usage (Lev. 24:5). A king could afford to have men and women as professional bakers (Gen. 40:1; 1 Sam. 8:13). Professional bakers may also have served the larger urban population (Neh. 3:11; Jer. 37:21; Hos. 7:4) in Jerusalem.

Fruits and vegetables. After settling in Canaan, the Israelites made some additions to their diet. Foodstuffs grown in cultivated gardens were now available. These included foods such as cucumbers, melons, leeks, onions, and garlic (Num. 11:5). Some of these vegetables were added to stews; others were eaten uncooked. Vegetable, bean, and lentil soups were prepared in large cooking pots placed directly on the fire. Esau particularly enjoyed lentil soup (Gen. 25:30). Herbs and spices (mint, dill, and cumin) were now accessible as well (Isa. 28:25, 27; Matt. 23:23). Salt came from the Dead Sea.

Fruits too were grown and harvested. Of particular interest was the olive. Olives were crushed in a press to render oil. Olive oil was used in cooking and baking. It was mixed with fine flour to make bread (1 Kings 17:12; Ezek. 16:13; cf. Num. 11:8).

Meat. When a guest arrived or when a special occasion called for it, meat was added to the stew. Meat often was boiled (2 Kings 4:38; Ezek. 24:3–5). Spices were also added (Ezek. 24:10). Since the meat was cut up to boil, this method had the advantage of avoiding the problem of ensuring that the blood was properly drained out of an animal before it could be roasted (Lev. 17:10–11). Milk could be used in the stew; however, cooking a kid in its mother's milk was prohibited (Exod. 23:19; 34:26; Deut. 14:21).

Meat was roasted over an open fire on a spit. Meat was available from flocks and through hunting. Abraham served his guests veal (Gen. 18:7); Gideon and his guests ate goat meat (Judg. 6:19); Samuel appears to have served Saul a mutton leg (1 Sam. 9:24). Contrary to ritual regulations, Hophni and Phinehas demanded meat for roasting (1 Sam. 2:13–15). Meat certainly was roasted as a sacrifice on the altar of the tabernacle and the temple. It also normally was roasted on feast days such as Passover (Exod. 12:8–9).

Fish were counted among the foods given to Noah and his sons after the flood (Gen. 9:2–3). The Israelites ate fish in Egypt (Num. 11:15), and fishermen plied their trade along the Nile (Isa. 19:8). Fishermen could hook, spear, or net fish (Job 41:1, 7; Eccles. 9:12; Ezek. 29:4; 47:10). In Israel, fish were taken from the Sea of Galilee or the Mediterranean. Jerusalem had a “Fish Gate,” where fish were sold (2 Chron. 33:14; Neh. 3:3; 12:39; Zeph. 1:10). The Phoenicians most likely exported several varieties of edible fish to Israel. Fish with fins and scales were clean, but those without fins or scales were not (Lev. 11:9–12). In Nehemiah’s day Phoenicians were selling fish to the inhabitants of Jerusalem even on the Sabbath (Neh. 13:16).

In NT times, the Phoenicians continued to import much of the fish brought into Palestine. The ministry of Jesus revolved around the smaller fishing industry on the Sea of Galilee. Jesus called several fishermen to follow him as disciples (Matt. 4:18). On a number of occasions Jesus helped his disciples to ply their trade by directing them where to cast their nets (John 21:6, 11). Fish were caught in dragnets (John 21:8) and hand nets (Matt. 4:18). After his resurrection Jesus ate fish with his disciples in Jerusalem and on the Sea of Galilee (Luke 24:42; John 21:9).

Fish became a staple of the common people (Matt. 14:17; 15:34). The fish used to feed the multitudes probably were salted. Fish normally were grilled over an open fire (John 21:9).

COOS *See* Kos.

COPING A word used in several English versions (e.g., KJV, NRSV, ESV, NASB; NIV: “eaves”) to render a Hebrew architectural term, *tepakhot*, whose meaning is uncertain (1 Kings 7:9). The context of this Hebrew word indicates that it refers to something at the top of a building, as it appears in the phrase “from the foundation to the coping” (NASB [TEV: “from the foundation to the edge of the roof”]).

COPPER A reddish metallic element valued for its appearance, malleability, ductility, and ability to alloy with other metals. Neither Hebrew nor Greek distinguished between copper and bronze, using the same words for both. Most references in the Bible should be translated “bronze,” but when referring to ore and the smelting process, the terms should be translated “copper” (Deut. 8:9; Job 28:2; Ezek. 22:18, 20).

Copper is one of the earliest known metals. The first metallic weapons and tools were made from copper. The Bible associates the origin of metalworking with Tubal-Cain (Gen. 4:22). As early as 8000 BC native copper was hammered into objects. Since most copper is found in impure forms, it has to be smelted. Evidence of smelted copper dates to as early as 5000 BC. The greatest advances in copper metallurgy came with the addition of other metals. At first, arsenic was added to improve the qualities of copper. The addition of tin formed bronze, and the addition of zinc formed brass. The resulting alloys were stronger, had lower melting points, and could be cast into more intricate forms. The Cave of Treasure, which was found in the Judean Desert about six miles southwest of Ein-Gedi, has produced some of the finest copper pieces in antiquity. This hoard of over four hundred copper pieces dates from about 3000 BC and gives evidence of the craftwork of ancient copper metallurgy.

This ornate crown is one of the ancient treasures from the Copper Age in Israel.

The ancient Israelites extensively used copper/bronze for musical instruments (1 Chron. 15:19), weapons (Ps. 18:34), armor (1 Sam. 17:5), mirrors (Job 37:18), and cooking utensils (Lev. 6:28). In the tabernacle and temple many objects were made of bronze, including incense censers, tent pegs, utensils, and the altar (Exod. 27:2–3). In the temple the large water basin (the Sea) was made of bronze and rested on twelve bronze bulls (2 Kings 16:17). The bronze serpent that Moses made in the wilderness (Num. 21:9) stood in the temple until King Hezekiah destroyed it (2 Kings 18:4). Although most coins were made of silver, some small coins, including the widow’s mite, were made of copper (Mark 12:42).

The largest source of copper in antiquity was Cyprus (the word “copper” is derived from the Latin word for “Cyprus”). Closer sources of copper were Ai (1 Kings 7:45–46), Timna (in southern Israel, about twenty miles north of Eilat), and Khirbat en-Nahas (in Jordan).

COPPERSMITH The profession of Alexander, whom Paul claims did him harm and would be repaid by God (2 Tim. 4:14; cf. 1 Tim. 1:20). Rendered “coppersmith” in some versions (KJV, RSV, NRSV, NASB, NET, NLT), the Greek term *chalkeus* could refer more generally to a “metalworker”

(NIV, TEV).

COR A measure of volume used with grain, flour, oil, and so on, perhaps equivalent to about forty-six gallons and equal to the homer (Ezek. 45:14). Solomon's daily provision included thirty cors of fine flour and sixty cors of meal (1 Kings 4:22; cf. 5:11 [NASB, NET: "kor"]).

CORAL The hard, calcareous skeleton secreted by certain marine polyps that is black or red in color. In the ancient Near East coral was deemed to be of high value and was equated to gemstones, although Job names it with several other stones that are less valuable than wisdom (Job 28:18). Coral was among the stones used for payment when the people of Aram engaged in trade with the people of Tyre (Ezek. 27:16).

CORBAN A transliteration of a technical term, *qorban*, used in reference to an offering to God throughout Leviticus and Numbers (e.g., Lev. 1:2; Num. 5:15). Mark 7:11 is set in the midst of an exchange where Jesus condemns the Pharisees for attempting to evade the true significance of the OT laws of Corban by greedily keeping money to themselves that should have been used to support elderly parents (cf. the parallel in Matt. 15:5–6, which uses the Greek word *dōron* ["gift"] rather than Corban).

CORD Cord (KJV: "lace") was used to bind together certain items in the high priest's garments. By running blue cord through rings on the breastpiece and the ephod, Moses' craftsmen attached the breastpiece to the ephod's waistband so that the breastpiece would not "swing out from the ephod" (Exod. 28:28; 39:21). Blue cord also fastened a gold plate, inscribed with the words "Holy to the LORD," to the high priest's turban at the forehead area (Exod. 28:36–38; 39:30–31).

CORIANDER SEED Indigenous to the Mediterranean area, the seed to which the manna is likened in its form and white color (Exod. 16:31; Num. 11:7). Used for both culinary and medicinal purposes, the seeds of this plant are the size of a peppercorn and have a sharp though pleasant aroma. The coriander plant, also known as cilantro, has seasoned food around the Mediterranean since at least 1550 BC and was used as a medicine to aid digestion and sleep.

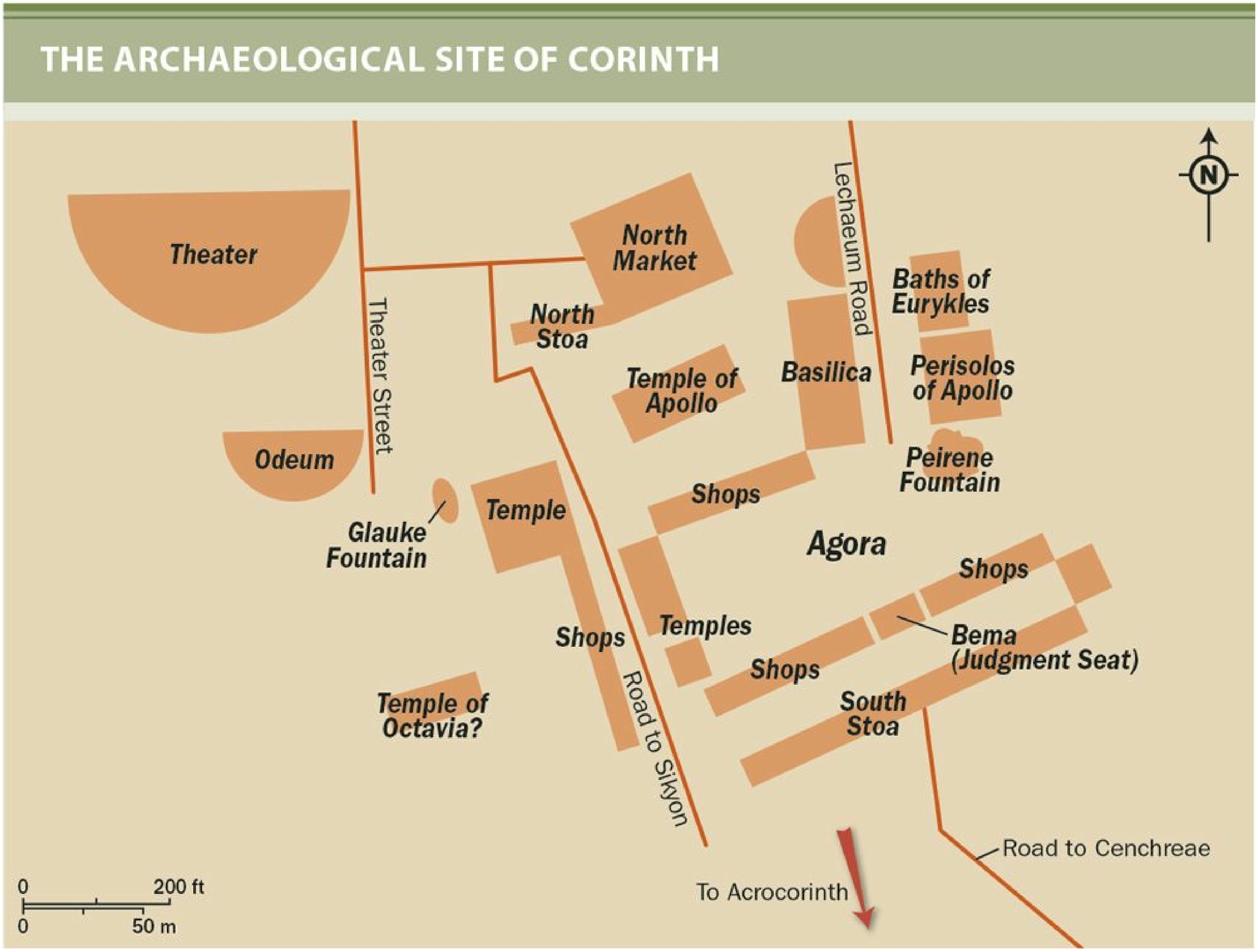
CORINTH One of the largest, wealthiest, and most prestigious cities in ancient Greece.

Location and important features. Corinth is located about fifty miles west of Athens on the narrow isthmus that connects mainland Greece with the Peloponnesus.

Corinth had two harbors. Lechaeum was about 1.5 miles west on the Corinthian Gulf and was enclosed within the six-mile-long city walls. Cenchreae was about 6.5 miles east on the Saronic Gulf. Paul sailed from Cenchreae to Syria to end his second missionary journey (Acts 18:18). Corinth's location made it an international crossroads of commerce and travel. Because of the narrowness of the isthmus, it controlled the land routes between the Peloponnesus and mainland Greece.

With its two harbors, Corinth served as a gateway between Asia and Europe. Instead of sailing all the way around the Peloponnesian peninsula, it was faster and cheaper for ships to dock at one harbor and have cargo transferred across the narrow isthmus to the other harbor. The *diolkos* was the road upon which cargo and even small ships were carried across. In 602 BC Periander became the first to attempt to cut a canal across the isthmus, but he soon gave up after a negative oracle from Delphi. Later Roman emperors, including Julius Caesar, Caligula, and Nero, tried but failed. Strabo credited the location of Corinth as a key to its wealth, but he also recognized its temples, artisans, and the Isthmian games as major sources of wealth.

Corinth boasted the most impressive acropolis in Greece, its Acrocorinth towering eighteen hundred feet above the city. The Acrocorinth served as a fortress and hosted temples, the most famous of which was the temple of Aphrodite, which in the old city (destroyed by the Romans in 146 BC) had boasted a thousand temple slaves and prostitutes. Its presence contributed to Corinth's reputation as an excessively immoral city. A Greek verb was coined, *korinthiazomai* (lit., "to Corinthianize"), which meant "to practice sexual immorality." Like other prominent Greek cities, Corinth contained numerous temples to various gods and emperors. Asclepius was the god of healing, and his sanctuary made Corinth one of the premier medical centers. The temple of Apollo was one of the oldest temples in Greece, built in the sixth century BC in the Doric order.


THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE OF CORINTH
N
Theater
Theater Street
Odeum
North Market
North Stoa
Lechaeum Road
Baths of Eurykles
Basilica
Temple of Apollo
Perisolos of Apollo
Peirene Fountain
Glauke Fountain
Temple
Shops
Agora
Shops
Temples
Shops
Bema (Judgment Seat)
Shops
South Stoa
Temple of Octavia?
Road to Sikyon
Road to Cenchreae
To Acrocorinth
0
200 ft
0
50 m

Since in 44 BC Julius Caesar had rebuilt Corinth as a Roman colony, the city was laid out along a Roman grid system. By the time of Paul, Corinth's architecture reflected the transition from Greek culture to a Roman colony. The predominance of Latin inscriptions over Greek inscriptions during the first century AD further demonstrates the Roman character of the city. As would be expected of a large Roman city in Greece, Corinth had a large forum in the city center surrounded by many commercial and civic buildings, including basilicas, water fountains, shops, public toilets, and a *bouleutērion* (council chamber). Its large theater was nearby.

Played every two years just ten miles from Corinth, the Isthmian games were one of four permanent Panhellenic games. The Isthmian games were played in AD 51, the same year Paul appeared before Gallio. The games brought considerable prestige and wealth to Corinth.

From ancient to modern times. The first occupation of Corinth began in the Stone Age, and by 1100 BC it was very prosperous and may be the "wealthy Corinth" mentioned in Homer's *Iliad*. As one of the most prominent Greek city-states, it contributed to the development of Greece's culture and wealth. It was a colonizing city-state and planted settlements across Greece and the Mediterranean. However, Corinth never fully recovered its former prominence after its defeat in the Peloponnesian War, which left Sparta victorious and Greece exhausted. Corinth later fell under the influence of the Macedonians for about 150 years until the arrival of the Romans in 196 BC. After years of opposition to the Romans, it was destroyed, and its inhabitants were sold into slavery in 146 BC (1 Macc. 8:9–11). Corinth's fortunes changed when Julius Caesar established it as a Roman colony and Augustus later made it the capital of Achaia.

By the time of Paul's arrival, Corinth was one of the most important commercial centers in the entire Roman Empire and the largest city in Greece, with a free population of about 300,000 and an additional 460,000 slaves. Corinth had a significant Jewish population, especially after AD 49, when the Jews were expelled from Rome (Acts 18:2). During Paul's year and a half of ministry, he regularly argued in the synagogue (18:4). An inscription from the synagogue's lintel has been found. In AD 51 many of the Jews brought Paul before Gallio, the proconsul of Achaia, on charges of "persuading the people to worship God in ways contrary to the law" (18:13). As Paul stood at the *bēma* (judgment seat), Gallio dismissed the charges and expelled the Jews from the court (18:12–17). The *bēma*, a platform where speakers stood and citizens appeared before officials, has been located and identified by archaeologists. Archaeologists have also found near the theater an inscription that reads, "Erastus, in return for his aedileship, laid this pavement at his own expense." This is likely the same Erastus who was Corinth's city treasurer and who became a Christian (Rom. 16:23; 2 Tim. 4:20). Corinth played a significant role in Paul's ministry, as he visited it on multiple occasions (1 Cor. 12:14; 13:1), wrote 1–2 Corinthians to its church, and likely wrote Romans and 1–2 Thessalonians from there. Other early church leaders also ministered in Corinth, such as Apollos (Acts 19:1).

In spite of numerous devastating earthquakes and conquests by foreign powers, Corinth remained an important but not prominent city over the centuries. At the founding of modern Greece, it was considered a candidate for the capital.

CORINTHIANS, FIRST LETTER TO THE First Corinthians is the first of two NT letters written by the apostle Paul to the Corinthian church. Paul visited Corinth on his second missionary journey (Acts 18:1–18) for a year and a half before leaving for Syria. This period can be dated quite precisely, since Acts mentions a court hearing before Gallio, proconsul of Achaia, who served in AD 51–52. Several years later, during Paul's third missionary journey, the Corinthian correspondence was written.

CONTEXT

While in Ephesus, Paul heard of immorality in the church at Corinth and responded with a letter (1 Cor. 5:9). This letter is lost, but scholars have designated it as "Corinthians A" to distinguish it from the two canonical letters. About this time, three men from Corinth brought a financial gift to Paul (1 Cor. 16:17) along with a list of questions, which Paul answers in another letter (see 7:1). This letter, known to us as 1 Corinthians, is designated by scholars as "Corinthians B," since it is actually the second letter written by Paul to the church. (For more on the order and naming of the Corinthian correspondence, *see* Corinthians, Second Letter to the.)

PURPOSE

In chapters 1–6 Paul deals with a number of problems in the church at Corinth, including divisions, arrogance, immaturity, and immorality; then, in chapters 7–16 he answers the questions sent to him by the church. Not only are the members of this church not unified, but also they are at odds with Paul himself. Paul seeks to reestablish his authority over the church.

PROBLEMS IN CORINTH

Divisions. The church had divided sharply, aligning with different Christian leaders (1:12). There is no indication that this was encouraged by these leaders. Paul points out that it was not he who was crucified for them, and they were not baptized in his name. These groups had formed in the name of wisdom, each group boasting of the superiority of its leader's teaching.

Paul appeals to them to end their divisions and to be unified in mind and thought. Christ is the head of the church, and he cannot be divided. Human wisdom is not the cornerstone of the church. God's wisdom can only be known spiritually; the person with the Spirit of God understands the deep things of God (2:10–11). Those who think themselves wise by human standards should become "foolish" in the worldly sense in order to be wise spiritually (3:18).

Confronting immorality. Paul is appalled at the sexual immorality at the church: a man is sleeping with his own stepmother (5:1). This is forbidden in the Torah (Lev. 18:7–8) and even among pagan cultures. Worse than the sin, though, is the church community's response: they are proud, boasting even. It is not clear whether Paul refers to their generally inflated egos, a perverted sense of freedom in Christ, or the fact that they consider themselves so open-minded as to allow such a sin; what is clear is that Paul has attempted to deal with this before, in his first letter ("Corinthians A"; see 5:9). Paul orders that the man be put out of fellowship (this he states four times) so that the man's spirit may be saved (5:5).

Lawsuits between believers. Conflicts in the church community had reached the point where church members were seeking resolution in secular courts. Paul shames the supposedly "wise" Corinthians for not solving their own problems. They are already defeated because they would rather be declared right by a nonbeliever than simply be wronged by a Christian brother or sister (6:7).

Immorality generally. The Corinthian church was begun when Paul abandoned his preaching to the Jews in Corinth and went instead to the Gentiles (Acts 18:6). Apparently, the new converts have continued with much of their pagan lifestyle, including visits to the temple prostitutes. To justify their behavior, the Corinthians had distorted Paul's theology of freedom: "I have the right to do anything," they say. Paul reminds them, "But not everything is beneficial" (6:12). Paul's corrective is for them to flee sexual immorality, because their bodies are not their own; they have been bought with a price (6:19–20).

QUESTIONS FROM CORINTH

Paul then turns to questions brought him from the church, touching on many topics relevant for the church today.

Marriage. Some of the Corinthians were claiming that celibacy was a higher spiritual state than marriage. Paul agrees that there are benefits to celibacy and defends his own as a gift, but he also acknowledges the goodness of marriage (7:1–11). Marriage is the appropriate context for sexual energy to be expressed, and husbands and wives are responsible to each other sexually. For spiritual reasons they may abstain from sexual relations for a brief time and by mutual consent, but then they must come back together. Divorce is not condoned, except in the case of an unbelieving spouse leaving the marriage.

Each person's life should be lived in the situation in which he or she was called. A man should not seek to change from circumcision to uncircumcision or vice versa. Slaves should not seek freedom, and those who are free should remain so. Married couples should stay married; single believers should remain content in their singleness, though they do not sin by marrying.

Food sacrificed to idols. Most of the meat eaten in the ancient world came from pagan shrines and temples, where some of the animal was burned on the altar and the rest sold at a market. Some Christians believed that eating the pagan meat was like worshiping the god to which it was sacrificed. The question before Paul was, "Should Christians avoid meat from pagan sacrifices?"

Paul responds by saying that the idol is nothing, and the association of the food with an idol is irrelevant. Yet, because new believers may still associate the food with the idol and fall into sin, a Christian should avoid this meat in their presence. At a meal with an unbeliever, the food may be eaten freely unless its source in idol worship is made an issue. Then, for the sake of the unbeliever's conscience, the food must be refused.

Issues in worship. Paul's discussion on head coverings in chapter 11 is among the most difficult in the NT because the background and context are obscure to us. Clearly, the Corinthians were being inappropriate in dress or hairstyles in either a sexual or a religious context, or both. We can draw a principle from Paul's arguments: Christians should not blur the visual distinctions between the sexes, nor should they offend contemporary customs and fashion in a particular church. As with the food sacrificed to idols, one's effect on fellow Christians is paramount in one's actions.

Likewise in the Lord's Supper, the church must be unified in this central part of worship. The church was fracturing along class and economic lines when it came to the "love feast," a communal meal shared by the church in conjunction with the Lord's Supper. The rich were coming early to the meal and gorging themselves, while the poor had nothing to eat. Paul warns the church of God's severe judgment for such inequities and instructs them to all partake together (11:33).

Paul also applies the theme of unity to the gifts of the Spirit, but here it is diversity within unity. The many different gifts are given by the same Spirit and are intended for accomplishing God's work. Although some of the gifts are more spectacular, the greater gifts are faith, hope, and love.

The resurrection. To the question "Will there be a physical resurrection of the dead?" Paul gives an extensive explanation of the gospel message. The resurrection is central to the gospel; without it, Christian faith is in vain (15:14). But Christ was raised as the firstfruits of the dead, and in him all will be made alive (15:22). Christians will be raised with a glorified body, imperishable, powerful, and spiritual (15:42–44).

OUTLINE

I. Greeting (1:1–9)

II. Problems in Corinth (1:10–6:20)

    - A. Divisions in the church (1:10–4:21)
    - B. Immoral situations (5:1–13)
    - C. Lawsuits between believers (6:1–11)
    - D. Immorality generally (6:12–20)
- III. Questions from Corinth (7:1–16:4)
    - A. Marriage (7:1–40)
    - B. Food sacrificed to idols (8:1–11:1)
    - C. Issues in worship (11:2–14:40)
    - D. The resurrection (15:1–58)
    - E. The collection for Jerusalem (16:1–4)
- IV. Conclusion (16:5–24)

CORINTHIANS, SECOND LETTER TO THE Part of the Corinthian correspondence, along with 1 Corinthians. These two letters are part of a larger body of correspondence written by the apostle Paul to the Corinthian church. Paul visited Corinth on his second missionary journey (Acts 18:1–18) for a year and a half before leaving for Syria. This period can be dated quite precisely, since Acts mentions a court hearing before Gallio, proconsul of Achaia, who served in AD 51–52. It was several years later, during Paul's third missionary journey, that the Corinthian correspondence was written.

CONTEXT

While in Ephesus, Paul heard of immorality in the church at Corinth and responded with a letter (1 Cor. 5:9). This letter is lost but has been designated by scholars as "Corinthians A" to distinguish it from the two canonical letters. About this time, three men from Corinth brought a financial gift to Paul (1 Cor. 16:17) along with a list of questions, which Paul answers in another letter (see 1 Cor. 7:1). This letter, known to us as 1 Corinthians, is designated by scholars as "Corinthians B," since it is actually the second letter written by Paul to the church. Some time later, Paul heard that his letter had not solved many of the problems at Corinth, so he made a visit. This went very poorly (see 2 Cor. 2:1), and Paul sent a sorrowful letter (2 Cor. 2:3–4, 9; 7:8, 12), designated by scholars as "Corinthians C." This letter is also lost, though some think that it may be preserved in 2 Cor. 10–13. When Paul heard later that the Corinthian church had repented and wished to reconcile with him, he was overjoyed and wrote yet again. This letter, which scholars call "Corinthians D," is known to us as 2 Corinthians. The sharp change in tone of chapters 10–13 perhaps represents a fifth letter (designated "Corinthians E") reflecting ongoing friction with a strong minority faction within the church, or these chapters may reflect Paul addressing one unrepentant division in the course of the "D" letter.

PURPOSE

False teachers in the church at Corinth had attacked Paul's teaching and authority. Their charges can be seen in 2 Corinthians: Paul was fickle (1:17, 18, 23), proud and boastful (3:1; 5:12), worldly (10:2), unimpressive in appearance and speech (10:10; 11:6), confused and foolish (5:13; 11:16–19), dishonest (12:16–19), and “not a true apostle” (11:5; 12:11–12). Paul writes to defend his ministry and authority.

THEMES

Paul gives a wonderful description of his apostolic ministry. He is a captive in Christ’s triumphal procession, spreading the aroma of the gospel wherever he goes. This aroma is the smell of death to some, but life to others (2:16). He needs no letter of recommendation, as the church at Corinth is his letter, written on human hearts. The gospel is unlike the fading glory in Moses’ face (see Exod. 34:33); in fact, relationship with God during the old covenant was accomplished only through a veil, which still covers hearts when Moses is read. Rather, Christians bask in the unveiled glory of the Lord and are transformed into the Lord’s image with ever greater glory (3:18), carrying in their bodies the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may be revealed in them (4:10).

The earthly consequence of this ministry is pain and suffering. Paul is constantly struggling, yet never defeated (4:8–9). But the spiritual reward is great: an eternal home with the Lord in heaven, with the Spirit given to him during this life as a deposit of what is to come (5:5).

Beginning with chapter 10, Paul’s tone changes sharply, becoming much more aggressive as he defends his apostolic authority. His gentle nature in person, which may have been mistaken by some of the Corinthians for weakness, is really Christlikeness in Paul. He fights not as the world does, but rather on the spiritual level, with weapons that can demolish all arguments (10:4). He hopes that he will not have to unleash his power when he comes to see them, though he will if necessary (10:6).

Paul’s opponents in Corinth have been exercising false authority beyond their rightful limits. They commend themselves and boast of their works. Paul promises to remain within the sphere assigned him by God, and he assures them that his sphere includes their church (10:13).

In chapter 11 Paul begins speaking “as a fool.” His opponents apparently have referred to him as a fool, so he allows himself some latitude to do this. If he were a fool, he would boast of his accomplishments as an apostle. His opponents boast about themselves; Paul has more to boast about. He also is a Hebrew, a descendant of Abraham, and a servant of Christ; in fact, he is more. He has worked harder; he has been imprisoned more, beaten more, stoned, and shipwrecked; he has gone without food and water; he has been cold and naked. He has had visions and revelations, and he has been caught up in heaven and heard things that he may not repeat. Yet he would rather boast of his weakness, for his worldly weakness allows him to be strong in Christ. Paul should have been commended by the Corinthians, yet he has been reduced to having to defend himself boastfully.

During Paul’s next visit, he will continue his habit of supporting himself, so as not to be a burden on the Corinthians (see Acts 18:3). He has not asked them to support him (though it was his right [see 1 Cor. 9]), yet they have accused him of trickery (12:16; see also 1:12). He hopes that he will not be forced to deal harshly with them, but they demand proof that Christ speaks through him (13:3). He would rather use the authority that God has given him to build them up, not tear them down (13:10).

OUTLINE

I. Greeting (1:1–11)

II. Paul Defends His Ministry (1:12–7:16)

   A. Paul explains his conduct (1:12–2:13)

   B. Paul describes his ministry (2:14–7:1)

    - C. Reconciliation with the Corinthians (7:2–16)
- III. The Collection for Jerusalem (8:1–9:15)
    - A. Generosity encouraged (8:1–15)
    - B. Titus's credentials (8:16–9:5)
    - C. Results of giving generously (9:6–15)
- IV. Paul Defends His Authority (10:1–13:10)
    - A. Paul gives them warning (10:1–18)
    - B. Paul speaks ironically as a "fool" (11:1–12:13)
    - C. Paul's planned visit (12:14–13:10)
- V. Conclusion (13:11–14)

CORMORANT A predominantly black bird that dives for fish. The cormorant (Heb. *shalakh*) is listed among the unclean birds (Lev. 11:17; Deut. 14:17). The most common species in the Middle East is the white-necked cormorant.

CORN The KJV uses the word "corn" to translate a variety of words that refer to cereal crops such as wheat and barley. In these instances, the NIV typically uses the translation "grain" (e.g., Gen. 27:28; Deut. 16:9; Mark 2:23; etc.). *See also* Grain.

CORNELIUS A centurion in the Italian Regiment (cohort) of the Roman army who lived in Caesarea Maritima. Cornelius, whose generosity is notable, and his family are devout God-fearers, constantly engaged in prayer. In Acts 10:4–5 Cornelius receives a vision from God to have Peter brought from Joppa to Caesarea to instruct him, his family, and close friends further in the truths of the gospel. Peter hesitates until he receives a vision from God that makes it clear the Gentiles are no longer unclean in light of Christ's reconciling work on the cross. Nonetheless, Peter and his Jewish Christian companions are astonished when the Holy Spirit falls upon all those who have just heard Peter's sermon. Those gathered are consequently baptized, since they have clearly received the Holy Spirit (see Acts 10–11). Cornelius thus appears in Acts as the confirming witness that God's salvation is for the Gentiles as well as the Jews.

CORNER BUTTRESS *See* Wall, Angle of the.

CORNER GATE A gate of Jerusalem located on the western end of the city, guarding the east-west transverse valley. Joash king of Israel defeated Amaziah and destroyed the city wall between the Ephraim Gate and the Corner Gate (2 Kings 14:13; 2 Chron. 25:23). Uzziah rebuilt the gate with defensive towers (2 Chron. 26:9). The Corner Gate is the westernmost boundary of a future Jerusalem (Jer. 31:38; Zech. 14:10).

CORNERSTONE An architecturally important stone, giving rise to its figurative uses. The architectural uses refer to either a capstone or a foundation stone. Long interlocking stones used to tie the corners of a building together for stability were topped off with a capstone, or "head of the corner" (1 Pet. 2:7 KJV, NRSV). The corner foundation stone was important for bearing weight and possibly for establishing the lines for the walls. The Canaanites who preceded Israel seemed to have made great ceremony over laying a foundation stone, possibly including human sacrifice. It has also been suggested that the term refers to the pivot stone. This important stone was a strong rock with a depression on top to hold a doorpost, which would pivot on this point to open and close. Frequently foundation stones were inscribed or covered valuables or symbolic items deposited at the building. Job 38:4–6 figuratively pictures God laying the earth's foundation and cornerstone. References to a cornerstone in Ps. 118:22; Isa. 28:16; Zech. 10:4 are taken as messianic. Zechariah looks forward to the ruler from Judah of the messianic age. In Isaiah's prophecy the corner foundation stone is of precious material and acts to ensure a true or square line. Like a good wall with aligned stones, the one who believes will not give way. Peter compares the church to believing, living stones built around Christ, the cornerstone (1 Pet. 2:4–6). Psalm 118 highlights an irony: a stone rejected early in the building process is chosen by God to be the corner capstone, a metaphor applied to Jesus six times in the NT (Matt. 21:42; Mark 12:10; Luke 20:17; Acts 4:11; Eph. 2:20; 1 Pet. 2:7). *See also* Capstone.

CORNET *See* Horn.

CORNFLOOR *See* Threshing, Threshing Floor.

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT One form of corporal punishment mentioned in the Bible, scourging, was sometimes used to punish criminals or those who appeared to threaten the political structures of the day. By law, the punisher could not strike the punished more than forty times (Deut. 25:1–3).

Wisdom literature mentions the use of corporal punishment in the context of disciplining youth. The most familiar proverb that refers to the use of the rod is Prov. 13:24: "He who spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him is careful to discipline him." In the mind of the sage, sometimes love demanded tough action. However, it never involved abuse. The proverbs that advocate corporal punishment must be understood in the larger context of wisdom's admonition to practice self-restraint (Prov. 16:32; 25:28), its warnings against excessive anger (14:17), and the value that it places on patience (12:16; 14:29; 15:1). *See also* Crimes and Punishments.

Sumerian tablet telling the story of two days in the life of a young schoolboy, filled with tedious work and harsh beatings

CORRUPTION The concept of corruption deals with decay or destruction. This decay or destruction can be physical, often that of death (Job 17:14 NIV; Ps. 16:10 KJV), or moral/spiritual, in which case evil is in view (Isa. 1:4; Dan. 6:4; Hos. 9:9; 2 Pet. 1:4). In Gal. 6:8 Paul contrasts corruption (NIV: "destruction") with eternal life.

CORRUPTION, HILL OF A mountain or hill to the east of Jerusalem that had a high place on it that was destroyed by Josiah (2 Kings 23:13 [KJV: "Mount of Corruption"; NRSV, NASB: "Mount of Destruction"]). According to 1 Kings 11:7–8, these high places were erected by Solomon to the gods Chemosh and Molek. In rabbinic tradition this mountain is more commonly identified as the Mount of Olives.

COS *See* Kos.

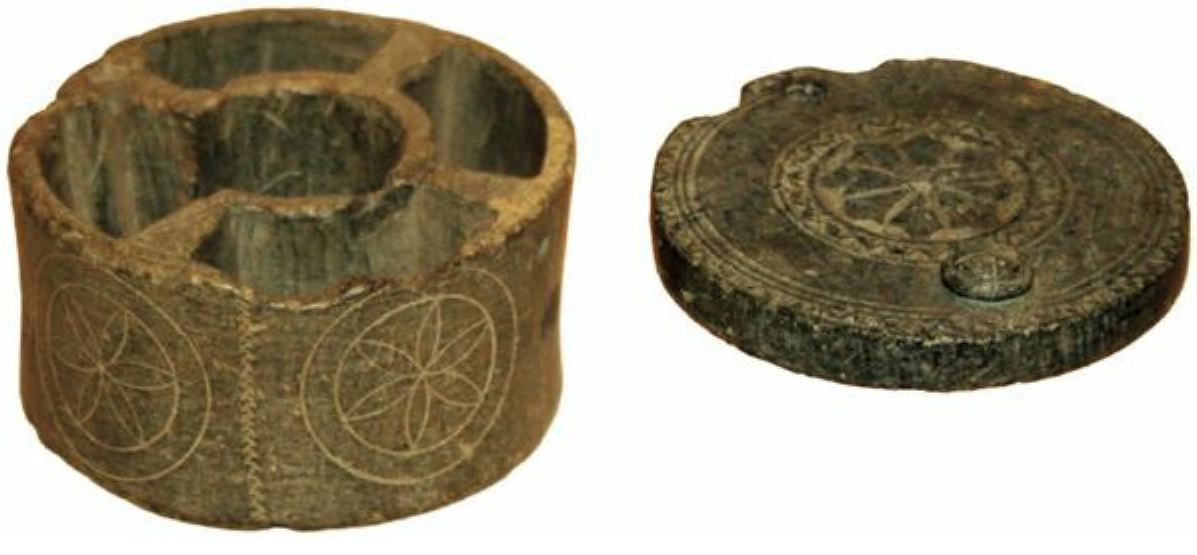
COSAM An otherwise unknown ancestor of Jesus mentioned only in Luke 3:28 as the son of Elmadam and the father of Addi.

COSMETICS Cosmetics were well known to the ancient Near Eastern world, as both men and women used various substances to care for their skin, make themselves more attractive, and cover up odor. The most common forms of cosmetics were ointments or oils, though many types of applicators and containers have been found in the archaeological remnants of the ancient societies.

The sources of the various ointments and pigments ranged from the use of minerals to the manipulation of by-products from agricultural wares. Different clays rich in iron oxide could be manipulated through the application of heat or water to produce colors, including yellow, red, brown, and purple. The clay was mined and then washed, dried, and heated to enhance the color. Other minerals that provided color included lead carbonate (white), malachite (green), lead sulphate (black), and manganese (shades of violet). Agricultural products such as seeds, olives, nuts, gourds, trees, and plant leaves provided a source for oils and ointments, as did animal and fish fats. Fragrances were collected from flowers, herbs, seeds, and leaves.

The containers for the various substances were as varied as the essences themselves. Powder perfumes were kept in boxes, and the liquid forms were kept in alabaster jars or glass bottles. Small bowls with wide rims or flat palettes made of clay or stone were used for pigments. Flasks could be made from ivory, bronze, wood, or bone. Applicators used these same items, as well as hair from various animals.

Cosmetics also played an important role in perceptions of wealth because many of them had to be imported from foreign lands. At times perfumes and cosmetics rivaled even silver and gold in value. The kings of Judah kept them in their treasure houses (2 Kings 20:13), and part of the tribute from the Queen of Sheba to Solomon included spices probably intended to be used for cosmetic purposes (1 Kings 10:2, 10). The cosmetics mentioned in the Bible and the instruments related to them were imported from Syria, Arabia, Egypt, Africa, Mesopotamia, and farther east into Persia.



A cosmetic case (ninth–seventh century BC) discovered in the Amuq Valley (southern Turkey)

Ointments served a dual purpose: protecting the skin in the harsh arid conditions of the Near East and providing hygiene. Part of Naomi’s instructions to Ruth as she prepared to go and meet Boaz was to put on oil (Ruth 3:3), and Esther reports that application of such oils was part of the beauty treatments that the king’s harem received (Esther 2:12). Apparently because of the refreshment that it provided (Prov. 27:9), in NT times application of ointment and oils was considered a sign of hospitality (Luke 7:37–50).

Although painting one's eyes could be viewed as a sign of a woman with low morals (Ezek. 23:40), the purpose of such paints was more generally beautification (Jer. 4:30), and other ancient texts suggest that the practice had the added feature of discouraging flies from landing around moist areas of the eyes. Imagery from antiquity indicates the use of black, green, yellow, and red pigments to adorn the eyes.

The close relationship between the activities of anointing for purposes of hygiene and beauty and anointing for service should not be missed. Being sanctified to God often carried with it the imagery of being a pleasing aroma. Furthermore, the act of anointing was seen to have a cleansing purpose as well (Matt. 6:17). Perfumes played a role in worship (Exod. 30:34–38; Ps. 141:2; Isa. 60:6), and the imagery of cosmetics was sometimes used as a representation of God's forgiveness and grace (Jer. 8:22).

COUNCIL, HEAVENLY *See* Heavenly Council.

COUNCIL OF JERUSALEM The teaching by some individuals in both Syrian Antioch (Acts 15:1) and in Jerusalem (15:5) that Gentile believers must be circumcised prompted the council of Jerusalem. The council, a meeting of the apostles and elders in Jerusalem in approximately AD 49, addressed matters regarding the relationship between Gentile Christians and the Mosaic law (15:6–29). Paul, Barnabas, Simon Peter, James the brother of Jesus, Silas, and Judas Barsabbas were among those present. The council acknowledged that salvation is by grace (15:11). In a letter dispatched to Gentile Christians, the council affirmed Gentiles' freedom from requirements of the law but required that they abstain from food sacrificed to idols, from blood, from the meat of strangled animals, and from sexual immorality (15:29). Some scholars believe that the council of Jerusalem is also described in Gal. 2:1–10.

COUNSELOR **(1)** One gifted with insight into human nature and the ability to discern the wise response in complex situations. Daniel became a counselor in the royal court of Babylon, and because of his knowledge of God, he became distinguished for his superior counsel (Dan. 1:20; 5:11–12). Isaiah prophesied that the Spirit of wisdom and understanding would rest on the Messiah (11:2). Possessing the Spirit and knowledge of Scripture (Heb. 4:12) makes believers competent counselors (Rom. 15:14; Col. 3:16). **(2)** A rendering of the Greek word *paraklētos* in John 14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:7 (RSV). *See also* Advocate; Paraclete.

COUNTENANCE One's expression or demeanor. Some English translations use "countenance" regularly (KJV 53×; NRSV 20×), while others are practically devoid of it (ESV twice; NIV once). "Countenance" typically translates the Hebrew word *paneh* ("face"). When used in connection with certain verbs, this word forms idioms: "the face fell," denoting anger (Gen. 4:5); "fell on the face," a gesture of respect (Gen. 17:3); "cover the face," a sign of sorrow (2 Sam. 19:4). The priestly blessing calls on God to "turn his face" toward his people, showing divine approval. When God "hides" his face, that approval is removed (Deut. 31:18).

COURAGE Although the word "courage" does not occur with great frequency in the Bible, there are numerous examples of those who display its qualities (e.g., Heb. 11). Courage is an important theme in the conquest of the land of Canaan (Deut. 3:28; 31:6–8, 23; Josh. 1:6–9; 10:25). The psalmist is filled with courage because of God's protection (Ps. 27:1). Paul takes courage in God to share the gospel with the Thessalonians (1 Thess. 2:2). God's people take courage because of God's presence (1 Chron. 22:13; 2 Chron. 32:7; Hag. 2:4; 1 Cor. 16:13; 2 Cor. 5:6–8; Heb. 13:6). The source of courage, therefore, comes not from one's own character but rather from the character of God. Courage is inspired by God, generated by God, expressed in service to God, and manifests itself in endurance and integrity.

COURIERS Lacking our modern communications technologies, couriers were essential in the ancient world. They carried messages for royal officials (2 Chron. 30:6–10; Esther 3:13–15) and also brought news from the battlefield (Jer. 51:31). Official courier systems existed in both the Persian and the Roman Empires but were restricted to official correspondence. Thus, Paul sent his letters with private individuals or ministry coworkers (Phil. 2:25; Col. 4:7; 1 Thess. 3:2).

COURT OF THE GUARD, COURT OF THE PRISON An area in the royal palace in Jerusalem used for the retention of prisoners. Jeremiah was kept there during the siege of Jerusalem (Jer. 32:2, 38:6). The KJV renders the Hebrew phrase *khatser hammattarah* as "court of the prison," while more-recent versions translate it as "court of the guard" (NRSV) or "courtyard of the guard" (NIV).

COURT SYSTEMS Ancient court systems reflected the needs, values, and structures of the broader society. Not surprisingly, the court systems in nomadic and urban societies are quite different. Nomadic courts were more informal, based more on custom than law. The context of nomadic justice was located primarily within the family and clan. Those with disputes sought out elders and wise leaders to settle them. Urban court systems used more-fixed institutions of judges under the supervision of priests and kings. Even in an urban system the court functioned on a case-by-case basis and drew little or no distinction between criminal and civil offenses. Cases dealt primarily with an injury and the compensation for the injury. The basic process involved stating a case before a judge, each side calling witnesses, and the judge giving a judgment.

OLD TESTAMENT

Courts in ancient Israel reflected features of both nomadic and urban court systems as well as the broader judicial practices of the ancient Near East. In ancient Israel a case could be tried by the elders, a judge, a priest, or the king. The elders were heads of families and leading citizens. They sat at the city gate (Prov. 31:23), where they heard cases (Ruth 4:1–12), oversaw property transactions (Gen. 23:10–20), settled disputes, and imposed penalties (Deut. 22:18–19). As Israelite society developed, judges were appointed from each tribe and town to administer justice (Deut. 16:18). If a case was too difficult, the judge could transfer the case to a higher court and judge (Exod. 18:21–22). Once a higher court gave a verdict, the participants and lower courts were bound by the decision (Deut. 17:8–13). Priests distinguished between the holy and the common, between clean and unclean (Lev. 10:10). However, they could judge all types of cases, not just religious ones (Deut. 21:5; Ezek. 44:23–24).

With the establishment of the monarchy, the king became the highest judge, and the elders and priests became minor judges. David appointed judges from the Levites over all Israel to administer justice (1 Chron. 26:29), but he also heard cases himself. Solomon provided the quintessential example of a wise judge as he settled the case of the two women and the one remaining child (1 Kings 3:16–28). Solomon moved the court from the city gate to the "Hall of Justice" in his palace (1 Kings 7:7). Jehoshaphat reformed Judah's court system and established two courts, one over cases concerning God, the other over cases concerning the king (2 Chron. 19:5–11).

The OT does not provide a detailed description of the Israelite court procedures; however, glimpses into the procedures can be pieced together from several passages. Whether at the city gate, sanctuary, or palace, a private person who appeared as a plaintiff initiated the judicial action (Deut. 25:7–8). The parties stood before the judge, while the judge was seated (Deut. 19:17). However, the judge stood to pronounce judgment (Isa. 3:13). The plaintiff was the *satan*, "accuser" or "adversary" (Ps. 109:6). The accusation could be given orally (Isa. 41:21) or in writing (Job 31:35–36). There was no public prosecutor or defender. Each party brought its own case and witnesses. A conviction required at least two witnesses (Num. 35:30; Deut. 19:15). Witnesses accepted responsibility for the sentence, which is why they had to throw the first stones when such a penalty was in order (Deut. 17:7; John 8:7). If they provided false testimony, they faced the punishment for the crime about which they testified. Each side could produce physical evidence to make its case (Deut. 22:13–17). If a case lacked sufficient evidence or witnesses, an oath or an ordeal could be undertaken to support one's case (Exod. 22:6–10). At times, lots were cast to select a guilty individual (Josh. 7:14–15) or to end a quarrel (Prov. 18:18). After everything had been examined, the judge acquitted the innocent and condemned the guilty (Deut. 25:1). Depending upon the crime, the penalty could be a fine, compensation, bodily punishment, or even death. Jail was primarily used for those awaiting trial and not as a punishment. If evidence and witnesses were lacking and a murder went unsolved, then a sacrifice was made to declare the community's innocence and to atone for the community (Deut. 21:1–8).

Ideally, judges were just, righteous, fair, and defenders of the weak (Deut. 16:18–20). Unfortunately, multiple examples exist of false witnesses (Deut. 19:18) and corrupt judges who accepted bribes, perverted justice, and showed favoritism (Exod. 23:3, 8; Mic. 3:11). Ultimately, God was the supreme judge of all, protector of the weak, just, and no respecter of persons.

NEW TESTAMENT

During the NT period numerous lesser Sanhedrins, or councils, administered justice in Jewish communities. The lesser Sanhedrins consisted of twenty-three members, but the one in Jerusalem, the Great Sanhedrin, consisted of the high priest and seventy members comprised of priests, scribes, elders, and laity from among the Sadducees and the Pharisees. The Great Sanhedrin was the supreme legislative and judicial body, and it wielded its own police force (Acts 5:24–26). The Romans allowed the Great Sanhedrin broad authority over internal and religious matters, but they limited its ability to exercise capital punishment (John 18:31). The deaths of Stephen and James were probably lynchings rather than formal executions. Clearly, the Great Sanhedrin had the authority to administer corporal punishment (2 Cor. 11:24).

The Mishnah provides insight into the Great Sanhedrin's judicial procedure. However, several of the procedures stand in tension with the procedures described in the Gospels concerning Jesus' trial. Cases were to be heard only during the day, but at least a hearing into the charges facing Jesus occurred at night. The proceedings against Jesus were held at the high priest's palace instead of properly at the court (John 18:13). Capital cases could not be heard the day before the Sabbath or a festival, but Jesus was condemned on Friday during Passover.

The trials of Jesus and Paul fit well with what is known about Roman law. Roman regional rulers heard cases involving public order but usually left smaller issues in the hands of local courts. For example, Pilate, a prefect, initially wanted to release Jesus, and Gallio, the proconsul of Achaia, refused to hear the charges against Paul. Such officials could also delay a decision for extended periods of time. Hoping to receive a bribe, the procurator Felix held Paul for two years without a judgment (Acts 24:26). Roman officials also had the discretion to send defendants to their home province. Pilate sent Jesus to Herod because Jesus was from Galilee, and Felix inquired about Paul's home in Cilicia. When hearing a case, the Roman official gave the defendant and the accuser opportunities to make their respective cases and to call witnesses. Pilate gave Jesus an opportunity to defend himself, and Festus explained that it is "not the Roman custom" to condemn someone who has not yet faced the accusers and put on a defense against their charges (Acts 25:16). As a Roman citizen, Paul was afforded rights in the court system. When Paul was imprisoned and beaten without trial, he demanded an apology from the Philippian officials (16:37). Paul's Roman citizenship also gave him the right to appeal to Caesar (25:11).

Paul expected Christians to abide by the decisions of the courts (Rom. 13:1–3), but he also encouraged Christians to avoid taking other Christians to court (1 Cor. 6:1–11) because they should be able to settle disputes within the church.

COUSIN The offspring of one's aunt or uncle. Roman Catholicism teaches that Mary the mother of Jesus is a perpetual virgin, and thus she had no other children after him. On this view, Jesus' "brothers" and "sisters" mentioned in the NT are taken to be his cousins (Matt. 13:56; Mark 6:3; *see also* Brothers and Sisters, Jesus').

COVENANT Covenant is one of the most significant concepts in the biblical material that affects our understanding of God, his relationship with his people (past, present, and future), and the structure and message of his word. Since the covenant concept is not a unique biblical idea, comparative literature from the world of the Scriptures has enriched our understanding of the nature and the function of covenant. This article highlights the covenant concept and the genre of covenant and provides a brief overview of the major biblical covenants.

TERMINOLOGY

Defining "covenant." What is a covenant (Heb. *berit*)? Most dictionaries refer to it as a pact/compact or an agreement. Although there is some uncertainty regarding the etymology of *berit*, the two most commonly suggested etymological derivations are from the Akkadian *burru*, which refers to the establishment of a legal situation by a testimony with an oath, or the Akkadian *bittu*, often translated as "to bind, fetter." The NT counterpart word is *diathēkē*, defined as a "legal disposition of personal goods." Interestingly, this NT term is used in reference to the initiative of one person who establishes the terms and provisions of the relationship, which is in keeping with unilateral OT covenants. Some OT dictionaries list the "covenant" root with the root for the word "to eat," perhaps associating the covenant with a covenant meal.

If the concept of binding best represents the covenant terminology, then the covenant is something that binds parties together or obligates one party to the other. Although there are legal implications associated with covenant, the relational aspect of covenant should not be overlooked. A covenant is best understood as a relationship with related legalities. Marriage, for example, is a covenant that establishes and defines a relationship. This perhaps explains why God chose from the realm of relationships among humans the covenant metaphor to establish and communicate his intent in divine-human relationships. The concept of a covenant relationship between God and people is uniquely developed in the biblical material.

Some covenants are between persons of equal status (parity treaties); others are between a master and a servant (suzerainty treaties), between nations, between clans, and between a husband and a wife (Mal. 2:14). To “cut a covenant” at any level of society implies a solemn commitment to a relationship. Hittite treaties illustrate reports of covenant commitments that include a record of negotiations, formulations of terms, a statement that the act of covenant making actually happened, and a closure of negotiations with solemn ratification of the terms.

The most significant covenant relationship in the biblical material is the one between God and humankind. The uniqueness of Israel’s covenant relationship with Yahweh in contrast to all surrounding nations is established on the basis of Deut. 32:8–9. Although Yahweh gave the nations their inheritance, he selected Israel for his own personal care; he established a relationship with the nation independent of and prior to the nation’s association with his land. This was a unique application of the covenant that ran counter to the prevailing Semitic mind-set, which connected deities to specific geographic territories first and was concerned with the inhabitants of those areas only in a secondary sense. Individual OT believers celebrated their relationship with Yahweh and proclaimed him as the unrivaled universal God (Exod. 15; 1 Sam. 2; Isa. 40).

Other key terms. In addition to the “covenant” terminology word group, several other key terms fill out our understanding of this important concept.

“Oath” is a term used synonymously with “covenant” and functions at times to describe the making of a covenant. The oath emphasizes the liability and obligation associated in the relationship (Deut. 29:19). The oath can be taken by both parties (Gen. 26:28) or by just one party (Ezek. 17:13).

The word “testimony” refers to the contents of the two tablets of stone (Exod. 31:18) received by Moses from God at Mount Sinai. The ark of the covenant is also identified by the phrase “ark of the testimony” (Exod. 26:34; 30:6; 31:7 KJV, ESV). Testimony in the context of the covenant refers to the obligations placed upon the nation in covenant with Yahweh.

Jebel Musa (“Mountain of Moses”), the traditional site of Mount Sinai, where Moses received the covenant

The term “word” can be understood in connection with covenant communication. The conquest of the land (a covenant promise) is viewed as a performance of the word of God (Deut. 9:5 KJV). The phrases “establish his covenant” (Deut. 8:18 KJV) and “perform his word” (Deut. 9:5 KJV) are parallel ideas within the overall concept of covenant. The sure “word of the LORD” to David in 2 Sam. 7:4 can be contrasted with worthless words of the nation used in making a covenant with God (Hos. 10:4).

Torah is a Hebrew term related to covenant. The terms *berit* and *torah* are found in parallel structure in Ps. 78:10. The binding arrangement between God and his people is ultimately based upon and regulated by the instructions of his word. The phrase “Book of the Law” (2 Kings 22:8) has the same covenant implications as the phrase “tablets of the Testimony” (Exod. 31:18 ESV, NASB). God indicted the priesthood for misguiding the people and causing them to stumble at the law (Mal. 2:5–8) and ultimately to be misguided in their relationship with him.

Khesed is another Hebrew term that is frequently used with relation to a covenant. Defined as “steadfast covenant loyalty,” it is also understood as grace, mercy, kindness, loving-kindness. *Khesed* is that characteristic of God which causes him to act consistently and faithfully regarding self-imposed obligations in covenant relationships despite the failure or success of the other party. The *khesed* of God will never cease (Lam. 3:19–21) because he keeps covenant and mercy (Deut. 7:9, 12). The loyalty of God to David is stated in 2 Sam. 7:14–15 and celebrated in Ps. 89:14, 24, 28, 33–34, 49. In contrast, the people are indicted for their lack of loyalty (Hos. 4:1).

Common phrases. The most common covenant-making phrase is “to cut a covenant.” Two possible practices lie behind this phrase. The first reflects a practice in Mesopotamia and Syria, cutting a covenant into a tablet with a stylus. This may be somewhat similar to what is found in Exod. 31:18, where it is said that the two tablets of stone were “inscribed by the finger of God.” The second practice behind this phrase is the cutting of sacrificial animals. The halving of animals was part of the covenant made with Abraham in Gen. 15:9–18. In a situation of covenant violation God tells Israel that he will treat them like the calf they cut in covenant making (Jer. 34:17–19). Covenant making is also described as establishing a covenant (2 Sam. 23:5), giving a covenant (Gen. 9:12), and erecting a covenant (Exod. 6:4).

Faithfulness and loyalty to a covenant are expressed by several phrases. “Keep a covenant” exhorts the covenant parties to watch, guard, exercise faithfulness to the terms of the relationship established (Exod. 34:7). “Observe a covenant” implies the demonstration of covenant fidelity in observing and doing (Gen. 17:9–10; Exod. 19:5; NIV: “keep my covenant”). God is obviously faithful in observing the covenant (Deut. 7:9–12). “Remember a covenant” conveys more than just a mental exercise, especially when God is the subject of the verbal action of remembering. When God remembers a covenant, he acts with resolve and intervention (Gen. 8:1; 19:29; 30:22; Exod. 2:24).

Covenant infidelity is expressed by the phrases “break the covenant” (Lev. 26:14–16; Jer. 11:10; 31:32; 33:20–21), “not faithful” (Ps. 78:37), “violate the covenant” (Deut. 17:2; Josh. 7:11, 15; 23:16), and “forsake the covenant” (Jer. 22:9; cf. Deut. 29:25; 1 Kings 19:10, 14).

The Covenant Genre

We now turn to the form, content, and function of a covenant, or the covenant genre. There is evidence of a common treaty form used by ancient Near Eastern peoples to govern relationships between nations and tribes. This evidence dates back to the third millennium BC and is derived from literary texts discovered in the ancient Near East. The most helpful contributions to this discussion come from the Hittites (1400–1200 BC), the Assyrians (800–600 BC), and the Babylonians. From this evidence, we are able to identify four ancient Near Eastern arrangements.

1. The *intertribal treaty* was a legal arrangement between tribes and clans for various purposes such as the purchase of land, trading, or peaceful coexistence. The arrangements made in this format were equally binding on both parties. A possible biblical example is the arrangement between Abraham and Abimelek in Gen. 21:22–34 or the arrangement between Abimelek and Isaac in Gen. 26:28.

2. The *parity treaty* was an arrangement made between kings and princes who were equal in each other's eyes. This arrangement involved mutual participation, as illustrated in the economic relationship established between King Solomon and King Hiram of Tyre in 1 Kings 5:1–12.

3. The *suzerainty treaty* was established between two parties, one inferior and one superior. The distinctive emphasis of the treaty was on the superior party, the suzerain. In this arrangement the suzerain agrees to make certain provisions for the vassal. He agrees to defend the vassal in the case of attack, along with permitting the existence of the vassal nation. In addition, the suzerain has the right to take tribute from the vassal at any time. The vassal, for his part, agrees to a position of servanthood but not slavery. Vassals honor the suzerain with tribute and material goods.

There are six basic parts to the format of this treaty. Many scholars believe that the suzerainty treaty form has influenced the structure of the book of Deuteronomy.

(a) The treaty begins with the preamble that identifies the treaty's author/originator (cf. Deut. 1:1–6a; 5:6a, 23–27).

(b) The second part is the prologue, which contains a review of the past relationship between the vassal and the suzerain constructed in an "I-Thou" format (cf. Deut. 1:6b–3:29; 2:7; 4:32–38). The purpose of this section is to review the previous acts of benevolence demonstrated by the suzerain toward the vassal. The faithfulness of the suzerain to the vassal would perhaps instill some measure of confidence for entrance into this relationship. In Hittite treaties there was often a grace ethic ideology that characterized the prologue and served as a basis of appeal for obedience. The Hittites demonstrated a measure of appreciation for conquered vassals and treated them with dignity by allowing them limited sovereignty. The Assyrians operated with a power ethic that motivated obedience by threatening dismemberment, torture, and even death. Yahweh appealed to Israel on the basis of the grace of redemption (Exod. 20:8–11; Deut. 5:12–15) and the privilege of revelation (Deut. 4:12; cf. Rom. 3:2).

(c) The stipulations are the third part of the treaty form. These are the expectations of the suzerain for the vassal (cf. Deut. 4:1–23; 6:4–7:2; 10:12–22; 12–26). The stipulations call for the vassal to be loyal in war, to loyally return political refugees, and to not murmur against the suzerain and his kingdom. The heart of the stipulation in Deuteronomy is the appeal to "love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength" (6:5), one of the most important verses of the OT.

(d) The deposit and public reading of the treaty is the next division. This section instructs the vassal to place the treaty in his sanctuary and directs the vassal to publicly read the document from one to four times per year (cf. Deut. 10:1–5; 31:9–13). A regular reading was designed to keep the stipulations before the vassal in order to nurture respect for the suzerain.

(e) In the next part, a list of witnesses, usually gods, are called upon to observe the covenant and to punish any breach of it (cf. Deut. 30:19–20).

(f) The final part of the treaty is a section of blessing and curse. This section contains a list of potential rewards for faithfulness and terrifying possibilities of retribution for covenant violations (cf. Deut. 28–29).

4. The *royal grant treaty*, used in both biblical and secular literature, is somewhat similar to the suzerainty treaty. The distinctive difference is that the obligation of the grant is not on the vassal but rather on the suzerain to protect the rights of the vassal. In this format the curse is directed against any third party that would oppose the vassal or against the suzerain who would act unfaithfully against the vassal.

COVENANTS IN THE BIBLE

Types of covenants. The material on covenant form, content, and structure comes into play when attempts are made to interpret the major covenants recorded in the Bible (Noahic, Abrahamic, Mosaic, Davidic, and new). Initial discussions usually revolve around whether these covenants are conditional or unconditional. Although there is merit to this discussion, covenants should also be understood in light of which party is bearing the treaty obligation. As described above, the obligation of the suzerainty treaty is upon the vassal to fulfill the expectations of the suzerain. In the grant treaty the obligation is placed upon the suzerain to fulfill the treaty promises made to the vassal. There is a sense of conditionality and unconditionality in both treaty forms.

On this basis, the Mosaic covenant is most fittingly understood in light of the suzerainty treaty. This covenant made at Mount Sinai established Israel as a covenant nation. Yahweh never intended to create a relationship with Israel on the basis of this covenant. Rather, he chose this covenant form as the means to regulate his relationship with Israel, the nation that he had just graciously redeemed. The Mosaic covenant addressed every aspect of Israelite life. so that the prophetic charges against the nation’s transgressions were considered covenant violations.

The Abrahamic and Davidic covenants are more like a grant. In the Abrahamic covenant Yahweh is obligating himself to gift Israel with land, seed, and blessing (Gen. 12–17). The halving of animals in Gen. 15:9–20 resembles a covenant-cutting ceremony in which Yahweh, in the form of a smoking firepot, walks between the animals, obligating himself to the terms of the covenant. In the Davidic covenant (2 Sam. 7; Ps. 89), Yahweh obligates himself to provide David and his descendants a king and a kingdom. The new covenant is first referenced by Moses in Deut. 30:6 and then developed more extensively in Jer. 31:31–33 and Ezek. 36. Scholars debate the nature of this covenant and the promises associated with it. Some define it as a grant and speak of it in unconditional terms, while others view it as an administrative covenant. The new covenant anticipates a change in the heart of the vassal that ultimately facilitates keeping of the law. The OT Scriptures see this happening in connection with Israel’s occupation of the land at a future time.

Covenant leadership positions. In addition to the very specific covenant arrangements made by God in the OT defining and regulating the life and future of Israel, God established three key covenant leadership positions for the nation: prophet, priest, and king (Deut. 17–18). Their connection with the covenant is evident from the fact that their origin and function are detailed in the covenant book of Deuteronomy.

God provided a prophet (Deut. 18:9–22) for the nation so that it would not learn the abominations of the Canaanites and surrounding nations. God desired spiritual integrity for his people and established the prophet as his mouthpiece to speak what he commanded (Deut. 18:18–20). The prophet was to be an Israelite who fit a Moses-like pattern (Deut. 18:18–19). The writing and nonwriting prophets often called Israel back to covenant fidelity. They did this by using legal terminology to illustrate covenant violations, thus establishing covenant lawsuits against them. Isaiah 1 is a case made by God against the nation. In this lawsuit God functions as judge, jury, and lawyer.

The priest (Deut. 17:8–13; 18:1–8; 33:8–11) had a threefold function within the covenant community. He was a mediator of people before God and of God before people. This particular function of the priesthood was broad and encompassed much of its work. The priest was a teacher who sought from the Torah resolution to disagreements between parties (cf. Jer. 18:18). It is also worth noting that the teaching of the priest preceded sacrifice. Finally, he was a minister of sacrifice. The priest led Israel in worship and sacrifice, giving instruction concerning what was clean and unclean (Lev. 13–15).

The king was also a provision of the covenant (Deut. 17). Kingship was not a divine accommodation to the desire of Israel (1 Sam. 8) but rather a part of the overall covenant plan of God revealed to Abraham (Gen. 17:16). The promise of kingship was reiterated in Gen. 35:11; 49:10. The duty of the king involved administration of the kingdom on the basis of the word of God (Deut. 17:18–20; cf. Prov. 29:4, 14).

Covenant in the Old Testament. Covenant is a dominant theme that gives cohesiveness to the structure of the OT and distinguishes the history of Israel. The phrase “covenant history” can be used to describe the biblical literature that recounts the events and episodes of Israelite life. It is a macrogenre that characterizes the historical narratives of the OT. Although this large literary corpus of historical narrative shares a covenant perspective, the individual books within the narrative corpus are noted for the attention they give to various aspects of the covenant relationship. For example, Gen. 12–50 develops the covenant promises of seed and blessing through a number of subgenres such as genealogies and family stories. Joshua, on the other hand, engages several military subgenres to recount the tension between the promise of land occupation and the responsibility of Israel to occupy the land. Covenant history is a realistic presentation of the tensions associated with the covenant relationship between Yahweh and the nation of Israel.

Finally, the psalms have a direct covenant connection emphasizing covenant worship. Psalm 119 (esp. vv. 57–64) is filled with covenant terms that relate to God’s word (testimonies, laws, oath, judgments). Marching to the place of worship designated by the covenant is reflected in the Psalms of Ascent.

Covenant in the New Testament. Although the covenant theme is less pervasive in the NT, its christological significance is profound. The NT highlights the significant messianic role of Christ in relation to the covenants. Paul references the new covenant in both books of Corinthians (1 Cor. 11:25; 2 Cor. 3:6). Each celebration of the Lord’s Supper reminds us that the shed blood of Christ is the blood of the new covenant. The new covenant is cut in connection with or on the basis of his death, burial, and resurrection (1 Cor. 11:25). The writer of the book of Hebrews gives detailed attention to how the new covenant functions in contrast to the old Mosaic covenant. The writer explains that Jesus is the guarantor of a better covenant (7:22; 8:6–7). Finally, Paul indicates that we are now considered ministers of the new covenant ministry (2 Cor. 3:6).

COVENANT BOX *See* Ark of the Covenant.

COVENANT OF SALT Grain offerings were seasoned with the “salt of the covenant” (Lev. 2:13). The sacred incense was to be salted (Exod. 30:35). Offering portions for the priests and Levites were given to them as “an everlasting covenant of salt” (Num. 18:19). The preservative quality of salt (or the fact that salt survives the sacrificial fire) symbolized the eternality of the covenant and undergirded Jesus' charge to believers to be "salt" (Matt. 5:13).

COVERING OF THE HEAD Head coverings were common in the world of the Bible, and their meaning differed from place to place and from time to time. They often were associated with mourning, shame, and/or religious observances. In 1 Cor. 11:2–16 Paul gives instructions to both men and women about covering the head while praying and prophesying. Although some see this as a reference to hair, it is more likely a reference to a material covering.

Corinth was a Roman colony, and the significance of head coverings in 1 Cor. 11:2–16 is to be found in that sociocultural milieu. The practice of Roman men covering their heads while praying was common in the context of the imperial cult. The literal meaning of the Greek of 1 Cor. 11:4, "having [something] down from the head," may refer to the material of the toga coming down from the head during pagan worship; a statue of a veiled Augustus in Corinth helps to confirm this interpretation. A man therefore dishonored his head (i.e., Christ [1 Cor. 11:4]) if his anatomical head was covered, as this would associate Christian worship with pagan devotion.

Statue of Augustus with his head covered (first century AD)

For Roman women, covering the head was a sign of modesty and respectability. A married woman, when appearing in public, covered her hair in order to protect her from the gaze of a man who was not her husband; hair was seen as an object of male lust. For women, an uncovered head hinted at sexual availability or shame, and this state was inappropriate when a woman was praying or prophesying.

In 1 Cor. 11:6 Paul refers both to head coverings and to hair. A woman with a shaved head would be seen as having lost her femininity; a woman with a covered head would display her modesty, her respectability, and her self-controlled and respectable sexuality.

COVERING OF THE LIVER *See* Caul.

COVET, COVETOUS To harbor an inordinate desire, especially for something belonging to someone else, often with intent to deprive that person of what is rightfully his or hers. English Bible versions differ on which biblical terms bear this sense and how best to render them.

In the OT, the principal Hebrew term, *khamad*, indicates an unrestrained, selfish desire. A survey of its occurrences shows this desire directed most often toward things that belong to others or that are otherwise illicit (e.g., Josh. 7:21; Prov. 6:25; Mic. 2:2; but see Ps. 68:16: “God chooses”).

Notably, the tenth commandment prohibits coveting another’s possessions (Exod. 20:17; Deut. 5:21). It is unique among the Decalogue’s latter commandments (Exod. 20:12–17) because it targets an inward attitude rather than outward acts. This reflects awareness that covetousness, when permitted, prompts the very acts that the Decalogue condemns. The OT is replete with corresponding examples: Achan coveted plunder devoted to Yahweh and stole some (Josh. 7); David coveted Bathsheba, thus committing adultery and instigating murder (2 Sam. 11); Ahab coveted Naboth’s vineyard, and he got it when Jezebel had Naboth falsely accused (1 Kings 21).

In the NT, a principal Greek term, *epithymeō*, represents a strong desire generally. Paul (following the LXX) uses it when referencing the tenth commandment (Rom. 7:7; 13:9), so that the Greek term is similar to the Hebrew one in meaning. In contrast, James 4:2 employs *epithymeō* broadly to refer to evil desires that promote strife. The exact meaning of this word is determined by context (cf. Matt. 13:17, where Jesus speaks of those who “longed” to experience what his disciples did).

In Rom. 13:9 Paul expands Jesus’ summation of the Decalogue: coveting is the antithesis of loving one’s neighbor as oneself.

COW A domesticated livestock animal commonly kept in the ancient Near East. When translating the original language, it is not always possible to distinguish whether the animals referred to are cattle, oxen, sheep, goats, or a mixed herd. Cows and oxen were kept for milk (Deut. 32:14) and meat (Gen. 18:7; Luke 15:23) and as work animals for plowing or pulling wagons (1 Sam. 11:5; 1 Kings 19:19).

COZ *See* Hakkoz; Koz.

COZBI *See* Kozbi.

COZEBA *See* Kozeba.

CRACKNEL *See* Cake.

CRAFT The expertise of fashioning useful or decorative items from materials such as clay, stone, wood, metal, or textiles. God's Spirit enabled men and women to use the crafts of metalworking, stonecutting, woodworking, weaving, embroidering, and perfumery to construct and adorn the tabernacle and its furnishings (Exod. 31:3–11; 35:25–35). Men skilled in any craft were dispatched to assist with the building of the temple under the direction of Solomon (1 Chron. 28:21). Paul's preaching interfered with the craft of those who made metal idols in Ephesus (Acts 19:24).

CRANE In Isa. 38:14; Jer. 8:7 many versions translate the Hebrew word *'agur* as "crane" (NIV: "thrush"), a tall, storklike bird, with a noisy cry, that migrates over Israel in huge flocks for a few days each spring and fall.

CRAWLING THINGS *See* Insects; Reptiles.

CREATION The foundational story in all of the OT is the story of creation, found in Gen. 1–2. Throughout the history of interpretation there have been many approaches to understanding these chapters. In the modern world, discoveries from both science and archaeology have challenged some traditional convictions, and debates continue to rage. Still, what Gen. 1–2 communicates is generally clear: (1) it establishes Yahweh, the God of Israel, as the God by whose word all exists; (2) it presents for ancient readers a compelling argument for why they should worship Israel's God and not other gods of the ancient world. On this second point, it must be remembered that Israel's belief in one God flew in the face of contemporary religious notions, where each nation had a high god along with lesser gods. Hence, when reading Gen. 1–2, we must keep in mind its ancient polemical dimension rather than approaching it with modern expectations.

The differing perspectives of Genesis 1 and 2. Even a quick reading of Gen. 1–2 shows that the perspectives on creation in the two chapters are somewhat different. Genesis 1 is ordered famously as a seven-day process, whereby humanity is created as the pinnacle of God's work on day six. On the seventh day, as is well known, God rested. Much has been made among some Christians about the need to read this chapter literally, but that no longer seems to be the dominant view. Much less is a scientific explanation winning the day (where the details of the text correspond to certain scientific models, which are themselves disputed). A commonly accepted understanding of these chapters among Christians goes by various names, and it attempts to account for the poetic structure of Gen. 1. In Gen. 1:2 we read that the earth was "formless and empty." What follows is a description of God providing "form" in days one through three and then a corresponding filling of the "emptiness" in days four through six. Hence, in day one God separates light from darkness, and in day four he fills the void with the sun, the moon, and the stars. Day two yields the expanses between the waters and the sky, and day five fills the voids with water creatures and sky creatures. Day three yields the land and vegetation, and day six fills the void with land creatures, the crowning achievement being humanity.

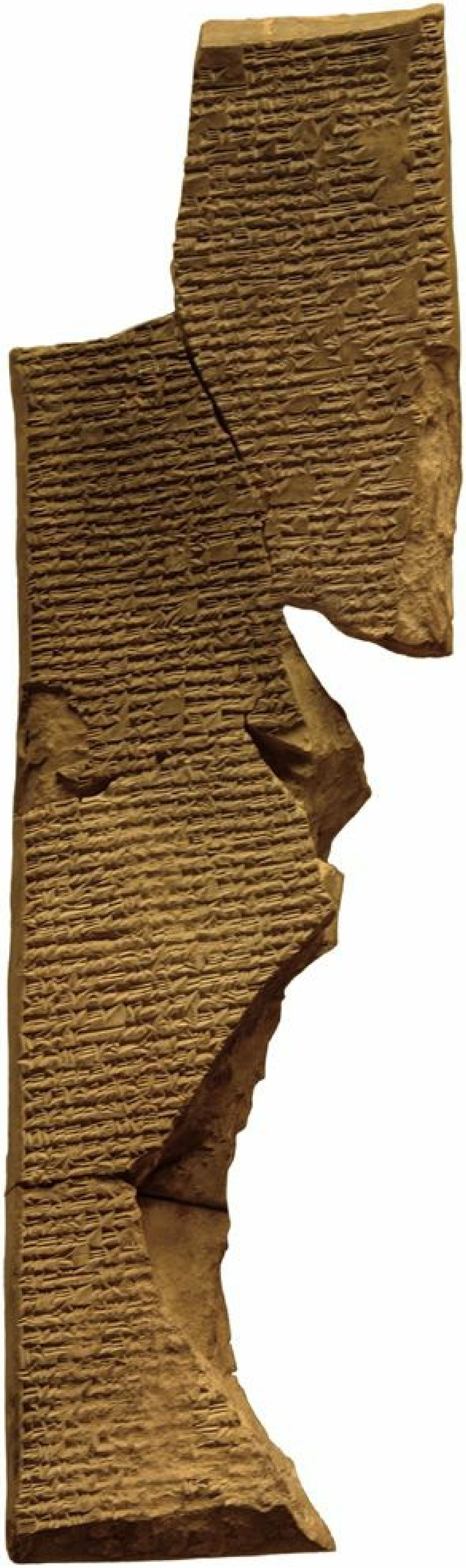
Genesis 2 provides a different perspective on the events. It seems that humanity is created before there were any shrubs or plants. Apart from this difference in order, more important is the focus on Adam and Eve and their role in creation, as those called to work the land together. These two perspectives are not contradictory, since one can easily understand Gen. 2 as explicating Gen. 1:26–

30. Modern scholarship has largely assigned these two versions to two different literary sources (*see* Documentary Hypothesis), a theory based not only on the different perspectives of the two stories but also on other differences, such as language and style. Regardless of the alleged origins of these stories, however, they are presented to us together in the OT. As a unit, along with what follows in Gen. 3–11, these early chapters in Genesis in some ways stand in stark contrast to creation stories of the ancient Mesopotamian world, while at the same time adopting many of the concepts and much of the language of those stories.

Modern and ancient questions. To enter into this discussion is to ask, “What are these opening chapters of Genesis trying to say? How did the Israelites hear the creation story in Genesis?” It sometimes is tempting to read the creation story and ask modern questions. For example, “How does the Genesis creation narrative conform to scientific knowledge?” Modern questions such as these are not, in and of themselves, out of bounds. In fact, they may be unavoidable to a certain degree. But we must remember that ancient Israelites did not ask such questions. In the ancient Near East described in Genesis, which is thousands of years old, there was no science in any sense close to the way we think of it today.

The creation story was written not to answer modern questions but rather to address Israel’s questions. Beginning about the middle of the nineteenth century and into the early twentieth century, archaeologists discovered a number of creation stories from different peoples of the ancient Near East that help put the biblical account in context. These accounts tell stories of creation in which a number of gods are responsible. In one prominent example from ancient Babylon, creation was a result of a bloody conflict among the gods. Genesis 1 shares some of the descriptions of one or more of these other accounts (e.g., light exists before the creation of the sun, the moon, and the stars).

The theology of creation. Where Gen. 1 stands out is in its insistence that Israel’s God alone created the world through his spoken word. The purpose of such a declaration is not to satisfy contemporary intellectual curiosities about the nature of matter or the first moments of the universe’s existence. Its purpose is to declare to the Israelites that their God, not the gods of the ancient world, is responsible for everything there is, and that he alone is the one, therefore, who is worthy of their worship. The creation story is not an intellectual exercise but rather a deeply religious one. The Israelites lived in a world where every surrounding nation had a plurality of gods (pantheon). The Israelites were different. They had one God, and this is the message that rings loud and clear from Gen. 1.



Cuneiform tablet from the library of Ashurbanipal (669–631 BC) including a portion of the Mesopotamian creation epic

That Yahweh, Israel's God, is alone the creator is not an abstract theological statement. It is a call to worship. This is why, for example, numerous passages in the OT burst out in praise of Yahweh the creator. One example is Ps. 19. God's glory is so great and so apparent that even creation itself is said to speak of it. The psalm uses specific Genesis language: the "heavens" and the "firmament" proclaim what God has done (these words occur in Gen. 1:1, 6–8, and the Hebrew words in Gen. 1 and Ps. 19 are the same). Even though the heavens and the firmament have no powers of speech, as the psalm tells us (19:3–4), nevertheless they are "heard" throughout the world because of the awesomeness of the sun's circuit (19:5–6). The message is this: if you want to see how great God is, look up.

But the psalm does not end there. David is not simply interested in a contemplative posture for his people. Six verses about creation are followed, somewhat abruptly, by eight verses about the law. Clearly, a connection between them is being established, and that connection seems to be fairly straightforward: knowing God as creator should have an effect on how you behave. The God who created the heavens is also the God who gave you the law, David seems to be saying. And as worthy as God is of praise for the creation (even the heavens and the firmament join in), so too is the law. It is to be desired more than gold or sweet honey (v. 10). Knowing God as creator has very practical implications.

Creation and re-creation. Another important recurrence of creation in the OT, which also has practical implications, concerns God's saving activity. In brief, according to the OT (and the NT as well), when God saves his people, it is an act of "re-creation." One can see this theme developed in numerous places. For example, God is Israel's "maker" in texts such as Ps. 95:6; Hos. 8:14. These two texts are found in the context of God having delivered the Israelites from Egypt; their deliverance corresponds to their "creation" as God's people. Similarly, Isa. 43:14–17 concerns Israel's captivity in Babylon and what God will do to deliver his people. The prophecy describes their deliverance by using "exodus" language and in doing so refers to Yahweh as Israel's "Creator" (v. 15).

This connection between creation and redemption (re-creation) is also well articulated in the NT. For example, the opening words of John's Gospel echo the very first verses of the Bible: "in the beginning." With the coming of Christ, there is a new beginning. His act of redemption is described as the act of a second or new Adam (Rom. 5:12–21; 1 Cor. 15:22). When one confesses faith in Christ, one is "born again" or "from above" (John 3:3, 7; see also John 1:13; 1 Pet. 1:3, 23). To be a Christian is to start over, to begin anew, or as Paul put it, "If anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!" (2 Cor. 5:17). And in Rev. 22:2 paradise is described as containing a "tree of life," to which God's people once again have access. At the end, in other words, it will be as it was in the beginning. In the coming of Christ we see a new creation. That new creation is inaugurated in his first coming, where the church, his redeemed people, by the power of the Spirit, live as newly created beings in a fallen world. At his second coming, this new creation will be complete, and all creation will be redeemed.

CREATION AND SCIENCE Modern science and the Bible present accounts of the creation of the world that often are claimed to be incompatible. In response, interpreters of the Bible have adopted a range of approaches in order to overcome the apparent tensions. At one end of the spectrum is the position that wholeheartedly adopts modern scientific thinking and restricts the Bible's authority only to matters of faith—where "faith" must necessarily exclude anything that may touch on scientific matters. The other end of the spectrum lies with those who reject any claims of modern science that stand at odds with a "literal" reading of the Bible, affirming the truth of the Bible in all matters upon which it touches. Among contemporary Christians a number of positions on this spectrum are represented in modern debate; some of the more important of these are outlined in what follows here.

First is the view that a literal reading of the creation account in the Bible is necessitated by the nature of God and his self-revelation as trustworthy and true. Consequently, where conflict with modern science occurs, the literal reading of the Bible is right and modern science is wrong. In spite of this disagreement, the Bible's revelation can be supported through the application of modern scientific methodologies, and consequently an alternate scientific account of the creation of the world can be produced that reflects rather than contradicts the biblical account. Proponents of this view typically affirm the notion that the earth was created in six days within the last few thousand years. Some variations to this interpretation do exist, such as the view that a vast expanse of time may have passed between Gen. 1:1 and Gen. 1:3.

Second, it is possible to employ modern science to illuminate the meaning of the creation accounts. This approach has been used to suggest, for example, that a scientific model of the ancient earth's atmosphere may have provided conditions that could allow for the earthbound observer to believe that day and night existed before the appearance of the sun and other heavenly bodies. It has also facilitated the production of elaborate and detailed explanations of precisely how Gen. 1–2 can be interpreted to agree with the current scientific account of origins. One major problem is that it allows science ultimately to dictate the interpretation of the Bible, but other problems are apparent as well, such as the fact that because modern science becomes a prerequisite for a correct understanding of the biblical text, the true meaning of the text was unavailable in the past and, in particular, unavailable to its original audience.

Third, others claim that some aspects of the creation account in the Bible are figurative and should not be understood literally. The application of such an approach varies enormously, with disagreement over precisely which parts of the text are to be read figuratively and which literally. What this approach does allow for, however, is that where there are apparent conflicts between a literal reading of the text and modern science, both science and the text can be correct if the text is understood figuratively. One example of this approach suggests that the days of Gen. 1 are a literary device and, as such, should not be interpreted as literal twenty-four-hour days. This view thus allows its proponents to reconcile the creation account with the scientific view that the earth is billions of years old.

The fourth approach—in many ways a refinement of the third—emphasizes the notion that the Bible represents God's communication with people who lived in a particular historical and cultural context. As such, God's message is conveyed in their language, using expressions, idioms, concepts, and ideas with which they were familiar in order to effectively communicate with those people. Thus, some aspects of the text are "reflective" instead of didactic, accommodating to the needs of the people in order to effectively communicate the intended message. So, for example, when the OT refers to the heart as the locus of the human intellect, this reflects not an authoritative decree relating to human physiology but rather an aspect of the Hebrew language and culture employed by God to speak effectively to his people. Aspects of the creation account often cited as incoherent or problematical thus actually reflect accommodation to aspects of the worldview of the audience employed by God to communicate accurately with his people.

In spite of the often heated exchanges between proponents of these various positions, many in each group remain committed to the authority of the Bible. For those Christians who do accept that the prevailing modern scientific account of the origin of the universe is accurate (if not necessarily complete), it nonetheless remains impossible to reasonably claim that the Bible has nothing to say about creation or that it can have no impact on how scientists understand the universe. While God is "other"—that is, not part of creation—he is still intimately associated with it: he upholds it, controls it, and purposes it for his own ends (Isa. 46:9–11; Heb. 1:3).

Regardless of how one resolves the difficulties apparent in reconciling the biblical creation account with modern science, the existence of the problem itself highlights a fundamental aspect of Christianity: God intervenes in human history. If God interacts with his creation, then this invariably impacts how we should understand the universe in which we live. Science often adopts an unnecessarily atheistic set of presuppositions that are not only incompatible with biblical faith but also ultimately unnecessary for the pursuit of scientific understanding.

It is also important to acknowledge that science has long influenced readings of the Bible's creation account, whether that science was that of Aristotle or that of Einstein. For example, many early scholars felt it necessary to note the figurative nature of the days in Gen. 1, because they held that the creation of the universe was instantaneous. History has shown that for those who seek to reconcile their interpretation of the opening chapters of Genesis with the prevailing scientific paradigm of their day, each major shift in scientific understanding necessitates a revision of their understanding of the text. That this is so ought to serve as a warning that this approach is problematic. Understanding the Bible's creation account is clearly not contingent upon understanding modern science, or else it would have been useless to the many generations who came before us. Rather, in light of the fact that the account was written in an ancient language to the people of ancient Israel, it is more appropriate to read the text through their understanding of the world in order to derive the meaning that they would have attained as they read. We seek to understand the meaning of the text through a study of its language and culture. Part of this process is necessarily to seek to understand the meaning of the *ideas* implicit in the text, such as the manner in which it expresses details of the world in which the Israelites lived.

Of all aspects of science that have caused difficulties for readers of the Bible, the theory of evolution has perhaps been most consistently at the forefront of debate. Here again the spectrum of approaches outlined above is evident in Christian responses to the theory, and here again the degree of discord has frequently been overstated. Furthermore, the debate has tended to polarize views, driving the more vocal defenders of evolution to express their position more vehemently and with more certitude than is actually warranted by the evidence, and for some opponents of evolution similarly to overstate their case.

Even for those who hold that modern science is incompatible with biblical revelation on the matter of the origins of the universe and life, there remain substantial areas of science that do not come into conflict with the Bible, so we need to avoid an irrational response to modern science that rejects the whole on the basis of a disagreement over a part. It is also important to retain a degree of humility in our approach to both science and the Bible, for we are infallible interpreters neither of the physical world in which we live nor of the word of God.

Finally, it is important to acknowledge that the Bible makes certain claims that necessarily impact one's view of science. It is difficult to escape the fact that the Bible clearly depicts God as both responsible for creation and intervening in history. Consequently, a scientific worldview that seeks to comprehensively exclude God from involvement with his creation is clearly neither biblical nor compatible with the Bible except through application of the most elaborate exegetical and hermeneutical gymnastics.

CREATURE Whether animal or human, "creature" assumes creator. God's unique creative activity is showcased in his majestic work: "creatures" (Heb. *bar'a*, "to create" [Gen. 1:1, 27]; Heb. *nepesh hayah*, "living creature" [Gen. 1:24; cf. 2:7]). While the infinite God is not confined in the lives of his creatures, both are linked in a relationship of fidelity (Ps. 104).

A creature is a gift and has an obligation of service (Ps. 150). Scripture celebrates divine rule and creaturely dependence (Ps. 96). Creatures have roles, and the liturgy of doxology revels in a cosmic and eschatological drama (Ps. 148; Isa. 40:12–31; 65:17–25). Humans are caretaking creatures (Ps. 8).

CREDIT, CREDITOR The practice of borrowing and lending was strictly regulated in ancient Israel. Credit could be given to foreigners at interest (Deut. 23:20), but money lent to other Israelites was regarded as charitable giving, and no interest was to be charged on this (Lev. 25:35–37; Deut. 23:19). Creditors were to treat their debtors with compassion (Exod. 22:26–27), and they were not permitted to use force to compel repayment (Deut. 24:10–13). This was because loans normally were given only in cases of extreme hardship, not for commercial purposes. Lending without interest was the mark of a righteous man (Ps. 15:5; Ezek. 18:5–9). Jesus gave similar instructions for lending generously and compassionately, without expectation of repayment (Matt. 5:42; Luke 6:33–35). Cancellation of debt was used as a parable to illustrate the forgiveness of sins (Luke 7:41–47).

CREEPING THING A translation of the Hebrew word *remes*, referring to a category of animals that includes reptiles, crawling insects, and other small animals that travel low to the ground. In the OT, such creatures are regularly distinguished from humans, large animals, livestock, flying animals, and fish, each of which constitutes its own class, and which, taken together with creeping things, represent all nonplant life. Creeping things are mentioned significantly in the creation account (Gen. 1:24–26) and in the Noah story (6:7, 20; 7:14, 23; 8:17, 19; 9:3). They are also found in 1 Kings 4:33; Pss. 104:25; 148:10; Ezek. 8:10; 38:20; Hos. 2:18; Hab. 1:14.

CREMATION The burning of the body of a deceased person as a final act of disposition of the body. Christians today are confronted with the question of whether the body of a loved one should be buried or cremated. Scripture reveals three basic principles: (1) the Bible does not use the word "cremation" or directly address this as a practice, so it would be improper to conclude that cremation is a sin; (2) the burial of the body in the ground or a tomb/vault is the clear and consistent pattern throughout Scripture for the proper handling of the body of the deceased; and (3) what references there are in Scripture to people's bodies being burned following death are often associated with judgment and disrespect for the person's body.

The early church rejected cremation, partly because of its association with pagan cultures of Greece and Rome. Thus, early Christians followed earlier Jewish practices and buried their dead in graves or catacombs (underground vaults). The strong preference for burial has continued for most of church history. The practice of cremation has emerged in the Western world only in the past century or so. Christians today are often attracted to cremation for reasons of cost and/or saving the environment. The best way to handle such matters that are not clearly specified or given directives in Scripture is to show tolerance for the views of others and for each person to "be fully convinced in their own mind” (Rom. 14:5).

CRESCENS Paul’s coworker who left for Galatia (or possibly Gaul) during Paul’s imprisonment at the writing of 2 Timothy. Crescens is mentioned once in the NT (2 Tim. 4:10). Later tradition speaks of his founding churches in Gaul.

CRESCENTS Jewelry fashioned in crescent shapes (Heb. *saharon*) was worn by the kings of Midian and their camels (Judg. 8:21, 26 ESV, NASB) and by some unfaithful Israelites (Isa. 3:18). The new-moon shape of the crescent may indicate that this sign had an astrological significance.

CRETANS Inhabitants of Crete, a large Mediterranean island southeast of Greece. Apparently, many held Cretans in general to be of low morals. In order to bolster his argument against destructive teachers in Crete, Paul favorably quotes to Titus a saying from a Cretan “prophet”: “Cretans are always liars, evil brutes, lazy gluttons” (Titus 1:12). The saying usually is attributed to the poet Epimenides of Crete (sixth century BC).

CRETE Crete is an island in the Mediterranean just off the coast of Greece, about 160 miles long and 35 miles wide in several places. It is a mountainous territory that has a known history dating back at least to 6000 BC. The most important early period was the third and second millennia BC, known as the Minoan period (named for King Minos). During this time, commerce and trade developed. The second half of this period is known for huge palaces, the ruins of some of which can still be seen (e.g., the mighty palace ruins in Knossos). In the first century BC the island was occupied by the Romans until the mid-fourth century AD. During NT times the island was under the rule of the Roman Empire.

Fair Havens (modern Kali Limones) in Crete (see Acts 27:8)

Archaeological excavations on Crete have revealed a language for the Cretan peoples in ancient times. Objects have been found containing an ancient pictographic language (Linear). Out of this developed Linear A, a language probably not alphabetic but also not pictographic (there seem to be about seventy symbols), still not deciphered, one that seems unlike anything else known.

The word for Crete in the OT is “Caphtor.” As Moses recounts the division and settling of the land of Canaan, he makes note of a number of the inhabitants, one group being the Avvites, who lived near Gaza, near the Mediterranean Sea (Deut. 2:23). Their land was taken by the Caphtorites, from the island of Crete. Jeremiah prophesies that God will destroy the people of the coasts of Caphtor, or Crete (Jer. 47:4). The prophet Amos records God’s message declaring his sovereignty over the nations, the Israelites, the Caphtorites (from Crete), and the Arameans (Amos 9:7).

Crete is referred to in the NT five times, four of these related to Paul’s sailing to Rome for trial. Acts mentions that on the way to Rome the ship found shelter sailing under the lee of Crete. They sailed close to the coast of Crete, moving to the western part of the island in hopes of spending the winter there (27:7–13). Against Paul’s warning, they chose to sail on, only to incur disaster. Afterward, Paul appeals to that event so that they might listen to him from then on (27:21–22).

Later, Paul returned to Crete for the purpose of evangelism and church planting. There he left his protégé Titus to carry on the work. The correction of the church at Crete and the instructions for ordaining elders occasion the book of Titus (1:5). Little is known of this church on Crete, only what can be inferred from the book of Titus. The church seems to have had problems similar to those faced by many of the other churches to which Paul ministered. Active there were rebellious and deceptive false teachers, whom Titus needed to silence. Paul reports that they were misleading whole families with their teaching. These teachers are said to have a Jewish connection. It is unclear what Paul means by this, but here he makes a surprising evaluation of these individuals by favorably citing a Cretan “prophet” who says that Cretans are “liars, evil brutes, lazy gluttons” (Titus 1:12–13). The connection between this evaluation and the problem of their false teaching is unclear, but Paul’s characterization of the Cretans must have been in some way related to the type of false teaching that was occurring.

CRIB *See* Manger.

CRICKET Mentioned only once in the Bible (Lev. 11:22), the cricket (Heb. *khargol*) is a flightless insect related to locusts, katydids, and grasshoppers and is listed along with them as clean and thus edible (cf. Matt. 3:4). In the list of insects in Lev. 11:22 the correlation of the Hebrew words to insect types is uncertain, so translations vary.

CRIMES AND PUNISHMENTS Unlike modern systems of jurisprudence, the Bible does not draw distinctions between criminal, civil, family, and religious law, either in its terminology or in its presentation of legal material. In the Bible, acts of deviance that are defined as criminal in virtually all societies are discussed alongside violations of a culturally specific, religious nature. For instance, the Ten Commandments prohibit murder and dishonoring parents (Exod. 20:12–13), as well as commanding Sabbath observance (Exod. 20:8–11). Any attempt to extract a system of criminal law from biblical materials must account for the fact that every culture defines deviance differently, with respect not only to specific acts but also to categories of deviance.

When viewed from the standpoint of the Bible’s organization of legal material, the terminology used, and the sanctions applied, there is substantial overlap in the Bible between “crime” and what modern societies define as noncriminal deviance. For present purposes, we might define “crime” broadly as including any act of social deviance that merits the application of a sanction by society at large (as opposed to the ad hoc fiats of rulers, as in Gen. 26:11) and that can be prohibited in a generally applied rule (even accounting for differences between free citizens and slaves, as in Exod. 21:18–21). As we will see, the Bible requires punishments, often severe, for a broad spectrum of offenses.

CAPITAL CRIMES

The Pentateuch mandates the death penalty for a wide variety of crimes. Often the mode of execution is unspecified. Where a particular mode is prescribed, the death penalty most often consisted of stoning (as in Num. 15:35) and less frequently of burning (Lev. 20:14) or shooting with arrows (Exod. 19:13).

Crimes incurring the death penalty include killing or murder (Exod. 21:12–14; Lev. 24:17; Num. 35:16), though the crime is aggravated or lessened depending on the intention behind it (Exod. 21:13–14) and whether a weapon is involved (Num. 35:16); attacking parents (Exod. 21:15); kidnapping and slave trading (Exod. 21:16; Deut. 24:7); cursing parents (Exod 21:17; Lev. 20:9); negligence resulting in death (Exod. 21:29); bestiality (Exod. 22:19; Lev. 20:15–16); breach of the Sabbath

(Exod. 31:14–15; Num. 15:35); child sacrifice (Lev. 20:2); adultery (Lev. 20:10; Deut. 22:22); incest (Lev. 20:11–12); homosexuality (Lev. 20:13); marrying a woman and her mother (Lev. 20:14); witchcraft (Exod. 22:18; Lev. 20:27); blasphemy (Exod. 24:16); unauthorized approach to the tabernacle (Num. 1:51); idolatry (Num. 25:5); false prophecy and divination (Deut. 13:5); presumptuous prophecy (Deut. 18:20); enticing others to idolatry (Deut. 13:6–10); false testimony in a capital case (Deut. 19:19); and contempt for authorities (Deut. 17:2; Josh. 1:18).

When the body of an executed criminal was displayed by hanging, it had to be removed by nightfall (Deut. 21:22). The death penalty was not to be applied vicariously to family members of criminals (Deut. 24:16). In OT texts, execution was to be carried out by the victims (Deut. 13:9), families of victims (the "avenger of blood" of Num. 35:19), or witnesses to the crime.

The NT mentions an official or professional executioner (Mark 6:27). Paul declares that the authorities rightly derive the power of the sword from God (Rom. 13:4).

PUNISHMENTS FOR NONCAPITAL CRIMES

Corporal punishment. Beating as a criminal punishment is rare in the OT (Jer. 20:2; 37:15). Most OT references to beating occur in the context of the household, as a punishment for slaves or children. Deuteronomy 25:3 limits the number of strokes in a flogging to forty (see 2 Cor. 11:24). Flogging was commonly applied as a criminal punishment in Roman times, and it was a common mode of discipline within the Roman military (Acts 16:22; 2 Cor. 11:25; 1 Pet. 2:20).

Restitution. Crimes against property were punished by compelling the offender to make restitution by repaying, often in an amount that exceeded the actual damages, including in cases of theft or negligence (Exod. 21:33; 22:3–15); killing an animal (Lev. 24:18, 21); having sexual relations with a virgin not pledged to be married (Exod. 22:16); injuring a pregnant woman (Exod. 21:22); harming a slave (Exod. 21:26–27). Financial restitution could not be made for murder (Num. 35:31).

Retribution. The notion of the *lex talionis*, the law of retribution, is stated in Exod. 21:23–24: "life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot" (cf. Lev. 24:19–20; Deut. 19:21; Matt. 5:38). This formula appears in other ancient legal traditions. The idea of bodily mutilation may strike modern readers as barbaric, but such laws may actually have been relatively enlightened by ancient standards, as they imposed a proportional limit on retribution.

Incarceration. In modern societies, incarceration and probation account for the vast majority of the punishments resulting from criminal offenses. In the OT, incarceration is rarely mentioned apart from the imprisonment of war captives (e.g., Judg. 16:21) and political dissidents. Jeremiah was imprisoned several times for his criticism of the regime (Jer. 32:2; 37:15). Throughout the Bible, prisoners often are guarded by soldiers rather than by professional jailers.

Paul imprisoned Christians prior to his conversion (Acts 8:3), and he himself was imprisoned or placed under arrest several times (e.g., Acts 16:23; 20:23; 24:27; Rom. 16:7). John the Baptist was imprisoned after he criticized Herod (Mark 6:17). Again, in both cases, incarceration was used to silence and segregate someone whose free movement in society threatened political stability rather than to punish a common criminal. In Matt. 5:25–26 Jesus refers to imprisonment for an unspecified reason, though the threat that "you will not get out until you have paid the last penny" suggests that incarceration was a substitute for an unpaid fine or monetary penalty. This recalls Exod. 22:3, which mandates that a thief who could not make financial restitution for theft must be sold (as a slave).

Banishment and cities of refuge. A number of OT passages refer to the "cutting off" of a person from the community. It is not clear whether this language refers to exile or the death penalty; several of the crimes thus punished are known to be capital crimes in other texts.

The law of Num. 35:6–34 establishes six “cities of refuge” among the towns allotted to the Levites. To these cities an unintentional killer could flee from the “avenger of blood,” a relative of the victim, until such time as the case could be adjudicated by the whole community. A killer who was found to have acted unintentionally and without malice could remain in the city of refuge, safe from retribution, until the death of the high priest, at which time the killer was free to return home with impunity.

TRIALS AND JUDGMENTS

In biblical times Israel did not have an independent judiciary. Judgments in criminal cases were rendered by local elders (Josh. 20:4), communities (Num. 35:24), monarchs, or other rulers and officials. The judges of the book of Judges were primarily military rulers, though they may have also adjudicated cases as a function of their military and political power (Judg. 4:5). Cases were decided on the basis of eyewitness testimony (Num. 35:30) and, in the case of capital crimes, on the basis of multiple witnesses (Deut. 17:6). In some cases, the Bible provides detailed statutory criteria for making such judgments, as in the discussion in Num. 35:16–28 of the difference between murder and unintentional killing. In some cases, where the determination of guilt or innocence would have been impossible, as in the case of suspected adultery, a verdict could be attained through divination (Num. 5:11–31). As already noted, the judgment of some cases could be affected by the slave status of those involved (Exod. 20:20–21; see also 22:8–9).

The trial and execution of Naboth, though ultimately a subversion of justice of the highest order, offers an insight into the operation of justice in Israel in the monarchic period (1 Kings 21:1–16). Naboth was accused on a trumped-up charge of blasphemy, a capital crime (Exod. 24:16). He was tried by the notables of his city, and on the testimony of two (false) witnesses (Deut. 17:6), he was then stoned to death.

From the standpoint of OT law, the trial and execution of Jesus were complicated by the context of concurrent systems of Jewish and Roman law and government. Like Naboth, Jesus was accused by false witnesses (Matt. 26:60–61). Ultimately, the Sanhedrin determined that because Jesus had blasphemed in its presence by identifying himself as the Messiah and the Son of God, further witness testimony was unnecessary in order to achieve the desired result, the death penalty (Matt. 26:65–66; John 19:7). Ultimately, the Sanhedrin had to involve the Roman governor because it lacked the authority to execute a criminal (John 18:31). By the time Jesus was taken before Pilate, the charge had been changed from a religious one to a political one: Jesus claimed to be the king of the Jews, thus subverting Roman authority (Matt. 26:11–12). Eventually, Pilate tortured and executed Jesus not because he saw merit in the charges but rather to avoid a riot (Matt. 27:24; John 19:4, 12). Luke reports that Jesus also had a trial before Herod Antipas, the ruler to whom Jesus was subject as a Galilean (23:7). Thus, the trial of Jesus in some ways reflects both Jewish and Roman law, but it also involves some purely pragmatic (and legally and morally questionable) actions on the part of both the Sanhedrin and Pilate.

CRIMSON Crimson dye was formed from the crushed bodies of female cochineal insects. It produces a deep red color (close to scarlet) used for yarns and cloth. In some translations of the Bible “crimson” is interchangeable with “scarlet.” Crimson, or scarlet, was a royal color, associated with wealth and power (Isa. 63:1; Jer. 4:30). A crimson robe was put on Jesus before his crucifixion in mockery of his kingship (Matt. 27:28). In conjunction with blue and purple, crimson was one of the colors used in the divine presence: the tabernacle curtains were woven from blue, purple, and scarlet yarn (Exod. 26:1), as were the high-priestly garments (Exod. 28:4–15, 33) and the temple curtains (2 Chron. 3:14). Crimson red was also used to symbolize sin (Isa. 1:18; cf. Rev. 17:3–4). *See also* Colors.

CRISPING PIN The KJV translation of the Hebrew word *kharit* in Isa. 3:22, referring to an ornament used by women for curling their hair. More-recent versions translate the word as “purse” or “handbag.” *See also* Purse.

CRISPUS A synagogue ruler in Corinth (with or before Sosthenes; cf. Acts 18:17) who became a Christian, along with his entire household, after hearing Paul preach (18:8). He was one of the few Corinthian believers whom Paul himself baptized (1 Cor. 1:14–16).

CROCUS Several species of crocus grow in Palestine. It is a spring-flowering plant with a long yellow floral tube tinged with purple specks or stripes. With abundant blossoms, the crocus (Heb. *khabatselet*) symbolizes beauty and splendor (Song 2:1; Isa. 35:1). According to the Targum, it is the dazzling yellow-green polyanthus narcissus that grows abundantly on Judean hills. Sometimes *khabatselet* is translated as “rose” (Song 2:1 KJV, NIV, NRSV), and botanists agree that the crocus may actually be the asphodel.

CROSS, CRUCIFIXION

TYPES OF CROSSES

A cross is an upright wooden beam or post on which persons were either tied or nailed as a means of torture and execution. A cross could have several different shapes. The earliest was not a cross at all but rather a simple stake or pole on which persons were impaled. This simple stake evolved over time into more elaborate shapes with the addition of a crossbeam that was secured to the upright stake. The Latin cross was shaped like a t and was the type most commonly used by the Romans. Jesus was crucified probably on a Latin cross, which allowed for a convenient place for a sign (called a *titlos* in John 19:19) to be placed above his head (Matt. 27:37 pars.). Another form of cross, now referred to as a St. Anthony’s cross, was shaped like a T, with the crossbeam affixed at the top of the upright beam. A cross shaped like an X, having a crisscross pattern, is also known as a St. Andrew’s cross. Tradition holds that the apostle Peter was crucified upside down on this type of cross. A cross shaped like a +, the Greek cross, has the crossbeam in the center.

CRUCIFIXION IN ANCIENT TIMES

In ancient times, crucifixion was a method of execution used by many peoples, including the Assyrians, the Phoenicians, the Babylonians, the Persians, the Medes, and the Greeks. Historically, crucifixion’s barbaric predecessor was impalement. Victims often were beheaded first, and then their lifeless bodies were forced onto a large stake or spike (Gen. 40:19; 1 Sam. 31:9–10). Impalement originally was more about triumph and exposure than execution (Deut. 21:22–23; Josh. 8:29; 10:26; 2 Sam. 4:12; 21:9–10). But the Assyrians impaled their enemies by sticking them, still alive, onto pointed stakes, thus utilizing impalement as a method of execution. The book of Esther probably reflects the practice of impalement in the Persian period by describing how the king’s officials were executed (2:23; 5:14; KJV: “hanged”). In these verses, the Hebrew word that some English versions translate as “gallows” (*’ets*) actually means “tree,” and a noose for hanging was not used in Persia during this period. Impalement became a common form of execution.

Impalement as a means of execution eventually gave way to crucifixion. Crucifixion was especially prized by the Phoenicians, whose normal methods of execution—drowning, immersion in boiling oil, impalement, stoning, and burning—were seen as too quick and easy. Wanting their victims to suffer longer, they used crucifixion, a more severe form of execution. The Greeks also crucified victims on a stake or a cross. Alexander the Great crucified two thousand inhabitants of Tyre along the shoreline when he captured the city in 332 BC.

There is no evidence that ancient Israel fastened people to a stake or a cross as a method of execution. Instead, stoning was the preferred method of execution in Israel and was commanded by the law (Lev. 20:2; Deut. 22:24). The law did, however, permit the public display of an offender's body "on a tree" or a "pole" after being executed (Deut. 21:22). The same expression is used in the book of Acts to describe Jesus' crucifixion (5:30; 10:39; 13:29). In contrast to pagan nations that would leave a corpse hanging on a cross until the flesh either rotted away or was devoured by vultures, Israel was commanded to take the body down, not letting it remain on the tree overnight (Deut. 21:23). This explains why the Jews were so adamant that Jesus' body be taken down before the Sabbath commenced at sunset (John 19:31). Being hung on a tree was especially abhorrent to Israel because it reflected God's curse upon the offender (Deut. 21:23). Jesus was accursed by God as he hung on the cross, bearing the sins of the world (Gal. 3:13).

CRUCIFIXION IN NEW TESTAMENT TIMES

Not long before the Romans took over Palestine, the Jewish ruler Alexander Jannaeus crucified about eight hundred Pharisees who opposed him in 86 BC. This gruesome event was out of character for the Jewish nation and was frowned upon by the Jews of the day as well as by the later Jewish historian Josephus. But it was the Romans who perfected crucifixion as a means of torture and execution. The Romans called crucifixion "slaves' punishment" because it was intended for the lowest members of society. It became the preferred method of execution for political crimes such as desertion, spying, rebellion, and insurrection. Roman crucifixion was common in NT times and extended well into the fourth century AD. The emperor Constantine converted to Christianity in AD 312 and abolished crucifixion altogether. The cross became a symbol of Christian sacrifice instead of a barbarous method of torture and execution.

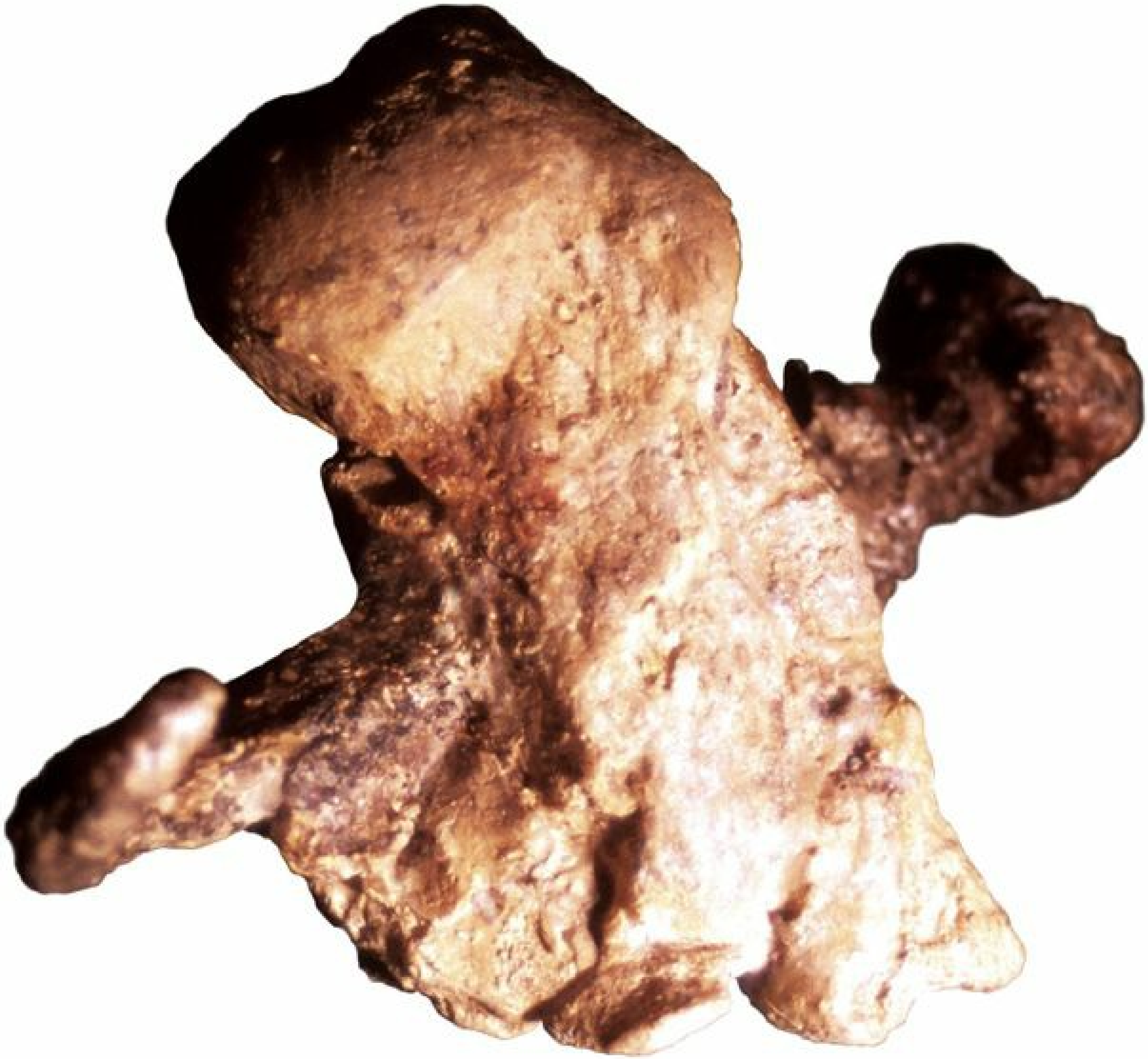
ROMAN CRUCIFIXION

Crucifixion was a barbaric method of torture and execution whereby a victim was either nailed or tied to a wooden cross and left to die a long, agonizing death. It often was reserved for the most offensive criminals, such as thieves (Matt. 27:38), murderers, insurrectionists (Mark 15:7), and other political rebels. Disobedient slaves commonly were crucified. Crucifixion was so demeaning that Roman citizens were exempt and could be crucified only by direct decree of the emperor. Crucifixion also was used as a triumphant sign in times of war as victors demonstrated their conquests by hoisting their enemies upon crosses for all to see. It was viewed as a public symbol of strength and intimidation. Adding insult to injury, executioners stripped their victims and crucified them alongside busy roads and in public places where onlookers could gaze in horror.

Criminals often were flogged severely before crucifixion in a pseudo-compassionate effort to speed up the death process experienced on the cross (John 19:1). The victim was stripped, tied to a post, and then brutally beaten by several Roman torturers using whips with sharp pieces of bone or metal at the ends of the lashes. Such floggings were said to leave the victim's bones and entrails exposed. The torturers did not stop until they either exhausted themselves or were called off by their commanding officers.

After the flogging, the offender was forced to carry the crossbeam, often weighing seventy-five to one hundred pounds, on his or her shoulders to the crucifixion site (John 19:17). The main upright beam, standing seven to nine feet tall, remained at the site of crucifixion and was used repeatedly. The victim was then laid down with arms stretched out across the beam and usually tied into position. Once the victim's arms were secured by ropes, a soldier searched for the "hollow spot" in the wrist located just above the flexion area near the carpal bones. The metacarpal bones of the palms were too weak to support the weight of the body on the cross, so the wrist was a stronger alternative. However, the use of ropes to support the arms made the choice of little consequence. Either location was acceptable. A hammer was used to drive five-inch nails through both wrists, affixing the victim to the crossbeam. It was customary to offer the victim a narcotic cocktail to help ease the pain of crucifixion. Jesus refused this drink (Matt. 27:34; Mark 15:23).

After the victim's arms were nailed to the crossbeam, it was hoisted up and secured to the upright post. This alone was very hard on the fatigued body of the victim, who already had lost a considerable amount of blood. This quick, upward motion caused orthostatic hypotension—very low blood pressure caused by a rapid vertical shift in body position. The victim's blood pressure would drop to half of normal, while the pulse rate doubled. Victims frequently fainted due to the rush of blood away from the head during this upward motion. This motion probably is the imagery behind Jesus' "lifted up" sayings (John 3:14; 8:28; 12:32). Jesus was quite literally lifted up onto the cross.



Remains of a heel bone with a nail driven through it

Next came the nailing of the feet. The Romans had several different ways of nailing the feet to the cross. Roman soldiers were notorious for twisting and contorting victims into odd positions while nailing them to the cross. Sometimes a victim's legs were stretched downward, feet crossed, and one nail driven through both. A support block typically was placed behind the victim to support the weight of the body on the cross. A heel bone of a crucified man named "Yehohanan" (John) was discovered in an ossuary north of Jerusalem in 1968. A single nail had been driven through the side of the heel. Either the body was twisted so that the nail was driven through both heels, the right above the left, or each heel was nailed to opposite sides of the upright beam causing the victim to straddle the cross. A piece of wood was held against the heel before the nail was driven in, to act as a washer, preventing the foot from tearing free. The ossuary's inscription describes Yehohanan as "the one hanged with knees apart." Once nailed to the cross, the victim often suffered for several hours, even days, exposed to the hot sun as well as the insults of those passing by on the busy road (cf. Matt. 27:39; Mark 15:29; Luke 23:35; John 19:20). Extreme thirst was brought on by massive blood loss and exposure to the elements (John 19:28).

Because death could take several hours, it sometimes was hastened by a crushing blow to the legs with a club. Victims were unable to push their bodies upward to gasp for air or to keep their blood circulating. This final blow to the legs also caused intense pain and usually was enough to throw the body into shock, with death following soon afterward. Jesus was already dead when the soldiers approached to break his legs (John 19:32–33). This fulfilled what was written in the Scriptures: "Not one of his bones will be broken" (John 19:36; cf. Exod. 12:46; Num. 9:12; Ps. 34:20). Instead of breaking Jesus' legs, a soldier thrust a spear into his side, which brought forth a sudden flow of blood and water, indicating that he was truly dead (John 19:34). This too was to fulfill Scripture: "They will look on the one they have pierced" (John 19:37; cf. Zech. 12:10). Bodies often were left on the crosses to be eaten by scavenging birds such as vultures. The Jews demanded that the bodies of Jesus and the two thieves crucified with him be taken down before the Sabbath that began that evening (John 19:31).

PHYSICAL DEATH BY CRUCIFIXION

Death by crucifixion resulted from a combination of factors. The most obvious was massive blood loss. With the nails being driven through the extensive artery systems of the wrists and feet, the victim lost a lot of blood. The severe flogging before being crucified also played a role and took its toll on the body. Blood loss also led to a depletion of oxygen supply to the vital tissues. Major organs failed due to lack of oxygenation. Another factor leading to death was suffocation or asphyxiation. The weight of the body hanging on the cross was too great for the tendons and muscles in the arms, so the victims were unable to hold themselves up in order to take in deep breaths. The victim's upper body continued to sink lower until the lungs became too compressed and unable to take in large volumes of air. Victims could force themselves upward to gasp air by using their legs, but this was extremely painful. Preventing the victim from pushing upward in order to breathe was another reason for breaking the legs. The victim slowly suffocated for hours.

The ultimate cause of death was an eventual heart rupture due to massive blood loss and lack of oxygenation. As the pulse raced and blood pressure increased, the heart eventually burst due to the stress. This helps explain the reference to the "sudden flow of blood and water" in John 19:34. In the case of heart rupture, the right side of the heart still has some blood left in it while the sac that surrounds the heart, the pericardium, fills with water. The soldier's spear pierced this sac and the heart, causing both blood and water to flow out.

THE MEANING OF JESUS' CRUCIFIXION

The OT teaches that it is blood that makes atonement for sin (Lev. 17:11). Just as sacrificial lambs shed their blood on the altar for the sins of Israel, Jesus shed his blood on the cross for the sins of the world (John 1:29). The crucifixion of Jesus was the greatest atoning event in history. His blood, which provided the means for a new covenant, was poured out for many on the cross (Matt. 26:28). The cross, as gruesome as it was, was the means through which Christ died "for our sins" (Gal. 1:4). Jesus freely scorned the shame of the cross so that we might be reconciled to God by his shed blood (Col. 1:20; Heb. 12:2).

Jesus also bore the curse of God in our place when he died on the cross. The one who hangs on a tree is divinely cursed (Deut. 21:23). God's curse is a curse upon sin, death, and fallenness. Jesus took God's curse upon himself in order to redeem us from that curse (Gal. 3:13).

Jesus demonstrated the humble nature of his mission and ministry by his obedience to death, even death on the cross (Phil. 2:8). For Jesus the cross was not simply his martyrdom, as if he simply died for a worthy cause; it was the pinnacle example of obedience and love in the Bible. Jesus called his followers to take up a cross and follow his example of selfless sacrifice (Matt. 16:24). Jesus' cross is a symbol of his love, obedience, and selflessness.

Most of all, the cross reveals the unconditional love of God, who offered his Son as the atoning sacrifice for sin (John 3:16; 1 John 4:10). The brutal cross reveals the beautiful love of Jesus, who willingly laid down his life (1 John 3:16).

CROWN Headgear signifying honor, victory, power, or authority. A crown was worn by monarchs in the ancient world to designate their royal power, often including a golden headband with precious stones in it, as well as a turban.

There are two important types of crowns in the OT: the priestly and the royal. A royal crown first appears with Saul (2 Sam. 1:10) and is worn by monarchs after him, including David (2 Sam. 12:30; 1 Chron. 20:2; see also Pss. 21:3; 132:18) and Joash (2 Kings 11:12; 2 Chron. 23:11). Jeremiah 13:18 warns of a day when the royal crowns of Judah will be taken away, signifying the monarchy's fall from power. Esther wears a Persian royal crown (Esther 1:11; 2:17), as does Mordecai (8:15).

The book of Exodus depicts a crownlike turban to which is affixed a golden "sacred emblem" bearing the inscription "Holy to the LORD," which is to be worn by the high priest (Exod. 28:36–37; 29:6; see also, e.g., 39:30; Lev. 8:9).

Zechariah 6:11–14 looks to a future messiah, "the Branch," who will be both priest and king, thus wearing a priestly and royal crown. Before his crucifixion, Jesus' tormentors place on his head a mock crown made of thorns (Matt. 27:29; Mark 15:17; John 19:2, 5). In the book of Revelation both godly and satanic figures wear crowns: the elders in heaven (4:4, 10), the rider of the white horse (6:2), the locusts from the Abyss (9:7), the woman clothed with the sun (12:1), the dragon and the beast (12:3; 13:1), the one "like a son of man" (14:14), and Christ himself (19:12).

Crowns symbolize human honor (Ps. 8:5; Prov. 4:9; Heb. 2:7, 9) and kingly power (Ps. 89:39), as well as the loss of such glory (Job 19:9; Ezek. 21:26) and its ultimate renewal in eternal life (1 Pet. 5:4). Similarly, crowns often represent eternal salvation (Ps. 149:4; James 1:12; Rev. 2:10). Paul even calls his converts his "crown" (Phil. 4:1; 1 Thess. 2:19). The figure of a crownlike garland, the prize for victory in Greco-Roman athletic games, signifies the Christian's final enjoyment of eternal bliss (1 Cor. 9:25; 2 Tim. 2:5; 4:8). Crowns portray divine blessings, including joy (Isa. 35:10; 51:11), love (Ps. 103:4), and beauty, the last of which symbolizes divine restoration after judgment (Isa. 61:3). God is even portrayed as the crown of his people (Isa. 28:5). In addition, a crown stands for several human features, such as wealth (Prov. 14:24) and pride (Isa. 28:1, 3).

CROWN OF THORNS In each of the Gospels except Luke, Jesus' tormentors mock his kingly claims by placing on his head a crown made of thorns (Matt. 27:29; Mark 15:17; John 19:2, 5). The thorns probably were the rachis of a palm frond (*Phoenix dactylifera*), shaped into a radiating crown representing the light rays emanating from the heads of divinities. The "crown" was forced into the victim's skull, causing significant pain.

CRUCIBLE A crucible (Prov. 17:3; 27:21; KJV: "fining pot"; see also Ps. 12:6) is a vessel in which a metal (in biblical times, silver-bearing lead sulfide) is heated to a high temperature, in order to remove impurities (Jer. 6:29–30; Ezek. 22:18–22). In Proverbs, it is mentioned in comparison to the way God tests and refines the human heart.

CRUCIFICTION *See* Cross, Crucifiction

CRUSE The KJV uses "cruse" to translate a group of Hebrew terms referring to a ceramic jar or vessel used to contain water (1 Sam. 26:11; 1 Kings 19:6), honey (1 Kings 14:3), oil (1 Kings 17:12), or salt (2 Kings 2:20). In two stories, a cruse of water appears at the head of a sleeping person, suggesting that the vessel was a canteen for personal use.

CRYSTAL A form of almost clear macrocrystalline quartz. In a poem with extensive references to minerals, Job 28:17 uses the crystal as a point of comparison for the value of wisdom. In Ezekiel's vision of the divine chariot-throne, the gleam of the dome above is compared to crystal (1:22). The book of Revelation uses the brilliant appearance of crystal to describe the glassy sea before God's throne (4:6), the water of the river of life flowing from the throne of God and the Lamb (22:1), and the new Jerusalem (21:11).

CUB *See* Libya.

CUBIT A unit of length. It was used throughout the ancient world and was based on the length of a forearm (roughly 17.5 to 20.5 inches).

CUCKOW The KJV uses "cuckow" (i.e., "cuckoo") to translate *shakhap* in the lists of unclean birds (Lev. 11:16; Deut. 14:15). Cuckoos are known throughout Eurasia and Africa. Most modern translations render this word with a generic term for seabirds such as "gull" (NIV) or "seagull" (ESV, NLT).

CUMIN Similar to caraway in taste and appearance, *Cuminum cyminum* has long been cultivated in Palestine for its seeds, which were used as a condiment and a medicine. Another plant, "black cumin" (also called "fitches," "caraway," or "dill"), was used to flavor bread and as a medicine. Easily damaged in threshing, both plants were threshed with sticks to keep the seeds intact, and thus they are used as illustrations of God's grace in Isa. 28:25, 27. The Pharisees scrupulously tithed their cumin (Matt. 23:23).

CUN *See* Kun.

CUNEIFORM Meaning "wedge-shaped" (from Lat. *cuneus*, "wedge"), "cuneiform" describes the writing system in which wedge-shaped signs were impressed upon clay with a reed stylus for the inscription of language.

This system was originated by the Sumerians in the ancient city of Uruk around 3100 BC for the purpose of keeping economic and administrative records. In this early form of writing, each cuneiform sign represented one Sumerian word, a logogram. Although most signs originally were pictograms, there were a few abstract signs in their repertoire.

The next step in the development of this writing system was to use the cuneiform signs to express syllables (syllabograms) rather than words. This new development allowed for greater sophistication in the written language. Whereas a pictographic system can adequately represent concrete objects and express certain abstract ideas, it cannot account for grammatical and syntactic features of language (sentence structure, subject-verb agreement, parts of speech, etc.) that are necessary for complete linguistic expression.

The Assyrians and the Babylonians in the early to middle third millennium BC began to use Sumerian logograms as phonetic syllables for the writing of their native language, Akkadian. It was now possible to write such literary works as letters and commemorative inscriptions. The popular Epic of Gilgamesh was written using these Sumero-Akkadian signs.

Akkadian was the lingua franca of the Near East in the period of 1500–1200 BC and was used regularly in diplomatic and royal communications (e.g., the Amarna letters). By the middle of the second millennium BC, several nations had adopted the Akkadian syllabary for the writing of their own language. This included the Elamites, the Hurrians, and the Hittites. A further development in the use of cuneiform signs is seen in the ancient city of Ugarit, where a cuneiform alphabet (not syllabary) was used for the writing of Ugaritic. In the middle of the first millennium, the Persians developed a cuneiform syllabary of thirty-six signs and six logograms for the writing of Old Persian, which was used for commemorative purposes only.

In Syria and Palestine, cuneiform signs were replaced by the easier-to-learn alphabet. This transition was also occurring in Mesopotamia, albeit at a slower rate. The change in the writing system was accompanied by a change in language, as Aramaic overtook Akkadian as the new international language of diplomacy.

CUP In the book of Psalms,“cup” signifies a person’s divinely appointed lot in life (16:5–6; 23:5). The “cup of salvation” (Ps. 116:13) alludes to the wine poured out as part of the thank offering (Num. 28:7–8).

The most important theological use is the mainly prophetic (but also psalmic [e.g., Ps. 75:8]) image of the cup of God’s wrath that wicked nations will drink (e.g., Isa. 51:17–23; Jer. 25:15–17, 28). The book of Revelation takes up this image (14:10; 16:19; 17:4; 18:6). This OT usage also stands behind the “cup” that Jesus must drink, to which he refers in the prediction of his death (Mark 10:38–39) and in his prayer in the garden of Gethsemane (Mark 14:36; cf. John 18:11: “Shall I not drink the cup the Father has given me?”). On the cross, Jesus as the substitute for sinners bore God’s wrath.

A cup of cold water (Matt. 10:42) symbolizes a small deed of kindness done for one of Jesus’ “little ones” that will not go unrewarded. The Pharisees cleaned only “the outside of the cup,” meaning that they conformed only outwardly to God’s will (Matt. 23:25–26). The “cup of thanksgiving” (cf. 1 Cor. 10:16), the third cup of the series of shared cups during the Passover meal (Luke 22:17 mentions an earlier cup), was reinterpreted by Jesus at the Last Supper (Matt. 26:27; Mark 14:23; Luke 22:20; 1 Cor. 10:23–29). Paul teaches that sharing in meals at pagan temples (“the cup of demons”) is incompatible with participation in the Lord’s Supper (“the cup of the Lord”) (1 Cor. 10:21).

CUPBEARER A high-ranking official in ancient Near Eastern courts. The cupbearer was responsible for serving wine at the king’s table. Because of the possibility of plots and poisoning, a trustworthy individual was required for this position. At times, he would be required to taste the wine before serving it to verify it was safe. His closeness to the king often gave him a position of great influence.

The “chief cupbearer” in the Joseph story (Gen. 40:1–2) likely supervised a staff. While, in prison, the cupbearer, along with the baker, was attended by Joseph. Although Joseph asked the cupbearer to mention his plight to the pharaoh when the cupbearer was restored to his position, he forgot about Joseph for two years (Gen. 40:14, 23; 41:9–13). The cupbearer’s closeness to the pharaoh, however, eventually allowed him to be influential in Joseph’s rise to power.

Stone measuring cups excavated from the ruins of wealthy homes in Jerusalem (first century AD)

Nehemiah was the cupbearer to Artaxerxes (Neh. 1:11) and highly esteemed. Nehemiah's financial resources (5:10, 17) may indicate that the position was well compensated.

CURSE An expression of divine wrath incurred for departure from God's law (Deut. 27:9–26) or of human wrath in response to being harmed. Christ redeemed sinners from the curse of the law (Gal. 3:13). *See also* Blessing and Cursing.

CURTAIN A cloth hanging used to construct temporary dwelling places, to function as an entrance, or to screen private places. The tabernacle was constructed from ten curtains woven from expensively dyed yarns, hung with blue cord, and fastened with gold clasps (Exod. 26:1–6). The surrounding tent was formed from eleven goatskin curtains (26:7–13). A curtain hung in front of the holy place, preventing entry except by the high priest on certain days, and then only after animal sacrifices were made and the sanctuary was sprinkled with blood (Lev. 16:2). At the time of Jesus' death, this curtain was torn in two, from top to bottom (Matt. 27:51), signifying a new freedom of access to God, which Jesus achieved by his blood (Heb. 10:19–20). When the earth is spoken of metaphorically as God's dwelling place, the heavens are described as the curtains that encompass it (Isa. 40:22).

CUSH, CUSHITES (1) An African kingdom located along the Nile River to the south of Egypt, in the region that is now part of the country of Sudan. The Hebrew terms "Cush" and "Cushite" occur over fifty times in the OT. Since the Greeks used the term "Ethiopia" in a generic sense to refer to everything south of Egypt, including Cush, and some historians occasionally refer to the Cushite kingdom as Nubia, English Bible versions occasionally translate the Hebrew term "Cush" as "Ethiopia" or "Nubia." Likewise, the NT character referred to as the "Ethiopian eunuch" (Acts 8:27) was not from modern Ethiopia but rather from this same kingdom on the Nile, south of Egypt, called

“Cush” throughout the OT.

Cush is an identifiable political entity as early as 2500 BC, but for most of its early history it was under Egyptian domination. In the late eighth century BC, however, Cush began to grow and expand its influence, and by 710 BC Cush had conquered Egypt and set up its own dynasty of Cushite pharaohs. The Cushites ruled Egypt until 663 BC, when the Assyrians finally drove them out of Egypt.

Cush and the Cushites play several important roles in the Bible. Moses married a Cushite woman (Num. 12:1). Cushites made up a significant part of Egyptian society, so Moses would have had numerous points of contact with Cushites. In the time of the monarchies a Cushite general, Zerah, led an unsuccessful expedition against Israel (2 Chron. 14:9–15). Later in history Cush became a critical part of the historical background of 2 Kings and Isaiah. During this era, the Cushites developed into the superpower to the south of Israel and Judah that contended with Assyria, the superpower to the north. Thus, for much of the time of Isaiah, the Cushites appeared to be allied with Judah against the Assyrians. When the Assyrians attacked Jerusalem in 701 BC, the Cushite king Tirhakah sent an army from Egypt northward to Judah, to attempt to relieve Jerusalem.

King Ashurnasirpal with attendants, one of whom bears a cup or bowl

The Cushites were particularly famous throughout the ancient Near East as soldiers and mercenaries. Two individual Cushites in the Bible appear in this role: the messenger in David's army (2 Sam. 18:21) and probably Ebed-Melek (Jer. 38–39).

The OT prophets pronounce judgment on all the surrounding nations for their complicity in the attack on Israel and Judah by the Assyrians and Babylonians. Cush is included among the nations falling under this judgment. However, when the prophets look beyond the destruction to the time of messianic restoration, they paint a picture of people from all nations joining together to worship the true God. The prophets use the Cushites as one of their paradigm groups for this restoration. That is, in the prophetic passages of future restoration, Cush often represents the future Gentile inclusion (Isa. 11:11; 45:14; Zeph. 3:9–10). Ebed-Melek, the Cushite who rescued Jeremiah during the Babylonian siege of Jerusalem, appears to play a similar role in the narrative of Jer. 38–39. That is, while the entire city of Jerusalem turns against God's word and his true prophet Jeremiah, it is the Cushite Ebed-Melek (representing the Gentiles) who believes and trusts in God, thus finding deliverance instead of death (Jer. 39:15–18). In the NT, the Ethiopian eunuch (an official from Cush) is similar in several respects to Ebed-Melek in the book of Jeremiah (Acts 8:26–40). At a time when Jerusalem has rejected the message of God and is actively persecuting God's messengers (Acts 7:1–8:3), it is an Ethiopian (Cushite) official who believes. Thus, in a fashion similar to Ebed-Melek, this Ethiopian (Cushite) probably symbolizes the inclusion of Gentiles into the people of God.

(2) The superscription of Ps. 7 (7:1 MT) states that David sang this psalm to God concerning a Benjamite named "Cush," apparently one of David's enemies. It is not known why this individual and the Cushi of Zeph. 1:1, who apparently were Hebrews, were so named. Perhaps they were Cushites, or perhaps one of their parents was a Cushite. On the other hand, perhaps they were given the name in honor of a certain Cushite. (*See also* Cushi.)

(3) Another reference to someone named "Cush" is in the puzzling passage Gen. 10:6–8 (restated in 1 Chron. 1:8–10). Genesis 10, however, is a notoriously difficult chapter to interpret. It consists largely of a genealogy, but the names used in the genealogy include those of individuals, peoples, countries, tribes, and cities. Some scholars think that the chapter is more about geopolitical alliances and geographical locations than about physical descent of individuals. In Gen. 10:6 Cush is said to be the father of Nimrod. Little is known for certain about Nimrod, but in Gen. 10:10–12 he is closely associated with various cities and kingdoms in Mesopotamia. Thus, some scholars associate this reference to Cush with some entity in Mesopotamia, perhaps a people known as the Cassites. On the other hand, in Gen. 10:6 Cush is closely associated with Egypt (Mizraim), as was the historical kingdom of Cush, which was just to the south of Egypt. Likewise, the "sons" of Cush listed in Gen. 10:7 are cities, regions, or individuals normally associated with Arabia, the Red Sea region, or the area south of Egypt (Cush). Consequently, there is no consensus among scholars as to how the term "Cush" is used in Gen. 10:6–8.

CUSHAN Habakkuk 3 describes the itinerary of God from the mountain country of the southern Transjordan (v. 3). Along the way, he passes through Cushan and Midian (v. 7). Cushan is mentioned only here in the Bible. The context suggests that "Cushan" is a synonym for "Midian," in northern Arabia. The word sounds like *kush*, the biblical term for "Ethiopia."

CUSHAN-RISHATHAIM King of Aram Naharaim, meaning "Aram of the Two Rivers," the Tigris and the Euphrates in northwest Mesopotamia. He is mentioned in Judg. 3:7–11. God allowed him to subjugate the Israelites because of their disobedience in turning from the worship of Yahweh to worship of Baals and Asherahs. Othniel, the first judge mentioned, went to war against Cushan-Rishathaim and delivered the Israelites. The name “Cushan-Rishathaim” means “doubly wicked Cushan” and is likely a pun on his real name.

CUSHI **(1)** An ancestor of Jehudi, an official during the reign of Jehoiakim who was one of those who heard Jeremiah’s message (Jer. 36:14). **(2)** The father of the prophet Zephaniah (Zeph. 1:1).

CUSHITE *See* Cush, Cushites.

CUSTODIAN In Greco-Roman society, children were accompanied by a custodian (*paidagōgos*, lit., “pedagogue”) who was entrusted with guardianship and instruction of the youth in goodness and morality. The judgment of the *paidagōgos* was considered to be the norm for the youth’s actions. As such, the custodian was responsible for the social actions of the youth in public and could be punished for them when they were inappropriate. Libanius records one such incident: “Diogenes, on seeing a youth misbehaving, struck his paedagogus, adding: ‘Why do you teach such things?’ ” (*Progymnasmata* 3).

The term *paidagōgos* is translated a variety of ways in the NT: “guardian” (NIV, ESV), “custodian” (RSV), “schoolmaster” or “instructor” (KJV), “tutor” (NASB), “disciplinarian” (NRSV), and so on. The apostle Paul refers to the law as a *paidagōgos* (Gal. 3:24–25) and to custodians or guardians (in contrast to fathers) in Christ (1 Cor. 4:15). The law’s role in Israel’s upbringing was to provide proper protection and guidance for growing up rightly. However, this custodial role was for Jews before the time of Christ, and now that Christ has come, no one needs or is required to submit to it in order to enter, remain, or go on in the Christian life.

CUTH, CUTHAH *See* Kuth, Kuthah.

CUZA *See* Chuza.

CYPRESS *See* Box Tree; Plants.

CYPRUS The third-largest island in the Mediterranean Sea, located off the coasts of Syria and Asia Minor (modern-day Turkey). The island has two main mountain ranges: the Troodos in the southwest and the Pentadaktylos along the northern shore. In antiquity, Cyprus was known as an excellent source of timber for shipbuilding and copper ore. Its favorable location relative to other regional powers, coupled with good sailing conditions, made it a natural trading center and an advantageous territory for empires seeking to stretch their power throughout the eastern Mediterranean. Cyprus is mentioned sporadically throughout the Bible, but in the OT it is referred to as “Kittim” (ESV, NRSV, NASB) or “Chittim” (KJV) (although sometimes the word “Kittim” is used to denote lands west of Palestine in general). In the NT, the island is called *Kypros* (Acts 11:19; 13:4; 15:39; 21:3; 27:4; cf. *Kyprios*, “Cypriot,” in 4:36; 11:20; 21:16), whence the English name “Cyprus” (the word “copper” is derived from the Latin word for “Cyprus”).

Evidence of human settlements on Cyprus stretches back many thousands of years, with dense civilization appearing as early as the end of the third millennium BC. For much of its history, Cyprus was ruled by a series of city-states that held sway over the rest of the island. Following colonization by the Mycenaeans in the late second millennium BC, Cyprus absorbed Greek culture, and from the tenth to the eighth centuries BC the Egyptian and the Phoenician empires exerted an influence on the island. In 709 BC Cyprus formally lost its independence to Sargon II of Assyria, and for centuries after that Cyprus passed into the hands of the Egyptians, Persians, Alexander the Great, and the subsequent Ptolemaic Empire, until finally the Roman Empire annexed the island in 58 BC.

By the time the Romans took control of the island, Cyprus was host to a significant Jewish population, and Barnabas was originally from there (Acts 4:36). The persecution of believers in Jerusalem caused them to spread to Cyprus, and people from Cyprus traveled to Antioch spreading "the good news about the Lord Jesus" (11:19–20). On their first missionary journey, Paul and Barnabas traveled across the island, from the city of Salamis on the eastern side of the island to Paphos on the western side. In Paphos they met Bar-Jesus, a sorcerer and false prophet, "who was an attendant of the proconsul, Sergius Paulus" (13:7). When Bar-Jesus tried to dissuade the proconsul (who was the provincial ruler of Cyprus on behalf of the Romans) from accepting the gospel, Paul struck him blind (13:6–12). Following a disagreement during Paul's second missionary journey, Barnabas returned to Cyprus without Paul, accompanied by John Mark (15:36–41). Later, Paul passed by Cyprus twice while sailing elsewhere (21:3; 27:4).

CYRENE A city on the coast of North Africa. During the NT period the city contained a large Jewish population. Simon the Cyrene was chosen to carry Jesus' cross (Matt. 27:32; Mark 15:21; Luke 23:26). Jews from Cyrene were present at Pentecost (Acts 2:10) and at the stoning of Stephen (6:9). Some Cyrenian Christians were prominent missionaries to Antioch (11:20; 13:1).

CYRENIAN A person from the Roman province of Cyrenaica in Africa. Cyrenaica had a significant Jewish community, which maintained cultural ties with Jerusalem (Acts 6:9; Josephus, *Ant.* 14.115–16, 118; 16.169). Two Cyrenians are mentioned by name in the NT: Simon, the bearer of Jesus' crossbeam (according to tradition he may have become a Christian, along with his sons, Alexander and Rufus; Mark 15:21 pars.); and Lucius, a Christian teacher at Antioch (Acts 13:1). An ossuary was discovered in an Israelite burial cave for Cyrenian Jews that reads "Alexander son of Simon."

CYRENIUS *See* Quirinius.

CYRUS Cyrus II, better known as Cyrus the Great, was the founder and first ruler of the Persian Empire (559–529 BC). His actions had major repercussions for the history of Israel in the late OT period. The following comments focus on information relevant to Cyrus's impact on Israel.

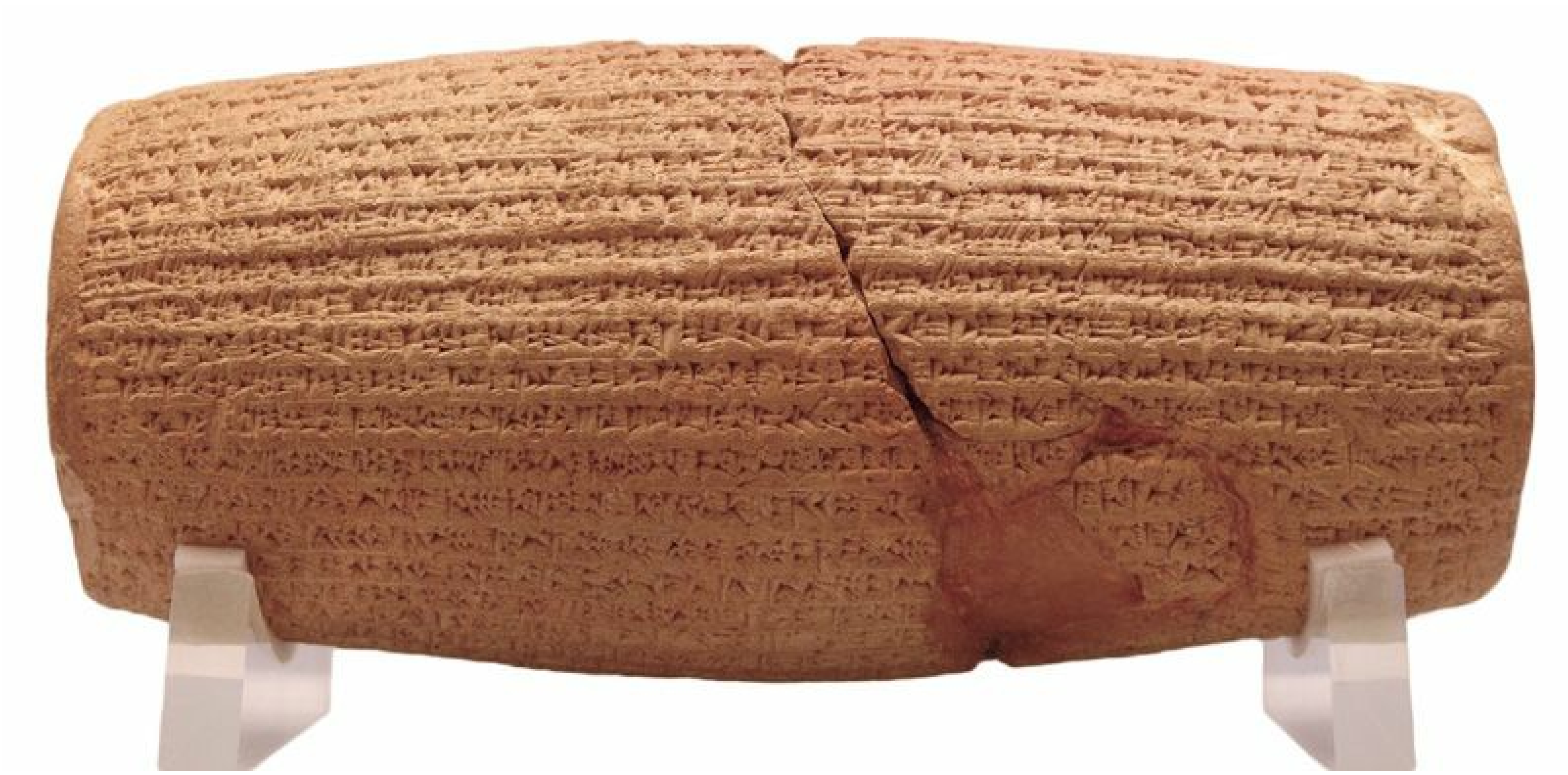
Ancient texts say that Cyrus's mother was a princess from Persia, at that time a small state centered on the city of Susa, while his father, Cambyses I, was son of the king Astyages, of the more powerful neighboring state of the Medes. His grandfather ordered that the infant Cyrus be killed, having heard a prediction that he would assume power. Legend has it that he was found by a shepherd, who raised him.

After Cyrus assumed leadership of the Persians, he defeated the Medes (c. 550 BC) and combined the two states into one. He then defeated the Lydians (c. 546 BC), located in Asia Minor with a capital at Sardis, ruled at that time by the legendary King Croesus. Cyrus then turned his attention to the major prize, Babylon, whose kingdom extended from Palestine into Syria and across Mesopotamia. In 539 BC he defeated the army of Babylon under the leadership of its king, Nabonidus, then soon entered the city, which, according to Dan. 5, was ruled by Nabonidus's son and coregent, Belshazzar.

After inheriting the Babylonian empire and all its vassals, Cyrus issued a decree that allowed these subjugated people to return to their lands and rebuild their temples. This decree is described in what has come to be known as the Cyrus Cylinder, a record of major events in Cyrus's reign, but in the Bible the version is specifically directed toward the Jewish people (2 Chron. 36:23; Ezra 1:2–4). Soon thereafter, some, but not all, Jewish exiles began to return to Jerusalem under the leadership of Sheshbazzar and Zerubbabel.

Cyrus's impact on the people of God is described in Isa. 44:28–45:13 (esp. 45:1), where God refers to this foreign king as "his anointed" or "his messiah" (*mashiakh*). Such an honorific shows that it was really God himself who moved history to restore his people to their land.

Cyrus died in 530 BC while fighting the Massagetae in central Asia. His son Cambyses II inherited his vast empire from him at that time.



The Cyrus Cylinder, a record of events in Cyrus's reign

D

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D *See* Documentary Hypothesis.

DABAREH *See* Daberath.

DABBASHETH *See* Dabbesheth.

DABBESHETH This city sat on the southwestern border of the territory allotted to the tribe of Zebulun when the land was divided among the tribes of Israel (Josh. 19:11). It was located in the vicinity of Jokneam.

DABERATH A Levitical city in the land of Issachar (Josh. 21:28; 1 Chron. 6:72). Daberath sits on the border of Zebulun (Josh. 19:12). It does not appear among the cities of Issachar in Josh. 19; however, the LXX understands Rabbith to be a reference to it (19:20).

DAGGER A swordlike weapon with a hilt and a blade, designed for stabbing. Shorter than a conventional sword at sixteen inches or less, it was easily concealed from an enemy (2 Sam. 20:8–10; cf. Judg. 3:16–22).

A bronze dagger blade (Megiddo, 1400–1300 BC)

DAGON The Hebrew spelling of the name for a West Semitic deity attested throughout Upper Mesopotamia (Mari, Ebla) starting in the third millennium BC. At Ugarit, Dagon appears third on lists of deities, immediately after El. One of the city's two major temples may have been dedicated to him. Despite this, Dagon appears in Ugarit's mythology merely as Baal's father.

Little is known about the deity's attributes. Attempts to derive "Dagon" from the Semitic root for "fish" have been discounted. Association with the Semitic root for "grain," while more probable, is also unsupported. Correlation of Dagon with the Mesopotamian war god Enlil, likewise his connection to Baal, may indicate that Dagon was a storm god.

Within the OT, Dagon is represented as the chief god of the Philistines. Nothing is revealed about the god, though portrayal of the cult is consistent with worship in the ancient Near East generally. The Philistines dedicated a "great sacrifice" to Dagon following their capture of Samson. This occurred in a temple at Gaza and was accompanied by testimony of Dagon's deeds (Judg. 16:23; cf. Exod. 15). In 1 Sam. 5 is recounted God's defeat of Dagon; here "Dagon" refers to the deity's image, situated in his temple at Ashdod. The text mentions priests, who served the cult, and the temple's threshold, which became sacred after the confrontation between Dagon's image and God's ark (1 Sam. 5:4–5).

Following Israel's defeat at Gilboa, the Philistines took Saul's head and armor and presented them as gifts to their gods (1 Chron. 10:10). Archaeology has yet to produce a cult site associated with Dagon in Philistia.

Twice "Beth Dagon" ("house of Dagon") occurs as a place name, further demonstrating Dagon's importance throughout the region (Josh. 15:41; 19:27).

DALAIAH *See* Delaiah.

DALMANUTHA A region on the west side of the Sea of Galilee where Jesus and his disciples were questioned by Pharisees after the feeding of the four thousand (Mark 8:10). The exact location and word derivation are uncertain. Possibly, it is synonymous with Magadan in Matt. 15:39, the parallel text.

DALMATIA A mountainous region on the eastern coast of the Adriatic Sea northwest of Macedonia and across from central Italy. In Roman times, Dalmatia was part of the province of Illyricum, but during the reign of Augustus, Illyricum was divided into Pannonia and Dalmatia after Tiberius put down a series of revolts. Titus traveled to Dalmatia while Paul was imprisoned in Rome (2 Tim. 4:10), but no specific purpose for his visit is stated.

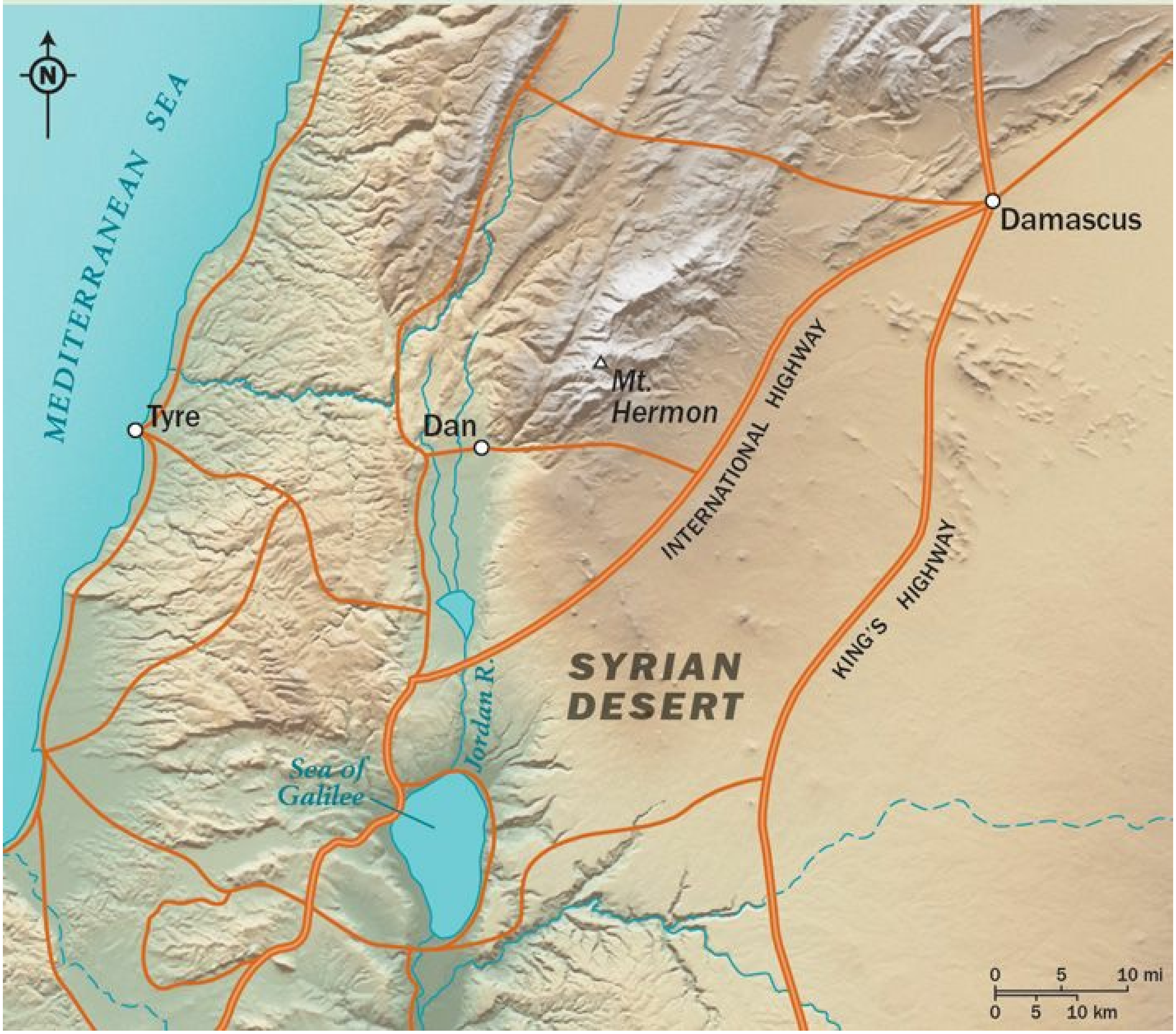
DALPHON One of Haman's ten sons killed by the Jews during the reign of the Persian king Xerxes (Ahasuerus), who granted them permission to "destroy, kill and annihilate" their enemies (Esther 8:11). At the request of Esther, the king ordered that the corpses of Dalphon and his brothers be hung in public display (9:7–14).

DAMARIS A prominent female Christian converted through Paul's preaching in Athens (Acts 17:34). Luke links her with Dionysius, a member of the Areopagus, possibly indicating some personal or social distinction (Acts 17:12), as well as the effect of the gospel across boundaries of gender.

DAMASCENE A resident of Damascus. In recounting his sufferings to the church in Corinth, Paul refers to the city by the phrase "the city of the Damascenes" (2 Cor. 11:32).

DAMASCUS A major city in ancient Syria (Aram) and the capital of modern Syria. Damascus is located fifty miles inland from the Mediterranean, east of the Anti-Lebanon mountains, northeast of Mount Hermon, and west of the Syrian Desert. It sits on a well-watered plateau 2,200 feet above sea level, near the Ghouta oasis and the Barada River (biblical Abana). Strategically located on main trade routes from Egypt, Arabia, and Mesopotamia, Damascus is considered one of the oldest continuously occupied cities in the Near East. Because the site of the ancient city lies under the modern "Old City," few archaeological excavations have been carried out, and no remains prior to the Roman period have been found. However, some Roman columns still stand along Straight Street (likely the same street mentioned in Acts 9:11), and remains of a Roman arch and gateway, a temple of Jupiter Damascenus, and several Greek inscriptions have been identified.

LOCATION OF DAMASCUS, SYRIA


N
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
Damascus
Mt. Hermon
Tyre
Dan
INTERNATIONAL HIGHWAY
KING'S HIGHWAY
SYRIAN DESERT
Jordan R.
Sea of Galilee
0 5 10 mi
0 5 10 km

Although no information about ancient Damascus has yet been provided by archaeological excavations, much can be learned about the city from its mention in historical sources from neighboring cultures. Probably the earliest reference to Damascus is in a list of cities whose kings were defeated by Thutmose III at Megiddo (c. 1482 BC). Damascus is also mentioned in the Amarna letters as a town of the land of Upi, in connection with a Hittite attempt to gain control of the area from Egyptian domination (fourteenth century BC). The city is first mentioned in the Bible when Abraham’s pursuit of four kings who kidnapped Lot took him past Damascus to Hobah (Gen. 14:15). Damascus is also noted as the hometown of Abraham’s servant Eliezer (15:2).

Old Testament Narrative and Prophetic Literature

During the Iron Age (1200–586 BC), Damascus became a prominent Aramean city-state that played a significant role in the political events of Israel’s united and divided monarchies, and in this light it receives frequent mention in OT narrative and prophetic literature.

Narrative literature. During the united monarchy, David incorporated Damascus into his kingdom after the Arameans from the city unsuccessfully came to the aid of Hadadezer of Zobah and were defeated by David in battle (2 Sam. 8:5–6; 1 Chron. 18:5–6). Later, Solomon's adversary Rezon son of Eliada, who had served under Hadadezer of Zobah, gathered a band of rebels, went to Damascus, and took control of the city (1 Kings 11:23–25).

After the division of the kingdom around 928 BC, little is known of Damascus until the biblical report that Asa of Judah appealed to Ben-Hadad I in Damascus for help in his war against Baasha of Israel. When Asa sent gifts of silver and gold and proposed a treaty, Ben-Hadad I (also known as Bir-Hadad I) complied with Asa's request and sent his army to attack Israel's northern cities (1 Kings 15:16–22; 2 Chron. 16:2).

In 853 BC the Assyrian king Shalmaneser III tried to invade Syria and was met north of Damascus at Qarqar by a coalition of twelve states led by Ben-Hadad II of Damascus (also known as Hadadezer or Adad-idri). Although Shalmaneser's Monolith Inscription reports that he was victorious, the fact that he was unable to advance farther into Syria and that he returned immediately homeward likely indicates that the coalition successfully repelled him. According to the Monolith Inscription, Ahab of Israel was a member of this coalition.

Additional contacts between Ahab and Ben-Hadad II of Damascus are recounted in 1 Kings 20; 22. Chapter 20 notes that Ben-Hadad II gathered a coalition of thirty-two kings to besiege Samaria, but Ahab was able to defeat them. A second encounter left Ben-Hadad II requesting Ahab's mercy, offering to restore previously captured Israelite towns and to give Ahab access to Damascus. A third engagement pitted Ahab of Israel and Jehoshaphat of Judah against the Arameans at Ramoth Gilead and resulted in Ahab's death. However, some scholars identify the Ben-Hadad referred to in these chapters (as well as in 2 Kings 5–7) as Ben-Hadad III and place these events during the time of Jehoash of Israel rather than during Ahab's reign.

During and after Ahab's reign, both Elijah and Elisha became involved in the political affairs of Damascus. Elijah traveled to Damascus after his encounter with God at Horeb in order to anoint Hazael as future king of Aram (1 Kings 19:15). Later, Ben-Hadad II, informed of Elisha's presence in Damascus, sent his servant Hazael to inquire whether he would recover from an illness. However, Elisha used the opportunity to reluctantly predict Hazael's rise to kingship in Aram (2 Kings 8:7–15).

When he did rule as king (c. 842–806 BC), Hazael successfully expanded his empire into the territories of Israel and Judah during the reigns of Joram (2 Kings 8:28–29; 9:14–15), Jehu (10:32–33), and Jehoahaz of Israel (13:1–9), as well as Joash of Judah, who paid tribute to Damascus (12:17–18; cf. 2 Chron. 24:23).

After Hazael's death the kingdom of Aram, ruled by his son Ben-Hadad III (also known as Bir-Hadad), no longer remained the dominant power of the region. Jehoash of Israel was able to recapture Israelite territory (2 Kings 13:25), and the Assyrian king Adad-nirari III besieged Damascus and made the king pay tribute (c. 796 BC). Aram's weakened state was also apparent during the reign of Jeroboam II of Israel, who expanded Israel's border back to Damascus (2 Kings 14:28).

Rezin, Aram's last king (c. 740–732 BC), formed a coalition that included Pekah of Israel to fight Tiglath-pileser III of Assyria. When Rezin and Pekah attacked Ahaz of Judah and tried to replace him with a procoalition puppet named "Tabeel" (Isa. 7:6), Ahaz appealed to Assyria for help by sending gifts. Tiglath-pileser III complied with Ahaz's requests and attacked Damascus, deporting its inhabitants, putting Rezin to death, and annexing Aram into the Assyrian Empire (2 Kings 16:5–9). Although Damascus, with several surrounding cities, did attempt to rebel against Assyria in 720 BC, Sargon II was able to defeat them. From that point on, Damascus remained under control of the Assyrians, then the Babylonians, and then served as a provincial capital under the Persians.

Prophetic literature. In light of the significant involvement of Damascus in international affairs during the period of the divided monarchies, it is not surprising to find frequent mention of the city in the prophetic literature. Amos, for example, proclaims judgment against the rulers of Damascus for their brutality and predicts exile for the city's inhabitants in the first of his oracles against the nations (Amos 1:3–5). Isaiah also speaks of Damascus, assuring Ahaz that the plot by Rezin and Pekah to overthrow Jerusalem would not be successful, and that Damascus would soon be conquered by Assyria (Isa. 7–8; 17:1–3). Jeremiah's oracle against Damascus may also refer to these events, since what Jeremiah describes is not known to have taken place during his lifetime (Jer. 49:23–27). Ezekiel notes, in passing, Damascus as a customer of the wares of Tyre and in connection with the description of Israel's future boundaries (Ezek. 27:18; 47:16–18; 48:1). Finally, Zechariah includes Damascus in his oracle concerning some of the city-states in Syria-Palestine (Zech. 9:1).

HELLENISTIC PERIOD AND NEW TESTAMENT

During the Hellenistic period (322–37 BC), Damascus was conquered by Parmenio, a general under Alexander the Great, and then it came under the rule of Seleucus I Nicator. Control over the city fluctuated during the conflicts between the Seleucids and the Ptolemies, and in 63 BC General Pompey annexed the area for Rome, although he allowed the Nabateans to control the city.

Damascus is notable in the NT as the city to which Paul (then Saul) was traveling to persecute Christians when he encountered the risen Christ. After his conversion Paul stayed in Damascus until he had to escape the city by night because Jews were plotting to kill him (Acts 9:1–27; 22:3–16; 26:12–23; 2 Cor. 11:32–33). Paul also visited Damascus after his journey to Arabia (Gal. 1:17).

DAN **(1)** The fifth of Jacob's twelve sons, and the namesake of one of Israel's twelve tribes, Dan was the first son of Bilhah, servant to Rachel. He was conceived out of Rachel's desperation to become a mother despite her infertility, and Rachel named him "Dan" (meaning "he judged, vindicated") because God favorably judged her plea for a child (Gen. 30:1–6).

Dan and his son, Hushim, went to Egypt under Joseph's patronage along with Jacob and the rest of the family to escape famine in Canaan (Gen. 46:5–7, 23–27; Exod. 1:1–5). In his blessing of Dan, Jacob noted that he would both judge Israel and become "a snake" and "a viper" (Gen. 49:16–17).

(2) The city of Dan, originally known as Laish. After attacking the people of Laish (Leshem) and destroying the city, the Danites rebuilt it, settled there, and named it "Dan" after their forefather (Judg. 18:27–29; cf. Josh. 19:40–48).

DAN, TRIBE OF One of the twelve tribes of Israel, the descendants of the fifth of Jacob's twelve sons, Dan, whose mother was Bilhah, Rachel's servant. Although Dan's early history included the notable Oholiab, a chief craftsman of the sanctuary built under the direction of Moses (Exod. 31:6; 35:34; 36:1, 2; 38:23), it was otherwise unremarkable. Dan participated with the other tribes in responsibilities shared across all Israel. For example, the camp of Dan is named as rearguard of the wilderness tabernacle (Num. 2:25, 31). Other instances include sending a representative to spy out the land, being counted in the census, and being instructed by Moses to participate in deciding the territorial allotments (Num. 13:12; 26:42; 34:22). However, the harsh nature of Jacob's blessing for his son Dan, in which he prophesied that Dan will be not only a judge but also a serpent and a viper, rightly suggests that Dan's future would be troubled (Gen. 49:16–17).

THE TERRITORY OF DAN

The postconquest tribal allotment to Dan was a roughly U-shaped area to the northwest of Jerusalem, between the allotments of Judah and Ephraim. It included the cities along the northern border of Judah—Zorah, Eshtaol, Timnah, Ekron—and extended to the Mediterranean coast, including Joppa. However, the text immediately notes that Dan was unable to possess its territory. Instead, Dan moved from there to the northern city of Leshem (Laish), situated at the foot of Mount Hermon and near the headwaters of the Jordan. After brutally attacking Leshem, Dan took it over (Josh. 19:40–48).

The book of Judges provides additional insight into these events. Dan had trouble occupying its own territory because of the Amorites, who kept Dan in the hills away from the coastal plain (1:34). Dan was also pressured by the Philistines (13:1). God eventually raised Samson, a Danite, as judge of Israel against the Philistines (13:2–5; cf. Gen. 49:16). In the end, however, rather than defeating the Philistines, Samson was ensnared by them (Judg. 14–16).

The Samson narrative is followed by the detailed story of the Danites' move to the north (Judg. 17–18). Having concluded that they must relocate in order to settle, the tribe sent out scouts to find a new home. They met Micah's Levite along the way and eventually came to Laish, where they saw a fertile and prosperous land populated by peaceful, unsuspecting inhabitants under the protection of the Sidonians, a remote distance to the west. After the scouts' report, the Danites raised an army of six hundred, which returned north via Micah's house. Taking the Levite and Micah's idol with them, they proceeded to Laish. Encountering no opposing forces, they attacked and burned the city.

These events help explain an otherwise perplexing verse incorporated into Moses' farewell blessing to the twelve tribes (Deut. 33:22). Moses refers to Dan as a lion's cub "springing out of Bashan." Although "Bashan" is a place name, it is not otherwise associated with Dan. However, *bashan* also means "snake." Dan, as a cub rather than a full-grown lion, was not fierce enough to claim its divine allotment and thus was leaping away from its oppressors, the snake. But Dan, a lion nonetheless, was indeed fierce enough to lay waste to the peaceful, isolated Laish.

In due course, the Danites rebuilt Laish, renamed it "Dan," and set up Micah's idol as a shrine there. This initiated the city's long history as a seat of apostasy (Judg. 18:28–31), which was furthered by the sin of Jeroboam, who placed one of his two golden calves there (1 Kings 12:29–30; 2 Kings 10:29).

DAN THROUGHOUT THE BIBLE

Dan's extreme northern location as compared to Beersheba in the Negev contributed to the expression "from Dan to Beersheba" as a common description for the entire land of Israel (Judg. 20:1; 1 Sam. 3:20; 2 Sam. 3:10; 17:11; 24:2, 15; 1 Kings 4:25; 1 Chron. 21:2; 2 Chron. 30:5; cf. Amos 8:14).

Dan is mentioned by Ezekiel in his eschatological vision of Israel as receiving its portion of the land (48:1–2, 32). However, Dan is omitted from the list of the twelve tribes in Rev. 7:5–8, where it is replaced by Manasseh. Although lists of the twelve tribes often count Joseph twice (by naming his sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, instead), the omitted tribe usually is Levi because of its priestly status. In this case, Dan's absence is often attributed to the tribe's persistent apostasy.

Elsewhere in Scripture, the tribe of Dan is listed as one of the tribes, along with Reuben, Gad, Asher, Zebulun, and Naphtali, standing on Mount Ebal, the mount from which curses on Israel were pronounced (Deut. 27:13); and it is reported that Dan failed to fight alongside Deborah and Barak

(Judg. 5:17), was conquered by Ben-Hadad in the context of his pact with King Asa of Judah (1 Kings 15:20; 2 Chron. 16:4), and produced Huram-Abi, a craftsman for Solomon's temple (2 Chron. 2:14).

DANCING Rhythmic movement of the body, usually to music. In the Bible, dancing usually has some form of religious significance. For God's people in the OT, dancing was a joyous experience associated with celebration and worship. The various words used to describe dancing are descriptive: leaping, skipping, twisting, and whirling. Throughout Scripture, dancing is used as a symbol of rejoicing and as an antithesis to mourning (Ps. 30:11; Eccles. 3:4; Lam. 5:15). The sacred dances of the Hebrews expressed praise (Pss. 149:3; 150:4) and joy (Exod. 15:20; Judg. 11:34; 1 Sam. 18:6–7; 21:11; 29:5; Ps. 30:11; Eccles. 3:4; Lam. 5:15). In ancient Jewish culture men and women danced in separate groups (Ps. 68:25; Jer. 31:13). Dance performers usually were groups of women, with one leading, on occasions of national celebration, such as after the crossing of the Red Sea (Exod. 15:20), after military victories (1 Sam. 18:6), and at religious festivals (Judg. 21:19–21). This may reveal the peculiarity of David's conduct in dancing with all his might as the ark of the Lord was brought to Jerusalem (2 Sam. 6:14; 1 Chron. 13:1–14; 15:1–29). Although dancing was reserved for occasions of religious worship and festivity, God speaks of a time of the ultimate restoration of his people from despair, when he promises that all Israel will rejoice in dancing (Jer. 31:4, 13).

Pagan worship also included dancing. The prophets of Baal, in their attempt to implore their god to appear, performed a kind of limping dance around Elijah's altar on Mount Carmel (1 Kings 18:26). Elsewhere, Aaron and the Israelites danced before the golden calf at the foot of Mount Sinai (Exod. 32:6, 18–19).

Dancing is also associated with pagan celebrations, as when Herodias's daughter danced before Herod Antipas and his dinner guests at Herod's birthday celebration. The result was the beheading of John the Baptist. In the manner of Greek entertainment, the dance of this young daughter, who perhaps was only twelve to fourteen years old (Matt. 14:6; Mark 6:22), probably was a sensual art form, a type of dance unheard of in Israel.

The Dancer of Dan, a pottery piece excavated from the ancient city of Dan (fourteenth–thirteenth centuries BC)

Dance is not limited to the pious, and it was found to be an integral part of everyday events of antiquity. Children danced (Job 21:11; Matt. 11:16–17; Luke 7:32), as did the young women at the vineyards, some while playing their hand drums (Judg. 21:21; Jer. 31:4, 13). The Shulammite's dance (Song 6:13) was as beautiful as two dance troupes. Dancing is associated with family celebrations, as in the story of the prodigal son. When the prodigal son returned home, his exuberant father cried out, "For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found," and so "they began to celebrate." The older brother heard music and dancing, which commemorated the homecoming of the prodigal son (Luke 15:24–25).

DANIEL **(1)** A Jewish prophet in the Babylonian exile, best known from the book that bears his name. In 605 BC, Nebuchadnezzar, who that year had succeeded his father, Nabopolassar, as king of the resurgent empire of Babylon, pressed Jerusalem and its king, Jehoiakim (609–597 BC). Jehoiakim was forced to submit and turn over to the Babylonians the temple vessels and some young men from the royal family (Dan. 1:1–5). The latter included Daniel and three of his friends, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah.

Daniel 1 recounts their initial experience in the Babylonian court. Nebuchadnezzar, in keeping with ancient Near Eastern practice, wanted to reprogram these young future leaders to Babylonian ways. In this way he could either send them back to leadership positions in Judah, where they would be servants faithful to Babylon, or, as happens with the three friends, keep them in the center of the empire to support the efforts of a growing imperial system. As part of the reprogramming effort, their names were changed from names that glorified Israel's God to names that celebrated Babylonian deities. "Daniel" means "God is my judge," while his new name, "Belteshazzar," means something like "the divine lady protects the king." Even more tellingly, Nebuchadnezzar put them on a dietary and educational track that would transform them into Babylonian sympathizers. The education was in the "language and literature of the Babylonians" (1:4), which would have focused on divination texts like those that interpret the stars or dreams. Interestingly, Daniel and the three friends were at the top of their class at the end of the chapter (1:19). He also placed them on a diet of rich food and wine to ensure that they would be robust and good-looking. However, the four young men refused and secretly ate only vegetables and drank water. This latter diet should have left them looking thin, but after ten days they looked healthier and better nourished than those young men who were on the king's diet (1:15). Here we know for sure that their good looks are the result not of the king's diet, but of God's blessing.

The next five chapters continue to describe Daniel's life in a foreign court. He developed a close relationship with King Nebuchadnezzar, who came to respect Daniel for his virtue and wisdom. Indeed, Daniel's actions led the king to express respect for Daniel's God on more than one occasion (2:47; 4:34–35). Nebuchadnezzar died in 562 BC, and while the text is clear that Daniel continued to operate during the reigns of his successors, it gives us only stories set in the reign of the last Babylonian king, Belshazzar, and the first years of the Persian Empire (Cyrus/Darius the Mede). Daniel had a good relationship with Darius, who only reluctantly threw him into the lions' den (Dan. 6) and was greatly relieved that he survived, but there was no respect or love for Belshazzar, whose kingdom Daniel denounced when he read the handwriting on the wall.

Daniel was also the recipient of four major visions (Dan. 7–12) that anticipated future events, even to the end of time. Daniel's reputation spread quickly. He is mentioned by his near contemporary Ezekiel as comparable to the ancient worthies Noah and Job (Ezek. 14:14, 20).

(2) The second son of David, born while he was king of Judah in Hebron. His mother was Abigail of Carmel (1 Chron. 3:1). In 2 Sam. 3:3, he is called Kileab (or Chileab).

(3) A descendant of Ithamar, the priest, who returned with Ezra to Jerusalem (Ezra 8:2). He is likely the same Daniel as the man who sealed the covenant at the time of Ezra and Nehemiah (Neh. 10:6).

DANIEL, BOOK OF The book of Daniel contains gripping stories and complex visions of the end of history. While the former are easy to follow and provide clear moral lessons to readers, the latter are quite difficult to interpret. Set in a time when the people of God were living under the thumb of powerful pagan nations, the purpose of the book is to provide comfort and hope in the knowledge that

God is in control and, in spite of present difficulties, will provide victory for his people.

Sarcophagus relief depicting Daniel in the lions' den (fourth century AD)

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Authorship and date. The book does not name an author. The first six chapters are stories about Daniel in a foreign court, and the last six chapters narrate four visions received by Daniel.

The traditional view holds that the events described in the book took place in the period 605–537 BC, and that the book, no matter when it was written, faithfully reflects actual events and the visions that Daniel received. Although the book nowhere insists that he is the author, it is possible, if not likely, that we are to think of Daniel as the author of at least the visions. Indeed, in 12:4 the angel tells him, "Roll up and seal the words of the scroll." Daniel himself or a later inspired author could have given the book in its final form.

However, some scholars reject the idea that the book accurately reflects events of the period in question. They point to historical problems such as questions concerning the identity of Darius the Mede as well as the specificity of the prophecies particularly and argue that the book must have been written by an anonymous person after the predicted events. Indeed, they point to what they believe is an actual prophecy at the end of the book (11:40–45) that did not take place to suggest that the book was written in the mid-160s BC.

Those who believe that God could provide Daniel with a glimpse of the future do not have a problem with the precision of the description of future events. Further, 11:40–45 may be a picture of the antichrist in the far-distant future. It seems best to side with the traditional understanding of the book of Daniel as having been written early and reflecting an accurate depiction of Daniel's life.

Ancient Near Eastern historical context. The book of Daniel begins with a Babylonian siege of Jerusalem in the third year of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, dated to 605 BC. Nebuchadnezzar, who according to Babylonian sources had just become king of Babylon, demands tokens of Judean submission: vessels from the temple and hostages from the royal family and nobility, including Daniel and three friends. Since 626 BC the Babylonians have been on the uprise, displacing Assyria as the superpower of the day. The action of Dan. 1–4 takes place in Babylon during the reign of the powerful empire builder Nebuchadnezzar. Daniel lives longer than the king, and Dan. 5 is set during the rule of a man named "Belshazzar." The story concerns the end of the Babylonian Empire, and it was initially puzzling that Babylonian sources rediscovered beginning in the nineteenth century AD named Nabonidus as the last king of Babylon rather than Belshazzar. However, texts discovered more recently have resolved the problem, demonstrating that Belshazzar (known in the Babylonian texts as Bel-shar-usur) was the son of Nabonidus and his coregent: Belshazzar ruled in the city of Babylon while Nabonidus ruled from an oasis (Teima) in what is today Saudi Arabia. The visions recorded in Dan. 7–8 are dated to the time of this Belshazzar.

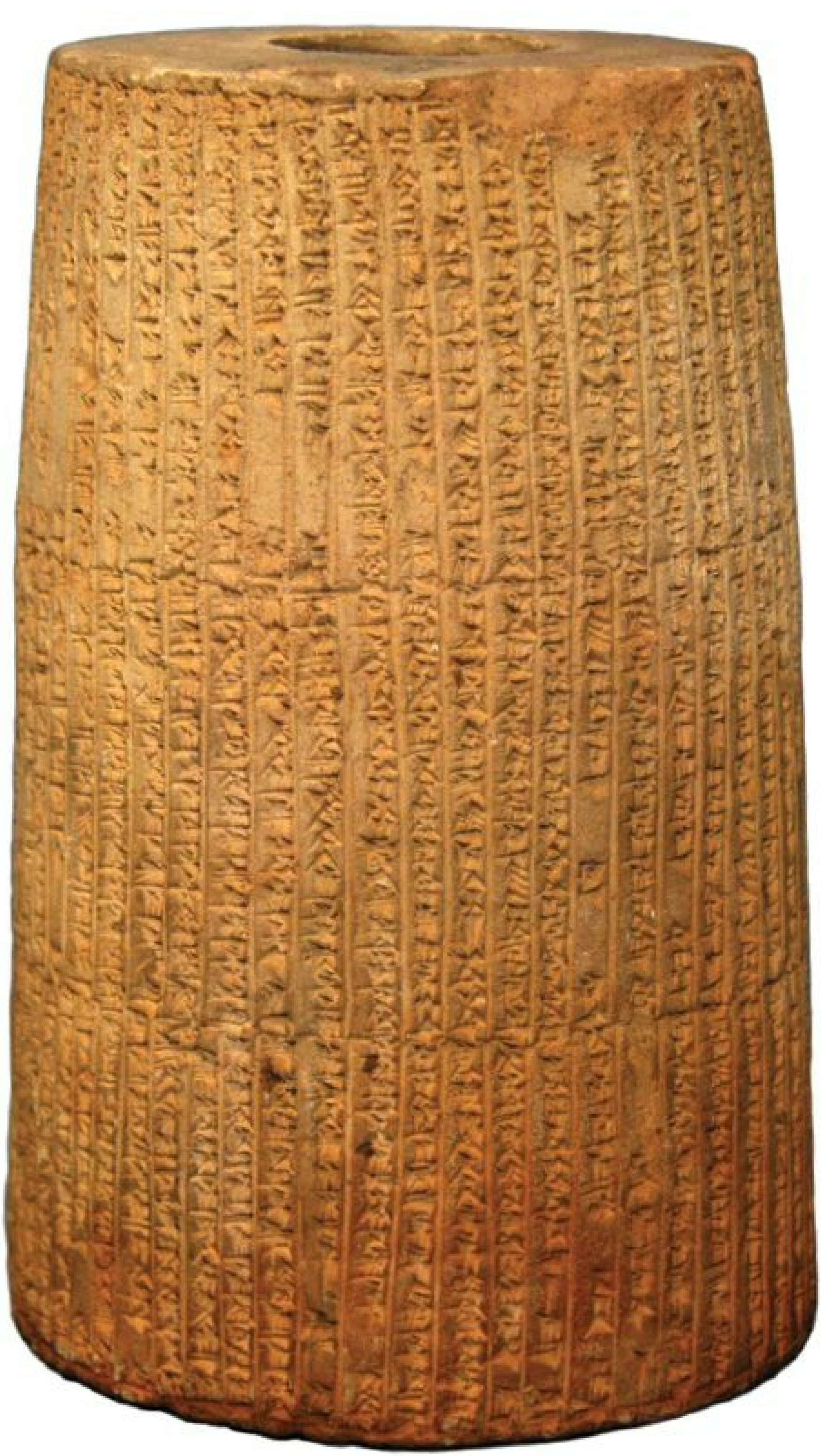
Daniel even survived the fall of the Babylonian Empire and found a place of importance in the Persian Empire (Dan. 6), which succeeded it. The first ruler of this Persian Empire was Cyrus, though Dan. 6 speaks of a king named "Darius." Some believe this is a historical mistake because there was a King Darius who ruled some years after Cyrus, but it is likely that "Darius" is either another name for Cyrus or perhaps a subruler in charge of Babylon. The visions found in Dan. 9–12 are dated to the time of Darius/Cyrus.

Daniel almost certainly died during the reign of Darius/Cyrus, but his prophetic vision extended beyond even the Persian Empire, which ended with the conquest by the Greek Alexander the Great in 333 BC.

Text. An interesting feature of the original text of Daniel is that it is written in two languages. Daniel 1:1–2:4a; 8:1–12:13 is in Hebrew, while Dan. 2:4b–7:28 is in Aramaic. This extensive use of two languages is unique in a single biblical book. Although the Aramaic begins when the text announces that the astrologers answered the king in Aramaic, no persuasive reason has been offered for why the text continues in Aramaic until the end of chapter 7.

The evidence from the eight partial and fragmentary manuscripts of Daniel from the DSS supports the antiquity and authenticity of the text that is used to translate the book into modern languages, including English. It also supports the use of two languages in the book.

Early Greek versions of Daniel have additions that are found in modern Bibles that include the Apocrypha. The first of these is the Prayer of Azariah and the Song of the Three Young Men, which is found after Dan. 3:23. The story of Susanna appears in some Greek manuscripts before Dan. 1 and in others after Dan. 12. Bel and the Dragon concludes the book.



A cylinder describing the extensive building activities of Nebuchadnezzar II, king of Babylon

LITERARY CONSIDERATIONS AND OUTLINE

There are two major parts of the book. The first half (Dan. 1–6) is composed of six stories of Daniel in a foreign court, and the second half (Dan. 7–12) is composed of four apocalyptic visions. A more detailed outline of the book is as follows:

I. Daniel in a Foreign Court (1:1–6:28)

- A. Daniel and his friends in the Babylonian court (1:1–21)
- B. God’s wisdom versus Babylonian wisdom (2:1–49)
- C. God saves the three friends from the fiery furnace (3:1–30)
- D. Nebuchadnezzar’s pride takes a fall (4:1–37)
- E. Writing on the wall (5:1–31)
- F. Daniel in the lions’ den (6:1–28)

II. Four Visions (7:1–12:13)
- A. The four beasts and the one like a son of man (7:1–28)
- B. The ram and the goat (8:1–27)
- C. The seventy weeks (9:1–27)
- D. The scope and end of history (10:1–12:13)

The stories of the first six chapters may be identified as court narratives that focus on Daniel and the three friends and their interactions with the rulers. Such interaction often brings them into conflict with the Babylonian wise men and other officials. Of course, Daniel and his friends are successful in the various court contests and conflicts because their God is with them.

The visions of the last six chapters have been called “apocalyptic.” Apocalyptic literature has a distinct form from even the type of prophecy that we read in a book such as Jeremiah (*see* Apocalyptic). In Jeremiah, God gives a message to the prophet, who is told to communicate with the people so that they might change their behavior and thus avoid punishment. God never speaks to Daniel. He has a vision, and an angel interprets the vision for him. He is told not to preach the message of the vision. The purpose of such visions is not to elicit repentance but rather to assure God’s faithful people that, although they are presently being oppressed, God is with them and will win the victory in the end.

Apocalyptic literature features an intense use of striking images. Beasts arise out of a sea, a humanlike figure rides a cloud chariot, and a goat butts heads with a ram. Although this imagery strikes modern readers as odd, it communicated clearly to its ancient audience, which knew that the sea and its monsters represented evil and chaos, the cloud rider was God on his storm chariot, and the ram represented Persia and the goat Greece.

THEOLOGICAL MESSAGE

Though varied in genre with six stories and four visions, the basic message of the book of Daniel is clear and repeated in each: in spite of present difficulties, God is in control and will have the victory. The book intends to instill in its readers a sense of calmness in the midst of crisis: although persecuted and/or living in a culture toxic to their faith, not only can they survive but they can thrive.

Daniel 1 illustrates this theme among the stories. Young Daniel and his friends are forced to go into exile in Babylon. Though faithful, they are subjected to the pagan curriculum of the court to become wise men. Such study would have included astrology and other forms of divination. Furthermore, they are required to eat a diet that will assure that they become robust. But by refusing to eat the rich food prescribed by the king and consuming only vegetables and water, they give God room to work. Thus, when later they are proclaimed to be “better nourished” than those who eat the king’s diet, they know that it is not because of the king’s diet but because of God. They are also more learned than others in the court. Daniel 2 demonstrates how their exceptional wisdom is not the result of their Babylonian education, but because of God's wisdom. So in spite of their present situation, they not only survive but also thrive, as evidenced by their promotions in the king's court.

Daniel 7 illustrates this important theme among the apocalyptic visions. The vision begins with the description of hybrid beasts that arise from the sea. They are evil kingdoms that oppress the people of God. However, the vision looks beyond the present to the arrival of the "one like a son of man" on his cloud chariot, who will lead the saints of the Most High God in a victorious battle against these forces of evil.

NEW TESTAMENT CONNECTIONS

Daniel's visions look to the far future when God will appear and bring history to a close with a tremendous victory over the forces of evil. Not surprisingly, Daniel's imagery permeates the apocalyptic materials in the NT that speak of the second coming of Jesus Christ. For instance, in the book of Revelation evil is imaged as a sea monster (Rev. 13) that reminds the reader of the four sea beasts of Dan. 7. Jesus, the one who defeats this epitome of evil, is called "Son of Man" in the NT and is pictured as appearing on a cloud at the end of time (Matt. 24:30; Mark 13:26; Luke 21:27; cf. Rev. 1:7).

DANITE A member of the tribe of Dan. The word is synonymous with the more literal phrase "tribe of Dan." *See also* Dan, Tribe of.

DAN JAAN A city mentioned only once in the Bible (2 Sam. 24:6). It was a location listed on the route Joab and the commanders of his army took when they were sent out to take a census for David. Because of the path of their route, many associate Dan Jaan with Dan (cf. NRSV). Others propose a connection with Ijon (1 Kings 15:20).

DANNAH One of the towns in the hill country south of Jerusalem allotted to the tribe of Judah (Josh. 15:49).

DAPPLED A variegation in color, whether mottled or spotted. The underlying color probably was gray. The term is used in the NIV, NASB, and NKJV for horses in Zech. 6:3, 6 (NLT and NRSV have "dappled gray").

DARA Occurring in some Hebrew manuscripts of 1 Chron. 2:6 through scribal error (see NIV mg.), "Dara" probably is equivalent to "Darda" (1 Kings 4:31). *See also* Darda.

DARDA A member of the tribe of Judah and one of the sons of Mahol, who were noted for their wisdom (1 Kings 4:31). In 1 Chron. 2:6 he is called a "son" of Zerah, but this should be understood in the broader sense as a "descendant" of Zerah; Mahol was his biological father.

DARIC Gold coin introduced by the Persian king Darius I (r. 521–486 BC), successor of Cyrus. Under Persia's influence, the daric (Heb. *'adarkon*) is likely the first coin that Jews used. It is mentioned only twice in the Bible. In 1 Chron. 29:7 darics are mentioned with respect to the funding of the first temple, thus indicating the Persian setting of Chronicles. According to Ezra 8:27, the twenty gold bowls of the second temple were valued at one thousand darics. Ezra 2:69 refers to the people giving sixty-one thousand *darkemonim* for rebuilding the temple, which some translations (e.g., NASB, NKJV) take to be drachmas, Greek silver coins; however, other translations (e.g., NIV, NRSV) take this to refer to darics (likewise Neh. 7:70–72).

DARIUS Several Medo-Persian kings are named “Darius.” Three are mentioned in the OT books of the exilic and postexilic eras.

(1) Darius the Mede. He appears in the book of Daniel. Belshazzar, king of the Babylonians, was killed (we are not told how) after seeing the famous writing on the wall and exalting Daniel for interpreting the words (5:1–29). During his reign, Darius installed 120 satraps, who were accountable to three administrators, one of whom was Daniel. Daniel’s success made the satraps and other administrators jealous, and they incited Darius to issue an edict that anyone praying to anyone other than Darius over a thirty-day period would be thrown into the lions’ den. Upon hearing the decree, Daniel prayed openly and was arrested, which distressed Darius. After Daniel’s miraculous deliverance, Daniel’s accusers and their families were thrown into the lions’ den, with deadly results, but Daniel prospered (6:1–28).

There is some ambiguity, however, about the historical identity of “Darius the Mede.” Outside the OT there is no Median king named “Darius.” Also, it is the Persian king Cyrus who defeated the Babylonians. They did not fall as a result of a Median invasion, a fact attested to in ancient Greek and Babylonian sources. Still, prophecies such as Isa. 13:17–18 and Jer. 51:11 refer to Babylon falling to Medes, not to mention the reference to Belshazzar’s kingdom falling to the Medes and Persians in Dan. 6:28. This is a classic example where biblical and extrabiblical sources seem to clash.

One solution is to suggest that in fact a Median king named “Darius” did conquer Babylon, thus to follow the biblical report at face value and discount external evidence. Others suggest that the Medes are simply inserted into the biblical narrative to account for the biblical prophecies mentioned above (and others). Still others suggest that the name may refer to Gubaru, the governor whom the Persian king Cyrus put in charge of the Babylonian territories. He was from Gutium, which seems to have been known at the time as part of Media. This does not settle the matter of why he is called “Darius” in the OT, but Gubaru of Gutium seems to provide the best way forward in reconciling the biblical and extrabiblical evidence. It also addresses the notion that “Darius” and Cyrus ruled simultaneously (Dan. 6:28).

(2) Darius I (r. 521–486 BC), also known as Darius the Great. His rise to power is debated among historians, in part because the principal historical source is his own writing. He is the king under whom the temple was rebuilt (Ezra 4–6; Haggai; Zech. 1–8). He unified the Persian Empire and expanded it far to the west, nearly invading mainland Greece (he was defeated by the Athenians at the famous battle at Marathon in 490 BC). He was also a skilled administrator. He divided the empire into twenty provinces for purposes of governance and tax collection. He also instituted a system of weights and measures and introduced the daric, a gold coin.

(3) Darius the Persian. He is mentioned in the OT only in Neh. 12:22. His identity is debated. He is considered to be either Darius III Codamannus (r. 336–331 BC) or Darius II Nothus (r. 423–404 BC). If biblical chronology has any say in the matter, the latter is the only option to coincide with the ministry of Nehemiah. He is best known for having aided Sparta in winning the Peloponnesian War.

DARKNESS At the beginning of creation, the darkness “over the surface of the deep” is not a primordial principle of chaos to be combated by God (as sometimes suggested), but simply something that prepares for his creation of light in Gen. 1:3. The “thick and dreadful darkness” that came over sleeping Abram (Gen. 15:12) was an indicator of the reception of a mysterious divine revelation involving a manifestation of God in the form of a smoking fire pot and a blazing torch (15:17). Likewise, the thick cloud and darkness that shrouded Mount Sinai (Deut. 4:11; 5:23; Ps. 18:7–10) was a sign of God's presence and also hid him from the sight of the Israelites.

A plague of darkness was inflicted on Egypt as a prelude to the exodus deliverance (Exod. 10) and made darkness a sign and symbol of God's judgment. In prophetic teaching, the coming "day of the LORD" in judgment upon Israel and the nations is "a day of darkness and gloom" (Joel 2:2, 31; Amos 5:18–20; Zeph.1:14–15). The wicked will be thrust into darkness (Prov. 4:19; Isa. 8:22). Jesus used such imagery when speaking of punishment in hell (e.g., Matt. 22:13; 25:30). The moral life of a believer involves turning away from deeds of darkness (Eph. 5:8–11; 1 Thess. 5:4–8).

Darkness is associated with Sheol and death (e.g., Job 10:21; 17:13) and so also becomes a metaphor of a situation of distress, especially life-threatening danger (Ps. 107:10, 14). In contrast, the dispelling of darkness becomes a metaphor of God's saving help in Isa. 9:2: "The people walking in darkness have seen a great light" (cf. Isa. 10:17). That salvation will include the provision of a future Davidic ruler (Isa. 9:6–7), so that the coming of Jesus is the dawning of light (John 1:5; 12:35).

This rich OT background gives a context to the three-hour period of darkness as Jesus hung on the cross (Matt. 27:45). This began at the sixth hour (i.e., noon) and signaled that the judgment day was taking place as Jesus suffered in the place of sinners (cf. Amos 8:9).

DARKON An ancestor of a family that belonged to the "servants of Solomon" (Ezra 2:55–56; Neh. 7:57–58) and returned from the Babylonian exile with Zerubbabel in 539 BC or soon after. Little is known about this group except that it likely performed menial functions at the temple, as it is grouped with the "temple servants" (*see* Nethinim). The name of the group suggests that it was formed during the period of Solomon, though it could have been so named because Solomon built the first temple.

DART A medium-range projectile weapon with a sharp metal point, similar to the long-range arrow. The dart was usually thrown (Job 41:26) like the larger javelin. The figurative use of "flaming darts" (NIV: "flaming arrows") of Eph. 6:16 suggests that they could also serve as incendiary weapons.

DATE The reddish brown fruit (drupe) of the date palm (*Phoenix dactylifera*), which is prevalent around oases in the desert but also easily cultivated (Exod. 15:27 NASB; Josephus, *J.W.* 7.296; *Ant.* 10.190). The name of the biblical city Jericho means "city of palms" (see Deut. 34:3; 2 Chron. 28:15). Dates remain a staple food throughout the Middle East. They are handpicked by cutting the fronds, shaking them into containers, and then sun-drying them. Eaten raw, they are also folded into dough for date cakes on special occasions (see 2 Sam. 6:19; 16:1–2 LXX; cf. Song 5:11 NASB).

DATHAN A descendant of Reuben through Eliab who, along with his brother Abiram, rebelled against Moses and Aaron with Korah son of Izhar. In one of the more memorable events of Israelite history, God executed judgment on Korah, Dathan, and Abiram by causing the earth to open up and swallow them and their families alive (Num. 16:1–35; 26:9–10; cf. Ps. 106:17).

DAUGHTER-IN-LAW The wife of one's son. Scriptural parent-in-law/daughter-in-law pairs include Terah/Sarai (Gen. 11:31), Judah/Tamar (Gen. 38:11, 16, 24; 1 Chron. 2:4), Naomi/Ruth (Ruth 1:6, 7, 8, 22; 2:20; 4:15), Naomi/Orpah (Ruth 1:6, 7, 8), and Eli/wife of Phineas (1 Sam. 4:19).

The OT is forceful in governing the conduct of fathers-in-law toward their daughters-in-law, proscribing any sexual behavior between them (Lev. 18:15; 20:12; Ezek. 22:11). The narrative drama of efforts by the widowed daughter-in-law Tamar to conceive by her father-in-law, Judah, turns on this point, since he had deprived her of her levirate marriage rights (Gen. 38:6–27).

Otherwise, the biblical expectation is that a daughter-in-law will have a close filial relationship with her parents-in-law. Naomi calls her daughters-in-law “my daughters” (Ruth 1:11, 12, 13), and Ruth’s oath to her is frequently adopted by couples in modern marriage ceremonies (Ruth 1:16–17). In his anger at Israel, God refers to daughters and daughters-in-law similarly (Hos. 4:13–14). Indeed, an image of ungodliness is the rebellion of a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law (Mic. 7:6; Matt. 10:35; Luke 12:53).

DAVID The second king of Israel (r. 1010–970 BC), founder of a dynasty that continued with his son Solomon (r. 970–931 BC), who ruled all of Israel; subsequently the remaining “sons of David” ruled the southern kingdom, Judah, until 586 BC.

David’s importance can be measured by the vast space devoted to the account of his life (1 Sam. 16:1–1 Kings 2:12; 1 Chron. 11:1–29:30). The titles of many psalms identify him as their author. Although there are no contemporary extrabiblical references to David due to the rarity of inscriptions in Palestine at this time, the “house of David” (or Tel Dan) inscription, dated to the eighth century BC, provides an extraordinarily early reference to his dynasty.

DAVID AND SAUL

Human kingship is a late development in Israel, but a number of ancient texts anticipate the establishment of the institution (Gen. 17:6; Deut. 17:14–20) and specifically the rise of a king from Judah (Gen. 49:8–12; Num. 24:17). Thus, it is surprising that the first king of Israel is not from Judah, but from Benjamin. When the people ask Samuel for a king, he anoints Saul (1 Sam. 8–12), who proves to be a tremendous disappointment. He forfeits the establishment of his dynasty when he shows a lack of confidence in God by rashly offering prebattle sacrifices (13:13–14). God then rejects Saul as king because he does not execute God’s full judgment against the Amalekites as he knows he should (15:23).

At this point the biblical history turns its attention to David. God commands Samuel to go to Bethlehem, specifically to the household of Jesse, to anoint one of his sons as the next king (1 Sam. 16). In contrast to Saul, who is notable because of his tall, imposing physical stature (10:23), David is the youngest and smallest of all the children of Jesse, a simple shepherd. Nonetheless, he is the chosen one because God “looks at the heart” (16:7). However, David does not immediately assume the kingship. Indeed, his anointing is kept secret.

The first two accounts of David’s initial public appearance appear in 1 Sam. 16:14–17:58. Some doubt attends the question of whether these two stories are chronologically or thematically organized, but in either case they anticipate David’s later role as psalm singer and warrior. The narrative describes David’s work in Saul’s court as a harpist whose music soothes Saul’s tormented mind (16:14–23) and tells the heroic story of David’s courageous stand against Goliath, a gigantic Philistine mercenary (1 Sam. 17).

Although David never shows any signs of subversion or disloyalty, his growing popularity increases the paranoia of Saul. However, Saul cannot simply kill off such a popular figure, even though in a fit of madness he throws a spear at him (1 Sam. 18:10–11). Saul instead settles on a plan that would lead to David’s death on the battlefield. Saul offers his daughter to David in marriage.

After an abortive first attempt involving his daughter Merab, Saul invites him to marry Michal, though as a bride-price he asks through his attendants for one hundred Philistine foreskins (1 Sam. 18:25). Saul assumes that David will surely die in the attempt to obtain them, but instead David kills two hundred Philistines and marries Michal. The alliance to the royal house strengthens his later bid for the throne, but for the moment it serves the purpose of making Saul even more suspicious.

While Saul's hostility increases toward David, Saul's son Jonathan develops an intense personal friendship with David (1 Sam. 18:1–4). Jonathan recognizes his father's weaknesses and understands that he will not be the next king. He helps David escape his father's wrath, and forever afterward David is kind to the descendants of Jonathan (1 Sam. 19–20).

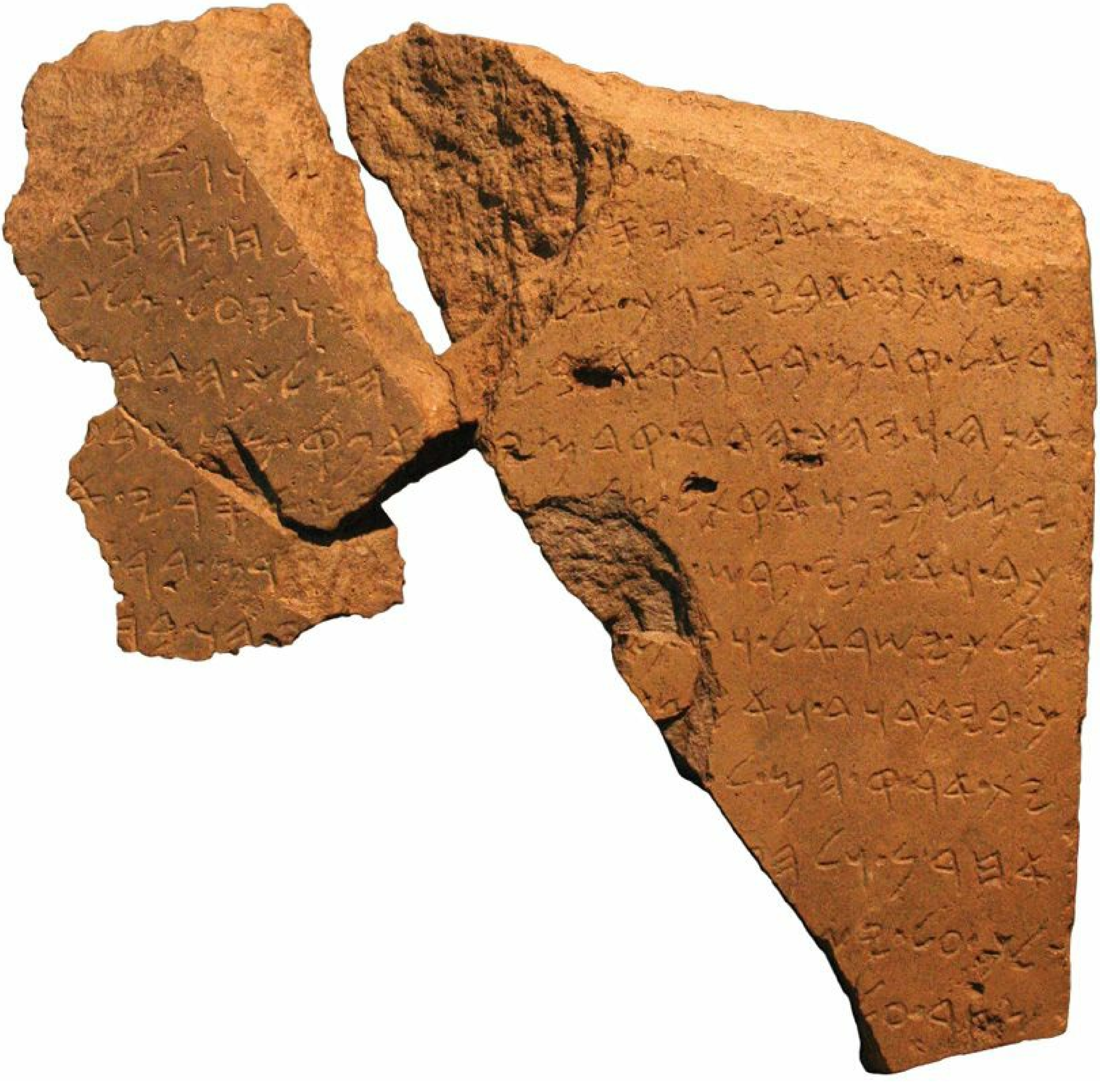
Eventually, Saul's murderous intentions toward David become so intense that he must leave the court and live in the hinterlands, moving from place to place, staying one step ahead of Saul and his men. He is not alone, however. With him is an army of six hundred men, a prophet (Gad), and the high priest (Abiathar). In essence, he functions as a kingdom in exile. He saves the Judean city of Keilah from the Philistines (1 Sam. 23:1–6) and protects the flocks of Judean landowners such as the aptly named Nabal ("fool") (1 Sam. 25). The latter is not properly grateful for the help, and David is ready to avenge himself against him. Fortunately, Nabal's wife, Abigail, wisely intercedes with David. Nabal dies of other causes, and David marries Abigail.

David is to be the next king, but he is no usurper. Two times during this period (1 Sam. 24; 26) David's men are in a position to dispatch the king. It may even be possible to justify such a move because Saul is pursuing David to kill him. David knows, however, that it is wrong to harm the anointed of the Lord. He is not going to manipulate the situation and grasp the kingship; he will wait on the Lord's own timing. David continues to keep out of Saul's way, even seeking refuge with the Philistines for a period of time.

Eventually, however, Saul's moment of judgment comes. Saul's final battle is against the Philistines, the major foreign force still inside the borders of the promised land. Both Saul and Jonathan meet their end on Mount Gilboa, and David sings songs that express his sadness over their deaths (1 Sam. 31–2 Sam. 1).

DAVID'S KINGSHIP

Even with Saul out of the way, David's rise to kingship is not easy. He is immediately crowned king of Judah (2 Sam. 2:1–7), but the northern tribes choose to follow Ish-Bosheth, the son of Saul. War erupts between the two kingdoms. Eventually, though, the powerful general Abner abandons his support of Saul's son, sealing the end of that dynasty. Ish-Bosheth is killed by his own men, and soon David becomes king over all Israel (5:1–5).



The “House of David” inscription, the earliest inscriptional evidence for the Davidic dynasty (Dan, ninth century BC)

David’s kingship leads to significant victories that, in essence, complete the conquest of Canaan by finally subduing all the internal enemies. His men take the city of Jerusalem from the Jebusites, and he makes it his capital (2 Sam. 5:6–16). He also defeats the Philistines, who have been a thorn in the side of Israel for years (5:17–25; for other victories, see 8:1–14). In celebration, David brings the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem (2 Sam. 6).

The David narrative reaches its apex when God enters into a covenant with him that establishes his dynasty (2 Sam. 7; 1 Chron. 17). After David dies, his son will succeed him, and indeed his dynasty lasts for many hundreds of years (see below).

David is a good king, but not a perfect king. A turning point in his reign comes in 2 Sam. 11. Up to this point, David has been content with what God has given him. He does not grasp for anything that does not belong to him. However, when he sees the beautiful Bathsheba bathing, he sends messengers to bring her to his house, where the two have sexual intercourse and she becomes pregnant. In an attempt to conceal this sin of adultery, he orders the death of her husband, Uriah the Hittite. Thus, he adds the crime of murder to that of adultery.

David thinks that the sin is secret, but nothing is hidden from God, who sends his prophet Nathan to confront David (2 Sam. 12; cf. Ps. 51). The difference between Saul and David is not that the latter is perfect but rather that David, as opposed to Saul, repents when he sins. Thus, God allows his reign to continue. Even so, David feels the consequences of his sin. First, the son that Bathsheba bears from her illicit union with David is struck with illness and dies. And ever afterward, David's family life is troubled, with great impact on the political life of Israel. Son is pitted against son (Amnon and Absalom [2 Sam. 13]), as well as son against father (Absalom and David [2 Sam. 15–18]). Absalom temporarily deposes his father from the throne, but David eventually regains the kingship, though at the cost of the heartbreaking loss of his son.

Even at the very end, there is conflict within David's house. When David has grown old, another son, Adonijah, attempts to take the throne, with support from powerful people such as Joab and Abiathar. At the instigation of Bathsheba and Nathan, however, David places the son of his choosing, Solomon, on the throne (1 Kings 1). David then dies after a reign of forty-one years, seven in Hebron and the rest over all Israel (1 Kings 2:10–12).

DAVID'S LEGACY

The account in Chronicles emphasizes David's role in the preparations for the building of the temple. He had wanted to build the structure, but God says that this task is not for the one who completes the conquest of Canaan (1 Chron. 22:8), but rather for his son Solomon, who will inherit a stable nation and whose very name means "peace."

David's greatest legacy is the dynasty that bears his name. Beginning with Solomon, however, his successors do not continue his spiritual legacy. Although a number of kings do some good, only Hezekiah (r. 727–698 BC) and Josiah (r. 639–609 BC) are given unqualified approval. Eventually, the Davidic rule comes to an end in Jerusalem at the hands of the Babylonians (586 BC). But God is not done with his redemptive purposes, and his promise to David is that he will have a ruler on the throne "forever" (2 Sam. 7:16). The NT recognizes that Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of this promise. He is the greater son of David, the one who is the Christ or Messiah, the anointed king. Jesus is the one who reigns forever in heaven. The life and the rule of David foreshadow the messianic rule of Jesus Christ.

DAVID, CITY OF *See* City of David.

DAWN Twilight before sunrise (Gen. 19:15; Job 3:9; cf. Prov. 4:18). People typically slept from dusk to dawn (but see Judg. 19:25; 1 Sam. 14:36), beginning activity at sunrise (Judg. 16:2; Neh. 4:21; Dan. 6:19). The psalmist and Jesus pray before dawn (Ps. 119:147; Mark 1:35). Jesus was raised from the dead before dawn (Mark 16:2), making the time a symbol of the resurrection (2 Pet. 1:19).

DAY OF ATONEMENT The Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur), on the tenth day of the seventh month, was regarded as the most solemn festival of the Israelite calendar (Lev. 16; 23:27–28; 25:9). The word "atonement" refers to the averting of the wrath of God that, unless dealt with, would fall on a sinful people.

As a special "sabbath" on which no work was to be done (Lev. 16:31; 23:28), the day was a reminder of God's rest after his creative work (Gen. 2:2–3). The Israelites were to deny themselves (presumably by fasting and sexual abstinence) and to gather in sacred assembly on this day (Lev. 16:29, 31; 23:27).

The high priest performed certain rituals for the purification of himself, the tabernacle or temple (representing a renewed cosmos), and the people. He was to be clothed in linen garments (Lev. 16:4), not the more regal vestments of Exod. 28, perhaps signifying his admission to the company of attendants on God's heavenly throne (cf. Ezek. 9:2–3; Dan. 10:5; Rev. 15:6).

The rituals of the day included the sacrifice of a young bull as a sin offering and a ram as a burnt offering. A unique feature of the ritual was the selection of two goats. One was to be slaughtered as a sin offering, while the other was "for Azazel," an obscure term traditionally rendered "as a scapegoat." The sacrifice of the one goat and, after the transferal of guilt through the laying on of the priest's hands, the expulsion of the second appear to be a twofold way of speaking of the cleansing of the Israelite community.

The central element of the Day of Atonement is the entry of the high priest beyond the curtain into the most holy place of the sanctuary, where rested the ark of the covenant, the symbol of God's presence. The focus is on the covering of the ark, or "mercy seat" (*kapporet*, a word related to the word for "atonement"), elsewhere depicted as a footstool for God's imagined throne above the cherubim that flanked it (1 Chron. 28:2; Ps. 99:1; Heb. 9:5). Screened from view by the smoke of incense, the priest sprinkled the blood of the sacrifice on and in front of the mercy seat. The altar was likewise sprinkled with the sacrificial blood.

Hebrews 9:7–14 sees the work of Christ as fulfilling what was typified in the ritual of the Day of Atonement, securing for us eternal purification from sin through his own blood. *See also* Festivals.

DAY OF CHRIST *See* Day of the Lord; Judgment Day.

DAY OF THE LORD The "day of the Lord" is a phrase used frequently by the OT prophets as well as by several NT writers. In general, it is used to refer to the coming time when God will intervene powerfully and decisively in human history to bring about his promised plan.

The OT prophets also use other similar phrases such as "the day," "the day when," and "that day" to mean the same thing as the "day of the Lord" (Heb. *yom yhwh*). In regard to the future, the prophets speak regularly of imminent judgment and future restoration, both for Israel/Judah and for the nations. Some of their prophecies find fulfillment after only a few months or years (the Assyrian and Babylonian invasion), and some of their prophecies are fulfilled generations later by the return of the exiles under Ezra and Nehemiah. Some are fulfilled by the first coming of Christ, and some still await fulfillment. In poetic fashion, the OT prophets often telescope all the multifaceted significant prophetic events of the future into one spectacular dramatic time called "the day of the Lord."

Included in this "day" are several significant prophetic actions by God. First, the imminent judgments on Israel and Judah by the hand of the Assyrians and the Babylonians are included in the "day of the LORD" (Isa. 3:18–4:1; Amos 5:18–20). Likewise, merged into the "day of the Lord" is God's judgment on the foreign nations that conspired against Israel and Judah (Isa. 13:1–22; Obad.

15). Finally, the prophets will use the phrase “day of the LORD” to refer to that time of glorious future restoration and blessing that God will establish for both Israel/Judah and for the nations (Isa. 11:10–12; Joel 3:14–18). In this final context the “day of the Lord” is often tightly interconnected with the messianic promise.

In the NT, the phrase “day of the Lord” (Gk. *hēmera tou kyriou*) is used in much the same manner as in the OT. Some aspects of the day of the Lord were clearly fulfilled by the first coming of Christ. For example, the OT prophet Joel prophesies that on the day of the Lord, God will pour out his Spirit on all kinds of people (Joel 2:28–31), a prophecy that found fulfillment on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:17–21). So the OT messianic prophecies connected to the day of the Lord sometimes find fulfillment in events surrounding Christ’s first coming (as seen in the NT), while some await his future, second coming.

The NT writers often employ this important phrase from the OT, but they use it primarily to refer specifically to the future, second coming of Christ (1 Cor. 5:5; 1 Thess. 5:2; 2 Thess. 2:2; 2 Pet. 3:10, 12). Just as the OT uses synonyms for the “day of the LORD,” the NT uses terms such as “that day,” “those days,” “the great day,” or “the day of our Lord Jesus Christ” as synonyms for the “day of the Lord,” the time of Christ’s glorious return (e.g., Mark 13:24; 1 Cor. 1:8; Rev. 6:17; 16:14).

DAYSMAN The KJV translation of the Hebrew word *mokiakh* in Job 9:33, referring to one who arbitrates (NIV: “someone to mediate”; ESV, NET: “arbiter”; NRSV: “umpire”). The daysman was so called because legal proceedings are set for certain days. In the only biblical use of “daysman” (Job 9:33), Job laments that there is no arbiter to go between him and God, enabling him to “speak up without fear of” God. Ironically, Job proceeds to complain directly to God in the following passage (Job 10). Some note here the role of Christ as mediator between God and humans (1 Tim. 2:5).

DAY STAR *See* Morning Star.

DEACON

TERMINOLOGY

“Deacon” is an English translation of the Greek word *diakonos*. Generically, this term refers to one who serves, and the word is used with this sense repeatedly throughout the NT (e.g., Matt. 20:26; 23:11; Mark 9:35; 10:43). Matthew 22:13 speaks specifically of those who serve by doing the bidding of a king. John 2:9 refers to the servants who draw the water at the wedding in Cana. Various other passages use *diakonos* in a religious context with reference to ministers or those who serve God or Christ in some way (Rom. 13:4; 2 Cor. 6:4; Eph. 6:21; Col. 1:7; 1 Tim. 4:6). This broad usage of the term to indicate general service, including table service, is also quite common in the secular Greek literature of the first century.

As the early church grew and developed, the word *diakonos* came to designate the specific church office of deacon. Although often cited, Acts 6 is inconclusive regarding the office of deacon. The noun *diakonos* does not appear in this text, but the related verb form *diakoneō* (“to wait on” [Acts 6:2]) is used in reference to the ministry of distributing food. Some interpreters find in this the precursor or establishment of the diaconate, but others argue that the use of *diakoneō* to speak of table service need not imply that the role of deacon had developed at this early stage of the church. Only two passages in the NT, Phil. 1:1 and 1 Tim. 3:8–12, clearly use *diakonos* in the sense of an established church office, and here the NIV rightly translates it as “deacon.”

THE OFFICE OF DEACON

Paul’s address to the believers in Philippi is unique within the Pauline corpus in its singling out of two church offices. While directing his words to the saints at Philippi, Paul specifically makes mention of the “overseers” (Gk. *episkopos*) and deacons in their midst (Phil. 1:1). This greeting provides evidence of the existence of such ecclesiastical structure from the early AD 60s at the latest.

The most detailed information in the NT related to the office of deacon occurs in 1 Tim. 3:8–12. Immediately following a discussion of “overseers” (Gk. *episkopos*) in 1 Tim. 3:1–7, this text shifts its focus to the office of deacon and provides a description of the requirements for the one occupying the role. The one fit to serve as a deacon should have a character worthy of respect, and the passage calls for the demonstration of this character in the areas of drink, money (v. 8), and family (v. 12). A deacon should display a commitment to Christian truth (v. 9), and a candidate should be tested before officially being allowed to serve in this office (v. 10).

DEACONESSES IN THE EARLY CHURCH

Significant discussion surrounds the issue of whether the NT limits the role of deacon to men or whether it provides evidence of women serving as deacons, frequently designated with the feminized term “deaconess.” At issue is the translation of *gynaikes* in 1 Tim. 3:11. The NIV renders it as “women”; also within its range of meaning are the translations “wives” (ESV) and “women deacons.” The context of the passage must dictate whether the qualifications listed in 1 Tim. 3:11 apply to the wives of those men who wish to be deacons or whether they are the standard for those women who themselves desire to serve in the office of deacon. On the one hand, the subsequent clear address of a male deacon as needing to be “faithful to his wife” (1 Tim. 3:12) makes a reference to female deacons in 1 Tim. 3:11 an illogical interruption. However, those who see in 1 Tim. 3:11 a reference to female deacons cite the use of *diakonos* to describe Phoebe in Rom. 16:1 as evidence that she served as a deaconess of the church in Cenchrea. Alternatively, Rom. 16:1 may be speaking only of Phoebe’s great service to the church in that locale without implying that she occupied an official church office.

Whether or not 1 Tim. 3:11 and Rom. 16:1 have in mind the role of deaconess, it is clear that an order of deaconesses existed in the church after the first century. The most significant early evidence includes the *Didaskalia Apostolorum* (Syria, early third century AD), which describes the female deacon in the Eastern church as one who ministered by assisting women with their baptism, provided instruction to the recently baptized women, visited women who were ill, and provided service for women in need. The fourth-century Syrian *Apostolic Constitutions* affirms their function in similar activities and identifies additional duties, including maintaining the separation of the sexes during worship. It also describes their ordination by means of the laying on of hands and prayer.

DEAD SEA The large salt lake to the south of the Jordan River. The Bible refers to this lake as the Salt Sea (Num. 34:12 ESV), Sea of the Arabah (Josh. 3:16), and Eastern Sea (Ezek. 47:18), but not the Dead Sea. Josephus called it Lake Asphaltitis. The Dead Sea is forty-two miles long and eleven miles wide. Located in the depths of the Jordan Rift Valley, the shore of the Dead Sea is the lowest point on earth, about 1,385 feet below sea level, and its waters are the second saltiest on earth. Only Lake Asal in Djibouti is saltier. The Dead Sea is more than 30 percent salt, whereas the Mediterranean Sea is only 4 percent salt. Because of the high salt content, nothing lives in the Dead Sea except microscopic organisms. Nevertheless, Ezekiel prophesied that its waters will be fresh and teeming with life (47:8–10). The Dead Sea is fed by the Jordan River, wadis such as the Arnon and the Zered, and springs such as En Gedi, but water escapes only through evaporation.

Several important biblical and historical events occurred around the Dead Sea. Lot's wife was turned into a pillar of salt as Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed. From Mount Nebo Moses looked down upon the Dead Sea. David hid from Saul in the caves at En Gedi. The Romans besieged Herod's fortress at Masada. The Qumran scrolls (DSS) were found in caves along its northwestern shore. Because of modern demands for freshwater upstream, the Dead Sea's water level has dropped significantly.

DEAD SEA SCROLLS The Dead Sea Scrolls (DSS) were first discovered in 1947 by a Bedouin shepherd in a cave near Khirbet Qumran (*see* Qumran). Over the next several years, ten other caves were found by Bedouins (Caves 4, 11) and archaeologists (Caves 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10). The caves are numbered according to the order in which they were found: Cave 1 was found first, Cave 11 last. The scrolls are mostly written in Hebrew, but there are also a number in Aramaic and a few in Greek. There are thousands of fragments of over nine hundred scrolls. Some of the scrolls are virtually complete, while others are in tiny fragments smaller than a postage stamp.

The scrolls are our earliest manuscript witness to both the Hebrew OT and the Greek OT. They give us a glimpse into the beliefs of a Jewish sect thought to be composed of members of the Jewish party known as the Essenes and help us to understand the development of the Hebrew language.

THE BIBLE IN THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS

Approximately 20 percent of the DSS are biblical manuscripts dating from the mid-third century BC to the mid-first century AD. This means that the biblical manuscripts found at Qumran predate our previous manuscript witnesses to the Hebrew OT by around one thousand years (though there are some manuscripts from the intervening centuries; see below, "Other Scrolls from the Judean Desert"). The Greek OT fragments are the oldest Greek witnesses, but the Greek OT, in contrast to the Hebrew, has a relatively continuous witness throughout the centuries. The centuries-long gap between the extant witnesses of the Hebrew text is explained by the Jewish practice of ritually destroying biblical manuscripts when they are worn out.

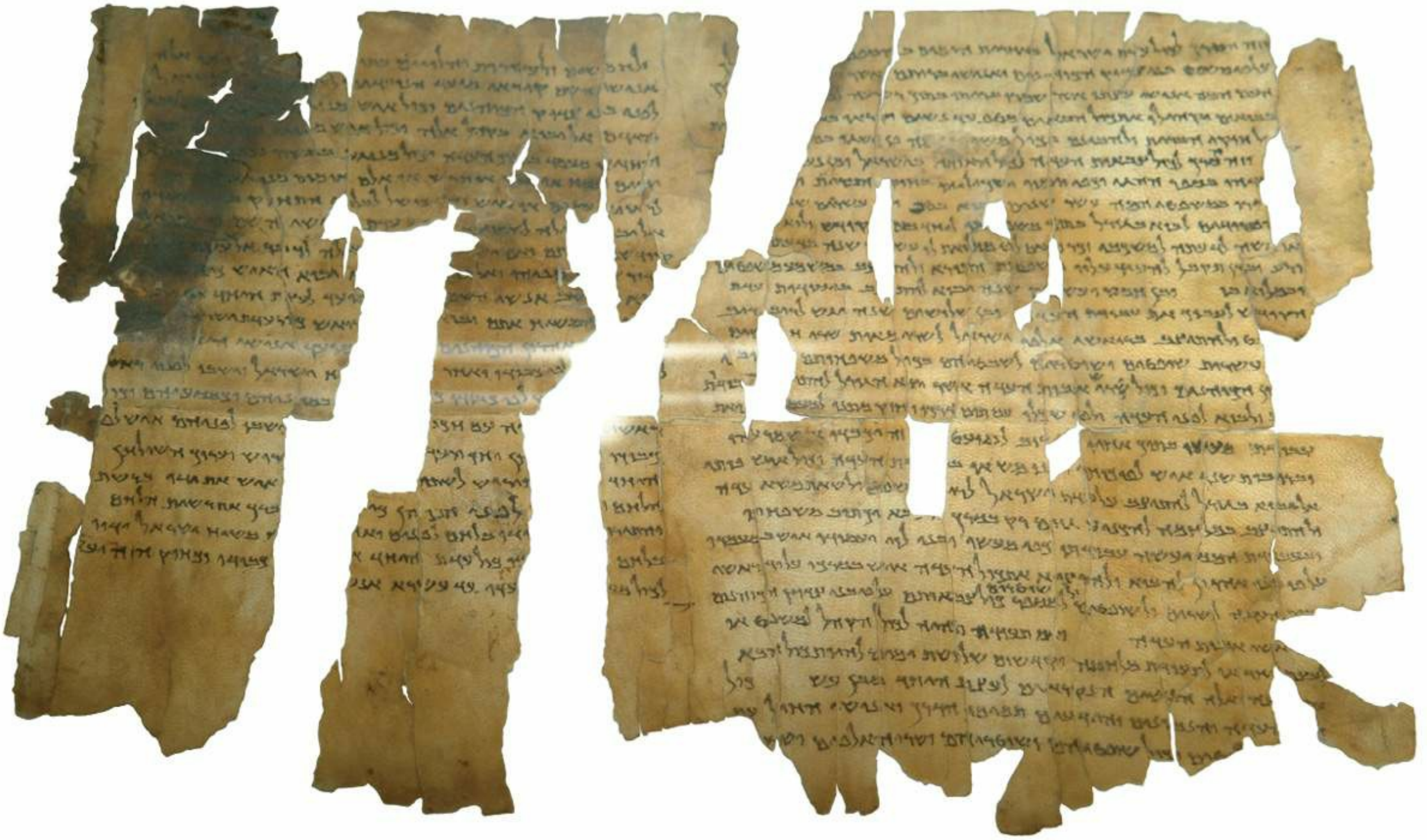
About one-third of the biblical manuscripts found at Qumran are very close to those from a thousand years later, when the manuscript evidence for the Hebrew OT picks up again. These manuscripts are called "proto-Masoretic," as they generally conform to the Masoretic Text (MT), the Bible of the rabbis and the Bible from which modern OT translations are generally made.

Among the remaining biblical manuscripts, some seem to contain texts similar to the Septuagint (LXX) and the Samaritan Pentateuch. Other manuscripts have unique readings, and still others conform to the LXX in one place and the MT in another place, and so forth. By the time of the second-century evidence to the Hebrew text, there seems to be a uniform text, as rabbis were choosing their received text and suppressing variant readings. The Greek fragments found at Qumran seem to reflect an editing of the text toward the Hebrew text; since these revised Greek fragments date from the first century BC, we can see that before the second century AD the rabbis had a standard biblical text from which they worked.

The biblical scrolls from Qumran include all the books in the Hebrew OT except for Esther. Whether the absence of Esther at Qumran is due to it not being seen as inspired or is an accident of history, we will never know. Statistically, based on the number of scrolls found of the various books of the Bible, the Qumran sectarians favored Deuteronomy (over thirty scrolls), Isaiah (twenty-two), and Psalms (approximately forty scrolls).

The psalms at Qumran are especially interesting. Some of the scrolls contain psalms not found in the Psalter as preserved in the rabbinic Bible, and the ordering within some of the psalms scrolls is different.

From the sectarian scrolls (see the next section), we can understand the contents of the biblical canon at Qumran. Some of the sectarian literature at Qumran indicates that the Qumranites had a canon similar to that of rabbinic Judaism. Most statements concerning canon at Qumran refer to the law of Moses and to the prophets. Another statement in the *Halakhic Letter* divides the canon into four parts: Torah, the Prophets, David, and the Chronicles. We cannot assume that the Qumran sectarians considered all the scrolls in the caves to be canonical Scripture.



Fragment of Dead Sea Scroll 1Q28a, the Rule of the Community, or Messianic Rule

SECTARIAN SCROLLS

Besides biblical texts, the DSS contain documents by which the Qumran sectarians organized their community, oriented themselves toward the outside world, and stated their goals. This is a rather fluid category; some of the literature that has not been included in this category easily could be.

The Rule of the Community. This text is found in various revisions in a few of the caves, but the main, virtually complete, copy is from Cave 1 (1QS). In general, the community rule discusses the purpose of the Qumran community, the requirements for entry, who can consume the pure food and drink, and punishment for infractions. Much of the rule involves when an initiate can be numbered among the community, “the Many,” and the initiate’s duties toward leaders, especially the “sons of

Zadok.” There are certain sections directed toward the Instructor, or the wise person, who teaches to the rest of the community the sectarians’ dualistic understanding of humanity as predestined to be either sons of light or sons of darkness. The instructor is to teach and to examine the community as to how they are progressing so that they may “walk perfectly.” An interesting feature of the *Rule of the Community* is that the sectarians were to keep their knowledge concealed from the outside. They were a community separated from the broader society and very much concerned about the purity, both moral and ritual, of their members.

The Damascus Document (Zadokite Fragments). This text was found in Caves 4, 5, 6. A version of it was also found in the Cairo Genizah in Egypt. The *Damascus Document* discusses the larger sectarian community to which the Qumran community apparently belonged. The first section of the document is known as “the Admonition.” It discusses how Israel consistently did not follow God, which eventually led to the destruction of the first temple. The sectarians are the remnant of true Israel, a plant that God caused to grow from Israel and Aaron (CD-A 1:5–7). The *Damascus Document* is a source for the reconstruction of the sectarians’ history. Included within the Admonition are midrashlike scriptural interpretations in which the sectarians apply the Bible to themselves and to their opponents. The second section, known as “the Laws,” contains laws for members of the sect covering everything from Sabbath observance to witnesses in court. In other words, it presents a comprehensive view of community life as envisioned by sectarian law, which is at times markedly different from what we know about rabbinic law. There has been some discussion concerning the role that Damascus plays in the document, as the sectarians are said to be in exile in Damascus. Earlier scholars interpreted this as an actual move to Damascus, but based on newer research, “Damascus” is now taken to be a code word for “Qumran.”

The War Scroll. There are seven copies of the *War Scroll*, one from Cave 1 (1QM), and six from Cave 6. The *War Scroll* is addressed to the Instructor and is essentially a battle manual for conducting the future, final battle between the sons of light and the sons of darkness. The sons of light defeat their enemies, and ultimately all evil is defeated. The foes are often spoken of in symbolic language, so it is difficult to identify them exactly. The outcome of the final battle in which the sons of light defeat their enemies has been preordained by God. The *War Scroll* uses ancient battle tactics to describe the various battalions of troops in the army of the sons of light. Numerous details are described concerning the deployment of priests as well as the ritual purity of the soldiers, including the avoidance of nakedness in the camps, because the angels are encamped with them. The banners described in the *War Scroll* have slogans written on them, such as “God’s offering,” rather than images in order to avoid breaking the commandment against making images. The latter half of this text is punctuated by war hymns that are sung when returning to camp, songs that curse the sons of Belial, and so forth.

The Halakhic Letter. The *Halakhic Letter* (4QMMT) is a letter composed by a leader of the Qumran community to the priests in the Jerusalem temple. Some believe that the writer of this letter was the Teacher of Righteousness himself (an early leader, perhaps founder, of the Qumran sect, who was considered an authoritative interpreter of Torah and the Prophets), but there is insufficient evidence to determine exactly who wrote it. The letter lists over twenty points of disagreement concerning ritual behavior in temple service. Some differences include whether pouring liquid from a clean container into an unclean one pollutes the clean one, whether blind and/or deaf people can participate in the temple service, and whether the priests involved in the rites of purity with the red heifer and the sin offering should be purified before sunset or wait until morning to be purified. Invariably, the Qumranites had a stricter halakah (laws governing sacrifice, ritual purity, Sabbath observance, etc.) than did the priests at the Jerusalem temple. The *Halakhic Letter* gives us a rare glimpse into the community before they condemn the Jerusalem priests to complete reprobation. Although there are harsh warnings given to the Jerusalem priests, reconciliation and redemption are possible if they follow the halakah of the Qumranites. This letter contrasts with much of the other sectarian literature found at Qumran, in which the Qumranites' enemies are the sons of darkness and are condemned to destruction. Also, in some of the other sectarian literature the Qumranites are to hate their enemies and hide their knowledge from them.

Some rabbinic scholars have compared the *Halakhic Letter* with the Mishnah. There are similarities between the halakah of the Qumranites and that of the Sadducees. This has led some scholars to conclude that there was a Sadducean group at Qumran. This is plausible, and it cautions against identifying the Qumranites with the Essenes completely and uncritically.

OTHER LITERATURE

The DSS contain various types of literature, too many to discuss here. This section of the article will examine primarily exegetical literature—the interpretation of Scripture—with a brief mention also of the *Copper Scroll*.

Targumim and rewritten Scripture. The Targumim are Aramaic translations of books from the Hebrew Bible. As well as being a translation, a Targum provides some explanatory interpretation of the Hebrew Bible. There were fragments of a Targum of Leviticus as well as fragments from two Targumim of Job found at Qumran. The Qumran scrolls also contain two major reworkings of Genesis: *Jubilees* and the *Genesis Apocryphon*. *First Enoch* and the *Book of the Giants* are, in a way, huge expansions on Genesis.

Pesharim. The Pesharim are a unique form of biblical commentary found at Qumran. Scholars have named them after the literature's use of the Hebrew term *pesher* ("interpretation") to introduce interpretive material. The Pesher quotes a portion of Scripture, includes a derivative of the word *pesher*, and then gives an interpretation of the Scripture text. The scholarship concerning the Pesherim and their exegetical technique is immense. The most fruitful line of investigation involves examining similarities between the Pesharim and Daniel's interpretation of the writing on the wall in Dan. 5:25–28. The term *pesher* and its earlier Hebrew cognate *pathar* are used concerning Daniel's and Joseph's interpretations of dreams (in Daniel and Genesis respectively).

Scholarship has generally considered there to be two types of Pesharim at Qumran, continuous and thematic. The continuous Pesharim interpret books of the Bible, usually one of the prophets, verse by verse, whereas the thematic Pesharim are organized around a theme. The Pesharim operate on the understanding that the Qumran community is the remnant of Israel at the end of days and that Scripture is being fulfilled in relation to the community. The Scriptures speak about them, and the Pesharim are inspired interpretation by which one learns the true meaning of the Scripture text. The prophets spoke partially, and the Teacher of Righteousness taught the Qumran community the true meaning of the biblical text that the prophet did not understand (1QpHab 7:1–14).

The Pesharim are useful in reconstructing the history of the Qumran sect because they interpret the Scriptures in light of the community's own experience. The Pesharim speak a code language in which specific people and groups are mostly given code names, so reconstructing the history of the Qumran community from the Pesharim is educated guesswork. Pesharim (indicated with "p") are signified according to the cave in which they were found and the biblical book commented on. So, for example, "1QpHab" refers to the Pesher on Habakkuk found in Qumran Cave 1.

The Copper Scroll. The *Copper Scroll*, so named for the material from which it is made, is a list of treasures from the temple and their hidden locations throughout Palestine. The purpose of this scroll is a mystery, but it is valuable for the insights that it provides into the history of the Hebrew language.

THEOLOGY OF THE QUMRAN SECT AS ILLUMINATED BY THE SCROLLS

As illustrated by the sect's literature, three main theological points were foundational for the Qumranites: (1) ritual purity, (2) deterministic dualism, and (3) the community as the center of prophecy.

The Qumranites were a priestly group deeply concerned about ritual purity. Their strict way of life ensured that ritual purity would be maintained. This was important for at least three reasons. First, they were the true remnant of the Zadokite priesthood. They had to remain suitable for service in the temple when God would restore them to it. Second, angels were in their midst in worship. In order to remain worthy of participating in worship with angels, they had to be ritually pure. Third, the angels would also be with them in the final battle. This battle would be religious in nature, and so ritual purity was important in order to engage in it.

The Qumranites held a dualistic outlook, seeing the world as divided between two camps: the sons of light and the sons of darkness. These two groups were predestined by God either to redemption and blessing or to condemnation and destruction. God had preordained that these two groups be in continual struggle until a final conflict in which the sons of light would emerge victorious and a messianic age would ensue in which Israel would be fully restored.

Connected with their dualism and belief in predestination was the Qumranite belief that their community was the center of prophetic literature. Their community was at the heart of what was taking place in the end of days.

HISTORY OF THE QUMRAN SECT AS ILLUMINATED BY THE SCROLLS

The Qumran community was formed by a group of disaffected Zadokite priests who lost power when the Hasmoneans assumed the high priesthood; the Hasmoneans were not from a family that the Qumranites considered legitimate and did not follow a strict enough halakah. The group was relatively directionless for about twenty years, until a charismatic leader emerged that galvanized the group and gave it direction. At this initial stage, although relationships between the Qumranites and the Jerusalem priesthood were strained, their differences were not irreconcilable. During this time the *Halakhic Letter* was written. Things took a turn for the worse when the "Wicked Priest" confronted and possibly attacked the Teacher of Righteousness at Qumran on the Day of Atonement (the Qumranites followed a different calendar from that of their adversaries). Along with the Wicked Priest, another of the Qumranites' enemies was the "Man of Lies," who rejected the sect's understanding of the law. The Pesher on Habakkuk calls both of these enemies traitors, so perhaps they were people from whom the Qumranites expected support. From this point onward, the Qumranites became more polarized from their Jerusalem rivals, and their goals changed from reforming the Jerusalem temple to maintaining their own cultic purity as they waited for the end of days, when God would help them destroy their enemies and reestablish them as the head of a new temple. Apparently, this development began to take longer than they expected (1QpHab 7). The historical allusions in the Zadokite Fragments and the Pesharim depict a group that was active in the Hasmonean period and, like the Pharisees and the Sadducees, was involved in the politics of the day.

THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS AND THE EARLIEST CHRISTIANS

In spite of earlier scholarship's claim that NT fragments were found at Qumran, this is not the case. What were thought to be NT fragments proved to be LXX and *First Enoch* fragments. Despite claims that the Teacher of Righteousness was Jesus, the texts on which such a claim was based predate the Christian era. That being the case, there are similarities between the group described in the DSS and the early Christians. Both centered on a person who faced opposition, in one case the Teacher of Righteousness, and in the other case Jesus of Nazareth. Both saw its group as pivotal to the culmination of the messianic age, either through the group itself, as in the case of Qumran, or in the return of Jesus, for early Christianity. Both the Qumran sectarians and the earliest Christians were messianic. The Qumran sectarians believed in two messiahs, one Davidic and one priestly, both to come in the future. The early Christians believed in Jesus as the Messiah, who came and who would come again to judge and restore all things.

The Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered in jars such as this one.

OTHER SCROLLS FROM THE JUDEAN DESERT

In the wake of the discovery of the DSS, archaeologists scoured the caves of the Judean Desert near the Dead Sea and did find more scrolls. Archaeologists also excavated Masada in the 1960s and found scrolls there. Besides Masada, the two most significant sites for the discovery of scrolls were Wadi Murabba'at and Nahal Hever. The biblical scrolls found at all three of these sites are significant because they are Proto-Masoretic. These biblical scrolls date from the late first century AD to the early second century AD and represent a time in which rabbinic Judaism and the rabbinic Bible became dominant, in contrast to the non-Proto-Masoretic scrolls found at Qumran, which represent other textual strands of the Hebrew Bible.

All the biblical scrolls found at Masada predate AD 73, when the site fell to the Romans. Archaeologists found there the fragments of a Deuteronomy scroll, two Leviticus scrolls, two Psalms scrolls, and an Ezekiel scroll. At Wadi Murabba'at archaeologists found a relatively intact scroll of the Minor Prophets, as well as the fragments of a Torah scroll and Isaiah. At Nahal Hever fragments of a Psalms scroll and fragments of Genesis and Numbers were discovered. A Greek Minor Prophets scroll was found at Nahal Hever as well. This is significant because the Greek scroll is very similar to the rabbinic Bible. Although the Jews came to reject the LXX, an ancient Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible that the Christians adopted, they still found a Greek translation necessary. The scrolls at Nahal Hever and Wadi Murabba'at predate AD 132–135, the time of the Bar Kokhba Revolt.

Besides having biblical scrolls, Nahal Hever was rich in material that gives a glimpse into the social and political life of ancient Palestine. In the Cave of Letters, archaeologists found the archive of a Jewish woman, Babatha, which includes a marriage contract (*ketubah*), a document that discusses how her son is to be cared for, and so forth. The details of the material in the Babatha archive conform to what we know was required by Jewish law in the early rabbinic literature. Also found in the Cave of Letters were letters to and from Simon Bar Kosiba (famously known as Simon Bar Kokhba), the leader of the Second Jewish Revolt against Rome. From these letters, we know that Bar Kosiba was a religious Jew who celebrated the Jewish festivals even though there was a war going on; for example, he discusses the provisions for celebrating the Feast of Booths.

The finds at Masada and Nahal Hever give us a glimpse into the religious motivation of much of the revolutionary activity, since the revolutionaries hiding at these places brought biblical texts with them.

DEAFNESS The condition of being wholly, or partly, without hearing. The Greek word *kōphos* can refer to one's inability to speak (Matt. 9:32–33; 12:22; 15:30–31; Luke 1:22; 11:14) or hear (Matt. 11:5; Mark 7:37; 9:25; Luke 7:22). Such a condition was often believed to be a judgment from God (Mic. 7:16). God has control over deafness (Exod. 4:11; Ps. 94:9; Prov. 20:12; Luke 1:20). God's people were to mirror his compassion toward the deaf (Lev. 19:14). In NT times, hearing deficiencies were sometimes caused by Satan (Mark 9:25) but were always met by Jesus' miraculous power (Matt. 11:5; Mark 7:32–37; 9:25). Figuratively, deafness describes people's spiritual rebellion, their unwillingness to hear, know, and obey God (Ps. 58:4; Prov. 28:9; Isa. 6:10; 29:18; 35:5; Jer. 6:10; Ezek. 12:2; Matt. 13:14–16; Mark 4:10–12; Luke 8:10; Acts 28:26–27). God is described as being deaf to a rebellious people (Deut. 1:45; Pss. 28:1; 39:12), whereas idols are deaf because they have no real life (Deut. 4:28; Pss. 115:6; 135:17; Dan. 5:23; Rev. 9:20).

DEATH Death is commonly defined as the end of physical life, wherein the normal biological processes associated with life (such as respiration) cease. This definition, however, does not adequately encompass the varied nuances associated with death in the Bible.

THE BEGINNING OF DEATH

Death is introduced in the Bible as the penalty for transgressing the prohibition against eating the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil—a contrast to Mesopotamia, where death was part of the divine design of human beings. In Gen. 2:16–17 God tells the first man, “When you eat from [the fruit of the tree] you will certainly die.” The consequences of eating provide a useful basis for discussing the nature of death from a biblical perspective.

First, as is apparent from the subsequent narrative, neither the man nor the woman experiences physical, biological death immediately after eating the fruit. In this way, Gen. 2–3 reflects the common biblical notion that death refers to more than just biological death, pointing to the more significant aspect of death that embodies alienation and separation from the source of life, God. The point is presupposed by Jesus when he offers life to those who are dead (John 5:24), and by Paul when he proclaims that before Christ all were dead in their sins and transgressions (Eph. 2:1, 5). It is also reflected in the common punishment prescribed in the Pentateuch whereby offenders were cut off from the people (Gen. 17:14; Exod. 12:15, 19; 30:38; cf. Gen. 9:11; Exod. 9:15). Within Gen. 2–3, death arrives with loss of access to the tree of life in the garden. Biologically, the first man and woman may continue to live for a while outside the garden, but their fate is sealed when they are cut off from the garden and the intimate fellowship with the Creator that had been enjoyed therein.

Second, the strong implication of Gen. 2:16–17 is that human beings, as originally created, were not subject to death (see also Rom. 5:12; 6:23; 1 Cor. 15:21). This does not mean that they were immortal in the same manner as God (cf. 1 Tim. 6:16), but rather that they were contingently immortal: they were not subject to death but sustained by their relationship to the life-giving God through the provision of the tree of life (cf. Rev. 2:7; 22:2, 14). Once they were cut off from the source of life, death ensued.

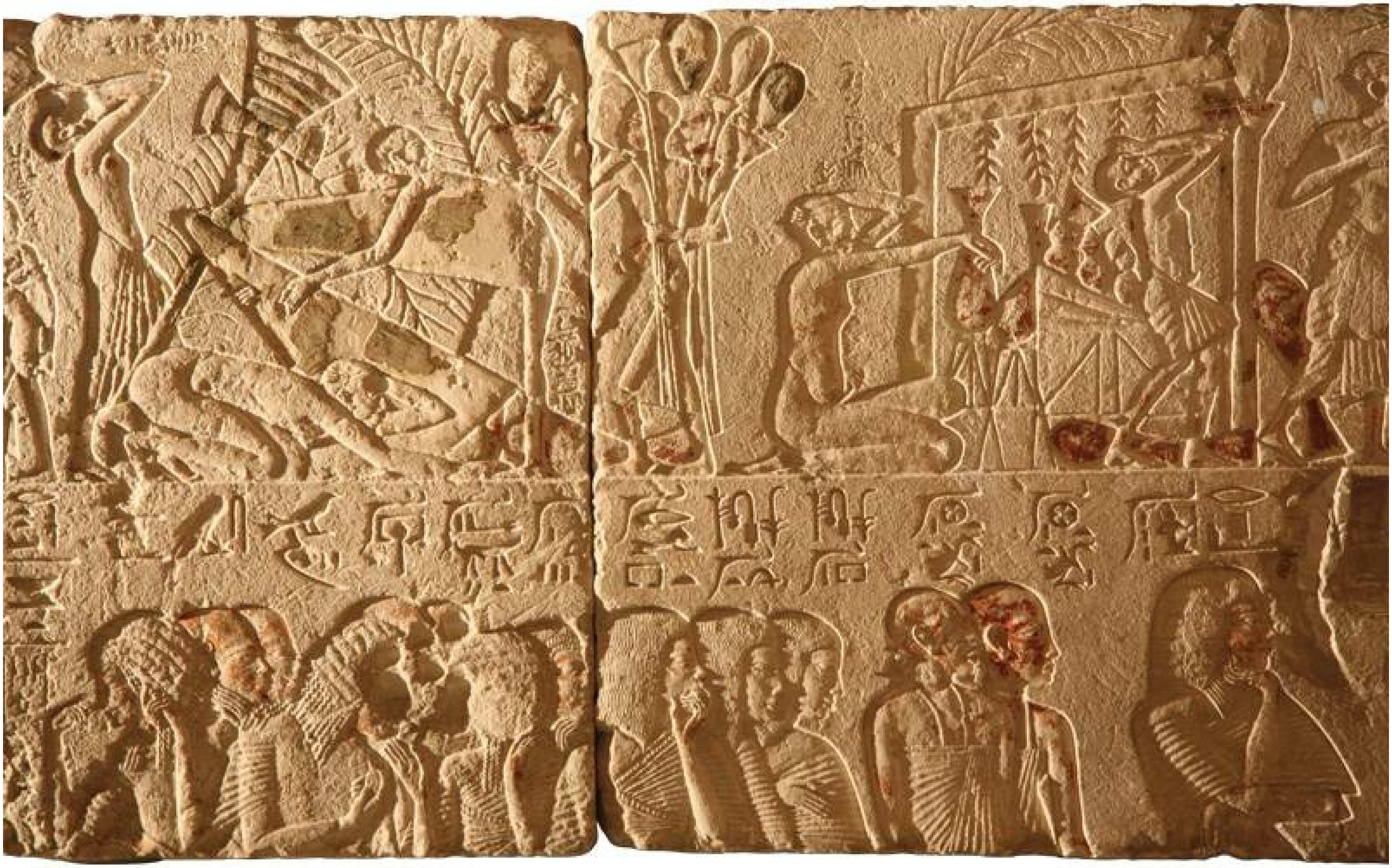
The account of the arrival of death in Gen. 3, however, tells us little about how death affected animals, since the Bible consistently presents a predominantly human focus. While Eccles. 3:21 affirms human ignorance over the relative postmortem fate of humans and animals, little else is said on the matter. Similarly, it is not entirely clear whether death is introduced as a punishment for sin for humans only (and so whether animals could have died prior to the fall) or whether animals were perceived as sharing in immortality prior to the fall.

DEATH IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

Death is frequently depicted negatively throughout the OT. Aside from its initial presentation as a divine punishment for sin, it is presented as that which seeks out and devours life and is terrifying (Pss. 18:4–5; 55:4; Prov. 30:15–16; Hab. 2:5). For the author of Ecclesiastes, death is that which ultimately undermines any possible value that life may otherwise have (e.g., Eccles. 9:3). The tragedy of death, in the OT, is that it results in separation, from God (as noted above in the context of Gen. 2–3) and from people. The psalms, for example, frequently cite the finality and profundity of death’s effects (e.g., Pss. 6:5; 88:5; 115:17; cf. Isa. 38:18). Even those few passages that appear to present death more positively (e.g., Job 3:13, 17) ultimately serve to highlight the appalling circumstances of the speaker’s life rather than any blessed state of the dead (for a similar idea in the NT, see Rev. 9:6).

The OT does, however, depict death as the natural end of life, and a good death as one that arrives only after a long and prosperous life. So Abraham (Gen. 25:8), Isaac (Gen. 35:29), and Job (Job 42:16–17) are said to live long lives before they die. Furthermore, some passages refer to the person being "gathered to his people," suggesting some form of reunion with previous generations in death, presumably in Sheol, although the location and state of the dead are never explicated. Isaiah can even include the idea of death within language used to describe the ideal future world (Isa. 65:20).

Although there are no laws relating to the manner in which the bodies of the dead were to be handled, all the descriptive indicators show that burial was normative, often in a family tomb or plot (e.g., Gen. 23; cf. 1 Kings 13:22). Indeed, the importance of an appropriate burial is apparent in Ecclesiastes' comment that a stillborn child is better off than someone who lives a long life but receives no burial (Eccles. 6:3) and in the prophets' presentation of those not buried as being accursed (Jer. 8:2; 14:16; 16:4).



Relief from a tomb wall showing a funeral procession and mourners (Egypt, 1550–1292 BC)

LIFE AFTER DEATH IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

Belief in some form of postmortem existence was common in many parts of the ancient world. In Egypt, an elaborate set of beliefs relating to the state of those who had died included the possibility of an ongoing existence that could even surpass what one may have experienced before death (although such an opportunity was a reasonable expectation only for the upper classes, while the general population probably had more modest expectations of the nature of their existence in the afterlife). By way of contrast, Mesopotamian beliefs depicted a far darker and more troubling afterlife for all but the very few whose lives and deaths were sufficiently blessed to ensure them some degree of postmortem comfort. For the remainder, there was little hope for any positive experience following death.

The OT, however, has little to say about the state of those who have died. The widespread belief in some form of continued existence beyond biological death in the ancient world suggests that, in the absence of contrary data in the Bible, the people of Israel probably assumed that some aspect of a person persisted beyond death. Furthermore, there are hints that this may have been the case, such as the raising of Samuel's shade by the medium at Endor (1 Sam. 28), the escape from death of Enoch (Gen. 5:24) and Elijah (2 Kings 2:11), the revivification of the body dropped on Elisha's bones (2 Kings 13:21), and expressions used to refer to death such as "gathered to his people" (Gen. 25:8, 17; 35:29; 49:29; Num. 27:13; Deut. 32:50; cf. Gen. 47:30; Deut. 31:16). The dead (sometimes referred to by the term *repa'im*, "shades/spirits of the dead") were thought to dwell in Sheol, generally described as under the earth (e.g., Ezek. 31:14). Beyond this, there are prophetic expectations that God will ultimately destroy death (e.g., Isa. 25:8), and that God does not take pleasure in anyone's death (Ezek. 18:23, 32).

DEATH IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

The NT continues, and in some places expands upon, the negative view of death presented in the OT. The notion that death is a consequence of and punishment for the sinful state that imprisons all humanity is stated emphatically (e.g., Rom. 3:23; 6:23) and reinforced by the notion that, although biologically alive, sinful humans are dead in their sin and so incapable of reviving themselves (Eph. 2:1). Death, according to Paul, is the last enemy (1 Cor. 15:26), and yet to die is gain (Phil. 1:21–24) because it heralds being with Christ, which, explains Paul, "is better by far" than being alive in this body in this world.

Central to both the message of the Bible and to the significance of death in the Bible is the death of the Messiah, God's Son. Jesus' death provides the basis for countering the consequences of the original rebellion against God by the first couple (2 Cor. 5:21). Consequently, Paul could write that Jesus' death itself destroyed death (2 Tim. 1:10). Furthermore, the life that Jesus offers—eternal life—is available to the believer in the present (John 3:36; 5:24), prior to the time when death is ultimately abolished, such that Jesus could assert that all those who believe in him will live even though they die (John 11:25–26).

The NT expands somewhat on the details relating to the state of the dead from the OT. For one thing, the existence of an afterlife is clearly presented. Furthermore, the parable of the rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19–31) reflects a more comprehensive understanding of the existence of distinctions among those who have died, such that the rich man is said to be suffering in Hades (Gk. *hadēs*, used in the LXX to translate Heb. *she'ol* in the OT), while Lazarus is far off with Abraham and being comforted. Although there is a danger in reading too much into a parable, the detail appears to reflect something of the expanded understanding of the afterlife among some in Jesus' day.

The NT makes several references to a "second death" (Rev. 2:11; 20:6, 14; 21:8; cf. Jude 12). The expression refers to the state of eternal judgment under God's wrath, a death from which there will be no escape. But those who remain faithful to Christ will not experience this second death (Rev. 20:6), and in their dwelling place with God, the new Jerusalem, death will be no more (21:4).

DEATH OF CHRIST *See* Christ and Christology; Cross, Crucifixion; Jesus Christ.

DEBIR **(1)** The king of Eglon who was part of a coalition led by Adoni-Zedek of Jerusalem against Joshua (Josh. 10:3). **(2)** A city in the hill country of Judah. Its former names were Kiriath Sannah (Josh. 15:49) and Kiriath Sepher (Judg. 1:11). It was totally destroyed by Joshua (Josh. 10:38–39; see also 11:21; 12:13). Caleb promised his daughter Aksah in marriage to the one who could capture Debir; the feat was accomplished by Othniel, Caleb's brother. It is listed among the Levite towns (Josh. 21:15). Debir is also mentioned in Josh. 15:7 as a town among the allotment to Judah. It is not clear whether this is the same Debir as those mentioned above. **(3)** A town in Transjordan Gad (Josh. 13:26) of debated location. It is also referred to in 2 Sam. 9:4–5; 17:27; Amos 6:13. The Hebrew noun *debir* is also commonly used to refer to the "back room"—that is, the innermost chamber, the most holy place of the temple (e.g., 1 Kings 6:16; Ps. 28:2).

DEBORAH **(1)** The fourth judge of Israel, whose story is told in Judg. 4:1–5:31. While the period of judges was a time of ever-increasing moral darkness and spiritual confusion, Deborah was a paragon of virtue, wisdom, and piety. Her interaction with the military commander Barak, however, illustrates the problems of this time period.

After the death of Ehud, Israel sinned again, presumably by worshiping idols. God accordingly turned them over to an oppressor, Jabin, a Canaanite king. Deborah is first of all described as a prophet, who was functioning as a judge in the judicial sense in the hill country of Ephraim. She received word from God that Barak should lead the army to expel Jabin. At this point, he should have responded affirmatively and without qualification, but he hesitated and placed a condition on his participation: Deborah must go with him. For this, Deborah informed him, a woman would receive the glory, not him. While one might think that Deborah would be that woman, the narrative moves in a different direction.

With Deborah in attendance, Barak engaged Jabin's commander, Sisera, and routed his army at Mount Tabor. Sisera escaped and sought refuge in the camp of a Kenite, Heber, and in the tent of his wife, Jael, assuming that they continued to be allies. However, after lulling Sisera into a state of relaxation and sleep, she dispatched him by driving a tent peg through his head with a hammer, thus earning glory (Judg. 5:24–27).

In this way, God ultimately ended Jabin's oppression of Israel. Deborah and Barak sang a song to celebrate this great victory (Judg. 5).

(2) Rebekah's nurse, who died upon Jacob's return to Bethel. She was buried beneath an oak tree near Bethel (Gen. 35:8).

DEBT, DEBTOR *See* Loan.

DECALOGUE *See* Ten Commandments.

DECAPOLIS A federation of ten Greco-Roman city-states primarily situated east and south of the Sea of Galilee. The Decapolis was established by Pompey in 64 BC during the course of his invasion of Syria and Judea. It was to serve as a league for trade and defense.

According to Pliny the Elder (AD 23–79), the cities were Scythopolis (Bet She'an), Hippos (Suseih), Gadara (Umm Qais), Pella (Tabaqat Fahl), Philadelphia (Amman), Gerasa (Jerash), Dion (Adun), Kanatha (Kanawat), Damascus, and Raphana (Abila). Of these, only Scythopolis, biblical Beth Shan (1 Sam. 31:10–12), was west of the Jordan.

The Decapolis cities were populated not by Jews but rather by Greeks, who had begun settling in the region during the intertestamental period. Hellenistic culture and practices prevailed, creating ongoing friction, conflict, and unease with the Jews in the area. The Greeks were offended by the Jewish practice of circumcision. In turn, the Jews found the Greeks' culturally normative homosexual behavior, religious idolatry, and swine herding repugnant.

Decapolites were among those who followed Jesus (Matt. 4:25). His healing of the deaf man by use of his own saliva also took place in this region (Mark 7:31–37). Although it is not explicitly mentioned, the Decapolis could be the "distant country" ("distant region" is a better translation) of the prodigal son (Luke 15:13–16).

However, Jesus' most significant encounter in the Decapolis is his healing of the Gadarene demoniac (Matt. 8:28–34; Mark 5:1–20; Luke 8:26–39). The place name for this miracle differs among the Gospel writers, with textual variants occurring in all three accounts. Mark and Luke refer to it as "Gerasa," one of the Decapolis cities with excellent name recognition, while Matthew indicates "Gadara," a smaller city nearer the Galilee coast. Some manuscripts also identify "Gergesa," an insignificant town near Gadara that is very near the kind of steep coastline featured in the account. It has been suggested that Matthew may have been a native of the Decapolis and therefore had better command of the geographic details.

DECISION, VALLEY OF This place designation occurs twice in the same verse (Joel 3:14) and probably is to be equated with the Valley of Jehoshaphat (Joel 3:2, 12). *See also* Jehoshaphat, Valley of.

DECREE A royal or divine command with the force of law. In the religious sense, the term "decree" is one of several synonyms that refer to divine lawgiving, as in Gen. 26:5: "Abraham obeyed me and did everything I required of him, keeping my commands, my decrees and my instructions." Here, as in numerous other places, "decree" represents the Hebrew word *khuqqah* (and its related term *khoq*) and it stands alongside "command" (*mitswah*) and "law" (*torah*). Another word that is often juxtaposed with *khuqqah* or *khoq* is *mishpat*, "judgment" (see Deut. 4:1). Because "decree" is frequently conjoined to synonyms, it is difficult to distinguish within biblical legal texts between decrees and other laws. Most often, "decree" is joined with one or more of the synonyms to denote divine law in general, without specific reference to its content.

In 1 Chron. 16:16–18 "decree" is used in parallel with "covenant," and the content is specified as the promise to Abraham and the patriarchs that they would inherit the land of Canaan.

Biblical authors particularly associate the issuing of royal decrees with the Persians, including Cyrus (Ezra 6:3), Darius (Ezra 6:12; Dan. 6:8), and Artaxerxes (Ezra 7:13; cf. 6:14). Persian royal decrees are presented as immutable, irrevocable, and enforced by harsh punishments (Esther 1:19; 8:8; Ezra 6:11; Dan. 6:8). In the book of Daniel, the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar rules through despotic decrees (e.g., 3:10).

The NT twice refers to Roman imperial decrees (*dogma*), including the ordering of a census that resulted in Jesus being born in Bethlehem (Luke 2:1; Acts 17:7).

DEDAN, DEDANITES A pastoral and trading tribe of the Arabian Desert that had ties with the Edomites (Jer. 25:23–24; 49:8; Ezek. 25:13; 27:20). It has either Hamitic (Gen. 10:7) or Semitic (Gen. 25:3) origins.

DEDICATE, DEDICATION To dedicate something is to set it apart or to install it, usually for God and his service. According to the book of Leviticus, the Israelites could dedicate (KJV: "sanctify"; NRSV: "consecrate") animals (27:9–13), houses (27:14–15), and fields (27:16–24), which could be redeemed in most cases; people could be dedicated as well (27:2–8). Additionally, individuals could dedicate themselves by making a Nazirite vow (Num. 6:2–21). Spoils of war could be dedicated to God (e.g., 2 Sam. 8:11–12; 1 Chron. 26:27). However, the kings of Judah dedicated (some versions: "gave") horses to the sun (2 Kings 23:11).

The word *khanukkah*, translated "dedication," and a related verb denote the ceremonial dedication of the tabernacle's sacrificial altar (e.g., Num. 7:10), of the first and the second temple (e.g., 1 Kings 8:63; Ezra 6:16–17), of Nehemiah's wall (Neh. 12:27), and of Nebuchadnezzar's image (Dan. 3:2–3). The Jewish holiday Hanukkah, or the Feast of Dedication (John 10:22), commemorates the purification of the temple during the intertestamental period.

A relief of three menorahs from a synagogue in Corinth. A menorah is used during Hanukkah, the Feast of Dedication.

DEEP, THE "The deep" (Heb. *tehom*; Gk. *abyssos*) refers to the deep sea or the depths of the sea, in particular to the primeval sea that was understood to exist prior to God's creative work, which brought order to the chaotic initial state of the world (Gen. 1:2), and that re-covered the earth as creation was reversed in the flood (Gen. 7:11; 8:2). The Hebrew term is etymologically related to the primeval Babylonian goddess who, according to the creation myth in the Mesopotamian text known as the *Enuma Elish*, was slain by the god Marduk and from whose carcass the universe was formed. In spite of this, there is no indication that the term as used in the Bible was in any way associated with the Babylonian deity, particularly given that the root itself was also used at Ugarit and Ebla to mean "the deep."

Although the OT does not import the mythological and religious ideas associated with the deep from Mesopotamia, the deep nevertheless often represents a somewhat ominous place, a fearful place of chaos (e.g., Ps. 148:7; Jon. 2:5), sometimes symbolically representing the depths of despair (Ps. 71:20). Yet the OT affirms God's complete control and sovereignty over the deep (Pss. 33:7; 77:16; 135:6; Isa. 51:10). Elsewhere, however, the term can simply refer to the source of springs and appears to reflect an abundant supply of water (Deut. 8:7; Ps. 78:15).

In the NT, the deep (or the abyss) is presented as a place of the dead (Rom. 10:7) or a prison for demons (Luke 8:31; Rev. 9:1–11) from which opposition to God arises. Revelation also continues the view that the deep sea is a place of darkness and opposition to God with the pronouncement that in the new heaven and new earth there is no longer any sea (Rev. 21:1).

DEER A four-legged mammal that often lives in wooded areas. In most species of deer the males have antlers and the females do not. The land in and around Israel was host to three types of deer: fallow, red, and roe. Deer are mentioned among the many animals regulated in Israel's dietary laws (Deut. 12–15), and the list of food eaten daily at Solomon's table mentions roebucks (1 Kings 4:23). Often deer are referred to in similes. Among them, 2 Sam. 22:34; Ps. 18:33 associate deer with sure-footedness, perhaps an indication that some deer inhabited mountainous regions and were known for agility. Probably the most famous mention of deer in the Bible is Ps. 42:1: "As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, my God." Here the beauty and simplicity of a deer longing for refreshing water is compared to the psalmist's desire for fellowship with God. *See also* Doe.

DEFILE To render something ritually or morally unclean and therefore inadmissible to God's holiness (Exod. 20:25; Lev. 18:24; Heb. 12:15; cf. Num. 35:23).

DEGREES, SONG OF *See* Ascents, Song of.

DEHAVITES Traditionally thought to refer to a people group in Samaria (Ezra 4:9 KJV, NKJV; based on a suggested scribal emendation). The Aramaic term written in the Hebrew Bible is best translated "that is," which is the translation preferred by most modern versions.

DEKAR One of King Solomon's twelve district governors. The KJV reads "son of Dekar" in 1 Kings 4:9, but more-recent translations (NIV, NRSV, NASB) transliterate the Hebrew phrase as a personal name, "Ben-Deker."

DELAIAH **(1)** The head of a priestly division at the time of David (1 Chron. 24:18). **(2)** An official in the court of King Jehoiakim who, along with others, encouraged the king to listen to the words of Jeremiah (Jer. 36:12, 25). **(3)** A descendant of David, through Jehoiakim and Zerubabbel, in the period after the exile (1 Chron. 3:24). **(4)** An ancestor of a family that could not prove its Israelite lineage after the exile (Ezra 2:60; Neh. 7:62). **(5)** The father of Shemaiah, a priest hired by Tobiah and Sanballat to implement their plan to discredit Nehemiah (Neh. 6:10).

DELILAH A non-Israelite woman, probably Philistine, who is best known for her role in the deception of her lover, Samson (Judg. 16:4). Enticed by the Philistine rulers' monetary bribe, Delilah is enlisted to find out the secret of Samson's strength. After lying three times, Samson succumbs to Delilah's constant nagging and reveals the truth: cutting off his hair would break his Nazirite vow, rendering him powerless. As a result, Samson is delivered, bald and bound, into the hands of the Philistines by Delilah, whose betrayal ultimately leads to Samson's final act, resulting in his own death along with many Philistines (Judg. 16:5–30).

DELIVERANCE, DELIVERER Deliverance provides relief or escape from a detrimental situation or the prospect of adverse circumstances. There are many terms in the Bible that express this thought, such as “save,” “rescue,” “redeem,” “set free,” “bring out,” “escape,” “avenge,” “vindicate,” “preserve,” “give legal protection,” as well as “deliver.” Deliverance may come from God or humans and may be from physical temporal distress or spiritual in nature.

The principal example of deliverance in the OT is the exodus, God’s deliverance of Israel from Egypt. The greatness of this deliverance comes from several factors: (1) the extremity of Israel’s circumstance, which was long-term slavery to one of the world’s superpowers; (2) the extent of God’s power displayed in the ten plagues upon Egypt and in Israel’s safe passage through the Red Sea; (3) its fulfillment of a promise to Abraham, beginning the process of giving his descendants the land; (4) its foundational place in Israel’s tradition and holy days (Passover). This event becomes the main component of the historical background clause of the covenant and a reminder to covenant faithfulness (e.g., Exod. 20:2; Lev. 22:33; 23:43; Num. 15:41; Deut. 4:20; 6:12; 20:1; Josh. 24:5–7, 17; Judg. 6:8; 1 Kings 9:9; Jer. 34:13; Ezek. 20:10; Dan. 9:15). When Jeremiah prophesies of the Babylonian exile and the later return from exile, he portrays it in the manner of or as surpassing the exodus (Jer. 16:14–15).

The NT continues the exodus theme in that Jesus’ death and resurrection, the foundation for salvation, coincide with the celebration of Passover. This constitutes deliverance in that all humanity is in slavery to the power of sin and subject to the penalty of death. Jesus’ death and resurrection provide the possibility of deliverance, usually called “salvation,” from the power of sin and death (1 Cor. 15:51–57; Gal. 1:4; Col. 1:13; 1 Thess. 1:10).

Throughout the Bible, God provides deliverers and is a deliverer (Judg. 3:15; 2 Sam. 22:2; 2 Kings 13:5; Ps. 40:17). The NT prefers the term “Savior,” applying it to God the Father and to Jesus Christ.

DELUGE *See* Flood.

DEMAS A Gentile companion of Paul who sent greetings in Col. 4:14; Philem. 24. Paul refers to him as a “fellow worker” in Philem. 24; however, in 2 Tim. 4:10 Paul says that Demas deserted him because he “loved this world.”

DEMETRIUS **(1)** A silversmith in Ephesus whose livelihood came from making “silver shrines” of the goddess Artemis (Acts 19:23–41). Worried that Paul’s preaching would end his business and that of his fellow craftsmen, Demetrius stirred a local crowd into frenzied support of Artemis. As a result, Paul’s missionary companions Gaius and Aristarchus were seized by the crowd and taken into the local theater. Calm came only with the intervention of the city clerk, who suggested that Paul had not actually spoken against Artemis, and that the proper place for Demetrius to air his grievances was a court. **(2)** In 3 John, a Christian of good repute in the church who was commended to the recipients of the letter with high praise (v. 12).

DEMON *See* Devil, Demons.

DEMONIC POSSESSION The Gospels list demon possession among the maladies that Jesus and his disciples (and later the apostles) cured (e.g., Matt. 4:24). While the NT does not offer an explicit theory of demon possession or an account of how it differs from illnesses with nondemonic causes, the Gospels are rich in descriptions of the suffering of the demon-possessed. Demons caused muteness (Matt. 9:32–33; Luke 11:14), blindness (Matt. 12:22), and seizures (Matt. 17:15; Luke 4:35; 9:42), as well as symptoms that moderns associate with various forms of mental illness, including strange verbal outbursts (Matt. 8:28–34; Luke 4:34). The story of the Gerasene demoniac is especially troubling (Luke 8:26–39 pars.). The demoniac (or demoniacs, according to Matt. 8:28) wore no clothes, lived outside his city among the tombs, howled, cut himself with stones, and shouted under the control of the demons. He was able to break chains that were placed on his body as restraints. Many demoniacs who appear in the Gospels are men, but demon possession also affected women (Matt. 15:22–28). The Gospels do not describe the onset of demon possession.

In addition to these descriptions of demon possession, the recorded perceptions of Jesus' contemporaries offer insight into how it was understood in antiquity. Some thought that John the Baptist was demon-possessed (Matt. 11:18; Luke 7:33) because he "came neither eating nor drinking"—that is, he adhered to an extreme ascetic diet and lifestyle. Jesus was thought to derive his power to cast out demons from collusion with Beelzebul (Mark 3:22). In the Gospel of John, in contrast to the Synoptic Gospels, Jesus' ability to heal leads his contemporaries to the opposite conclusion, that he is not demon-possessed (John 10:20–21). Instead, the charge of demon possession in the Gospel of John stems from the perception that Jesus' religious teachings were unorthodox (John 8:48–52). Paul also correlates heresy with demonic influence (1 Tim. 4:1).

It is important to note that in the NT, demon possession is almost always portrayed as a terrible affliction. The idea of harnessing the power of a demon for one's own benefit, which was widespread in antiquity and the Middle Ages, is not a major focus in the NT, though it is reflected in the story of the girl who was possessed by a fortune-telling spirit (Acts 16:16) and in cases in which Jesus' contemporaries attributed (falsely) his healing power to demonic possession.

DENARIUS A Roman silver coin that was the pay for a day's labor as well as the annual temple tax. It was what Jesus' opponents brought to him when he told them, "Give back Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's" (see Matt. 22:15–22; Mark 12:13–17; Luke 20:20–26).

SCAVR
AED CVR
EX

A Roman denarius

DEN OF LIONS **(1)** A place of execution into which criminals were cast for a particularly painful death (Dan. 6:7). **(2)** The lair of a lion and cubs (Nah. 2:11). **(3)** A metaphorical representation of danger and/or wickedness (Ps. 10:9 KJV).

DEPOSIT **(1)** The dregs or residue, used metaphorically to speak of people's remaining impurities (Ezek. 24:6, 11–12). **(2)** An amount of money or other valuable entrusted to another (Matt. 25:27; Luke 19:23; 2 Tim. 1:14) or used as a down payment. In three instances in the NT the Greek word *arrabōn* is used to refer to the Holy Spirit as the deposit that guarantees what is still to come (2 Cor. 1:22; 5:5; Eph. 1:13–14). The last of these passages notes that the deposit of the Spirit in view is the redemption of God's people, their future inheritance.

DEPTHS In addition to ocean depths, the biblical text refers to the depths of the earth (Ps. 63:9) and of the grave (86:13). The different terms translated "depths" are employed figuratively to represent God's incomprehensibility (Job 11:8) and omnipotence, omnipresence, and omniscience (Ps. 95:4), dire and distressing situations (Pss. 30:1; 88:6; 130:1), death and near death (Ps. 71:20; Prov. 9:18), and hidden places, such as the mother's womb (Ps. 139:15). *See also* Deep, The.

DEPUTY An official appointed to exercise the authority of a superior (Judg. 9:28). The KJV uses "deputy" to render the Greek word *anthypatos* in Acts 13:7, 12; 18:12; 19:38, where most modern versions use "proconsul."

DERBE A city in the province of Galatia in Asia Minor (Acts 14:6). Although its exact location is unknown, Derbe was situated along the main road connecting Iconium, the chief city of the region, with Laranda. The people there spoke a local dialect called “Lycaonian” (14:11). Derbe was the last city Paul visited on his first missionary journey before he began the return trip (14:20), and it was the first city he visited on his second journey (16:1). A companion on Paul’s third journey, Gaius, was from Derbe (Acts 20:4).

DESCENT INTO HADES The Apostles’ Creed announces that following his death and burial, Jesus “descended into hell.” Is there a biblical basis for such a statement?

This doctrine is drawn from various NT passages, but especially 1 Pet. 3:18–20, which says that Jesus “was put to death in the body but made alive in the Spirit. After being made alive, he went and made proclamation to the imprisoned spirits—to those who were disobedient long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built.” And 1 Pet. 4:6 says, “For this is the reason the gospel was preached even to those who are now dead” (cf. Acts 2:25–31; Eph. 4:8–10).

There are various interpretations of these passages. First, some claim that Christ preached to the people of Noah’s day, either through Noah or in a preincarnate state. Second, some assert that Christ descended to Hades after his death and preached to Noah’s contemporaries who had died in the flood. The “spirits” would be the spirits of dead people. A third view is that Christ descended to Hades (or hell) after his death and there proclaimed his victory to the fallen angels (“spirits”). These may have been the “sons of God” of Gen. 6:1–4 (see 2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6). The intertestamental Jewish book *1 Enoch* (second century BC) develops an interpretation of this puzzling Genesis text, telling of angels who had brought evil to the world by marrying women and fathering demons. Before the flood they had been put in prison under the earth. A fourth view is similar to the third but claims that Jesus’ proclamation to these fallen angels took place not during a descent into hell, but at his resurrection and ascension.

This last interpretation is the most likely one. Jesus’ descent to “Hades” (meaning the place of the dead) refers generally to his death, not to an entrance into hell. Jesus’ proclamation was his announcement of victory over sin, Satan, and death at his resurrection and ascension. Peter here is reassuring his readers that Jesus rules, and that his death and resurrection have sealed the fate of all powers, real or not, that evoke fear. Paul says simply that Jesus triumphed over all such powers by the cross (Col. 2:15). Jesus did not go to hell; rather, like every believer, when he died, his spirit went to be with the Father in heaven (Luke 23:43), to remain there until reunited with his body at his resurrection.

DESERT An arid environment challenging to life. Desert comprises about a third of the earth’s land surface, often overtaking verdant areas and squeezing human beings and animals into narrower oases. The deserts of the Bible—Negev, Sinai, Paran, and Zin—are part of the greater Saharo-Arabian desert system, the largest and driest in the world. Most of the land east (areas of present-day Jordan, Iraq, Saudi Arabia) and south (Egypt) of Palestine is desert. However, the desert experience of most Israelites was not vast sands but rather arid environments that could otherwise flourish with sufficient water. In this regard, the biblical “wilderness” and “desert” semantically overlap, but they are not the same environments.

With average precipitation of ten inches or less, these regions typically have sparse vegetation and little or no agriculture (Jer. 2:2). Pliny the Elder (AD 23/24–79) describes the Essenes, who lived near the Dead Sea, as having only “the company of palm trees” (*Nat.* 5.73). Temperatures are severe, often exceeding 110°F on summer days, but also falling below freezing on winter nights. The limited winter rains provide short-lived grass for grazing (1 Sam. 17:28; Ps. 65:13; Jer. 23:10), along with thorns and briers (Judg. 8:7). Cisterns were dug to collect the precious rain (Gen. 37:22).

The severity of the environment is not conducive for animal and human life. The Bible mentions wild asses (Job 24:5; Jer. 48:6), jackals (Mal. 1:3), ostriches (Lam. 4:3), owls (Ps. 102:7), poisonous snakes (Isa. 30:6), panthers, and wolves (Hab. 1:8). The desert came to be viewed as the haunt of demons (Matt. 12:43) but also as a place for spiritual refreshment. By definition, a desert is untouched by human hands. The patterns and sounds go back to God, not the noisy neighbors of urban life. The desert therefore can facilitate communion with God because of the absence of distractions and the inevitable deepening awareness of the fragility of existence. Scarcity of resources also requires communal sharing and cooperation for survival.

Instead of in major urban centers in Mesopotamia, Egypt, and Palestine, the Bible presents God as training people in the desert by testing their faith, beginning with the patriarchs (Gen. 12–50). God redeems Israel out of Egypt into the desert (Exod. 15:22; 16:1; 17:1), leading them to Sinai (Exod. 18:5; 19:1–2) and then a forty-year sojourn (Num. 14:33; 32:13; Deut. 2:7). Following seasons of testing, concerning which the people routinely fail, God provides freshwater and manna, the “grain of heaven” (Ps. 78:24). However, except on the Sabbath, people are not allowed to store the food but must cultivate complete dependence upon God’s provision for their daily bread. Elijah flees into the wilderness and is provided for by an angel (1 Kings 19:1–8). He returns to Mount Sinai (Horeb) and experiences the immediate presence of God in a “thin silence” (1 Kings 19:8–13; NIV: “gentle whisper”).

This pattern is repeated in the NT, beginning with John the Baptist, who dresses like a desert nomad and subsists on locusts and wild honey—foods near at hand and not subject to agricultural tithing (Matt. 3:4; Mark 1:6). After John’s baptism, Jesus departs into the wilderness, where he fasts and is tempted for forty days and nights among the wild beasts but is also provided for by angels (Matt. 4:1–11 pars.). Paul, after his experience on the road to Damascus, departs into Arabia (Nabatea, present-day Jordan), the place “where the nomads live” and the traditional site of Mount Sinai (Pliny the Elder, *Nat.* 5.72; Gal. 1:17; 4:25). (Damascus, perhaps the oldest city in the world, is an oasis bordering the Arabian Desert on a highway connecting Egypt with Mesopotamia.) The author of Revelation depicts a woman, who represents the people of God, fleeing into the wilderness to escape the red dragon, Satan (Rev. 12:1–6).

DESIRE *See* Concupiscence; Lust.

DESIRE OF ALL NATIONS This phrase, as found in the KJV of Hag. 2:7 (cf. NIV: “desired by all nations”), has been traditionally understood as a messianic prophecy with reference to the person of Christ. It is almost certain, however, that the phrase refers to the desired “treasures” of the nations, and it picks up on a motif prominent in the OT in which the material wealth of various Gentile peoples, either as plunder from war or sometimes as voluntary contributions, is brought into the treasury of God’s temple in Jerusalem.

DESOLATION, ABOMINATION OF *See* Abomination, Abomination of Desolation.

DESTINY *See* Fortune and Destiny.

DESTROYER A term occurring both generically (e.g., Jer. 4:7; 48:8) and in reference to the destroying angel of the Passover (Exod. 12:23; Heb. 11:28). Revelation 9:11 speaks of an angel who rules the horde of locusts from the Abyss, "whose name in Hebrew is Abaddon and in Greek is Apollyon," both of which mean "destroyer."

DESTRUCTION *See* Perdition.

DEUEL The father of Eliasaph, who was the tribal leader of Gad during the wilderness wanderings (Num. 1:14; 2:14; 7:42, 47; 10:20). The main Hebrew manuscripts (the MT) give the name as "Reuel" in Num. 2:14, the result of a common confusion between the Hebrew letters *dalet* and *resh*. Many translations make the correction based on other text traditions, most notably the LXX. *See also* Eliasaph.

DEUTERONOMY, BOOK OF Deuteronomy concludes the Torah. It is the fifth scroll or chapter of the work traditionally ascribed to Moses. Its title is derived from the LXX and literally means "the second law." The name is appropriate in view of the fact that in it Moses takes a final opportunity, before the people go into the promised land and he ascends Mount Nebo to die, to speak to the people about their obligations before God. Many of the laws of the book, most notably the Ten Commandments (compare Deut. 5 with Exod. 20), may be found in an earlier form elsewhere in the Torah, but there are also many new laws as well (see below, "Genre and Message"). In essence, this final sermon by Moses takes the form of a covenant by which the people of God reaffirm their relationship to Yahweh.

AUTHOR AND DATE

Deuteronomy is the capstone of the literary work known as the Torah. With Deuteronomy, however, a few more comments need to be made. In one sense, this book is the one most closely associated with Moses, as it contains speeches that he made to the people of Israel before they entered the land. However, these speeches are placed within a narrative framework that does not name an author. Some scholars date its composition as late as the seventh century BC, long after the time of Moses, because although 2 Kings 22 describes the rediscovery of a portion of the law that leads that generation to centralize its worship, indicating that the book is Deuteronomy (cf. Deut. 12), these scholars suspect that the book was written, rather than found, at this time.

More in keeping with the evidence of the book itself is the conclusion that it originates with Moses' speech, although we must also allow that it was updated and edited later in the history of Israel.

GENRE, OUTLINE, AND MESSAGE

The book intriguingly takes the form of an ancient treaty similar to treaties formulated in countries that surround Israel. This observation is in keeping with the understanding of the book as a covenant renewal, since biblical covenants are essentially treaties between God and his people established through a mediator, in this case Moses. Such ancient treaties have the following five-part structure, and Deuteronomy roughly follows this pattern:

I. Preamble Introducing the Parties to the Treaty (1:1–5)

II. Historical Prologue (1:6–3:29)

III. Law (4–26)

IV. Curses and Blessings (27–30)

V. Witnesses and Other Arrangements for the Future (31–34)

An inscription of the Aleppo Treaty (c. 1300 BC) between the Hittite king Mursili II and Talmi-sharruma of Aleppo. The structure of Deuteronomy resembles a treaty, such as this one.

The richness of Deuteronomy's message makes it hard to summarize the book. Yet behind the concept of a covenant/treaty stands the metaphor of God as a great king over his servant people. The various parts of the covenant feed into this idea. The preamble introduces the parties: God and Israel. Moses mediates the covenant between the two. The historical prologue then narrates the history of the relationship up to the present. The purpose is to make explicit how gracious the king has been toward his people in the past. This history provides the background for the next and longest section in Deuteronomy, the law. God has established this relationship with Israel by grace, and Israel should respond by obeying his commands. Law naturally leads to the curses and the blessings. If the Israelites obey, they will experience God's blessing, but if they disobey, they will feel his curse. Since the treaty/covenant is a legal document, there are witnesses, who will observe the relationship and, if Israel is disobedient, will confirm the justice of the judgment. This last section simply looks to the future maintenance of the covenant.

The Deuteronomic covenant is a reaffirmation of the covenant formulated at Sinai (Exod. 19–24), and as such it emphasizes the law. This law casts its long shadow over much of the biblical material that comes after Deuteronomy. For instance, the history that follows (Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings, in contrast to Chronicles) seems to look at the history of Israel through the lens of the distinctively Deuteronomic law. Virtually every king is evaluated as to whether he keeps the law of centralization (a law, by the way, not found in earlier collections [Deut. 12]). Furthermore, some prophets (e.g., Jeremiah) bring their message of judgment specifically because the Israelites have broken the law of the covenant and therefore deserve the curses.

Thus, the significance of Deuteronomy is hard to overestimate. It is the capstone of the Pentateuch, and it informs the theology of much of the OT that follows.

CONTINUING RELEVANCE

Deuteronomy is a renewal of the covenant between God and his people at a point of potential crisis in the community. Their leader Moses is about to die, and the Israelites are given the opportunity to reaffirm their allegiance to God and their determination to keep his law. As we know from the history that follows, they failed to keep their word. As we read the story of Christ's temptation (Matt. 4:1–11) in light of Deuteronomy, we observe that Satan tries to provoke him to sin in a way similar to Israel in the wilderness by using hunger, the testing of God, and idolatry. Jesus is obedient where the Israelites have been disobedient, and in resisting these temptations he quotes Deuteronomy three times. Jesus is the obedient Son of God.

The law of Deuteronomy is not totally in effect today. Some of the laws concern rituals that are fulfilled in Christ, and other laws are shaped to address the needs of the ancient Israelite culture. For instance, when the roofs of houses were living areas, it made sense to promote life by requiring that barriers be built around their edges to keep people from falling off (Deut. 22:8). Even so, the general principles are still in effect, and even in regard to the law requiring roof barriers, we may learn that it is important to build fences around, say, swimming pools.

Finally, it has long been noted that Deuteronomy pays special attention to protections for the socially vulnerable in society. Widows, orphans, and resident aliens are given special consideration in the laws of Deuteronomy.

DEVIL, DEMONS In Gen. 3 the serpent entices humankind to sin. Not until Rev. 12:9 are we told explicitly that the serpent is Satan. In English, "Satan" is a name, whereas in the Bible this entity does not have a name. Rather, he is identified through a system of descriptive name-calling labels. In Hebrew, *satan* means "opponent"—in war, an enemy; in court, an accuser. The verb *satan* means "to be an adversary, to oppose" someone or something. Most commonly, *satan* refers to human enemies, and so 1 Chron. 21:1 simply refers to "an enemy" (not "Satan," as the NIV reads) who "rose up against Israel" (cf. 1 Kings 11:14). It is only as "the *satan*" (Job 1–2; Zech. 3:1–2; NIV: "Satan") that we meet the one we know from the NT as "the devil."

The widely held myth of Satan having been an angel who rebelled is not found in the Bible. Origen (AD 185–254) was the first to allegorize Isa. 14:3–23 and Ezek. 28:1–10 in this way, and Jerome (AD 345–420) the first to translate "the Morning Star" as the name "Lucifer" (cf. Isa. 14:12; Rev. 22:16). The Bible tells us nothing of Satan's origins.

In the OT, "evil spirit" may be a heavenly being sent by God (1 Sam. 16:14–23; 18:10; 19:9; cf. 1 Kings 22:22–23). The OT engages in extensive rebuke of the superstitions of the surrounding nations that included belief in demons (Deut. 32:17; Ps. 106:37; perhaps Isa. 13:21; cf. Rev. 18:2).

A bronze amulet of the Mesopotamian demon Pazuzu, used for warding off evil (c. 700–500 BC)

Around 200 BC, works falsely attributed to Enoch began to appear, presenting evil and mortality as essential aspects of all physical creatures. Understanding “sons of God” (Gen. 6:1–4) as angels, these books tell of angels marrying women and producing murderous giants. In response, God imprisoned the fallen angels, caused the giants to slaughter one another, and cleansed the earth with the flood. The spirits of the giants then reappear as demons having control of the Gentile nations, appearing to them as gods, worshiped as idols. The book *Jubilees* (c. 160 BC) introduced a leader of these demons and labeled him “Mastema” (“hatred, enmity”).

Picking up on these ideas, the Qumran literature speaks of many *satan*s and expands the number of abusive labels used to refer to the ruler of the demons—for example, “Belial” (“worthless one”). In the same way, the LXX uses “slanderer” (*diabolos*) as a translation of *satan*. The word *satan* also was taken over into LXX Greek as a loanword to mean “enemy” or “adversary” (1 Kings 11:14). Both *satanas* and *diabolos* are used in the NT.

Jesus’ encounter with the devil in the wilderness recalls Adam and Eve’s encounter with the serpent in Eden. The setting, significantly, is now a wasteland. The second man to walk the earth with no sin claims the right to take back the dominion that Adam passed to the serpent. Jesus can have the whole world (without the cross) if only he will submit to the devil’s rule (Luke 4:5–7). Jesus rejects the offer. Later, he sees Satan’s fall from heaven to earth (Luke 10:18; cf. Rev. 12:5–12). Whereas once the devil had access to God’s courtroom, now his case is lost. His only recourse is murderous persecution. Between the ascension of the Son of Man (Acts 1:9) and the final judgment, this is understood to be the experience of Christ’s people (Dan. 7:25; Rev. 12:17; cf. 1 Pet. 5:8).

Whereas the OT provides sparse information about Satan and his angels/demons, the NT opens with an intensity of activity. Demons are also called “evil spirits,” and they are associated with physical illness, madness, and fortune-telling. In Acts 17:22 Paul describes his pagan Athenian listeners as “demon-fearers” (NIV: “religious”). Jesus’ miracles demonstrate his lordship over Satan’s regime as the demons flee in terror before him (Mark 1:23–26; 5:1–15). According to Paul, Christians are temples of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 6:19), and John urges believers to “test the spirits to see whether they are from God” (1 John 4:1), assuring them that they need not fear Satan or his forces, “because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world” (1 John 4:4). On judgment day Satan will be cast into the lake of fire (Rev. 20:14–15) along with all of God’s enemies.

DEVOTED, DEVOTED TO DESTRUCTION *See* Anathema.

DEVOUT To be devout is to show reverence for and obedience to God and his law as worship. In the OT, Obadiah, a palace administrator for King Ahab, demonstrates his devotion by harboring God’s prophets during a persecution by Queen Jezebel (1 Kings 18:3). In the NT, Luke applies the term “devout” to both Jews and non-Jews, God-fearers who had adopted much of the Mosaic law (Luke 2:25; Acts 2:5; 8:1–2; 10:2, 7; 13:50; 22:12 NRSV). Devotion to deities was widespread in the Greco-Roman world.

DEW Droplets of water that condense from warm air onto cool objects. Because Palestine sees little to no rain from May to October, the dew that naturally settles there because of its nearness to the Mediterranean Sea is critical to the land and anything that grows there. It is also very warm in the summer, but nights cool quickly as breezes come from the sea. As the air cools and comes in contact with plants and other objects, dew takes the place of rain in providing needed moisture. Gideon’s request from God concerning the fleece demonstrated how dew covered everything, with the fleece representing a specific sign from God (Judg. 6:37–40). Dew is used symbolically in the Bible to represent God’s blessing (Gen. 27:28; Ps. 133:3; Hos. 14:5; Mic. 5:7) and refreshment (Isa. 18:4).

DIADEM An ornamental headband signifying status and authority. “Diadem” is a transliteration of the Greek word *diadema*, which in its verbal form means “to tie around.” As in English, Hebrew and Greek use several terms to describe head coverings that designate special status. While diadem, crown, turban, tiara, and wreath could be distinguished from one another, the terms were often used interchangeably and synonymously. (The NIV most commonly uses the translation “crown.”) Originally, the diadem was a ribbon tied around the head, but later it also took the form of a metal headband. The diadem could be worn by high priests (Exod. 29:6 [NIV: “turban”]; cf. 1 Macc. 10:20), kings (Isa. 62:3; cf. 2 Kings 11:12; 1 Macc. 11:13), queens (Esther 1:11), or one receiving special recognition, such as Mordecai (Esther 8:15). Along with a throne, a scepter, and the color purple, a diadem signified royalty. Persian kings wore a purple band with white decorations. Alexander the Great and his successors adopted the diadem as a symbol of their royal power. To continue the legal fiction of the Roman Republic and to avoid direct claims of royalty, Roman emperors before Constantine did not wear the diadem. Revelation describes the enemies of Christ, a red dragon (12:3) and a beast rising out of the sea (13:1), wearing many diadems, but Christ (19:12), who will also wear many diadems, will be exalted. *See also* Crown.

A male statue from Cyprus wearing a diadem with rosettes

DIAL *See* Sundial.

DIAMOND A pure, crystallized native carbon, the hardest mineral known. The KJV uses "diamond" three times to translate the Hebrew word *yahalom* (Exod. 28:18; 39:11; Ezek. 28:13 [NIV: "emerald"; NRSV: "moonstone"]) and once to translate *shamir* (Jer. 17:1 [NIV: "flint"; NRSV: "diamond"]). This was the precious gemstone located in the third and last position in the second row of the high priest's breastpiece, though the Hebrew term more likely refers to green jasper. Judah's sin was etched on their hearts with a diamond-tipped iron pen (Jer. 17:1), an instrument used to carve inscriptions on stone. The Hebrew word rendered "diamond" in the KJV must have referred to some other hard stone, as there is no evidence that the ancients ever cut diamonds. The diamond is not identified in the Mediterranean lands until hundreds of years later, in the first century. To identify this stone with any accuracy is difficult, but whatever stone is described, it is one of impenetrable hardness. *See also* Minerals and Metals.

DIANA Roman goddess of the hunt, associated with woods, wildlife, and chastity. In Greek mythology Diana was known as Artemis. Artemis of the Ephesians (Acts 19:23–41) shares the name, but she is a fertility goddess bearing a different profile. *See* Artemis.

DIASPORA The Diaspora (or the Dispersion) generally refers to Jews living outside the land of Israel. Especially by the first century AD, Jews lived throughout the Mediterranean world and Mesopotamia. Large populations of Jews lived in Egypt and in Babylon/Persia. Two Jewish communities in Egypt established temples: at Elephantine sometime from the fifth through the fourth centuries BC, and at Leontopolis in the second century BC.

According to 2 Kings 17:1–41, the first major relocation of Israelites occurred forcibly around 722 BC, when Samaria fell to Sargon II, king of Assyria. As punishment for breaking their subject obligations to Assyria, Sargon deported many Israelites elsewhere in the Assyrian Empire, a usual Assyrian practice. The Bible also records the deportations of Judeans by Babylon around the end of the seventh and beginning of the sixth century BC (2 Kings 24–25; Jer. 21; 25; 27; 29; 39; 52). It explains these forced dispersions, or exiles, as punishments for breaking covenant obligations to Yahweh (Lev. 26:31–39; Deut. 28:64–67). The Bible also notes some Jews relocating voluntarily (Jer. 40–43). Voluntary relocations likely constitute the primary source for Jews in the Diaspora.

According to Acts, Christianity’s spread was inseparably tied to the Diaspora. The initial large “conversion” that Acts records, at Pentecost, involves Jews from the Diaspora who have traveled to Jerusalem for the festival (Acts 2:5–13). Throughout the rest of Acts, the apostles and missionaries find refuge and audiences among many Diaspora Jewish communities. Even after Paul declares that he will turn to the Gentiles because the Jews have rejected the message (Acts 13:44–52), Diaspora communities continue to provide travel destinations and audiences for him (e.g., Acts 17:1–4, 10–12, 17; 18:1–11, 19; 28:17–30). Some NT authors label their recipients as those in the Diaspora (or Dispersion), perhaps a Christianizing deployment of the term (James 1:1; 1 Pet. 1:1–2).

DIBLAH A place referred to in Ezek. 6:14 (KJV: “Diblath”) to show the extent to which God directed operations against Jerusalem through the hand of King Nebuchadnezzar: “I will stretch out my hand against them and make the land a desolate waste from the desert to Diblah.” The specific location is unknown. Diblah occurs only once in the OT and is otherwise unknown. It is possible that the name resulted from a scribal error in transcribing “Riblah” (since in Hebrew the characters for *r* and *d* look similar), in which case it would refer to the town at the eastern boundary of Israel. Riblah is where Pharaoh imprisoned Jehoahaz and made Eliakim king in his place (Num. 34:11; 2 Kings 23:33).

DIBLAIM In Hos. 1:3 Gomer, the prostitute whom Hosea married, is referred to as “daughter of Diblaim.” This could indicate Gomer’s hometown, “the place of two streams,” or it could be the name of Gomer’s father. The root meaning is “to make into balls,” and the word has a dual ending, suggesting a meaning of “two round-shaped objects.” There are nouns from this root meaning “ring,” “tumor,” “stream” or “rivulet,” and “round fig cake.” One common suggestion that should be dismissed, “two round fig cakes,” the price for a prostitute, would actually be “Diblataim.”

DIBON **(1)** Also called “Dibon Gad,” a city in Moab located north of the Arnon River and east of the Dead Sea. It is situated on the King’s Highway. The Israelites stopped here during their wanderings (Num. 33:45–46). The Israelites gained control of Dibon after defeating Sihon in battle.

Dibon was given to the tribe of Gad (Num. 32:3, 32). Joshua 13:17 assigns it to Reuben.

Dibon apparently was retaken by the Moabites during the period of the judges (Judg. 3:12–30), and the Israelites living in the area served Eglon, the king of Moab, for eighteen years. During the time of David, Dibon was again under Israelite control (2 Sam. 8:2). By the time of the exilic period, it was again part of Moab (Isa. 15:2; Jer. 48:18–22). Isaiah condemned Dibon as the wickedest of all Moabite cities (Isa. 15:9 [NIV: "Dimon"]).

The city was built on two heights. The higher elevation served as the citadel. It was surrounded by a wall and possessed several water cisterns and reservoirs. The royal palace and a shrine were also located here.

Archaeological remains at Dibon

The Moabite Stone was found in 1868 at Dibon. It was erected by King Mesha, a contemporary of Omri, king of Israel, who reigned through the time of Omri's grandson Joram and of Jehoshaphat of Judah. This stela gives detailed accounts of his campaigns against the Israelites. After ridding Moab of their presence, Mesha rebuilt Dibon as his capital, calling it "Qarhoh."

After the death of Mesha, his successes did not last long. Dibon became a vassal under Assyria and lost a revolt against the Babylonians. Dibon appears to have belonged to the Nabateans but may have been part of the Perea, the area east of the Jordan under control of the pre-Roman Jewish state. It appears that there was a Roman garrison at Dibon from the second through the third centuries AD.

(2) A town in the Negev belonging to Judah to which Babylonian exiles returned (Neh. 11:25).

DIBRI A member of the tribe of Dan and the father of Shelomith, who married an Egyptian man.

When a fight broke out between Shelomith’s son and an Israelite, the son cursed God’s name and was stoned for blasphemy (Lev. 24:10–23).

DIDRACHMA The two-drachma (half-shekel) temple tax required annually of all Jewish males. In one instance, Jesus and Peter paid this tax with the four-drachma coin (*statēr*) that Peter found in a fish’s mouth (Matt. 17:24–27). According to the Mishnah, the tax was collected during the month before Passover, and only the silver four-drachma (one shekel) coin minted in Tyre was deemed acceptable, perhaps because of its high silver content.

DIDYMUS Surname of the apostle Thomas, meaning “twin.” The term occurs only in the Gospel of John (11:16; 20:24; 21:2). “Didymus” is the Greek equivalent of the Aramaic “Thomas,” which also means “twin.”

DIET A prescribed selection of foods. The Mosaic law requires a distinctive diet for Israel that excludes, among other foods, camel, hare, rock badger, and blood (see Lev. 11; Deut. 14:1–21) and requires a day-long fast on the Day of Atonement. The basis is not entirely clear. Some argue for a nutritional advantage to the diet; others view the commandments as an opportunity to express obedience and self-discipline. Although God allows the consumption of the flesh of certain animals, but not their blood (Gen. 9:2–4; Lev. 17:10–16), the ideal diet appears to be fruits, grains, and vegetables (Gen. 1:11–12; 2:5; Exod. 16; Dan. 1:11–16; Matt. 6:11). Israelites could also make a Nazirite vow, by which they abstained from wine and anything derived from grapes (Num. 6:1–21; Judg. 13:5–7). John the Baptist adopted a restrictive diet of locusts and wild honey, probably as an expression of mournful fasting—a diet that Jesus departs from, leading to accusations of him being a drunkard and glutton (Matt. 3:4; 9:14–17; 11:16–19). Otherwise, the Bible eschews stringent asceticism. With rampant poverty and drought, few people then struggled with the modern preoccupation with overeating and becoming overweight (but see Judg. 3:17). Within the bounds of moderation, humaneness toward animals killed for food, and sensitivity to the conscience of others, Christians are free from restrictions concerning food (Mark 7:19; Rom. 14:14; Phil. 3:19). Like Paul, they may choose to adopt a Nazirite vow (Acts 18:18) or observe other restrictions for the sake of their conscience (e.g., vegetarianism), but they should do so without judging another’s diet.

DIGNITIES The KJV translation in two similar passages of the Greek word *doxai*, meaning “glories” (2 Pet. 2:10; Jude 1:8). The “dignities,” which evil people speak against, apparently are angelic beings of some kind (NIV: “celestial beings”; NRSV: “glorious ones”).

DIKLAH One of the sons of Joktan, the father of the tribes that settled in southwest Arabia (Gen. 10:27; 1 Chron. 1:21). The word means “a date palm,” and it became a designation for a small oasis region, possibly near Sirwah, where dates were cultivated.

DILEAN A town included in the inheritance of the tribe of Judah. Listed in the same district as Lachish, in the lowland region east of the coastal plain and west of the Judean hills, its exact location is unknown (Josh. 15:38).

DILL An herb (*Anethum graveolens*) used in modern as well as biblical times. Jesus criticized the teachers of the law and the Pharisees for giving a tenth of their mint, dill (Gk. *anēthon*; KJV: “anise”), and cumin but neglecting “the more important matters of the law” (Matt. 23:23).

DIMNAH One of the four towns of Zebulun allotted to the Levite clan of Merari (Josh. 21:35). It probably should be identified with Rimmon of Josh. 19:13 and Rimmono of 1 Chron. 6:77. The town lay about thirteen miles due west of the Sea of Galilee.

DIMON *See* Dibon.

DIMONAH A town included in the inheritance of Judah's tribe. The town is listed in the Negev district, which covered the wilderness area overlooking the Dead Sea southward toward Edom, but its location is unknown (Josh. 15:22). Some identify it with Dibon, a town settled after the exile (Neh. 11:25).

DINAH The daughter of Jacob and Leah (Gen. 30:21). Dinah was raped by Shechem in the Canaanite city of Shechem (Gen. 34). Dinah's action prior to the assault—leaving home to visit the Canaanite women—appears innocent but, in context, could be understood as improper. Her defilement led to the slaughter of the male residents of Shechem by Jacob's sons Simeon and Levi.

DINAITES The name of a people, according to the KJV rendering of the Hebrew word *dinaye'* in Ezra 4:9. More-recent versions translate the word as "judges."

DINHABAH The city of Bela son of Beor, named as the first king of Edom "before any Israelite king reigned" (Gen. 36:32; 1 Chron. 1:43). The location of the city is undetermined.

DINOSAURS The word "dinosaur" comes from Greek words meaning "terrible lizard" and refers to very large reptiles, long extinct, that have been reconstructed and studied by paleontologists. Their fossilized remains have been known from antiquity but were considered rock formations that coincidentally resembled parts of living creatures. The fossils were patently not made of bone or organic material. Christians as late as the seventeenth century rejected the idea that fossils were the remains of once living beings, since those species no longer existed, and the very idea of extinction seemed anathema to the doctrine of creation, since it was unlike God to allow his creatures to die off.

Once the scientific community accepted that fossils were formed from organisms that were once living but are now extinct, the question of their relationship with human history became an issue. The consensus today is that they date to a period long before human history. But some argue that this contradicts the biblical account of creation, which seems to imply that people and dinosaurs once coexisted. Evidence from the Bible has been culled to illustrate that the Bible writers knew of such creatures before their extinction. For example, the KJV of Ps. 91:13 mentions a "dragon" (modern translations: "serpent"), supposedly a dinosaur. Job 40–41 describes Behemoth and Leviathan, which seem larger than life and are identified as dinosaurs by some creationists. It is notable that alternative interpretations are readily available. Many today take Behemoth to be the hippopotamus, and Leviathan to be the crocodile. Earlier interpreters identified Leviathan with Satan.

DIONYSIUS A member of Athens' Areopagus council ("Areopagite"), which ruled over various legal and educational matters, who became a Christian after hearing Paul preach to the council (Acts 17:34). Later tradition suggests that he became bishop of Athens, the city's first Christian martyr, and its patron saint.

DIOTREPHES An unruly church member rebuked by John for his malicious behavior and rejection of authority. He is assumed to be a powerful leader in the church, based on his authoritarian actions of excommunicating fellow Christians (3 John 9–10).

DIPHATH *See* Riphath.

DIRECTIONS

GEOGRAPHY

Whereas the principal direction in the modern world is north, in the ancient world different cultures used a variety of orientations as they sought to describe their relationship to their geographical environment. In Israel the primary direction was determined by the sunrise: east. This is reflected in Hebrew, where the main word used to refer to east as a direction was *qedem*, which could also be used to simply refer to that which was directly ahead or in front of the speaker (e.g., Ps. 139:5). Elsewhere, east is designated by the terms *mizrakh* ("rising" [Josh. 11:3]) or *mizrakh hashamesh* ("rising of the sun" [Num. 21:11]), both of which derive from the direction of sunrise. By way of contrast, in Egypt the primary direction was south, in alignment with the source of the Nile River.

The ancient world employed the same notion of four cardinal directions, which persists to the present, and the terminology related to these was influenced by the choice of primary direction. Thus, in Israel north is often designated by "left"; south could be designated by "right," and west by "behind." In addition, directions could be specified by reference to geographical features found in those directions. North could be specified by the word *tsapon*, which was derived from the name of a northern Syrian mountain (Zaphon); south by *negeb*, a name for the region south of Israel (Negev); and west by *yam* ("sea"), since the Mediterranean Sea lay to the west.

SYMBOLISM

Aside from their purely geographical significance, the directions also came to bear figurative significance. Some caution is warranted in assigning symbolic significance to language, for there is danger of reading invalid meanings into texts. Furthermore, given the ambiguity inherent in the use of terms to refer to directions, which also have alternate significances, there is danger of assigning a symbolic meaning to the direction that actually resides in the alternate. So, for example, while *yam* ("sea") carries significant symbolic overtones in the Bible, this association does not appear to have been extended to encompass the term when used to designate a westerly direction.

East and west. Nonetheless, there is, for example, probably some significance in the expulsion from Eden and progressive movement eastward to the tower of Babel through Gen. 1–11, followed by a return to the promised land, which was approached by reversing the easterly migration and returning toward Eden. Eden itself was said to lie "in the east" (Heb. *miqqedem*; Gen. 2:8), although the same Hebrew expression in Pss. 74:12; 77:5, 11; 78:2; 143:5 means "in ancient times," and there is perhaps a deliberate ambiguity in the use of the expression in Gen. 2:8. In Isa. 2:6 the east is the source of influences on the people that lead them astray. Following the exile, Ezekiel sees the glory of God returning to the temple from the east (Ezek. 43:1–2). Thus, when used symbolically, "east" is often viewed negatively or else may be used to mark a connection with distant antiquity (Gen. 2:8; Job 1:3). Any symbolic significance assigned to west appears primarily to be associated with it being the antithesis of east. The distance between east and west was used poetically to express vast distance (Ps. 103:12).

North and south. North is significant for two primary reasons. First, it is the direction from which invading armies most often descended upon Israel (Jer. 1:13) as well as from which Babylon’s destruction is said to come (Jer. 50:3). In light of this, Ezekiel’s vision of God approaching from the north strikes an ominous tone of impending judgment (Ezek. 1:1–4). Second, in Canaanite mythology the abode of the gods, and specifically Baal, lay to the north, on Mount Zaphon. Thus, the king of Babylon’s plans in Isa. 14:13 amount to a claim to establish himself as one of the gods. In contrast to this, Ps. 48:2 presents Mount Zion as supplanting Mount Zaphon and thus implicitly presents Israel’s one God as supplanting the Canaanite pantheon.

As with west, there is little symbolic significance associated with the direction south in the Bible, aside from its use in combination with other directions.

The four directions. The four directions (or sometimes just pairs of directions) are used together to describe both the scattering of the Israelites as well as their being gathered by God back to the promised land (Ps. 107:3; Isa. 43:5–6; Luke 13:29). They are also used together to express the extent of the promised land (Gen. 13:14) or else to describe something that is all-encompassing (1 Chron. 9:24).

DIRGE A song of sorrow or lament, often but not only associated with grieving a death (Matt. 11:17; Luke 7:32); also a type of poetic meter used in some lament poems.

DISABILITIES AND DEFORMITIES *See* Diseases and Physical Abnormalities.

DISAPPOINTMENT A feeling of frustration, sadness, or distress because something has not happened or turned out as desired. Misplaced trust or hope will result in disappointment. Often in their apostasies, the people of Israel put trust in other gods or in foreign alliances. The prophets warn that such expectation will meet with disappointment (Jer. 2:36–37). In contrast, God is reliable and worthy of trust (Isa. 49:23). Three times the NT quotes Isa. 28:16 (Rom. 9:33; 10:11; 1 Pet. 2:6), saying that those who believe “in him” (the cornerstone representing the Messiah) will not be disappointed. Although the working out of the plan of salvation and the future end of time are a hope that will not be disappointed, current disappointments nonetheless abound, even disappointment with God. When, in Ps. 22, the psalmist affirms God’s faithful pattern of deliverance, by which Israel’s forefathers have not been disappointed in their trust (v. 4), this affirmation comes in stark contrast to the disappointment expressed in the psalm’s opening question: “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” (v. 1). Thus, the surety of hope and trust in God does not mean a lack of disappointment or the suppression of its expression. *See also* Frustration; Eloi, Eloi, Lama Sabachthani; Hope.

DISCERNMENT OF SPIRITS A spiritual gift listed in 1 Cor. 12:10 (NIV: “distinguishing between spirits”). Interpreters disagree on the precise nature of the gift, but at some level it involves the supernatural ability to recognize when the Holy Spirit is truly at work. John also charges his readers to test the spirits, because of false prophets. He recognizes those who say that Jesus has come in the flesh from God as true prophets (1 John 4:1–3).

DISCHARGE Leviticus 15:1–33 provides regulations concerning bodily discharges causing ritual impurity, including emissions of semen, menstruation, and other discharges of blood or fluids (on childbirth, see Lev. 12:7). Such discharges contaminated not only the person with the discharge but also any object that such a person touched, including beds, clothing, seats, and clay and wooden vessels. The impurity could be reversed by waiting for a specified period, washing, and offering a small sacrifice of birds. Impurity could spread to anyone who contacted the impure persons or objects. Discharges disqualified men from serving as priests (Lev. 22:4). Jesus healed a woman who had been bleeding for twelve years, which had made her impure under the law of Lev. 15:25 (Mark 5:25–29 pars.).

DISCIPLE The Greek term for "disciple," *mathētēs*, means "student." Like other rabbis and religious figures of the time, Jesus taught a group of such students (Matt. 9:14; 22:16; Mark 2:16; John 1:35; 4:1). The forms of address that Jesus' disciples used for him reflect the nature of the relationship: "rabbi" (Mark 9:5), "teacher" (Mark 9:38), and "master" (Luke 5:5). In addition to receiving instruction from Jesus, his disciples took care of his physical needs (Matt. 21:1; John 4:8), ate with him (Matt. 9:10; 26:18), performed exorcisms and healings (Matt. 10:1; Luke 10:17), baptized (John 4:2), controlled access to Jesus (Matt. 19:13; John 12:21), and traveled with him (Luke 8:1; John 2:12). On one occasion Jesus visited the house of Peter and healed Peter's mother-in-law (Matt. 8:14), which suggests that although the Gospels do not generally depict the private lives of Jesus or his disciples apart from their public ministry, the relationship among these men did not prevent the disciples from maintaining their own homes, families, and, probably, occupations.

In the Gospels Jesus is depicted with variously sized groups of disciples and followers. A prominent tradition in the Gospels indicates that there was an inner group of twelve (Matt. 10:1; 26:20; Mark 3:14; 4:10; 6:7; John 6:70), each of whom is known by name. This is the group most traditionally understood as "the disciples" of Jesus. As an authority, the group of twelve persisted beyond the ascension of Jesus (Acts 6:2). Following the death of Judas Iscariot, Matthias was chosen to take his place among the Twelve (Acts 1:26). Other passages specify a group of seventy or seventy-two (Luke 10:1, 16), and often the number of disciples is indeterminate. Several passages name disciples beyond the Twelve (Matt. 27:57; Luke 24:18; Acts 9:10; 9:36; 16:1; 21:16), and some later authors attempted to list the names of the seventy by drawing names from the book of Acts, the Epistles, and other early Christian traditions (e.g., the thirteenth-century Syriac compilation *The Book of the Bee*). The book of Acts often refers to any follower of Christ as "disciple," including those in cities throughout the Roman Empire.

The Gospels tend to present Jesus as a charismatic teacher who could attract adherents with little overt persuasion. The calling of several disciples is narrated, including that of the brothers Simon Peter and Andrew, the brothers James and John the sons of Zebedee (Mark 1:16–20; John 1:40–41), Philip and Nathanael (John 1:44–45), and Matthew/Levi (Mark 2:13–17 pars.). The Gospel of John presents Andrew as a former disciple of John the Baptist.

THE TWELVE

Each of the Synoptic Gospels has a list of the Twelve (Matt. 10:1–4; Mark 3:13–19; Luke 6:12–16; cf. the list of eleven in Acts 1:13), and the Gospel of John mentions "the Twelve" several times without providing a list. With some slight harmonizations, it is possible to come up with a single list of twelve disciples based on the three Synoptic lists.

(1) All three Synoptic Gospels agree in placing Simon Peter first in the list. (2) His brother Andrew is second, though Mark has placed Andrew farther down the list and does not identify him as Peter's brother. (3) James the son of Zebedee and (4) John the brother of James are next. Mark adds

that the two were also named “Boanerges,” meaning “sons of thunder.” The placement of Peter, James, and John at the head of the list corresponds with the prominence of these three disciples in the story of Jesus’ arrest at Gethsemane, where these three were present (Matt. 26:37 // Mark 14:33). Perhaps the order of Mark’s list reflects the prestige of these three disciples, with Matthew and Luke bringing Andrew to the head of the list not because of any particular importance but so that he is listed with his brother Peter.

IE
SVS
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MARCVS

Fragment from a sarcophagus lid showing Christ in a boat with his disciples (fourth century AD)

The lists continue with (5) Philip, (6) Bartholomew, and (7) Matthew, further identified in Matt. 10:3 as a “tax collector.” The calling of Matthew is narrated in Matt. 9:9–13 and also in Mark 2:13–17; Luke 5:27–32, where Matthew is called “Levi.” (8) Thomas is next (Matt. 10:3 lists Thomas before Matthew; in John 20:24 he is also called “Didymus”), followed by (9) James the son of Alphaeus (Mark 2:14 also calls Levi “son of Alphaeus”), so named to avoid confusion with James the son of Zebedee. (10) Simon the Cananaean (Matt. 10:4; Mark 3:18 NRSV) or Zealot (Luke 6:15; Acts 1:13) is so designated to avoid confusion with Simon Peter. The precise meaning of the term “Cananaean” is uncertain (*see* Cananaean). (11) Thaddaeus (who precedes Simon the Cananaean in Matthew and Mark) probably should be identified with the eleventh disciple in Luke’s list, Judas the son of James. The names of Thaddaeus and Judas son of James represent the greatest single discrepancy among the three lists, but it may be mitigated somewhat by the fact that some manuscripts identify “Thaddaeus” as a surname (though they give this disciple’s other name as “Lebbaeus,” not “Judas”). All three lists agree in listing (12) Judas Iscariot as the last disciple in the list, and all note that he betrayed Jesus or became a traitor. The fact that Judas Iscariot bears a second name (“Iscariot”) may suggest that there was another Judas among the Twelve from whom it was necessary to distinguish him, as in the case of the two Simons and the two Jameses. This observation lends some weight to the notion that Thaddaeus was also named “Judas.”

THE DISCIPLES AS APOSTLES

At various points in his ministry Jesus sent out his disciples to preach and perform miracles, hence they are also referred to as "apostles" (i.e., emissaries). The connection between these two terms is made clear in Luke 6:13: "When morning came, he called his disciples to him and chose twelve of them, whom he also designated apostles." In the NT Epistles the title "apostle" is applied to several individuals who were not among Jesus' twelve disciples, most notably Paul. In sum, both "disciple" and "apostle" have narrow and broad meanings in the NT, though there is substantial continuity between "the Twelve" disciples or apostles of Jesus and the narrow definition of "apostle" in the early chapters of Acts.

THE LATER CAREERS OF THE DISCIPLES

After his resurrection, Jesus told his disciples ("the apostles he had chosen" [Acts 1:2]) that they would be his witnesses "in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8). Stories about the subsequent careers of the Twelve exist in both the NT and other early Christian sources. The first half of Acts largely focuses on the career of Simon Peter, before attention shifts to the career of Paul in the eastern Roman Empire. Extracanonical books and local legends trace the later careers of Jesus' twelve disciples, placing them in Rome (Peter), Scythia (Andrew), Spain (James), Ephesus (John), Phrygia (Philip), Armenia (Bartholomew and Thaddaeus), India (Thomas), Ethiopia (Matthew), and North Africa (Simon the Cananaean). Pious local traditions attribute martyrdom to a number of the Twelve, though in the NT we know only of the deaths of Judas Iscariot (Matt. 27:3–10; Acts 1:16–20) and James the son of Zebedee (Acts 12:1–2).

DISCIPLINE In the Bible, "discipline" can refer, positively, to training that instills wisdom in an individual (sometimes translated "instruction") and, negatively, to punishment or correction of groups or individuals (sometimes translated "chastisement"). Discipline comes from God or from humans, especially from parents to their children. Biblical references to discipline in the Bible occur largely in several clusters, especially in Lev. 26:14–46; Deuteronomy (4:36; 8:5; 11:2; 21:18; 22:18); Job (4:3; 5:17; 20:3; 33:16; 36:10); Psalms (throughout); Proverbs (throughout); Jeremiah (2:19; 5:3; 6:8; 7:28; 10:8, 24; 17:23; 30:11, 14; 31:18; 32:33; 35:13; 46:28); and in the NT, in Heb. 12:5–11. Elsewhere, the language of discipline occurs to a limited extent in Isa. 8:11; 26:16; 28:22, 26; Ezek. 5:15; Hos. 5:2; 7:15; 10:10; Zeph. 3:2, 7; and in the NT, in 1 Cor. 11:32; Eph. 6:4; 2 Tim. 2:16; Rev. 3:19. Most of the OT passages cited above can be described as pertaining to the themes of wisdom (citations of Proverbs and Job) and covenant (citations of Deuteronomy, Jeremiah, Hosea).

Divine discipline. OT wisdom and poetry affirm that it is a blessing to be disciplined by God, even in the negative sense of chastisement (e.g., Job 5:17; Ps. 94:12; Prov. 3:11). This surprising attitude is no doubt due to the close connection between God's chastening of humans and his covenant relationship with them. Indeed, the prophetic threat of divine discipline often comes in response to the covenant unfaithfulness of God's people, and such discipline is intended to correct human sin so that the covenant relationship can ultimately be restored (cf. Lev. 16:18–28 with the final resolution of the situation in Lev. 26:40–45, whereby chastisement effects repentance and reconciliation). The author of Hebrews quotes Prov. 3:11–12, reminding his readers that "the Lord disciplines the one he loves" (12:6). As Jeremiah mocks the silliness of worshiping vain idols that are no more than "a scarecrow in a cucumber field" (Jer. 10:5), he points out that unlike the living God of Israel, idols lack the power to administer discipline or instruction (10:8).

In addition to this positive view of divine discipline, there is a prominent but complementary strand of thought that involves imploring the Lord for relief from deserved divine discipline: “LORD, do not rebuke me in your anger or discipline me in your wrath” (Pss. 6:1; 38:1). Here is a recognition that while God’s discipline proceeds from his love, it is not a thing to be considered lightly or embraced flippantly.

Human parental discipline. Given the importance of discipline in the education of children, it is not surprising that the theme is well developed in wisdom literature (Proverbs and Job), where issues of parenting are prominent. The opening words of the book of Proverbs assert the value of the proverbs “to teach people wisdom and discipline,” among other things (1:2 NLT). Discipline is paired with wisdom in another of the book’s best-known passages: “Fear of the LORD is the foundation of true knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and discipline” (1:7 NLT; see also 12:1; 23:23). In addition to divine discipline (see above), Proverbs speaks of the discipline administered by parents, warning that “a fool spurns a parent’s discipline” (15:5), admonishing children to heed “a father’s instruction” (4:1), and urging parents, “Discipline your children, for in that there is hope; do not be a willing party to their death” (19:18). Discipline can sometimes take the form of physical punishment, as in 23:13: “Do not withhold discipline from a child; if you punish them with the rod, they will not die” (see also 13:24; 22:15). In Proverbs discipline is construed both positively, as when it is paired with wisdom or knowledge (23:12), and negatively, as in 15:10: “Stern discipline awaits anyone who leaves the path.”

Proverbs often equates listening to discipline with life, and spurning discipline with death. In the law of Deut. 21:18–21, this equation is more than a figure of speech: the son who rejects discipline from his parents is to be stoned to death by the elders of his town. The congruity between divine and human parental discipline is well illustrated in Deut. 8:5: “Know then in your heart that as a man disciplines his son, so the LORD your God disciplines you.” Similarly, the author of Hebrews teaches, “Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as his children. For what children are not disciplined by their father?” (12:7). And the writer of Ephesians urges fathers, “Do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline [*paideia*] and instruction of the Lord” (6:4 NRSV).

DISEASES AND PHYSICAL ABNORMALITIES The Bible often speaks of health, healing, disease, and illness. Good health was a sign of God’s favor, and healing was also the work of God and his divinely empowered agents. These agents included the prophets (1 Kings 17:8–23; 2 Kings 5:1–15), the apostles (Acts 3:1–10), and the messiah (Mal. 4:2). The divine prerogative of Jesus was to heal (Mark 1:32; 6:56; Matt. 4:23; 8:16; 15:30; 21:14; Luke 6:10, 17–19), and miraculous healings were a sign of his messianic office (Luke 7:20–23). Disease, on the other hand, was regarded as a sign of God’s disfavor. Within a covenantal context, God could send disease to punish the sinner (Exod. 4:11; 32:35).

The Bible assigns a wide variety of names to various diseases and their symptoms. These terms are nontechnical and generally descriptive. Some are uncertain in meaning. In most cases they describe the symptoms of the disease, not the disease itself. Diagnosis often was based on incomplete observation and nonclinical examination. The Bible also presupposes supernatural intervention in the life of a person. Healing occurred when God’s agents touched individuals, cast out demons, and resurrected the dead.

ANCIENT NEAR EASTERN INFLUENCES

In the ancient Near East the knowledge of disease and medicine was precritical. Bacteria and viruses were virtually unknown. Mesopotamian literature contains many references to medicine, physicians, and medical practice. Minerals, salts, herbs, and other botanicals were used to make up treatments. Babylonian physicians also administered prescriptions accompanied by incantations. Disease was considered to be the result of a violation of a taboo or possession by a demon. The Code of Hammurabi (1750 BC) includes laws regulating the practice of medicine and surgery by physicians. In Egypt medicine and healing were connected to the gods. Tomb paintings and several papyrus documents describe the developing state of Egyptian medicine, pharmacy, and surgery.

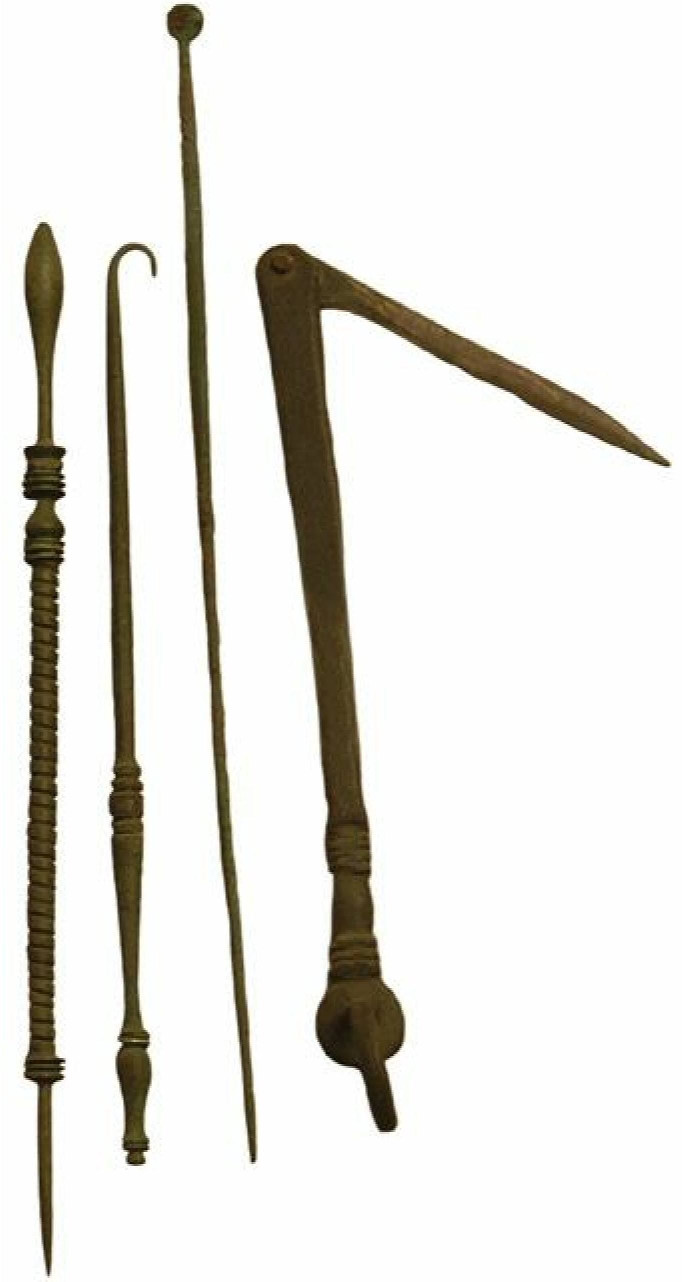
Greek physicians admired and sought to learn the skills of the Egyptians. However, the early Greek doctor Hippocrates (460–370 BC), called the "Father of Medicine," is credited with being the first physician to reject the belief that supernatural or divine forces cause illness. He argued that disease is the result of environmental factors, diet, and living habits, not a punishment imposed by the gods.

It is clear that the biblical world shared with the ancient Near East the same types of maladies common to tropical or subtropical climates. These include malaria, tropical fevers, dysentery, and sunstroke. The tendency of the hot climate to produce frequent droughts and famine certainly contributed to similar types of diseases throughout the Fertile Crescent. Additionally, it must be remembered that Palestine was a land bridge between the Mesopotamian and Egyptian worlds. Migrations carry not only goods and products, but also parasites, communicable disease, and epidemics.

BIBLICAL CONCEPT OF DISEASE

The religious tradition of the Hebrews repudiated the magical or demonic origin of disease. Hence, moral, ethical, and spiritual factors regulated disease and illness. This was true for the individual as well as the community. The Hebrews, like the Egyptians, also recognized that much sickness arose from the individual's relationship to the physical environment. Great stress was placed on hygiene and preventive medicine.

Pentateuchal legislation offered seven covenantal principles designed to prevent the possibility of disease and sickness: (1) Sabbath observance for humans, animals, and the land, which enforced regular periods of rest (Gen. 2:3); (2) dietary regulations, which divided food into efficient categories of clean and unclean (Lev. 11); (3) circumcision, which carried physical benefits as well as religious and moral implications (Gen. 17:9; circumcision is the only example of Hebrew surgery); (4) laws governing sexual relationships and health, including a list of forbidden degrees of marital relationships (Lev. 18–20); (5) provisions for individual sexual hygiene (Lev. 15); (6) stipulations for cleanliness and bodily purification (Lev. 14:2; 15:2); (7) sanitary and hygienic regulations for camp life (Num. 31:19; Deut. 23:12).



Probes, hooks, and a knife used as Roman surgical instruments (first century AD)

In NT times magical charms and incantations were used along with folk remedies in an effort to cure disease. Jesus repudiated these means. He also suggested that sickness and disease were not direct punishments for sin (John 9:2). In the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5–7), Jesus confirmed that the ethical and religious standards of the new covenant promoted the total health of the community and the individual.

CIRCULATORY DISEASES

Nabal most likely suffered a cerebrovascular accident or stroke (1 Sam. 25:36–38). After a heavy bout of drinking, his heart “died” (KJV; NIV: “failed”), and he became paralyzed, lapsed into a coma, and died ten days later. Psalm 137:5–6 may contain a clinical example of the symptoms of stroke. The psalmist wrote, “If I forget you, Jerusalem, may my right hand forget its skill. May my tongue cling to the roof of my mouth if I do not remember you.” This description points to a paralysis of the right side of the body (right hemiplegia) and the loss of speech (motor aphasia) that result from a stroke on the left side of the brain. Basically, the exiled psalmist is wishing upon himself the effects of a stroke if he held anything other than Jerusalem as his highest priority. Some have considered the collapse of Uzzah when he reached out to stabilize the ark of the covenant (2 Sam. 6:6–7) to be the consequence of an apoplectic seizure. But since no actual paralysis was described and death occurred immediately, this seems unlikely. It is more probable that God struck him down with an aortic aneurism or a coronary thrombosis.

PARALYSIS

A possible case of paralysis may be described in the shriveled (atrophic) hand of Jeroboam I (1 Kings 13:4–6). In an angry outburst Jeroboam ordered the arrest of a prophet who condemned the altar at Bethel. When Jeroboam stretched out his hand, it "shriveled up, so that he could not pull it back." Several complicated diagnoses have been offered to explain the "withered" hand, but it is possibly an example of cataplexy, a sudden loss of muscle power following a strong emotional stimulus. After intercession by the man of God, and the subsiding of the emotional outburst, the arm was restored.

The threat against the faithless shepherd of God's people (Zech. 11:17), which included a withered arm and blindness in the right eye, may refer to a form of paralysis known as tabes dorsalis, or locomotor ataxia. Knifelike pains in the extremities and blindness characterize this disease.

Paralysis is frequently mentioned in the NT (Matt. 8:6; 9:2, 6; 12:10; Mark 2:3–5, 9, 10; 3:1, 3, 5; Luke 5:18, 24; 6:6; John 5:3; Acts 9:33; Heb. 12:12). The exact diagnosis for each of these cases remains uncertain.

The physician Luke's use of the Greek medical term *paralelymenos* (Luke 5:18, 24) suggests that some of these cases were caused by chronic organic disease. Others clearly were congenital (Acts 3:2; cf. 14:8). It is not necessary to rationalize the origin of these examples of paralysis as hysteria or pretense. The NT writers regarded the healing of these individuals by Jesus and the apostles as miraculous.

MENTAL ILLNESS AND BRAIN DISORDERS

Cases of mental disease are generally described in the Bible by noting the symptoms produced by the disorder. The particular cause of a mental illness in the NT is often blamed on an unknown evil spirit or spirits (Luke 8:2). Such spirits, however, were subject to God's control and operated only within the boundaries allowed by him (1 Sam. 16:14–16, 23; 18:10; 19:9). Accordingly, in the OT "madness" and "confusion of mind" were regarded as consequences of covenantal disobedience (Deut. 28:28, 34).

A limestone amulet from Nineveh (c. 700–612 BC), meant to ward off demons or disease

It has been argued that King Saul displayed early indications of personality disorder. Symptoms included pride, self-aggrandizement (1 Sam. 11:6; 13:12; 15:9, 19), and ecstatic behavior (10:11–12). A rapid deterioration in Saul's character transpired after David was anointed and became more popular (16:14; 18:10–11). Since Saul demonstrated fear, jealousy, a sense of persecution, and homicidal tendencies, some scholars argue that he suffered from paranoid schizophrenia.

Nebuchadnezzar suffered a rare form of monomania in which he lived like a wild beast in the field eating grass (Dan. 4:33). David, in order to save his own life, feigned insanity or perhaps epilepsy before the Philistine king Achish (1 Sam. 21:12–15).

In the NT, individuals with mental disorders went about naked, mutilated themselves, lived in tombs (Mark 5:2), and exhibited violent behavior (Matt. 8:28). Such mental disorientation was often linked to demon possession. Examples include the Syrophoenician's child (Matt. 15:22; Mark 7:25), the demoniacs at Gerasa (Matt. 8:28; Mark 5:2; Luke 8:27) and Capernaum (Mark 1:23; Luke 4:33), a blind and mute demoniac (Matt. 12:22; Luke 11:14), and a fortune-telling slave girl (Acts 16:16). While such behavior is clinically suggestive of paranoid schizophrenia or other mental disorders, the mind-controlling influence of some extraneous negative force cannot be ruled out.

Epilepsy (grand mal) causes the afflicted person to fall to the ground, foam at the mouth, and clench or grind the teeth (Matt. 17:15; Mark 9:17–18; Luke 9:39). The description of Saul falling to the ground in an ecstatic state (1 Sam. 19:23–24) and Balaam falling with open eyes may be indicative of an epileptic seizure. In the NT, Jesus healed many who suffered from epilepsy (Matt. 4:24; 17:14–18; Mark 9:17–18; Luke 9:38–42). Some scholars have linked the light seen by Paul on the road to Damascus with the aura that some epileptics experience prior to a seizure. His subsequent blindness has also been attributed to the epileptic disturbance of the circulation of the blood in the brain.

CHILDHOOD DISEASES

The cause of the death of the widow's son at Zarephath is unknown (1 Kings 17:17–22). The death of the Shunammite woman's son has been attributed to sunstroke (2 Kings 4:18–37), although a headache is the only symptom recorded (v. 19). In both cases there is too little evidence to present an accurate diagnosis.

In the first case, the boy at Zarephath stopped breathing (1 Kings 17:17). This may leave the door open to argue that Elijah resuscitated the child. However, in the second case, the text clearly states that the Shunammite boy died (2 Kings 4:20), implying a resurrection.

INFECTIOUS AND COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Fever and other calamities are listed among the punishments for covenantal infidelity (Deut. 28:22). Three different types of fever may be intentionally described here: "fever," "inflammation," and "scorching heat" (ESV: "fiery heat"). Fever is also mentioned frequently in the NT (Matt. 8:15; Mark 1:30–31; Luke 4:38–39; John 4:52; Acts 28:8). Both Jesus and Paul healed individuals who had a fever. A number of these fevers were likely caused by malaria, since the disease was known to be endemic to the Jordan Valley and other marshy areas in Palestine.

Several epidemics in which numerous people died of pestilence or plague are mentioned in the OT (Exod. 11:1; 12:13; Num. 14:37; Zech. 14:12). The fifth plague of Egypt (Exod. 9:3–6) has been attributed to Jordan Rift Valley fever, which is spread by flies. Bubonic plague has been blamed for the malady that struck the Philistines (1 Sam. 5–6). However, it may have been the result of a severe form of tropical dysentery. Acute bacillary dysentery contracted in the military camp may also have been responsible for the epidemic that killed a large number of the Assyrian army (2 Kings 19:35).

PARASITIC DISEASES

Some scholars have repeatedly argued that the "fiery serpents" (NIV: "venomous snakes") encountered by Moses and the children of Israel (Num. 21:6–9) were in reality an infestation of the parasitic guinea worm (*Dracunculus medinensis*). Microscopic fleas ingested in drinking water carry the larvae of this slender nematode into the body. The larvae move from the digestive tract to the skin. The adult worm, which may grow to a length of several feet, discharges its eggs into an ulcer on the skin. Death of the host occurs because of the resulting infection of the skin ulcers.

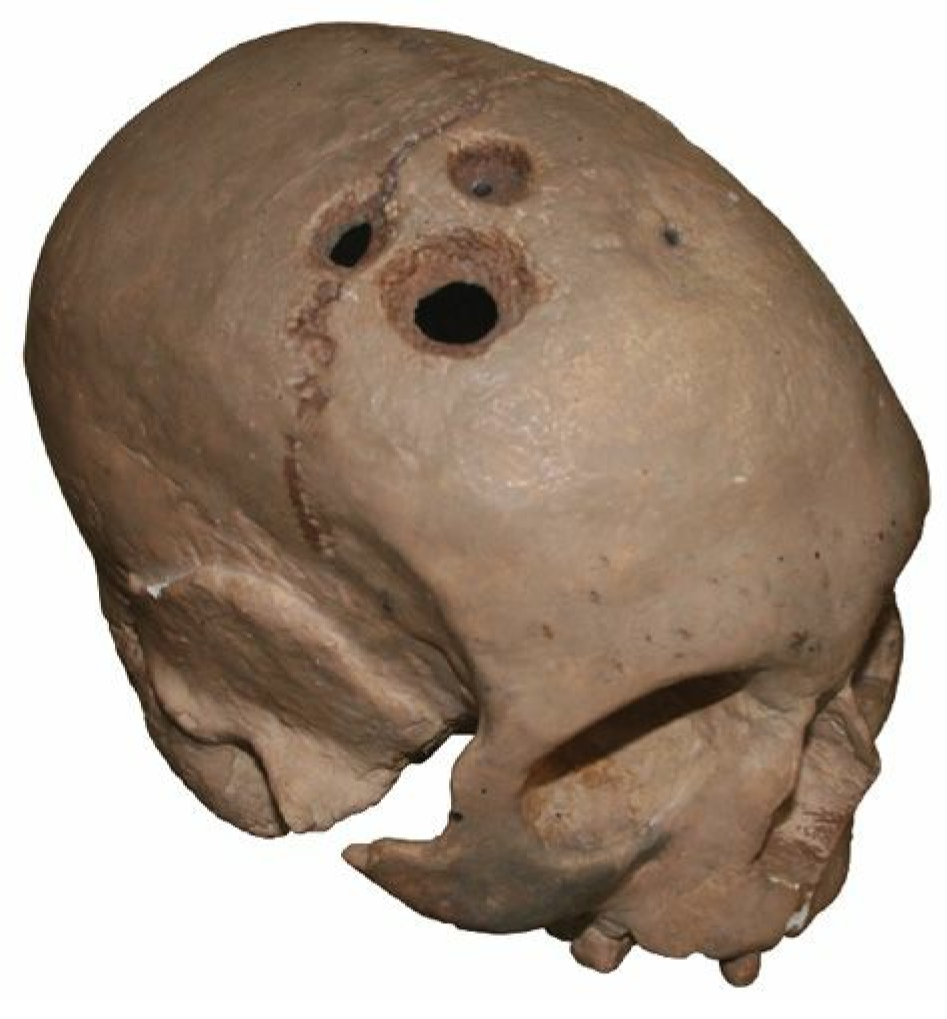
After the conquest of Jericho, Joshua cursed the individual who would endeavor to rebuild the city (Josh. 6:26). Later, Hiel of Bethel attempted to rebuild the city and lost two of his sons as a result of the curse (1 Kings 16:34). Elisha was then asked to purify the bad water at Jericho in order to allow a new settlement (2 Kings 2:19). Elisha obliged by throwing salt into the spring and thereby making the water potable (2:20–22). Recent archaeological study has discovered the remains of certain snails in the mud-bricks used to construct Jericho in the Bronze Age. These types of snails are now known to serve as intermediate hosts for the flatworm parasite that can cause schistosomiasis. The *Schistosoma haematobium* trematode infects the urinary tract and the bladder. It is possible that this type of parasite was responsible for the death of Hiel's two sons.

In NT times, Herod Agrippa apparently died of the complications of a parasitic disease, perhaps being infested by the larvae of flies (myiasis) in the bowels. Luke mentions that he was "eaten by worms" (*skōlēkobrōtos* [Acts 12:23]). The father of Publius also suffered from dysentery (Acts

28:8).

PHYSICAL DEFORMITIES AND ABNORMALITIES

Individuals with deformities were disqualified from priestly service (Lev. 21:18–20). The list included lameness, limb damage, and dwarfism. The deformities mentioned here might have been congenital or acquired. Mephibosheth was dropped by his nurse (2 Sam. 4:4) and perhaps suffered damage to the spinal cord. Jacob possibly sustained injury to an intervertebral disk (Gen. 32:32) causing a deformity and a limp. The woman who was "bent over" (Luke 13:10–17) might have suffered from an abnormality of the spine similar to scoliosis. It is difficult to ascertain the origin of the "shriveled hand" of the unnamed individual healed by Jesus (Matt. 12:10–13; Mark 3:1–5; Luke 6:6–10). It could be congenital in character or a paralysis caused by any number of factors.



Cast of a human skull (Jericho, Early Bronze Age) showing evidence of trephining, the ancient surgical practice of boring holes in the skull

DISEASES AND DISABILITIES OF THE EYES AND EARS

Physical blindness is mentioned several times in the Bible. Blindness excluded one from serving as a priest (Lev. 21:18, 20). Blindness and deafness, however, were disabilities requiring special care from the community (Lev. 19:14; Deut. 27:18). The "weak eyes" of Leah may refer to an eye condition (Gen. 29:17).

Blindness in the biblical world was caused by various factors. Leviticus 26:16 speaks of a fever that destroys the eyes. Flies probably were responsible for much of the conjunctivitis found in children. John 9:1 mentions congenital blindness, which Jesus cured using mud made from spittle and dirt (John 9:6). In Mark 8:22–26 Jesus healed a blind man by spitting in his eye and laying hands on him (cf. Matt. 20:34 with Mark 10:52).

Congenital deafness would also be associated with mutism and speech defects because a child learning to speak depends on imitation and mimicry. Jesus healed a man who was deaf and could barely talk (Mark 7:32–37). The man's inability to say much possibly pointed to a loss of hearing early in life.

SKIN CONDITIONS

Various skin and hair abnormalities are described in the Bible. Some made the individual unclean (Lev. 13:30; 14:54). The OT speaks of "the boils of Egypt" (Deut. 28:27; cf. Exod. 9:9). Skin ailments included tumors, festering sores, boils, infections, and the itch (Deut. 28:27, 35; Isa. 3:7). Job complained of a litany of ailments: broken and festering skin (7:5), multiple wounds (9:17), black peeling skin and fever (30:30), gnawing bone pain (2:5; 19:20; 30:17), insomnia (7:3–4), and wasting away (33:21). These symptoms have been diagnosed as indications of yaws or eczema. A poultice made of figs cured Hezekiah's boil (2 Kings 20:7).

Leprosy was once thought to be a common problem in the biblical world. Leprosy (Hansen's disease) is a slow, progressive chronic infectious disease caused by a bacterium. Symptoms include loss of sensation and loss of parts of the body. Evidence for this type of disease in Palestine is rare. Uzziah may have had a true case of Hansen's disease. He was quarantined until the day he died (2 Chron. 26:21).

Scholars now suggest that the symptoms of the disease described in the Bible do not fit this pattern and thus do not signify leprosy (Hansen's disease) as it is known today. Instead, the word that English versions translate as "leprosy" (Heb. root *tsr'*) probably refers to different types of infectious skin disease, often characterized by a long-standing, patchy skin condition associated with peeling or flakiness and redness of skin. Evidence points more toward psoriasis, fungal infections, or dermatitis.

This disease could appear in humans (Lev. 14:2), on buildings (14:34), and on clothing (14:55). It was not limited to the extremities but could occur on the head (14:42–44). It could run its course quickly (13:5–8). It made the individual ceremonially unclean, but it was also curable (Lev. 14:3; 2 Kings 5:1–27). Individuals with the disease were not necessarily shunned (2 Kings 7; Matt. 26:6 // Mark 14:3). Moses (Exod. 4:6), Miriam (Num. 12:10), and Naaman experienced this type of skin disease (2 Kings 5:1–27). Jesus healed many suffering from skin ailments (Matt. 8:2–3; Mark 1:40–42; Luke 5:12–13), including the ten "men who had leprosy" (Luke 17:12–14).

AILMENTS OF AN UNKNOWN NATURE

Some cases in the Bible present insufficient evidence for scholars to render a clear diagnosis. King Asa suffered a disease in his feet (2 Chron. 16:12). However, in the OT the Hebrew expression for "feet" is sometimes used euphemistically for the sexual organs (Judg. 3:24 KJV). Because of this, the exact nature of the disease is ambiguous. Jehoram was afflicted with "an incurable disease of the bowels" (2 Chron. 21:18–19). Other unknown ailments factor in the deaths of the firstborn son of David and Bathsheba (2 Sam. 12:15), of Jeroboam's son in infancy (1 Kings 14:17), of Elisha (2 Kings 13:14), and of Ezekiel's wife (Ezek. 24:16).

DISH A small vessel, usually used to contain liquids. Biblical examples include golden dishes that each Israelite tribe offers at the tabernacle dedication (Num. 7), a golden temple vessel (1 Chron. 28:17), and the dish that Jesus dips bread into before handing it to Judas, signaling his betrayer's identity (John 13:26). In 2 Kings 21:13 God, speaking through prophets, says that he will destroy Jerusalem and cast Judah from the land as effortlessly as someone wipes a dish clean. Proverbs 26:15 says that a sluggard dips a hand into a dish and is too lazy to raise it again to eat. Cleaning only the outside of a dish while leaving the inside filthy is a metaphor for how the Pharisees care more about ritual purity than pure hearts (Matt. 23:25–26; Luke 11:39–41).

DISHAN A Horite chief in the land of Seir in Edom (Gen. 36:21, 30). He was a son of Seir (Gen. 36:21; 1 Chron. 1:38), and the father of Uz and Aran (Gen. 36:28; 1 Chron. 1:42). His name is the proto-Semitic form of the name of his brother Dishon.

DISHON **(1)** A Horite chief in the land of Seir in Edom (Gen. 36:21, 30; 1 Chron. 1:38). The father of Hemdan, Eshban, Ithran, and Keran (Gen. 36:26). **(2)** The son of Anah (Gen. 36:25; 1 Chron. 1:41).

DISHONOR *See* Shame and Honor.

DISPENSATION

TERMINOLOGY

The KJV uses "dispensation" to translate some occurrences of the Greek word *oikonomia*, meaning "stewardship" or "administration of a household." The Greek noun *oikonomos*, meaning "steward, manager, trustee, treasurer," usually refers to an appointed individual responsible for the management of business affairs or an estate, and the related verb *oikonomeō* refers to acting in such a capacity.

The nuance of *oikonomia* in four instances (Eph. 1:10; 3:2, 9; Col. 1:25) reflects divine government and the outworking of God's overarching plan on earth for humankind. God accomplishes this plan by assigning specific responsibilities and duties that people are obligated to fulfill. Covenant infidelity may endanger the viability of the arrangement or alter the terms significantly. Despite disobedience, humankind is responsible for any previous revelation as well as for the new body of truth, underscoring the progressive nature of divine revelation as a series of agreements undergoing the expansion process that culminates in the NT. Each dispensation involves a distinct body of revelation from God that governs his relationship with humankind. Biblical scholars who embrace this hermeneutical model see each dispensation as chronologically successive and, in the case of progressive dispensationalism, as reflecting progressive stages in salvation history. Consequently, each dispensation, although distinguishable from the others in content and character, builds upon the previous revelation to form a unified corpus of truth.

THREE THEORIES ON DISPENSATIONALISM

Wide disagreement exists among scholars concerning the hermeneutical implications of the term "dispensation" and how to interpret the biblical text based on that framework. The three major divisions of those who hold to some form of dispensations are covenant theologians, classical dispensationalists, and revised or progressive dispensationalists.

Covenant theology. Covenant theology presumes three covenants or dispensations. All Scripture may be categorized under two of those dispensations: a covenant of works and a covenant of grace. Through disobedience, humankind immediately violated the covenant of works, initiated by God in Gen. 2. Consequently, Gen. 3 introduces the covenant of grace, which supersedes the previous covenant and governs the remaining scriptural history. Genesis 12–17 expands the stipulations of the covenant of grace, and all subsequent covenants elaborate or reinforce the covenant of grace. A third covenant, the covenant of redemption, reflects an internal and timeless agreement within the persons of the Godhead concerning the plan and process of unfolding redemption for humankind.

In addition, covenant theology argues that the NT church comprises the new Israel, and that all the promises made to literal Israel in the OT have been transferred and reapplied to the church. This view finds root in the NT citations of OT texts describing historic Israel, which are then understood to represent a spiritual reality in the church.

Classical dispensationalism. According to the classical dispensational model, which originated with J. N. Darby (1880) and became more popularized with the advent of the *Scofield Reference Bible* (1909), the inauguration of a new dispensation occurs when God gives a further revelation that changes or adds to his governmental relationship with humankind. Each of the seven dispensations covering the extent of scriptural redemptive history represents an agreement between God and humankind characterized by a new divine revelation, followed by a test, disobedience, judgment, and restoration by means of a new revelation. These time periods are distinguished by an alteration of God's method of dealing with humankind's sinfulness and culpability. The seven dispensations are innocence, conscience, human government, promise, law, grace, and the millennium.

Classical dispensationalists broadly distinguish two distinctive plans for Israel and the church, recognizing each as a separate entity with promises specific to each group. They affirm clear delineations between the principles of law and grace: law requires humankind's obedience to God, while grace enables believers to fulfill that righteousness through salvation effected by the sacrifice of Christ.

Relying on a consistently literal interpretation of prophecy, dispensationalists find no mention of the NT church in the OT, affirming Paul's contention that the church was a "mystery" (Eph. 3:5–6) unforeseen by the earliest biblical writers. These believers understand the church as a parenthesis in the program of God for Israel, since the church is raptured out of the world on the advent of the great tribulation (1 Thess. 4:13–17). Promises of Israel's restoration and return have been temporarily suspended during the dispensation of grace; however, God's promises to Israel will realize fulfillment during the millennial kingdom.

Revised or progressive dispensationalism. Revised dispensationalism removes the distinction between Israel, as God's earthly people, and the church, as God's heavenly people, following the millennial kingdom, since both entities share eternal life through salvation in the new Jerusalem. Jews and Gentiles maintain separate identities under the auspices of redeemed believers.

Those who support this view maintain a threefold concept of the kingdom of God: a universal reign over all things, a spiritual kingdom identical to the present church age, and an eventual political and national Davidic kingdom on earth during the millennium.

Progressive dispensationalism understands the separate dispensations as a unified series of arrangements whereby the manifestation of God's grace increases with the passing of each dispensation. The dispensations reflect the comprehensive plan through which redemptive history is carried out. Those who support this view of dispensations advocate the partial fulfillment of OT prophecy in the church, with complete fulfillment realized with the culmination of God's program during the millennial kingdom.

Progressive dispensationalists differ from covenant theologians in their acknowledgment of Israel and the church as distinct entities that coexist as God's redemptive people. Classical dispensationalists believe that the dispensations reflect differing economies of divine administration aimed at manifesting the glory of God, while progressives argue that redemptive history provides the unifying principle of each dispensation. Both classical and progressive dispensationalists affirm the systematic and progressive unfolding of God's revelation chronologically through successive dispensations or economies, and each group reinforces separate identities for Israel and the church as two groups subsumed under one people of God. Specific promises made to Israel by God will realize fruition during the millennial reign of Christ.

DISPERSION *See* Diaspora.

DISSIPATION Wastefulness or lack of moderation. The concept of dissipation occurs in biblical texts that concern wild behavior or drunkenness. In Luke 21:34 Jesus instructs his disciples not to let their hearts "be weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and cares of this life" (ESV). Here, "dissipation" (NIV: "carousing") translates a Greek word (*kraipalē*) that refers specifically to excessive drinking and its physical results. "Dissipation" also translates a different Greek word (*asōtia*) denoting wasteful or reckless behavior. Paul indicates that any man whose children are open to the charge of dissipation is ineligible to be an elder (Titus 1:6 NASB, NET [NIV: "being wild"]). Peter calls pagan behavior—"lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties and abominable idolatries"—a "flood of dissipation" (1 Pet. 4:3–4 NKJV). The NIV and other versions translate the same Greek word as "debauchery" in Eph. 5:18, a well-known verse in which Paul tells believers to be filled with the Spirit rather than to get drunk.

DISTAFF A rod attached to a spinning wheel (also called a "spindle"). Skill in its use is a mark of an excellent wife (Prov. 31:19), but it is also used within David's curse on Joab and his family for Abner's murder (2 Sam. 3:29). In the latter text, David asks that Joab's descendants never lack a man who works the distaff (woman's work). Here, the NIV follows the LXX, which understands the Hebrew word *pelek* to refer to a crutch, not a distaff.

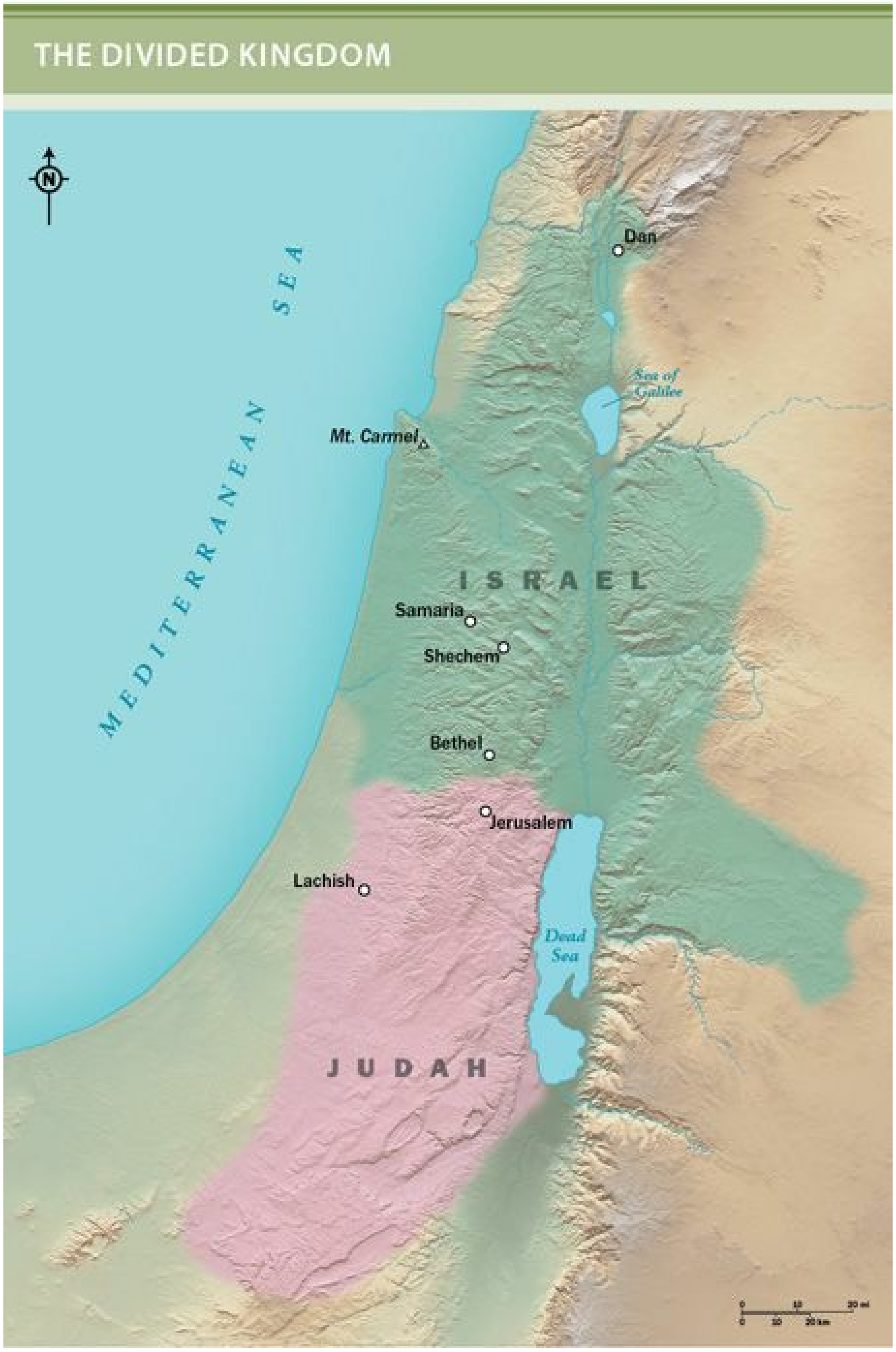
DISTRICT A bounded geographical region within or around a country or city. A district encompasses the boundaries of the tribes of Israel (Judg. 5:15, 16; 2 Chron. 11:13, 23), named regions of a land (Gen. 47:11; 1 Sam. 9:4–5; Ezra 5:1; Matt. 2:22; Acts 16:12), and sectors within a city (2 Kings 22:14; Eccles. 5:8; Zeph. 1:11). Solomon appointed regional district governors (1 Kings 4:5, 7, 13, 19, 27). The work to reconstruct the temple wall in Jerusalem was apportioned by districts (Neh. 3:14, 15, 17). Ezekiel instructed that land be allotted as a "sacred district" for God (Ezek. 45:1, 3, 7).

DIVERSITY Diversity, in the sense of the modern valuation of ethnic, gender, biological, and cultural heterogeneity, is anachronistic to biblical times. Some manifestations of diversity in the modern sense, such as religious toleration and intermarriage, are strongly condemned in some biblical passages (e.g., Deut. 7:3; 12:30). At the same time, several biblical texts are aligned to at least some degree with the modern value of diversity. In 1 Cor. 12:4–31 Paul emphasizes that a diversity of spiritual gifts in the church is a great blessing (see also 1 Pet. 4:10). The book of Acts portrays the early church as drawing converts from the fullest variety of ethnicities (2:5–13), and

Revelation describes the church as consisting of the redeemed of “every tribe and language and people and nation” (5:9 [cf. 7:9]). Indeed, this positive evaluation of ethnic diversity is anticipated in the OT (Gen. 12:3; Mic. 4:2). The Bible anticipates the modern notion of biodiversity by emphasizing the goodness of God’s creation of distinct “kinds” and the intrinsic value of such variety (Gen. 1:21; 7:3).

DIVES The name popularly given to the rich man in Jesus’ story of the rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19–31). However, “Dives” is actually not a proper name but rather is the Latin word for “rich man,” which occurs in the Vulgate translation of the story. In the Greek text of the story, this character is unnamed.

DIVIDED KINGDOM After the reigns of David and Solomon, who had held the Israelite tribes together in a fragile union, the kingdom split into north and south in 931 BC (1 Kings 11–12). The reasons for the division are given as Solomon’s unfaithfulness (11:1–13) and his son Rehoboam’s unreasonable expectations (12:1–15). Behind this lay a long history of rivalry among the tribes.


THE DIVIDED KINGDOM
N
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
Dan
Sea of Galilee
Mt. Carmel
ISRAEL
Samaria
Shechem
Bethel
Jerusalem
Lachish
Dead Sea
JUDAH
0 10 20 mi
0 10 20 km

Retaining the name “Israel” (also known as “Ephraim”), the ten northern tribes had an unstable succession of kings for two hundred years until 722 BC, when the Assyrians brought the kingdom to an end with their deportation and resettlement program.

The southern kingdom of Judah (with the much weaker tribe of Benjamin) retained a Davidic line of kings until their removal and the destruction of the capital, Jerusalem, by the Babylonians in 586 BC.

DIVIDING ROCK *See* Sela Hammahlekoth.

DIVIDING WALL *See* Wall, Dividing.

DIVINATION AND MAGIC Divination and magic were fairly common practices throughout the biblical period. Divination was especially prevalent in the ancient Near East during the OT era, but many divination and magic/sorcery practices continued into the NT era throughout the Mediterranean region as well. Divination, which encompasses a wide range of magic-related practices, generally refers to various techniques used to communicate with supernatural entities such as gods and spirits in order to determine the future, ward off evil, or change something for the better. Divination emphasizes obtaining information that would otherwise be unknown to humans. Magic and sorcery, on the other hand, while overlapping to some degree with divination, use curses and spells to influence and affect people, often with the intention of harming one's enemies, but also to enhance the fortunes of those issuing the spells. Thus, magic and sorcery generally emphasize influencing people or events through supernatural or occult means. However, often the practices overlap and are frequently carried out by the same person. Likewise, especially in the OT and throughout the ancient Near East during the OT era, the terminology for diviners, magicians, and sorcerers was quite fluid and not precise or restrictive.

The nonbiblical literary texts of Israel's neighbors in the ancient Near East (especially Egypt, Assyria, and Babylonia) contain hundreds of references to various types of divination and magic. The most common divination techniques involved (1) watching birds and the patterns of their flight; (2) observing drops of oil spreading across the surface of water in a bucket; (3) astrology; and (4) removing and observing the entrails of animals, especially the liver. From observing these things, the skilled diviner supposedly could interpret the future and advise a king (or other patron) about what course to follow. Magic included the casting of spells as well as the wearing of charms and amulets.

This papyrus manuscript found in the tomb of a man named Pawerem contains a magical spell for driving away hostile spirits.

The book of Acts clearly indicates that magic and sorcery (and probably divination) were still quite prevalent in the NT era. Peter confronts a sorcerer, Simon, in Acts 8:9–24. In numerous early nonbiblical Christian writings, there are references to this same Simon as a powerful sorcerer who contended with Peter in various ways. Later in Acts, Paul and Barnabas encountered a Jewish sorcerer, Bar-Jesus, at the very beginning of their first missionary journey (Acts 13:6), perhaps indicating that this type of hostile power was fairly prevalent in many of the places where the early church was taking root. Likewise, in Acts 19:19, when the citizens of Ephesus responded to the gospel in large numbers, “a number who had practiced sorcery brought their scrolls together and burned them,” indicating that sorcery was widespread in Ephesus.

In the OT, the practice of divination and numerous other kinds of magic and sorcery was strictly prohibited. Deuteronomy 18:9–14 presents a list of prohibited practices (although the precise translation of the Hebrew terms in this text is difficult). There, divination and all other related pagan methods of seeing or determining the future are described as detestable. Likewise, a wide range of practices relating to sorcery, magic, and witchcraft are prohibited (casting spells, consulting with the dead, etc.). In contrast, this passage is followed by a description of the proper way to engage with the supernatural: through true biblical prophets chosen by God and speaking in his name (Deut. 18:17–22).

Likewise, in the NT, especially in the book of Acts, those who had the Spirit were proved repeatedly to be infinitely more powerful than even the most famous of sorcerers and those who practiced witchcraft. Paul includes “witchcraft” (Gk. *pharmakeia*, which probably includes sorcery and magic) in his list of “acts of the flesh” (Gal. 5:19–20). Finally, the book of Revelation pronounces judgment on those who practice magic arts and sorcery (9:21; 18:23; 21:8; 22:15).

DIVINE FREEDOM The Bible presents God as a maximally free being. He did not have to create anything at all, and no creature can constrain him. Psalm 115:3 proclaims, “Our God is in heaven; he does whatever pleases him.” Proverbs 21:1 puts even kings under God’s power, so that their hearts turn wherever he wills and not the reverse. No force can threaten God’s love for us in Christ Jesus (Rom. 8:38–39). God always reigns, and he is never reigned over by anyone or any circumstance, as is emphasized by the royal language and imagery of the book of Revelation. In this sense, God enjoys a unique kind of liberty. He alone is perfect in knowledge, power, and goodness; and thus only he can always do as he pleases, unhindered by any weakness or obstacle. He never improvises, shifting from Plan A to Plan B in light of changing circumstances. He responds to influences only when his sovereign plan calls for him to do so.

This picture of God’s freedom includes three distinct elements: (1) he has a mind of his own and his own desires; (2) he can do anything he likes, unconstrained by others; and (3) he has the power to accomplish whatever he sets out to do. However, his freedom does not include defying the laws of logic or even wishing to do so. Thus, God cannot desire and carry out evil. He cannot inflict pointless harm, celebrate injustice, or subordinate his own glory to some lesser good. For a similar reason, God cannot make square circles, cause two to equal three, or make a rock so large that he could not lift it. From a logical standpoint, these actions involve stopping and going simultaneously, or turning left and right at the same theoretical juncture. God cannot perform these feats, because they are logically impossible. The identical principle explains why God cannot attempt to change his own nature, so that he ceases to be all-knowing, all-powerful, or morally perfect. He cannot lose the characteristics that make him God, because his doing so would be absurd.

God cannot fail or become essentially unfree. However, the world looks different from our human perspective. We see a God who has set himself up for failure and opposition by giving us minds of our own. He must constantly improvise down the paths of history because we desire evil and do what he forbids. God could step in at any time and “win” outright, using brute force; but he plays the game according to self-imposed rules, and thus he suffers occasional setbacks. We seem to limit his options, denying him permission to enter our hearts and change us. Consequently, God becomes frustrated with us and complains about us through his prophets and apostles. This picture of God draws upon our experiences with other human beings and what we think genuine relationships must entail. They involve give and take, and God must swallow a good deal of nonsense and wickedness from us. This account of things seems right because it interprets God’s liberty in the usual, zero-sum way: where he can move about freely, we cannot, and vice versa. That is how it works in everyday life, so we expect our relationship with God to be similarly competitive.

However, the biblical writers offer a less extreme picture. For one thing, they give us no reason to believe that we ourselves enjoy godlike freedom, as described above. All sorts of factors have conditioned what we desire, and we face many obstacles that we cannot remove, even if we wanted to do so. Failure is always an option for us. Consequently, our wills are not immovable objects meeting the irresistible force of God’s decrees. He is absolutely free; we are relatively free. Thus, the two wills, his and ours, do not simply meet each other halfway. At the same time, the Bible also reminds us that God is not the one free agent in the universe, surrounded by legions of automata—some in heaven, some in hell, and some here on earth. We, not God, do evil, and his exhortations to us are not mere formalities. He exercises his sovereign will upon us by using noncoercive means that we do not understand and that the Bible makes no attempt to explain. God has all the elbow room in the universe, and he never backs up because we wish to move forward. He always makes up his own mind and always accomplishes what he sets out to do through us. He is seldom obeyed but never sovereignly opposed.

DIVINE RETRIBUTION Retribution refers to “giving what is due,” usually in response to evil. Retribution is an important theological doctrine whose significance is belied by scant use of the term in English translations (ESV 2×; NIV 6×; NRSV 9×). Retribution is driven by the theological conviction that moral order is built into the fabric of the world (Ps. 7:14–16; Prov. 26:27). This moral compass is guaranteed by God’s oversight, meting out justice in judgment and rewards to the righteous, not only on the human-human level, but also on the divine-human level (2 Cor. 9:6; Gal. 6:7). This biblical equation assures that (1) life is not overwhelmed by moral chaos, (2) human actions affect the future, (3) the world is morally uniform, and (4) human revenge is to be avoided (Lev. 19:17–18; Matt. 16:27; Rom. 12:19). With the human community in view, God’s commands are intended to instruct and guide. Not surprisingly, address of retribution is found throughout biblical literature: legal (Deut. 28), narrative (Num. 16), poetic (Pss. 18:20; 94:15), sapiential (Prov. 11:24–25), and prophetic (Hab. 2:2–20).

This poetic justice pervades the OT in the judgment and exile of Adam and Eve (Gen. 3:8–24), Cain’s sentence and blood revenge (Gen. 4:15, 24), and the worldwide flood and annihilation (Gen. 6–9) (cf. Exod. 21:20–21; Deut. 30:15–20; Josh. 7; Amos 3:14–15; Mic. 2:1–3). Such stories reveal a sovereign God acting as an external agent who exacts punishment in light of his intentions for creation. For Israel, retribution is the exercise of Yahweh’s legal rights in an attempt to restore covenant fellowship (Lev. 26:40–45). Although serious tensions exist—sometimes the wicked prosper and the innocent suffer—this does not alter the grand scheme of Scripture (Job 33; Jer. 12:1–4). In some scenarios, only the next lifetime will fully bring justice and reward (Ps. 49:5–15; Dan. 12:2; Matt. 25:31–46; Rev. 22:1–5). Deep wisdom, however, embraces mystery and understands the limits of human agency (Gen. 50:19–20; James 1:5).

While the notion of consequence may be too strong, the concept of correspondence is helpful for understanding the concept of retribution. God’s judgments reveal (1) a correspondence between act and effect, (2) accountability to known law, (3) a debt requiring resolve/restitution, and (4) punishment that reenacts elements of the sin itself. God’s roles as divine warrior, judge, and king proclaim his universal rule and preserve it from all who would mock or defy his royal authority (Gen. 3:14–19; Deut. 7:10; 1 Sam. 24:19; 2 Sam. 12:11–12; Ps. 149; Prov. 15:25; Mic. 5:15; 1 Cor. 16:22; Gal. 1:8–9; 2 Thess. 1:5–10).

God’s reasons for retribution center on disobedience and injustice, while his purposes are essentially restorative and developmental. Retribution is an application of God’s holiness that purifies the world for his kingdom of peace. In this way, vengeance and deliverance work together (Nah. 1:2, 7). Paradoxically, retribution gives hope to fallen humanity for sin acknowledged and unacknowledged, anticipating the triumph of righteousness (Ps. 58:11). Retribution grants rationality and stability to humanity, promotes closure in crisis, and fosters hope—a forerunner of the ultimate judgment before the throne of God the King.

DIVINERS’ TREE A notable tree used in pagan divination practices, visible from the entrance to the city Shechem (Judg. 9:37). This may be the tree near which Abram built an altar after receiving God’s promise regarding the surrounding land (Gen. 12:6–7). This may also be the tree under which Jacob buried his household’s foreign gods and earrings (Gen. 35:4). These possible references cannot be verified. Renderings of the Hebrew *’elon me’onenim* also include “plain of Meonenim” (KJV), “diviners’ oak” (NASB, RSV, ESV), and “oracle oak” (MSG).

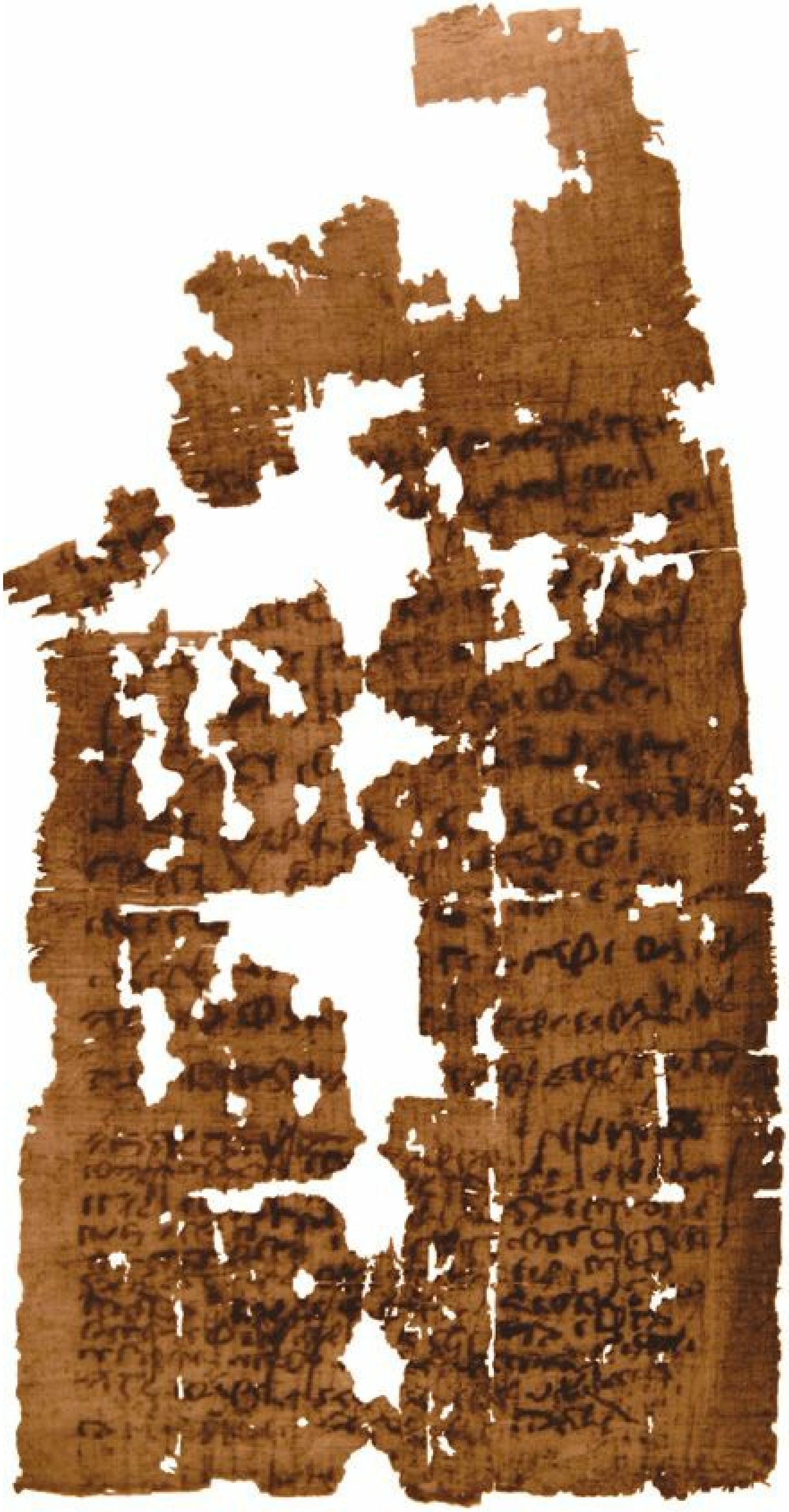
DIVINITY OF CHRIST *See* Christ and Christology; Incarnation; Jesus Christ.

DIVORCE Divorce involves the separation of a husband and a wife and the management of children and property, and it raises the question of the right to remarry.

According to Deut. 24:1–4, a man was permitted to divorce his wife if he found in her anything “indecent” (*’erwat dabar*, lit., “nakedness of a thing,” referring to sexual impropriety; cf. Lev. 18:6–19; 20:11, 17–21; 1 Sam. 20:30 NRSV). The marriage could be restored, but only if the woman had not married anyone else in the meantime.

The rabbis of Jesus’ day debated this law vigorously. Rabbi Hillel’s supporters read “indecent thing” as “anything or obscenity.” So they argued for divorce on the grounds of “any cause” and proceeded to list things such as burning food or developing wrinkles as sufficient cause for a man to divorce his wife. Rabbi Shammai’s school understood the passage to refer only to sexual sin.

Some Pharisees put this question to Jesus in Matt. 19:1–12. Jesus asserted, “What God has joined together, let no one separate” (v. 6). This they countered with the specifics from Deut. 24. Jesus affirmed that divorce was God’s way of limiting the damage caused by “hardness of heart” (ESV, NASB). He then ruled in favor of the view that only the sexual violation of the marriage can justify a man divorcing his wife (Matt. 19:9). Such a divorce gives the innocent party the right to remarry. For a man to divorce his wife while the marriage is sexually pure makes any subsequent marriage an act of adultery, for which he is responsible. Even Jesus’ own disciples were shocked by this statement (v. 10).



A Jewish bill of divorce (AD 72), an Aramaic papyrus discovered at Wadi Murabba’at

It is significant that under biblical law, the innocent party in the event of adultery, whether husband or wife, was free to remarry.

A second divorce law is found in the OT at Exod. 21:7–11. This law concerns the rights of a female slave-concubine. The dignity of such a female slave was to be protected under God’s covenant with Israel. She could not be sold, nor could she be freed in the seventh year, as a male slave would be (Exod. 21:1–6). If the man later wanted to separate from her, he would have to let her go free. This would be the equivalent of a certificate of divorce for a free woman. It is noteworthy that where the slave was purchased as a concubine for a son, she was to have “the rights of a daughter” (Exod. 21:9). She had the right to go free if he married another wife and deprived her of food and clothing or ceased to make love to her. A good example is the experience of Sarai’s slave Hagar (Gen. 16; 21:9–21).

It is difficult to know how to apply this case to the overall biblical teaching on divorce and to different cultural circumstances. This case, though problematic, does speak to modern situations of domestic abuse and desertion (cf. 1 Cor. 7:10–13).

A third case concerns mixed marriage between a Christian and a non-Christian. A Christian is not to marry a non-Christian (2 Cor. 6:14–16; cf. Deut. 7:1–7; Ezra 9). In 1 Cor. 7:12–16 Paul addresses this issue. He does so in light of the old covenant law that required God’s people to marry within the community of Israel. Circumstances had changed significantly with the coming of the new covenant. God’s people are now identified by faith in Christ, not ethnicity. Paul’s ruling here addresses one of two possible situations. Either the couple married as non-Christians and only one of them later converted, or two Christians married and one of them later abandoned the faith.

For a Jewish Christian, the first question was whether the marriage should continue or whether, on the precedent of Ezra 9, it should be terminated. Under the old covenant, for a marriage and children to be holy, both husband and wife had to establish their identity as Israelites. When Paul speaks of the unbelieving husband (1 Cor. 7:14) or children of this union as “sanctified,” he is speaking about the integrity of the marriage and the legitimacy of the children, not about their salvation. Without faith in Christ, no one is saved (Rom. 5:1; Gal. 2:16; Heb. 11:6).

Paul’s ruling is thus that the wife of the unbelieving husband should continue with the marriage because it is legitimate. “But if the unbeliever leaves, let it be so” (1 Cor. 7:15). Under such circumstances, the wife (or husband [7:14]) is free, which implies the option of remarriage (7:39). She should not persevere in hope that he will be converted. She is the innocent victim.

Throughout the Bible there always remains the possibility of restoration of the original marriage except when remarriage to another has occurred (Deut. 24:4).

DIZAHAB One of the places referenced to specify where Moses’ final speech to the Israelites took place (Deut. 1:1). The context indicates that Dizahab was situated somewhere east of the Jordan, but its location remains unknown.

DOCTOR *See* Diseases and Physical Abnormalities.

DOCTRINE In Christian theology, doctrine is the synthesis of Christian teaching, especially as set forth in its various related themes. The early disciples frequently referred to the teachings of Christ and to the teachings of the apostles and the church. These were memorized, compiled, and passed through the generations in the church (2 Tim. 2). As early as Acts 2 reference is made to the teaching of the apostles and the devotion of the church to it. By the second century, a body of teaching had crystallized into a doctrinal treatise called the *Didache*. Doctrinal teaching as a set structure is especially emphasized in the Pastoral Epistles, such that it has caused some to conjecture a later date and early catholic outlook for those letters. Regardless of the validity of this postulation, these letters evidence an early doctrinal and confessional outlook within the church.

This was, of course, nothing new, since the Israelites had a body of teaching that they had passed on through the generations: the law, both written and oral. For the Israelites, the law, both written and oral, was memorized, taught, interpreted, and heeded through all of society. The church simply followed suit in forming its teachings.

In the NT two words, *didachē* and *didaskalia*, are commonly translated "teaching" and in some cases are rendered by some translations as "doctrine." The term *didachē* appears more widely throughout the NT, whereas *didaskalia* is used largely in the Pastoral Epistles (referring to both the content and the act of teaching). The term *didaskalia* is sometimes used with the term *logos* when the latter indicates sound speech (Titus 2:7–8) and words of the faith (1 Tim. 4:6). In fact, in one verse in the Pastoral Epistles all three terms are used together as "the faithful *word*," "in accordance with the *teaching*," and "in sound *doctrine*" (Titus 1:9 NASB).

The first body of teaching for the church is the teaching of Jesus (Matt. 7:28), such as that found in the Sermon on the Mount, where Jesus notes the ethic of his messiahship and his followers. The teaching of Jesus, which is authoritative (Mark 1:22, 27), and confrontational (Mark 12:38), is an astonishing answer to the religious leaders (Matt. 22:33; cf. Luke 4:32). Jesus notes the vanity of teaching the human commandments as if they were the doctrine from God (Mark 7:7). When questioned, Jesus sets forth his teaching as from the Father (John 7:16–17). The chief priests seek to destroy both Jesus and his followers because of the teaching (Mark 11:18; John 18:19; Acts 5:28). On Cyprus the proconsul is astonished at the doctrine of Christ taught by Paul (Acts 13:12), and in Athens Paul's teaching about Christ is new and unusual to those of the Areopagus (Acts 17:18–20).

For Paul, doctrine is fundamental for believers. He notes the commitment to the teaching of Christ after conversion as normative for the Roman believers (Rom. 6:17), and he instructs further that they keep an eye out for those who cause division and hinder adherence to sound doctrine (Rom. 16:17). In fact, God has given gifted people to the body for building up the saints to avoid such doctrinal problems (Eph. 4:12–14). Further, a straightforward expression of teaching has priority over gifts such as tongues (1 Cor. 14:6, 26). Paul also points out that the Colossian heresy is the doctrine of human beings rather than that of God (Col. 2:22).

In the Pastoral Epistles the injunction from Paul to Timothy is that he be nourished on and persevere in sound doctrine (1 Tim. 4:6, 16) and set forth doctrine in preaching (1 Tim. 4:13 [along with public reading of Scripture]; 2 Tim. 4:2). All this is certainly fitting for Timothy, as he has followed the teaching of Paul (2 Tim. 3:10). The injunction to Titus is to hold to the word and to the sound doctrine and teaching as he corrects the church (Titus 1:9). Those who are servants are encouraged to show honesty and good faith, so that the teaching of the Savior will be respected (Titus 2:10). It is clear for Paul that Scripture is the basis of doctrine (2 Tim. 3:16). This doctrine (teaching) will be tolerated by few; as a whole, sound doctrine will be rejected in favor of a message more palatable to human interest (2 Tim. 4:3). The task of the servant of God is to stand against heterodox teaching (1 Tim. 1:3; 6:3). Heterodoxy leads to heteropraxy (1 Tim. 1:10). Paul notes the doctrine of demons, false teaching that is ultimately based in satanic teaching (1 Tim. 4:1).

The injunction of the writer to the Hebrews is that they are not to submit to strange teachings, which deny grace (13:9). This accords with the book's argument as a whole. For John, staying in the doctrine of Christ is salvific, but going outside it is not (2 John 9). John's readers are not to receive those who pervert the doctrine of Christ (2 John 10).

In the book of Revelation, Jesus warns the church at Pergamum about the false teaching of Balaam (2:14) and that of the Nicolaitans (2:15). The church at Thyatira is likewise warned to shun the teachings of the false prophetess known as "Jezebel" (2:20, 24).

DOCUMENTARY HYPOTHESIS A theory first originating with Julius Wellhausen that argues the Pentateuch (or Torah, the books of Genesis through Deuteronomy) is a compilation of four major sources that have been edited together. The four sources are labeled as J, E, D, P. J stands for "Jahwist" and comes from the use of "Yahweh" (in German, *Jahweh*) as the name of God. E stands for "Elohist," referring to the use of "Elohim" for the name of God. D stands for "Deuteronomist," indicating the source that includes the book of Deuteronomy (and similar material in subsequent books of the Bible). P stands for "Priestly (source)," which is most closely identified with the concerns of the priesthood.

According to the Documentary Hypothesis, J is the oldest source, composed in Judah around 950 BC; E is the next oldest, composed in Israel around 850 BC; D comes from a period of religious reform in Jerusalem around 600 BC; and P was composed by priests during the Babylonian exile (c. 500 BC). In a process of several phases, the four sources were worked together, resulting in the final form around 400 BC. Although Wellhausen's theory gained a strong following in critical scholarship, recent research has seriously challenged the viability of the Documentary Hypothesis, whether in whole or in part. *See also* Pentateuch.

DODAI A commander of the second of Israel's twelve divisions of soldiers (twenty-four thousand men each) during David's reign, identified as an Ahohite (1 Chron. 27:4; cf. 2 Sam. 23:28; 1 Chron. 11:29). This likely indicates that Dodai was a descendant of someone named "Ahoah" (as in 1 Chron. 8:4). While some translations render the name Dodo as the father of the gifted warrior Eleazar in 2 Sam. 23:9 and 1 Chron. 11:12 (e.g., KJV, NRSV), this is best understood as Dodai (cf. NIV).

DODANIM An Ionian group (descended from Javan) that appears in Gen. 10:4 in most Hebrew manuscripts. A few Hebrew manuscripts, along with the Samaritan Pentateuch and the LXX, have "Rodanim" (the people of Rhodes; see also ESV, NRSV; NIV: "Rodanites") in its place, which appears in this position in 1 Chron. 1:7. If "Dodanim" is not simply an error in some manuscripts, it may refer to the inhabitants of Dodona, the site of an ancient Greek oracle located in the mountains of northern Greece, thirty miles inland from the Ionian Sea.

DODAVAHU Dodavahu lived in Mareshah and was the father of the prophet Eliezer, who spoke against King Jehoshaphat (2 Chron. 20:37). The meaning of his name is uncertain, but it is conjectured that "Dodayahu" ("Yahweh is the beloved one") is intended.

DODO **(1)** The father of the Issacharite judge Tola (Judg. 10:1) was "Puah, the son of Dodo." Some ancient versions take the Hebrew *dodo* not as a proper name but as a common noun, "his uncle." **(2)** Among David's mighty men was "Elhanan son of Dodo from Bethlehem" (2 Sam. 23:24; 1 Chron. 11:26), though Dodo here may best be understood as Dodai. *See also* Dodai.

DOE The doe symbolizes feminine fecundity and beauty (Prov. 5:19; Song 2:7) and the flourishing of the recipient with God's protection and blessings (2 Sam. 22:34; Hab. 3:19). The doe symbolizes the tribe of Naphtali in Gen. 49:21. The calving of does was viewed as something that occurred under the providence of God (Job 39:1; Jer. 14:5; and in some translations of Ps. 29:9 [e.g., NASB: "The voice of the LORD makes the deer to calve"], though the NIV and other versions translate an emended text). One psalm had an accompaniment (possibly a musical melody) called "The Doe of the Morning" (Ps. 22 superscription).

DOEG An Edomite, Saul's chief shepherd (though this may be a military title). Doeg was at the sanctuary at Nob when David arrived while fleeing Saul, and he saw Ahimelek provide David with bread and Goliath's sword (1 Sam. 21:6–9). Saul later complained of a conspiracy among his servants, so Doeg claimed that he also had seen Ahimelek inquire of Yahweh for David (1 Sam. 22:7–10). Ahimelek was condemned by Saul for this, and when no one else would act, Doeg executed him and the other priests from Nob (1 Sam. 22:16–19).

DOG Many believe that dogs were scorned in ancient Israel. They are described as scavengers both within and outside cities (Ps. 59:6, 14; Rev. 22:15). To be devoured by dogs was considered a sign of covenantal curse (1 Kings 14:11; 16:4; 21:23; 2 Kings 9:10; cf. 1 Kings 21:19). The "wages of a dog" (ESV, NASB; Heb. *mekhir keleb*) is figuratively used to express the wages of a male temple prostitute (Deut. 23:18). The image of a dog returning to its own vomit is used to describe someone who repeats sins (Prov. 26:11).

Assyrian relief depicting hunting dogs (645–635 BC)

Ironically, the name of the Israelite hero Caleb is derived from the Hebrew word for dog (*keleb*). Although eccentric names do exist in the OT (e.g., Hosea's daughter Lo-Ruhamah and son Lo-Ammi [Hos. 1:6, 8]; Naomi's sons Mahlon and Kilion, meaning "illness" and "death" respectively [Ruth 1:2]), it is striking that Caleb was named after such a purportedly disdained animal. Isaiah 56:10–11 rebukes prophets who neglect their duties instead of behaving like "dogs" that bark when there is a threat. In Exod. 11:7 God tells Moses and Aaron that whereas the Egyptians will suffer the horror of watching their firstborn die in the final plague, Israel, under divine protection, will not be troubled by so much as a barking dog. Isaiah 66:3 alludes to dogs as animals worthy of sacrifice (sacrificing dogs was a common Canaanite practice). All of this evidence cautions against rigid and sweeping generalizations about negative views of dogs on the part of people in the ancient biblical context.

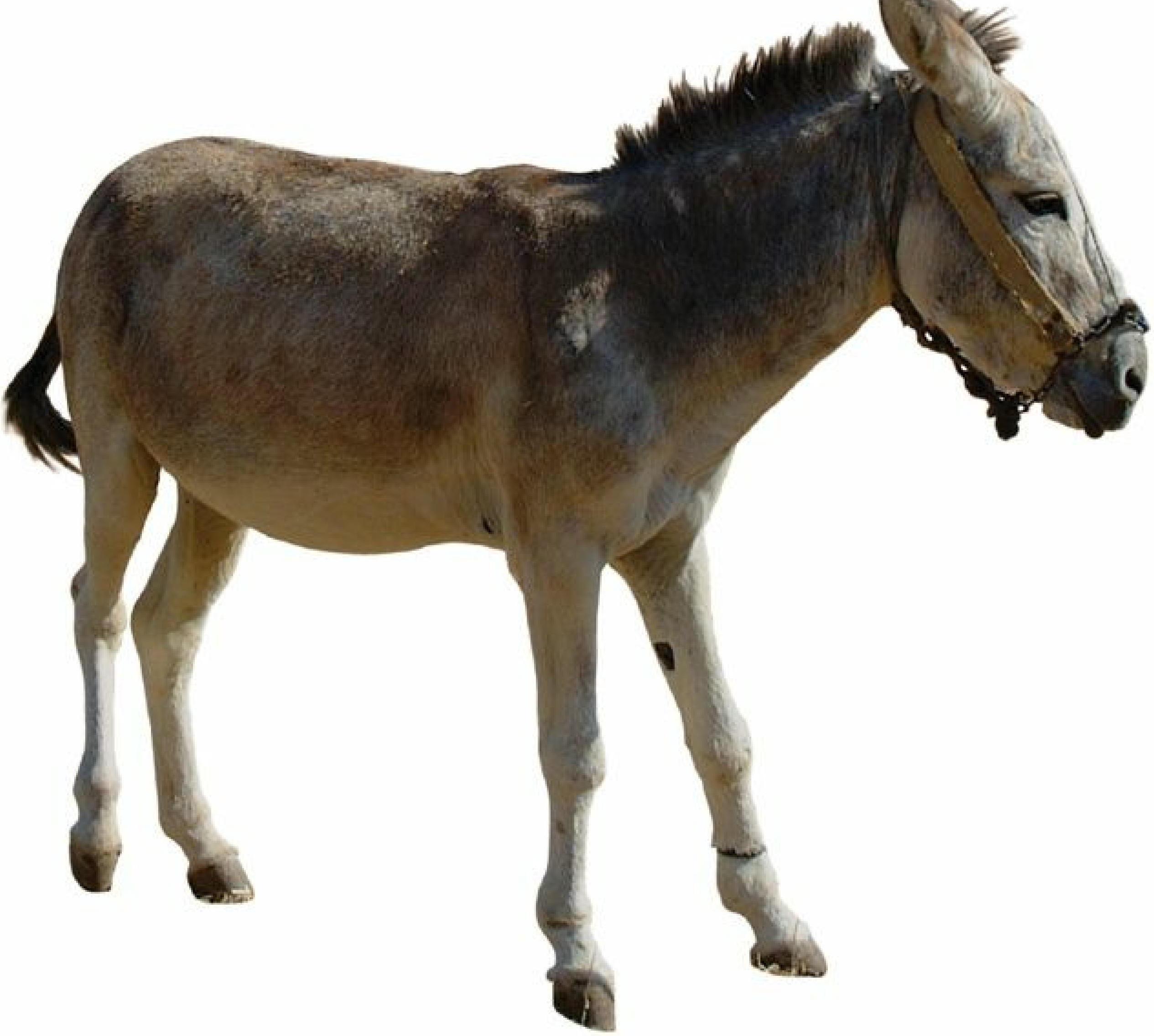
DOMINION The word "dominion" translates several terms that express power, mastery, rulership, and authority. As the cosmic king, God has deputized humankind as his image bearer to "rule over" creation (Gen. 1:26, 28; Ps. 8:5–6). Human rulership is intended to be a stewardship for God, one of development, not domination.

Dominion is also found in political might (1 Kings 4:24), sometimes in the possession of Israel's enemies (Neh. 9:28), and in God's chosen king over creation (Ps. 72:8). There is also the messianic restoration of dominion (Mic. 4:8), dominion among supernatural beings (Eph. 1:21), and the ultimate dominion of Christ over all (Col. 1:15–20). The rule of sin and death is contrasted with the dominion of grace and resurrection (Rom. 5:14–21; 6:9–14). God's dominion is his "sovereignty," both in creation and redemption (Dan. 4:34; 1 Pet. 4:11; Jude 25).

DONKEY Several words are used in the Bible to designate donkeys or asses, but they roughly point to two kinds: domestic and wild.

Fond of freedom (Job 39:5) and solitary places (Jer. 14:6), a wild donkey is mentioned several times in the Bible. The Israelites' idolatry is compared to the lust of a wild donkey (Jer. 2:24). The mode of life of Ishmael and the desert dwellers is likened to that of a wild donkey (Gen. 16:12; Job 24:5). Israel's political alliance with Assyria is also likened to the wild donkey's wandering (Hos. 8:9). Such a derisive view is also found in Job 11:12, where the impossibility of a fool being wise is compared to the impossibility of the wild donkey being born a man.

Most of the biblical references to donkeys are about domestic animals. People, regardless of their social class or gender, primarily used this animal for riding. Riding a donkey usually means peaceful pursuits (Gen. 42:26; 1 Sam. 16:20), whereas riding a horse signifies war. However, riding a donkey to enter a city carries the connotation of a royal procession, as indicated in Solomon's riding on David's mule on the way to Gihon for anointing (1 Kings 1:33, 44) as well as in other ancient Near Eastern texts, such as the Mari letters (c. eighteenth century BC). Against this background, the Gospel writers understand Jesus' entry into Jerusalem as the fulfillment of the prophecy about a messianic king in Zech. 9:9 (Matt. 21:1–11; John 12:12–16). (*See also* Colt; Mule.)



Donkey

Donkeys were also important agricultural resources, used for tilling fields (Isa. 30:24; 32:20) and carrying burdens (Gen. 45:23; Isa. 30:6). Although these animals are small, other physical characteristics (e.g., long, hollow, sharp-edged hoofs, great strength, little thirst, fondness for prickly herbs) make them well suited for various tasks in the arid hilly regions of western Asia and northeastern Africa. Thus, they were highly valued as important assets (Gen. 12:16; Deut. 5:21; Job 1:3).

Domestic donkeys carry a variety of symbolic connotations. Proverbs characterizes them as stubborn, paralleling the necessity of discipline for fools with that of a bridle for a donkey (26:3). Isaiah uses their usual lack of freedom to portray the dramatic reversal in the time of restoration (32:20). Mosaic law forbids the yoking of a donkey with an ox in plowing (Deut. 22:10; cf. 2 Cor. 6:14). This prohibition may be intended to protect the weaker animal from being exhausted, but it may also be related to the general priestly prohibition of various types of mixtures. This conception of uncleanness helps to explain the descriptions of the severity of the famine in Samaria (2 Kings 6:25), of the Israelites' spiritual adultery (Ezek. 23:20), and of Jehoiakim's burial (Jer. 22:19).

Noteworthy is the use of donkeys as literary foils to their riders. For example, in the story of

Balaam the prophet (Num. 22:21–30) the description of the donkey plays a crucial role in emphasizing the absurdity of the prophet. The donkey is able to see the angel of the Lord and refuses to move in fear, whereas the bribed prophet cannot see him and forces the donkey to move on by beating it three times. The donkey also delivers the word of God, rebuking the prophet for his disobedience to God. Although our modern conception of the donkey as stupid may draw out a sharper contrast between the prophet and the donkey, it is doubtful that ancient readers shared the same conception. Rather, the contrast is made between the ordinary animal's recognition of the angel and the supposedly inspired prophet's lack of discernment (cf. Isa. 1:3). Similarly, the donkey's faithfulness in the story of the old prophet of Bethel (1 Kings 13) serves to highlight the prophet's disobedience. Although the donkey here is not as active as in the Balaam story, its survival from the lion's attack is contrasted with its owner's miserable death. The portrayal of the donkey as faithfully standing by the corpse of its owner is also compared with that of the prophet lying dead because of his disobedience to God's command.

DOOR Nineteenth-century BC Egyptian reliefs show city gates in Syria-Palestine. Arched gates were found in the second millennium BC. A door (Heb. *petakh*) often had side posts, a top post (lintel), and a threshold. The temple door was made of juniper wood (1 Kings 6:34). Doorposts and lintels (Heb. *mashqop*) are mentioned in the story of the exodus (Exod. 12:7, 22–23).

Doors separated external and internal space. In the OT story of the flood, the ark contained a door (*petakh*; Gen. 6:16). God closed the door behind those inside the ark (Gen. 7:16), separating them from the outside world.

In the Greco-Roman world, doors represented turning points. Janus, the Roman god of doors (Lat. *ianua*), prevented evil from entering the home. Janus had two faces, one looking inward and one looking outward. The Romans named a month after Janus, *Januarius*, at the turn of their year, as a door between past and future.

In Matthew, a door (*thyra*) separated the unprepared from the prepared in kingdom life (Matt. 25:10–12). Likewise, life and destruction were separated by a door or gate (Matt. 7:13–14; Luke 13:24). The NT records Jesus referring to himself as "the door" (John 10:1–9 ESV, NASB; NIV: "gate") and, in turn, standing at the door of preparedness by (Matt. 24:33; Mark 13:29) and in fellowship with (Rev. 3:20) his followers.

DOORKEEPER Levitical priests served as doorkeepers, or gatekeepers (see 2 Chron. 34:9), responsible for collecting money from Israelite census taxes and sacrificial gifts to be used for temple maintenance (2 Kings 12:10; 22:4; 23:4; 25:18; Jer. 52:24). Gatekeepers were also tasked with restricting entrance to the temple in order to preserve its purity (2 Chron. 23:19). Levitical priests were appointed as doorkeepers responsible for aspects of the transportation of the ark of the covenant (1 Chron. 15:23–24). The job of doorkeeper apparently was low in prestige, as Ps. 84:10 indicates when it contrasts the excellence of serving as a lowly doorkeeper in God's temple with the evil of dwelling comfortably in the tents of wicked people.

Elsewhere in the Bible, eunuchs guard the doorway to the Persian king's palace (Esther 2:21). In John 18:16–17, while Caiaphas questions Jesus, Peter remains outside the court of the high priest, where a young girl, who is responsible for letting people into the court and passing messages on to the priestly authorities, stands watch. *See also* Gatekeeper.

DOPHKAH One of the places where the Israelites camped after fleeing Egypt (Num. 33:12–13).

Listed as their stop after leaving the Desert of Sin and before arriving at Alush, Dophkah is possibly in the southwestern region of the Sinai Peninsula, but its exact location is unknown.

DOR A port city on the Mediterranean coast, now identified with Khirbet el-Burj, located fourteen miles south of Haifa. Apparently settled around 2000 BC, it functioned as a major port for the Canaanites. The city, also called "Naphoth Dor," was located within the tribal allotment of Manasseh at the time of the Israelite conquest (Josh. 17:11). The Israelites defeated the king of Dor in battle during the conquest (Josh. 11:1–9; 12:23) but could not conquer and occupy the city at that time (Judg. 1:27). By the time of Solomon, Dor was identified as the home of the governor of Solomon's fourth administrative district (1 Kings 4:11), suggesting that David likely conquered the port during his earlier expansion. Dor probably was the primary port of the northern kingdom during the divided monarchy and served as the capital of the later Assyrian province of the same name. It continued as a significant port until the seventh century AD.

DORCAS A benevolent seamstress in Joppa, characterized by her selfless deeds and described as a disciple (Acts 9:36). While Peter was in the nearby town of Lydda, Dorcas, or Tabitha (Aramaic), became ill and died. After burial preparations were performed on the body, two men went and asked Peter to heal Dorcas. He complied, traveled to Joppa, and raised her from the dead. Many people followed Jesus Christ because of this miracle (Acts 9:36–42).

DOT The RSV and REB use "dot" to translate the Greek word *keraia* in Matt. 5:18 (NIV: "the smallest letter"), where Jesus says that not the smallest part of a letter of the law will pass away.

DOTHAN The Dothan Valley, at the southeastern end of the Carmel range, provided a vital connection between major coastal and Transjordanian routes. When Jacob sent Joseph to search for his brothers, in God's providence, he found them at Dothan. They sold him to the caravan of Midianite/Ishmaelite spice traders who "just happened" to be passing by en route to Egypt (Gen. 37:12–36). The international implications of Dothan's location are also evident in 2 Kings 6:8–23. Because Elisha was providing military information to the king of Israel, the king of Aram sent an army to surround Dothan, within the territory of Israel and not far from the capital of Samaria, in order to capture Elisha. They did not succeed, however, and Elisha's fearful servant was allowed to see the hills around the city full of horses and chariots of fire.

DOUBLE-MINDED A description of a doubting or hesitant person in James 1:8; 4:8. The Greek term, *dipsychos*, literally means "double-souled," as if a person had a split personality. James uses this description in reference to spiritually unstable people among his readers who were "like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind" (James 1:6), and he appeals to them to "come near to God . . . and purify your hearts, you double-minded" (James 4:8). This turmoil pictures the kind of spiritual warfare often experienced by believers. This concept is found also in Ps. 119:113, where the psalmist says to God, "I hate double-minded people [*se'apim*], but I love your law." God calls believers to a fight for faith leading to a wholehearted commitment to him. Elijah's challenge remains: "How long will you waver between two opinions? If the LORD is God, follow him; but if Baal is God, follow him" (1 Kings 18:21).

DOUBLE-TONGUED A negative quality that is not to characterize believers, especially church leaders such as deacons, according to the list of qualifications set forth in 1 Tim. 3:8 (Gk. *dilogos*). Today we would describe this as "talking out of both sides of one's mouth" or trying to cater or pander to different people. Some translations (e.g., NIV) avoid this term and substitute the positive quality of being "sincere." There are many admonitions in Scripture about the proper use of the tongue, the dangers of lies and flattery, and the importance of honesty and integrity.

DOUGH Dough is mentioned both literally and figuratively in biblical texts. The Israelites brought along dough without yeast in their flight from Egypt (Exod. 12:34). Jesus compared the growth of the kingdom of God to yeast spreading throughout a lump of dough (Matt. 13:33; Luke 13:20–21). In contrast, Paul used the same word picture to speak of the spread of sin (1 Cor. 5:6; Gal. 5:9). See also Rom. 11:16.

DOVE The rock dove (Heb. *yonah*; Gk. *peristera*) was domesticated throughout the ancient Near East and used for carrying messages long before Roman times. It breeds prolifically, and its homing instinct brings it swiftly back to its dovecote (Isa. 60:8; Hos. 11:11) or the buildings or crevices where it nests (Jer. 48:28). Israel also has three species of turtledove (Heb. *tor*; Gk. *trygōn*), one being a summer migrant (Song 2:12; Jer. 8:7).

In Israel, the dove was considered clean for food and designated for sacrifice, often as a poor person’s substitute for a lamb (Gen. 15:9; Lev. 1:14; 5:7, 11; 12:6, 8; 14:22, 30; 15:14, 29; Num. 6:10; Matt. 21:12; Mark 11:15; Luke 2:24; John 2:14, 16). The dove is first mentioned in Scripture when Noah sends out a dove from the ark (Gen. 8:8–12). In the NT, the dove is an image of purity (Matt. 10:16) and also symbolizes the Holy Spirit (Matt. 3:16; Mark 1:10; Luke 3:22; John 1:32), but in the Song of Songs, where the beloved, and in particular the beloved’s eyes, are likened to doves (1:15; 2:14; 4:1; 5:2, 12; 6:9), it may also connote fertility.

The dove is also, however, mournful (Isa. 38:14; 59:11; Ezek. 7:16; Nah. 2:7), vulnerable (Ps. 74:19), and easily deceived (Hos. 7:11). When frightened, it takes flight to lonely places (Ps. 55:6; Isa. 60:8), which perhaps adds interest to the fact that Jonah’s name literally means “dove.”

DOVE ON DISTANT OAKS This phrase (Heb. *yonat ’elem rekhoqim*), found only in the title of Ps. 56, has been variously understood. Most interpreters consider it the title of a song to which these words should be sung (cf. NIV). Very early interpreters connected this phrase with another part of the title that refers to David being seized by the Philistines. So the LXX translates it as “for the people far removed from the sanctuary.” Lacking a solution, some versions transliterate (KJV, NASB, NAB) or omit (TEV) the phrase.

DOVE’S DUNG During Ben-Hadad’s siege of Samaria, there was a famine in the city, and 2 Kings 6:25 refers to the selling of “a quarter of a cab of seed pods for five shekels.” The word translated as “seed pods” in the NIV, *khareyonim*, literally means “dove’s dung” (cf. KJV). It probably refers to some kind of vegetable food, eaten only in emergencies, that was so named because it resembles dove’s dung. Suggestions include chickpeas, wild onions (NAB, NJB), and locust beans. Alternatively, dove’s dung may have been a poor-quality fuel, but expensive in times of famine, used as a substitute for animal manure when all the animals had died.

DOWNSIZING The reduction of expenditure and consumption. Solomon is presented as the extremity of excess, which contributed to turning his attention away from God, a form of idolatry (1 Kings 11; cf. Exod. 20:3; Matt. 6:24; 1 Tim. 6:6–10). Jesus rebukes those who follow this example, because they lack awareness of others’ needs (Luke 12:16–21; 16:19–31). To those with more he says, “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal” (Matt. 6:19). The commandment reminds the disciple that material possessions fall apart, particularly when unused, and that the means available for satisfying human wants are scarce in comparison to the extent of those wants. People covet (Exod. 20:17), and when they reach a threshold of desperation, many steal, which causes those enslaved to their wealth to live in constant fear of losing it. The solution is to be content with God meeting our basic needs and to share when we have an abundance.

DOWRY The English word “dowry” can refer either to the price that a bridegroom pays to the father of the bride or to a gift that the father grants to the bride. To avoid confusion, the NIV uses expressions such as “bride-price” (Exod. 22:17) and “price for the bride” (1 Sam. 18:25) to refer to the former. The payment of the bride-price was a widespread custom in the ancient Near East.

Apparently, the size of the payments varied according to the social status of the families, the desirability of the bride, and so on. Exodus 22:17 indicates that the price paid for virgin brides was considerably higher than for nonvirgins. There are also indications that the amount was negotiable (Gen. 34:12). Payment for the bride, while normally monetary, could also take the form of services rendered (Gen. 29:18, 27–28). On a few occasions in the OT a heroic deed constituted the bride-price (Josh. 15:16; Judg. 1:12; 1 Sam. 18:25).

There are also cases in the OT that refer to a dowry from a father to his daughter for her wedding. Pharaoh gave his daughter the city of Gezer when she married Solomon (1 Kings 9:16), though this may simply be a wedding gift rather than a formal dowry. Caleb's daughter Aksah complained to him that he married her off without giving her an adequate dowry (Josh. 15:19; Judg. 1:15).

DOXOLOGY A hymn or salutation praising God, often sung or chanted in the opening or closing portions of a Christian worship service. A doxology may also be written and often is found in books or letters written by Christians. Although the term "doxology" does not appear in the original scriptural texts, it subsequently was added as a descriptive header for certain sections of Scripture, including Rom. 11:33–36; Jude 24–25; Rev. 1:4–6.

The words spoken by the heavenly host in announcing Jesus' birth to the shepherds, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests" (Luke 2:14), are known as the Greater Doxology. The words "Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end, Amen," though not found in the Scriptures, are known as the Lesser Doxology.

Similar phrases of exaltation and praise certainly exist in the OT, though they have not been specifically categorized as doxologies. One example is the psalmist's praise "LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!" (Ps. 8:1, 9).

DRACHMA A drachma was originally a weight but later a coin. In Ezra 2 and Neh. 7 (between 450 BC and 350 BC), a drachma (NIV: "daric") is a standard weight of money, often identified with the ¼ troy ounce gold daric coin. In the NT, the drachma is a silver coin (Luke 15:8–9; cf. Josephus, *J.W.* 1.308) that was a typical day's wage for a laborer (Matt. 20:2; NIV: "denarius"). In the reigns of Augustus and Tiberius (27 BC–AD 37), drachma coins weighed 1⁄[illegible] to 1⁄[illegible] troy ounce, close to a silver denarius (Pliny the Elder, *Nat.* 21.109).

DRAGNET A fishing net spread in the water and dragged to shore. The dragnet, or seine, was one of the most effective and popular methods of fishing in the premodern era. The net could be up to one thousand feet long and twenty feet deep in the center, tapering at the ends. A team of up to sixteen men sailed with the dragnet to a desirable location. Half of the crew jumped in the water and pulled one end of the net to shore. The boat sailed out and back toward shore, spreading the net in a U-shaped arrangement. The other half of the crew pulled the other end of the net to shore, dragging the net up on the beach with its catch of different kinds of fish. The team then sorted the fish (Matt. 13:47–51), keeping the "good" fish (those permissible for eating) and discarding the "bad" (those without fins or scales [Lev. 11:9–12]) before repeating the process farther along the shore. At the end of the day the nets were spread for mending and drying (Ezek. 26:5, 14; 47:10).

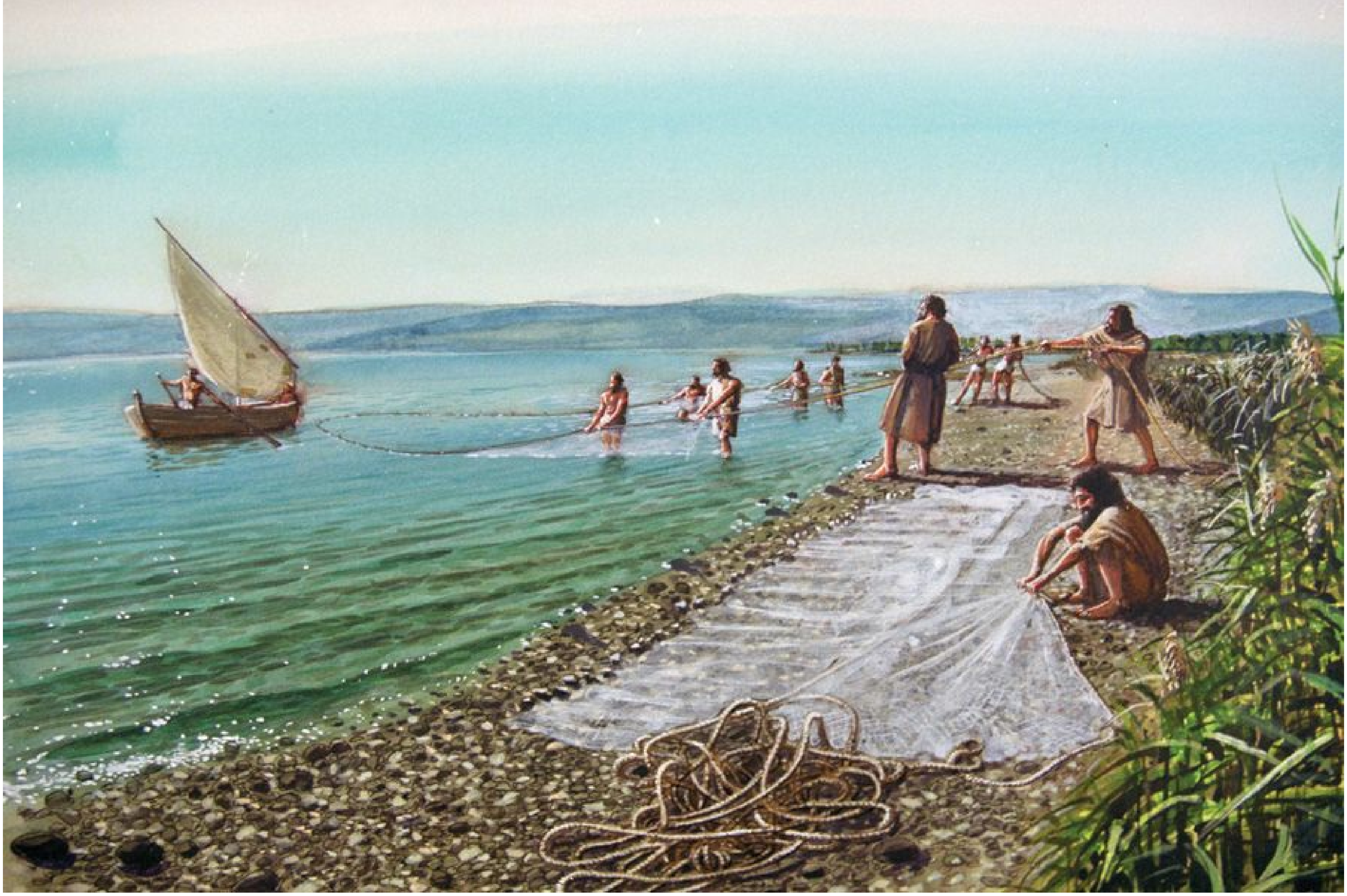


Illustration of a dragnet

DRAGON The KJV uses “dragon” twenty-one times in the OT to translate the Hebrew word *tannin*, *tannim*. In Deut. 32:33 the term is used in parallel with *peten* (“adder” or “cobra”), indicating that it probably refers to a snake of some type. The term is rendered inconsistently by the KJV, so that elsewhere the translation is “whale” (Gen. 1:21; Job 7:12; Ezek. 32:2–3) or “serpent” (Exod. 7:9–10, 12). There is also some confusion in the KJV of *tannim* with the plural of the noun *tan*, which means “jackal” (Job 30:29; Ps. 44:19; Isa. 13:22; 34:13; 35:7; 43:20; Jer. 9:11; 10:22; 14:6; 49:3; 51:37; Mic. 1:8; see also Lam. 4:3; Mal. 1:3).

In many passages the LXX uses the term *drakōn*, which again refers to a serpent. This term is used in the NT only in Revelation, where, as in the OT, the writer probably envisioned not the fire-breathing winged monster familiar to most modern readers but rather something more directly resembling a serpent (note Rev. 12:9, where the “great dragon” is also described as the “ancient serpent” and identified as “the devil, or Satan”). Revelation 12:3 elaborates by describing it as possessing “seven heads and ten horns.” Hence, the dragon of Revelation is linked directly to the serpent in the garden of Eden (Gen. 3), which is ultimately subject to defeat and eternal punishment (Rev. 20:7–10).

DRAGON WELL *See* Jackal Well.

DRAWERS OF WATER *See* Water Carriers.

DREAMS In the ancient world, dreams often were considered to be a means by which God communicated to humans. The Bible has several well-known examples where God speaks in dreams to both Israelites and non-Israelites.

In Gen. 20 Abimelek, king of Gerar, is warned by God in a dream not to take Sarah, Abraham's wife, as his wife. In the dream, Abimelek pleads his clear conscience, and God tells him to return Sarah to Abraham.

God also speaks to non-Israelites in dreams in the Joseph story. First, Joseph is imprisoned with the royal cupbearer and baker (Gen. 40). Each man has a dream about his future and is disturbed that he cannot interpret it. Joseph, declaring that the interpretation of dreams belongs to God, tells the cupbearer that his dream is a sign that he will soon be restored to his place of favor in Pharaoh's court. The baker's dream, although superficially similar, is a sign that he will soon be executed. Both interpretations come true soon afterward.

Two years later, when Pharaoh has a dream that troubles him greatly, Joseph interprets it as a sign of coming famine (Gen. 41). Joseph's God-given ability to interpret dreams and his administrative skill keep Egypt from starving to death, which opens political doors for Joseph and paves the way for his entire family to move to Egypt.

Two other dreams occur in Genesis, both dreamed by Jacob. In Gen. 28:12 he sees the famous "stairway to heaven" at Bethel, where God reaffirms his promise to make his descendants numerous. In Gen. 31:10–13 Jacob claims that his scheme for taking much of Laban's flocks came to him in a dream, but there is no indication of this in the previous narrative (30:25–43). Laban, however, is told by God in a dream "not to say anything to Jacob, either good or bad" (31:24) as he is pursuing him in the hill country of Gilead.

Dreams are also a way of relaying prophetic oracles to Israel, and apparently dreams are similar to visions (Num. 12:6), although the latter occur during waking hours. Prophetic dreams are to be tested, and dreamers who are false or lead people away from God are to be ignored (Jer. 23:25–32; 27:9; 29:8; Zech. 10:2) or even put to death (Deut. 13:1–5). God may also choose to withhold dreams from those who ask. Such is the case with Saul (1 Sam. 28:6). By contrast, God speaks with Solomon in a dream (1 Kings 3:5, 15).

In Dan. 2, similar to the Joseph story, Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, has a dream that none in his court can describe or interpret. God reveals the dream and its meaning to Daniel in a vision: the statue in the dream is made of four different metals, which represent kings, and its gold head is Nebuchadnezzar. Later, Daniel interprets another of the king's dreams, this one about an enormous tree: the tree is Nebuchadnezzar, and only a stump will remain because of his sins and refusal to acknowledge that "Heaven rules" (Dan. 4:26).

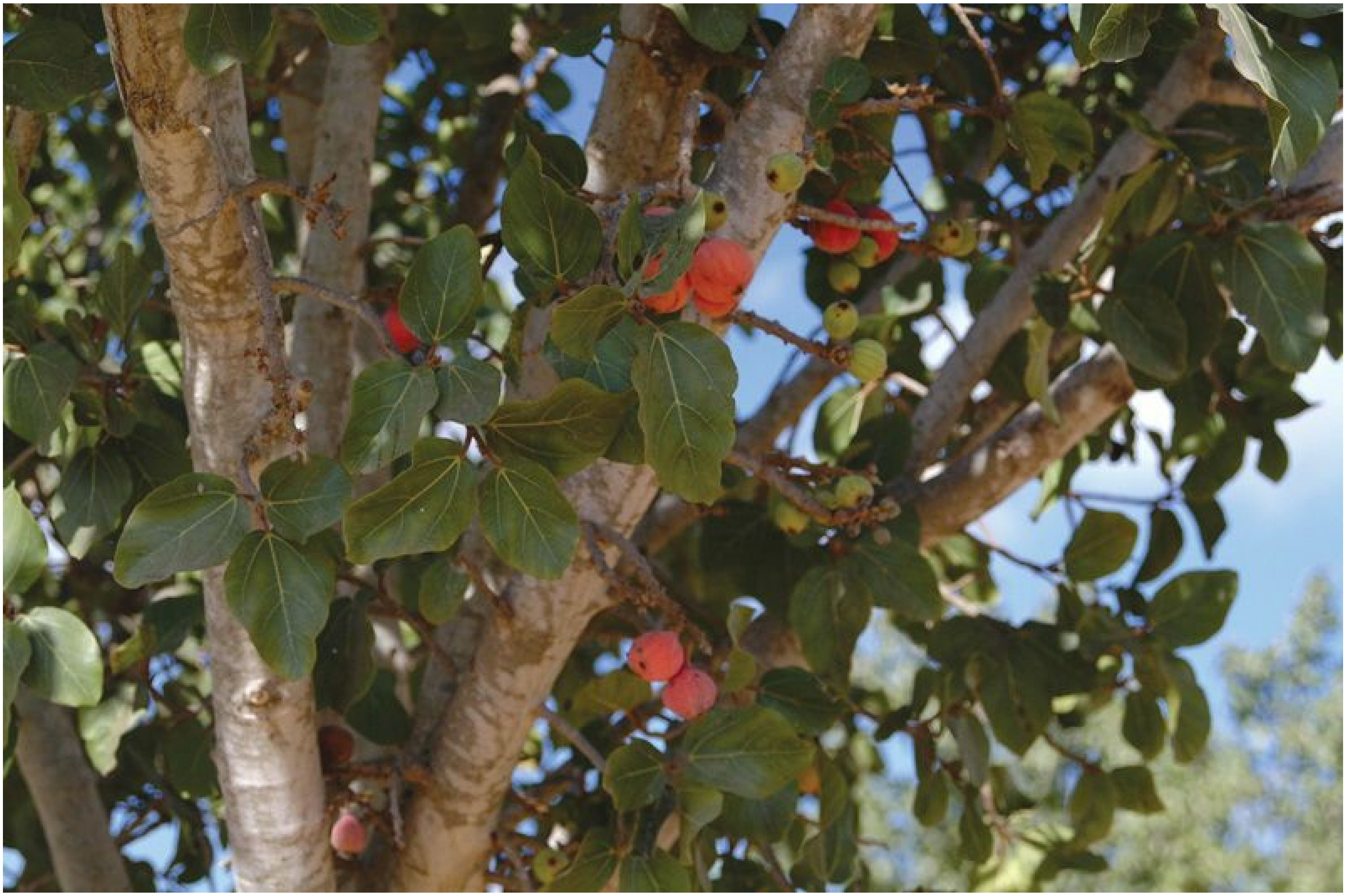
Dreams in the OT can also refer to something immaterial, ephemeral, of no substance (Job 20:8; Ps. 73:20; Eccles. 5:3, 7; Isa. 29:8).

In Jesus' birth narrative in Matthew's Gospel, dreams play an active role. Joseph is told that Mary is to conceive by the Holy Spirit (1:20); the magi are told to avoid Herod after seeing the infant Jesus (2:12); Joseph is told to flee with his family to Egypt (2:12), and later that it is safe to return (2:19) and settle in Nazareth (2:21–23). Also in Matthew, Pilate's wife is warned in a dream not to have anything to do with Jesus (27:19). In Acts 2:17 Peter says that dreams will be a sign of God once again pouring out his Spirit in the last days (citing Joel 2:28).

DREGS The thick, syrupy sediment at the bottom of a wineskin of aged wine (sometimes "lees" in the KJV, RSV). The term is used negatively in reference to judgment of those who will drink fully from God's cup of wrath (Ps. 75:8; Isa. 51:17) or to symbolize laziness or complacency (Jer. 48:11; Zeph. 1:12). Only once is it used positively, to symbolize God's abundant provision for his people (in Isa. 25:6 [NIV: "aged wine"; KJV, RSV: "lees"]).

DRESS *See* Clothing.

DRESSER OF SYCAMORE TREES Amos described his profession as harvester of sycamore (fig) trees and stockbreeder (Amos 7:14). Neither role need suggest a lowly social status. The leaves of the sycamore trees and the fruit not fit for human consumption were used as winter feed for stock, so these are linked professional activities. Every year at the end of summer, Amos's herds may have migrated from the Judean highlands (where Tekoa was located) down to the Jericho Valley, to rented fields containing sycamore trees. At that time of year, the trees would be laden with fruit. Some of the harvested figs would be sold and others stored as winter fodder.



Sycamore tree and fruit

DRIED GRAPES *See* Raisins.

DRINK To ingest a liquid. Drinking and eating, being closely related, commonly occur in the same context. Their primary purpose is to sustain life. The most common drinks are water, wine (or unfermented grape juice), milk, vinegar, and beer, but water is most important for sustaining life (e.g., Gen. 21:19; Exod. 15:22–23; 17:1–3; Num. 20:5). Fellowship is promoted among those who eat and drink together (e.g., Judg. 19:4–7; Job 1:18; Gal. 2:11–12). Food and drink often symbolize the enjoyment of life (1 Kings 18:41; Neh. 8:12; Eccles. 2:24; 8:15). Drinking wine commemorates the blood of the Passover and Jesus' crucifixion, but its abuse is condemned (e.g., Eph. 5:18). On occasion, drinking accompanies the making of a covenant: old (Exod. 24:11) and new (Luke 22:20). Drinking is also used metaphorically to represent partaking of something, such as sexual activity (Prov. 5:15; 9:5) or violence (Isa. 34:5; Rev. 16:6).

DROMEDARY The single-humped Arabian dromedary was the most common type of camel in biblical times, unclean as meat but used for transport and milk. *See also* Camel.

DROPSY An archaic term for the diagnosis, since the time of Hippocrates (c. 460–370 BC), of a disease resulting in an excess of fluids collecting in various parts of the body. Jesus healed a man who had an advanced form of this condition (Luke 14:2). *See also* Diseases and Physical Abnormalities.

DROSS The scum that forms during the process of smelting metals, particularly silver (Prov. 25:4). It often is used figuratively for something that is impure or worthless. The psalmist compares "the wicked of the earth" to dross (Ps. 119:119). God promises through Isaiah that he will purge away the dross of Jerusalem (Isa. 1:25; cf. Ezek. 22:18–19). In Prov. 26:23, some translations render the Hebrew phrase *kesep sigim* as "a glaze" (e.g., ESV, NRSV; NIV: "silver dross"). This translation may be understood in terms of the process of melting the ore, in which the silver, oxygen, and lead are separated, leaving lead monoxide as silver dross. Because of its silvery gloss, this slag was used as a glaze for ceramics.

DRUG Any substance that, after being absorbed by the body, alters its normal function. The most common drug in the Bible is alcohol, particularly wine, which replaces the sugar in grape juice during fermentation. Noah drinks wine, becomes intoxicated, and acts shamefully by exposing his nakedness (Gen. 9:21). The Bible unequivocally condemns drunkenness (e.g., Eph. 5:18) but not the moderate consumption of alcohol (Ps. 104:15; Eccles. 10:19; Isa. 25:6). Physicians used drugs medicinally, apparently without sanction or stigma. In the first century, Dioscorides wrote a treatise on drugs, *De materia medica*, which became a standard of botanical knowledge for well over a millennium. Medicine often was derived from natural herbs and roots (synthetic drugs were not available until further gains in chemistry). The author of Sirach praises the work of physicians and allows the use of medicines because they are part of God's creation (38:1–15). Paul encourages Timothy to drink a little wine for his ailments (1 Tim. 5:23), and he appreciated the services of Luke, whom he calls the "beloved physician" (Col. 4:14 KJV, RSV). But the Bible also condemns sorcery and magic (Gal. 5:20), which often appropriated drugs to manipulate the divine. Sorcerers carried drugs around in bottles (*Herm.* 17:7). The line between healing and manipulation could be blurred, as with the Roman use of an abortion pill (Juvenal, *Sat.* 595–596).

DRUNKENNESS Although the Bible does acknowledge the limited value of alcohol or inebriation as a palliative (Prov. 31:6–7), drunkenness is generally presented as the cause of all sorts of problems in life: woe, sorrow, strife, bruises, red eyes, lust (Prov. 23:29–35), poverty (Prov. 23:21), staggering, vomiting, loss of discernment (Isa. 28:7–8), and public shame (Hab. 2:15; cf. Gen. 9:21). Drunkenness is named as a mark of the disobedient son (Deut. 21:20–21; cf. Luke 15:11–13). It is also a characteristically negative feature in several incidents (e.g., the incest in Lot's family [Gen. 19:33–35]; David's plan to cover up his adultery [2 Sam. 11:13]; assassinations of Amnon, Elah, Ben-Hadad and his allies [2 Sam. 13:28; 1 Kings 16:9; 20:16]; Nabal's feast of wine [1 Sam. 25:36]), although it is mistakenly attributed to Hannah in prayer (1 Sam. 1:13) and the disciples on the Pentecost (Acts 2:13). Drunkenness of civic and religious leaders represents the religious and moral corruption of God's people (Isa. 5:11–12, 22–23; 28:1, 3; 28:7–8; 56:11–12; Amos 2:12; 6:6). It is also mentioned as a characteristic of the wicked servant (Matt. 24:49) and a sign of division among the believers (1 Cor. 11:21).

In the OT, therefore, abstinence from strong drink not only is regarded as a virtue of the leaders of society (Prov. 31:4–5; Eccles. 10:16–17) but also is required of those who should maintain spiritual purity (priests on duty [Lev. 10:9; Ezek. 44:21]; Nazirites during their vows [Num. 6:3–4; cf. Judg. 13:7]; cf. voluntary abstainers [Jer. 35:6; Dan. 1:8]). In the NT sobriety is required of all believers in Christ (Gal. 5:21; Eph. 5:18; especially living in the last days [Luke 21:34; 1 Thess. 5:7]), particularly church leaders (1 Tim. 3:2–3; Titus 1:7–8; 2:2–3).

Drunkenness is also a metaphor widely employed in the Bible (e.g., storm-tossed sailors [Ps. 107:27]; Jeremiah before God [Jer. 23:9]; the spiritual adultery of the kings of the earth [Rev. 17:2]; slaughter [Deut. 32:42; Jer. 46:10; Rev. 17:6]). Notably, drunkenness signifies God's judgment (Jer. 13:13; Ezek. 23:33), and Isaiah frequently compares drunkenness to the lack of discernment and wisdom among the leaders of society (Isa. 19:13–14; 24:20; 29:9–10; 63:6; also Job 12:25). A wine cup also symbolizes God's wrath (Ps. 75:8; Isa. 51:17, 22; Jer. 25:15–28; 51:7; Lam. 4:21; Ezek. 23:31–34; Hab. 2:16; Matt. 20:22–23; 26:39, 42; John 18:11; Rev. 14:10; 16:19).

DRUSILLA Daughter of Agrippa I; great-granddaughter of Herod the Great; younger sister of Agrippa II and Bernice. According to Josephus (*Ant.* 20.137–47), Drusilla was stunningly beautiful, and she was envied by Bernice. Drusilla first wed Azizus, king of Emesa, for political reasons. Soon, however, Felix, the Roman governor of Judea, encountered Drusilla and fell in love with her. He approached her through his friend Simon, persuading her to transgress Jewish law, leave her husband, and marry him.

Acts 24:24 identifies Drusilla specifically as Felix's "Jewish" wife, which some interpret as communicating disapproval. She bore Felix one son, Agrippa, who was killed in AD 79 during the eruption of Vesuvius.

DULCIMER The KJV rendering of the Hebrew word *sumeponeyah*, a musical instrument mentioned in the story of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego and the fiery furnace (Dan. 3:5, 10, 15). Other English Bible versions variously translate the Hebrew word as "bagpipe, pipe, lyre, drum." If the instrument was a dulcimer, it was not the same type as the modern Appalachian dulcimer.

DUMAH **(1)** One of the twelve sons of Ishmael (Gen. 25:14; 1 Chron. 1:30). **(2)** A location in the territory of Judah (Josh. 15:52). **(3)** The mention of "Dumah" in Isa. 21:11 may refer to one of the entities described above or to Edom, the name of which sounds similar in Hebrew (the same verse mentions "Seir," a synonym for "Edom").

DUMBNESS *See* Muteness.

DUNG Human and animal excrement, to be either disposed of because of its uncleanness or appropriated for fertilizer or fueling fires (1 Kings 14:10). Jerusalem had an entrance known as the Dung Gate (Neh. 2:13; 3:13, 14; 12:31). The rabbis required that a person be at least four cubits (about six feet) away from dung (and urine) before reciting the Shema (*m. Ber.* 3:5; *t. Ber.* 2:17–18). They avoided alleyways where chamber pots were emptied (*t. Ber.* 2:19–20). They taught that a person who needs to defecate should not pray (*t. Ber.* 2:19). The Essenes were even more stringent: they would not defecate on a Sabbath day; on other days, they left their camps, dug a hole with a shovel, and then covered the excrement (Josephus, *J.W.* 2.147–49; cf. Deut. 23:12–14). Appropriating this background, Paul compares his past separation from Christ to dung (Phil. 3:8 KJV, NET [NIV: “garbage”]).

DUNGEON *See* Prison, Prisoner.

DUNG GATE A gate of Jerusalem located in the southwest corner, leading into the Hinnom Valley. The gate was restored by Nehemiah (Neh. 3:13). In NT times it was known as the Gate of the Essenes (Josephus, *J.W.* 5.145). The gate was called “Dung Gate” probably because it led to the city dump. God instructed Jeremiah to prophesy the destruction of Jerusalem from the Potsherd Gate (Jer. 19:2), possibly the same gate as the Dung Gate.

DURA Nebuchadnezzar commanded the worship of a golden statue on the “plain of Dura” in the province of Babylon (Dan. 3:1). Of numerous locations named similarly in the vicinity, none has been positively identified with this site. Further, *dura’*, an Aramaic term, probably means “fortification” and may refer to part of Babylon or its walls.

DUST The primary term in Hebrew is *’apar* (“loose earth, dust”), which is related to the Hebrew terms for cultivatable “soil” (*’adamah* [Gen. 3:19]) and “earth” (*’erets* [Gen. 13:16]). These terms are semantically close enough to be used interchangeably (cf. 1 Sam. 4:12; 2 Sam. 1:2 with Josh. 7:6; Ezek. 27:30).

In the OT, the imagery of dust is used to illustrate notions of quantity and abundance (Num. 23:10; 2 Chron. 1:9; Job 27:16; Ps. 78:27; Isa. 40:12; Zech. 9:3). This stock of imagery is applied to annihilation (2 Sam. 22:43), worthlessness (Zeph. 1:17), humiliation (Isa. 25:12), and mourning (Isa. 2:10; Rev. 18:19). In the OT, *’apar* alone is used figuratively over sixty times to refer to judgment. Thus, “to lick the dust” (Ps. 72:9) is a sign of subjugation. The opposite is “to shake off the dust,” a sign of repudiation (Isa. 52:2; Matt. 10:14; Mark 6:11; Luke 9:5; 10:11; Acts 13:51). It is this figurative use of “dust” that facilitates the theological use of *’apar*. Yahweh acts to humiliate, debase, destroy, and “cast down” into the dust (Isa. 25:12); and he also restores, “lifting up” to remove the shame (1 Kings 16:2; Ps. 113:7).

The significance of *’apar* is powerfully portrayed in the creation of humans. Whereas animals are made from the “earth,” humankind emerges from more refined material, the dust (*’apar* [Gen. 2:7]). In an etymological pun, the “human” (*’adam*) rises from the “humus” (*’adamah*; cf. Ps. 103:14; Job 4:19). Death comes when God withdraws the human’s “breath of life” (cf. Gen. 2:7), causing the groundling to collapse back to the ground like “crushed dust” (cf. Pss. 90:3; 104:29; 146:4). Human life is fragile, dependent, and transitory. This is the teacher’s argument and also the reason that he stresses death as the inevitable end of both human and animal life (Eccles. 3:18–20). However, Daniel knows that "multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake" (Dan. 12:2).

DWARF A person of unusually short stature. OT Levitical law considers dwarfs to be defective persons and thus prohibits them from drawing near the temple curtain or altar. Dwarfs are also prohibited from making food offerings to God. Dwarfs are, however, permitted to eat of the holy food (Lev. 21:20–22). Attention should be drawn to the fact, though, that some believe this Hebrew word refers to a "withered" part of the body, not a dwarf.

DWELLING Dwelling can refer to a place ("building, residence" [e.g., Exod. 15:17; Acts 7:46]) or an action ("to reside" [e.g., 1 Sam. 2:29]). While dwelling characterizes people's residence (Gen. 27:39; Num. 24:21; Prov. 24:15; Isa. 32:18; Hab. 1:6; Zeph. 3:6–7), God's sanctuary, where the ark of the covenant resides (Exod. 25–26; Ps. 132:8), is described as his dwelling among his people (Exod. 15:13, 17; Lev. 15:31; 26:11; 1 Sam. 2:29, 32; 1 Chron. 9:19; Zech. 2:13). Both the tabernacle (2 Sam. 7:6; 15:25; 1 Chron. 16:1) and the temple (2 Chron. 31:2; 36:15; Pss. 84:1; 132:5; Ezek. 3:12; Mic. 1:2–3) are so described. A sanctuary for the needy and oppressed (Pss. 27:5; 31:20; 68:5), it is also a post from which God watches the earth (Pss. 33:14; 132:6–9). God himself can also be described as a "dwelling" in which people seek refuge (Pss. 90:1; 91:9; Ezek. 37:27).

Deuteronomy, perhaps in an effort to eliminate any misconception of God's omnipresence or in reaction to the destruction of the first temple, describes the sanctuary as the "dwelling for his Name" (Deut. 12:11; 14:23; 16:2, 6, 11; 26:2; cf. 1 Kings 8:29; Isa. 18:2–7; Jer. 7:12), while Kings and Chronicles (1 Kings 8:30, 39, 43, 49; cf. 1 Chron. 17:5; 2 Chron. 6:21, 30, 33, 39; 30:27) maintain that God's dwelling is in heaven and not on earth. As Solomon confesses, not even the heavens can contain God, let alone a temple (1 Kings 8:27; cf. Ps.74:7; Jer. 25:30). Some prophets and writings refer to Jerusalem, the location of the now destroyed temple, as the "dwelling of God" (e.g., Ezra 7:15; Jer. 31:23; Lam. 2:6), while others prefer the "dwelling place of God's Name" (e.g., Neh. 1:9; Isa. 18:7).

Job's friend Bildad identifies the dwelling of an evil person as one characterized by calamities (Job 18:5–21), while Job, who wants to make his claim of innocence to God, laments his inability to locate God's dwelling (23:3).

Jesus is described in John's Gospel as the Word (*logos*) of God that dwelled or "tabernacled" (*skēnoō*) among humans (John 1:14). Paul describes believers as groaning in waiting to be clothed with their "heavenly dwelling," by which they attain immortality (2 Cor. 5:2–4), and says that they are being built into a dwelling of God's Spirit (Eph. 2:22). This latter sentiment is echoed in Revelation, which says that the new city of God will need no physical temple because God and the Lamb themselves are the temple, dwelling among the people (21:3, 22; cf. 1 Cor. 3:16–17).

DYEING The craft of applying dyes in order to permanently color textiles. The Bible often speaks of dyed materials, though not of the dyeing process itself. While many dye colors were obtained from plants, animals, and minerals, the Bible usually refers to the colors blue, scarlet, and purple. These three colors figured prominently in the early Israelite tabernacle and priestly garb (Exod. 25–28; 35–39). They were also used in King Solomon's temple (2 Chron. 2:7, 14) and for royalty (2 Sam. 1:24; Esther 8:15).

The ancient source of blue, according to the Talmud, is a mysterious sea creature, the *hilazon*. The *hilazon*'s exact identity is unknown, though it is believed by some Jews to be the only true source for dyeing parts of their prayer shawls (Num. 15:37–40).

Scarlet comes from the kermes worm, which can be found in various oak trees in Israel. Once dried, the female’s eggs or the ensuing larvae are crushed, producing a few drops of the rich red color.

Purple was the most prized and expensive of the three colors because of the effort involved in production and the dye’s quality (cf. Lam. 4:5; Dan. 5:7; Luke 16:19; Rev. 18:12). Also known as “Tyrian purple” or “imperial purple,” the dye came from the smelly flesh of the murex and purpura mollusks. Each specimen produced only a scarce amount of the precious purple substance. And while cheaper imitations eventually were produced, none could rival the quality or durability of the dye that was literally worth its weight in gold.

DYSENTERY A bacterial infection of the intestines transmitted through contaminated food or drink, resulting in severe diarrhea, with the presence of blood and mucus in the excrement. The chronic form of this disease often is attended by high fever. Luke speaks of it as “fever and dysentery” (Acts 28:8). Internal use of frankincense was recommended for dysentery. The chronic bowel disease that afflicted King Jehoram was likely dysentery (2 Chron. 21:15, 18–19). While the causes of dysentery were natural, Paul miraculously cured a person of dysentery on the island of Malta: “His father was sick in bed, suffering from fever and dysentery. Paul went in to see him and, after prayer, placed his hands on him and healed him” (Acts 28:8).

E

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E *See* Documentary Hypothesis.

EAGLE The word “eagle” may represent more than one species of eagle and vulture, particularly the griffon vulture. A bird of prey, the eagle is classed among the unclean birds in the OT (Lev. 11:13). The eagle was considered one of the marvels of the world (Prov. 30:19), proverbial for its speed and power (Deut. 28:49; 2 Sam. 1:23; Ezek. 17:3), its inaccessibility among the high rocks (Job 39:27; Jer. 49:16), and its tutelage and protection of its young (Deut. 32:11). The eagle serves to illustrate the renewed strength of those whose hope is in God (Ps. 103:5; Isa. 40:31).

ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΟΥ
ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ

Coin showing Zeus holding an eagle (c. 325 BC)

In the ancient world, the eagle was a symbol of transcendence over the earthly realm. In Egyptian and Mesopotamian iconography it is closely associated with royalty, serving to demonstrate that the king is invited to participate in a dominion normally beyond the reach of human capacity. There is a close association with warfare and with divine protection and guarantee of success.

In Exod. 19:4 God brings his royal-priestly people to himself at Mount Sinai “on eagles’ wings,” while in Deut. 32:10–11 the eagle illustrates the divine protection of Israel. Because of its proverbial attributes and associations, the eagle is included in a number of visionary images (Ezek. 1:10; Dan. 7:4; Rev. 4:7; 8:13).

EAR An organ for hearing, and a symbol of understanding and obedience. Common life in ancient society relied on the spoken word as much as, if not more than, the written word. For this reason, the ear represents more than just a body part. The ear symbolizes understanding (Isa. 64:4). Twice the book of Job compares the ear's discernment of words to the tongue's tasting of food (Job 12:11; 34:3). The ear also symbolizes the will to obey (Deut. 29:4) or disobey (Prov. 28:9). Because of the ear's association with obedience, the application of blood or oil to the right ear was an act of consecration in Israel's worship (Exod. 29:20; Lev. 14:14, 17). Ears are also ascribed to God in a figurative way (Pss. 18:6; 94:9). To the obedient, God listens compassionately (2 Chron. 7:15); and to the disobedient, God acts as if deaf (Deut. 1:45). At times, the news of calamity is meant to make the ears of Israel tingle (1 Sam. 3:11; 2 Kings 21:12; Jer. 19:3). Elsewhere, the irony of idol worship is illustrated by idols that have ears but cannot hear (Pss. 115:6; 135:17). Jesus repeatedly calls out to those who have ears to hear (Matt. 11:15; Mark 4:9; Luke 8:8). This appeal is also repeated at the end of each message to the seven churches of Asia (Rev. 1:18–3:22). The apostle Paul warns Timothy about those who have "itching" ears, those who find teachers to support their own false notions (2 Tim. 4:3–4).

EARLY RAIN *See* Rain.

EARNEST *See* Deposit; Pledge.

EARRINGS *See* Jewels, Jewelry.

EARS OF GRAIN *See* Heads of Grain.

EARTH, LAND The Hebrew word *'erets* occurs 2,505 times in the OT and is most frequently translated "country" or "land." "Earth" renders the Greek word *gē* in the NT. Not surprisingly, *'erets* appears 311 times in Genesis alone, the book that initiates Israel's landed covenant (Gen. 15:18). The primary uses of *'erets* are cosmological (e.g., the earth) and geographical (e.g., the land of Israel). Other uses of *'erets* include physical (e.g., the ground on which one stands) and political (e.g., governed countries) designations. Less frequently, "earth" translates the Hebrew word *'adamah* ("country, ground, land, soil").

HEAVEN AND EARTH

Israel shared the cosmology of its ancient Near Eastern neighbors. This worldview understood the earth as a "disk" upon the primeval waters (Job 38:13; Isa. 40:22), with the earth having four rims or "corners" (Ps. 135:7; Isa. 11:12). These rims were sealed at the horizon to prevent the influx of cosmic waters. God speaks to Job about the dawn grasping the edges of the earth and shaking the evil people out of it (Job 38:12–13). Similarly, the Akkadian text Hymn to the Sun-God states, "You [Shamash] are holding the ends of the earth suspended from the midst of heaven" (I:22). The earth's boundaries were set against chaos (Ps. 104:7–9; Isa. 40:12). In this way, the Creator and the Savior cannot be separated because, taken together, God works against chaos in the mission of redemption (Ps. 74:12–17; Isa. 51:9–11). The phrase "heavens and earth" is a merism (two extremes representing the whole) for the entire universe (Gen. 1:1; Ps. 102:25). Over the earth arched a firm "vault" (Gen. 1:6). Heaven's vault rested on the earth's "pillars," the mountains (Deut. 32:22; 1 Sam. 2:8). Below the heavens is the sea, part of the earth's flat surface.

There was no term for “world” in the OT. The perception of world was basically bipartite (heaven and earth), though some tripartite expressions also occur (e.g., heaven, earth, sea [Exod. 20:11; Rev. 5:3, 13]). Though rare, some uses of *’erets* may refer to the “underworld” or Sheol (Exod. 15:12; Jer. 17:13; Jon. 2:6). The earth can be regarded as the realm of the dead (Matt. 12:40; Eph. 4:9). However, the OT is less concerned with the organic structure of the earth than with what fills the earth: inhabitants (Ps. 33:14; Isa. 24:1), people groups (Gen. 18:18; Deut. 28:10), and kingdoms (Deut. 28:25; 2 Kings 19:15). The term *’erets* can be used symbolically to indicate its inhabitants (Gen. 6:11). However, unlike its neighbors, Israel acknowledged no divine “Mother Earth,” given the cultural associations with female consorts.

THE THEOLOGY OF LAND

In biblical faith, the concept of land combines geography with theology. The modern person values land more as a place to build than for its productive capacities. But from the outset, human beings and the “earth” (*’erets*) functioned in a symbiotic relationship with the Creator (Gen. 1:28). God even gave the land agency to “bring forth living creatures” (Gen. 1:24). The “ground” (*’adamah*) also provided the raw substance to make the human being (*’adam* [Gen. 2:7]). In turn, the human being was charged with developing and protecting the land (Gen. 2:5, 15). Showing divine care, the Noahic covenant was “between [God] and the earth” (Gen. 9:13). Thus, land was no mere onlooker; human rebellion had cosmic effects (Gen. 6:7, 17). The land could be cursed and suffer (Gen. 3:17; cf. 4:11).

Israel’s promised land was built on the sanctuary prototype of Eden (Gen. 13:10; Deut. 6:3; 31:20); both were defined by divine blessing, fertility, legal instruction, secure boundaries, and were orienting points for the world. Canaan was Israel’s new paradise, “flowing with milk and honey” (Exod. 3:8; Num. 13:27). Conversely, the lack of fertile land was tantamount to insecurity and judgment. As Eden illustrated for Israel, any rupture of relationship with God brought alienation between humans, God, and the land; this could ultimately bring exile, as an ethically nauseated land “vomits” people out (Lev. 18:25, 28; 20:22; see also Deut. 4; 30).

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Babylonian map of the world, depicting the inhabited world as disk shaped and surrounded by an ancient ocean

For Israel, land involved both God’s covenant promise (Gen. 15:18–21; 35:9–12) and the nation’s faithful obedience (Gen. 17:1; Exod. 19:5; 1 Kings 2:1–4). Conditionality and unconditionality coexisted in Israel’s relationship of “sonship” with Yahweh (Exod. 4:22; Hos. 11:1). Yahweh was the earth’s Lord (Ps. 97:5), Judge (Gen. 18:25), and King (Ps. 47:2, 7). Both owner and giver, he was the supreme landlord, who gifted the land to Israel (Exod. 19:5; Lev. 25:23; Josh. 22:19; Ps. 24:1).

The land was God’s “inheritance” to give (1 Sam. 26:19; 2 Sam. 14:16; Ps. 79:1; Jer. 2:7). The Levites, however, did not receive an allotment of land as did the other tribes, since God was their “portion” (Num. 18:20; Ps. 73:26). Israel’s obedience was necessary both to enter and to occupy the land (Deut. 8:1–3; 11:8–9; 21:1; 27:1–3). Ironically, the earth swallowed rebellious Israelites when they accused Moses of bringing them “up out of a land flowing with milk and honey” (Num. 16:13). As the conquest shows, however, no tribe was completely obedient, taking its full “inheritance” (Josh. 13:1).

Land possession had serious ethical and religious ramifications (Deut. 26:1–11). Israel was not chosen to receive a special land; rather, land was the medium of Israel’s relationship with God. Land functioned as a spiritual barometer (Ps. 78:56–64; Lam. 1:3–5). The heavens and earth stood as covenant witnesses (Deut. 4:26). Blood, in particular, could physically pollute the land (Num. 35:30–34). National sin could culminate in expulsion (Lev. 26:32–39), and eventually the land was lost (Jer. 25:1–11). For this reason, Israel’s exiles prompted a profound theological crisis.

INHERITANCE

The notion of inheritance connected Israel’s religious worship with practical stewardship. Land was not owned; it was passed down through patrimonial succession. God entrusted each family with an inheritance that was to be safeguarded (Lev. 25:23–28; Mic. 2:1–2). This highlights the serious crime when Naboth’s vineyard was forcibly stolen (1 Kings 21). It was Israel’s filial sonship with Yahweh and Israel’s land tenure that formed Yahweh’s solidarity with the nation. The law helped limit Israel’s attachment to mere real estate: Yahweh was to be Israel’s preoccupation (see Jer. 3:6–25). When the nation was finally exiled, the message of the new covenant transcended geographical boundaries (Jer. 32:36–44; Ezek. 36–37; cf. Lev. 26:40–45; Deut. 30:1–10). In postexilic Israel, sanctuary was prioritized (Hag. 1:9–14).

It was Israel’s redefinition of land through the exile that prepared the way for the incorporation of the Gentiles (Ezek. 47:22–23), an integration already anticipated (Isa. 56:3–7). The prophets saw a time when the nations would share in the inheritance of God previously guarded by Israel (Isa. 60; Zech. 2:11; cf. Gen. 12:3). Viewed as a political territory, land receives no substantial theological treatment in the NT; rather, inheritance surpasses covenant metaphor. Using the language of sonship and inheritance, Paul develops this new Gentile mission in Galatians (cf. Col. 1:13–14). The OT land motif fully flowers in the NT teaching of adoption (cf. 1 Pet. 1:3–5). Both curse and covenant are resolved eschatologically (Rom. 8:19–22). Inheritance is now found in Christ (Eph. 2:11–22; 1 Pet. 1:4). In the economy of the new covenant, land tenure has matured in fellowship (*koinōnia*). *Koinōnia* recalibrates the ethical significance of OT land themes, reapplying them practically through inclusion, lifestyle, economic responsibility, and social equity.

Beyond cosmological realms, heaven and earth are also theological horizons still under God’s ownership. What began as the creation mandate to fill and subdue the earth (Gen. 1:28) culminates in the new creation with Christ (Rom. 8:4–25). Under the power of Satan, the earth “lags behind” heaven. Christ’s mission brings what is qualitatively of heaven onto the earthly stage, often using signs of the budding rule of God (Matt. 6:10; Mark 2:10–11; John 3:31–36; Eph. 4:9–13; Heb. 12:25). As Israel was to stand out in a hostile world (Deut. 4:5–8), now those of Abrahamic faith stand out through Christian love (John 13:34–35; Rom. 4:9–16). According to Heb. 4:1–11, Israel’s initial rest in the land (see Exod. 33:14; Deut. 12:9) culminates in the believers’ rest in Christ (Heb. 4:3, 5). The former inheritance of space gives way to the inheritance of Christ’s presence. The OT theme of land is ultimately fulfilled in Jesus’ exhortation to “abide in me” (John 15).

EARTHQUAKE In Palestine there have been about seventeen recorded major earthquakes in the past two millennia. One of the major sources of these earthquakes is believed to originate from the Jordan Rift Valley. In antiquity earthquakes were viewed as fearful events because the mountains, which represented everlasting durability, were disturbed. The confession of faith is pronounced in association with such phenomena ("We will not fear, though the earth give way" [Ps. 46:2]). An earthquake must have made a great impact in Amos's day ("two years before the earthquake" [Amos 1:1; cf. Zech. 14:5]).

An earthquake has many symbolic meanings. First, the power of God and his divine presence are manifested through it (Job 9:6; Ps. 68:8; Hag. 2:6). It accompanied theophanic revelation (Exod. 19:18; Isa. 6:4; 1 Kings 19:11–12) when the glory of the Lord appeared (Ezek. 3:12). His divine presence was especially felt when earthquakes occurred during the time of the crucifixion and the resurrection of Jesus Christ (Matt. 27:54; 28:2). It led the centurion to confess of Christ, "Surely he was the Son of God!" (Matt. 27:54). God's salvation power is represented when an earthquake comes at the appropriate moment, such as when it freed Paul and Silas from prison (Acts 16:26).

Second, it is used in the context of God's judgment (Isa. 13:13; Amos 9:1; Nah. 1:5). It becomes the symbol of God's anger and wrath (Ps. 18:7). God brought earthquakes upon the people to destroy evil in the world and to punish those who had sinned against him (Num. 16:31–33; Isa. 29:6; Ezek. 38:19). Earthquake activity possibly explains the background to the story of Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. 19:24).

Third, earthquakes are said to precede the end of time (Matt. 24:7; Mark 13:8; Luke 21:11). In the apocalyptic book of Revelation, earthquakes are regular occurrences (Rev. 6:12; 11:13, 19; 16:18).

EAST *See* Directions.

EAST COUNTRY The Israelites associated the east with the rising sun (the same Hebrew word, *mizrakh*, describes both), the desert (Deut. 1:1; Hos. 13:15), scorching winds (Isa. 27:8; Ezek. 17:10; Hos. 13:15; Jon. 4:8), wisdom (1 Kings 4:30; Job 1:3; cf. Matt. 2:1), and, along with the west country, the whole world (Zech. 8:7). The east country is a broad expanse stretching from the middle Euphrates to North Arabia (Gen. 29:1; Num. 23:7; Judg. 6:3, 33; 7:15). Abraham sent the sons of his concubines there (Gen. 25:6).

EASTER The Christian celebration commemorating the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. "Easter" only appears once in the Bible, in the KJV translation of the Greek word *pascha* in Acts 12:4. This Greek word appears twenty-nine times in the NT and always refers to the Jewish Passover, although in English and other modern languages the term "Pasch" or "Pascha" has carried over to refer to the Christian festival.

Easter finds its roots in the Jewish Passover because Christ's passion occurred at this time and because Jesus is closely associated with the Passover lamb (John 1:29; 1 Cor. 5:7). Not much is known about Easter in the first century other than what the NT says of the Passover/Pascha festival.

In the second century a problem arose over the date of the Pascha festival. The Quartodeciman Controversy involved those who wanted to celebrate Pascha on the fourteenth of Nisan, according to the Jewish calendar (the word *quartodeciman* means "fourteenth"), against those who began celebrating Pascha the Sunday following Passover. The controversy continued with varying intensity, and even today the Eastern Orthodox observe Pascha in agreement with the Julian calendar, while Roman Catholics and Protestants calculate the date for Easter based on the Gregorian calendar.

The name “Easter” is not found until AD 725, in a work by the English monk the Venerable Bede. In *De temporum ratione* (“On the Reckoning of Time”), he recounts that the word “Easter” comes from the Old English name for April, “Eosturmonath,” which in turn is named after the Anglo-Saxon goddess Eostre.

EASTERN SEA Some modern translations refer to the Dead Sea as the “eastern sea,” in contexts where it marks the eastern border of Israelite territory (Ezek. 47:18; Joel 2:20; Zech. 14:8 ESV, NRSV, NASB, MSG).

EAST GATE **(1)** One of the outer-court temple gates at the main entrance to the temple (1 Chron. 26:14; Ezek. 40:5–16; 42:15). Gatekeepers to the East Gate were responsible for the freewill offering (2 Chron. 31:14). In a prophetic vision Ezekiel sees the glory of the Lord depart from the East Gate (Ezek. 10:19). In later visions Ezekiel sees the glory of the Lord returning (43:1–2) and a river flowing out of the East Gate (47:1). According to Ezek. 44:1–3, since God entered the temple through the East Gate, only the prince was to do likewise. **(2)** One of the gates opening to the inner court of the temple. It may be opened on the Sabbath and New Moon (Ezek. 46:1–8). **(3)** One of the entrances through the wall into Jerusalem (Neh. 3:29).

EAST WIND *See* Wind.

EATING *See* Cooking and Heating; Food.

EBAL **(1)** A grandson of Seir the Horite, an early inhabitant of the land of Seir, which Esau conquered (Gen. 36:20–23; 1 Chron. 1:38–40). **(2)** A mountain in north-central Israel overshadowing the city of Shechem on the north. Mount Ebal and its counterpart Mount Gerizim on the south form a natural amphitheater, eminently suitable for the covenantal ceremony commanded by Moses (Deut. 11:29; 27:1–13) and carried out by Joshua and the Israelites (Josh. 8:30–35). Half the tribes stood before Gerizim and half before Ebal, reciting the covenantal blessings and curses, respectively. The Israelites also set up large plaster-coated stones inscribed with the law of Moses. They built a sacrificial altar on Ebal, perhaps the same as the structure discovered there in 1980 dating from the thirteenth to twelfth centuries BC. Its floor was covered with ash and charred animal bones, but its identification and purpose are disputed. *See also* Gerizim.

Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim, near Shechem

EBED **(1)** The father of Gaal, who was a leader of the people of Shechem (Judg. 9:26, 28, 30, 31, 35). **(2)** A descendant of Adin and son of Jonathan (Ezra 8:6). He is listed as one of the family heads who returned from exile under Ezra's leadership.

EBED-MELECH *See* Ebed-Melek.

EBED-MELEK A Cushite official, probably a military officer, in Jerusalem during the Babylonian siege (587–586 BC). The prophet Jeremiah is arrested and placed into a dungeon/pit with King Zedekiah's permission (Jer. 38:1–13). Ebed-Melek confronts the king and obtains permission to remove Jeremiah from this pit, probably saving his life. God commends Ebed-Melek, declaring that Ebed-Melek will be delivered because he trusted in God (Jer. 39:15–18).

EBENEZER Ebenezer usually is associated with a symbol of God's help in the past and an encouragement for continued trust. This is based on 1 Sam. 7:12: "Samuel took a stone and set it up between Mizpah and Shen. He named it Ebenezer [lit., "stone of help"], saying, 'Thus far the LORD has helped us.'" Ebenezer is also an unknown location in western Palestine where Israel had been defeated and subsequently lost the ark of the covenant to the Philistines (1 Sam. 4–5).

EBER **(1)** A descendant of Shem, son of Shelah, father of Peleg, and ancestor to Jesus (Gen. 10:21–31; 11:14–17; 1 Chron. 1:18–25; Luke 3:35). As hinted in Gen. 10:21, Eber seems to be the source for the name "Hebrew" for that particular line of Semitic people (a name similarly derived from

“Shem”). **(2)** A descendant of Jacob in the tribe of Gad (1 Chron. 5:13). **(3)** A son of Elpaal in the tribe of Benjamin (1 Chron. 8:12). **(4)** A son of Shashak in the tribe of Benjamin (1 Chron. 8:22–25). **(5)** The head of the postexilic priestly family of Amok (Neh. 12:20).

EBEZ One of sixteen towns allotted to Issachar in Josh. 19:20.

EBIASAPH A descendant of Korah, in the line of Kohath, one of Levi’s three sons (see Exod. 6:16–21). The name is mentioned in 1 Chron. 6:23, 37; 9:19, but it is not clear whether all three refer to the same person (in 1 Chron. 6:23, Ebiasaph is a descendant of Korah but the son of Elkanah). According to 1 Chron. 6:37, he is among the temple musicians. In 1 Chron. 9:19 he is mentioned in the Korahite lineage of the temple gatekeepers.

EBLA Ebla (modern Tell Mardikh, in northern Syria) was a major urban center and royal city-state of the Early Bronze Age (c. 2400–2300 BC). After a violent destruction and several centuries of decline, the site was once again prominent for several centuries in the Middle Bronze Age II (c. 1800–1600 BC), after which it was finally destroyed by the Hittites. The history of the kingdom of Ebla does not overlap at any point with the history of the biblical states of Israel and Judah, nor is Ebla mentioned in the Bible. Nevertheless, because the biblical stories of Israel’s patriarchal ancestors are set ostensibly in the vicinity of Ebla and around the time of its flourishing, the cultural and textual remains of Ebla have sometimes attracted the attention of biblical scholars, though seldom without controversy.

In 1964 a team of Italian archaeologists began excavations at the site of Ebla. The principal significance of the site is that since 1975 it has yielded tens of thousands of clay tablets, written in the Eblaite language in a cuneiform script and attesting richly the life, culture, and history of the Eblaite kingdom. Most of the texts are administrative records of the government.

Preserved archaeological remains of the palace at ancient Ebla (2400–2300 BC)

Eblaite is written in a cuneiform (wedge-shaped) script that is heavily indebted to the Sumerian writing system. Unlike Sumerian, however, Eblaite is a Semitic language. Consistent with its geographical placement in northwestern Syrian, the language bears similarities to two of the major families of Semitic languages, the East Semitic (including Akkadian and Babylonian) and West Semitic (including Aramaic, Arabic, and Canaanite). The exact classification of Eblaite has been debated. Much of the evidence is onomastic (personal names), and there is a relative paucity of literary texts and connected prose that would allow for a more definitive study and classification of the language. It is now apparent that the use of Eblaite was not restricted to the city; it was also used more broadly in the region.

Soon after the discovery and decipherment of texts at Ebla, scholars identified in the corpus a number of personal geographical names that appeared to be equivalent to names known from the Bible or cuneiform texts. More recently, the consensus among scholars is to regard with skepticism any direct parallels between the Ebla texts and the Bible. At the same time, many early conjectures connecting the language of Ebla to the Canaanite language family (including biblical Hebrew) have since been disproved.

EBRON *See* Abdon.

EBRONAH *See* Abronah.

ECBATANA Also known as Achmetha (modern Hamadan), located about 160 miles southwest of modern Tehran, Iran. Ecbatana was known to Greek and Persian sources in antiquity and was the summer residence of the Persian kings. According to ancient Greek authors, the city was founded by the Medes. The single reference to Ecbatana in the OT comes in Ezra 6:2, where a document thought to be in Babylon is later found to have been deposited in Ecbatana. Several stories in the Apocrypha are set in Ecbatana (Tob. 3:7; Jdt. 1:14; 2 Macc. 9:3).

ECCLESIASTES, BOOK OF

TITLE

The English title "Ecclesiastes" comes to us from the LXX by way of the Vulgate. The Greek title is from a word that means "assembly" or "gathering" (the common NT word for "church" is *ekklēsia*). This may reflect an understanding of the Hebrew title for the book, "Qoheleth," since the Hebrew root *qhl*, from which "Qoheleth" is derived, can mean "to assemble." "Qoheleth" is the Hebrew name not only of the book but also of the main character, which, in keeping with the notion of "assembly," has commonly been translated "Preacher" or "Teacher." It is highly questionable whether this reflects the Hebrew meaning, however, and it is best to treat "Qoheleth" as a nickname.

AUTHORSHIP AND DATE

Throughout much of the history of Jewish and Christian interpretation, "Qoheleth" was thought to be a nickname for Solomon himself, and so Solomon was assumed to be the author. The so-called pessimism of the book (to which we will return below) is thought to represent Solomon's rather dismal, perhaps penitent, view of things toward the end of his life. A connection between Solomon and Qoheleth is forged on the basis of 1 Kings 8, which refers to Solomon "gathering" (Heb. *qhl*) the people together for the dedication of the temple. Furthermore, the book begins with "the words of Qoheleth [NIV: "the Teacher"], son of David, king in Jerusalem."

Thus, there seems to be good reason to conclude that Ecclesiastes was written by Solomon, perhaps somewhere toward the end of his life (c. 930 BC). There are, however, several important factors that make this identification difficult to maintain.

For one thing, there is evidence within the book itself. For example, the traditional reference to Solomon specifically would be quite odd, given what we see in 1:16: "Look, I have increased in wisdom more than anyone who has ruled over Jerusalem before me." Only David preceded Solomon ruling in Jerusalem, yet this statement gives the impression that there was a long line of kings whose wisdom was exceeded by this later "Qoheleth."

One should also keep in mind that nowhere does the book mention Solomon as the author. It is widely accepted today among scholars of various persuasions that "Qoheleth" is not a secretive name for Solomon, but rather an attempt by an anonymous author to signal Solomon while also making it clear that he himself is not claiming to be Solomon. This is not a tactic of deception but rather a literary device used by an author to make a sustained theological point, one that does not come to a conclusion until the end of the book.

Two other important factors point away from Solomonic authorship and toward anonymous authorship at a considerably later date. First, the Solomonic persona is not sustained throughout the book. The further one reads in the book, the less kingly the author sounds. The persona is sustained well in chapters 1–3. But beginning with chapter 4 and in several other places afterward, there seems to be a gap between the author and kingship (e.g., 4:1–3). In fact, the author even seems to harbor a touch of animosity for the institution of kingship (5:8–9; 10:20). Second is the factor of language. Hebrew scholars have long noted that the Hebrew language, like all languages, developed and changed over time (cf. the differences between King James English and modern English). The Hebrew of Ecclesiastes has features (e.g., certain vocabulary, general style) that have led scholars, almost universally, to conclude that someone living in the tenth century BC could not have written it. Proposed dates vary anywhere from sometime before the exile (587 BC), to the exilic (587/586–539 BC) and postexilic periods (fifth century BC), even as late as the Hellenistic period (fourth century BC or later).

The general consensus, therefore, is that the book known as Ecclesiastes is an anonymous work by an author assuming a Solomonic identity, not for the purpose of deceiving his readers, but as a vehicle for what he wants to express. This type of literary device, whereby the writer takes on a pseudonym, became quite common after the exile as a means of inspiring contemporary readers to remain faithful to God. For readers today, it is probably more helpful to think of "Qoheleth" not as a pseudonym but rather as a nickname, or a literary device, such as when any author creates a character and speaks through it in the first person.

OUTLINE AND STRUCTURE

I. Frame Narrative Introduction (1:1–11)

II. The Words of Qoheleth (1:12–12:7)

III. Frame Narrative Summary and Conclusion (12:8–14)

Ecclesiastes has an overall structure that is easily discerned simply by reading through the book. The words of Qoheleth are found in 1:12–12:7; here the main character speaks in the first person. The sections 1:1–11 and 12:8–14 are in the third person and form the narrative frame of the book. Note that (after a general introduction in 1:1) 1:2 and 12:8, with the well-known refrain that everything is "meaningless" (see below), are virtually identical. The frame narrator, as he is sometimes called, begins and ends on the same note. The purpose of 1:1–11 is to introduce the thinking of Qoheleth, whereas 12:8–14 summarizes his thinking and then concludes the book.

Even though this overall structure is fairly obvious, its significance is not. For one thing, it raises the question of whether the book has two authors: one responsible for the first-person reflections and another responsible for the third-person evaluation. This has been an opinion of scholars, but most today simply consider Ecclesiastes to have one author, where the words of Qoheleth in 1:12–12:7 reflect the author's rhetorical decision to adopt a Solomonic persona, as mentioned above.

Another question raised by the structure is precisely what the frame narrator's evaluation of Qoheleth is. Here the differences of opinion among scholars are a bit clearer, and the matter more or less comes down to whether the frame narrator is negatively disposed toward Qoheleth or more supportive. In a sense, it is not at all a mystery how the frame narrator summarizes Qoheleth's words. The opening words in 1:1–11 are very clear: everything is meaningless (v. 2); there is nothing to gain from our labors (v. 3); the point is illustrated in the natural world (vv. 4–10); in the end we all die, and no one is remembered (v. 11). The message is not a particularly encouraging one, but there is little doubt about how the frame narrator summarizes Qoheleth.

When we return to the frame narrator in 12:8, after repeating his summary of 1:2, he begins an evaluation of Qoheleth's words. Much of the scholarly disagreement mentioned above concerns this portion of the text: does the frame narrator evaluate Qoheleth positively or negatively? On the one hand, so much of what Qoheleth says in the previous chapters has been considered theologically problematic, even since early rabbinic days (e.g., 1:18; 2:15–16; 3:18–21). One would expect a negative evaluation of Qoheleth's theology. On the other hand, the frame narrator does not seem too quick to condemn Qoheleth. In fact, he is quite complimentary in 12:9–10.

The evaluation of the frame narrator is perhaps best understood as both expressing support for Qoheleth's wisdom (12:9–10) and offering some advice to his readers to move forward, beyond Qoheleth (12:13–14). "Yes, Qoheleth is wise," the frame narrator seems to be saying. "Take his observations to heart. But ultimately, your duty is to fear God and keep his commandments, knowing that he is the supreme judge." The value of such an approach to reading Ecclesiastes is that readers are dissuaded from dismissing Qoheleth's words as those of a lunatic or an unbeliever. There is a reason that 203 of the 221 verses of the book belong to Qoheleth, and it is unlikely that the frame narrator's evaluation is a simple dismissal. In other words, we are forced to wrestle with Qoheleth's words, take them seriously, perhaps even identify with this wise man's bouts with faith.

With respect to the structure of the book, a much more difficult issue is to discern some logic, some structure, to Qoheleth's thoughts in 1:12–12:7. There is a significant amount of interweaving and revisiting of themes. Sometimes they seem to come almost out of nowhere: Qoheleth apparently is on one topic, then seems to take a dramatic shift to another, but only to return a few verses later to the previous topic. This phenomenon proves challenging for any interpreter. The author of Ecclesiastes does not seem overly concerned to accommodate our expectation of a certain type of order in a text.

Furthermore, Qoheleth is not consistent in his thinking. This becomes evident when one compares, for example, 1:18 with 2:13; 5:10 with 10:19; or 7:3 with 8:15. These inconsistencies, however, are not there for readers to solve; much less are they evidence that Qoheleth is not worth listening to. Rather, such inconsistencies reflect Qoheleth's struggles, and these struggles are what drive the book forward. To put it another way, readers are invited to enter into Qoheleth's world, feel his pain, so to speak, and not remain outside, at a lofty distance.

QOHELETH'S MESSAGE

The message of the book as a whole depends on how one understands the function of the frame narrator's evaluation in 12:8–14 (see above). But what is Qoheleth, in 1:12–12:7, trying to say about life? What is he saying that drives him to the conclusion, again and again, that everything is "meaningless"? First, we must pause for a word of explanation of "meaningless." This is one well-known English translation (the KJV has "vanity") for the Hebrew word *hebel*. But a careful reading of Qoheleth's words will show that he is not really saying that everything is meaningless, in the sense that life is empty. Rather, he is expressing extreme frustration, even anger, that things are the way they are. Hence, a better translation may be that everything is "absurd."

What makes everything absurd? Qoheleth says that everything is absurd because there is no "profit" in anything that we do, no payoff (6:11). This notion is summarized in 1:4–10. And why is there ultimately no profit in anything that we do? The answer is summarized in 1:11 and becomes a dominant theme for Qoheleth: in the end, we all die, and no one remembers us. This is the absurdity that brings Qoheleth to ask big questions and make some striking comments. Yet, it is this same

Qoheleth whom the frame narrator calls "wise" and to whose words we are to pay close attention.

ECONOMIC LIFE The economic life of the biblical world rested on the precepts of improvement of one's standing, stable interaction between individuals and nations, and the fact that all of life belonged first to God. The ability to create a stable economy was driven by international standing, military strength, and environmental conditions. As a state, Israel was far more successful in creating and sustaining wealth during periods with little upheaval in the monarchy and when there was little threat from outside forces. The reign of Solomon in the united monarchy and the coterminous reigns of Uzziah in Judah and Jeroboam II in Israel, therefore, represent the periods with the most favorable economic conditions, and indeed these two periods are generally considered to be golden ages of economic and cultural strength.

THE ECONOMY OF ISRAEL

Before the monarchy. The economic life of the Bible begins with the creation account and the reflections communicated there about humankind's stewardship of that which belongs to God. Humankind is placed in the world as the caregiver and protector of the rest of creation. This purpose will have ramifications for the remainder of the biblical story. Throughout the Bible, God expresses a deep concern for economic justice and economic well-being among his people. The law given by God sets out an economic and political framework that builds on this idea of justice and human stewardship of God's creation, including some rather striking passages meant to assure a just distribution and maintenance of resources and equality (Lev. 25:1–55; Deut. 10:17–18; 15:1–11). The emphasis on economic and social justice is closely related to spiritual faithfulness throughout the prophetic texts. Isaiah speaks of economic prosperity and peace as an integral part of God's desire for Israel. Amos, Jeremiah, and Micah denounce the economic injustices within Israel. This attitude and emphasis continue into the NT, where Jesus talks as much about economics in his teachings as he does about the rest of the Christian life. Jesus' primary emphases in discussing economic matters suggest a need to recognize both the priority of the heavenly economy over the earthly and the fact that one's economic activities must communicate a sense of justice and mercy as well.

The lack of a centralized government and industry in the early years of Israel's existence meant that much of the economy revolved around private ownership and agrarian realities. In conquering the land of Canaan, the Israelites were transformed from seminomads into agriculturists, but they were still largely on their own in economic matters. They dwelled in villages and towns and lived off of what they raised in their fields and the milk and meat of their livestock. There was limited trade during this period, primarily existing only through opportunities provided by traveling merchants from Phoenicia and elsewhere. The modifications that took place in the Canaanite material culture when they were assumed by Israel were slight in nature in this early period. The period of the judges reveals a brutal culture, and the people would have remained somewhat constrained economically in the days prior to the monarchy. As stated above, the laws certainly are important in understanding how Israel viewed itself before God; however, it must be admitted that there were relatively few requisites concerning business contained in its precepts (Lev. 19:35–36; 25:36–37, 44–45; Deut. 15:2; 23:20). This may in fact reflect the more individualized nature of the early economic systems of Israel.

The monarchy. With the beginning of the monarchy, and especially the reign of Solomon, signs of extensive external trade begin to manifest themselves within Israel. The primary exports seem still to have been agricultural in nature, as Solomon is said to have sent grains and oil to Tyre in exchange for their timber and workers (1 Kings 5). Horses were a significant sign of wealth in the ancient world, and during his reign, Solomon apparently was able to import quite a few from Egypt (1 Kings 10:28–29). Solomon is even said to have sent ships to the far reaches of the known world to acquire gold, silver, iron, apes, and peacocks (1 Kings 10:22). Solomon also saw the development of an extensive system of internal economic prosperity through division of the land into districts and through establishing firm control of the major arteries of travel within Israel (1 Kings 4). Unfortunately, Solomon's successors lacked his economic acumen. Due to inner turmoil and outside forces, Israel was unable to regain the standing that it held under Solomon, except for a brief period during the reign of Uzziah. Interestingly, the prophets often equated merchants with the Canaanites (Hos. 12:7; Zeph. 1:11; Zech. 14:21). The kings of the northern kingdom of Israel seem to have fared slightly better in economic matters than did the kings of Judah. Ahab obtained a special standing in the markets of Damascus (1 Kings 20:34), and Jeroboam II raised Israel to powerful status in the world's economic perspectives.

Agriculture defined the economic life of the early years of the nation of Israel.

After the exile. Following the return from the exile, the Jewish community was severely impoverished and had very little business activity except in its larger cities (Neh. 3:31–32). Hellenism brought with it a renewal of trade capabilities, and Josephus reports that by the mid-second century BC, Athenian merchants came regularly to Judea. The Maccabees captured Joppa, and Herod built Caesarea, which ultimately improved the economic standing of the Jews because they then controlled port locations.

Life in the NT seems not to have varied much from that in the OT, the most important exception being the stability and ease of transport resulting from Roman control of the region. This stability was often offset, however, by the imposition of high taxes. The NT relates the vast disparity of economic lifestyle between the enormously wealthy and the severely impoverished. There were also political and religious ramifications to be found in the struggle to find a proper response to taxation. This dilemma is reflected in the two opposing viewpoints among the twelve apostles, including the views of a tax collector and of a Zealot. The early church seems to have dealt with economic matters with various degrees of success (Rev. 2:9; 3:17).

COINAGE

The monetary system of Israel seems to have always been based primarily on gold and silver. In fact, the Hebrew word most often translated “money,” *kesep*, is the word for “silver.” It is unclear exactly when coinage started in Israel. Opinions vary from the period just before the exile to several years after the exile. Up until that point, worth was assessed not by the value of the coin but rather by the weight of the metal. People carried their own weights in a bag that were used to determine the value of an exchange (Deut. 25:13; 2 Sam. 18:12); thus, the focus for ensuring fair trade was almost always on guarding against the use of false weights and scales (Lev. 19:36). The precursors to coinage seem to have been pieces of silver and gold that were considered to be a certain weight, though the emphasis was still on the weight of the product (Josh. 7:21; 1 Sam. 9:8). The basic standard of weight was the shekel.

The Persians developed a more fixed system of coinage. Darius first introduced a reformed currency system around 520–480 BC. The basic standard was the daric, which was comparable to a Babylonian shekel in weight. Because of the inherent value of coins, the purity of the metals used became more important. This resulted in a slight shift in monetary imagery related to purity versus fair weight. In the Roman era, the denarius was the basic unit of money.

VILLAGES AND CITIES

The OT distinguished in size between villages and cities. The smallest measure of communal living seems to have been farming settlements or homesteads (Exod. 8:9; Neh. 11:25; Ps. 10:8). Larger settlements were referred to as villages (Gen. 25:16; 1 Sam. 6:18) or cities (Gen. 4:17; 19:25, 29). Cities were usually built along a lake or river (Tiberius and Beth Shan) or where natural springs were sufficient to sustain a large population (Jerusalem and Jericho). Streets in the cities seemed to have been named after the place to which they led or by the industry represented on them (Neh. 11:35; Isa. 7:3; Jer. 37:21). Open squares were found mainly at the gates of the city, where most of the commerce took place and which tended to be the centers of city life. The gate and the adjoining open area constituted the marketplace, hence, names such as “Sheep Gate” (Neh. 3:1, 3, 32; 12:39; Zeph. 1:10). The wells sometimes were situated here (2 Sam. 23:15–16). News from the outside was announced first at the gate (1 Sam. 4:18). Finally, court and council sessions were held at the gate (Deut. 13:17; Ruth 4:11; 2 Kings 7:1; Job 29:7; cf. Gen. 19:7).

ECONOMIC ISSUES ADDRESSED IN THE BIBLE

Slavery. Slavery was considered legitimate in various circumstances, but since individual possession of a slave was somewhat rare, it never became a centerpiece of the Israelite economic structures. It was a capital offense to kidnap people for the purpose of enslaving them (Exod. 20:10–16; Deut. 24:7). When held by individual families, slaves were to be treated as part of an extended family, and they were permitted to partake in important festivals and to observe the Sabbath (Exod. 20:10; Deut. 16:14). Ideally, slaves in debt bondage and Israelite slaves owned by foreign residents were automatically freed at the Jubilee. If they had not already purchased their freedom, male Israelite slaves were automatically freed once they had worked for six years (Exod. 21:2; Lev. 25:39–55); however, the prophet Jeremiah's denunciation of the permanent enslavement of Hebrew men and women by their masters (Jer. 34:8–22) suggests that these practices were not faithfully executed within Israel's history.

Death, marriage, and redemption. The economic impact of death is addressed to some degree in the biblical texts. Daughters who received an inheritance of land because of the lack of a male heir were required to marry within the tribe in order to preserve the tribal allotments outlined by God in his gift of land to the people (Num. 27:7–8; 36:6–9). If the deceased had no children of his own, his closest male relative would receive the land (Num. 27:9–11). The levirate and *go'el* ("redeemer") systems seem to have been enacted in order to protect both widows and the property rights of the family. Marriage with a brother's widow was forbidden as a general rule (Lev. 20:21), but when no male heir was present, the act was considered obligatory (Deut. 25:5–10). Although there is some disagreement, most would consider the case of Ruth to be not one of levirate marriage, but instead an expression of the *go'el* (Lev. 25:25; Jer. 32:6–9). The two systems apparently are related, with the latter being an extension of the former. But the important distinction is that the *go'el*'s duties included redemption in much broader terms, including redemption from slavery (Lev. 25:47–55) and vengeance in the case of wrongful death (Deut. 19:6). One clear case of levirate marriage is found in the attempts of Tamar to bear a child with the brother of Er, her deceased husband, and then eventually with Er's father (Gen. 38).

Tithing. Tithing one's possessions was a very ancient custom that actually predates the law codes and is found in the time of the patriarchs. Abraham gave Melchizedek "a tenth of everything" (Gen. 14:20), and Jacob made a vow that if he returned to his father's house in safety, he would acknowledge Yahweh as his Lord and would give him a tenth of all that he possessed (Gen. 28:20–22). The tithe that was applied to the seed of the land or to the fruit of the tree was redeemable. The tithe of cattle, on the other hand, was not redeemable. Determining which animal was the tithe involved counting each animal singly, and every tenth one that passed under the rod became the tithe animal (Lev. 27:30–33). There is apparently some disparity in the biblical texts relating to a tithe. Nehemiah 10:37–38 seems to clearly indicate that there was only one prescribed tithe taken in the OT era. However, there are three texts regulating the tithe in the OT (Lev. 27:30–33; Num. 18:21–32; Deut. 14:22–29). It would seem, then, that each law gives only a partial picture of the regulations involving the tithe, as each assumes both the presence and the regulations of the others. The practice of the tithe in Israel involved a yearly gift to the temple, with the gifts of every third year kept in the community for the care of the poor and oppressed. These laws, then, were a reminder of Israel's holy status before God and that its enjoyment of the rewards of that status was a consequence of their election. Consequently, the tithe demanded recognition of God's ownership of all the land. Furthermore, by being allowed to consume part of the tithe (Deut. 14:23), participants were reminded of the priority of God in their economy and lives.

ED A transliteration of the Hebrew word *'ed*, meaning "witness" or "testimony," in the KJV of Josh. 22:34. When the land of Canaan was divided, the tribes of Reuben and Gad and the half-tribe of

Manasseh (Josh. 22:9) constructed a great altar, which, they affirmed, was not for sacrifice but rather for a witness to future generations (22:21–27). The NIV translates the Hebrew term as “witness.”

EDAR *See* Eder.

EDEN The region within which was situated the primeval garden, the setting of the story of the creation in Gen. 2 and of the fall in Gen. 3. Although numerous attempts have been made to identify its intended location (Turkey, North Africa, the Persian Gulf), the information we can glean from the references to Eden, the rivers that flow from it, and the regions they encompass is insufficient for locating Eden in relation to known geography. It is simply “in the east” (Gen. 2:8).

Eden is portrayed as a mountainous region (Ezek. 28:13–14). Four rivers flow from it: the Pishon and the Gihon, which are unknown, and the Tigris and the Euphrates in Mesopotamia (Gen. 2:10–14). This may be compared with other ancient Near Eastern portrayals of rivers flowing from the mountain dwelling of the gods.

The name “Eden” may be connected with a Hebrew word for “luxury, delight,” though another suggestion is that it derives from a Sumerian word meaning “steppe, plain.” The garden in Eden is also referred to as the “garden of the Lord” (Gen. 13:10; Isa. 51:3) or the “garden of God” (Ezek. 28:13; 31:8–9), or (in a visionary reappearance) as “paradise,” from a Persian word for “garden” (Rev. 2:7).

The garden is depicted as a sanctuary or holy space (Ezek. 28:14) into which humanity is invited on God’s terms to act as God’s agents. It contains the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and the tree of life (Gen. 2:9).

As a picture of fertility, Eden holds out the prospect of a reversal from a desolate state (Isa. 51:3).

EDER **(1)** A town that was part of the tribe of Judah’s traditional territorial allotment. It was located in the southern part of Judah, in the Negev (Josh. 15:21). **(2)** A son of Beriah (KJV: “Ader”; 1 Chron. 8:15). **(3)** One of the three sons of Mushi, a Levite from the Merarites (1 Chron. 23:23; 24:30). *See also* Migdal Eder.

EDICT *See* Decree.

EDIFICATION Edification is the building up, strengthening, and encouraging of others in the body of Christ. This is primarily a Pauline concept and takes place in the context of mutual relationships among members in the local church: “Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing” (1 Thess. 5:11). The frequency of this concept in Paul’s letters shows how important this was and how much he sought to develop this practice among his readers: “Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification” (Rom. 14:19). This building up of one another in the body should lead to a properly functioning local church where Christ is at the center and “the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work” (Eph. 4:16). Put simply, “Knowledge puffs up while love builds up” (1 Cor. 8:1).

EDOM “Edom” denotes Esau (Gen. 25:30; 36:1, 8, 19), or the Edomites collectively (Num. 20:18, 20–21; Amos 1:6, 11; 9:12; Mal. 1:4), or the land occupied by Esau’s descendants, formerly the land of Seir (Gen. 32:3; 36:20–21, 30; Num. 24:18). Edom was renowned in Israel for its wisdom (Jer.

49:7; Obad. 8), and the book of Job seems to reflect an Edomite setting.

THE LAND OF EDOM

The region stretched from the Zered Valley to the Gulf of Aqabah (about one hundred miles) and extended to both sides of the Arabah, the great depression connecting the Dead Sea to the Red Sea (Gen. 14:6; Deut. 2:1, 12; Josh. 15:1; Judg. 11:17–18; 1 Kings 9:26). It is a dry, mountainous area with peaks rising to 3,500 feet. Though not a fertile land, it has cultivable areas (Num. 20:14–18). The name is derived from the Semitic root meaning “red, ruddy,” perhaps because of the reddish color of the sandstone in that region.

The earliest reference to Edom comes from Egypt, where Papyrus Anastasi VI preserves the report of an official from the reign of Merneptah (c. 1220 BC). He noted that the Bedouin tribes of Edom were trying to pass an Egyptian fortress to “the pools of Per-Atum” to keep themselves and their cattle alive.

It is possible that the Semitic place name was in use as early as the fifteenth century BC, if Edom is identified with one of the place names (*’i-d-má*) from the list of Thutmose III (1490–1436 BC).

The land(s) of Seir (a term often used in the OT to refer to Edom; cf. “the hill country of Seir” in Gen. 36:8–9) appears already in a letter from Amarna written by a king of Jerusalem to Amenhotep III in the first half of the fourteenth century. About a century later, Ramesses II (1290–1224 BC) claimed to have devastated the land of Shosu and plundered Mount Seir. In the next century Ramesses III (1193–1162 BC) made a similar claim.

Thus, there is considerable evidence outside the OT from the fourteenth to the twelfth centuries BC that mentions both Edom and Seir (the latter is more frequent and seems to be better known). The sources do not identify the two places, but they refer to their inhabitants as (Bedouin) *shosu*.

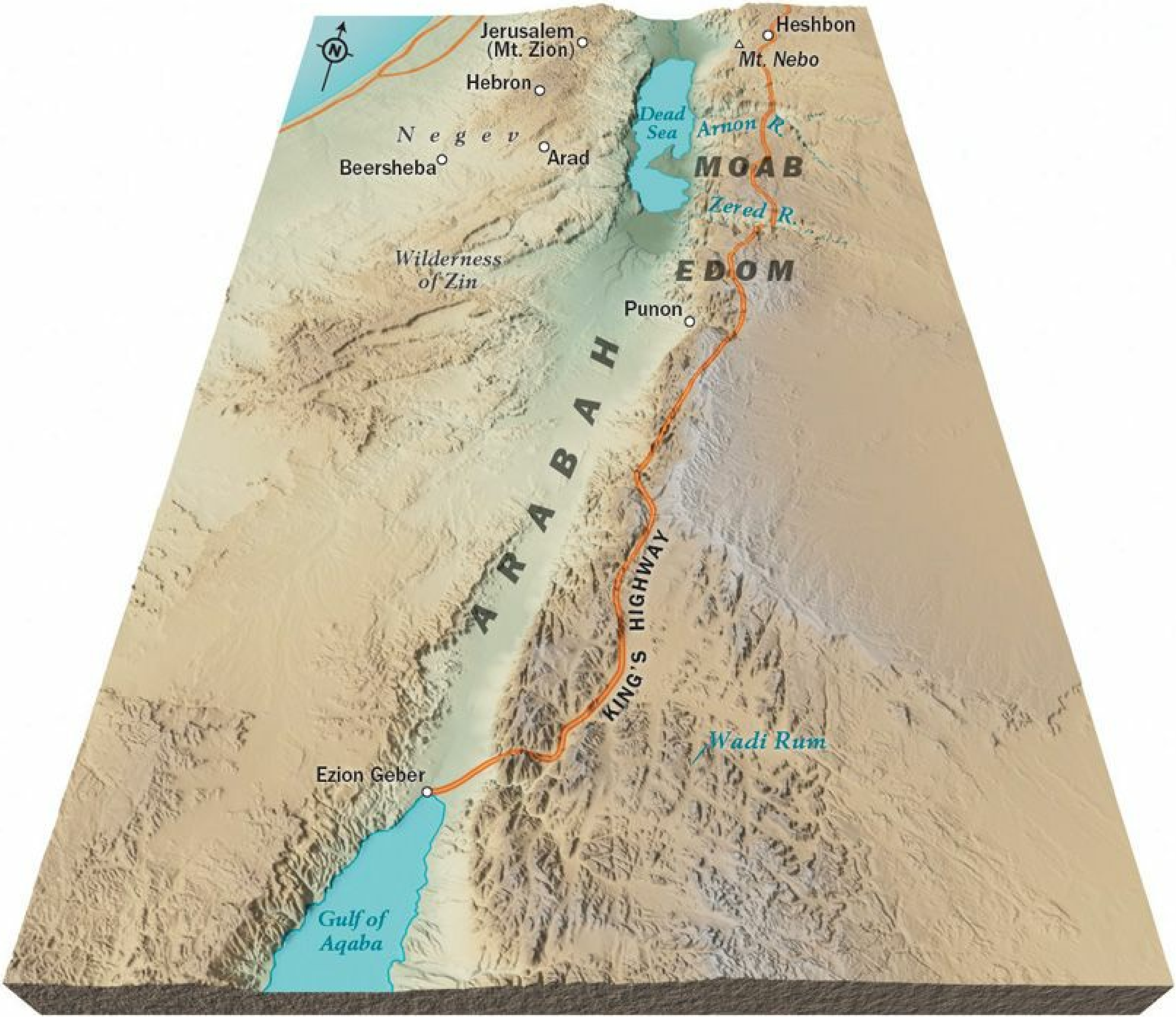
THE EDOMITES

Following the OT, it seems that Esau’s descendants migrated to the land of Seir and in time became the dominant group, incorporating the original Horites (Gen. 14:6) and others into their number. Esau had already occupied Edom when Jacob returned from Harran (Gen. 32:3; 36:6–8; Deut. 2:4–5; Josh. 24:4). Tribal chiefs emerged here quite early (Gen. 36:15–19, 40, 43; 1 Chron. 1:51, 54), and the Edomites had kings “before any Israelite king reigned” (Gen. 36:31; 1 Chron. 1:43–51).

We know from the OT that after the exodus Israel was denied permission to travel by the King’s Highway (Num. 20:14–21; 21:4; Judg. 11:17–18). Still, Israelites were forbidden to abhor their Edomite brothers (Deut. 23:7–8). Joshua allotted the territory of Judah up to the borders of Edom (Josh. 15:1, 21), but the Israelites were not allowed to encroach on their lands.

Despite the brotherly relationship between Edom and Israel, the biblical evidence shows that the relationship between Edom and Israel was one of continuous hostility from the time of the Israelite kings. King Saul fought the Edomites (1 Sam. 14:47), and David conquered Edom and put garrisons throughout the land (2 Sam. 8:13–14). Edom was subjugated by Israel during the time of David but seems to have regained independence in the eighth century BC.

The prophets of Judah were very bitter against later Edom because of its stance in the destruction of Jerusalem by Babylon (587/586 BC), and they predicted Edom’s destruction (e.g., Obadiah). The oracle of Mal. 1:2–4 indicates that by the time of its writing, Edom was in ruin. The archaeological evidence supports the fall of Edom by the end of the sixth century BC, and there is evidence that the Nabateans (an Arabian tribe) forced their way into Edom and replaced the Edomites, many of whom went westward to southern Judea (later Idumea [cf. 1 Macc. 5:3, 65]), while others may have been absorbed by the newcomers. By 312 BC the area around Petra was inhabited by Nabateans.


N
Jerusalem (Mt. Zion)
Heshbon
Mt. Nebo
Hebron
Dead Sea
Arnon R.
Negev
Arad
Beersheba
MOAB
Zered R.
Wilderness of Zin
EDOM
Punon
ARABAH
KING'S HIGHWAY
Wadi Rum
Ezion Geber
Gulf of Aqaba

Edom at the time of Obadiah

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

Modern archaeology has shown that the land was occupied before Esau's time, and recent excavations have shed new light on the history of Edom, unearthing evidence of a settled state society as early as the eleventh century BC. Surveys and excavations support the conclusion that Edom was a sophisticated, urbanized society as early as the tenth century BC, with industrial-scale production of copper at this time in that region.

This new data pushes back the archaeological chronology of this area some three centuries earlier than the prevalent scholarly consensus. At the moment, there are at least thirty-five high-precision dates from Edom dating to the tenth century BC (and some may be even earlier). Egyptian artifacts were found at the site in a layer associated with a serious disruption in production at the end of the tenth century BC, possibly tying Khirbat en-Nahas to the campaign of Pharaoh Sheshonq I (Shishak in the OT), who, following Solomon's death, sought to crush economic activity in the area. Thus, recent archaeological and scientific data provide a real correlation to the time of Solomon and beyond, as described in the OT (1 Kings 7:46; see also 1 Kings 14:25–26).

There is also strong, and generally undisputed, archaeological evidence for many seventh- and sixth-century sites attributed to the Edomites. Modern Buseirah is generally identified with biblical Bozrah (e.g., Isa. 34:6; Jer. 49:13, 22), probably the Edomite capital. Another site of special interest is Tell el-Kheleifeh (probably Ezion Geber = Elath [see, e.g., 1 Kings 9:26]). Period IV at this site testifies to a vigorous Edomite civilization in the seventh to sixth centuries BC. Most of the Edomite sites, however, are small villages, farms, or seminomadic sites. The Edomites usually are associated with Edomite pottery, a ware found in both southern Jordan and the Negev.

ECONOMY AND RELIGION

The economy of Edom was based on agriculture (possible especially in the northeast) and commerce. Its prosperity depended mostly on controlling the caravan routes from India and southern Arabia to the Mediterranean coast and Egypt. It seems that whenever Edom lost control of these routes, its civilization declined.

The religion of the Edomites, like that of the Canaanites, was devoted to the gods and goddesses of fertility. The deity peculiar to Edom was Qaus, and this name is incorporated into numerous Edomite personal names.

EDOMITES The inhabitants of Edom and descendants of Esau (Gen. 36:1–17). *See also* Edom.

EDREI A principal stronghold of Og of Bashan, one of two Transjordanian rulers the Israelites defeated under Moses (Josh. 13:12). Edrei was the site of this battle (Num. 21:33–35; see also Deut. 3:1). Joshua 13:31 describes Edrei and Ashtaroth as "royal cities" of Og and places both in the tribal territory of Manasseh (specifically, of the subtribe of Makir [see Judg. 5:14]). Joshua 19:37 mentions a distinct "fortified city" of Edrei in the territory of Naphtali.

EDUCATION Understanding many aspects of education in Israel during OT times and, to a lesser extent, into the NT period is extraordinarily difficult. Many studies draw quite specific conclusions based on very slender evidence and inferences drawn from supposed parallels with neighboring societies, inferences themselves beset by uncertainties. Therefore, conclusions are necessarily tentative at many points. Furthermore, it is reasonable to expect that things did not remain constant through history, and that what can be reliably discerned for one period may not accurately reflect the situation in other times.

Education encompasses several areas of life in the biblical world. Aside from academic education (relating to literacy and numeracy), there was moral and religious education, military education, and vocational training. These are not all distinct; those whose vocation lay in diplomatic circles or within the royal court as scribes would have received academic education, while those living in the country and working a farm would have had little opportunity to access such knowledge.

OLD TESTAMENT

Settings for education. There were three primary arenas of education in OT times: home, school, and temple.

Home. The most important setting for education in OT times was the home (Deut. 4:9; 6:7; 11:19). Both parents were expected to play a role in a child's education (Prov. 1:8; 6:20; 23:22; 31:1). Sons generally were trained in their father's vocation, and such training took the form of an apprenticeship (1 Sam. 16:11; 2 Kings 4:18); girls learned from their mothers as they undertook their work on a daily basis (Exod. 35:25–26; 2 Sam. 13:8).

In part, the extent of home education is tied to the question of the extent of formal schooling in ancient Israel. As noted below, the nature and extent of schools is unclear, and if (as the evidence seems to suggest) schools were virtually nonexistent outside the royal court, then the home ultimately would have been the locus of any academic education received by children and the source of any widespread literacy and numeracy in the community. The frequent use of father/son language in Proverbs, however, need not imply an exclusively familial context for the instruction contained therein, as there is evidence from Egypt that such language was used between teacher and student.

School. The existence, nature, and extent of schools in OT times is extensively debated and ultimately uncertain. The first explicit reference to a school is found in the second century BC in Sir. 51:23. The virtual silence of the OT on the topic may reflect either that schools were absent in ancient Israel or that their existence was somehow of little interest and so warranted little reflection by biblical authors. In any case, it is likely that some form of school for scribes and those training to work in government existed in the vicinity of the royal court, as they did in Mesopotamia and Egypt. These did not form a comprehensive national schooling system for young children but were more specifically targeted to the few individuals who aimed to become scribes or advisers.

Outside the Bible there exist a number of inscriptions that could suggest the existence of schools in Israel prior to the exile. These include abecedaries (lists of the letters of the alphabet written out, usually as practice exercises or as examples), words written out several times, lists of month names, and possible exercises in reading foreign languages, among others.

There is also extensive evidence of schools in Egypt, Mesopotamia, and probably also Ugarit from an early date (cf. Acts 7:22). Whether their existence supports the existence of schools in Israel is unclear. Egypt and Mesopotamia had large and complex bureaucracies necessary to administer their kingdoms, and they employed writing systems far more difficult to master than Hebrew. In addition, mathematical texts reflect a concern with numeracy within the schools of these kingdoms, for which there is no clear evidence in ancient Israel.

A practice tablet for scribes in training

The sages and scribes appear to be the primary source for the material supposedly employed in schools. Ecclesiastes 12:9 identifies one of the tasks of the sages as teaching the people, and some claim that Proverbs functioned as a textbook within a school setting. Indeed, Prov. 4:5; 17:16 speak of the “buying” (Heb. *qanah*) of knowledge, interpreted by some as a reference to teachers paid for providing tuition. Again, the context in which such tuition may have taken place is uncertain.

Temple. Priests were also involved in some teaching (1 Sam. 2:21, 26). According to 2 Chron. 17:7–9, King Jehoshaphat sent five officials, nine Levites, and two priests to teach the people of Judah from the Book of the Law, a point that stresses both the importance of the task and the probable failure of the home setting to adequately convey this instruction, at least by the late fifth century BC.

Types of education. In OT times four types of education can be discerned: moral and religious, academic, vocational, and military.

Moral and religious education. The Bible stresses the importance of moral and religious education above all other forms (Exod. 10:2; 12:26; 13:8; Deut. 4:9; 6:7, 20–21; 32:7, 46).

Academic education. The extent of literacy and numeracy in ancient Israel is difficult to ascertain. Rudimentary numeracy almost certainly was widespread and learned within the home and in the course of vocational training when necessary. Many among the population also appear to have been at least capable of reading and writing names or other simple texts (Deut. 6:9; 11:20; Judg. 8:14).

Vocational training. Most commonly, boys followed in their father's vocation and thus learned through observation and participation. Under some circumstances, however, children served apprenticeships under the tutelage of others, such as was apparently the case for prophetic schools (2 Kings 2:7; 4:38; 6:1–2; Amos 7:14–15).

Military training. There are clear indications that kings recruited mercenaries to form the most important part of their army (e.g., 1 Sam. 22:2; 25:13). These mercenaries were paid and likely had received some formal training, but the nature of that training is nowhere explained. In addition to these elite forces, all able-bodied men apparently were considered eligible for military service when the need arose (2 Chron. 25:5). So, for example, the elite troops were responsible for staging the attack (2 Sam. 11:14–17; 12:26), while the remainder of the army served as reinforcements where necessary (2 Sam. 12:29). The use of chariots (under David and Solomon) would have required some training, as would the wielding of various weapons (swords, spears, bows, and slings). Ultimately, however, there are only allusions to such training (e.g., Judg. 3:2; 2 Sam. 22:35).

Educational methods. Throughout the ancient Near East there is evidence that corporal punishment played a significant role in education. There is a somewhat comical text from Mesopotamia that relates a day in the life of a student who receives physical punishment for virtually everything he does. Similarly, the book of Proverbs highlights the importance of discipline in raising and training children (e.g., 13:24; 22:15; 29:15, 17). Nonetheless, Proverbs uses "the rod" as a means to signify discipline as a whole without necessarily endorsing corporal punishment as the only or even the primary means of discipline. This is apparent because Proverbs contrasts the rod not with other, lesser forms of discipline but rather with no discipline at all. Thus, although there is evidence that corporal punishment was used extensively (and probably excessively [see Sir. 30]), Proverbs endorses a more nuanced approach to disciplining children.

Academic, religious, and moral education also involved the use of various techniques that facilitated learning. These included the use of poetry or poetic couplets (common in wisdom literature and in psalms), numerical sayings (e.g., Ps. 62:11; Prov. 6:16), and acrostics, as well as the celebration of feasts and memorials at various times throughout the year.

New Testament

Greco-Roman education. Greek education developed from about the fourth century BC and spread throughout the Mediterranean region, adopted with minor modification by the Romans. The curriculum was dominated by sports and a focus on literacy, with little place given to religious education (although philosophy was taught and did bear some religious traits). Education in the Greco-Roman world was expensive, and its provision was a parental responsibility, which tended to restrict formal education to the elite.

At about the age of fifteen, boys could move from elementary schooling to the gymnasium, where they received intellectual and physical training. Some in the Corinthian church may have received such an education, a possibility raised by Paul's terminology in 1 Corinthians that reflects educational language: his claim to be father of the Corinthian household (4:14–21); sporting imagery (esp. 9:24–27); language of nursing and nature (3:1–4); agricultural imagery (3:5–9); his threat to come with a rod (4:21), which could be related to the rod of correction; the term *grammateus* (1:20), which may refer to the gymnasium instructor; reference to writing (4:6); and talk of removing the marks of circumcision (7:18).

Education in Israel. One Jewish tradition states that in AD 63 the high priest Joshua ben Gamla decreed that every town should appoint a schoolteacher for the education of children of six or seven years of age. This, together with the existence of Sirach's school more than two centuries earlier, indicates that some form of schooling existed within Israel in the first century AD.

Although some Jews throughout the ancient world received a standard Hellenistic education, others reacted against the influence of Hellenism and sought to educate their children within the Scriptures and Jewish tradition. The DSS refer to the importance placed on study of the Torah (1QS 6:6–7). There were also rabbinic schools that focused on such teaching.

By NT times, synagogues were well established. Although determining precisely what took place within the synagogues is difficult, indications are that the focus on Scripture and its exposition played an important role in teaching both its importance and the appropriate way to interpret it. Teaching, however, was not confined to synagogues or the temple, as is amply demonstrated by the frequency with which Jesus is described as teaching in a variety of settings. Nonetheless, the temple itself did appear to serve as a center for religious education, as is reflected in the account of the twelve-year-old Jesus' interactions with the teachers at the temple (Luke 2:41–51). Jesus' own teaching was remarkable, however, in that it was delivered with authority (Matt. 7:29; Mark 1:22; Luke 4:32).

Education in the church. Paul highlights one of the prerequisites for being an overseer of a church as the ability to teach, stressing the importance of the NT church as a place of learning (1 Tim. 3:2; 2 Tim. 2:2, 24). This teaching involved a familiarity with right doctrine in order to avoid being led astray, an exemplary life that modeled godly behavior for all to see, and the maturity required to apply discipline when necessary.

EGLAH The wife of David, married while he was king in Hebron. Her son was named "Ithream" (2 Sam. 3:5; 1 Chron. 3:3).

EGLAIM **(1)** A location in Moab (Isa. 15:8). **(2)** "En Eglaim" (meaning "spring of the two calves") is the name of a spring on the western shore of the Dead Sea, opposite Moab (Ezek. 47:10).

EGLATH SHELISHIYAH A location mentioned in two oracles against Moab (Isa. 15:5; Jer. 48:34). The phrase translates as "the third Eglath." While most translations follow the LXX in understanding it as the name of a location, the KJV translates these Hebrew terms as "a heifer of three years old." A young heifer is sometimes understood figuratively as a land that has yet to be conquered (Hos. 10:11), which may fit within the context of these two oracles against Moab as referring to unconquered land in Zoar and Horonaim. Its geographical location is uncertain.

EGLON **(1)** The obese Moabite king who, after enlisting the aid of the Ammonites and the Amalekites, defeated Israel and ruled over them for eighteen years. He was assassinated by the Israelite judge Ehud, who deceived Eglon and plunged a small sword into his stomach. Following Eglon's death, Israel defeated the Moabites and ended their oppressive rule (Judg. 3:12–30). **(2)** A southern Canaanite city whose king (Debir) joined an alliance with four other Canaanite kings and battled against the Gibeonites following their treaty with Joshua. In order to honor the treaty, the Israelites fought and defeated the five kings, their men, and their cities (Josh. 10:1–43; 12:12). Eglon was allotted to the tribe of Judah (Josh. 15:39). Its precise location is uncertain.

EGYPT

CULTURE AND GEOGRAPHY

Egypt is one of the earliest ancient civilizations. The first development of writing took place simultaneously in both Egypt and ancient Sumer around 3000 BC. Using different languages, both developed pictographic writing systems (where pictures of objects stood for words, parts of words, etc.). Egypt kept the pictographic signs and highly stylized them (hieroglyphs), while Sumer changed them into wedge shapes (cuneiform). The Egyptian inscriptions found on pyramids, temples, stelae, tombs, and so forth are mostly in the hieroglyphic form.

Geography. Ancient Sumer and Egypt were river valley cultures. Sumer was located in Mesopotamia (southeast Iraq), Egypt in the Nile Valley (northeast Africa). The Nile Valley was well suited for long-term growth and cultural success for three reasons. First, the annual flooding of the Nile (July to October) brought sediment and nutrients from up river to the fields of the Nile Valley. The water also washed the salts out of the soil. These brought great fertility to the valley and allowed the same fields to be farmed year after year for millennia without exhausting the land. Second, the Nile provided a central highway for transporting people and goods across Egypt, thus facilitating internal trade and communication. Third, Egypt was surrounded by a buffer zone of desert regions to the east, west, and south, which hindered foreign invasion. Ancient Egyptians called the fertile land of the Nile Valley the “black land” and the desert regions the “red land.” They also divided the land into “upper” and “lower” Egypt. Upper Egypt (from the first cataract northward to Memphis) was in the higher southern elevations of the Nile River (the Nile flows from south to north). Lower Egypt was made up of the Nile Delta region. Only a pharaoh who controlled and unified both could take the epithet “king of upper and lower Egypt.” The ancient Egyptians called the entirety of their land “Kemet.”

The Nile River, whose annual flooding resulted in agricultural bounty for Egypt

Politics and religion. The Nile Valley was divided into regional administrative districts, nomes. There were forty-two nomes in all. Each nome had a town or city as its capital. Each of these cities had a ruler, a nomarch ("great overlord"), who governed the region. Kingship likely began when one city ruler began to subjugate other regions and cities. At times, there was more than one dynasty in power (one in Upper Egypt and one in Lower Egypt). Each ruling dynasty had a triad of idol-gods from its home city that it viewed as supreme in the Egyptian pantheon. The triad was made up of a father, a wife, and a firstborn son. In the Eighteenth Dynasty from Thebes, these were the sun god Amun-Re, his wife/consort Mut, and their son the moon god Khonsu.

Early Egyptian religion focused on veneration of animals, sacred burials, and cultic objects. The dead were buried with care in the predynastic period (before writing), which may indicate an understanding of the divine and the afterlife. We know little of this time without written texts. However, once writing was developed, the Egyptians began to create and record elaborate stories that explained their understanding of divine beings, creation, the daily cycle of sunrise/sunset, as well as the afterlife.

The Egyptian view of deities eventually became connected to physical forms. Each deity embodied divine attributes, affinities, powers, and one or more forms (human, animal, or a combination) that allowed the Egyptians to relate to them and that also shaped Egyptian culture and language through time. The god Thoth appeared in drawings, paintings, reliefs, or statues as one of three forms: as a human with an ibis-bird head, as an ibis, or as a baboon. The god Bes was patron of mothers in childbirth, Re (later Amun-Re) was the sun god, and so on. They even had a goddess of divine order, Ma'at, a female with a feather on her head. Ma'at was the embodiment of divine and human social order. At midnight on the day of death, a soul was placed in the balance of Ma'at's scale and weighed against her feather. A soul heavier or lighter was devoured by the awaiting crocodile-headed destroyer deity; only those in balance could move on into the afterlife. For Egypt, the pharaoh was the great shepherd of the people, who both kept the divine order (Ma'at) and forced out chaos and disorder. With changing dynasties and preferences, deities changed rank, assimilated powers, merged with other deities, and rose or declined in popularity. Many deities were tied to a geographic place, but some were universal (such as Isis, Apis, Geb, Osiris, Bes, Anubis, and Imhotep). The deities were either found in or had power over all areas of the created order (Nile, insects, animals, humans, crops, fertility [of humans, animals, crops], sky, sun, moon, death, etc.). With the proliferation of idols, temples and sacrifices multiplied, and literally thousands of sacred mummified birds, cats, crocodiles, and other animals have been found in Egypt.

From the very beginning the king was viewed as divine. Later he was viewed as the personification of the sun god, with his wife/queen being the personification of the wife goddess in his dynasty triad and his firstborn son tied to the son in the triad. When the pharaoh died, he moved into the afterlife to become the sun god, and his heir took his earthly place. The whole aspect of a proper burial was very important to having a place and a successful experience in the afterlife. The shape of the pyramid tomb reflected the image of the rays of the sun streaming down to earth at angles from the sun. A proper burial on the west bank of the Nile (toward the setting sun) allowed the deceased to begin a proper journey into the afterlife. In order for the deceased to pass through all the gateways and to balance properly in Ma'at's scales, a copy of the Book of the Dead would be placed in the person's sarcophagus. This text contained all the correct things that the deceased needed to say to attain an easy passage and gloss over his or her sins. The great pyramid of Khufu has the pyramids of Khufu's wives nearby, his nobles' tombs farther out, then the tombs of minor officials, and finally those of foremen who worked on the pyramid with their work crew just beyond them. Each in the pecking order sought to attach himself or herself to the coattails of Pharaoh in his death so that they too might gain entry into the afterlife.

HISTORY

Prehistoric period. In the fifth millennium BC the hunter-gatherer culture in Egypt slowly shifted to a farming and shepherding lifestyle. As crop yields increased beyond the need for food, time was available to develop skills in crafts as well as trade. The pottery and material culture (tools, burials, house style, etc.) of Lower Egypt evidenced the Buto-Ma'adi culture, and that of Upper Egypt the Naqada culture. The Naqada expanded northward and unified Egypt in predynastic times. Several proto-kingships developed as nomes or their capital cities allied together or were subjugated by a stronger neighbor.

Early Dynastic period (3000–2575 BC). As indicated by the Narmer Palette, the earliest known king of a unified Egypt was Narmer (c. 3000 BC). The palette shows Narmer defeating the king of Lower Egypt and wearing the crown of Upper Egypt on one side and the crown of Lower Egypt on the other. Laws in Egypt were not codified as they are today. The king made the rules and kept them as he saw fit. The Egyptian story "The Tale of the Eloquent Peasant" from a later Egyptian period explains the way things worked. In this story, the peasant is on the way to market with his goods on his donkey. The rich man sees him coming and covers the pathway with a garment. The peasant has a dilemma:

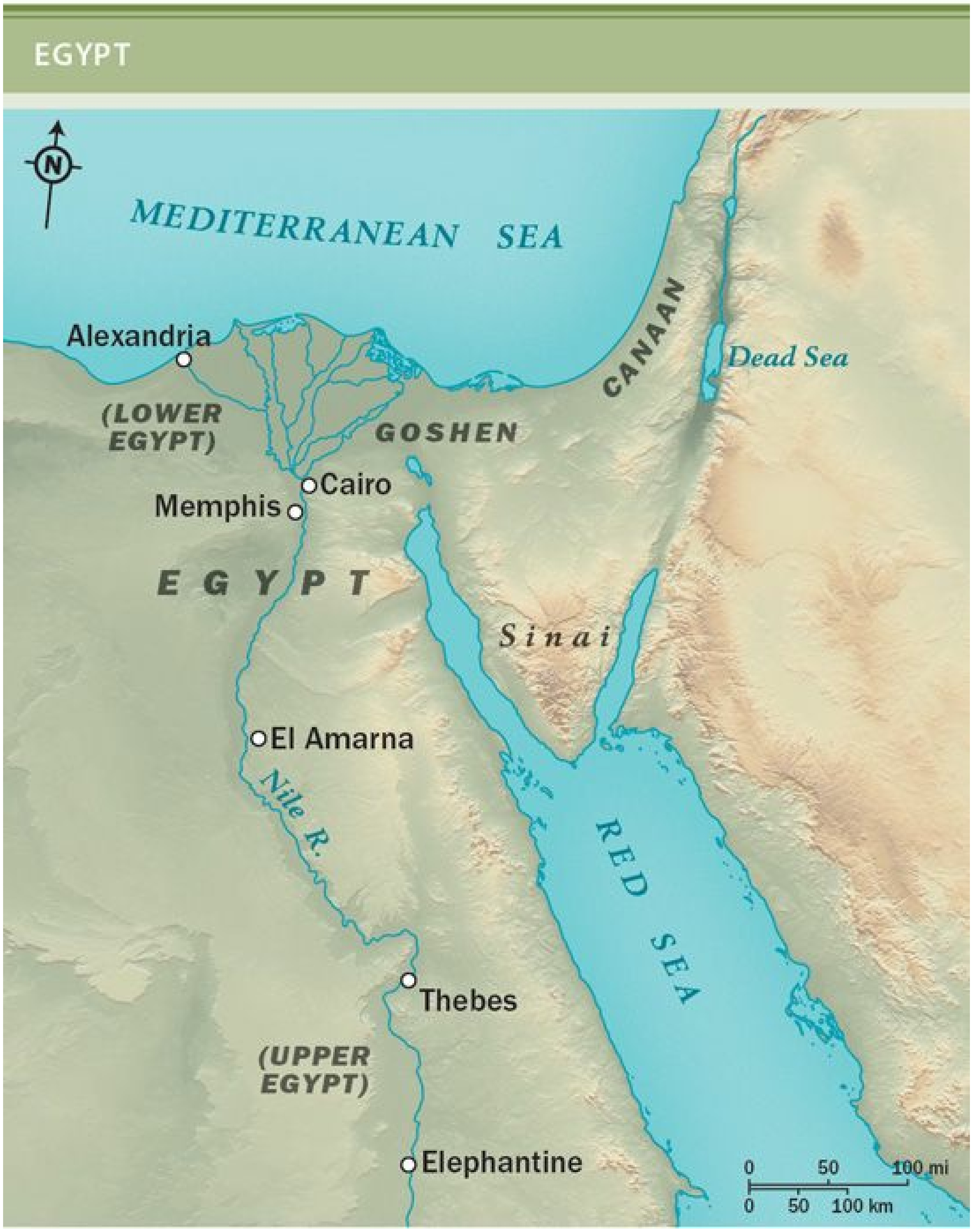
trample the garment or destroy some of the rich man's field to get by. He is unsuccessful in traveling by without trespass, and the rich man seizes his goods and donkey and throws him in jail. The peasant awaits a chance to speak before Pharaoh, who is the judge. When he has a chance to make his appeal, the peasant is so well spoken that Pharaoh keeps him in prison just so he can keep hearing him argue his case day after day! Eventually the poor man's goods are restored, and he is freed.

Old Kingdom (2575–2134 BC). The Old Kingdom capital was Memphis. This period was an age of pyramids and a time of political and economic stability. The agricultural economy grew and prospered. The two largest pyramids were constructed in this period: Khufu's Great Pyramid at Giza and one next to it (along with the Sphinx), belonging to his successor, Chephren. The pyramid workers were not slaves but rather peasants who owed a corvée tax of labor. Workers were paid daily in bread and beer. Egypt was a feudal society. Private citizens could own property, but the pharaoh owned most of the land and parceled it out to his retainers or gave it permanently to temples. The pharaohs sent quarrying expeditions into the deserts for building stone and occasionally made military expeditions southward into Nubia and Punt.

The great pyramid of Giza and the Sphinx

First Intermediate Kingdom (2134–2040 BC) and Middle Kingdom (2040–1640 BC). After the death of Pepy II came economic collapse due to drought and falling tax revenues. These led to political collapse, and power was split among many competing factions. This time of instability is known as the First Intermediate period; it ended when the Eleventh Dynasty pharaoh Mentuhotep II reunified Egypt and reestablished a strong central government. This likely is the period when Abraham visited Egypt and later Joseph, Jacob, and his family entered Egypt. The famous Beni Hasan tomb painting of this period shows a caravan of Semitic peoples moving into Egypt, wearing multicolored clothing. In this period the position of vizier (prime minister) grew to prominence. One vizier, Amenemhet, succeeded to the throne of Egypt. Joseph filled the role of vizier in the biblical account (Gen. 41:39–40). Also dating from this period are turquoise mines in the Sinai region that have the earliest known Semitic inscription. Written on the mine walls in Proto-Sinaitic, this inscription may be the earliest alphabetic script in existence.

Second Intermediate period (1640–1550 BC). At the end of the Middle Kingdom, Egypt again fell into a fractured political situation with the decline of the pharaoh’s power. A Semitic people, the Hyksos (Egyptian for “foreign rulers” or “shepherd kings”), invaded the Nile Delta region and established their capital at Avaris. The Seventeenth Dynasty continued to rule Upper Egypt in the south while the Hyksos were in power. Although the Israelites were servants of Pharaoh from the beginning (keeping his flocks), they were not enslaved until later. It may have been a Hyksos pharaoh or a New Kingdom pharaoh who enslaved them to hard labor.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GOSHEN
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New Kingdom (1550–1069 BC). The last king of the Seventeenth (Theban) Dynasty, Kamose, attacked the Hyksos, but it was his successor, Ahmose, who drove them out and reunified Egypt. Ahmose is considered the first pharaoh of the Eighteenth Dynasty. It may have been Ahmose or one of his successors who enslaved the Hebrews (for more on the Eighteenth Dynasty, *see* Thutmose). During the first half of the New Kingdom, Egypt was at the height of its power and wealth. During this period Egyptians began to call their king “Pharaoh,” meaning “great house.” The Eighteenth Dynasty pharaoh Thutmose III and his son Amenhotep II are good candidates for an early-date exodus (c. 1446 BC). A later king of the Eighteenth Dynasty, Akhenaten, moved the capital to Amarna and shifted his allegiance from Amun-Re, the sun god, to sole worship of the god Aton (sun-disk). For this reason, many identify him as the first monotheist. Akhenaten may have made this move in order to defund the temples and priestly orders that had grown very wealthy and powerful over time. His reforms did not last, and the worship of Amun-Re was restored by his successor, Tutankhamen. The Nineteenth Dynasty warrior Ramesses II is the likely pharaoh of a late-date Exodus (c. 1250 BC).

Third Intermediate period (1069–664 BC). This period was a time of weak and divided government, with capitals in the north and the south. Pharaoh Siamun has been conjectured to be King Solomon's father-in-law, who conquered Gezer and gave it to Solomon as a dowry (c. 960 BC; 1 Kings 9:16). Later, Sheshonq (biblical Shishak), a Libyan pharaoh of the Twenty-second Dynasty, came to the throne and campaigned against Solomon's son Rehoboam, plundering Jerusalem in the process (1 Kings 14:25; 2 Chron. 12:2; cf. 1 Kings 11:40). The African Cushite pharaohs of the Twenty-fifth Dynasty (760–664 BC) ruled the north for a little more than a century but failed to defend against the waves of Assyrian conquest in the seventh century BC.

Late Kingdom period (664–525 BC). The Twenty-sixth (Saite) Dynasty (ruling from the Delta city of Sais) reunified Egypt under native Egyptian control. Pharaoh Necho II tried to support a declining Assyria as a buffer against the Babylonian onslaught but was unsuccessful (c. 609 BC). However, in the process Necho killed King Josiah of Judah in battle at Megiddo and placed one of Josiah's sons, Jehoiakim, as a vassal upon the throne of Judah (2 Kings 23:29–35; cf. 2 Chron. 35:20–36:8; Jer. 46:2). After the Babylonian destruction of Judah/Jerusalem (587/586 BC) and the murder of their Jewish governor, Gedaliah, a group of Jewish exiles fled to Egypt. This group forced the prophet Jeremiah to go with them to Egypt (Jer. 40:1–43:7). A small group of Jewish exiles eventually found their way to a tiny island in the upper Nile, Elephantine, where they established a temple and community; there they worked as mercenaries.

Persian period (525–332 BC). Cambyses II, king of Persia and son of Cyrus the Great, conquered Egypt in 525 BC. His successor, Darius I, ruled Egypt benevolently and resumed the construction of temples and canals. However, Egypt revolted against Persian rule several times, ultimately winning independence in 404 BC with the help of Greek allies. The last native Egyptian pharaoh was Nectanebo II, who ruled in 359–343 BC. However, this period of Egyptian independence was short-lived, with Persia reestablishing control in 343 BC.

Hellenistic-Roman period (332–30 BC; 30 BC and beyond). Alexander the Great conquered Egypt in 332 BC. After Alexander's death, his general Ptolemy took control of Egypt and ruled as pharaoh. From Alexander's conquest to the death of Cleopatra, Egyptian rulers were of Greek descent. After Cleopatra's death (30 BC), Rome annexed Egypt into its empire and governed the country until the fall of the Roman Empire. A large contingent of Jews lived and prospered in the Delta city of Alexandria in this period.

EGYPTIAN, THE Hearing Paul speak Greek, a Roman tribune mistook him for "the Egyptian," who had recently led four thousand terrorists into the wilderness (Acts 21:37–38). Jews had been immigrating to Egypt since the sixth century BC, but they maintained close ties with Jerusalem, often making a pilgrimage to the second temple (see, e.g., the prologue of Sirach; *Let. Aris.* 83–120). Alexandria, a great Egyptian center for Greek learning and culture, had the largest Jewish community outside Palestine. Rome had to quell Jewish rebellions in both regions. The first-century Jewish historian Josephus corroborates the event and adds supplemental detail (*J.W.* 2.261–63; *Ant.* 20.169–72). He claims that the Egyptian was a "false prophet," a messianic "imposter," who deceived an even larger body of people ("thirty thousand" [*J.W.* 2.261] or a "multitude of the common people" [*Ant.* 20.169]). Like the exodus generation, these people wandered in the wilderness, before eventually gathering on the Mount of Olives to besiege Jerusalem. The Egyptian claimed that the city's walls would fall at his command. However, the Roman procurator Felix attacked preemptively. Although the Egyptian escaped, most of his followers were killed or imprisoned. Josephus also mentions the terrorists or "assassins" (*sicarii*), who murdered Roman sympathizers with short, curved swords (e.g., *J.W.* 2.254; *Ant.* 20.186).

EHI One of Benjamin's ten sons (Gen. 46:21). "Ehi" is probably a shortened name. He is likely the same person as Ahiram (Num. 26:38) and Aharah (1 Chron. 8:1).

EHUD **(1)** The second judge, or deliverer, of Israel appointed by God to relieve his people from foreign oppression—in this case, the Moabites. In Judg. 3:15 Ehud, a Benjamite, is said to be left-handed, which, following the LXX (*amphoterodexios*), may actually be a reference to his ambidexterity. Ehud is sent by the Israelites to present a tribute to Eglon, the obese king of Moab. Following the presentation, however, Ehud deceives Eglon by claiming that he has a secret message for him, and when alone, Ehud assassinates the king with a small sword. Ehud escapes unnoticed and rallies Israel to defeat the Moabites (Judg. 3:5–4:1). **(2)** The great-grandson of Benjamin (1 Chron. 7:10). **(3)** The Benjamite father of Naaman, Ahijah, and Gera, who were former inhabitants of Geba exiled to Manahath (1 Chron. 8:6–7).

EKER A descendant of Judah through Ram, the firstborn son of Jerahmeel (1 Chron. 2:27). His brothers were Maaz and Jamin.

EKRON One of the five chief cities of the Philistines, listed as part of the territory of Judah but not taken by Israel at the time of the distribution of the land to tribes (Josh. 13:3; 15:11, 45–46; Judg. 1:18), though it bordered Dan (Josh. 19:43).

Upon the defeat of Hophni and Phinehas, the ark of the covenant was taken to the temple of Dagon in Ashdod. After God demonstrated his displeasure, the Philistines sent the ark to Ekron, where God greatly afflicted the people until they sent it back to Israel (1 Sam. 5).

Ekron served as the entry point from Israel to Philistia, as witnesses the account of the pursuit of the Philistine army to the "gates of Ekron" (1 Sam. 17:52) after David defeated Goliath.

In 2 Kings 1, King Ahaziah is accused of worshiping Baal-Zebub, the god of Ekron. The prophets pronounced oracles announcing the destruction of this city (Jer. 25:20; Amos 1:8; Zeph. 2:4; Zech. 9:5, 7).

Ekron has been identified with a large mound (some fifty acres), Tel Miqne, about fourteen miles from the Mediterranean coast and thirty-five miles southwest of Jerusalem.

EL In the OT, the Hebrew word *ʾel* is used to denote divinity in a generic way or to refer specifically to Yahweh as God. *ʾEl* is often translated "god" in passages such as Deut. 32:21; Isa. 44:10, 15; 46:6. *ʾEl* is understood specifically as God in passages such as 2 Sam. 22:32. Some verses utilize both meanings, as in Exod. 34:14, "Do not worship any other god [*ʾel*], for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God [*ʾel*]." In Genesis several titles for God begin with the word *ʾel* and are used to present God's power and transcendence as well as his concern for humanity. In Gen. 21:33 Abraham calls God *ʾel ʿolam* ("Eternal God"). In Gen. 14:18–22 he is *ʾel ʿelyon* ("God Most High"). In Gen. 16:13 the Egyptian slave Hagar names God *ʾel roʾi* ("God who sees"). God calls himself *ʾel shadday* ("God Almighty") when talking to Abraham (Gen. 17:1) and refers to this name when he reveals to Moses his name as "Yahweh" (Exod. 6:3). In Num. 23:8 *ʾel* is used of God in parallel with "Yahweh." The word *ʾel* appears in the names of locations (e.g., Bethel, "house of God" [Gen. 35:7]) and in many personal names (e.g., "Eliphaz," "Daniel," "Israel").

In ancient Near Eastern texts, especially cuneiform texts found at Ugarit, "El" is a proper name for the head god of the ancient Mesopotamian pantheon. Described as a tent dweller who presides over his divine council on the mount of assembly in the north, El holds many titles, including “creator,” “ancient one,” and “compassionate one.” Texts such as Exod. 34:6 (“The Lord, the Lord [*yhwh*], the compassionate and gracious God [*’el*]”) seem to show an awareness of the biblical writers for this understanding of the word, although they use this material to proclaim the supremacy of Yahweh.

ELA The father of Shimei, a governor of Benjamin during the reign of Solomon (970–930 BC) (1 Kings 4:18).

ELADAH *See* Eleadah.

ELAH The Hebrew word *’elah*, meaning “oak” or “terebinth” (2 Sam. 18:9), is also used as a proper name. **(1)** A tribal ruler descended from Esau (Gen. 36:40–41; 1 Chron. 1:52). **(2)** The wicked son and successor of Baasha. Elah ruled Israel for two years (1 Kings 16:6–14). **(3)** The father of Hoshea, who usurped the Israelite crown (2 Kings 15:30; 17:1). **(4)** A son of Caleb the faithful spy (1 Chron. 4:15). **(5)** A Benjamite living in Jerusalem before the exile (1 Chron. 9:8). **(6)** A valley in the Judean foothills where David killed Goliath (1 Sam. 17), some twelve miles west-southwest of Bethlehem. As one of several fertile valleys in this region between the Philistines on the coastal plain and the Israelites in the hill country, the Elah Valley was a natural battleground between the two peoples.

ELAM Elam is one of the oldest of the ancient civilizations, lasting from 2700 BC to 539 BC. Ancient Elam originally consisted of kingdoms on the Iranian Plateau, centered in Anshan. Later, Susa in the Khuzistan lowlands became prominent in documentation of the Elamite civilization. The kings of Elam in the second and first millennia BC customarily called themselves “King of Anshan and Susa.” Despite progress made by researchers in the last few decades, the history of Elam is still one of the least known of the ancient Near Eastern civilizations. Most of the evidence comes from Mesopotamian royal inscriptions, where Elam is portrayed as being in constant contact, either friendly or hostile, with Babylon and Assyria. Elam’s natural resources (e.g., metals, wood, stone) and its location en route to the sources of certain highly desirable materials (e.g., lapis lazuli, tin) made Elam an object of periodic military campaigns of Mesopotamian kings.

Figurines from ancient Elam

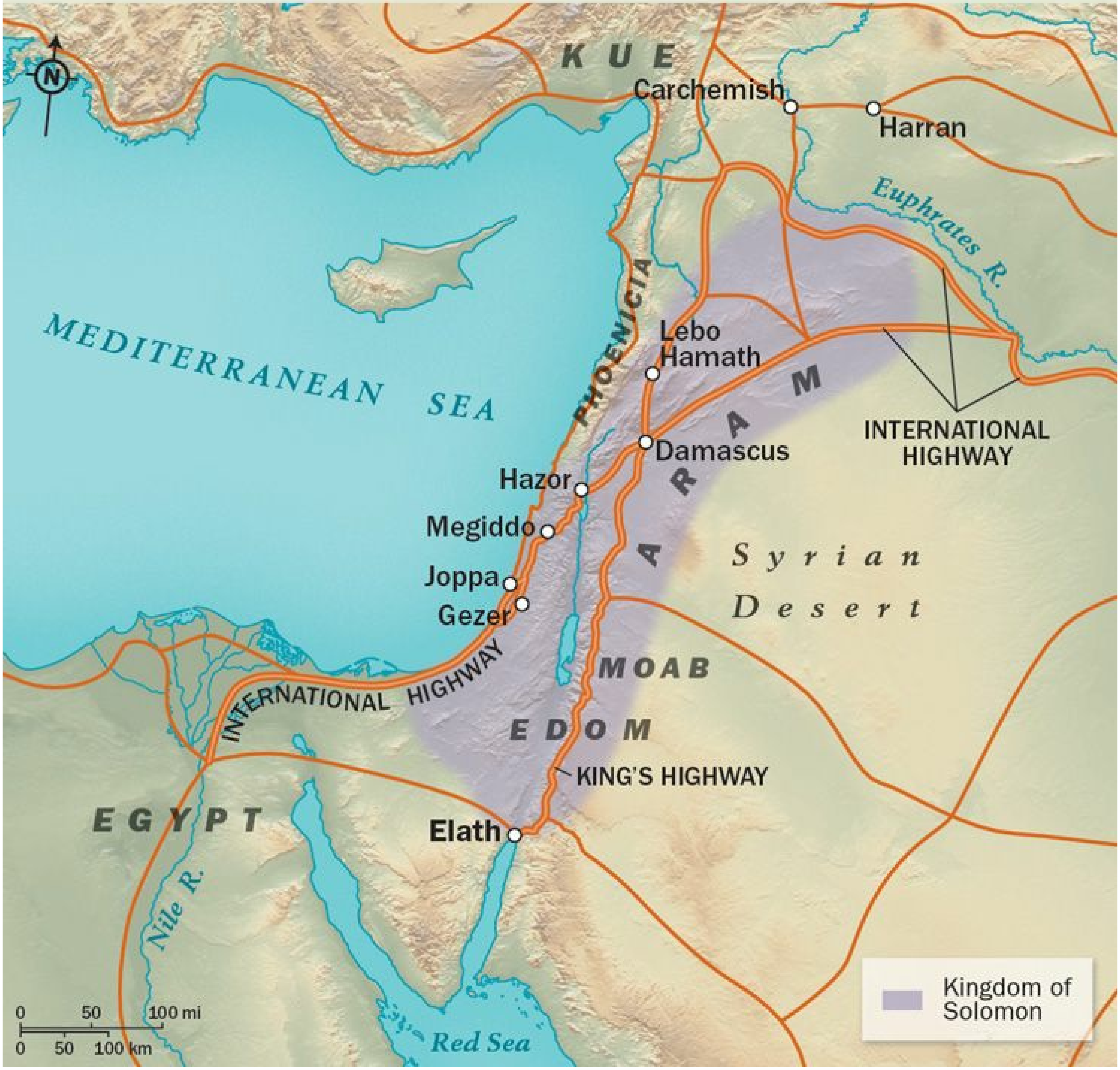
Elam appears in various books of the Bible (e.g., Ezra 4:9; Isa. 11:11; 21:2; 22:6; Jer. 25:25; 49:34–39; Ezek. 32:24; Dan. 8:2; Acts 2:9), including Gen. 14, where Kedorlaomer, king of Elam, is mentioned as one of the kings of the east who defeated the five kings of Sodom and Gomorrah. In the second millennium Elam was a powerful state, so much so that even King Hammurabi addressed an Elamite king as "Father." It is therefore possible that an Elamite king led a coalition of kings on a raid against Canaan. Elam, later subjugated by Assyria during the Assyrian ascendancy (732–604 BC), assisted in its war against Israel. The reference to Elam in Isaiah and Ezekiel (cited above) may be related to this historical fact. During the Achaemenid period, in which the traits of Elamite civilization were still strong, "Elam" was used as a general reference to the Persian province on the Iranian plateau (e.g., Dan. 8:2: "I saw myself in the citadel of Susa in the province of Elam"). In the NT era, Elam, albeit long gone from history, occupied an established place in the view of world history seen as a sequence of world empires (cf. Acts 2:9).

ELASAH The name "Elasah" or "Eleasah" (both are spelled the same in Hebrew) refers to one of four individuals. **(1)** One of the priestly descendants found to have taken a foreign wife after the exile (Ezra 10:22). **(2)** A Judahite official from the prominent scribal family of Shaphan (Jer. 29:3). **(3)** A descendant of Judah, he was the son of Helez and the father of Sismai (1 Chron. 2:39–40; NIV: "Eleasah"). **(4)** A descendant of Benjamin, Saul, and Jonathan through Raphah, he was the father of

Azel (1 Chron. 8:37; 9:43; NIV: "Eleasah").

ELATH This fortified harbor town, near Ezion Geber at the northern extremity of the Gulf of Aqabah (modern Aqabah), was a way station on the important trade routes to southern Arabia, Africa, and India. It is often identified with El Paran in Gen. 14:6.

THE LOCATION OF ELATH



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ARAM
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Hazor
Megiddo
Joppa
Gezer
Syrian Desert
MOAB
INTERNATIONAL HIGHWAY
EDOM
KING'S HIGHWAY
EGYPT
Elath
Nile R.
Red Sea
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Kingdom of Solomon

Due to its importance for the profitable trade with southern Arabia and beyond, control over Elath was a prized object for Israel, Edom, and other rival powers. King Solomon, for instance, built Ezion Geber close to Elath and dispatched the lucrative "ships of Tarshish" from there with the help of

Phoenician sailors (1 Kings 9:26–28; cf. Ps. 48:7). It is possible that the intention of Shishak's campaign in the Negev was to cut off these trade activities, since the Egyptians were the only competitors to Israel's shipping on the Gulf of Aqabah. Later Judean kings, such as Jehoshaphat and Uzziah, rebuilt the Red Sea port to resume trade with southern Arabia, although with much less success (2 Chron. 20:36; 26:2). Elath was handed over to the Edomites during the Syro-Ephramite war.

EL-BERITH The name of a deity associated with a temple near Shechem in Judg. 9:46. The name is synonymous with "Baal-Berith," mentioned earlier in Judg. 9:4. Both El and Baal were Canaanite deities, and *berit* means "covenant." The name "El" later came to be a generic term for God. The context of the reference leaves it unclear whether the name indicates a Canaanite deity or religious syncretism with Yahwism.

EL BETHEL Ancient Luz, named by Jacob "Bethel" ("house of El/God" [Gen. 28:19]). A second theophany thirty years later caused Jacob to rename the place "El Bethel" ("El of the house of El" [Gen. 35:7]). The site was located between Hebron and Shechem, ten miles north of Jerusalem. In thematic progression, Jacob's own name was then changed to "Israel," now reaffirmed in the land (Gen. 35:10). Fulfilling Jacob's earlier vow, a divine person had now eclipsed a mere site—"El of the house of El" (cf. Gen. 28:18–22).

ELDAAH One of the sons of Midian and thus a descendant of Abraham through his wife Keturah (Gen. 25:4; 1 Chron. 1:33).

ELDAD One of the seventy elders of Israel appointed to share the burden of leadership with Moses (Num. 11:26–27). He and Medad began to prophesy within the Israelite camp when the Spirit rested upon them, hence validating their appointment as elders of Israel. The apocryphal book *Eldad and Modad* is purported to have recorded their prophecies, but the only extant portion of it is from a quotation in the *Shepherd of Hermas* 7:3.

ELDER The term "elder" is used variously in Scripture to describe an older man, a person of authority, or an appointed leader in a church office.

Old Testament. The first instance of "elder" in the OT is in Exod. 3:16, where Moses calls the elders of Israel to gather together. These men, seventy in number, most likely were the heads of different families in Israel (Num. 11:16, 24; Deut. 19:12; 21:19). The term "elder" likely indicates both their function as leaders and their age. They were gifted leaders, but they were also wiser because of their experiences in life.

Elders exercised civic and judicial authority in Israel's cities and towns. They made judgments of various kinds, such as disciplining a rebellious son (Deut. 21:18–21), clearing the reputation of a young virgin girl who may have been slandered (22:13–19), and urging obedience to the law and commands of God (27:1).

New Testament. In the Gospels "the elders" are named together with the chief priests as ruling authorities in Israel. They appear to have been the nonpriestly members of the Sanhedrin and, like the Pharisees, scribes, and chief priests, are in frequent conflict with Jesus (e.g., Matt. 16:21; 26:3; 28:12; Mark 7:3; 8:31; Luke 7:3; 9:22). In the book of Acts they come into conflict with the apostles in Jerusalem (Acts 4:23) and are involved in the sentencing and execution of the first martyr, Stephen

(6:12; 7:54–60).

Following the model of Judaism, leaders in the first-century church are often referred to as “elders” (*presbyteroi* [e.g., Acts 11:30; 14:23]). In the Pastoral Epistles elders and “overseers” (or “bishops” [*episkopoi*]) appear to denote the same leadership office. Paul explicitly focuses on the elders’ character when he lists qualifications in 1 Tim. 3:1–7; Titus 1:5–9. Elders must be above reproach in character and behavior. This includes being the husband of one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. Each elder must manage his own family well and require obedience and respect from his children. He must not be a recent convert, and he must have a good reputation with outsiders. If the elder does not manage his own family well, how can he take care of God’s church (1 Tim. 3:5)? God’s calling to lead the church requires people of godly character.

Elders not only teach and lead (1 Tim. 3:2; 5:17), but they are also called to shepherd the flock. The apostle Peter provides insight into how an elder should lead, exhorting them to shepherd not under compulsion but willingly and by example (1 Pet. 5:1–5). They should follow the example of the chief shepherd, Jesus (5:4). This leadership must be done in humility, since God is opposed to the proud (5:5).

The last mention of elders in the NT is in the glimpse of heaven given in the book of Revelation. In Rev. 19:4 twenty-four elders are said to serve in a priestly role as part of the worship before God. The identity of these elders is uncertain. They may be angelic beings or representatives of the twelve tribes of Israel and the twelve apostles.

ELEAD A descendant of Ephraim who was killed along with his brother Ezer when the brothers went to steal the cattle of the natives of Gath (1 Chron. 7:21).

ELEADAH A descendant, apparently, of Ephraim through Tahath (1 Chron. 7:20). Some have suggested, however, that Elead of 1 Chron. 7:21–22 is the same person, which would make Eleadah a son of Ephraim.

ELEALEH A city with good pastureland that was allotted to the tribe of Reuben at the Reubenites’ request (Num. 32:3, 37). It had formerly been controlled by Sihon king of the Amorites. Elealeh lay near the city of Heshbon (see Isa. 15:4; 16:9; Jer. 48:34), about ten miles from the site of modern Amman, Jordan.

ELEASAH *See* Elasah.

ELEAZAR **(1)** The third son of Aaron, who succeeded his father as the second high priest after his older brothers Nadab and Abihu disqualified themselves by offering incense different from that which God commanded (Lev. 10:1–7). Eleazar had assisted his father and Moses against a rebellion of other Levites who wanted equal status with the priestly family of Aaron (Num. 16:36–40). Aaron failed to enter the promised land because he and Moses rebelled against God at the rock of Meribah (Num. 20:1–13). On Mount Hor, and in the presence of Moses, Aaron took off his high priestly garments and put them on his son Eleazar. Eleazar was the high priest during the conquest and, along with Joshua, cast the sacred lots to determine where each tribe should settle (Josh. 14:1–5). Upon Eleazar’s death, his son Phinehas succeeded him as high priest.

(2) During the early judgeship of Samuel, the son of Abinadab who was consecrated to guard the ark of the covenant at his father's house in Kiriath Jearim, where it lodged after being returned by the Philistines (1 Sam. 7:1). **(3)** One of David's mighty men, renowned for his personal combat against the Philistines (2 Sam. 23:9–10; 1 Chron. 11:12). **(4)** A Levite of the clan of Merari (1 Chron. 23:21–22; 24:28). **(5)** The son of Phinehas who helped to weigh the silver, gold, and sacred articles at the time of Ezra (Ezra 8:33). **(6)** An Israelite guilty of intermarriage at the time of Ezra (Ezra 10:25). **(7)** A temple musician who sang on the day that Nehemiah dedicated the wall of Jerusalem (Neh. 12:42). **(8)** An ancestor of Joseph, the father of Jesus (Matt. 1:15).

ELECTION The choice or selection of a person or group, especially God's determination of who will be saved.

TERMINOLOGY

On occasion, the language of being "elect" is used as a description of Christ, or perhaps even a title. Isaiah, in one of his Servant Songs, gives a description that is probably best taken as a veiled reference to Christ in his unique relationship with the Father: "Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen [or 'elect'] one in whom I delight; I will put my Spirit on him, and he will bring justice to the nations" (Isa. 42:1). There is similar usage in the NT, where Jesus is described in 1 Pet. 2:6 (using a quotation from Isa. 28:16): "For in Scripture it says: 'See, I lay a stone in Zion, a chosen [or 'elect'] and precious cornerstone, and the one who trusts in him will never be put to shame.' "

Many times the word "elect" is used in Scripture as a synonym for believers. For example, Jesus speaks of the future time when "he will send his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other" (Matt. 24:31). Similarly, Peter addresses his first letter "to God's elect" (1 Pet. 1:1). John does something similar in his second letter, addressed to "the lady chosen by God [KJV, RSV: "elect lady"] and to her children, whom I love in the truth" (2 John 1).

ELECTION AND SALVATION

There is more to this terminology, though, than simply a descriptive name for Christ or God's people. Other passages are more explanatory in nature and imply a definite and active place for God's involvement in the salvation process. For example, Peter continues on in his introduction to his first letter with a description of the elect as those "who have been chosen [KJV: 'elect'] according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, to be obedient to Jesus Christ and sprinkled with his blood" (1 Pet. 1:2). Here there is the key question of how we should understand the role of God's foreknowledge in the expression "chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father." Some argue that this is simply telling us that God is able to look forward and know ahead of time who will exercise faith and be saved, so salvation is simply based on a purely human decision after all.

However, Rom. 9 suggests otherwise. This chapter, perhaps more than any other, sheds light on God's election of his people. Paul is in the process of explaining how God's plan of redemption (which he has been developing in Rom. 1–8) applies to his own Jewish people. If the gospel is really as powerful as Paul claims, why has it produced so little fruit among God's own covenant people, the Jews? Paul answers, "It is not as though God's word had failed. For not all who are descended from Israel are Israel" (9:6). Then, in the following verses, Paul explains what he means by "not all Israel are Israel." Not every child of Abraham is a child of faith (9:7–13). The promise has come only through Isaac, and not through Abraham's other sons, Ishmael and the six sons of Keturah (see Gen. 25:1). Similarly, the line of promise and blessing does not involve all of Isaac and Rebekah's children either, but only Jacob and not Esau (9:10–13). Here Paul explains, "Before the twins were born or had done anything good or bad—in order that God's purpose in election might stand: not by works but by him who calls" (9:11–12). In support of this conclusion, Paul quotes from Mal. 1:2–3: "Just as it is written: 'Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated' " (9:13). The bottom line, according to Paul, is not one's ancestry at all, but God's own choice. God tells Moses in Exod. 33:19, "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion" (quoted in Rom. 9:15). Paul gives his summary of election: "It does not, therefore, depend on human desire or effort, but on God's mercy" (9:16). He rests his case with the classic OT illustration of God's hardening of Pharaoh (9:17) before concluding, "Therefore God has mercy on whom he wants to have mercy, and he hardens whom he wants to harden" (9:18).

Romans 9 is not an isolated passage of Scripture. The apostle John says much the same of Jesus' ministry, and how salvation is specifically to all "those who believed in his name"; to them "he gave the right to become children of God—children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God" (John 1:12–13). The last part of this passage is key: salvation ultimately depends not upon "natural descent" or one's human ancestry (including whether one is Jewish or not), nor upon "human decision" (including any and all acts of the human will), nor upon a "husband's will" (a more difficult expression that probably refers to the decisions of others in the family), but solely and ultimately only on being "born of God."

HARDENING OF HEARTS AND THE NONELECT

Certainly, there is a mystery in all of this. There is no easy way to understand the negative process of the hardening of Pharaoh's heart or to explain the mechanics of the positive process of election. Scripture often describes God himself as the one who has hardened the hearts of various individuals. In Exod. 4:21, for example, God says to Moses, "I will harden [Pharaoh's] heart so that he will not let the people go." Other times, Scripture is less clear and simply tells us that "Pharaoh's heart became hard" (Exod. 7:13). Then there are still other times when Pharaoh himself is described as being actively involved in this process of hardening his own heart, such as "when Pharaoh saw that there was relief, he hardened his heart and would not listen to Moses and Aaron" (Exod. 8:15). Undoubtedly, the best way to understand this is to see a negative response such as the hardening of a person's heart as a combination of the active will of fallen human beings and the mysterious workings of a sovereign God. In a similar way, both salvation and spiritual growth are other spiritual realities that also involve the mysterious combination of God's direct involvement in people's lives and the necessity of their own human response. Paul captures this tension in Phil. 2:12–13: "Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose."

There is also the question of the nonelect, sometimes put in terms of "reprobation" or "double predestination." If God is actively involved in the positive act of bringing human beings into a proper relationship with himself in salvation, is he actively involved equally in choosing those who will never respond in faith and will suffer an eternity of judgment apart from him? Again, Christians are divided, and simplistic overgeneralizations do little to advance our understanding of this topic. Those who give precedence to God's sovereignty in their understanding of the process of salvation usually see a greater involvement of God in the decisions of those who do not respond in faith; those who emphasize human involvement in salvation will also emphasize human decision in those who do not respond.

Those who emphasize God's sovereignty in this mystery of the faith lean toward the Calvinistic or Reformed end of the scale. They tend also to emphasize the total depravity of humanity: the notion not that people are as bad as they can possibly be, but simply that sin has tainted every area of the mind, will, and emotions, making a positive turning to God, apart from God's grace, humanly impossible. They also emphasize the definite atonement, the doctrine that Christ died specifically for the elect. On the other hand, those who emphasize human involvement, often called "Arminians," tend to emphasize the importance of human free will in order to create a sense of responsibility for one's decisions. They also emphasize an unlimited atonement, the doctrine that Christ died potentially for anyone and everyone.

SUMMARY

The proper balance in Scripture seems to involve both God's sovereignty and human involvement. Peter captures some of this need for balance: "Therefore, my brothers and sisters, make every effort to confirm your calling and election. For if you do these things, you will never stumble" (2 Pet. 1:10). Election is ultimately God's work, but at the same time there is a human involvement in it. Charles Spurgeon's illustration seems appropriate here. Human will and predestination are like the two rails on a railroad track: everywhere we look they are separate and distinct and thus irreconcilable; yet it is only off in the distance (really in the mind of God himself) that these two complementary truths come together in their perfect resolution. There is no question that "elect" and "election" are biblical terms; the key question is how to understand this difficult topic and to work out all the logical implications in terms of sharing the gospel with others in a meaningful and appropriate manner.

ELECT LADY The KJV and RSV term for the recipient of the letter of 2 John (v. 1). Not much is known about the identity of this "lady chosen by God" (NIV), though there are several possibilities. The phrase may refer to a personal friend or a prominent church member of John's acquaintance, along with her biological children. More probably, however, John uses the phrase as a metaphor for a particular church community and its members, a usage consistent with other NT images of the church (see Eph. 5:25–27; cf. Rev. 21:2).

EL ELOHE ISRAEL The name that Jacob associates with his altar in Gen. 33:20. It can be translated as "El [a name of God] is the God of Israel." The name indicates Jacob's new designation ("Israel") and his loyalty to the God who gave it to him.

EL ELYON *See* El; Names of God.

ELEMENTS, ELEMENTARY SPIRITS The Greek term *stoicheia*, which occurs seven times in the NT, is used in ancient religions and philosophy to refer to the basic rudiments or first principles —what today might be called the ABC's of some area of knowledge. The author of Hebrews chides his readers, "Though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God's word all over again" (5:12). Instead, the challenge is for believers to leave behind "the elementary teachings about Christ and be taken forward to maturity" (6:1). Other times, this language is used to refer to the basic principles of this present world system and how at one time we "were enslaved to the elementary principles of the world" (Gal. 4:3 ESV). Paul also warns us that these “elements” of the present world system around us can be a source of ongoing temptation to believers of “turning back to those weak and miserable forces” and being “enslaved by them all over again” (4:9). This language is used in still another way to refer to the basic building blocks of the universe, especially in relationship to the future day of the Lord, when “the heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything done in it will be laid bare” (2 Pet. 3:10). This picture is so vivid in Peter’s mind that he repeats this thought two verses later when he reminds us that the day of God “will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat” (3:12).

ELEPH *See* Haeleph.

ELEPHANTS Native to Africa and southern Asia, elephants prefer jungle and forest habitats but can adapt to any environment with sufficient vegetation. No elephants lived in Palestine, but wealthy Israelites sometimes imported ivory from elephant tusks. Solomon “made a great throne covered with ivory” (1 Kings 10:18). King Ahab built an ivory house (1 Kings 22:39). Extensive use of ivory attests to the prominence and power of Tyre (Ezek. 27:6).

Ivory sphinx from Phoenicia, carved from an elephant’s tusk

ELHANAN **(1)** “Elhanan son of Dodo from Bethlehem” is listed among David’s thirty mighty men (2 Sam. 23:24 // 1 Chron. 11:26). **(2)** Elhanan is one of David’s four warriors who engaged in single combat with Philistine champions (2 Sam. 21:19 // 1 Chron. 20:5). The parallel accounts, however, are not the same. According to 2 Samuel, Elhanan killed Goliath (contra 1 Sam. 17). According to 1 Chronicles, Elhanan killed “Lahmi the brother of Goliath.” If 2 Samuel is preferred, one might argue that “Elhanan” was actually David’s birth name. If 1 Chronicles is preferred, one might explain the 2 Samuel account as a scribal error.

ELI The chief priest of Israel at the tabernacle at Shiloh toward the end of the period of judges (1 Sam. 1:1–4:22). He is described as both physically and spiritually flabby. He is not evil, just spiritually undiscerning. Also, he fails to discipline his two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, who are wicked. Young Samuel is placed in Eli’s care, and right from the start the narrative draws a contrast between the former’s spiritual sensitivity and the latter’s dullness (see esp. 1 Sam. 3). God eventually commissions a prophet to announce the end of Eli’s priestly line (1 Sam. 2:27–36). He ends badly when his sons, who are leading the army against the Philistines, are defeated and killed. When he gets the news, Eli falls off a log and breaks his neck. Even so, his descendants continue as priests until the time of David. At that time, though, the prophetic announcement comes to fulfillment, and the priesthood passes from his descendant Abiathar and goes to Zadok (1 Kings 2:27, 35).

ELIAB **(1)** A leader of the tribe of Zebulun, the son of Helon (Num. 1:9; 2:7–8; 7:24–29). **(2)** A son of Pallu, of the tribe of Reuben, and the father of Dathan and Abiram (Num. 26:8–9), who rebelled against Moses (Num. 16:1–3, 12–14; Deut. 11:6). **(3)** A Levite descended from Kohath who was the great-grandfather of the prophet Samuel (1 Chron. 6:22–27). He is called “Elihu” in 1 Sam. 1:1. **(4)** The eldest son of Jesse and brother of David (1 Sam. 17:13) and father of Abihail (2 Chron. 11:18). Eliab is best known for rebuking David when he inquired about the reward that would be given to the slayer of the Philistine champion Goliath (1 Sam. 17:26–28). Eliab appears to have been jealous of or embarrassed by David. **(5)** A warrior from the tribe of Gad and friend of David (1 Chron. 12:9). **(6)** A Levitical musician during David’s reign (1 Chron. 15:18).

ELIADA A son of David born to an unnamed wife during the time he reigned from Jerusalem (2 Sam. 5:16; 1 Chron. 3:8). In the list in 1 Chron. 14 (v. 7) he is named “Beeliada” (formed from the divine name “Baal” rather than “El”: “Baal/El knows”).

ELIADAH *See* Eliada.

ELIAH *See* Elijah.

ELIAHBA One of David’s thirty warriors, Eliahba was a Shaalbonite (2 Sam. 23:32; 1 Chron. 11:33).

ELIAKIM **(1)** Son of Hilkiah, he was a palace administrator during the reign of Hezekiah (2 Kings 18:18, 26, 37; 19:2; Isa. 22:20–25; 36:3; 37:2). **(2)** A son of Josiah who was crowned king by Pharaoh Necho king of Egypt instead of his brother Jehoahaz (2 Kings 23:34; 2 Chron. 36:4). Pharaoh Necho changed Eliakim’s name to “Jehoiakim” (2 Chron. 36:4). During his reign, Judah faced multiple invasions of Babylonians, Arameans, Moabites, and Ammonites (2 Kings 24:2; 2 Chron. 36:5–7). **(3)** One of the priestly musicians who performed during the ceremony dedicating the rebuilt wall of Jerusalem (Neh. 12:41). **(4)** An ancestor of Jesus in Matthew's genealogy (Matt. 1:13). **(5)** An ancestor of Jesus in Luke's genealogy (Luke 3:30).

ELIAM The name "Eliam" occurs twice in the OT, perhaps for two different men, but more probably referring to the same man in two separate roles. **(1)** The father of Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah the Hittite (2 Sam. 11:3). He is called "Ammiel" in 1 Chron. 3:5. **(2)** One of David's thirty warriors, a son of Ahithophel, from the clan of the Gilonites (2 Sam. 23:34).

ELIAS The Greek form of the name "Elijah" as used in the NT and some apocryphal books (e.g., Matt. 11:14; 17:3, 11; 1 Esd. 9:27; 1 Macc. 2:58; Sir. 48:1, 12).

ELIASAPH **(1)** The son of Deuel, he was the tribal leader of Gad during the wilderness wanderings. He helped Moses during the taking of the military registration (Num. 1:14) and is mentioned in the description of the camp's layout (Num. 2:14). He presented Gad's offering for the sanctuary (Num. 7:42, 47) and is noted as the leader of Gad when the tribe departed from Sinai along with the rest of Israel (Num. 10:20). **(2)** The son of Lael, also during the wilderness period. He was the head of the Gershonite clan of the Levites (Num. 3:24), which was the clan responsible for the care and transporting of the curtains associated with the sanctuary.

ELIASHIB **(1)** A son of Elioenai, a descendant of David in the postexilic period (1 Chron. 3:24). **(2)** The Levite leader of the eleventh priestly division, set apart by David (1 Chron. 24:12). **(3)** The father of the high priest Jehohanan, who provided a room for Ezra to spend the night during his mourning over Israel's unfaithfulness (Ezra 10:6). **(4)** A singer who agreed to divorce his foreign wife during the time of Ezra (Ezra 10:24). **(5)** A descendant of Zattu who agreed to divorce his foreign wife during the time of Ezra (Ezra 10:27). **(6)** A descendant of Bani who agreed to divorce his foreign wife during the time of Ezra (Ezra 10:36). **(7)** The high priest who, along with his fellow priests, rebuilt the Sheep Gate during the time of Nehemiah (Neh. 3:1). Eliashib returned to Jerusalem with Zerubbabel after the exile, and he is described as the son of Joiakim and the father of Joiada (Neh. 12:10). Eliashib's grandson (Joiada's son) married into the house of Sanballat the Horonite, Nehemiah's adversary (Neh. 13:28). **(8)** The priest placed in charge of the storerooms who provided Tobiah with a large room (Neh. 13:4–9).

ELIATHAH A son of Heman, who was one of the chief musicians along with Asaph and Jeduthun, set apart by David as prophets and musicians (1 Chron. 25:4). Eliathah along with his thirteen brothers and the sons of Asaph and Jeduthun were temple musicians (1 Chron. 25:5–6). He was the head of the twentieth division of the temple musicians (1 Chron. 25:27).

ELIDAD A son of Kislon appointed as a representative of the tribe of Benjamin when Israel prepared for the division of the promised land as commanded by Moses prior to the conquest (Num. 34:21).

ELIEHOENAI **(1)** A temple gatekeeper in Meshelemiah's division of gatekeepers. He was the seventh son of Meshelemiah (1 Chron. 26:1–3). **(2)** A son of Zerahiah and a head of the descendants of Pahath-Moab who returned from exile under the leadership of Ezra (Ezra 8:4).

ELIEL **(1)** One of the heads of the families of the half-tribe of Manasseh (1 Chron. 5:23–24). **(2)** A temple musician from the family line of Heman the Kohathite (1 Chron. 6:34). **(3)** A son of Shemei from the tribe of Benjamin (1 Chron. 8:19–21). **(4)** A son of Shashak from the tribe of Benjamin (1 Chron. 8:22–25). **(5)** One of David's mighty warriors, a Mahavite (1 Chron. 11:46). **(6)** One of David's mighty warriors, a Mezobaite (1 Chron. 11:47). **(7)** The seventh army commander from the Gadites (1 Chron. 12:11). **(8)** A leader of the descendants of Hebron from the Levites (1 Chron. 15:9, 11). **(9)** A supervisor of the temple contributions, tithes, and dedications during the reign of Hezekiah (2 Chron. 31:13).

ELIENAI A son of Shimei from the tribe of Benjamin as listed from the genealogy of those who lived in Jerusalem (1 Chron. 8:20).

ELIEZER **(1)** A servant of Abram from Damascus (Gen. 15:2). He probably was Abram's adopted son and potential heir of his household (15:4–5). **(2)** A second son of Moses, born in Midian (Exod. 4:19–20); his brother was Gershom and his mother was Zipporah (Exod. 18:1–6; 1 Chron. 23:15). He had only one son, Rehabiah (1 Chron. 23:17). **(3)** A son of Beker, one of Benjamin's sons (1 Chron. 7:8). **(4)** One of the priests who played the trumpets when the ark of the covenant was brought to Jerusalem (1 Chron. 15:24). **(5)** A son of Zikri, and a chief of the tribe of Reuben during the reign of David (1 Chron. 27:16). **(6)** A son of Dodavahu of Mareshah. He prophesied against King Jehoshaphat's alliance with King Ahaziah (2 Chron. 20:37). **(7)** A learned man among those sent by Ezra to Iddo with a request for temple servants (Ezra 8:16–17). **(8, 9, 10)** Three individuals from the priestly line listed among those who married foreign women during the time of Ezra's revival (Ezra 10:18, 23, 31). **(11)** An ancestor of Jesus in Luke's genealogy (Luke 3:29).

ELIHOENAI *See* Eliehoenai.

ELIHOREPH A high official who, along with his brother, Ahijah, served as a scribe in Solomon's administration (1 Kings 4:3). Elihoreph and Ahijah were sons of Shisha.

ELIHU **(1)** The great-grandfather of Samuel the prophet (1 Sam. 1:1, 20). **(2)** A captain of a thousand who defected to David at Ziklag (1 Chron. 12:20). **(3)** The son of Shemaiah, and a gatekeeper of the temple (1 Chron. 26:7). **(4)** One of the leaders of Judah and brother of King David (1 Chron. 27:18), possibly identical to Eliab (1 Sam. 16:6). **(5)** The son of Barakel who mysteriously appeared and restarted the discussion after Job and his three friends had finished. After listening to his elders, he became angry with Job for justifying himself and with the friends because they had no answer (Job 32:2–5). His lengthy speeches (Job 32:6–37:24), emphasizing God's sovereignty, set up God's final response from the whirlwind.

ELIHUD Mentioned only in Matthew's genealogy of Jesus (Matt. 1:14–15), as the son of Akim. He was the great-great-grandfather of Joseph, the husband of Mary the mother of Jesus.

ELIJAH **(1)** A true prophet raised up by God during the reign of Ahab of Israel (ninth century BC) in order to counter fast-rising idolatry fueled by the king and his foreign-born wife, Jezebel.

False worship at this time focused on Baal, a major Canaanite deity who was the god of fertility, having power over dew, rain, lightning, and thunder. Thus, as people turned to Baal for these life-giving forces, God shut up the heavens so there would be no rain in Israel (1 Kings 17:1). God also at this time sent Elijah the Tishbite to confront the king.

Elijah lived in the wilderness, perhaps to escape the vengeance of the royal couple and to avoid being tainted by the perversities of the state of Israel. He had a distinctive appearance: very hairy and dressed in a loincloth (2 Kings 1:8).

Through the performance of miraculous acts, Elijah demonstrated that God was with him. The first such act was multiplying the food supplies of a widow who provided him with food. Even more dramatically, he prayed for the woman's son when the child died, and the dead boy began to breathe again (1 Kings 17:17–24).

SURREXIT ELIAS
PROPHETA QUASI
IGNIS ET VERBUM
IPSIUS QUASI FACULA
ARDEBAT
وقام ايليا النبي كالنار وتوقد كلامه
كالمشعل
ויקם אליהו הנביא כאש
ודברו כלפיד בער
(בן סירא מח. א)

Statue of Elijah the prophet at the Carmelite Monastery on Mount Carmel

Elijah's most dramatic moment came when he confronted Ahab and his many Baal prophets on Mount Carmel (1 Kings 18). Yahweh fought Baal on the latter's terms. The object was whether Yahweh or Baal could throw fire from heaven to light the altar fire. Baal was purportedly a specialist at throwing fire (lightning), and his prophets went first. However, because Baal did not really exist, they failed. When Yahweh's turn came, Elijah increased the stakes by pouring water on the wood. Yahweh, the one true God, threw fire from heaven, which burned the sacrifice, wood, stones, and dirt, and even dried up the water. Soon thereafter, God opened up the skies so that it rained again. Even so, Ahab and then his son Ahaziah (2 Kings 1) continued to worship Baal.

Elijah continued to confront the wicked idolatry of these kings. God used him to pronounce judgment against Ahab and Jezebel, as well as the dynasty, after the royal pair unjustly had Naboth the Jezreelite executed simply so they could possess his field (1 Kings 21).

Elijah was a devoted servant of Yahweh. Before Elijah passed from this life, God introduced him to his successor, Elisha. When the end came, he did not die but rather was caught up to heaven (2 Kings 2:1–18)—only the second person reported to leave this life without dying (cf. Enoch in Gen. 5:21–24).

Toward the end of the OT period, the prophet Malachi announced the coming day of the Lord (Mal. 4:5–6). As a precursor to that day, God would send the prophet Elijah as a forerunner. Some people thought that Jesus was Elijah (Matt. 16:14; Mark 6:15; 8:28; Luke 9:8, 19), but Jesus is the one who ushers in the kingdom of God. John the Baptist was his forerunner, and so it was he who is rightly associated with Elijah (Matt. 11:13–14). Indeed, his wilderness lifestyle and ministry echoed those of Elijah. At the Mount of Transfiguration, Elijah appeared to Jesus along with Moses; these two wilderness figures represented the prophets and the law (Matt. 17:1–13; Mark 9:2–13; Luke 9:28–36).

(2) A descendant of Benjamin and ancestor of Saul (1 Chron. 8:27). **(3)** A descendant of Harim, who married a foreign woman during the time of Ezra (Ezra 10:21). **(4)** A descendant of Elam, who married a foreign woman during the time of Ezra (Ezra 10:26).

ELIKA One of David's thirty mighty men, described along with Shammah as a "Harodite" (2 Sam. 23:25). The name is a short form of "Elikam," meaning "God has risen (for battle)."

ELIM The second named stopping place of the people of Israel after they crossed the Red Sea (Exod. 15:22–16:1; Num. 33:8–10). It was said to house "twelve springs and seventy palm trees" (Exod. 15:27), and it provided a resting place before they entered the Desert of Sin.

ELIMELECH *See* Elimelek.

ELIMELEK A man from Bethlehem of the tribe of Judah and the husband of Naomi. The story of Ruth begins as if it is about Elimelek, who takes his family to Moab during a famine. When he dies, the focus of the story shifts to Naomi (Ruth 1:1–5).

ELIOENAI **(1)** A member of the royal line of David. His father was Neariah, and he had seven sons (1 Chron. 3:23–24). **(2)** A clan leader within the tribe of Simeon (1 Chron. 4:36). **(3)** A descendant of Benjamin through Beker (1 Chron. 7:8). **(4)** A man from the priestly line who was descended from Pashhur and among those guilty of marrying foreign women during Ezra's time (Ezra 10:22). **(5)** A descendant of Zattu who was also among those guilty of marrying foreign women (Ezra 10:27). **(6)** One of the priests in Nehemiah's time (Neh. 12:41), possibly the same Elioenai as in Ezra 10:22. See also the KJV of 1 Chron. 26:3, where other versions read "Elihoenai."

ELIPHAL Son of Ur and one of David's thirty mighty men (1 Chron. 11:35). The parallel list in 2 Sam. 23 (v. 34) refers to him as Eliphelet son of Ahasbai the Maakathite.

ELIPHALET *See* Eliphelet.

ELIPHAZ **(1)** Son of Esau by his Hittite wife Adah (Gen. 36:4; 1 Chron. 1:35). **(2)** One of Job's three friends and interlocutors, identified as a Temanite (Job 2:11). Teman is one of the sons of Esau's son Eliphaz (Gen. 36:11). The participation of Eliphaz in the wisdom discussion of Job is appropriate, as the line of Teman was known elsewhere in the Bible for its sages (Jer. 49:7). Eliphaz is prominent among Job's three friends, and he speaks three times (Job 4–5; 15; 22). God spoke to Eliphaz as a representative of the three friends (42:7).

ELIPHELEHU One of the Levite gatekeepers appointed to play the harp (or lyre) when the ark of the covenant was transported from the house of Obed-Edom to Jerusalem (1 Chron. 15:18, 21). In the KJV the name is "Elipheleh."

ELIPHELET **(1)** A son of David born to an unnamed wife during the time he reigned from Jerusalem (2 Sam. 5:16; 1 Chron. 3:8; 14:7; KJV: "Eliphalet"). The name occurs a second time in the list in 1 Chron. 3 (vv. 6, 8), though this may be a textual mistake rather than a second individual. In the parallel list in 1 Chron. 14:4–7, the first of these two names appears as Elpelet (KJV: "Elpalet"). **(2)** One of the thirty mighty men in David's army, the son of Ahasbai the Maakathite (2 Sam. 23:34). The parallel list in 1 Chron. 11 (v. 35) refers to him as Eliphal son of Ur. **(3)** A Benjamite, a descendant of Eshek (1 Chron. 8:39). **(4)** A descendant of Adonikam who returned with Ezra to Jerusalem (Ezra 8:13). **(5)** A descendant of Hashum who was among those guilty of marrying foreign women during the time of Ezra (Ezra 10:33).

ELISEUS The KJV rendering of the Greek spelling of the name "Elisha" (*Elisaios*) in Luke 4:27.

ELISHA Prophet, coworker of and then successor to Elijah. Both men resisted the Baal worship that infected the northern kingdom during the reign of Ahab and his successors (Ahaziah, Jehoram, Jehu, Jehoahaz, and Jehoash) in the latter half of the ninth and first half of the eighth centuries BC.

Elisha began as a disciple of Elijah, whom God had used to confront Ahab and Jezebel's prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel (1 Kings 18). When Elijah was taken to heaven, Elisha succeeded him (2 Kings 2:19–23). God accredited Elisha as prophet and demonstrated his authority through miracles. Many of the miracles involve water, such as making the bitter water of Jericho drinkable (2 Kings 2:19–23) and raising an ax head from the bottom of the Jordan River (6:1–7). These miracles were implicitly directed at Baal and his supporters, since Baal was thought to be a god who specialized in providing and controlling the waters.

Elisha also demonstrated God's power and compassion with acts such as providing a poor woman with olive oil (2 Kings 4:1–7), curing a Syrian general of leprosy (2 Kings 5), and even raising a child from the dead (4:8–37).

God also told the prophet to anoint Hazael, king of Syria, and Jehu, a military man who usurped the throne of Israel (2 Kings 8:7–15; 9:1–13). God used these men to bring a violent conclusion to those leaders who promoted the worship of Baal.

Elisha's miracles continued even after his death. Some Israelites threw a dead man's body in Elisha's grave, and when it touched Elisha's bones, the man sprang back to life (2 Kings 13:20–21).

ELISHAH **(1)** A descendant of Japheth, a son of Javan (Gen. 10:4; 1 Chron. 1:7). **(2)** A place whose name is presumably derived from the Elishah of Gen. 10:4; 1 Chron. 1:7. Its location is in the Aegean, based on the following: Elishah is associated with Javan (Greece) and the Kittites (associated with Cyprus), and it is a producer of blue and purple fabric (Ezek. 27:7). Texts from the second millennium BC suggest that the name referred to Cyprus, either its eastern coast or the whole.

ELISHAMA **(1)** A son of Ammihud; a head of the tribe of Ephraim and a grandfather of Joshua, son of Nun (Num. 1:10; 2:18; 7:48, 53; 10:22; 1 Chron. 7:26). **(2)** A son of Jekamiah from the tribe of Judah through the line of Jerahmeel (1 Chron. 2:41). **(3)** One of the sons of David born to him during his thirty-three-year reign in Jerusalem (2 Sam. 5:16; 1 Chron. 3:8; 14:7). **(4)** One of the priests among those sent out to teach the law during the reign of Jehoshaphat (2 Chron. 17:8). **(5)** The secretary of King Jehoiakim (Jer. 36:12, 20–21). **(6)** An official from the royal bloodline for King Zedekiah (2 Kings 25:25). He was grandfather of Ishmael the slayer of Gedaliah, a ruler whom Nebuchadnezzar appointed over those who remained in Judah (Jer. 41:1).

ELISHAPHAT Son of Zikri, he was one of the commanders of the units of a hundred, who aligned themselves with Jehoiada the priest to overthrow Athaliah and establish Joash as king over Judah (2 Chron. 23:1).

ELISHEBA Wife of Aaron, daughter of Amminadab, sister of Nahshon, and mother of Nadab, Abihu, Eleazer, and Ithamar (Exod. 6:23).

ELISHUA A son of David born to an unnamed wife during the time he reigned from Jerusalem (2 Sam. 5:15; 1 Chron. 3:6 [though here, most Hebrew manuscripts have "Elishama"]; 14:5).

ELIUD *See* Elihud.

ELIZABETH The mother of John the Baptist. She was a descendant of Aaron and the wife of Zechariah (Luke 1:5). She and her husband are described in Luke 1 as righteous but barren in their old age. When Zechariah had the opportunity to serve in the temple and burn incense, an angel prophesied that he and Elizabeth would have a son, and they would name him "John." Elizabeth was the relative of Mary the mother of Jesus (Luke 1:36), but the Bible does not specify how they were related. Mary visited Elizabeth when both were pregnant, and Elizabeth was filled with the Spirit when she heard Mary's voice. She called Mary "the mother of my Lord" (Luke 1:43).

ELIZAPHAN **(1)** A son of Uzziel, and a leader of the Kohathite family (Num. 3:30). His descendants served in David's transfer of the ark of the covenant (1 Chron. 15:8) and assisted in

Hezekiah's reform (2 Chron. 29:13). "Elzaphan" is a shortened form of this name (Exod. 6:22; Lev. 10:4). **(2)** A son of Parnach, and a leader from the tribe of Zebulun. He was one of those appointed to assist in land distribution (Num. 34:25).

ELIZUR The son of Sheduer, he was the tribal leader of Reuben during the wilderness wanderings. He helped Moses during the taking of the military registration (Num. 1:5) and is mentioned in the description of the camp's layout (Num. 2:10). He presented Reuben's offering for the sanctuary (Num. 7:30, 35) and is noted as the leader of Reuben when the tribe departed from Sinai along with the rest of Israel (Num. 10:18).

ELKANAH **(1)** One of several descendants of Levi through Korah (Exod. 6:24; 1 Chron. 6:23). Others are named in 1 Chron. 6:26–27. **(2)** An Ephraimite, the husband of Hannah and the father of Samuel (1 Sam. 1:1). **(3)** Three related temple musicians from among the Kohathites (1 Chron. 6:34–36). **(4)** A Levite who went into exile (1 Chron. 9:16). **(5)** One of David's Benjamite warriors (1 Chron. 12:6). **(6)** A Levite gatekeeper (1 Chron. 15:23). **(7)** A palace official in the time of Ahaz, killed in a northern Israelite raid (2 Chron. 28:7).

ELKOSH The hometown of the prophet Nahum (Nah. 1:1). The town is separately identified by at least four ancient traditions as **(1)** Al-Qush near Nineveh (a medieval tradition); **(2)** Elcesi (modern el-Kauzeh) in Galilee (Jerome); **(3)** Capernaum (meaning "village of Nahum") in Galilee; **(4)** a town near Begabar (modern Bayt Jibrin), thirteen miles northwest of Hebron (Pseudo-Epiphanius).

ELLASAR The kingdom ruled by Arioch, one of the four foreign kings who raided Canaan during the time of Abraham (Gen. 14:1, 9). After they plundered the region and kidnapped Lot, Abraham successfully defeated them and regained what they had taken. Its identification is uncertain, but suggestions include the city of Larsa in southern Mesopotamia, Alsi in northern Mesopotamia, and Ilansura near Carchemish.

ELMADAM An ancestor of Jesus in Luke's genealogy, which starts with the most recent names and works backward, concluding with Adam, "the son of God" (Luke 3:28).

ELNAAM The father of Jeribia and Joshaviah, two of David's warriors (1 Chron. 11:46). In the LXX Elnaam is listed as one of David's warriors, whereas Jeribia and Joshaviah are father and son.

ELNATHAN **(1)** The father of Nehushta, the mother of King Jehoiachin of Judah (2 Kings 24:8). **(2)** Son of Akbor, and an official of King Jehoiakim among those whom he sent to Egypt to capture Uriah for prophesying against the city of Jerusalem (Jer. 26:20–23; 36:12). He urged Jehoiakim not to burn the Jeremiah-Baruch scroll (Jer. 36:25). **(3)** A member of the group of leaders sent by Ezra to ask for temple servants from Iddo, the leader in Kasiphia (Ezra 8:16). **(4)** Along with Joiarib, one of two learned men sent by Ezra, along with a group of leaders, to ask for temple servants from Iddo, the leader in Kasiphia (Ezra 8:16).

ELOHIM *See* Names of God.

ELOI, ELOI, LAMA SABACHTHANI The Aramaic translation of Ps. 22:1, which Jesus cried out on the cross (Matt. 27:46; Mark 15:34), meaning, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” Jesus may have continued on and quoted the rest of the psalm. The Gospel writers, in any case, pattern part of their account of the crucifixion on elements of Ps. 22.

How is it that God forsakes Jesus, or forsakes at all? Verses such as Josh. 1:5, where God promises to “never forsake,” tend to get more attention than God’s threats to abandon. Speaking through Azariah to Asa in 2 Chron. 15:2, God made his presence conditional and warned that he would forsake Asa if Asa forsook him. In Jer. 23:33 God is forthright: “I will forsake you, declares the LORD.” So, what does it mean for God to be with or to forsake someone? The promise to Joshua was that God would give him success in the task of conquering Canaan (Josh. 1:5; cf. 6:27; 14:12), and even for Joshua the promise was conditional (7:12). A principal meaning of God being with someone is that God will give that person success in a task. In the OT, when God is said to abandon an individual, it refers to a task or role, not absolute abandonment from relationship. David knew that God had abandoned King Saul (1 Sam. 15:26; 16:14, 23; 18:12; 28:16). So after his adultery with Bathsheba and murder of Uriah, David pled with God, “Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me” (Ps. 51:11). His plea was that he might retain his role as king.

Psalm 22 presents a question, not a prophetic declaration, but the psalmist’s perception depends on the idea that God can forsake him. The psalm is Davidic and certainly applies to the royal line and extends to Jesus. When on the cross, Jesus had been left by God to the devices of his foes. The agonizing question and the following description of affliction as well as the confidence of being heard by God are fitting for the Davidic heir on the cross.

ELON **(1)** One of Esau’s two Hittite fathers-in-law (Gen. 26:34; 36:2). **(2)** One of the three sons of Zebulun (Gen. 46:14; Num. 26:26). **(3)** A judge from the tribe of Zebulun who succeeded Ibzan and led Israel for ten years (Judg. 12:11–12). He was buried in Aijalon (LXX: “Ailim”), which may be a wordplay on the name “Elon,” as the words are spelled with the same consonants in Hebrew. **(4)** A place name in the allotment for the tribe of Dan. It was located between Aijalon and Timnah (Josh. 19:43) and may be identified as Khirbet Wadi ‘Alin. This may be the same site as Elon Bethhanan, which was part of king Solomon’s second administrative district (1 Kings 4:9).

ELON BETHHANAN One of the towns under the leadership of Ben-Deker responsible for supplying Solomon’s court with provisions for one month a year (1 Kings 4:9).

ELONITE *See* Elon.

ELON-MEONENIM *See* Diviners’ Tree.

ELOTH *See* Elath.

ELPAAL One of the sons of Shaharaim, a Benjamite who moved to Moab after divorcing two of his wives. Elpaal’s son Shemed is credited with building the towns of Ono and Lod, and his sons Beriah and Shema are described as living in Aijalon, a Danite town. The genealogical record (1 Chron. 8:11–18) is unclear as to whether some of the names listed are Elpaal’s sons or grandsons.

ELPALET *See* Eliphelet.

EL PARAN The southernmost site conquered by the coalition of four kings during their raid through

Canaan (Gen. 14:6). El Paran may well be identified with Elath on the northern shore of the Red Sea (1 Kings 9:26).

ELPELET *See* Eliphelet.

EL SHADDAI *See* El; Names of God.

ELTEKEH A town that was part of the tribe of Dan's traditional territorial allotment (Josh. 19:44). Later, when some towns were designated for the Levites, the tribe gave this town to the Levites. The town is named in the Taylor Prism, which describes the military campaign of Sennacherib in 701 BC. The biblical account of Sennacherib's invasion is found in 2 Kings 18:13–37; 19:8–13 (Eltekeh is not named). Currently, the precise location of the town remains uncertain.

ELTEKON A town that was part of the tribe of Judah's traditional territorial allotment. The town was located in the hill country of Judah (Josh. 15:59) and is likely modern-day Khirbet ed-Deir near Bethlehem.

ELTOLAD A town that was part of the tribe of Judah's or Simeon's territorial allotment, located in the Negev (Josh. 15:30; 19:4). It is possible that because Simeon was completely surrounded by Judah, the tribe shared this town.

ELUL The sixth month of the Hebrew year. The rebuilding of the wall of Jerusalem was completed in this month (Neh. 6:15).

ELUZAI One of the warriors (armed with bows and able to shoot arrows or to sling stones right-handed or left-handed) who were kinsmen of Saul from the tribe of Benjamin. At Ziklag they aligned themselves with David while he was banished from Saul's presence (1 Chron. 12:2, 5).

ELYMAS A Jewish sorcerer and false prophet serving Sergius Paulus, the proconsul of Cyprus (Acts 13:4–12). Attempting to prevent the proconsul from believing the message of Paul and Barnabas, he was stricken with temporary blindness. He was also known as Bar-Jesus ("son of salvation" [Acts 13:6]). The name "Elymas" may be a transliteration of a Semitic word equivalent to the Greek *magos*, "magician" or "sorcerer" (Acts 13:8).

ELYON *See* El; Names of God.

ELZABAD **(1)** An army commander, one of the swift warriors from the tribe of Gad who aligned themselves with David at Ziklag (1 Chron. 12:12). **(2)** One of the sons of Shemaiah, who were known for their capable leadership among the gatekeepers (1 Chron. 26:7).

ELZAPHAN An abbreviated form of "Elizaphan" (Num. 3:30; 1 Chron. 15:8; 2 Chron. 29:13). A son of Uzziel, he and Mishael were summoned to carry Aaron's dead sons Nadab and Abihu outside the camp away from the sanctuary (Exod. 6:22; Lev. 10:4). *See also* Elizaphan.

EMBALMING Various methods of preserving dead corpses, human and animal, from organic decay. Mummification was a technical art and a religious rite that was distinctively Egyptian. Most other ancient Near Eastern cultures viewed the decay of corpses as a natural part of the death and burial process. Many of these cultures collected and reburied the bones following decomposition, a practice of secondary burial.

The embalming of Jacob and Joseph (Gen. 50:2–3, 24–26) are OT exceptions. Since Joseph is a state official, his father is embalmed in Egypt before being transported back to Canaan. Joseph is placed in an official sarcophagus (Heb. *'aron* ["ark, box"]). En route to his Canaan burial, his bones accompany Israel's exodus procession (Josh. 24:32).

Practiced as early as 3100 BC in Egypt (predynastic period), mummification reached its peak around 1000 BC (Twenty-first Dynasty). Performed by priests over a seventy-day period, the embalming process involved the removal of internal organs, corpse dehydration, corpse "packing," and extensive use of linen wrappings. Coptic Christians in Egypt (third century) largely rejected these practices.

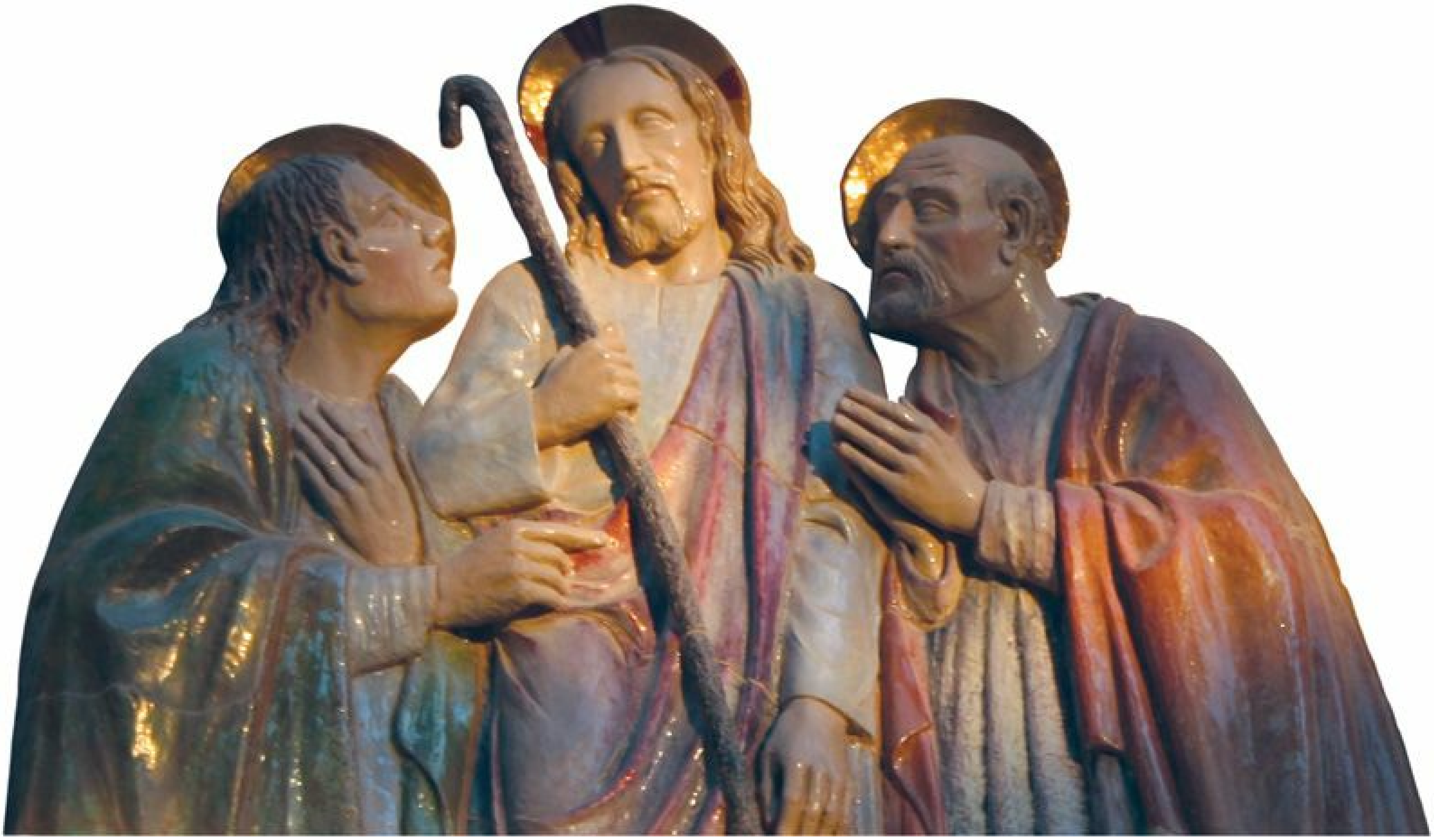
EMEK KEZIZ Called "valley of Keziz" in the KJV, this city was included in the territory allotted to the tribe of Benjamin (Josh. 18:21). The location is unknown.

EMERODS The KJV uses the archaic word "emerod" to refer to tumors or boils (Heb. *techorim*). The word is used several times in 1 Sam. 5–6. This narrative describes when the Philistines captured the ark of the covenant and took it to their city of Ashdod. As a result, the inhabitants of the city were afflicted with emerods. In an effort to stave off the outbreak, the Philistines sent the ark back to Israel along with five golden images of both emerods and rats as a guilt offering. Many scholars believe that the outbreak of tumors, because of its association with rats, was a bubonic plague outbreak. In Deut. 28:27 emerods are mentioned as a potential punishment for disobeying the law.

EMITES "Emites" (NRSV: "Emim") appears only three times, in two OT passages (Gen. 14:5; Deut. 2:10–11), used to designate a people group dispossessed by the Moabites. They are said to be a tall people like the Anakites and the Zamzummites (Deut. 2:10, 20–21). The name "Emites" may have the pejorative sense of "dreadful people."

EMMANUEL *See* Immanuel.

EMMAUS A village approximately seven miles (sixty stadia in the Greek text) from Jerusalem. The village is of particular note because of Luke's account of two disciples walking to Emmaus from Jerusalem and their encounter with the risen Christ (Luke 24:13–32). It is located at the eastern end of the Ayalon Valley.



Relief showing the two disciples with Jesus on the road to Emmaus, located in the Franciscan church at Qubeibeh, one of the suggested sites of Emmaus.

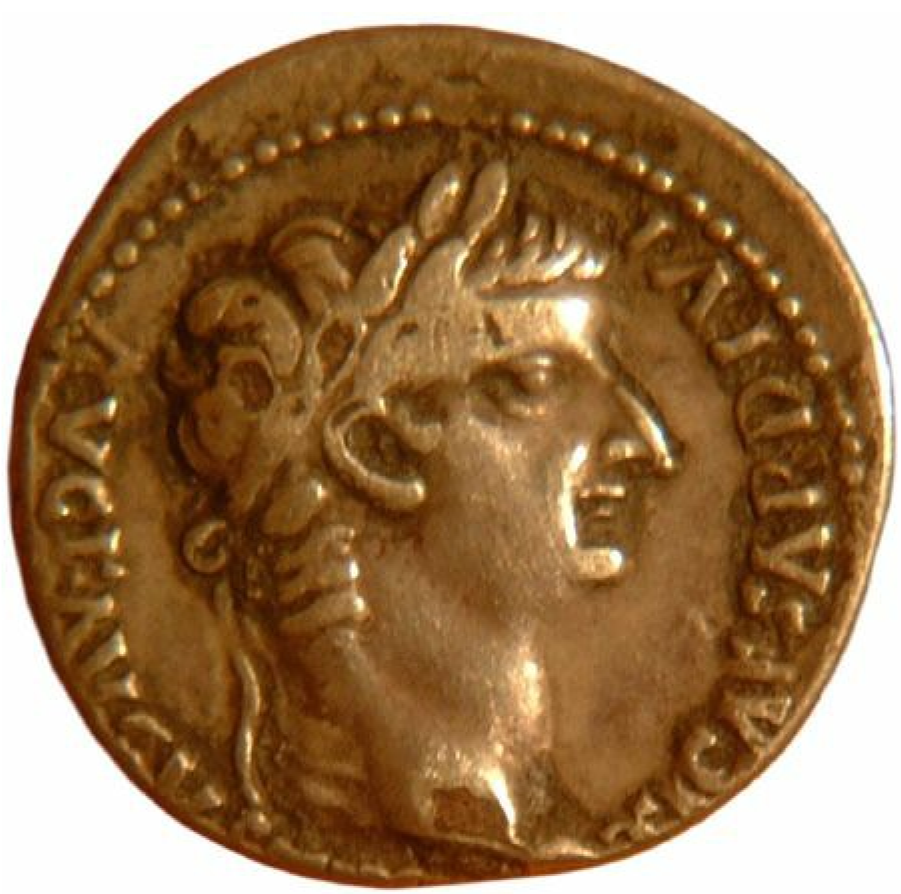
EMMOR *See* Hamor.

EMPEROR WORSHIP The origins of emperor worship lie in the merging of several aspects of religious life in ancient Greco-Roman culture. Traditional family religion in Greek territories centered on divine honors offered to the *genius* ("spirit") of the father, thus laying the groundwork for transference of such honors to Roman emperors, who were like fathers for the entire nation.

The idea that a human could become divine existed from antiquity. In Greek religious thought, this transformation was accomplished through the exercise of virtue. Heroes of the mythological past, such as Heracles, were thought to have become gods by living an exceptional life.

Greek peoples came into increasing contact with cultures to their east and south during the conquests of Alexander the Great (356–323 BC). Some, such as the Egyptians, saw their kings as divine long before Alexander's conquests. By taking this notion of divine kingship upon himself, Alexander set a precedent for future Greek and Roman rulers. This understanding of kingship was further enhanced when kings venerated their deceased relatives, especially previous kings.

Evidence in Greek dominions from as early as the fifth century BC indicates that divine honors were paid to people who delivered a city from military or economic distress. Such saviors (benefactors) were honored with altars, songs of praise, and veneration previously reserved for divine beings. These tributes were isolated phenomena but nonetheless reflected broader cultural and religious tendencies that paved the way for emperor worship. The emperor was essentially an honored benefactor, but on a much grander scale.



Roman silver denarius bearing the image of Tiberius. The inscription reads: “Augustus Tiberius, son of the Divine Augustus”

Originally, Roman emperors did not allow themselves to be worshiped directly. Instead of accepting direct worship, most emperors only accepted veneration of their *genius*, on the pattern of household religion. Divinization was initiated by the succeeding emperor and approved by the Roman senate. Divine honors were not automatically conferred, as the example of the unpopular Domitian (AD 51–96) illustrates.

Caligula (AD 12–41) was the first Roman emperor to demand personal veneration as a god. However, he and Domitian were the only emperors who required full-fledged worship while still alive.

The cult of the emperor was as much political as religious. The empire-wide cult united diverse cultures and people, provided a test of loyalty to the emperor, and enabled those who desired influence to display their commitment to imperial power. Many Jews and Christians were viewed suspiciously as unpatriotic because they refused to venerate the emperor.

The language of emperor worship has many striking parallels with NT language applied to Jesus Christ. Emperors received such titles as “savior,” “lord” (see Acts 25:26 KJV), “god,” and “son of god” in return for their acts of deliverance for peoples throughout the empire. The word *parousia* (“coming”) was used in ancient writings and inscriptions to describe the triumphant arrival of an emperor to a welcoming city in language very similar to that used to describe the second coming of Christ. Even more remarkable is the ascription of the word *euangelion* (“gospel, good news”) to major events in the life of the emperor, especially important military victories that led to relative peace throughout the empire.

In Luke 22:25 the word “benefactor” (Gk. *euergetēs*) is used in a way that displays awareness of the imperial system of patronage that forms a partial background to emperor worship. In Acts 12:20–23 Herod Antipas allows himself to be flattered with divine titles and is immediately struck down by an angel of the Lord. Acts 17:7 indicates that the early Christian proclamation that Jesus Christ alone is Lord could be misunderstood as treason against the emperor.

The book of Revelation narrates a time when emperor worship was a pressing temptation for the Christian churches spread throughout the Roman Empire. If, as is likely, Rev. 17:7–14 is a cryptic reference to Rome, then the prohibitions against worshiping the beast in 13:4, 8; 14:9–10 are calls for Christians to remain steadfast in their refusal to worship the Roman emperor, a refusal that could easily result in a death sentence.

ENAIM An unknown location between Timnah and Adullam where Judah's daughter-in-law Tamar disguised herself for a sexual encounter (Gen. 38:14, 21). The name means "two eyes" (or possibly "springs"). In Gen. 38:14 Tamar positions herself at *petakh 'enayim*, indicating either a fork in the road (Targum, Syriac, Vulg., NEB) or, more likely, an entrance to the town of Enaim (LXX, NIV, NRSV). Enaim perhaps is the same location as Enam in Josh. 15:34 (cf. *b. Soṭah* 10a).

ENAN The father of Ahira, who was the tribal leader of Naphtali during the wilderness wanderings (Num. 1:15; 2:29; 7:78, 83; 10:17).

END OF THE WORLD A time will come when the physical world will end and all things will come to their final states. According to 2 Pet. 3:10, 12–13, "The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything done in it will be laid bare. . . . That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells" (cf. Isa. 65:17).

Not only will the physical world be converted, but also even divine realities will take their final form. Christ will reign until all things are subject to him, and then he will hand the kingdom to God the Father (1 Cor. 15:24–25). Even death itself will be destroyed as the kingdom becomes completely subject to Christ (15:26). When this is complete, the Son himself will become subject to God, that "God may be all in all" (15:27–28). *See also* Eschatology.

ENDOR A town located in the territory assigned to western Manasseh (Josh. 17:11) and associated with modern Endor or Khirbet Salsafe. Mentioned three times in the OT (Josh. 17:11; 1 Sam. 28:7; Ps. 83:10), Endor was the residence of the woman—a spiritist, medium, or witch—whom Saul consulted to contact the spirit of Samuel on the night before his last battle against the Philistines at Gilboa (1 Sam. 28:7–25).

END TIMES *See* Eschatology.

ENDURANCE *See* Forebearance; Perseverance; Steadfastness.

ENEAS *See* Aeneas.

EN EGLAIM A town mentioned only in Ezekiel's vision of water flowing from the temple and down the Jordan Valley, bringing life to the Dead Sea (Ezek. 47:10). Although its location is unknown, its association with En Gedi as a place where fishermen would spread their nets places it along the Dead Sea shore.

ENEMY The word “enemy” primarily translates the Hebrew word *’oyev* and the Greek word *echthros*. The word *’oyev* occurs almost three hundred times in the OT, with several uses. Other terms commonly occur in parallel with *’oyev* (in the NIV, these are generally translated as “enemy”): “adversary” (*tsar* [Ps. 27:2; Mic. 5:9]), “foe” (*tsorer* [Exod. 23:22; Ps. 23:5]), “hating one” (*sone’* [Deut. 30:7]), and “one rising up” (*qam* [Ps. 18:48; NIV: “foes”]). Saul was a personal enemy of David (1 Sam. 18:29; 24:4, 19). Other pairs of enemies include David and Ish-Bosheth (2 Sam. 4:8), and Ahab and Elijah (1 Kings 21:20).

In most occurrences, Israel’s politico-military enemies are in view: Midianites, Assyrians, Babylonians, and often the Philistines. Periods of national peace and rest were the exception rather than commonplace (Lev. 26:6; Josh. 14:15; 2 Sam. 10:19). Neighboring nations routinely harassed and oppressed Israel (Deut. 1:42; Josh. 7:8; 1 Kings 8:33; Mic. 4:10). International fighting against Israel was viewed as divine judgment (Deut. 28:25–26, 31, 48, 68; Judg. 2:14). As the supreme warrior, Yahweh could crush his enemy (Exod. 15:6; cf. Isa. 1:24; Nah. 1:2). More startling are human claims that God was acting as their enemy: the captive Israel made such a claim (Jer. 30:14; Lam. 2:4–5), as did Job (Job 13:24).

The OT commonly refers to a national enemy, as does the NT (e.g., Luke 1:71: “salvation from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us”). The NT also speaks of enemies in a more personal sense. Jesus acknowledged that believers have personal enemies (Matt. 5:44). Sinners were God’s enemies (Rom. 5:8–10), but Satan remained God’s adversary (Matt. 13:24–30; Luke 10:19).

EN GANNIM A Hebrew name meaning “spring of the gardens,” referring to two OT locations. **(1)** A town given to Judah as part of its inheritance. It was situated near Beth Shemesh, in the Shephelah, or lowland region, between the hill country of Judea and the Plain of Philistia (Josh. 15:34). The town possibly was located on the site of modern Khirbet Umm Jina or Beit Jemal. **(2)** A town allotted to Issachar and then assigned to the descendants of Gershon as a Levitical city (Josh. 19:21; 21:29). Called “Anem” in 1 Chron. 6:73, it may be the Beth Haggan through which Ahaziah fled from Jehu (2 Kings 9:27). Located to the southwest of Mount Gilboa at the end of the Plain of Jezreel, it is probably Josephus’s Ginnea (*Ant.* 20.118; *J.W.* 3.48), which corresponds to modern Jenin.

EN GEDI A luxuriant oasis located west of the Dead Sea midway between Qumran and Masada (“En Gedi” often is written as “Ein Gedi,” lit., “spring of the kid [young goat]”). Four springs (David, Arugot, Shulamit, and Ein Gedi) cause the ravine to flow with water year-round, offering a stark contrast to the barren land surrounding it. The springs produce about three million cubic feet of water a year, most of which is used for watering crops or bottled for human consumption. There is a significant drop in elevation from about six hundred feet above sea level at the Judean Desert to about fourteen hundred feet below sea level at the shores of the Dead Sea. The sheer walls of the ravine contain several caves that shelter wild animals. It is abundant in wildlife (e.g., Nubian ibex and Syrian hyrax) and various plants (e.g., Sodom apple, acacia, poplar). In fact, the author of Song of Songs likens his beloved to a “cluster of henna blossoms from the vineyards of En Gedi” (1:14). Although the area does not appear to have been settled continuously, it was sporadically inhabited from as early as the Chalcolithic period (about 4000 BC) to the end of the Byzantine Empire (about AD 550).

En Gedi is mentioned six times in the OT (Josh. 15:62; 1 Sam. 23:29; 24:1; 2 Chron. 20:2; Song 1:14; Ezek. 47:10), but is most famous as the site where David hid from Saul. King Saul entered one of En Gedi's caves to relieve himself, and David and his men were hiding farther back in the same cave.

Waterfall at En Gedi

ENGRAVE Lettering and ornamental designs were engraved onto a range of surfaces, such as metal, jewels, stone, wood, and clay, using appropriate tools for each, including diamond-pointed pens (Jer. 17:1 KJV; NIV: “flint point”). The permanence of the engraving and the difficulty of producing exact copies made it especially suitable for use on signet rings, seals, and unchangeable edicts (Exod. 32:16; Job 19:24). The names of the twelve tribes of Israel were engraved on precious stones that adorned the ephod and breastpiece of the high priest (Exod. 28:9–12, 21), and a gold plate engraved with the words “Holy to the LORD” was fastened onto the high priest’s turban (28:36). Engravings made of wood and overlaid with gold decorated the temple (1 Kings 6:28–29; 7:36). In Zechariah’s vision, God promises to engrave an inscription on the stone set before Joshua and to remove the iniquity of the land (Zech. 3:9).

EN HADDAH A town listed as part of the inheritance of Issachar (Josh. 19:21). Its location is unknown, though modern el-Hadeth is possible.

EN HAKKORE A site whose name means “spring of the one who calls,” the place in Lehi (“jawbone”) where Samson cried out to God to quench his thirst after using the jawbone of a donkey to kill a thousand Philistines (Judg. 15:19). After God split the hollow place, water flowed, allowing Samson to drink and regain his strength. The exact location is unknown.

EN HAZOR A fortified city given to Naphtali as part of its inheritance (Josh. 19:37). It is distinct from any of the towns known in the Bible as Hazor. Although the site is sometimes linked with Khirbet Hizireh, many scholars consider its location unknown.

EN MISHPAT A city whose name means “spring of judgment,” evidently an early name for Kadesh (Gen. 14:7). This was one of the places captured by the coalition of four kings under Kedorlaomer en route to conquering the territory of the Amalekites and Amorites, before they attacked the five kings of Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zeboyim, and Bela. After this battle, many from Sodom, including Lot, were captured. Abraham retaliated and set the captives free.

ENOCH **(1)** The son of Cain after whom Cain named a city (Gen. 4:17). **(2)** The son of Jared and the father of Methuselah in Seth’s line. According to Gen. 5:23, he lived 365 years, conspicuously shorter than others in the genealogy. Most interpret Gen. 5:24 as saying that God took Enoch to the heavenly realm, without death, due to Enoch’s piety. In the NT, Jude 14 assumes that he wrote or prophesied part of *1 Enoch*, a collection of Second Temple Jewish apocalyptic writings.

ENON CITY *See* Hazar Enan.

ENOSH A grandson of Adam, a son of Seth, and the father of Kenan (Gen. 5:6–11; 1 Chron. 1:1–2), also listed in Luke’s genealogy of Jesus (Luke 3:38). The ungodliness of Lamech in Cain’s lineage (Gen. 4:23–24) is contrasted by a comment on a return to godliness at the time when Enosh was born (Gen. 4:25–26).

EN RIMMON A town whose name means “spring of the pomegranate,” though often rendered as two separate towns, Ain and Rimmon. Located in the wilderness to the southwest of Hebron and north of Beersheba, it was part of Judah’s inheritance that was transferred to Simeon (Josh. 15:32; 19:7). Nehemiah listed it among the towns resettled after the exile (Neh. 11:29). Zechariah prophesied that when God reigned as king over the earth, Jerusalem would rise above a low plain stretching from

Geba to Rimmon (Zech. 14:10). It is usually identified with Umm er-Ramamin.

EN ROGEL A place just south of Jerusalem on the border between the tribe of Judah and Benjamin, it is the source of Siloam's pool (Josh. 15:7; 18:16). Today it is known as Job's Well, near the confluence of two deep valleys, Kidron and Hinnom. Local tradition connects the well with the curing of Job's disease. Jonathan and Ahimaaz, two of David's spies, hid here to receive information for David during Absalom's rebellion (2 Sam. 17:17). Adonijah, David's son, attempted to gain the throne there (1 Kings 1:9).

EN SHEMESH A town on the border of Judah and Benjamin (Josh. 15:7; 18:17). Located to the east of Bethany, it lies just off the road from Jerusalem to Jericho. It corresponds to modern 'Ain el-Hod, the "spring of the apostles," so named because of a fifteenth-century tradition that the apostles drank there.

EN TAPPUAH A town on the border of Manasseh and Ephraim. The land of Tappuah was allotted to Manasseh, but the town itself belonged to Ephraim (Josh. 17:7–8). Also referred to simply as Tappuah, its Canaanite king was defeated by Joshua (Josh. 12:17). It probably was located near modern Yasuf.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION The ancient world knew nothing of terms like "global warming" or "going green." However, the Bible does contain many ideas that can support environmental awareness today. God created a world that is good (Gen. 1:31), and he enlists those whom he made in his image to rule over it (1:27–28).

Although some have understood the words "dominion" and "subdue" in Gen. 1:28 (KJV, ESV, NRSV) to support excessive exploitation of the earth's resources, the context rules out such a notion. On the contrary, God creates an orderly world from emptiness and disorder (1:2) and intends the bearers of his image to "work and take care of" the garden that he has given them (2:15). It seems necessary, then, that "dominion" and "subdue" endorse not tyranny, but rather a benevolent rule that mimics what the Creator began and continues to do (Gen. 8:21, 22; Ps. 65).

Another instructive biblical theme is Israel's duty to care for the land that God gives them (Deut. 11:11–15). This means that the Israelites are to observe certain limitations regarding the land and its crops (Exod. 23:10; Lev. 19:23–25; 25:1–22). Moreover, there is the theme of neighborly love (Matt. 22:37–39; Phil. 2:3).

Some believe that environmentalism is not supported by Scripture because Scripture does not indicate that an ecological crisis will end the world. Nevertheless, it remains true that present and future generations may suffer greatly due to excesses perpetrated in the present. Creation care is neighborly love.

ENVY The vice that resents the acceptance, success, and well-being of other people, especially when benefits come to those who are regarded as unworthy. The envious person competes with others—if only in his or her own mind—and therefore cannot love them, serve them, and enjoy their company. Thus, the Bible condemns envy or covetousness, the most familiar text being the last commandment of the Decalogue (Exod. 20:17; Deut. 5:21). It is wrong to smolder with desire for the advantages of one's neighbors and also wish them to stumble. Envy incited Cain to kill Abel (Gen. 4:1–16), and Scripture acknowledges its destructive tendencies (Prov. 14:30). Jesus warned his disciples that envy's "evil eye" could defile them (Mark 7:21) and darken their souls (Matt. 6:23).

This vice can do enormous damage in churches and among those who profess to be the people of God. Pilate recognized jealousy behind the case against Jesus (Matt. 27:18), and the apostle Paul faced many difficulties traceable to immature one-upmanship. Factions arose in the churches over coveted associations (1 Cor. 1:11–13) and spiritual gifts (1 Cor. 12–13). Some professing believers even preached Christ simply to advance themselves ahead of others, out of "envy and rivalry," perhaps to post impressive numbers of converts and gain a following (Phil. 1:15). In response, each person must say with John the Baptist, "He must become greater; I must become less" (John 3:30).

EPAENETUS *See* Epenetus.

EPAPHRAS Epaphras evangelized his hometown of Colossae and ministered in nearby Laodicea and Hierapolis (Col. 4:13). Paul highlighted Epaphras's devotion to prayer, and he called him a "servant of Christ Jesus" (4:12), "fellow servant" and "faithful minister" (Col. 1:7), and "fellow prisoner" (Philem. 23). Epaphras shared information about the Colossian church with Paul prior to Paul's letter to them. Although "Epaphras" is a shortened form of "Epaphroditus," he is not the man of that name referenced in Phil. 2:24; 4:18.

Epaphras helped establish the church at Colossae. The site of Colossae (the mound pictured here) has not yet been excavated.

EPAPHRODITUS Mentioned only in Philippians, Epaphroditus was a messenger of that church who brought a gift to Paul and served his needs on their behalf (4:18). Paul's words about Epaphroditus reflect a deep personal relationship and close association in the work of the gospel (cf. 2:30). For Paul, Epaphroditus was a brother, a fellow worker, and a fellow soldier (2:25). While serving Paul, he became ill and was close to death; this troubling news reached the church in Philippi, which was distressing to Epaphroditus and made Paul eager to send him there (2:26–30).

EPENETUS A beloved believer whom Paul greets in Rom. 16:5. He was the first convert in the province of Asia to Christ and possibly a member of Prisca and Aquila's house church (Rom. 16:3–5).

EPHAH **(1)** The grandson of Abraham and Keturah and son of Midian (Gen. 25:4; 1 Chron. 1:33). Ephah is commonly considered a patriarch of the Midianites along with Midian (Isa. 60:6). **(2)** Caleb's concubine and the mother of three of his sons (1 Chron. 2:46). **(3)** One of the sons of Jahdai (1 Chron. 2:47). **(4)** A measurement of dry weight most often used for grains, especially flour, and in particular temple offerings of flour. According to Ezek. 45:11, an ephah was equal in measurement to a bath and also a tenth of a homer. The size of an ephah is uncertain, but it was likely about twenty-two liters. Two-tenths or three-tenths of an ephah was enough to make a loaf of bread (Num. 29:3, 9, 14). Several times the Bible warns that the scales used to measure an ephah must be honest if they are to honor God (Lev. 19:36).

EPHAI The sons of Ephai the Netophathite were army officers who rallied around Gedaliah when the Babylonians appointed him governor of Jerusalem (Jer. 40:7–10). It is likely that Ishmael son of Nethaniah killed them when he killed Gedaliah and everyone who was living at Mizpah (Jer. 41:1–3).

EPHER **(1)** One of Midian's sons and Abraham and Keturah's grandsons (Gen. 25:4; 1 Chron. 1:33). **(2)** A man who was part of the tribe of Judah, and a son of Ezrah (1 Chron. 4:17). **(3)** One of the seven clan leaders, all brave warriors and famous men, of the Transjordanian half-tribe Manasseh (1 Chron. 5:24).

EPHES DAMMIM The site of a Philistine encampment (1 Sam. 17:1).

EPHESIANS, LETTER TO THE Rising above the ordinary routine of church life, Paul pens a majestic letter calling Christians to remember what God has done for them in Christ and to walk worthy of their calling. Ephesians stands as an extremely significant and intensely practical book for today's church.

AUTHORSHIP

Paul claims to be the author of Ephesians (1:1–2; 3:1), and its authenticity is well attested in the early church. A good portion of Ephesians is presented in the first person (1:15–18; 3:1–3, 7–8, 13–17; 4:1, 17; 5:32; 6:19–22), including information related to his prayers, apostolic ministry, and comments about Tychicus, the letter carrier. In addition, Ephesians seems to have been quoted by many of the Apostolic Fathers and is included in early lists of the NT. Since the end of the eighteenth century, however, some have doubted the Pauline authorship of Ephesians for the following reasons (accompanied by counterarguments).

1. The author does not seem to know his audience personally (1:15; 3:2). The "impersonal nature" of the letter makes better sense, however, if it was intended for a wider audience (see "Destination" below).

2. The language and style of Ephesians do not match Paul’s other letters (i.e., unique words and phrases, cumbersome sentences). Yet there are more unique words in Galatians and Philippians, for their length, than in Ephesians. Paul’s style in this letter is undoubtedly more reflective, and he may also have used a trusted secretary (amanuensis), which could account for much of the unusual wording.

3. The many parallels between Ephesians and Colossians suggest that someone other than Paul wrote Ephesians as an imitation of Colossians. Yet parallels are to be expected between two letters sent to the same area at the same time when one deals with a doctrinal error (Colossians) and the other aims to prevent the error from spreading by reflecting on the deep truths of the faith (Ephesians).

4. The theology of Ephesians differs from his undisputed letters (e.g., emphasizing the universal church and deemphasizing justification by faith and the return of Christ). However, the overall purpose of the letter and the lack of an impending church crisis make these emphases fully understandable.

While these four arguments against Pauline authorship are to be taken seriously, the traditional view that Paul wrote Ephesians remains the preferred option. The explicit statements within the text, the unanimous support of the early church, the likely use of a secretary, the absence of a looming crisis, and the overall purpose of the letter offer good reasons to suppose that Paul wrote Ephesians.

PLACE OF ORIGIN AND DATE

Ephesians was written while Paul was a prisoner (see Eph. 3:1; 4:1; 6:20), but he had been imprisoned on more than one occasion. The traditional view locates Paul in Rome under house arrest when he pens the letter (along with the other Prison Epistles: Colossians, Philemon, and Philippians). Since Tychicus delivered Ephesians, Colossians, and likely Philemon, all three letters must have been written from the same place (Eph. 6:21–22; Col. 4:7–9). Acts 28:30–31 reports that Paul was held captive in Rome for two years, but he retained limited freedom to meet with people and to minister (Eph. 6:19–20; Phil. 1:12–13; Col. 4:3–4). Luke’s use of “we” in Acts 28 indicates that he was with Paul in Rome during that imprisonment (see also Col. 4:14; Philem. 24). Also, Aristarchus, who traveled with Paul to Rome (Acts 27:2), is mentioned in two Prison Epistles (Col. 4:10; Philem. 24).

The two leading alternatives to Rome for the place of origin are Ephesus itself and Caesarea. Because of Paul’s comment about fighting wild beasts in Ephesus (1 Cor. 15:32; cf. 2 Cor. 1:8–11), some have suggested that Paul was imprisoned there, but there is no clear evidence to support that theory. On the other hand, Acts does refer to a lengthy imprisonment for Paul in Caesarea (Acts 24:27). When Paul writes to Philemon, he requests a guest room for an upcoming visit (Philem. 22). In Caesarea, however, Paul had appealed to Caesar and expected a trip to Rome rather than release from prison (Acts 25:10–11). Overall, the traditional view that Paul wrote Ephesians from Rome has more support than the alternative views.

If the place of origin is Rome, then Paul wrote Ephesians during his first Roman imprisonment, around AD 60–62. Most likely, Paul wrote Ephesians about the same time he wrote Colossians and Philemon, in the early or middle part of that imprisonment.

DESTINATION

Although Ephesians traditionally has been connected to the city of Ephesus, the words “in Ephesus” (1:1) are absent from some of the earliest and best Greek manuscripts. The letter itself even suggests that Paul may have been writing for a wider audience. In spite of living in Ephesus for several years, Paul mentions no church members by name (6:21–24), and he makes the awkward comments that he has "heard about" their faith and love (1:15) and assumes they have "heard about" how God has used him (3:2; cf. 4:21). Almost certainly Paul intended this general letter to circulate among several churches in Asia Minor, with each church "filling in the blank" as the letter was read publicly. Since Ephesus was the leading city, the letter became associated more permanently with Ephesus at an early stage. It is also possible that Ephesians is the "letter from Laodicea" mentioned in Col. 4:16, assuming that Tychicus first delivered the letter to Ephesus, with instructions to send it on to Laodicea and Colossae.

PURPOSE

Paul did not write Ephesians to solve a major problem or deal with any particular emergency in the church. Instead, he wrote a broadly reflective letter to help Christians remain strong in their faith. He had spent almost three years teaching and caring for some of these people, and he wanted to make sure that they continued to follow Jesus. Specifically, Paul wanted believers to have a deeper understanding and experience of three realities: (1) the new life in Christ; (2) the new community in Christ; (3) the new walk to which Christ called them.

Paul focuses on the new life experienced in Jesus Christ. The expression "in Christ" and parallel phrases such as "in the Lord" or "in him" are found almost forty times in Ephesians. God will unite and restore all of creation under one Lord, Jesus Christ (1:10). Paul also stresses the new community through words such as "unity," "one," and "with/together with" and concepts such as church, body, temple, and bride. When we are connected to Christ, we are also connected to a new community. This new community is called to a new walk that honors Christ, one characterized by love for God and for people.

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IX. Letter Closing (6:21–24)

I. Letter opening (1:1–2). The letter opens in typical fashion by naming the author and the audience before adding a greeting. Paul, an “apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God,” writes to God’s people in Ephesus (and surrounding cities). He greets his readers with “grace and peace,” themes that appear throughout the letter.

II. Praise for spiritual blessings in Christ (1:3–14). Ephesians explodes in adoration and praise: “Praise be to [or ‘blessed be’] the God . . . who has blessed us . . . with every spiritual blessing in Christ.” God’s people praise him for their election (1:4–6), for their redemption and wisdom to understand God’s master plan (1:7–12), and for sealing them with the Holy Spirit (1:13–14). Each section ends with a similar phrase, “to the praise of his glory” (1:6, 12, 14), showing that the triune God in his essential character (his glory) is worthy of highest praise.

III. Prayer for spiritual understanding (1:15–23). After praising God for his blessings, Paul now asks for spiritual wisdom that his audience might comprehend those blessings (as described in both the previous section and the rest of the letter). As the Spirit enlightens their hearts, they come to know the hope of God’s calling, the glory of God’s inheritance, and the greatness of God’s power (1:18–19), which was supremely displayed in Jesus Christ’s resurrection and exaltation (1:20–23).

IV. New life in Christ (2:1–10). Paul now turns his attention to the new life available in Christ (2:1–10). First, he offers a lengthy description of a person’s spiritual state without Christ (2:1–3). Second, he explains how God came to the rescue of such helpless and hopeless people. Moved by his love and mercy, God has mysteriously allowed believers to participate in Christ’s death, resurrection, and exaltation (2:4–6). God’s purpose in saving people was to demonstrate the “riches of his grace” expressed to us in Jesus (2:7). There is perhaps no better summary of this salvation message than 2:8–10: the basis of salvation is God’s grace, the means of receiving salvation is faith, and the result of salvation is good works.

V. New community in Christ (2:11–22). God not only has given new life to individuals in Christ but also has created a new community, comprised of both Jews and Gentiles. As Gentiles, the Ephesians’ condition outside of Christ was desperate: no Messiah, no connection to God’s people, no promise of salvation, no hope, and no relationship with God (2:11–12). But now they have been brought near through Christ’s sacrifice on the cross (2:13). In Christ, Jews and Gentiles have now been reconciled to each other in a new spiritual community (2:14–18). They are full-fledged members of God’s kingdom and God’s family. What is more, they are even part of God’s holy temple (2:19–22).

VI. Paul’s unique role in God’s plan (3:1–13). After describing God’s strategy to unite Jewish and Gentile believers in Christ, Paul begins to pray for these believers (3:1). Almost immediately, however, he breaks off his prayer to explain more about God’s “secret plan” or “mystery” and his own role in that plan. Only the grace and power of God could transform a persecutor of the church into one of the church’s great leaders (3:2–9). Now God is using his multicultural church to announce his manifold wisdom to the heavenly powers (3:10–11). Since God is using Paul to fulfill his purpose, no one should be discouraged by Paul’s sufferings (3:12–13).

VII. Paul’s prayer for the new community (3:14–21). Paul now resumes his prayer (3:1) and asks that God may strengthen believers by the Holy Spirit in their inner being according to his glorious riches (3:16). They will know the prayer has been answered when Christ feels at home in their hearts and they experience his indescribable love more and more. The final purpose of the prayer is that they be filled with the "fullness of God" or become like Christ (3:17–19; cf. 4:13). Although it may appear that Paul has asked for too much, the doxology in 3:20–21 affirms that God is able to do more than can be imagined.

VIII. New walk in Christ (4:1–6:20). God's gift of new life and his creation of a new community in Christ (chaps. 1–3) call for a new walk (chaps. 4–6). The important Greek word *oun* ("then, therefore") in 4:1 marks a transition from the blessings and privileges of the church (chaps. 1–3) to the conduct and responsibilities of the church (chaps. 4–6). Obedience comes as a response to God's grace.

A. Walk in unity (4:1–16). Believers are urged to live a life (or walk) worthy of their calling (4:1), and this worthy walk begins by maintaining the unity of the Spirit (4:3). The triune God perfectly exemplifies a diverse unity (4:4–6), and Paul suggests in 4:7–13 that diversity within the body of Christ actually enriches unity. All members are gifted, but they are gifted in different ways so as to benefit the body. The goal of unity is full maturity in Christ, resulting in discernment, truth, edification, and love (4:14–16).

B. Walk in holiness (4:17–32). Paul reminds his audience that rather than living like pagans (4:17–19), they have put off the old self (former life apart from Christ) and have put on "the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness" (4:20–24). Now they are called to live like the new people that they are in Christ. Paul offers a list of specific exhortations in 4:25–32 to illustrate what it means to walk in holiness.

C. Walk in love (5:1–6). Along with walking in unity and holiness, believers are called to walk in love. Positively, this means imitating the Father and loving sacrificially like the Son (5:1–2). Negatively, this means refusing to indulge in selfish sensuality (5:3–6). Paul closes this section by warning that immoral, impure, greedy, idolatrous people will inherit God's wrath rather than God's kingdom.

D. Walk in light (5:7–14). Although believers once lived in darkness, they are now light in the Lord and should walk as children of light (5:7–9). They need to discern what pleases the Lord and reject the useless deeds of darkness (5:10–11a). Instead, they are to expose and transform the darkness (5:11b–14).

E. Walk carefully (5:15–6:9). Paul, using three contrasts, cautions believers to walk carefully: not as unwise, but as wise (5:15); not as foolish, but with understanding (5:17); and not getting drunk, but being filled with the Spirit (5:18). Paul then specifies three results of being filled with the Spirit: worship, gratitude, and mutual submission (5:19–21). In 5:22–6:9 Paul explains how this final characteristic (mutual submission) is applied within the Christian household.

F. Walk in the Lord's strength (6:10–20). Paul concludes with instructions about walking in the Lord's strength. Christ has already won the victory over the powers of evil, but believers should expect continued attacks. Their task is to stand firm, using God's armor of truth, righteousness, the gospel of peace, faith, salvation, and the word of God. Prayer is required to appropriate the armor of God. Paul began the letter by praying for his readers (1:15–23); now he asks them to pray that he will fearlessly declare the mystery of the gospel.

IX. Letter closing (6:21–24). Paul concludes with a commendation of Tychicus, the letter carrier, and a benediction of peace, love, and grace.

EPHESUS, CITY OF Ancient Ephesus was located on the western coast of Asia Minor (modern-day Turkey). This cosmopolitan and multiethnic seaport city of some quarter of a million people was one of the largest and most important cities in the Roman Empire. Ephesus experienced tremendous growth during the reign of Caesar Augustus, who elevated the city to the capital of the province of Asia. The city became a center of international trade (because of its location), of finance (the main treasury for the tax collectors in Asia), and of communications (the base for a group of Roman military couriers).

Ephesus itself was an impressive place, featuring modern roads, a business market, a civic center, expensive homes, public baths, a stadium, a gymnasium, temples to various gods and emperors, a concert hall, an impressive library, and much more. Two particular landmarks would have stood out to visitors. First was a theater that seated almost twenty-five thousand people. This is the place where the silversmith Demetrius led the crowd to riot in opposition to Paul (see Acts 19:23–41). Second was the temple of Artemis, a structure about four times as large as the Parthenon in Athens. The building measured 130 meters by 70 meters and contained 127 columns that were 2 meters in diameter and 20 meters high. The temple served as the most important financial institution in Asia. Many ancient lists included the temple of Artemis as one of the seven wonders of the ancient world.

Archaeological remains of the theater in ancient Ephesus

Religiously, Artemis was the most important deity to the people of Ephesus. At least two major festivals were held in honor of Artemis, in which the Ephesians celebrated with competitions and religious processions. The city also featured other religions and cults, including worship of the Roman emperor. There were several temples dedicated to emperors at Ephesus, including one to Domitian (likely the emperor when Revelation was written), built around AD 89–90. The city was also a center for the practice of magic and occult arts. In Acts 19:18–19 we read about new

Christians turning away from the practice and burning their magic books (worth "fifty thousand drachmas"—i.e., the wages for fifty thousand days of work).

The apostle Paul's ministry in Asia was strongly connected to Ephesus (see Acts 18–20). After serving the church in Corinth for nearly two years (18:11), Paul went to Ephesus accompanied by Priscilla and Aquila, the couple who later instructed Apollos (18:26). Paul reasoned with the Jews in the synagogue for a short time before leaving for Antioch (18:19–22). On his third missionary tour, Paul came to Ephesus (18:24; 19:1), where he shared the gospel of Jesus Christ with twelve disciples of John the Baptist (19:1–7). He taught in the synagogue for three months, but later he moved to the lecture hall of Tyrannus, where he ministered for two years with tremendous results (Acts 19:8–20; cf. 1 Cor. 16:8). When conversions to Christ hurt sales of Artemis idols, the local silversmiths started a riot in the theater against the Christians (Acts 19:23–41; cf. 1 Cor. 15:32). Paul then left Ephesus for Macedonia (Acts 20:1) and spent the winter in Corinth. On his return trip to Jerusalem, he stopped in nearby Miletus, where he met with the Ephesian elders (20:16–38). Paul made it to Jerusalem but was arrested and eventually transferred to Rome. Many think that Paul wrote the Letter to the Ephesians from Rome (AD 60–62). Paul's coworkers Timothy (1 Tim. 1:3), Onesiphorus (2 Tim. 1:18), and Tychicus (2 Tim. 4:12) are associated with his ministry in Ephesus.

Early church tradition says that the apostle John lived in Ephesus toward the end of his life. Also, the church in Ephesus received the first of the letters to the seven churches of Asia (Rev. 1:11; 2:1–7). The church in Ephesus was commended for its perseverance and doctrinal purity but faulted for abandoning its first love. Those who overcame were promised access to the tree of life in paradise, an image contrasting with the sacred tree shrine in the temple of Artemis.

EPHLAL The son of Zabad and a descendant of Jerahmeel of the line of Judah (1 Chron. 2:37).

EPHOD The ephod (only in the OT) was a garment, perhaps a vest or tunic, worn over the shoulders and extending at least to the waist, covering front and back. It is most closely associated with the Israelite priesthood. The eighty-five priests at Nob wore linen ephods (1 Sam. 22:18), and the expression "to wear an ephod" is used as a virtual synonym for "to serve as a priest" (2:28; 14:3). The boy Samuel, who assisted the aging priest Eli at the sanctuary at Shiloh, also wore a linen ephod (1 Sam. 2:18). When King David danced before God upon bringing the ark of the covenant into Jerusalem (2 Sam. 6:14), he wore a linen ephod. His wife Michal considered such activity beneath someone of royal office.

Most references to the ephod are found in the pentateuchal instructions and descriptions of the garments worn by the Israelite high priests, Aaron and his descendants. This elaborate attire consisted of "a breastpiece, an ephod, a robe, a woven tunic, a turban and a sash" (Exod. 28:4), and it had regal associations: the priest was to symbolize humanity restored to Edenic "dignity and honor" (Exod. 28:2 [cf. the mocking description of the King of Tyre in Ezek. 28]). The "robe of the ephod," which underlay the ephod itself, was to be of blue cloth (Exod. 28:31).

The high priestly ephod itself was made of "gold, and of blue, purple and scarlet yarn, and of finely twisted linen" (Exod. 39:2). Closely associated with the ephod is the jewel-studded breastpiece that overlay it (Exod. 25:7; 28:28) and was fastened by blue cords to rings on the ephod. On the shoulder pieces of the ephod were set two onyx stones engraved with the names of the Israelites, symbolically to bring them to God's attention as the priest stood in his presence (Exod. 28:9–12). The breastpiece contained the Urim and Thummim, used for determining the will of God (Exod. 28:30; Lev. 8:8). This oracular function is sometimes attributed to the ephod (1 Sam. 23:9–12; 30:7–8).

The idolatrous golden ephod that Gideon made and placed in Ophrah (Judg. 8:27) may have been a more solid object, with similar oracular function. A similar deviant ephod is mentioned along with household idols in a shrine established by the Ephraimite Micah (Judg. 17:5). This ephod, along with Micah's priest, was carried off by the Danite tribe (Judg. 18:14–21).

EPHPHATHA A Hellenized form of the Aramaic for "Be opened!" Jesus said this in healing a man who was unable to hear or speak (Mark 7:34). It is one of several Aramaic words or phrases recorded in the Gospels.

EPHRAIM Joseph's second son, who received a greater blessing than did his older brother, Manasseh, when they were adopted by Jacob (Gen. 41:52; 46:20; 48:5, 20). Ephraim's descendants formed one of the tribes of Israel. *See also* Ephraim, Tribe of.

EPHRAIM, FOREST OF *See* Forest of Ephraim.

EPHRAIM, HILL COUNTRY OF The part of the hill country in north-central Israel allotted to the large, powerful tribe of Ephraim (Josh. 16). In Jeremiah, it is referred to as the "hills of Ephraim" (4:15; 31:6; 50:19); the KJV uses the term "Mount Ephraim." This part of the hill country included cities such as Shechem (Josh. 20:7), Shiloh, and Joshua's home of Timnath Serah (Josh. 24:30). The region was largely comprised of high, rugged hills that made for difficult travel. Since the area had only been sparsely settled before the Israelite conquest, the Ephraimites had to clear the natural forestation (Josh. 17:15–18) in order to take advantage of the naturally fertile soil.

EPHRAIM, TRIBE OF One of the tribes of Israel, descended from Joseph's second son, Ephraim (Gen. 46:20). Occasionally, the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh were described together as the tribe of Joseph (Deut. 33:13), but usually they were listed separately in censuses, tribal movements, and territorial descriptions (Num. 2:24). The territory of Ephraim included the central hill country, with Manasseh to the north and Benjamin to the south (Josh. 16). The territory of Ephraim played a prominent role during the period of the judges. Deborah held court in the hill country of Ephraim (Judg. 4:5). The Ephraimites contended with Gideon (Judg. 8:1) and later went to war with Jephthah (12:4). Ephraim played a role in the revolts against David, with Absalom being killed in Ephraim (2 Sam. 18:6) and Sheba being from Ephraim (20:21). Ephraim grew in prominence to represent the entire northern kingdom (Isa. 7:2; Ezek. 37:16).

EPHRAIM GATE A gate of Jerusalem located on the western end of the city immediately west of the temple precincts, guarding the east-west transverse valley. The gate was so named because it led to the central ridge route that led to the hill country of Ephraim. Joash king of Israel defeated Amaziah and destroyed the city wall between the Ephraim Gate and the Corner Gate (2 Kings 14:13; 2 Chron. 25:23). It was part of Nehemiah's dedication of the wall (Neh. 12:39).

EPHRAIMITE A member of the tribe of Ephraim, a powerful northern Israelite tribe with territory mostly in the north-central hill country. *See also* Ephraim, Tribe of.

EPHRAIN A town that King Abijah took from King Jeroboam, according to the Qere (corrected) reading of 2 Chron. 13:19, followed by the KJV. Most modern versions follow the Kethib (written) reading, identifying this town as Ephron (so also LXX, Vulg.). *See also* Ephron.

EPHRATAH *See* Ephrath, Ephrathah.

EPHRATH, EPHRATHAH "Ephrathah" (NIV), "Ephratah" (KJV), and "Ephrath" (both versions) represent variant spellings of the same Hebrew word. The word can designate a person, a location, or a clan and familial designation related to both the person and the location.

(1) Ephrath was the wife of Caleb (the great-grandson of Judah) and the mother of Hur (1 Chron. 2:19, 50). Hur, the son of Ephrathah, is called the "father of Bethlehem" (1 Chron. 4:4), perhaps denoting civic leadership.

(2) Ephrath is the location where Rachel, Jacob's beloved wife, died giving birth to Benjamin while they were in the process of moving from Bethel to Bethlehem (Gen. 35:16, 19). Genesis 35:19 adds the editorial comment that Ephrath is the same location as Bethlehem, although it is possible that the two were separate towns at first and that only later Ephrath was absorbed into Bethlehem. This story and its identification of Ephrath with Bethlehem is repeated in Gen. 48:7 when Jacob blesses his children before his death. By the time of the prophet Micah, the two place names had become synonymous. Micah's famous messianic promise that the ruler would come from a small town, and not Jerusalem, praised "Bethlehem Ephrathah" (Mic. 5:2).

(3) David, when preparing to fight Goliath, is recorded as "the son of an Ephrathite named Jesse" (1 Sam. 17:12). Later in the same chapter David says that he is a son of "Jesse of Bethlehem" (1 Sam. 17:58). Thus, the designation between location and being a descendant of Ephrath is blurred (of course, most members of a clan would have lived closely together). This is also the case in Ruth 1:2 when Naomi's husband and sons are recorded as being Ephrathites from Bethlehem, thus tying the name "Ephrathah" to the geographic location of Bethlehem (see also Ruth 4:11). Similarly, Caleb's name is associated with Ephrathah in 1 Chron. 2:24, where it is recorded that Hezron, Caleb's father, dies at Caleb Ephrathah. Because "Caleb Ephrathah" is an unusual place name (cf. KJV: "Calebephratah"; NRSV: "Caleb-ephrathah") and the Hebrew syntax of this verse is awkward, some prefer to emend the text, giving, for example, "After the death of Hezron, Caleb had relations with Ephrathah, the widow of his father Hezron, and she bore him Ashhur, the father of Tekoa" (NAB).

EPHRATHITE The designation of a person from Bethlehem who was part of the tribe of Judah (Ruth 1:2; 1 Sam. 17:12). *See also* Ephrath, Ephrathah.

EPHRON **(1)** A Hittite, the son of Zohar, who owned the cave of Machpelah near Mamre, which later was named "Hebron." Abraham negotiated with Ephron to buy Machpelah in order to have a place to bury his wife, Sarah. Following custom, Ephron offered to give the cave to Abraham, who, also following custom, offered full price (four hundred shekels) for the cave (Gen. 23:7–20). It is recorded that Abraham also was buried in the cave (25:9–10). According to Jacob, in his farewell message before dying, Isaac, Rebekah, and Leah were also buried there, and he desired to be buried there as well (49:29–32). Today Machpelah, or the Cave of the Patriarchs, is a heavily visited shrine, located in the modern city of Hebron.

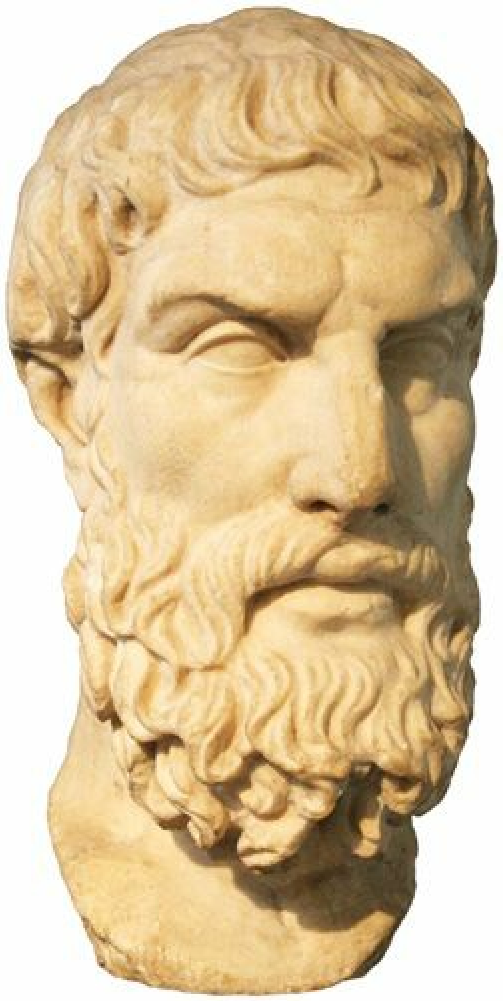
(2) A mountain that formed part of the northern boundary of the tribe of Judah (Josh. 15:9). The exact location of this mountain is uncertain.

(3) A town, perhaps corresponding to the mountain in Josh. 15:9, that was near Bethel (which would have been near the northern boundary of Judah). It was captured from King Jeroboam of Israel by King Abijah of Judah during skirmishes between Judah and Israel (2 Chron. 13:19).

EPICUREANISM A school of thought named for the late fourth-century BC philosopher Epicurus. Core values of Epicureanism include atomism, pleasure, friendship, and retirement from public life.

Atomism affirms that all matter is composed of indivisible "atoms," which are in constant motion. The random collisions of atoms produce all natural events, and the ability of atoms to "swerve" accounts for human free will. Although sometimes accused of atheism, Epicurean thought expressed belief in gods who existed materially but lived apart from and did not intervene in human affairs.

Epicurus identified the sensation of pleasure, defined as the absence of disturbance and fear, as the greatest good. He renounced the sorts of excesses now associated with the contemporary word "Epicurean" in favor of moderation coupled with wisdom and justice. The simple, quiet life among friends such as those who dwelled at the Garden in Athens was deemed most likely to produce a life of pleasure. The stress of civil involvement was to be avoided.



Bust of the philosopher Epicurus

Acts 17:18 mentions the presence of Epicurean philosophers among Paul's audience in the Athens Areopagus; although not explicitly identified, they are likely the ones who sneered at Paul's preaching of resurrection (17:32). Paul's education may have acquainted him with Epicurean philosophy, and his exhortations to quiet, responsible living among believers (1 Thess. 4:9–12) may exhibit values similar to those in Epicurean thought. Likewise, the skepticism expressed in 2 Pet. 3:4 may reflect an Epicurean argument.

EPILEPSY A physical disorder characterized by repeated seizures, also called the “falling sickness” and “sacred disease.” The seizures often were attributed to the divine or supernatural as a form of possession. Some trace the behavior of Saul (1 Sam. 16:14–16) and Ezekiel (Ezek. 3:26), as well as Paul’s “thorn in the flesh” (2 Cor. 12:1–7), to this condition. Matthew’s presentation of Jesus’ exorcism of the demon-possessed youth employs the Greek term *selēniazomai* (lit., “moonstruck”; NIV: “seizures”), which was associated with epilepsy in the Greco-Roman world (Matt. 17:15; cf. Ps. 121:6).

EPIPHANY In its narrower sense, the word “epiphany” refers to special occasions in redemptive history when there was a sudden manifestation of an ordinarily invisible being. For instance, while fleeing from his brother, Esau, Jacob saw in a dream a ladder to heaven on which the angels were ascending and descending, and God stood above it. God reassured Jacob by reaffirming his covenant promise to him. Upon waking, Jacob observed, “Surely the LORD is in this place, and I was not aware of it” (Gen. 28:16). The resurrection appearances of Christ are epiphanies (see Acts 9:3–4). Christ’s return will be an epiphany that all will see.

In its broader sense, an epiphany is any dramatic moment of revelatory insight. For instance, when the prodigal son came to his senses, he realized that even though he had become estranged, he was still a son, and so he still could turn to his father for help (Luke 15:17–19). At conversion, a person experiences a sort of epiphany, coming to understand for the first time not only oneself but also who God is, and suddenly becoming aware of the truth of his promises and of his love (1 Cor. 2:9–10).

EPISTLE *See* Letter.

ER **(1)** The first son of Judah by a Canaanite woman whom the Lord put to death for his wickedness, leaving his wife, Tamar, childless (Gen. 38:2–7; 46:12; Num. 26:19; 1 Chron. 2:3). **(2)** A grandson of Judah, a son of Shelah, and the father of Lecah (1 Chron. 4:21), perhaps named for his uncle Er (Gen. 38:2–7). **(3)** An otherwise unknown grandson of Eliezer, the son of Joshua, and the father of Elmadam in Jesus’ genealogy (Luke 3:28).

ERAN One of the grandsons of Ephraim (Num. 26:36).

ERANITE A clan descended from Eran, numbered among the second generation in the wilderness (Num. 26:36).

ERASTUS **(1)** An assistant to Paul who, after Paul decided to leave Ephesus and go to Macedonia and Achaia, was sent ahead to Macedonia by Paul along with Timothy (Acts 19:22). **(2)** A person described in 2 Tim. 4:20 as having “stayed in Corinth.” He is most likely the same person mentioned in Acts 19:22. **(3)** One of those mentioned in Rom. 16:23 as sending greetings to the church members in Rome. He is identified as “the city’s director of public works” (NIV) or “the city treasurer” (NRSV). Paul probably wrote Romans while in Corinth, and it may be that this Erastus is the same man mentioned in an inscription found in Corinth in 1929 and dated to the middle of the first century AD: “Erastus, commissioner of public works, bore the expense of this pavement.”

ERECH *See* Uruk.

ERI A son of Gad (Gen. 46:16) whose descendants were numbered among the second generation in the wilderness (Num. 26:16).

ERITE A clan descended from Eri that was numbered among the second generation in the wilderness (Num. 26:16).

ESAIAS The KJV rendering in the NT of the Greek name *Ēsaias*, translated as “Isaiah” in more-recent versions.

ESARHADDON Esarhaddon replaced Sennacherib as king of Assyria after some brief internal strife (2 Kings 19:37 // Isa. 37:38). During his reign (680–669 BC), western areas such as Phoenicia and Palestine were fairly stable. He resettled foreigners in Palestine (Ezra 4:2). He attacked Egypt repeatedly and was crowned as pharaoh there. He also rebuilt Babylon and its temples, considering Sennacherib’s destruction there to be excessive or even sacrilegious. He placed one son on the throne of Assyria and another in Babylon.

ESAU The firstborn son of Isaac and Rebekah, the twin brother of Jacob, and the father of the Edomites (Gen. 25:25–26; 36). Unlike Jacob, Esau was red and hairy in appearance (hence his name [25:25]), a skillful hunter by trade, and loved by his father, Isaac.

Before the birth of the twins, Rebekah received a prophecy that the two sons would represent nations, and that the older, Esau, would serve the younger, Jacob (Gen. 25:23). This reversal of events was brought about through the trickery of Jacob and Rebekah. Jacob bargained for Esau’s birthright, which the famished Esau traded for food. Rebekah cleverly disguised her beloved son, Jacob, to feel and smell like Esau in order to fool her blind husband, which allowed Jacob to steal Esau’s blessing. Esau plotted to kill Jacob, who possessed his birthright and blessing.

Rebekah intervened to save Jacob by urging Isaac to send Jacob away to Paddan Aram to take a wife from her father’s home (Gen. 27:42–28:5). As a result, Jacob’s wife-to-be would not be a grief to his parents like Esau’s foreign wives, Judith and Basemath (26:34). Upon hearing of his parents’ disapproval, Esau added another foreign wife, Mahalath, apparently out of spite (28:8–9). Esau never exacted revenge on his brother, even though Jacob greatly feared this fate (32:3–21). Instead, the two brothers met peacefully following Jacob’s departure from Paddan Aram (Gen. 33:4), and again in order to bury their father (35:29).

Genesis 36 describes Esau as the father of the Edomites, who inhabited the hill country of Seir in Edom (also Deut. 2:4–6). Even though Jacob and Esau resolved their differences, there was continued strife between the two nations that they represent, fulfilling the earlier prophecy. Edom also figures prominently within the prophetic corpus (see Obadiah; Mal. 1:2–4). Further, the relationship between Jacob and Esau and their father is used as a type in the NT (Rom. 9–11), and Esau is used to represent the godless (Heb. 12:16).

ESCHATOLOGY Eschatology is the study of last things. The word “eschatology” comes from the Greek word *eschatos*, meaning “last.” From this same Greek word is derived the term “eschaton,” which is sometimes used to refer to the end times.

Eschatology deals with such future events as the end of the world, Jesus’ return, the resurrection, the final judgment, and the afterlife in heaven or hell. The tribulation and the millennium also belong to eschatology, but their timing and nature vary with different views. Although from one perspective human history entered its final phase in NT times so that people today are already living in the "last days," eschatology normally focuses on the unfulfilled prophecies that remain still in the future for present-day believers.

Eschatology deals with questions regarding the future. Every religion and philosophy of life has offered answers to these questions. Plato taught about the immortality of the soul. Buddhism has its nirvana, Islam its sensual paradise, and Native Americans their happy hunting grounds. The belief that the soul survives death is widely held. Even atheists and materialists have their own views of eschatology. Yet only in Christianity does eschatology become the crown and capstone of everything else that God has been doing throughout history, when he will be perfectly glorified, Christ completely victorious, the power of sin entirely overcome, and the people of God given a complete salvation.

Yet it is difficult to find a topic on which Christians are more divided. Frequently, people studying eschatology fall into one of two opposite traps: unwarranted dogmatism or simple avoidance. Yet eschatology should be a source of comfort and hope to believers as well as an ongoing reminder of the lateness and urgency of the hour. Consequently, eschatology deserves most careful attention and should create a sense of excitement and anticipation.

REASONS FOR CONTROVERSY

Eschatology is by no means a simple discipline. The sheer magnitude of this topic is a significant challenge involving hundreds of different unfulfilled prophecies from virtually every book of the Bible. Difficulties in interpreting these prophecies with their figures of speech, apocalyptic language, and complicated symbolism create still greater complications. Then there is the challenge of organizing these individual prophecies together into a coherent timeline when each will be fulfilled. Discerning the period of fulfillment for some prophecies is relatively clear and easy, but for others it is much less certain.

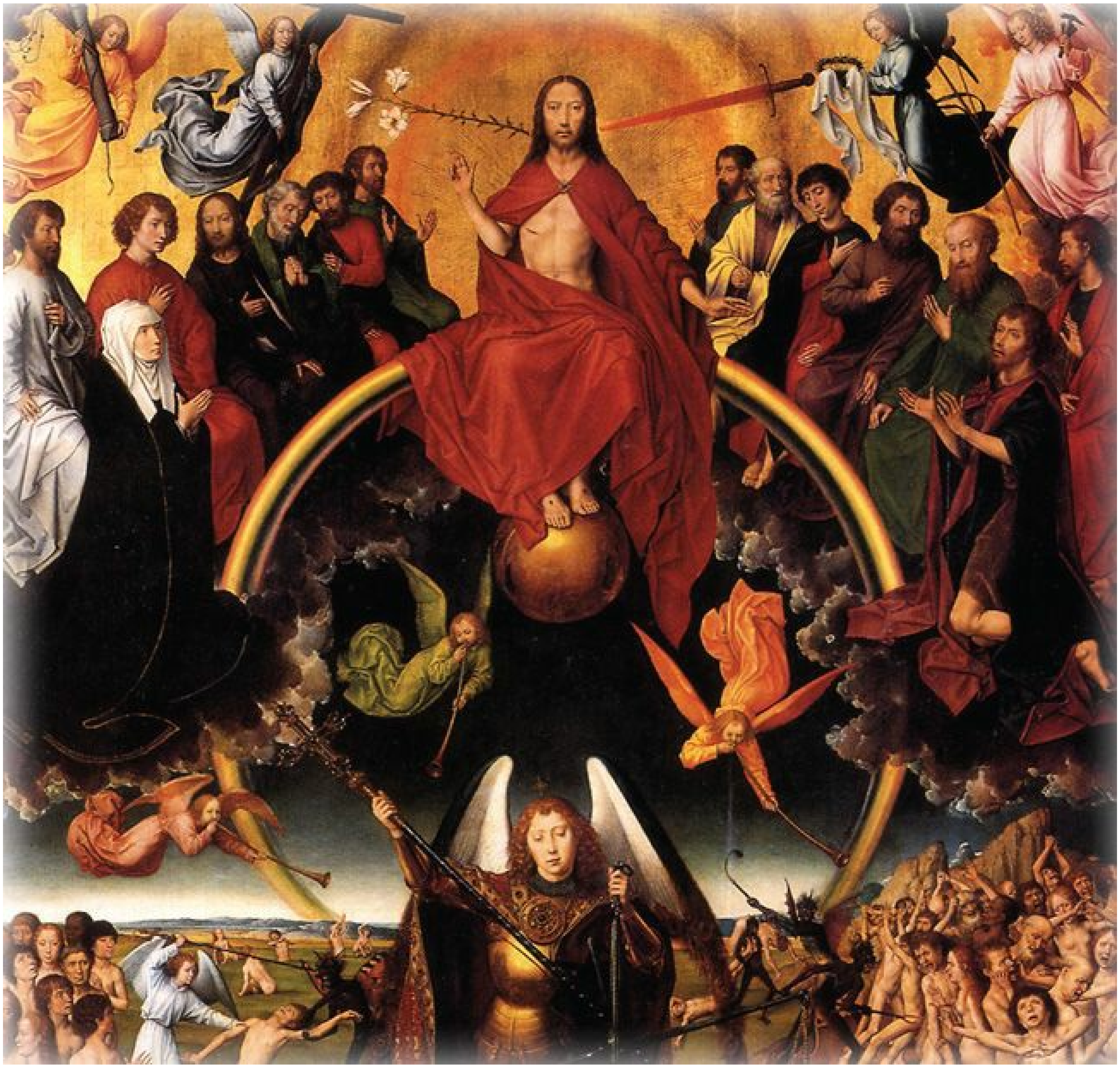
Even the question of how many periods of future time remain in God's timetable has often been the source of considerable debate. For example, will there be a future period of tribulation, or were these prophecies already fulfilled in AD 70, or perhaps more generally throughout church history, with its countless martyrs? Similar questions have been raised about the millennium: is this to be understood in a still future sense, as premillennialists assert, or is it already in the process of being fulfilled, as amillennialists and postmillennialists claim? The fact that there is no common agreement even on these fundamental questions virtually guarantees that believers will remain divided on this issue.

Then too there is the final step of trying to assign specific unfulfilled prophecies into this grid of prophetic time slots. For example, is the prophecy "The wolf and the lamb will feed together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox" (Isa. 65:25) a symbolic picture of God's blessings in this present church age, in a future millennium, or in eternity itself? The vast majority of these unfulfilled prophecies contain few clues regarding the precise time of their fulfillment, and interpreters often are left with little to guide them. We should not be surprised that eschatology leaves believers more divided than do other areas of theology.

JESUS' RETURN AND THE TRIBULATION

The fact of Jesus' return is clear. When Jesus was taken up from his apostles at the end of his earthly ministry, two angels promised them, "This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11). Today believers look forward to Jesus' second coming, as "the blessed hope" (Titus 2:13). The common understanding has always been that this return will be personal, visible, and bodily—just as real as his first coming two thousand years ago.

Christians, however, have been divided over the timing of Jesus' return and the tribulation. Here there are five interrelated questions.



The Last Judgment by Hans Memling (1430–1494)

1. The first question is whether Jesus' return is a single event or will occur in two stages. Dispensationalists distinguish two phases to Jesus' return: a secret rapture that removes the church from a period of intense tribulation involving Israel here on earth, and then a later public second coming in judgment at the end of the tribulation, when he will establish his kingdom. A number of recent "left behind" books and movies have popularized this approach. Yet this two-stage model is difficult to document in Scripture, and many understand Scripture to describe Jesus' return as a single unified event.

2. How one answers this first question has implications for the second question of the timing of

Jesus' return relative to the tribulation. Here there are three popular options regarding the timing of Jesus' return: pretribulational (before the tribulation), midtribulational (in the midst of the tribulation), and posttribulational (after the tribulation). Yet if Jesus' return is pretribulational or midtribulational, logic would require that there be two phases to Jesus' return: a secret rapture either before the tribulation (for pretribulationalism) or in the middle of it (for midtribulationalism), and then a separate public return at the conclusion of the tribulation to establish his kingdom. Thus, a two-stage return of Jesus goes hand in hand with pretribulationalism and midtribulationalism, and a single return with posttribulationalism.

3. A third question focuses on the nature of the tribulation period. There are three main views. Pretribulationalists assume that the tribulation will be a period (usually seven years) of great suffering such as this world has never seen. Midtribulationalists believe that Jesus will return after three and a half years of less intense tribulation, followed by a considerably more intense second period of three and a half years of wrath, from which believers will be spared. Posttribulationalists see this tribulation as the suffering and persecution of Christians at various times and places around the world, with possibly some intensification in the final days. Consequently, how one understands the intensity of the tribulation is another factor affecting the choice of one tribulational view or another.

4. A fourth interrelated question involves whether one believes that Jesus may return suddenly and unexpectedly at any moment (Matt. 24:42) or whether there are still unfulfilled prophecies that must take place first (initially including at least Peter's death [John 21:19] and the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem). Pretribulationalists pride themselves on how their view of a secret rapture allows for Jesus to return imminently without any intervening signs or other warnings. Midtribulationalists believe that the church will need to experience three and a half years of moderate tribulation, so there is less emphasis on an imminent return (although one could argue that the first period of tribulation is potentially more ambiguous in nature). Posttribulationalists are divided into two groups. Many have held that the tribulation will be a period of significant tribulation, so typically they have downplayed the idea of imminence. However, other posttribulationalists (sometimes called "pasttribulationalists" or "imminent posttribulationalists") assume that the tribulation described in Scripture may already be fulfilled either at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 or more generally throughout church history, and therefore Jesus may return at any time.

5. The fifth question focuses on how literally or figuratively one should interpret the two key passages of Scripture related to the nature of the tribulation: the Olivet Discourse (Matt. 24 pars.) and Rev. 6–19. Much of the Olivet Discourse focuses on the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70, and many have understood at least parts of Revelation as being fulfilled historically either in John's own day or during church history. The more one assumes that at least portions of these prophecies were already fulfilled, the less one awaits a future fulfillment. A more literal approach to these prophecies will predispose one toward pretribulationalism or possibly midtribulationalism, and a more figurative approach toward posttribulationalism.

Hyperpreterism, or consistent preterism, has emerged in the last few decades with a still different approach to the timing of Jesus' return. The driving force behind this movement is Jesus' apparent promise to return within a generation of his death (Matt. 24:34). Consequently, hyperpreterism has assumed that all the future prophecies in the NT must have been fulfilled by the time of the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70, including Jesus' return, the bodily resurrection, the final judgment, and the new heaven and new earth. The bottom line is that in order to take literally Jesus' promise to return within a generation, everything else in eschatology needs to be reinterpreted as having been fulfilled in one way or another within that same generation. A more moderate preterism sees many, but not all, of these eschatological events fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. Jesus returned as the Son of Man in judgment against Israel in these first-century events, but the final judgment of all people and the new heaven and new earth await his second coming.

THE RESURRECTION AND THE FINAL JUDGMENT

The bodily resurrection takes place at the time of Jesus' return. Although many other religions and philosophies have assumed the immortality of the soul, whereby the nonmaterial part of human nature survives death, Christianity is distinctive in its strong commitment to the idea of a bodily resurrection. Death marks the separation of the body from the soul and the time when believers are immediately ushered into God's presence (Eccles. 12:7). Thus, Jesus was able to promise the thief on the cross, "Today you will be with me in paradise" (Luke 23:43). However, people do not immediately receive new resurrection bodies at the time of death, but must wait until the time of Jesus' return, when "the dead in Christ will rise first" (1 Thess. 4:16). This bodily resurrection is the precursor to the final judgment of the saved and the lost, when "all who are in their graves will hear his voice and come out—those who have done good will rise to live, and those who have done evil will rise to be condemned" (John 5:28–29). At that time, Christ "will judge the living and the dead" (2 Tim. 4:1).

This theme of judgment is foundational to Christianity, although Christians remain divided about the exact number and character of these judgments. Yet the time will come when all people will be judged, both "the living and the dead" (Acts 10:42), when "we will all stand before God's judgment seat" (Rom. 14:10), and "each of us will give an account of ourselves to God" (14:12). God himself will be the judge, and Christ will be given a special place in presiding over the final judgment and separate those who truly belong to him from those who do not. Even though this judgment will be "according to what they have done" (Matt. 16:27; Rom. 2:6; Rev. 22:12), these deeds are simply an outward demonstration of whether a living faith is present, so there is no contradiction between justification by faith and the necessary place for a changed life in the believer. Yet, as Jesus warns, some will be surprised: "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven" (Matt. 7:21). God's judgment will be both just and inescapable.

Christians remain divided about the number of resurrections. Premillennialists who are also pretribulationalists or midtribulationalists would conclude that there is a minimum of a resurrection of believers at the time of the rapture, when Jesus returns for his church; another resurrection when Jesus returns at the end of the tribulation for believers who came to faith and died during the tribulation; as well as another resurrection at the end of the millennium for "the rest of the dead" (Rev. 20:5). Premillennialists who are also posttribulationalists would conclude that there are as few as two resurrections: one at Jesus' return and another at the end of the millennium. An amillennialist or a postmillennialist would assume that there may be only a single bodily resurrection when Jesus returns and establishes his kingdom.

There is one other aspect that completes this theme: God's judgment also includes the destruction of the devil in the lake of fire (Rev. 20:10). Someday sin and evil will be forever removed from God's creation.

THE MILLENNIUM

The millennium is a thousand-year reign of Christ described most clearly in Rev. 20. Again, there are sharp differences of opinion regarding this topic.

Premillennialists believe that Jesus' return will be "pre" (before) the millennium, and that this millennial kingdom will be a golden age of unprecedented glory and splendor. Dispensational premillennialists, with their emphasis on the distinction between Israel and the church, have focused on the fulfillment of all the remaining OT prophecies made to Israel. Historic premillennialists, on the other hand, lack this sharp distinction between Israel and the church and see themselves as being in continuity with the view of a future reign of Christ on earth found throughout church history. In recent years, premillennialism has become the leading view in American Christianity.

Postmillennialists believe that God will build his church for "a thousand years" and then Jesus will return "post" (after) this millennium. The millennium here is comparable to a silver age involving significant and unprecedented advances of the gospel throughout the world. Postmillennialists remain divided about how literal this thousand-year period might be and whether this period has already begun or not. Postmillennialism has had a significant following throughout most of church history but more recently has become a minority view.

Amillennialists believe in a different kind of millennium. Here there are two different varieties. Some believe that those reigning with Christ in Rev. 20 are simply believers living here in this present life experiencing the intimacy of Christ's presence in their daily lives. Others see this period as involving departed believers, who are currently reigning with Christ in the intermediate state between death and his return. The millennium here is neither the golden age of the premillennialist nor the silver age of the postmillennialist; it is simply life today.

Again there are predisposing factors. Those who place more weight on potentially unfulfilled OT prophecies will tend to be premillennial, whereas those who place more weight on the words of Jesus and Paul will tend to be amillennial or possibly postmillennial. Those who see more of a distinction between Israel and the church will tend to be dispensational premillennialists, whereas those who emphasize the unity among God's people throughout redemptive history will choose one of the other alternatives. Those who tend toward a more literal approach to interpreting Scripture will tend to be premillennialists, whereas those who give more weight to symbolic and figurative language will choose one of the other options. Those who tend to be more pessimistic about the future and believe that things are getting worse will tend to be premillennialists, whereas those who are more optimistic about what God is doing in this world and who emphasize the transforming power of the gospel will tend to be postmillennialists. One's eschatological convictions are the logical outgrowth of many other earlier commitments and persuasions.

Each of these millennial views also has implications for a number of other topics: the nature and intensity of Satan's binding in Rev. 20, the number of different resurrections, and the number of different judgments. The ultimate question, again, is which approach does the best job of putting together all the prophecies of Scripture and consequently is most faithful to God's word.

Heaven and Hell

God's judgment inevitably leads either to final and permanent torment in hell or to untold blessings in the new heaven and new earth (Matt. 25:46).

The ultimate hope of believers involves the bodily resurrection and a new earth to go along with these glorified bodies. The glad time will come when God "will wipe every tear from their eyes" and "there will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain" (Rev. 21:4). There will be the joys of physical bodies healed and restored, seeing friends and loved ones, but the greatest joy of all will be seeing the Lord himself in all his glory and majesty.

Hell will be the very opposite, experienced by those who deliberately rejected and avoided God during their earthly lives. They will find themselves rejected by God and cut off from his presence (and all the blessings that go along with his presence). Although there are various debates about how literal or figurative some of the biblical descriptions of hell are in terms of unquenchable fire and worms that do not die (Mark 9:48), it seems safe to say that hell will be the greatest of all possible tragedies and far worse than any of these descriptions suggest.

Annihilationism or conditional immortality, with its assumption that the souls of the lost will cease to exist at some point after death, represents an attempt to soften the explicit teachings of Scripture. Universalism—the belief that ultimately everyone will be saved—is another human strategy to avoid the clear teaching of Scripture. Ultimately, there is a heaven, and there is a hell, and human choices do make a difference for time and eternity.

THE BENEFITS OF ESCHATOLOGY

Eschatology should give balance and perspective to life so that the affairs and accomplishments of this present life do not take on an inappropriate importance. Whenever people are caught up with materialism and a this-worldly perspective on life or become complacent about their lack of spiritual growth or the spiritual condition of others, the underlying cause is often a lack of attention to eschatology. Although many difficult and controversial questions surround the nature and timing of the return of Jesus Christ, Scripture is clear about the fact of his return and the final judgment. A new life with Christ that will last for all eternity is described in Scripture as the greatest of all possible blessings. At the same time, a life apart from God both in this life and in the life to come is described as the greatest possible tragedy in life. Perhaps even the spiritual deception and confusion around us, whereby many “will abandon the faith” (1 Tim. 4:1) and “not put up with sound doctrine” (2 Tim. 4:3), are a sign of the lateness of the hour. A proper appreciation of eschatology can be a means that God uses to change people’s lives.

ESCHATON *See* Eschatology.

ESDRAELON “Esdraelon,” which does not appear in either of the two Testaments (although it does appear in the apocryphal book of Judith), is the Greek form of the Hebrew “Jezreel,” which occurs often in the OT.

The Valley of Esdraelon (or Plain of Esdraelon) begins at the Kishon River below Carmel, lies east of Carmel and Megiddo, south of Nazareth and the surrounding hill country of Galilee to the foot of Mount Tabor, and north of Jezreel. Rich and fertile, it is a large portion of the valley that extends from the coastal plain of the Mediterranean all the way to the Jordan Valley, severing the western hills into their northern (Galilee) and central (Samaria) sectors. The Valley of Esdraelon is sometimes called the “Plain of Megiddo,” the city of Megiddo being on the southern edge of the valley at the foot of the hill country.

The Valley of Esdraelon was a key territory because it split the western hills, and its road supplied the only access from the Mediterranean to the Jordan Valley and beyond. For this reason, and also because the territory was so fertile, the area was of special interest to all, from the conquerors of other lands to those simply traversing the trade routes from Tyre and Akko to Megiddo, to the Jordan Valley and the Transjordan. Megiddo, at the south edge of the plain, held a dominant place in trade because it was centrally and crucially located.

In the OT conquest, the Valley of Esdraelon was the territory largely belonging to Issachar and

Zebulun (Josh. 19:10–23). Additionally, after the confrontation of Elijah with the prophets of Baal on Carmel, the biblical text notes that the hand of Yahweh was with Elijah as he outran Ahab to Jezreel (1 Kings 18:45–46). Ahab rode in his chariot through this valley on his way back to the palace and probably was hindered by the quagmire of the Kishon River (which drains the Esdraelon Valley) in the heavy storm predicted by Elijah. Perhaps the defeat of Sisera in the Valley of Esdraelon came about in this same way if the Kishon overflowed its banks and the iron-wheeled chariots could not negotiate the mud (Judg. 4:1–16).

The apocryphal book of Judith notes Esdraelon as the area near which the story's villain, Holofernes, was encamped when the heroine, Judith, assassinated him (7:3). *See also* Jezreel.

ESEK A well, whose name means "dispute," that was a source of contention between Isaac's shepherds who dug it and the shepherds of the kingdom of Gerar (Gen. 26:20).

ESHAN A town included in the inheritance of the tribe of Judah. Listed in the same district as Hebron, in the central hill country of Judah, Eshan's exact location is unknown (Josh. 15:52). Codex Vaticanus of the LXX has "Soma" instead of "Eshan."

ESH-BAAL One of King Saul's sons (1 Chron. 8:33), also called "Ish-Bosheth (2 Sam. 2–4). Apparently, later scribes changed "Esh-Baal" ("man of Baal") to "Ish-Bosheth" ("man of shame") due to its pagan connotations. After Saul's death, Abner, the captain of Saul's army, proclaimed Esh-Baal king over Israel. Thus, he was David's rival for two years before Abner turned his support to David after being accused of sleeping with Saul's concubine Rizpah (2 Sam. 3:7–21). After Abner was murdered by Joab, Esh-Baal lost his courage and evidently all hope of regaining the crown. Shortly thereafter he was murdered by two of his officers, Baanah and Rechab. Although the assassins expected to be rewarded for their deed, David put them to death and had Esh-Baal buried in Hebron. Esh-Baal's death permitted David to gain control of all of Israel.

ESHBAN A son of Dishon, a descendant of Esau (Gen. 36:26; 1 Chron. 1:41).

ESHCOL *See* Eshkol.

ESHEK A descendant of Saul (1 Chron. 8:39).

ESHKALONITE *See* Ashkelon.

ESHKOL **(1)** An ally of Abraham who lived in the region of Hebron. Eshkol and his brothers joined with Abraham to fight against a coalition of four kings and take back Abraham's nephew Lot and his family (Gen. 14:13–24). **(2)** A valley near Hebron visited by the twelve Israelite spies during their reconnaissance of Canaan. The spies brought back a single "cluster [*'eshkol*] of grapes" from the valley as proof of Canaan's fruitfulness (Num. 13:23–24). The region still produces excellent grapes.

ESHTAOL A town allotted to Dan from the possession of Judah. It is located to the west of Jerusalem in the Shephelah, or lowlands. It is always mentioned in association with the town of Zorah. Mahaneh Dan ("camp of Dan"), located between these towns, marks the place where the Spirit of the Lord first moved upon Samson and where he was buried in his father's tomb (Judg. 13:25;

16:31). The five valiant Danites who searched for new territory for their tribe began their journey from these two towns, as did the six hundred Danite soldiers who set out to capture and settle in Laish (Judg. 18:2, 11).

ESHTAOLITES Descendants of Caleb (1 Chron. 2:53), their ancestral territory lay in the lowlands of Judah (Josh. 15:33).

ESHTARAH *See* Be Eshterah.

ESHTEMOA **(1)** The son of Ishbah, from the tribe of Judah (1 Chron. 4:17). **(2)** A descendant of Hodiah's wife, the sister of Naham from the tribe of Judah (1 Chron. 4:19). He was a Maakathite from the small Aramean kingdom of Maakah. **(3)** A town in the hill country of the tribal area of Judah that was given to the descendants of Aaron the priest. It was designated as a Levitical town (Josh. 21:14; 1 Chron. 6:57). This was one of the towns to which David sent a share of the plunder of his conquest after defeating the Amalekites when they had attacked his home of Ziklag (1 Sam. 30:28).

ESHTEMOH A town in the hill country that was part of the tribe of Judah's territorial allotment (Josh. 15:50). The town's name is also spelled "Eshtemoa."

ESHTON The son of Mehir and the father (or founder) of Beth Rapha, Paseah, and Tehinnah. He was from the tribe of Judah (1 Chron. 4:11–12).

ESLI An otherwise unknown postexilic ancestor of Jesus mentioned only in Luke 3:25 as the son of Naggai and father of Nahum.

ESPOUSAL *See* Betrothal.

ESROM *See* Hezron.

ESSENES The Essenes were an ascetic Jewish group first mentioned in the Hasmonean period. They believed in divine providence over everything and the immortality of the soul. They were said to predict the future and interpret dreams. They are generally equated with the Qumran community described in the DSS. *See also* Jewish Parties.

ESTHER Esther gives her name to the book that tells her story. She was a woman of the Diaspora of the Jewish people that followed the Babylonian captivity and continued beyond the time of the decree by Cyrus that allowed the Jews to return to Jerusalem if they so chose. Her cousin Mordecai had a position within the Persian government, which may explain why the family did not return; they were successful in their adopted land. Indeed, the name "Mordecai" means "man of Marduk," and the name "Esther" is related to the goddess name "Ishtar." From the story, we know that they were not active worshipers of these gods, but their names do suggest that they were well integrated in their adopted culture. Esther's Hebrew name was "Hadassah" (Esther 2:7), but the book, though noting this name, consistently refers to her as Esther.

Esther's story is set during the reign of Ahasuerus, also known as Xerxes, a famous Persian king (r. 486–465 BC). Esther enters the scene when his queen, Vashti, disobeyed a direct order in front of all the leaders of his empire during a banquet. He therefore deposed her and set out to find a replacement queen. To find the right woman, he gathered beautiful virgins into his harem and slept with each one. He approved of Esther above all others and made her his queen.

In the meantime, a bitter relationship was developing between Esther's cousin Mordecai and Haman, a leading official under Xerxes. Mordecai had already been introduced as a descendant of Shimei and Kish from the land of Benjamin, a subtle way of indicating that he was a descendant of Saul. Haman was an Agagite, which made him a descendant of King Agag of the Amalekites, a people whom Saul, against the command of God, had failed to eradicate after he defeated them (1 Sam. 15; see Deut. 25:17–19, based on Exod. 17:8–16).

Haman used money and his position to convince Xerxes to destroy the Jewish people in the empire. After some urging from Mordecai, Esther saved the day by intervening with the king and exposing Haman's plot. Instead of the Jewish people being destroyed, their enemies were killed. Indeed, as Mordecai had thought, Esther was put in her position in the court "for such a time as this" (Esther 4:14).

ESTHER, BOOK OF Esther is a provocative book, not least because it nowhere explicitly mentions God. Although this fact has led to questions concerning the book's canonical authority, close readers recognize that God is very present in all the "coincidences" of the story (see "Theological Message" below).

AUTHOR AND DATE

Esther is written anonymously. The book is set within the reign of Ahasuerus, king of Persia, who is also known by his Greek name, "Xerxes" (r. 486–465 BC). This places the events of the book between the time of the first return after the exile under the leadership of Sheshbazzar and Zerubbabel and the later postexilic period when Ezra and Nehemiah lived. Whereas the book of Ezra-Nehemiah gives the reader a picture of postexilic life in and around Jerusalem, the book of Esther reminds the reader that many Jews decided not to return, and thus the Diaspora (scattering) continues until today. The exact date and composition of the book after these events is unknown.

Relief depicting Xerxes on his throne

GENRE AND OUTLINE

Esther is a wonderfully written story. Its characters are memorable, and its plot is exciting and uplifting. The debate concerns whether the book also intends to record history, what actually happened. Because the narrated events take place during the reign of a king who we know existed, and because the story, for the most part, rings true of the period in which the narration takes place, the reader is led to suspect that the book is a work of history.

The book describes a number of feasts, which provide the following structure:

I. The Feasts of Xerxes (1:1–2:8)

II. The Feasts of Esther (2:19–7:10)

III. The Feast of Purim (8–10)

THEOLOGICAL MESSAGE

The purpose of the book of Esther is to explain how the Feast of Purim originated. At this time, Purim becomes one of the annual festivals of the Jewish people. It is the celebration of a time when God delivered his people from an almost certain end.

The story begins with a great banquet (chap. 1). King Ahasuerus throws a feast for all the important people of his kingdom. At the climactic point of the celebration, he calls for his queen, Vashti, so that all his subjects can see her great beauty. She refuses, creating a crisis. After all, this banquet likely had as its purpose the assertion of the king's authority over his leaders, and this disobedience could not be tolerated. Vashti is deposed, and the search begins for a new queen. The king takes full advantage of this opportunity and tries out many beautiful young women in his kingdom, but none is as outstanding as Esther. Her selection as queen provides background for the action that follows.

In the meantime, Esther's relative Mordecai also has an experience that carries importance later in the story. Mordecai foils an assassination plot against the king. At this point in the narrative, his action is simply given as information (2:21–23).

The reader is also introduced to one more major character in the book, Haman the Agagite. He is a powerful, evil figure. He hates Mordecai for refusing to show him the respect that he feels is his due (3:1–6). So he determines to kill not just Mordecai but all the Jewish people in the empire. Accordingly, Haman convinces the king to allow him to set a date when all the Jews might be killed. Lots (Heb. *purim*, from an Akkadian loanword) are cast to choose the date, about a year later (3:7–15).

Mordecai catches wind of the plot and explains the dire situation to Esther. He pleads with her to approach the king to inform him of the plot. Esther hesitates, until Mordecai reminds her that she will not escape the consequences just because she is queen (chap. 4). In the context of this discussion, Mordecai speaks the most famous words of the book when he asks, "Who knows but that you have come to your royal position for such a time as this?" (4:14).

This scene raises the question of who is the hero of the story. Although Mordecai and Esther perform admirable acts, there is a force behind the scenes that the narrative does not name but subtly and certainly makes clear is the hero. It is none other than God himself. The coincidences that follow are just too great to be attributed to chance.

First, Esther is given permission to approach the king, and she successfully invites him to a feast along with Haman (5:1–8). This invitation fuels Haman's pride. Soon thereafter, the king has difficulty sleeping and asks that the royal annals be read to him. Coincidentally, or so it seems, the part of the annals chosen informs the king of Mordecai's earlier service in foiling the assassination plot. The king is told that nothing has yet been done to honor Mordecai for his act (6:1–3).

The next morning, Haman comes to court having just constructed a huge gallows on which to execute his enemy Mordecai. When asked by the king what he should do to honor a person whom the king has desired to honor, Haman thinks that it is he who will receive the honor, so he piles up honor after honor. When informed that Mordecai is the one, and that he, Haman, would take a role in honoring him, Haman realizes that his own doom is assured (6:4–14).

Sure enough, at the banquet Esther informs the king of the underside of Haman's plot. The result is that Haman is killed on the gallows built for Mordecai, yet another ironic reversal in the book (chap. 7).

A problem persists, however. The king has determined a date for the destruction of the Jews, and a decree of a Persian king is irreversible. Although the king cannot reverse his decision to allow the killing of the Jewish people, he can, and does, issue a second decree, permitting the Jewish people to defend themselves (chap. 8). On the fateful day, the Jews are victorious over their enemies, the final and climactic ironic reversal (9:1–19). Purim is established as an annual festival to celebrate this fact (9:20–32).

A deeper significance to this conflict is recovered once it is realized that this is a story of unfinished business. The attentive reader recognizes that Mordecai's membership in the clan of Kish (2:5) connects him with Saul, since Kish was Saul's father. On the other hand, Haman is an Agagite (3:1) and therefore related to the Amalekite king Agag, whom Saul, against God's instructions, did not immediately kill (1 Sam. 15). The story actually begins during the wilderness wandering, when the Amalekites tried to kill off the Israelites before they entered the promised land. At that time, God determined that the Amalekites should be judged and eradicated (Exod. 17:16; Deut. 25:17–19). That a Saulide (Mordecai) defeats an Amalekite (Haman) has deep significance in the past.

CONTEMPORARY SIGNIFICANCE

Although God is never mentioned in the book of Esther, readers clearly see his hand in the events of the story. There are no miracles, but the survival of God's people is as much a matter of divine providence as the crossing of the Red Sea in the book of Exodus. God works in the "ordinary" events of life "for the good of those who love him" (Rom. 8:28). The people of God today are locked in a war, not with Agagites like Haman, but rather with the more imposing spiritual powers and principalities mentioned in passages such as Eph. 6:10–20. The book of Esther is a reminder that God is in control even when doom looks certain. Christians know that not even death can separate them from the love of Christ (Rom. 8:37–38).

ETAM **(1)** The rock of Etam is a location mentioned twice, with both references occurring in the same story (Judg. 15:8, 11). It was in a cave here that Samson camped after taking his revenge on the Philistines for murdering his wife and father-in-law. Soon afterward, men from Judah confronted Samson at the cave to turn him over to the Philistines. The exact location is unknown, though some have suggested a cave near Zorah (modern Tsora) as the most likely possibility. **(2)** A descendant of Judah, and the father of Jezreel, Ishma, Idbash, and Hazzelelponi (1 Chron. 4:3). This reference may possibly be either to a patriarch of the village that bears his name or to the town itself (see 4 below). The latter possibility is warranted by some manuscript evidence as well as 1 Chron. 4:4–5, where the patriarchs of Bethlehem and Tekoa (towns associated with Etam) are mentioned. **(3)** A village belonging to the tribe of Simeon (1 Chron. 4:32). The exact location is unknown. **(4)** One of the Judean towns fortified by King Rehoboam (928–911 BC; 2 Chron. 11:6). The most probable site is modern Khirbet el-Khokh, located about two miles southwest of Bethlehem. Near the traditional location for Solomon's Pools, Etam is mentioned by Josephus as the site for the great king's gardens and springs (*Ant.* 8.186).

ETERNAL LIFE Eternal life usually is mentioned in reference to human life, where it means unending life in the body, free from death. The expression, though most common in the NT, is drawn from the OT. The book of Daniel says that many who "sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt" (12:2). This yearning for eternal life is also expressed in Genesis, where those who eat of the "tree of life" will "live forever" (3:22). In Deuteronomy, God likewise declares, "I live forever" (32:40). Among the DSS, 4Q418 (frag. 69) and 1QS (4:7), both of which predate the NT, also refer to everlasting life.

The NT expression "eternal life" may seem to have a different meaning than the OT expression “everlasting life.” Any such appearance arises only in translation to English, for the underlying Greek words in the NT have the same meaning as the underlying Hebrew words in the OT. The words are already treated synonymously by the LXX, an ancient translation of the Hebrew Bible into Greek (predating the NT).

The English word “eternal” may refer to eternity past and future, but in biblical usage that word does not generally refer to eternity past. This is evident where the NT mentions “eternal fire” (Matt. 18:8) and “eternal punishment” (Matt. 25:46). It is also indicated where eternal life is seen as a future reward for the righteous (Dan. 12:2; Luke 18:30; Rom. 2:7; Gal. 6:8; Titus 1:2; 1 John 2:25).

That life in the body is included in the NT concept of eternal life is evident from several considerations. Jesus says of everyone who believes in him, “I will raise them up at the last day” (John 6:40). The bodily nature of everlasting life is indicated by Jesus’ own resurrection, for his tomb was left empty. Jesus says after his own resurrection that a spirit “does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have” (Luke 24:39). The apostle Paul even writes that without the resurrection the Christian faith is invalidated (1 Cor. 15:12–19). When Paul says that “flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God,” he does not mean that resurrection is of the human spirit, but rather that perishable flesh and blood must first be made immortal (1 Cor. 15:50–54; 2 Cor. 5:4).

The prospect of eternal life is often contrasted with death and punishment, just as the Bible more generally contrasts the prospect of life with death and lawless behavior. In Gen. 3, the sin of Adam and Eve shows that people turn from God out of self-interest, so everlasting life is not given to them. Much later, the people of Israel are warned that they will suffer death if they break faith with the true God to follow other gods (Lev. 26; Deut. 28; 30:15–20). Later still, the book of Daniel warns plainly that resurrection is to everlasting life or to everlasting contempt (12:1–3). The NT likewise, drawing at times from the Hebrew prophets (e.g., Isa. 66:22–24), contrasts the prospect of eternal life with the prospect of punishment for doing evil (Matt. 25:31–46; John 5:28–29; Rom. 6:23; Gal. 6:8; Rev. 20:10–15; 22:1–6).

Just as eternal life is contrasted with death, eternal life is sometimes referred to more fundamentally and simply as “life” (e.g., Matt. 19:17; Acts 11:18; 1 John 3:14). All life comes from God, through his divine word (Gen. 1; Deut. 30:20; John 1:1–4). The NT says that God gave his Son the power to give eternal life, since the Son does only what God the Father commands (John 5:19–30; 6:57–58).

The NT promises eternal life to all who believe (trust) in God’s Son (John 3:16; 3:36; 6:40; 11:25–26; 20:31; 1 John 5:13). To believe in God’s Son is to believe that God sent Jesus (John 17:8), to listen to Jesus’ message from God and so believe in God (5:24; 12:44), and to believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah (20:31).

The belief in God and Jesus that secures eternal life is not mere mental assent, but rather is expressed in a life that turns from evil. Those who will receive eternal life are characterized by love rather than by hatred and murder (John 5:29; 1 John 3:14–15). Only the righteous will enter into eternal life, and they are marked by their care for Jesus’ brothers and sisters: feeding the hungry and clothing the poor (Matt. 25:31–46). They do not live for themselves, nor do they give free rein to all human desires, but instead they are led by, and walk in accordance with, the Spirit of God (John 12:25; Gal. 5:16–21; 6:8).

ETHAM The second location where the Israelites camped during the exodus (Exod. 13:20; Num. 33:6–8). The stop at Etham, “on the edge of the desert,” followed the encampment at Succoth and occurred before the Israelites crossed the Red Sea and passed through the Desert of Etham.

ETHAN **(1)** Ethan the Ezrahite, son of Kishi (or Kushaiah) through the Levitical line Merari. He was a singer appointed by the Levites to the bronze cymbals (1 Chron. 15:19) and subsequently appointed to leadership by David after the ark of the covenant was returned to Jerusalem (1 Chron. 6:44). According to its inscription, Ps. 89 was composed by Ethan. Ethan had a reputation for being wise, though not as wise as Solomon (1 Kings 4:31). **(2)** A son of Zerah, son of Judah. He was the father of Azariah (1 Chron. 2:6, 8). **(3)** An ancestor of Asaph through the Levitical line of Gershom (1 Chron. 6:42).

ETHANIM The seventh month of the Israelite sacred year and the first month of the civil year, corresponding to September–October. The month, later known as Tishri, is mentioned by name only once in the Bible, in connection with Solomon's dedication of the temple (1 Kings 8:2).

ETHBAAL Ethbaal, a priest of Astoreth, reigned for thirty-two years as king of Tyre and Sidon, where he expanded Phoenician commercial activities. His daughter Jezebel married Ahab, king of Israel (1 Kings 16:31), an alliance that served to introduce Ahab and Israel to Baal worship. The name "Ethbaal" means "Baal is with him."

ETHER **(1)** A town listed in the inheritance of the tribe of Judah in the western foothills, along with Libnah and Ashan (Josh. 15:42). It is possibly the modern location of Khirbet el-Ater. **(2)** A town listed in the inheritance of the tribe of Simeon along with Ain, Rimmon, and Ashan (Josh. 19:7). It is possibly the modern location of Khirbet Attir.

ETHICS The Bible contains two kinds of statements related to proper conduct. Some of them describe the nature of God, the sort of world he created, and what he has done for particular groups of people. It also contains statements telling us what we ought to do, both as creatures of this God and, in some instances, as the unique beneficiaries of his redemptive activity. Consequently, the Bible sets forth a moral viewpoint or ethical system, supported by reasons that justify its content and urgency. The writers of Scripture were not moral philosophers, outlining their position in technical detail; nevertheless, they intended to reveal what pleases our God and Savior, so that the saints are "thoroughly equipped for every good work" (2 Tim. 3:16–17). The Bible, therefore, is the foundational resource for moral discernment, the definitive statement of what Christians must do and who they must become.

The Sources of Moral Knowledge

Scripture identifies two sources of moral knowledge. First, all human beings have the law of God "written on their hearts" (Rom. 2:15). We have a conscience, a God-given awareness of right and wrong that acquits or convicts us, depending on how we respond to it. The fall of humankind has damaged this source of knowledge, and our consciences can become "seared" through chronic disobedience and doctrinal treason (1 Tim. 4:2). We do not, therefore, see infallibly what our duties are. Nevertheless, the apostle Paul argues that every human being knows enough of God's law—and indeed, enough about his nature as God—to eliminate every defense on judgment day (Rom. 1:18–20). No one will be able to say to God in that hour, "I had no idea who you were and no hint of what you expected of me."

Second, as noted above, we have the Bible as a source of knowledge, this one being fully adequate and sufficiently clear to guide our choices. Knowing Scripture is necessary for Christian ethics because it offers a high-definition view of what conscience can (even in its best moments) scarcely grasp. The Bible proclaims not only what the church must do, often in straightforward, concrete terms, but also (at least, in many cases) why God's will has its particular content and why obedience is an emergency, not a safely deferred, improvement project. The Bible does not, and really could not, answer every ethical question put to it in unambiguous detail. New technologies and cultural shifts have created dilemmas unimagined in the first century or any previous age. But the church can be assured that a faithful reading of and response to Scripture will, by the grace of God, please him even today, whatever our particular circumstances.

The Logic of Biblical Morality

The moral teaching of Scripture has an identifiable structure consisting of duties and final objectives. When we obey God's commandments, which is our duty, his ultimate goals or objectives in creating us are realized. In this sense, biblical morality is complete and informative compared to systems derived from other worldviews. It explains what life is all about, but also what we must do from day to day. This entire picture emerges from Scripture because its theological statements are always practically applied and never presented with merely theoretical interest.

The objectives of biblical morality. The objectives of an ethical system are its final ends or purposes: the results that obedience is supposed to yield. In the Bible, two objectives have this ultimate significance, one being the anticipated side effect of the other.

To glorify God. The biblical writers proclaim the spectacular goodness of God. He is maximally excellent in all ways as the Creator, including wisdom, power, justice, and love. He is the holy God who, almost in spite of that fact, loves us and gave his Son, Jesus, to suffer for our sins so that we might live eternally in his presence. In these respects, God stands alone, not simply in experience but necessarily so. No one ever has, and no one ever could, be like him. Thus, the final objective of all human striving must be to glorify this God—to know him, to praise him, and to value what he values. Our actions must testify to his excellence, honoring him and encouraging others to do likewise. Obedience treasures what God treasures, shuns what he abhors, and allows his power to work in our lives, causing us to live in unity with our fellow believers. These patterns of behavior define what it means to glorify God.

To be happy in God's presence. The second goal or objective of biblical morality is to be happy in ways that are proper for God's creatures. In this sense, the Christian system of ethics differs from moral theories that either reject happiness altogether, viewing it as an unworthy goal, or else reduce it to a merely practical necessity—that is, we sinners need our incentives. On the contrary, the God of Scripture plainly desires our happiness and often presents himself as the final source of it when calling his people to obedience. This tendency follows from the perfect goodness of God and his freedom in creating all things. He did not have to make anything else, but he did so; and because he has no needs, his purposes must have been selfless rather than selfish. He created in order to give rather than to get, and the very best he desires for any of us is the happiness that results from our glorifying him together, as one body in Christ. Likewise, then, biblical morality differs from ethical systems that make human happiness an intrinsic good, so that any means to it is acceptable. God wants us to be happy, but our happiness must come from bringing him glory. All other forms of happiness are deceptive and transitory. The heavenly scenes of the book of Revelation show the church what happiness God has in store for them if they overcome the trials of this life (so, e.g., Rev. 4–5; 7; 21–22; cf. 1 Cor. 2:9; Heb. 12:2).

The means of biblical morality. Not surprisingly, the Bible also shows us how to glorify God—

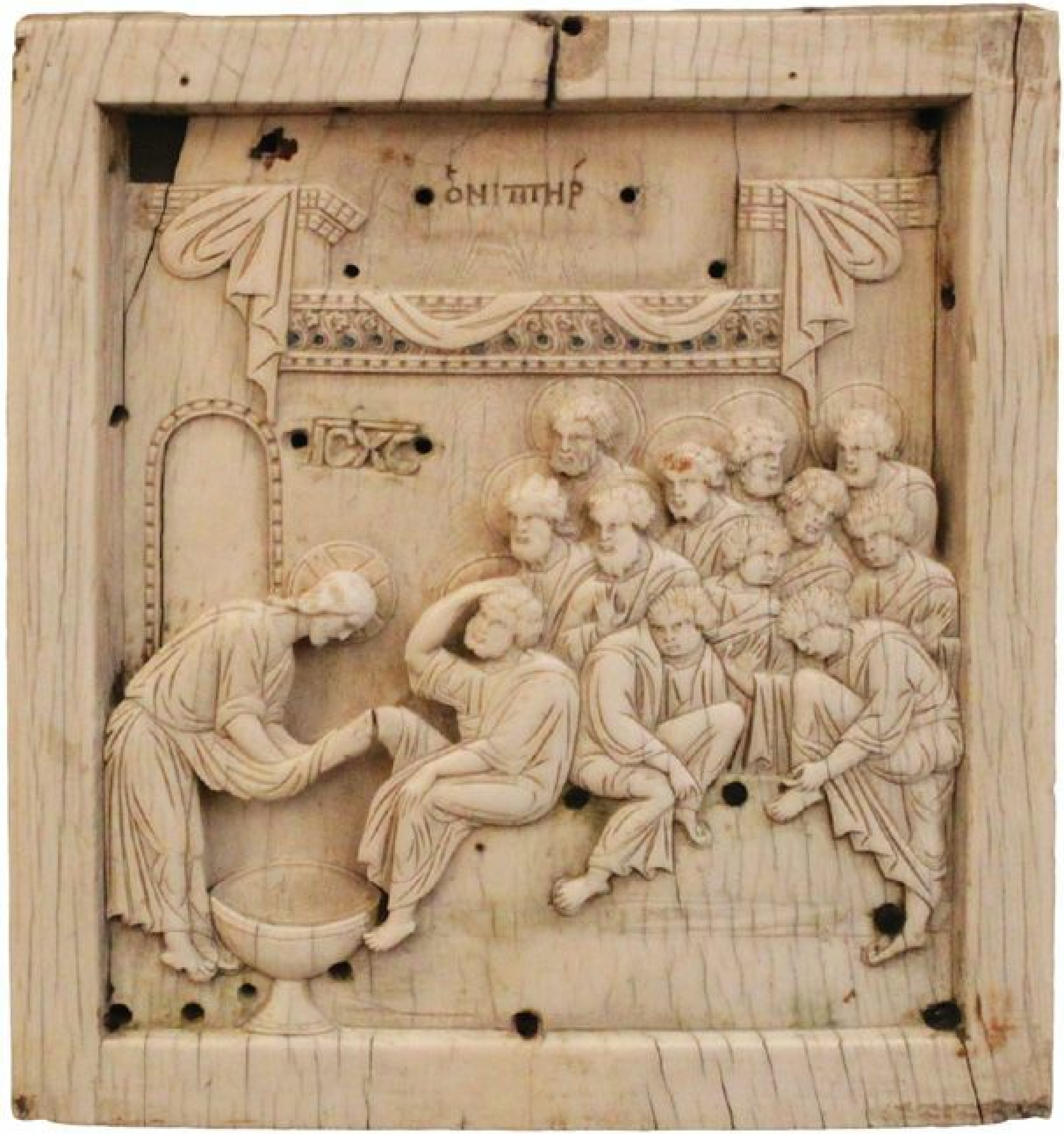
how to reflect his majesty in our daily lives, how to praise him, and how to value what he values. Within the whole of this teaching, several major themes can be discerned, five leading examples of which appear below, allowing some overlap between them.

Trusting in God's promises. Biblical faith is the confidence that God will do for us what he has promised. We believe that he can and will meet our needs and not allow us to endure pointless suffering. When we trust him, we proclaim his greatness and acknowledge our own dependence upon him. Both Rom. 4 and Heb. 11 make this point in ways that reflect upon OT history with an application to the present Christian life. The gospel is a promise concerning the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ; and faith assures us that God will reckon these events to our account. Conversely, we often violate God's commandments because we doubt that he will give us what we need when we need it (so, e.g., Abraham's capitulation to Sarah in Gen. 16, with its corresponding negative results).

Keeping holiness and impurity separated. God is the all-powerful, all-knowing, morally perfect Creator of the universe. All things depend on him for their existence, and he is extreme both in his commitment to justice and his desire to love. Consequently, God's creatures encounter him as "holy," as the ominously transcendent or dangerously perfect deity. He stands alone, apart from everything else, and life in his presence cannot entail business as usual. The shorthand way of expressing this duty is to say that we ourselves must be holy, as he is holy, by shunning all forms of impurity. In this way, for example, the ancient Israelites prepared themselves to enter Yahweh's presence and gave him public honor (Lev. 11:44; 19:2; Ps. 24:3–4; Isa. 6:1–5; cf. 1 Pet. 1:15–16).

In Scripture, the distinction between the pure and the impure, or the holy and the unholy, is sometimes intrinsic and sometimes pedagogical. Breaking any of the Ten Commandments makes one intrinsically impure. It is always evil, everywhere, for anyone to have other gods, make idols, and disrespect parents. It is evil to lie, steal, and murder. Even breaking the Sabbath is wrong if it expresses unbelief in God's ability and willingness to provide. But some lines between purity and impurity—or, in other cases, just between the sacred and the common—seem to be drawn by God for instructional purposes only. They do not separate good from evil as such, but they compel the Israelites to "practice Yahweh's presence" by honoring boundaries imposed on domestic life. It is not evil to eat pork, but doing that is forbidden in the OT and permitted in the NT (Lev. 11:7; Mark 7:19). It is not evil to wear blended cloth, but doing that is forbidden in the OT and passed over in the NT (Lev. 19:19). Therefore, as suggested, Levitical rules of this kind must have had some instrumental purpose, serving an objective beyond themselves. They impose the holiness of Yahweh on everyday choices, as the Holy Spirit now presses the claims of God upon his church. This separation of impurity and holiness is, in any case, a constant theme in the OT, and it carries over into the NT as well, where it informs the question "What must I do to be saved?" (cf. Acts 16:30).

Imitating God/Christ. The biblical writers also construe the moral life as an imitation of God and/or Christ, especially when the virtues of mercy, humility, and endurance are at stake. In the OT, Yahweh's behavior toward people becomes the standard for Israel's own conduct. So, for example, he says, "But let the one who boasts boast about this: that they have the understanding to know me, that I am the LORD, who exercises kindness, justice and righteousness on earth, for in these I delight" (Jer. 9:24). In the NT, similar inferences appear, as when Jesus says, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God" (Matt. 5:9), the son being one who follows in his father's footsteps. We must love our enemies, so that we may be "children of (our) Father in heaven" (Matt. 5:44–45). We must "be perfect," as he is perfect (Matt. 5:48). Jesus commands his disciples to wash one another's feet, after his own example (John 13:14–15). They must love each other as he has loved them (John 15:12). The new commandment to love one another, following the Lord's example, puts on display his character and their own relationship to him (13:34–35). Jesus prays that his disciples will be "one," just as the Father and the Son are one (17:22). Paul's hymn in Phil. 2:5–11 serves this purpose: we must imitate the humility that surrendered all, even to the point of crucifixion. Hebrews 12:1–2 holds up Christ as one who "for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame," resulting in his glory.



Icon showing Jesus washing his disciples' feet, an ethical example for us to imitate (Constantinople, tenth century AD)

Living out our unique identity. Scripture defines the moral ideal for all persons, whoever they are, because its perspective is not relativistic. Murder, idolatry, and lying are not wrong for some and right for others. Nevertheless, most of the Bible's moral teaching has a target audience, so that it often contains inferences to this effect: "You shall do X (or doing X is urgent for you), either (a) because you belong to God in a special way or (b) because he has done this special thing for you." In the OT, the target audience is Israel; in the NT, the corresponding group is the church. In both Testaments, however, the same ethical particularism operates, thereby giving the moral exhortations of Paul and Peter, to cite two clear examples, a recognizably "Jewish" structure or theme.

The linkage between gift and task, or supernatural identity and behavior, is the basic structure of the Sinai covenant itself. The text moves from prologue, "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt," to moral exhortation, beginning with, "You shall have no other gods before me" (Exod. 20:1–3; Deut. 5:6–7). Echoes of this prologue also occur frequently in the OT as motive clauses. God will say, in effect, "You shall do X, for I am the LORD your God," or "You shall not do Y, for I am the LORD your God who brought you out of Egypt." In some cases, the motive clause identifies the people themselves, as in, "For you are a people holy to the LORD your God. The LORD your God has chosen you out of all the peoples on the face of the earth to be his people, his treasured possession" (Deut. 7:6). Or again, "You are the children of the LORD your God. Do not cut yourselves or shave the front of your heads for the dead, for you are a people holy to the LORD your God. Out of all the peoples on the face of the earth, the LORD has chosen you to be his treasured possession" (Deut. 14:1–2). In some cases, God refers to the people's unique condition to shame them, as in, "When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son. But the more they were called, the more they went away from me" (Hos. 11:1–2). Loyalty was especially urgent, given Israel's experience of God's particular love.

In the NT, the mandate to live out one's special identity appears often, especially (though not exclusively) in the writings of Paul and Peter. In Rom. 6 those who have been emancipated from sin must resist its waning influence. In Rom. 8 those who are under the Holy Spirit's new management must walk in accordance with him and shun the mind-set of the flesh. The Corinthians have become an unleavened batch of dough; therefore, they must "Get rid of the old yeast," which tolerates extraordinary sin (1 Cor. 5). The members of Christ's one body are to function as one new humanity (1 Cor. 12:12–31). If the Galatians live by the Spirit, they must also walk by the Spirit (Gal. 5:25). Peter tells his readers to love one another because they have been "born again" of "imperishable seed" (1 Pet. 1:22–23). They are a "chosen race," a "royal priesthood," and a "holy nation"; therefore, they must proclaim his excellence and abstain from carnal passions (1 Pet. 2:9–11). Jesus himself says that because he is the vine and we are the branches, we must abide in him (John 15:1–11). In all these cases, the target audience has a special relationship to God that imposes on them corresponding duties or priorities, so that they reflect his holiness, value what he values, and attain the goals that he has set before them.

Living in unity with one another. The first sin separated God from humankind and damaged all other relationships (Gen. 3). From that point onward, Adam and Eve would live in tension (Gen. 3:16), and their son Cain kills his brother Abel (Gen. 4:8). Disunity results from sin; and in some cases, God scatters sinners as judgment on their wickedness (e.g., Gen. 11:1–9; 1 Kings 11). It is "good and pleasant" when "God's people live together in unity" (Ps. 133:1), and obedience to OT teaching would make them do so. Nevertheless, sin stands between Yahweh and his people, and it stands between one Israelite and another. Disunity, in all these dimensions, is the unfinished business of the OT story.

The NT presents unity as both an effect and a duty (or a gift and a task) of the new life in Christ. We are one in Christ, and we must live in unity of fellowship with one another. Jews and Gentiles—indeed, people from all walks of life—become one body, a new kind of people, defined by relationships that are "thicker than blood," so to speak, as blood is thicker than water. Paul, as the apostle to the Gentiles, enforces this theme throughout his letters, so that his exhortations concentrate on the church, in the first instance, rather than the individual. Christians must display the social virtues of love and humility, resisting selfish ambition and pride, both of which separate believer from believer and each from the head of the church, who is Christ. Romans and Ephesians make a positive case for Christian unity among Jews and Gentiles, while Philippians (perhaps, in a broader sense, also Galatians and Colossians) confronts a divisive tendency. The essential vice denounced in 1–2 Corinthians is arrogant grandstanding, which rejects Paul's "message of the cross" (1 Cor. 1:18) and subdivides the church into cults of personality. Worldly forces are centrifugal, leading us away from one another and into competition for influence, wealth, and public honor. In contrast, the Holy Spirit's force is centripetal, creating unity where no one would expect it and leading each person to self-sacrifice so that others in the body of Christ might be built up in him.

ETHIOPIA The ancient Greeks used the term "Ethiopia" (lit., "the burnt faces") to refer to all regions south of Egypt. Thus they lumped all of black Africa into this term. The leading black African kingdom that interacted regularly throughout the biblical period with the nations in Mesopotamia, Palestine, and the entire Mediterranean region was the kingdom of Cush, located just to the south of Egypt, above the fourth cataract on the Nile River (*see* Cush, Cushites). Thus, in ancient Greek literature most usages of the name "Ethiopia" actually refer to the region of Cush. The Hebrew Bible refers to Cush and Cushites over fifty times. English Bible translations are quite inconsistent in how they translate the Hebrew word *kush*, with several versions using "Ethiopia."

Modern Ethiopia in East Africa is a different area than ancient Cush (in modern Sudan). The region that comprises modern Ethiopia was the home of an ancient kingdom named after the capital city of Axum. The Axumites emerged as an entity in the early NT era, and they converted to Christianity in the fourth century AD. Based on their church traditions and legends, many of today's Ethiopians claim a connection to the "Ethiopians" of the Bible, as well as to King Solomon (through the Queen of Sheba). Yet, although the Axumite kingdom plays an important role in church history, there are no direct references in the Bible to the region that now comprises modern Ethiopia. Likewise, the legend claiming that the kings of Axum and modern Ethiopia were descendants of Solomon, though fascinating, is unlikely.

ETHIOPIAN EUNUCH The Ethiopian eunuch, who appears in Acts 8:26–40, is from an African kingdom centered at the city of Meroe, located on the Nile just to the south of Egypt. Acts 8:27 states that he is in charge of the treasury of the Kandake, queen of the Ethiopians. "Candace" was the name used by all the queens of the Cushite kingdom at Meroe. Roman records from 23 BC document negotiations between the Roman general Gaius Petronius and a queen named "Candace" ruling over a kingdom at Meroe, on the Nile River.

The conversion of a black African early in the book of Acts is significant, for as the story unfolds in Acts, "Ethiopia" probably represents the "ends of the earth," a phrase from the opening promise of Christ to the disciples in Acts 1:8. Thus, the conversion of this Ethiopian eunuch symbolizes the inclusion of the Gentiles, which will become a central part of the book of Acts in later chapters.

ETH KAZIN A town that was on the border of Zebulun's traditional territorial allotment (Josh. 19:13). The KJV spells the name of this town as "Ittahkazin." The current location of where Eth Kazin stood is unknown.

ETHNAN One of the sons of Ashhur and his wife Helah. He was from the tribe of Judah (1 Chron.

4:5–7).

ETHNI An ancestor of Asaph who is listed among the Levites who served in the temple (1 Chron. 6:41).

EUBULUS Paul sends this believer's greeting to Timothy from his imprisonment at the writing of 2 Timothy (4:21). Later tradition cites him as a presbyter in Corinth.

EUCHARIST *See* Communion; Lord's Supper.

EUNICE The Jewish mother of Timothy, Eunice was a Christian believer from Lystra in Asia Minor whose unnamed husband was Greek (Acts 16:1). Paul credits both Eunice and Timothy's grandmother Lois for instilling faith in his young disciple (2 Tim. 1:5).

EUNUCH Generally, a castrated official in a royal court serving a queen (2 Kings 9:30–32) or a king's harem (Esther 2:14–15). Ebed-Melek, an Ethiopian eunuch, along with Baruch, is the only person recorded as responding positively to Jeremiah (Jer. 38:7–13; 39:15–18). The Mosaic law did not permit eunuchs to enter sacred spaces (Deut. 23:1). Among the DSS, the *Damascus Document* perpetuates this isolation: No one maimed "shall enter into the community" (CD-A 15:16–17). Many eunuchs began their lives as slaves, often kidnapped from Africa. They were routinely mocked and marginalized in the Greco-Roman world. Juvenal writes, "Slave-dealers' boys are different: pathetically weak, ashamed of their empty bag, their lost chickpeas" (*Sat.* 6.373). Terence, a Roman playwright, has a character say of a eunuch: "What, that ugly old thing of no sex that he bought yesterday?' " (*The Eunuch*, act 2, scene 3). But the prophet Isaiah (Isa. 56:3–5) promises salvation to eunuchs, the fulfillment of which began when Philip the evangelist shared the gospel with a eunuch from Ethiopia, who was immediately baptized into the church (Acts 8:26–40). Jesus uses the term metaphorically to describe those who make themselves eunuchs for the kingdom, probably a reference to celibacy (Matt. 19:12).

EUODIA A woman in the church at Philippi who was encouraged by Paul to settle her disagreement with Syntyche (Phil. 4:2). Paul commended Euodia and Syntyche, who "contended at my side in the cause of the gospel" (4:3). These women likely held leadership roles in the church of Philippi, and thus their disagreement merited mention in the Letter to the Philippians. They may have been hosts of house churches or perhaps deacons. The nature of their disagreement remains unclear in the text.

EUPHRATES AND TIGRIS RIVERS The two rivers between which Mesopotamia ("between rivers") is located. The Euphrates and the Tigris originate in the mountains of modern Turkey and run through Syria and Iraq, each for more than a thousand miles, before meeting and emptying into the Persian Gulf. Like today, the two rivers gave life to many people, running through major centers of ancient civilization.

The Euphrates River

The Euphrates and the Tigris are mentioned together only once in the Bible (Gen. 2:10–14), where they are two of the four rivers stemming from the garden of Eden. The Euphrates itself figures prominently in the biblical narrative. It is also known as “the great river” or simply “the river.” Besides its role in Gen. 2, it is frequently mentioned as a border of the land that God promised to Abraham and his offspring (Gen. 15:18; Josh. 1:4), a land that Israel acquired during the united monarchy (2 Sam. 8:3; 1 Kings 4:24). King Josiah met his death here at the battle of Carchemish in 605 BC (2 Chron. 35:20–27; cf. Jer. 46:1–10). The Euphrates also functions as a symbol of Israel’s idolatrous past (Josh. 24:2–3) and as a symbol of freedom from the exile (Isa. 11:15; 27:12). In the NT, the Euphrates is the place where the four angels are bound (Rev. 9:14) and where the sixth angel pours out his bowl. Moreover, the Tigris appears in only one other place in the Bible (Dan. 10:4), where Daniel receives a vision on its banks. Some dispute the validity of this occurrence because certain manuscripts (i.e., the Peshitta) here replace “Tigris” with “Euphrates.”

EURAQUILO *See* Euroclydon.

EUROCLYDON In Acts 27:14 the KJV rendering of the Greek word *Euroklydōn* (the earliest manuscripts have *Eurakylōn*, and there are other variations), referring to the “northeaster” storm that resulted in the wreck of the ship transporting Paul to imprisonment in Rome. “Euroklydon” means “storm from the east,” while the preferred transliteration of the hybrid Greek-Latin word, “Euraquilo,” means “northeast wind.” According to Strabo (*Geogr.* 1.2.21), this was a violent wind from the north.

EUTYCHUS While Paul was preaching in Troas, this young man fell asleep and fell from his upstairs window seat (Acts 20:7–12). He was "picked up dead," but Paul revived him. Thus Luke portrays Paul as able to raise a boy from the dead in the tradition of Elijah and Elisha (1 Kings 17:21–22; 2 Kings 4:34–35).

EVANGELISM Evangelism is the proclamation of the "evangel" (Gk. *euangelion*), the good news, of Jesus Christ. The content of the evangel includes Jesus' birth, which was announced as good news to Zechariah by the angel Gabriel (Luke 1:19) and by the angels to the shepherds (Luke 2:10). The good news speaks of the reality of Jesus' resurrection (Acts 17:18), is described as a message of grace (Acts 20:24) and reconciliation to God through the sacrificed body of Christ (Col. 1:22–23), and includes the expectation of a day of divine judgment (Rom. 2:16). Paul preached the gospel (from Old English *gōdspel*, "good news") message, which he claimed had its origin with God, not humans (Gal. 1:11–12). He summarizes this message in 1 Cor. 15:3b–5: "that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, and then to the Twelve." The introduction to the Gospel of Mark (1:1) may indicate that this written gospel could serve evangelistic purposes.

Evangelistic efforts in the New Testament. Numerous figures throughout the NT participated in evangelistic endeavors. John the Baptist's preaching about the coming Messiah is described as evangelism (Luke 3:18). Evangelism was a characteristic activity of Jesus' own ministry (Matt. 4:23; 9:35; Mark 1:14; Luke 20:1), which focused on proclaiming the advent of the kingdom of God (Luke 4:43; 8:1) and at times was targeted toward the poor (Matt. 11:5; Luke 4:18; 7:22). Jesus commanded those who follow him to engage in evangelism. He sent out the twelve apostles for evangelistic purposes (Luke 9:2), and he issued the Great Commission to this end (Matt. 28:18–20).

The missionary enterprise recorded in Acts demonstrates the efforts of the earliest Christians to spread the gospel. The apostles in Jerusalem (Acts 5:42) proclaimed the gospel in spite of great opposition and persecution, and believers who were scattered outside Jerusalem because of persecution spread the gospel in new locales (8:4). Philip evangelized Samaritans and an Ethiopian (8:12, 35). The ministry of Paul and Barnabas is characterized as preaching the good news (14:7, 15, 21; 15:35; 16:10; 17:18). Philip, one of the seven chosen to distribute food (6:5), was given the name "the Evangelist" (21:8). Timothy, additionally, is said to be Paul's fellow worker in evangelism (1 Thess. 3:2; cf. 2 Tim. 4:5).

Evangelism was a central part of Paul's ministry (Rom. 1:9; 1 Cor. 1:17; 15:1–2; Eph. 6:19; 1 Thess. 2:2, 9). He indicated an explicit interest in sharing the gospel with Gentiles (Rom. 15:16; Gal. 1:16; 2:7; Eph. 3:8) and with those who had never heard it (Rom. 15:20; 2 Cor. 10:16), and he expressed a desire to preach the gospel at Rome (Rom. 1:15). Paul wrote of the necessity of evangelism in order for people to be saved (Rom. 10:15), and he preached the gospel message free of charge (1 Cor. 9:16, 18; 2 Cor. 11:7). He listed the role of the evangelist in the church along with apostles, prophets, pastors, and teachers (Eph. 4:11).

Goal and methods of evangelism. Evangelism's goal is to spread the gospel across ethnic and religious boundaries until it reaches all nations (Mark 13:10; Col. 1:23). To this end, Acts details an intentional effort by the earliest Christians to share the gospel with those who came from both Jewish and non-Jewish backgrounds. Acts 8:25 records Peter and John's evangelistic efforts in Samaritan villages, and Acts 15:7 identifies Peter as an evangelist to Gentiles. An outreach specifically to Gentiles is chronicled in Acts 11:20, and Paul's intentional program of traveling from city to city further contributes to this goal (Rom. 15:19).

The evangelists recorded in the NT demonstrate a range of methods and approaches to sharing the good news. They often began with a point of contact from the religious worldview of their audience. For instance, Philip used Scripture as a starting point in speaking with an individual who was familiar with some portion of it (Acts 8:35). Similarly, when addressing Jews, Paul preached Jesus as the fulfillment of various OT Scriptures (Acts 13:32–41), but when preaching the gospel to the Greeks in Athens, he acknowledged their religiosity and their previous worship of one called "an unknown God" (17:22–23). Evangelists sought opportunities to gain an audience, and Paul even took advantage of an illness to stay with the Galatians and share the gospel with them (Gal. 4:13). Finally, much of the evangelistic work in the early church was coupled with miraculous signs and wonders, which served to authenticate the message being proclaimed (Rom. 15:19; 1 Thess. 1:5).

EVE The first woman, formed from the side of Adam, was named "Eve" ("living one" or "life giver") "because she would become the mother of all the living" (Gen. 3:20). Eve was associated with Adam in disobeying God (Gen. 3:1–6; 2 Cor. 11:3; 1 Tim. 2:13–14). She bore Cain, Abel, and Seth, among other children. *See also* Adam and Eve.

EVERLASTING PUNISHMENT Jesus refers to hell more often than any other NT figure. Hell is where people go if their righteousness does not surpass the false piety of the Pharisees and teachers of the law (Matt. 5:22, 29–30; 7:19; cf. Mark 9:43–47). People go to hell when they persist in choosing sin, self, and safety over the call to discipleship, whatever the latter's immediate consequences (Matt. 10:28; 18:9; Luke 12:5; 16:23). Peter says that false prophets will go to hell (2 Pet. 2). Hell is also the place prepared for the devil and his angels (Matt. 25:41; cf. Rev. 12:9; 19:20; 20:10). Jesus uses the images of fire and outer darkness to capture the agonies of hell. John sees hell as a "lake of burning sulfur" (Rev. 20:10) and a "lake of fire" (Rev. 20:14–15). The biblical writers always assume, and sometimes openly proclaim, that God will pour out his wrath upon all sin—that is, upon either a vicarious substitute (Jesus Christ) or unbelieving sinners themselves; and hell is where God does this fully and finally.

Some theologians worry that this doctrine might undercut God's perfection, believing that he cannot be maximally loving if he also sends people to hell. But since the Bible says, in stark and unambiguous terms, that he will do so, several interpretation strategies have been suggested, each of which intends to soften this doctrine. God will punish people in hell, it is conceded, but their punishment either annihilates them, or lasts for a limited time, or is strictly and eternally voluntary. None of these alternatives, however, agrees with the biblical witness. The first option collides with the fact that sinners weep and gnash their teeth in hell (Matt. 24:51; 25:30; Luke 13:28), longing for some relief from its miseries (Luke 16:22–24). At the very least, we can say that hell does not annihilate anyone straightaway: unrepentant sinners suffer in hell for at least some duration, leaving aside the question of how long they do so. But even the second option, that of a limited time in hell, carries a heavy burden of proof, since the Bible draws a parallel between the durations of joy and punishment in the afterlife (Matt. 25:41; Mark 9:47–48). In Rev. 20:10 the devil and his angels are "tormented day and night for ever and ever," and the place of their punishment is also where sinners go (cf. Rev. 14:9–11).

The third option, that people stay in hell forever because they will never repent, fares somewhat better compared to the first two. The book of Revelation makes it clear that some sinners never repent. Neither great suffering (Rev. 9:20–21; 16:9, 11) nor seasons of providentially secured bliss (Rev. 20:7–10) turn them away from sin, so great is the depth of human depravity. Nevertheless, this interpretation tells only half the story. On one level, perhaps the bars of hell are locked from the inside; but the Scriptures also represent hell as a prison into which sinners are cast or locked, and it is a place where God actively pours out his righteous wrath against sin. Nothing happens in the universe apart from God's sovereign will (versus his moral will, which often is violated), and he takes personal responsibility for the punishment of the wicked (Rev. 6:10; 19:1–3; cf. Rom. 12:19). He is indeed the God of "second chances," but the latter will run out someday, and then "all the peoples of the earth will mourn" when they "see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory" (Matt. 24:30). By then, it is too late to repent.

The doctrine of everlasting punishment reminds us that God's moral perfection is not maximal niceness, as if any form of happiness preferred by sinners would satisfy him too. On the contrary, he is extreme in both his justice and his love; and neither of these attributes is reducible to the other. In fact, we can celebrate God's love and mercy properly only when we have seen the awful punishment that his justice requires of our sin. This doctrine also constitutes a strong motive to preach the good news to lost sinners, who, outside of Christ, will suffer eternally. *See also* Gehenna; Hell.

EVI One of the five kings of Midian defeated by the Israelites in Moses' day (Num. 31:8; Josh. 13:21).

EVIL Evil is unquestionably real from the biblical perspective, but the origin and nature of evil remain mysterious. The Bible is replete with references to evil, starting with the temptation and fall (Gen. 3) and the toll that it exacted on human existence. Humans not only suffer inwardly and reciprocally but also are now hopelessly and irredeemably inclined to evil. The Bible is the unfolding story of redemption through the sacrificial death of Christ, the ongoing battle in the lives of believers against the power of evil, and the eventual conquering of evil by the divine power vested in the risen Christ, who is to come as the cosmic ruler.

This sits uncomfortably with a fundamental affirmation in the Bible: the inherent goodness of creation. This is magisterially illustrated in the creation account of Genesis, where the Creator repeatedly pronounces at the end of each day that what had been created was "good" (Heb. *tob* means "good" in the aesthetic as well as the moral sense). The world, however, fell under the curse of human sin and, once compromised, is now under the rule of the evil one (1 John 5:19) and eagerly awaits its redemption (Rom. 8:19–23).

Though not narrated in the Bible, it is a likely inference that the origin of evil dates back further than human existence. Prior to the temptation of the first human couple, the tempter (Heb. *satan*, "accuser," is a poignant reminder of the treacherous nature of the temptation, as the tempter himself would function as the accuser of those who fell by his lies) and his followers had their own momentous experience: they jeopardized their privilege to serve God by separating themselves to establish their own kingdom. That God allows this realm of dark forces to persist until the end of history is itself a mystery.

Despite its grip over humanity, evil has been severely battered as it has confronted the divine power manifested at the cross. In fact, evil had no chance to challenge the real power. The essence of evil lies in its parasitic nature. Evil does not create; it only destroys. Evil draws its power from the absolute good, as it exercises its dominion over failed human beings by condemning them against the perfect standard established by God. It accuses humans of being wrong but never tells them how to be right. It diagnoses terminal illness without offering a cure. Satan achieved his grip over humanity by a conniving distortion of God's truth.

The crucifixion of Christ and his subsequent resurrection marked the decisive blow against the power of evil and death. The gospel is the declaration that evil finally met the higher power at the atoning death of the sinless Christ. The lie has been exposed. The risen Christ freed human beings from their bondage to sin and death. Despite this, evil will persist due to the arrogance of the evil one, who vows to never submit to God's authority. In fact, the activity of the evil one will only increase toward the end of history, even to the point that it will present a rival before the coming Christ. Against the second coming of Christ (Gk. *parousia*) there will be the coming (*parousia*) of the lawless one. Not only will he stand up against Christ, but also he will present himself as the alternative for Christ, befitting the title "antichrist" (*anti*, "instead of, in place of" as well as "against"). But eventually this rally against God will be in vain. Satan will be permanently and irrevocably crushed and thrown into "the lake of fire," destined for oblivion.

EVIL-MERODACH *See* Awel-Marduk.

EXACTOR One who presses or drives someone else for something. The word occurs in the KJV only at Isa. 60:17, although the KJV uses the verb "exact" and the noun "exaction" several times (see, e.g., Deut. 15:2–3; 2 Kings 23:35; Neh. 10:31), often in reference to requiring payment of some kind. The Hebrew word here can refer to someone who drives others harshly (see, e.g., Exod. 3:7 KJV: "taskmasters"), but the context of its occurrence in Isa. 60:17 indicates that the "exactors" (namely, righteousness) will exert their power in a more benevolent way (thus the NIV's choice of the softer word "ruler").

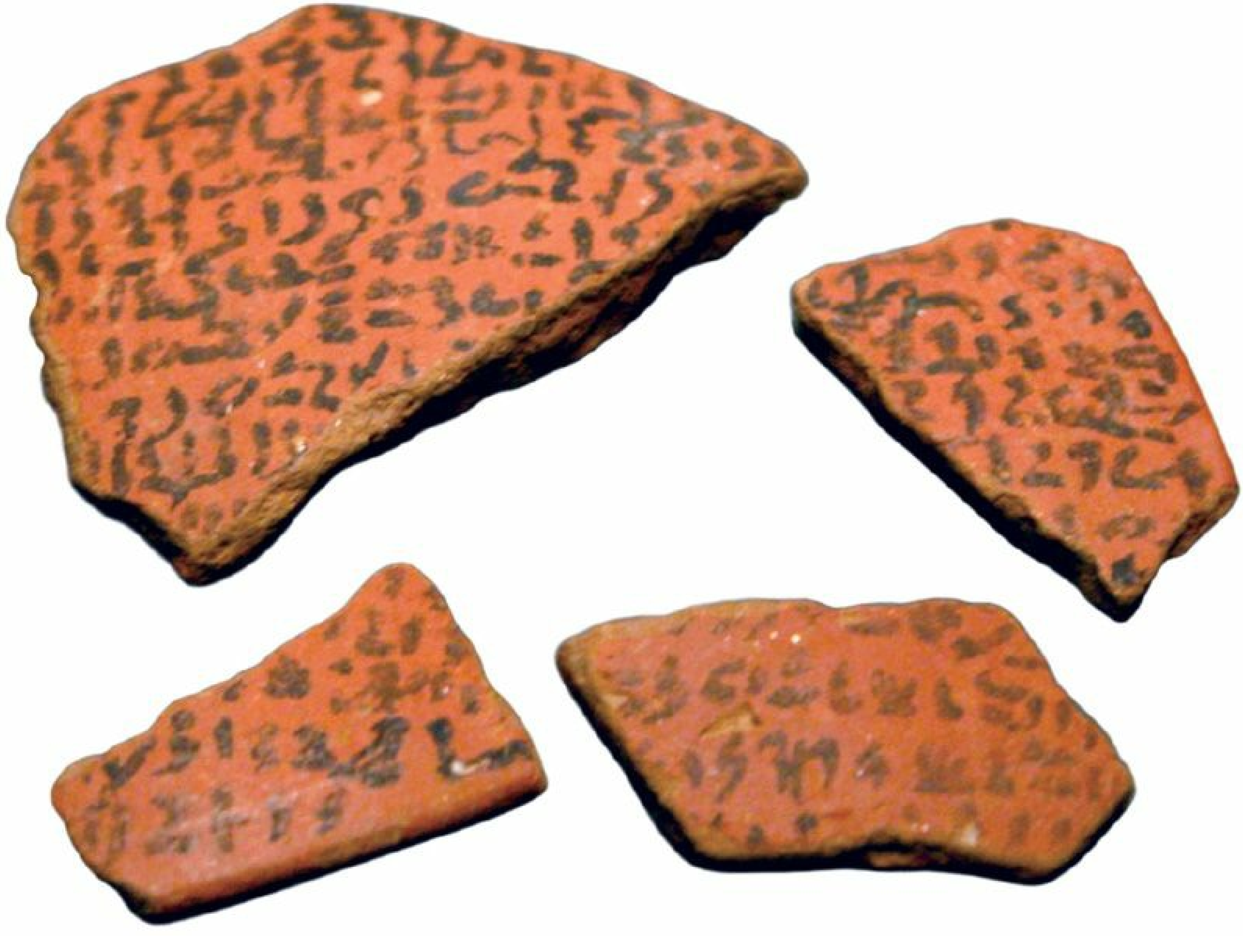
EXCOMMUNICATION A form of communal discipline characterized by expulsion from the community of the faithful. Jewish communities practiced excommunication, defined as being cut off from the people of Israel, and it is mentioned in connection with a number of transgressions: eating yeast during Passover (Exod. 12:15), failing to heed the call to return following the exile (Ezra 10:8), performing an improper sacrifice (Lev. 17:8–9), and others. David calls for his enemies to be cut off from the people of Israel (Ps. 109:13). In Jesus' day, excommunication could take the form of anything from a light censure to death. The Sanhedrin held the power of excommunication in serious cases, but to kill an offender required the authority of the Gentile rulers. Thus, the punishment of death for blasphemy put upon Jesus could not be exercised by the Sanhedrin alone.

Early Christians took their authority to excommunicate wayward members of the church from Jesus' words that sins against the Holy Spirit are unforgivable and that the apostles have authority to bind and loose (Mark 3:29; Matt. 16:19; 18:18). Both the concept and the practice of cutting off church members from spiritual fellowship for willful moral failures or refusal to abandon incorrect teachings appear throughout the NT (e.g., Matt. 18:15–17; Gal. 1:18; Titus 3:10–11; Heb. 10:28; 2 John 10–11). In Acts 5:1–10, the dramatic story of Ananias and Sapphira, telling lies to the church is specifically designated a sin against the Holy Spirit, and the offenders fall down dead following a pronouncement by Peter. In a different circumstance, Paul calls for the Corinthian church, regarding a sexually immoral person, to "hand this man over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved on the day of the Lord" (1 Cor. 5:5). He even forbids members of the Corinthian church from personally associating with a Christian who has been cut off because of sexual immorality (1 Cor. 5:11).

As a rule, excommunication seeks the repentance and ultimate salvation of the one excluded (see James 5:19), while at the same time serving to protect the faithful from unhealthy influences. However, exclusion because of apostasy is stated to be an eternal punishment (Heb. 6:4–6).

Excommunication also has a rich history in the Christian church beyond the NT. Heretics who opposed the decisions of the ecumenical councils were formally cursed (proclaimed *anathema*) and considered to be outside the fellowship of the church. Unfortunately, the process of excommunication sometimes was abused, with corrupt leaders using the threat of exclusion or denial of the sacraments for political purposes. The early Protestant reformers and some of their forerunners were excommunicated by the Roman Catholic Church, but they felt that their devotion to orthodoxy, if not the particular form championed by the Roman Catholic Church, rendered the excommunication invalid.

EXECRATION A synonym for "curse" that occurs in Jer. 42:18; 44:12 (KJV, NRSV). In both instances God proclaims through Jeremiah his wrath on the Judeans who are determined to flee to Egypt; there they will be "an execration [NIV: "a curse"], and an astonishment, and a curse, and a reproach" (KJV). Similar language appears in other biblical passages, particularly in Jeremiah (e.g., Deut. 28:37; Jer. 25:18; 29:18; 49:13). Many "execration texts" from Egypt have been found. These are texts cursing certain persons, written on objects that were then broken in a ritual.



Potsherds with execration texts (Egypt, twenty-first–seventeenth centuries BC)

EXECUTIONER One assigned to administer the sentence of capital punishment. The only executioner noted as such in the Bible is the agent of King Herod who beheaded John the Baptist in prison (Mark 6:27). In ancient Israel, the law stated that certain crimes, such as idolatry or murder, were punishable by death. The executioner might be the kinsman of the murdered (Num. 35:19), assigned men (Ezek. 9:1), or witnesses to the crime along with the townspeople (Lev. 20:2; Deut. 17:7; 21:21). A despotic king would have a designated executioner (Dan. 2:14, 24; Mark 6:27).

EXEGESIS *See* Biblical Hermeneutics.

EXERCISE To discipline the mind or to exert the body with rigorous physical activity. In the Greco-Roman world, the typical person worked from sunrise to noon, after which many would go to the local bathhouse to exercise in the *palaestra*. (Greek students spent half of their education engaged in sports.) Activities included wrestling, boxing, and running (see 1 Cor. 9:24–26; Gal. 5:7). The NT uses the concept metaphorically for training in the Christian way (1 Tim. 4:7–8; Heb. 5:14; 12:11; cf. 2 Pet. 2:14) but also finds value in disciplining the body to curb the insatiability of passion (1 Cor. 7:9; 9:27).

EXHORTATION The empowering of another in belief or course of action (1 Thess. 2:3; 1 Tim. 4:13; Heb. 12:5). The concept overlaps semantically with encouragement, the lifting of another's spirit (Acts 9:31; Phil. 2:1; 2 Cor. 1:4–7) and appeal (2 Cor. 8:4). Jews congregated regularly in synagogues to hear a reading from the Law and the Prophets, which then was applied to their immediate lives by a competent teacher as "a word of exhortation" or sermon (Acts 13:15; see Luke 4:16–21). Preaching weekly from an authoritative text for community formation appears to be a uniquely Jewish phenomenon in the Greco-Roman world. This practice continues in the church. The author of Hebrews describes his text as a "word of exhortation" (13:22). The Holy Spirit illumined the fuller sense of Scripture as a witness to Jesus Christ and also communicated directly to believers through prophetic utterances (Rom. 12:6; 1 Cor. 14:3).

EXILE The dislocation of a people group from its homeland. In the Bible, exile usually refers to two events in Israel's history: the Assyrian exile of the northern kingdom in 722 BC and the Babylonian exile of the southern kingdom around 586 BC.

THE ASSYRIAN EXILE

Although earlier Assyrian kings had deported the elite members of conquered populations, it was Tiglath-pileser III who formalized the procedure as a generalized policy in the late eighth century BC. Any people groups who were conquered or subdued after they had rebelled were subjected to exile by Tiglath-pileser, who resettled other conquered peoples in their place. This process of population exchange was designed to prevent the reorganization of and rebellion by groups that had been subjugated by Assyria.

The eventual Assyrian exile of the northern kingdom was set in motion when King Pekah of Israel joined with King Rezin of Damascus to revolt against their Assyrian overlords. Tiglath-pileser responded quickly and brutally, overrunning the northern kingdom in his campaign against Syria and Palestine (734–732 BC). Only a portion of Ephraim and western Manasseh remained, and with the assassination of Pekah, Hoshea was left to rule as the Assyrian vassal. However, before long Hoshea also rebelled. Shalmaneser V and his successor, Sargon II, conquered Samaria in 722 BC and exiled much of the Israelite population in Upper Mesopotamia. According to the biblical account of the fall of the north (2 Kings 15–17), peoples from Babylon, Cuthah, Avva, Hamath, and Sepharvaim were resettled in Samaria. The ten northern tribes eventually were assimilated into the local populations and were never reconstituted, though their eventual restoration would play an important role in prophetic eschatology (see Ezek. 37:15–28).

THE BABYLONIAN EXILE

More frequently, the exile refers to the Babylonian exile of the southern kingdom in the sixth century BC. With the fall of the Assyrian capital of Nineveh in 612 BC, the Babylonians became the preeminent power in the Near East and quickly moved to consolidate previous Assyrian territories. In 601 BC Nebuchadnezzar's forces clashed with Egyptian forces, and both sides suffered heavy losses. This setback prompted King Jehoiakim to rebel in order to establish Judah's independence (2 Kings 24). The Babylonians marched on Judah, and in 597 BC Jerusalem surrendered. King Jehoiachin (who had become king after the assassination of his father, Jehoiakim), government officials, and leading citizens were taken to Babylon, and Zedekiah was installed as the vassal king of Judah. Further rebellions by Zedekiah eventually led to the destruction of Jerusalem, the burning of the temple, and the exile of even more of the population in 586 BC.

The Babylonians' policy of exile differed from that of the Assyrians in two important respects. First, the Babylonians did not resettle other peoples in Judah. Second, they did not scatter the exiled peoples among other populations; rather, the Judahites were resettled in Babylon in their own community, called a *golah*. This resulted in the preservation of community identity along with theological traditions and texts. Important works of prophecy such as Ezekiel were written from the Babylonian *golah*, and there was much reflection on Israel's history. One of the principal points of 1–2 Kings is that exile was God's punishment for the sin of the nation, and repentance and a return to God were needed before they could be restored from exile.

AFTER THE EXILE

The first sign that Jewish fortunes might be improving came in 561 BC, when the Babylonian king Awel-Marduk (Evil-Merodach) exalted King Jehoiachin and gave him a place of honor in his court (2 Kings 25:27–30). But hopes rose even more after the ascendancy of the Persian king Cyrus. When Cyrus conquered the Median Empire in 550 BC, he treated the new subjects quite well compared to Babylonian policies. Cyrus made a habit of restoring exiled peoples to their homelands and permitted the reconstruction of local shrines. In cases of major temples or those that served a strategic importance for the Persian government, funds were even supplied for the rebuilding projects. The shrewd statesman Cyrus understood well that grateful subjects were more likely to be obedient subjects. By the autumn of 539 BC, Cyrus had sufficient military strength to attack Babylon, and when he did, the city fell surprisingly quickly.

In the wake of this victory and in conformity with Cyrus's policy, he authorized the return of the Jews living in the Babylonian *golah* and authorized the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem (Ezra 1:2–4; 5:13–17). Although some preliminary work was done, the rebuilding of the temple did not make significant progress until 520 BC, under the prophetic influence of Haggai and Zechariah and the leadership of Zerubbabel and Joshua the high priest. With the return from Babylon and the rebuilding of the temple, the period of the exile technically came to an end.

However, even though the exilic period had come to an end in one respect, in another respect the

Jews living in the late sixth century and later concluded that the exile had not fully ended. The hopes surrounding the Davidic heir Zerubbabel had waned by 515 BC, and the Jews still found themselves under the foreign rule of the Persians, albeit a more benevolent rule than that of the Babylonians. There was widespread social inequity, and the sins that had originally led Israel into exile still plagued the community. Thus, because the pictures of restoration in Isaiah and Ezekiel had not yet been realized, in a certain sense Israel was still in "exile" or slavery (cf. Ezra 9:7–8). Thus, throughout the Second Temple period many Jews considered the exile to have continued in a theological way, even though the Babylonian exile had come to an end.

This "theological exile" is the background to many statements of restoration in the Gospels. When Jesus calls twelve disciples who will institute the kingdom by driving out demons, curing illnesses, and ruling over the twelve tribes, he is implying that he has come to restore Israel from exile, for both the ten northern tribes and the two southern tribes (see Matt. 10:1; Luke 6:13; 22:28–30).

EXODUS The term "exodus" comes from a Greek word meaning "departure." Specifically, the exodus refers to Israel's departure from Egyptian slavery and its move toward the promised land (Canaan). The story of the exodus begins with a description of the harsh conditions under which the children of Abraham lived in Egypt, the raising up of a deliverer, the plagues, the actual departure, and the crossing of the Red Sea. Some treatments of the exodus include the wanderings in the wilderness (this topic is treated separately as a transitional period between the exodus and the conquest and settlement of the promised land; *see* Wilderness Wandering).

Many questions of interpretation of the exodus are matters of discussion, some of which will be treated below. These include, among other issues, the size of Israel, the date of the events, and the nature of the plagues. Two questions dominate all the others: Did the exodus happen? Does it matter to the message of the Bible whether the exodus happened?

THE NATURE OF THE EXODUS

The exodus event is described in the first fifteen chapters of the book of Exodus, which opens with a description of Israel's enslavement in the land of Egypt. The descendants of Israel had been in Egypt since the time of Joseph (see Gen. 37–50). An unspecified but significant number of years had passed since Joseph, and when the action begins in the book of Exodus, the Israelites were no longer honored in the land but reviled. Unmentioned in the Bible, but known from extrabiblical literature, a group called the "Hyksos" ("rulers of foreign countries"), ethnically related to the Hebrews, had taken advantage of an Egypt in political chaos and had dominated it for about a century (c. 1664–1555 BC). The events of Exod. 1 occurred after the Hyksos were expelled from Egypt, and many associate the new distrust of Israel with a general fear of a large Semitic presence in the land once a native Egyptian monarchy had been restored.

The biblical text, however, gives no motive but simply states that an unnamed (see below) pharaoh issued a decree to enslave the Israelites and to kill Israelite baby boys. In this context of enslavement and murder, God raised up a deliverer, Moses. His birth was extraordinary. After giving him birth, Moses' mother placed him in a papyrus basket and put him on the Nile River. He was discovered by none other than the daughter of Pharaoh, who even hired Moses' mother as a wet nurse. Thus, Israel's deliverer was raised in the very household of the pharaoh who was trying to exterminate him.

Parallels to the Moses birth story exist. Especially close is the Sargon legend. Sargon was born to a high priestess who, for unstated reasons, could not keep him. Instead of abandoning him, she placed him in a basket and floated him down the Euphrates, where he was discovered by Aqqi, an irrigation worker. Aqqi raised Sargon, and from there he became the first king of the dynasty of Akkad. Rather than attributing the stories' similarities to imitation, we should rather understand the action of Moses' and Sargon's mothers as the typical way that mothers helped preserve their babies in difficult situations. The moral of the biblical story is that God allows Israel's future hero to survive so that he can use him to deliver his people.

Nothing is narrated about Moses' childhood. The next major episode of the exodus involves Moses' intervention in an altercation between a Hebrew and an Egyptian. Moses, who certainly knew his true parentage, killed an Egyptian who was beating an Israelite. This killing became known, and he had to flee Egypt.

Moses' flight from Egypt brought him to Midian, an area around the Gulf of Aqabah. He married into the family of a Midianite tribal leader, Jethro. It was here, specifically at Mount Sinai, that God, speaking to Moses at a bush that was in flames but not consumed, called him to return to Egypt to confront Pharaoh. In response to Moses' hesitation, God made his brother Aaron his companion and spokesperson.

When Moses returned to Egypt, he demanded that Pharaoh allow his people to go into the wilderness for three days in order to celebrate a festival. Ethical issues arise with this demand because it is unlikely that the Israelites would have returned to Egypt after the three days. This deception is not the only instance when lying seems to be divinely approved in the OT. We should likely understand that the pharaoh had forfeited his right to the truth because he intended to use it for evil purposes.

Pharaoh refused to allow the Israelites to leave. In response, God sent a series of disasters (plagues) against Egypt. According to Exod. 12:12, the plagues were judgments directed at the gods of Egypt (see also Num. 33:4). Turning the Nile into blood, God attacked the god of the Nile, Hapi. Darkening the sun, God showed his power over the most important Egyptian deity, the sun god Aten-Re. Climactically, the death of the Egyptians' firstborn sons and livestock brought tragedy to the god who ruled Egypt, the pharaoh.

The plagues were a series of divinely initiated disasters of nature, miracles, or extraordinary providence, not naturally occurring events, that brought Egypt to its knees. Ultimately, Pharaoh agreed to let Israel leave Egypt. On the evening of the last plague, the Israelites celebrated the Passover (Exod. 12), which ever since has been an annual commemoration of their deliverance from Egypt.

Even after they set off toward the promised land, however, they were not safe. Pharaoh, angry and embarrassed, had a final change of mind and set off after the Israelites. He cornered them with their backs against an impassable body of water known traditionally as the Red Sea. The Hebrew phrase (*yam sup*) is literally translated "sea of reeds" and probably refers to one of the deepwater lakes that once existed to the north of the Gulf of Suez. In any case, Moses and the Israelites had no chance of escape—that is, no human chance. God opened up the sea so that they could pass through, and when the Egyptians tried to follow, he closed the sea so that it engulfed them. God's act of rescue and judgment is then celebrated in song (Exod. 15:1–18). After they passed safely through the waters, the Israelites then continued their journey through the wilderness and toward the promised land.

DID IT HAPPEN?

The only direct witness of the exodus is the Bible itself. The account given in the book of Exodus is intended to be taken as an actual past event, and those who have confidence in the Bible as a historical source typically do not doubt the historicity of the exodus, although some questions persist, such as the size of the group that left Egypt or whether the exodus was the culmination or the beginning of a process of Israelites moving from Egypt to Israel.

Unfortunately, there is only indirect evidence of Israelite presence in Egypt in the second half of the second millennium BC (see "When Did It Happen?" below). The exodus and Israel are never mentioned in Egyptian records. Of course, it is unlikely that Egypt would have preserved permanent records of such an embarrassing and painful moment in its history. The exodus is not the type of event that Egypt would have memorialized by a pyramid or on tomb walls. What we do have on tomb walls, however, does show in a general sense that Semitic peoples were engaged in slave labor in the second millennium in Egypt. For instance, as early as the reign of Thutmose III, around 1460 BC, we have scenes of foreigners making bricks for the temple of Amun in Thebes. This is one example of indirect evidence that can be marshaled to make the account of the exodus sound reasonable. In this context, we should also note that the first extrabiblical evidence for the existence of Israel as a people in Egypt comes from the very end of the thirteenth century BC, in a victory monument of Pharaoh Merneptah (also known as the Israel Stela) that mentions Israel as a vanquished enemy.

WHEN DID IT HAPPEN?

The biblical evidence is ambiguous as to when the exodus took place. Note that the names of the pharaohs are not given. The most straightforward text is 1 Kings 6:1, stating that Solomon began building the temple in his fourth year, which was 480 years after the exodus. Taking this number literally places the exodus in the middle of the fifteenth century BC. Through correlations with Assyrian chronology, which mentions dateable astronomical events, Solomon's fourth year is reckoned to be approximately 966 BC. If the exodus took place in the fifteenth century BC, then a ruler such as Thutmose III would be a candidate for the pharaoh of the exodus.

Problems arise, however, when this date is compared to the traditional interpretation of archaeological evidence. A full discussion of the issue is impossible here, but as an example, we will note briefly the two "store cities" that Egypt forced Israel to build, Pithom and Rameses (Exod. 1:11). In the first place, the name of the second city reflects that of a pharaoh who ruled in the thirteenth century, Ramesses II. It is possible that the book of Exodus has updated the name of a city that had existed as early as the fifteenth century. Indeed, some archaeological remains from the fifteenth century at the archaeological site are widely recognized as the remains of Rameses (Tell Qantir [Daba']). But it was during the reign of Ramesses II that the city really expanded.

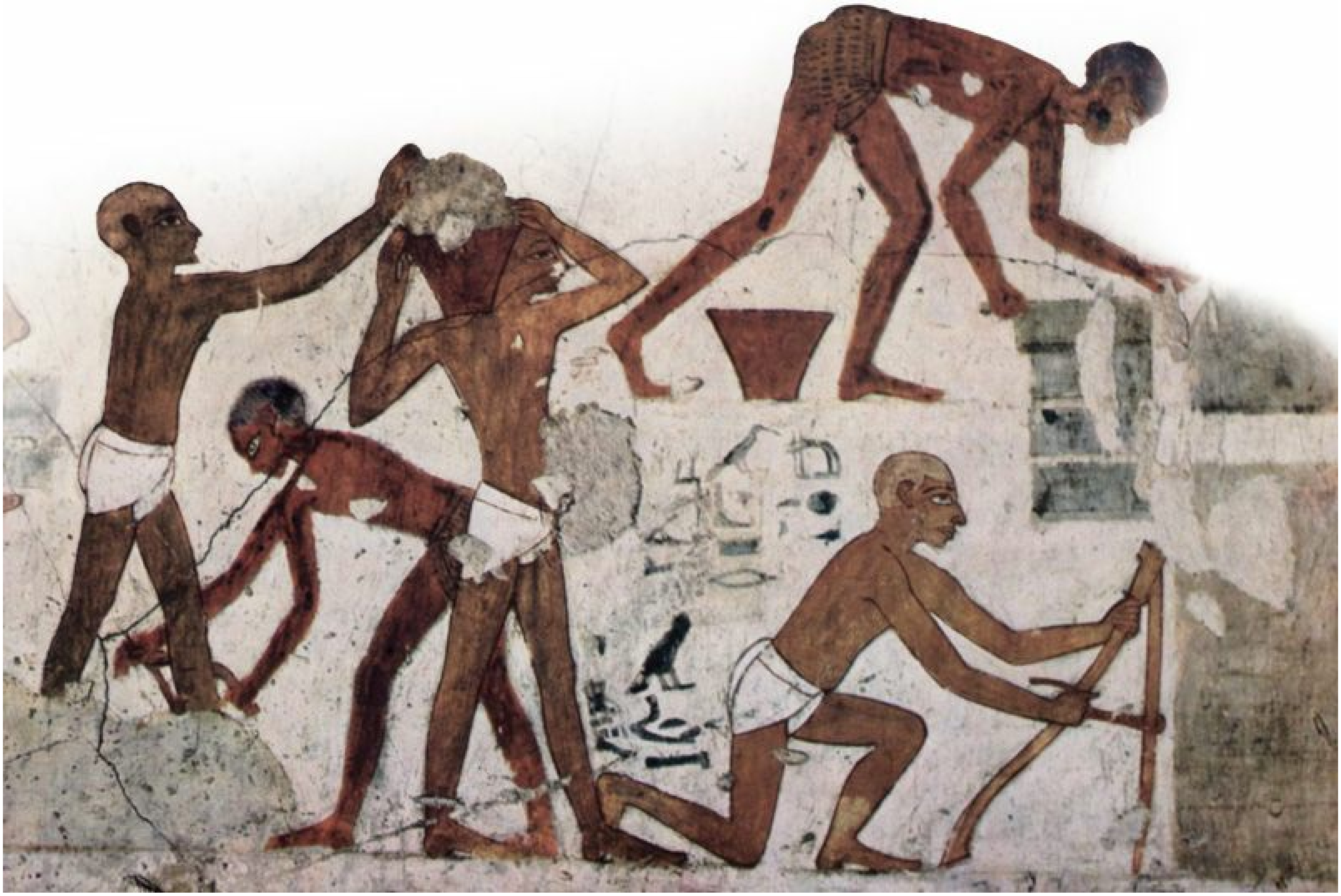
Archaeology better (but not perfectly) supports a date for the exodus in the thirteenth century BC, with Ramesses as the pharaoh of the exodus. This conclusion holds not only for Pithom and Rameses but also for the cities said to be involved in the conquest that took place forty years later (Jericho, Ai, Hazor).

A late date (thirteenth century) for the exodus can be biblically justified by taking the number 480 as symbolic. The number 40 could stand for a generation (like the wilderness generation), and thus 480 years would stand for twelve generations. However, a generation is actually closer to twenty-five years, meaning that twelve generations would "literally" be about three hundred years. Accordingly, the exodus would be dated to the first part of the thirteenth century.

In conclusion, both the archaeological evidence and the chronological statements of the Bible are ambiguous. Archaeological results are often open to more than one interpretation. While insisting on the historicity of the exodus, we still cannot be dogmatic about when the exodus took place, whether in the fifteenth century or in the thirteenth.

DOES IT MATTER WHETHER IT HAPPENED?

Many today understand the story of the exodus to be just that, a story. Often stories are meaningful in and of themselves, apart from whether the events they relate actually happened. However, in the case of the exodus, if the events associated with it did not happen, then the moral of the story has no relevance. The main teaching of the exodus is that Yahweh is a God who can rescue his people when they are beyond human aid. Indeed, that is how the exodus was understood even in later OT settings (see Ps. 77). At the exodus God was establishing a track record, showing that he was capable of and, under certain conditions, willing to rescue his people.



Reproduction of an Egyptian painting from the tomb of Rekmire showing foreigners making bricks

BIBLICAL THEOLOGY

The exodus is the salvation event that defined Israel as a nation. Occurring at the beginning of Israel's national history, it served as an important reminder of God's concern and care for his people. After the exodus, the Israelites journeyed through the wilderness toward the promised land. Due to their rebellion and lack of trust, God punished them by making them stay in the wilderness for forty years, enough time for the first generation of adults to die out. With the exception of the faithful spies, Joshua and Caleb, those who stood on the eastern bank of the Jordan River forty years later did not experience the crossing of the Red Sea. To demonstrate that the God of power was still with them, God caused the waters of the Jordan River to stop, evoking memories of the exodus (Josh. 3).

The psalms also often recall the exodus in such a way that this past event may bring confidence for the present and hope for the future. Psalm 77 illustrates this, as does Ps. 114, which personifies the sea as the forces of chaos, afraid of God, who will control it.

Interestingly, the later prophets often speak of the exodus as if it were a future event. Isaiah (4:5; 11:15–16; 40:1–11; 43:18–19; 48:21; 49:11–12; 50:2; 51:9–10; 52:10; 63:11–14), Jeremiah (16:14–15; 23:7–8), Hosea (2:14–16), and many others announce God's coming judgment on his sinful people. Looking beyond judgment, though, they also envision a future rescue of the faithful remnant, and often they do this in the language of the exodus.

When did this second exodus take place? Ezra 1–6 recounts the early returns under leaders such as Sheshbazzar and Zerubbabel. Those who heard the prophetic message would have understood the exile as a reversion to bondage and a wandering in the wilderness. Thus, we should not be surprised that the faithful would think of the return to the land as a fulfillment of the promises of the second exodus. It is striking that just as the Egyptians gave gifts to the departing children of Israel (Exod. 3:21–22; 11:2; 12:35–36), so too did the people of Israel's present foreign neighbors: "All their neighbors assisted them with articles of silver and gold, with goods and livestock, and with valuable gifts, in addition to all the freewill offerings" (Ezra 1:6). As the exodus generation offered gifts for the construction of the tabernacle (Exod. 35:21–29), so too the returnees contributed gifts for the construction of the temple (Ezra 2:68–69).

However, the return from exile was just the beginning. The NT understands that Jesus Christ is the ultimate fulfillment of the exodus; his work on earth follows the pattern of the exodus.

His ministry began with his baptism at the Jordan River, reflecting the Israelites' crossing through the Red Sea (which was their baptism [1 Cor. 10:1–6]), after which he went into the wilderness for forty days and nights (Matt. 4:1–11). Here he experienced the same temptations as Israel did during its forty-year wandering. In contrast to the Israelites, Jesus showed that he was the obedient Son of God by not succumbing to the temptation, each time quoting the book of Deuteronomy, Moses' last sermon to the Israelites in the wilderness.

After naming twelve disciples (reflecting the twelve tribes of Israel), Jesus preached a sermon from a mountain whose subject was the law (Matt. 5–7). Such a topic in such a setting would have reminded a Jewish Christian audience of God giving Moses the law on Mount Sinai.

These are just some examples of the connection between the exodus and Jesus' life. The connection culminates, though, on the cross, since Jesus is executed on the eve of the Passover, the annual celebration of the deliverance from Egypt.

While the connections with Jesus' life are arguably the most significant, the book of Hebrews also uses the exodus theme, though in a slightly different way. Hebrews likens contemporary Christians to the wilderness generation. They have been freed from their bondage (sin) and are on the way to the promised land (heaven), but for now they are in the wilderness. The author makes the connection to warn Christians not to rebel against God, as many in the wilderness generation did, and thus suffer punishment (Heb. 3:7–4:13).

EXODUS, BOOK OF The book of Exodus (the second book of the OT and of the Pentateuch) continues the story begun in Gen. 12 of the election of Abraham as God's choice for the beginning of a new people. Abraham's great-grandson Joseph was taken to Egypt as a slave but rose to power there. Eventually, his father, Jacob, along with his brothers and their families, made the trek to Egypt and settled there. Both Jacob and Joseph died in Egypt, and it is here that the book of Exodus picks up. In Egypt the Israelites at first found a safe haven, only to be enslaved later by a "new king" (Exod.

1:8). The book of Exodus tells the story of the Israelites' struggles in Egypt, their deliverance through Moses (perhaps the central human figure in the OT), their trek to Mount Sinai, and their continued movement to Canaan, the promised land.

AUTHORSHIP, DATE, AND HISTORICAL ISSUES

Authorship and date. The authorship of Exodus must be considered together with the larger issue of the authorship of the Pentateuch (*see* Pentateuch). This is one of the more central issues in the history of modern OT scholarship. Generally, Moses was considered the sole or essential author throughout much of the history of Jewish and Christian interpretation. This is not to say that careful readers of the Pentateuch did not raise thoughtful questions concerning passages that were problematic for Mosaic authorship. For example, the fifth-century translator Jerome raised the question of whether Moses could have recorded the story of his own death (Deut. 34). Serious questions concerning Mosaic authorship, however, did not become the dominant trend among scholars until the seventeenth century. The presence of numerous post-Mosaic elements as well as repetition in some key stories (e.g., the two creation stories in Gen. 1–2 and the repetition in the flood narrative in Gen. 6–9) suggested that the authorship question might be more complicated than traditionally understood. Some of these earlier discussions were not necessarily hostile to divine inspiration or to the notion of "basic" or "essential" Mosaic authorship. Nevertheless, the scholarly debates were synthesized in the latter half of the nineteenth century by Julius Wellhausen and his well-known Documentary Hypothesis. His theory presented considerable challenges to traditional views of pentateuchal authorship, and the Documentary Hypothesis soon became widely accepted throughout the scholarly world.

Wellhausen's views have undergone continual revision and refinement, as well as essential rejection. In contemporary academic dialogue, it is fair to say that precisely who wrote the Pentateuch that we have and when it was finalized remain open questions. A commonly accepted position, also among evangelicals, is that the Pentateuch we have today (i.e., its final form) is not the work of someone living in the middle of the second millennium BC (the traditional date for the life of Moses). The question is not of Moses' genius and special preparation for the task before him, or of his having received the law on Mount Sinai and having recorded certain events; rather, the question specifically concerns the historical period in which the Pentateuch as we know it came to be. And with respect to this specific question, contemporary biblical scholars commonly attribute the final form of the Pentateuch to later scribes (in the exilic and postexilic eras), using older material, both written and oral, at least some of it going back to Moses himself. Hence, terms such as "essential Mosaic authorship," although not precisely defined, have become common designations. References to the Pentateuch as the "Law of Moses" or similar phrases do not function as authorial statements in the modern sense of the word (i.e., refer to the one sitting down and doing the writing), but rather reflect the close association between the text and the events that lie behind it. We are perhaps not unwise to allow the question of the human authorship of the Pentateuch to remain open while also confessing that God is free to bring his word into existence in any way he sees fit.

Historicity. One reason why Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch has been such a focal point, however, concerns the question of the historicity of Exodus and of the Pentateuch in general. If Moses is not the author in the usual sense of the word, and if the Pentateuch as we know it was written by hands much removed from the events themselves, how can we be assured of its historical reliability? This is a fair question, although it assumes that eyewitnesses (or near eyewitnesses) would better guarantee historical accuracy than those more removed from the events. But one could just as easily argue that having some historical distance could make one more perceptive about the significance of past events. More important, however, such a view could appear to be limiting God's ability to allow the Pentateuch to develop through a historical process over a certain length of time. Since God is the ultimate author, non-Mosaic authorship does not imply an inability to produce a historically reliable text.

With respect to Exodus specifically, more serious questions concerning historicity have come from archaeological evidence—or better, lack of evidence. First, there are two reigning possibilities for the date of the exodus. The traditional date is around 1446/1447 BC and is based essentially on a literal reading of 1 Kings 6:1, which puts the exodus 480 years before the fourth year of Solomon's reign, around 966/967 BC. The alternate date is around 1270/1260 BC and is based on a symbolic reading of 1 Kings 6:1 and indirect archaeological evidence concerning "Pithom and Rameses" (Exod. 1:11) and some conquest sites. Concerning the latter, there is evidence for the destruction of some Canaanite towns, beginning around 1230–1220 BC, which, according to the biblical record, were destroyed right after Israel's entrance into Canaan. Hence, if the evidence for the destruction of these towns points to about 1230–1220 BC, a rough date of 1270/1260 BC for the exodus accounts for the intervening forty years of wilderness wandering.

However, biblical archaeologists have persistently maintained that there is no positive archaeological evidence for the existence of Israelite slaves in Egypt during the time when the exodus would have taken place. This absence of evidence has been understood in very different ways by people of different camps. For some, the absence of any sort of Israelite material remains in Egypt, not to mention the lack of any written Egyptian record of Israelite presence, is a fairly clear indication that such events never took place; modern scholarship is replete with theories to account for the biblical record, from complete fabrication to later legendizing of sparse, ancient records. Others consider the absence of written evidence to indicate Egyptian embarrassment at having been bested by a group of slaves (why would they want to keep a record of that?). The absence of evidence of specifically Israelite material culture in Egypt is attributed either to Israelite assimilation into Egyptian culture or to similarities with other Semitic peoples in Egypt during the second millennium BC.

Although the question of the historicity of the exodus is very much an open subject, recent work, particularly by evangelical scholars, has begun mounting arguments for the presence of Semitic peoples in second-millennium Egypt and therefore for the historical plausibility of Israelite presence, enslavement, and release from Egyptian captivity. From a scholarly point of view, this issue will not be settled in the near future, and much of the debate includes questions of a more philosophical nature, such as "What does it mean to 'record' history?" "What did it mean to record history in the ancient world as opposed to our modern world?" "What type of historical account should we expect from ancient Israelites?" These and other similar questions broaden the discussion considerably and ensure that it will be ongoing.

OUTLINE

In its simplest outline, Exodus may be roughly divided into two parts, which highlight the Israelites' departure from Egypt and their sojourn at the foot of Mount Sinai:

I. Departure from Egypt (1–15)

II. Journey to and Arrival at Mount Sinai (16–40)

A subdivision of section II can easily be justified, since two basic events at Mount Sinai are recounted in chapters 16–40, the giving of the law and the building of the tabernacle:

I. Departure from Egypt (1–15)

II. Mount Sinai: Law (16–24)

III. Mount Sinai: Tabernacle (25–40)

This three-point outline gives the broad contours of Exodus, but a bit more detail will perhaps provide a more useful presentation of the book's contents:

- I. Departure from Egypt (1–15)
    - A. Prelude and call of Moses (1–6)
    - B. Plagues (7–12)
    - C. Departure (13–15)
- II. Mount Sinai: Law (16–24)
    - A. Journey to Sinai (16–18)
    - B. Ten Commandments (19–20)
    - C. The Book of the Covenant (21–24)
- III. Mount Sinai: Tabernacle (25–40)
    - A. Instructions for the tabernacle (25–31)
    - B. Rebellion and forgiveness (32–34)
    - C. Building the tabernacle (35–40)

What is immediately striking, even through such a sparse outline, is how much space is devoted to the events on Mount Sinai. Exodus is much more than a record of historical events, as one might find in a modern textbook of American history. It is, rather, a profound theological statement, both in its own right as well as part of the Pentateuch as a whole, whose focus is not simply on the Israelites' release from Egypt but also on their arrival at Mount Sinai. The structure of the book, in other words, leads us to understand something of the book's theology.

THEOLOGY

Creation. Already in the first chapter we see connections to Genesis, which tell us that we cannot read Exodus in isolation. For example, Exod. 1:1 closely parallels Gen. 46:8. The latter speaks of the Israelites going down into Egypt, and the former picks up on this theme, thus reminding us that Israel's presence in Egypt was not an accident and that Exodus is a continuation of the story begun in Genesis. Likewise, the use of creation language in Exod. 1:7 (the Israelites were fruitful, multiplying, becoming numerous, filling the earth; compare to Gen. 1:21, 28; 8:17; 9:1) signals that Israel's impending drama is somehow connected to creation. That point is made clearer in the chapters that follow. Perhaps most central is the crossing of the Red Sea. As in Gen. 1:9, where the dry land appears where once there was water, here the dry land (Exod. 14:21) appears to make a path through the sea.

There is, in fact, a fair amount of Exodus that plays on this theological theme of creation and the reversal of creation. In ancient Near Eastern conceptions of creation, water represented chaos. The gods' role was to tame the chaos so that the earth could be inhabited. Separating the land from the primordial sea was an important part of that, and this is reflected in the biblical account in Gen. 1. The flood in Gen. 6–9 is a reversal of that creative act, where God allows the waters of chaos to come crashing down on his creation, thus making it uninhabitable again. Exodus continues this theme, but here creation is called upon to aid the Israelites in their escape, whereas it is used against the Egyptians. The ten plagues, for example, are declarations that Israel's God controls the cosmos, whereas Egypt's gods stand by helplessly. The plague of darkness in particular is a graphic reversal of what God had done in Genesis, the creation of light and the separation of light from darkness. Israel's deliverance from Egypt is, in other words, another act of creation: the same God who brought order to cosmic chaos in Gen. 1 is now unleashing the forces of creation to save his people and punish their enemies. And whereas Pharaoh's Egyptians are able to reproduce the first sign and the first two plagues, it is only Israel's God who can end the plagues and restore order to chaos.

Israel has been delivered from Egypt for a purpose, and that purpose begins to become clear in the chapters that follow their departure. The newly created people of Israel are not delivered from Egypt so that they can be "free" from bondage. The key struggle in the opening chapters of Exodus, indeed, the whole reason for the ten plagues, is to determine to whom Israel belongs, whether to Pharaoh or to Yahweh, Israel's God. The Hebrew word 'abad can mean both "serve" (in the sense of servitude) and "worship." In a wonderful play on words, the question being asked in the opening chapters is "Whom will Israel 'abad, Pharaoh or Yahweh?" But Yahweh claims his people, not so that they can be liberated to go where they please, but rather so that they are free to move from serving/worshiping Pharaoh to serving/worshiping Yahweh on Mount Sinai.

This is why so much of Exodus concerns the journey to Mount Sinai and what happens there. Much of the "action" may end by chapter 19, but the reason for the action is to get the Israelites to Mount Sinai so that they can begin their proper life of service to Yahweh and Yahweh alone. And this service involves two things: proper behavior (law) and proper worship (tabernacle). These are the main topics of the remainder of the book of Exodus. And the fact that so much text is dedicated to these two topics, which may be of relatively little interest to Christian readers, is an indication of their central importance to the theology of the OT.

A Greek parchment manuscript of the book of Exodus

Law. It is important to understand that the law was given to the Israelites after they had been redeemed from Egypt, not before. The law is a gift to those who have been saved. It is not something to be followed in order to become saved. Israel is, as we read in Exod. 4:22–23, God’s son. This is why Israel was delivered from Egypt, and this is why Israel was given the gift of the law.

The purpose of the law, therefore, was not to prove to God that his people were somehow worthy of his covenant with them. The law was given so that Israel would be molded into a new people, one whose hearts were wholly devoted to God and so could be the instrument through which not only Israel but also the nations themselves would be blessed (see Gen. 12:1–3). As Exod. 19:6 puts it, Israel is to become a “kingdom of priests”—that is, the “holy nation” that would perform the mediatorial role of blessing the nations. The law, therefore, was not a burden but a delight, a gift from God to a redeemed people.

Also, the laws that God gives in Exodus are not necessarily new, as if no one had ever heard of these sorts of things before. Murder and adultery were considered to be wrong long before the Ten Commandments were given. Likewise, the laws of Exod. 21–23 (often referred to as the Book of the Covenant) are not new but rather reflect other ancient law codes much older than Israel’s (regardless of when one dates the exodus). What makes these laws different, however, is that these are the laws that Yahweh, the true God, gives to his people; these are the laws that reflect his character and, if the Israelites follow them, will ensure that they reflect God’s character to one another and the surrounding nations. In other words, the law performs not so much an exclusionary role as a missional role. Or perhaps better, the Israelites are being trained to be separate, and different, from surrounding peoples in order to properly fulfill their holy, mediating, priestly function.

Tabernacle. The section on the tabernacle begins in chapter 25 and extends to the end of the book, chapter 40. In between is an important episode, the rebellion involving the making of the golden calf. Just as the law represents much more than "rules to live by," the tabernacle is more than just a building for sacrificing animals. The importance of the tabernacle can be seen by focusing on some key elements.

Chapters 25–31 provide the list of instructions for the tabernacle. For centuries, rabbis and biblical scholars have noticed a pattern in these chapters. Seven times the phrase is repeated "The LORD said to Moses," and the seventh time is in 31:12 to introduce the topic of Sabbath observance. Just like the creation of the cosmos in Gen. 1, the tabernacle is a product of a six-stage creative act ("And the LORD said") followed by rest. Some have suggested that the tabernacle is a microcosm of creation: for example, cherubim are worked into the curtains, so to look up is to look at the heavens; the lampstand is a sort of tree of life, as in the garden of Eden. To be in the tabernacle is to be in touch with creation as it was meant to be, in the garden apart from the chaos of life outside.

Chapters 35–40 relay how the instructions are carried out. This section begins with reference to the Sabbath (35:1–3), which is how the first section ends. In between, we find the episode of the golden calf (chaps. 32–34), which is about false worship. The Israelites nearly succeed in undoing all that God had planned in bringing his people out of Egypt. Still, through Moses' intervention, God's plan is not thwarted, and so chapter 35 does not miss a beat, picking up where chapter 31 leaves off, with the Sabbath. Some scholars see here a pattern of creation (chaps. 25–31), fall (chaps. 32–34), and redemption (chaps. 35–40).

The tabernacle is an important theological entity in Exodus: it is heaven on earth. It is a truly holy space where God communes with his holy (law-keeping) people. This is the ultimate purpose of the exodus: to create a people who embody God's character and who worship him in purity. Then God would be with his people wherever they go (40:36–38).

EXORCISM The act of expelling demons from afflicted persons, places, and objects.

New Testament. There is no record of exorcism in the OT. In the NT, Jesus considered delivering people from demons to be central to his proclamation of the kingdom of God: "But if it is by the Spirit of God that I drive out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you" (Matt. 12:28). He used no formula or ritual; on his own authority he simply commanded the demons to leave, and he attributed his success to God. He also extended to his disciples the authority to expel demons in his name (Luke 10:17), dependent upon their faith (Matt. 17:17–20). Even a nondisciple was found performing exorcisms in Jesus' name (Mark 9:38), and when Jesus was told about it, he refused to forbid it.

An ancient exorcism incantation written in Sumerian and Akkadian (c. 1300–900 BC)

Jesus is not shown struggling against the demons; he simply spoke, and they obeyed, even at a distance (Mark 7:30). Often the demons recognized Jesus (e.g., Mark 5:7); sometimes they left the person with Jesus' permission. Although Jesus' exorcisms are listed along with healing miracles, the NT differentiates between exorcism and healing (e.g., Matt. 10:8); not every disease is considered to have been caused by demons, nor is every possessed person described in terms of illness.

Philip's ministry in Samaria was enhanced by his casting out demons and healing the sick (Acts

8:6–7). In Acts 16:18 Paul performs an exorcism "in the name of Jesus Christ." But while the ministry of Paul was so profound that articles associated with him were effective in exorcisms (Acts 19:11–12), the Jewish sons of Sceva were themselves overcome when they invoked the names of Jesus and Paul in an attempted deliverance (19:13–16). In the longer (and inauthentic) ending of Mark, the ability to cast out demons is promised to all believers (Mark 16:17).

Early church. Exorcism is attested in the writings of the early church fathers, such as Justin Martyr (*2 Apol.* 6 [early second century] and Tertullian (*Apol.* 23 [early third century]), as an ongoing ministry of the church. Both men emphasize the power of the name of Christ in commanding demons. Justin Martyr reports that the name of Jesus delivered people not cured by other exorcists, who used "incantations and drugs." Tertullian explains that the name of Christ recalled to the demons their coming judgment at the hands of God, and that fear made them subject to the servants of God and Christ. Not only verbal commands were used; often there was laying on of hands, breathing, and making the sign of the cross.

As with much of the spiritual excesses of the Middle Ages, superstition about demons and witches led to widespread persecution of many people accused of being "possessed" or "in league with the devil." The Protestant Reformation represented a rejection of this, with exorcisms being abolished by the Lutherans and Calvinists. The Roman Catholic Church restricted its practice in 1614 (see below for Catholic use today).

Modern practices. Modern liberal thought tends to dismiss demonic possession as a manifestation of psychological maladies not understood by the early church. Jesus' dealing with these cases is explained as condescension to first-century limitations of medical knowledge. However, more-traditional theology continues to recognize demonic possession as an actual supernatural phenomenon.

The Roman Catholic Church's Roman Ritual contains the rite of exorcism as approved in 1998. Catholics also perform a baptismal exorcism as a prophylactic measure and in demonstration of the fact that the baptized will be free from the power of the devil.

Pentecostal groups may distinguish between "demon possession" and "demon influence," the latter being grounds for a "deliverance," a term intentionally different from "exorcism," which they perceive to be a Catholic ritual. Deliverances can be frequent in Pentecostal churches. Mainline Protestant denominations retain the idea of exorcism, but these are usually quite rare. The Episcopal Church sanctions exorcisms by permission of the bishop.

EXPIATION "Expiation" refers to the atonement of sin and the removal of guilt, while "propitiation" refers to the appeasement or satisfaction of wrath. Both ideas are present in the one Greek word *hilasmos* (and its cognates) used in the LXX and the NT. It is difficult to translate *hilasmos* into English using one corresponding word, so two words, "expiation" and "propitiation," are often used. This is problematic because neither term precisely captures the nuances of the Greek word. The problem persists because, as noted above, "expiation" and "propitiation" have different meanings in English. Because no single English word conveys the full sense of *hilasmos*, "expiation" and "propitiation" are conveniently combined in the NIV's "sacrifice of atonement" or "atoning sacrifice" (Rom. 3:25; 1 John 2:2; 4:10).

GREEK BACKGROUND

In classical Greek, *hilasmos* referred to a sacrifice that would somehow avert a god's wrath. When a worshiper sinned against a god and violated the god's holiness, the worshiper paid the proper amount, through some kind of sacrifice, so that the god's wrath was then averted. It was a means of turning the god from anger to a favorable attitude, and it functioned by giving the god something (via sacrifice) that compensated for the offense. This sacrifice was intended not as atonement for the worshiper's sin but rather to appease the wrath of the god. The worshiper was the subject who offered the sacrifice to the god as the object in an effort to appease the god's wrath.

OLD TESTAMENT

The OT shares this Greek usage to a degree but also expands it to include the more familiar biblical notion of expiation or atonement. The LXX uses *hilasmos* to convey the ideas of expiation as well as propitiation. The word group associated with *hilasmos* is used in different contexts throughout the Bible, so context must determine the meaning in each case. A prominent use occurs in Lev. 25:9, where it refers to the Day of Atonement. Here *hilasmos* involves the removal of guilt effected by a sacrifice. A similar use is found in Num. 5:8, where *hilasmos* is used in connection with the ram with which people make atonement for their sins. Ezekiel 44:27 uses the same term when referring to the sin offering that a priest must make for his own sins upon entrance into the holy place. Each of these examples uses *hilasmos* to translate the biblical concept of expiation: the atonement of sin and the removal of guilt. The unholy worshiper who sins against God is made holy once again by offering a sacrifice to atone for his or her sin.

Hilasmos also conveys forgiveness. Forgiveness is closely connected with atonement. The LXX uses a related term *hilastērion* twenty-eight times to refer to the mercy seat, the cover of the ark of the covenant over which God appeared on the Day of Atonement and on which sacrificial blood was poured. The mercy seat was where both atonement and forgiveness were found. The term is used in Heb. 9:5 to refer to the same mercy seat or "atonement cover" (NIV). Here again, mercy and forgiveness are linked to the idea of atonement. Psalm 130:4 (129:4 LXX) also uses *hilasmos* to convey the connection between atonement and forgiveness: "But with you there is forgiveness/atonement [*hilasmos*]."

In some cases, *hilasmos* bears the sense of propitiation—turning aside wrath. An interesting use occurs in the story of Jacob and Esau in Gen. 32. Jacob goes out to meet his brother Esau but is afraid because he had deceived their father, Isaac, into giving him the blessing that belonged to Esau (Gen. 27). Esau holds a grudge against Jacob and intends to kill him after mourning the death of their father (27:41). After years of separation, the brother reunite; Jacob, fearing the wrath of his brother, plans to avert his brother's anger with gifts: "I will pacify him with these gifts I am sending on ahead; later, when I see him, perhaps he will receive me" (32:20 [32:21 LXX]). Here *exilaskomai*, a verb related to *hilasmos*, is used when Jacob says that he hopes to "pacify" Esau. This context suggests not expiation or atonement but appeasement (cf. NRSV, NET). Jacob fears the wrath of his brother. To avert that wrath, he sends gifts.

The idea of propitiating God's wrath occurs throughout the OT. Granted, it does not amount to bribery, as was potentially the case in pagan usage, where a god was "paid off" by a sacrifice, with no sense of atonement for sin, but the notion of averting God's wrath is common. For example, Moses is directed by God to take a census of the people to count them, and each one is to pay God a ransom so that no plague will come upon them (Exod. 30:12). This sum of money is then said to "make atonement" for their lives (30:16). Through the offering of ransom money to God, his wrath is turned away from the people, so that no plague will come upon them. The idea of propitiating God's wrath is found in other places in the OT: Exod. 32:30; Num. 8:19; 16:46; 35:31; Prov. 16:6; Isa. 47:11. All of this suggests that the notion of atonement in the OT is best understood comprehensively to include both the cleansing and the forgiveness of the sinner (expiation) and the turning away of God’s wrath (propitiation).

NEW TESTAMENT

Expiation and propitiation are combined in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. He is both the expiation for sin and the sacrifice that averts God’s wrath. The Bible combines both expiation and propitiation into the one word *hilasmos*, and Jesus himself is the *hilasmos* for sin (Heb. 2:17; 1 John 2:2; 4:10; cf. Rom. 3:25 [*hilastērion*]). The one action of Christ’s sacrifice has the double effect of expiating sin and thereby propitiating God. In the Bible, God’s wrath results when his holiness is offended by sin. So there is need for both expiation and propitiation. His wrath must be appeased so that forgiveness for the sinner may result. Whereas expiation deals with sin—satisfying the penalty incurred because of sin—propitiation deals with wrath. Jesus accomplished both by becoming the “atoning sacrifice” for our sins. He is the ultimate mercy seat, the ultimate place of atonement and expiation (Heb. 9:5). He is also the ultimate sacrifice (Rom. 3:25).

The NT is very nuanced regarding the sacrifice of Christ. Although it includes both expiation and propitiation, these differ significantly from Greek paganism and the OT. On one hand, God is too holy and righteous for fallen humanity to expiate sin and satisfy his demand for holiness by offering a sacrifice. On the other hand, God is not capricious in that he simply needs to be pacified through a gift in order to avert his wrath. The Bible teaches that no human being can offer a sacrifice worthy enough to expiate his or her own sin or to avert God’s holy wrath. The pagan idea of propitiation is impossible for fallen humanity. God’s holiness is so great that he is rightfully wrathful at our sin, and our sin demands expiation. But we are unable to offer a sacrifice pure enough for our own atonement. So God himself offers the sacrifice that both expiates our sin and averts his own wrath. Biblical propitiation is distinct from pagan propitiation. In the latter, human beings are the subjects of the action, the ones who are offering the propitiating sacrifice, while the gods receive the action and are thus propitiated. But God is the subject of the action in the Bible. God has the right to be wrathful because of sin, to be righteously indignant. But he sends his own Son to handle that wrath. God himself sends the sacrifice; he is the sacrifice; he is the place where that sacrifice is offered (Rom. 3:25).

There are three elements that help to summarize expiation/propitiation in the Bible: (1) God was rightfully wrathful because of our sin, (2) God offered the sacrifice that averted his own wrath, and (3) God was the sacrifice that atoned for our sin. “This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins” (1 John 4:10).

EYE The organ of visual perception. The eye is the lamp of the body, so that someone who has a sound or healthy eye can experience light, but someone with a deficient eye experiences only darkness (Matt. 6:22–23). Bright eyes signify alertness and good health (1 Sam. 14:27–29; Ps. 38:10), whereas dim eyes signify poor vision, often from old age (Gen. 27:1; 48:10; 1 Sam. 3:2). Blindness may be cured by opening the eyes (Isa. 35:5; John 9:14), although Paul was blind even with his eyes open (Acts 9:8). To lift or raise the eyes is to take a look around or look toward something (Gen. 13:10; 18:2; John 11:41). To turn the eyes from something is to no longer look at it (Ps. 119:37; Song 6:5; Isa. 22:4). Something hidden from the eyes is unknown (Num. 5:13; Job 28:21; Luke 19:42), but hiding the eyes from something is to ignore it (Isa. 1:15; Ezek. 22:26; cf. Lev. 20:4). The expression “before the eyes” signifies that an event has taken place in the presence of others, and they have witnessed it.

Kohl tube, a limestone vessel containing eye cosmetics (fifteenth or fourteenth century BC)

The eye is an important part of the body (1 Cor. 12:16–21). A defective eye disqualified a priest from certain duties (Lev. 21:17–20). A conquering army often gouged out the eyes of the defeated enemy (Judg. 16:21; 2 Kings 25:7), rendering them ineffective in battle (1 Sam. 11:2). Destroying Israel’s eyes is the first among many punishments listed for breaking God’s covenant (Lev. 26:16). Paul testifies that the Galatians cared enough for him even to pluck out their eyes in order to give them to him (Gal. 4:15). The importance of the eye highlights the importance of Jesus’ demand to pluck it out if it causes one to stumble (Matt. 5:29; 18:9).

Perception and enlightenment. Opening eyes is a theme that runs through both Testaments. At times, opening the eyes simply refers to making one aware of previously unknown information. It may be in this sense that the eyes of Adam and Eve are opened, since they become aware of their nakedness (Gen. 3:7). This same kind of opening occurs when God reveals a well to Hagar (Gen. 21:19), when Balaam sees the angel of the Lord standing in his way (Num. 22:31), and when the disciples on the road to Emmaus recognize Jesus (Luke 24:31). This sense is extended into the spiritual realm, so that the eye is used figuratively as the principal organ of spiritual perception. To open or enlighten the eyes in this sense involves one of the following: (1) allowing one to understand spiritual truth in the law of God (Ps. 119:18), prophetic utterance (Num. 24:3), or by the Spirit of God (Eph. 1:18); or (2) leading someone to repentance and conversion (Acts 26:18). These spiritual eyes may also be blinded or closed, hindering the person from repenting (Isa. 6:10; Matt. 13:13; cf. 2 Cor. 4:4).

The eye not only allows one to perceive the world but also helps others perceive the person. David has beautiful eyes, highlighting his handsome appearance (1 Sam. 16:12). Leah has weak eyes, a characteristic that is contrasted to the beautiful appearance of her sister, Rachel (Gen. 29:17). A bountiful eye reveals a generous spirit (Prov. 22:9). Haughty eyes reveal arrogance (Ps. 18:27; Prov. 6:17), as do eyes that are exalted (Ps. 131:1; Prov. 30:13). Eyes may reveal one's pity for another (Ezek. 16:5), but in the administration of justice, the eye is not allowed to pity or spare, meaning that the law will be executed to its fullest extent (Deut. 7:16; Ezek. 5:11). The eye that mocks a father or a mother reveals a person who holds them in contempt (Prov. 30:17).

Direction and evaluation. The eye also serves as a symbol for direction, care, and vast knowledge. Since the eye allows one to see, it helps set the proper course forward, physically (Num. 10:31) or spiritually (1 John 2:11). The fact that God's eyes are always upon the land of Israel demonstrates his care for it (Deut. 11:12). Likewise, his eyes are always upon the righteous, ready to help them (Ps. 34:15). Especially in apocalyptic literature, the many eyes of the living creatures are symbols of God's omniscience (Ezek. 1:18; Rev. 4:6), while the eyes of God in general are symbols of his awareness (1 Kings 9:3; Jer. 32:19; Amos 9:8; Heb. 4:13).

Finally, the eyes are associated with evaluation. The eyes of God often represent his favor or disfavor (Gen. 6:8; Deut. 21:9; 2 Kings 10:30). Those who evaluate themselves in their own eyes are often led astray because the eyes can lead to sinful lust (Num. 15:39; Deut. 12:8; Judg. 17:6; Prov. 3:7; 1 John 2:16).

EYELIDS OF THE MORNING In Job 41:18 this phrase is the KJV rendering of the Hebrew *'ap'appe shakhar*, describing Leviathan's eyes (NIV: "rays of dawn"; NRSV: "eyelids of the dawn").

EYE OF A NEEDLE *See* Needle.

EZAR *See* Ezer.

EZBAI Father of Naarai, one of David's mighty men (1 Chron. 11:37). The parallel (2 Sam. 23:35) reads "Paarai the Arbite" for "Naarai son of Ezbai." "Ezbai" could refer to a nationality. If so, Naarai may have been from the city of Arab (Josh. 15:52). Spelling differences could have arisen during scribal transmission.

EZBON **(1)** One of Gad's sons, listed fourth of seven (Gen. 46:16). A parallel (Num. 26:15–18) lists the other six in the same order, but Ezbon is replaced by Ozni. **(2)** First in a list of five sons of Bela son of Benjamin (1 Chron. 7:7). These five sons were referred to as "heads of families." Ezbon is absent from the longer list of Bela's sons (1 Chron. 8:3).

EZEKIAS The KJV rendering of the Greek name *Hezekias*, referring to a king of Judah listed in the Matthean genealogy of Jesus (Matt. 1:9–10). More-recent versions translate it as "Hezekiah."

EZEKIEL A major prophet of the early sixth century BC. Isaiah is known for the power of his language. Jeremiah is memorable for his emotions. Ezekiel is the most surprising or even bizarre in his actions and in his speech.

Ezekiel was thirty years old and living in Babylon by the Kebar River, a large irrigation canal, when he began receiving visions from God (Ezek. 1:1). This year was the fifth year of the exile of King Jehoiachin (1:2), who was taken to Babylon after Nebuchadnezzar laid siege to Jerusalem in response to the rebellion of Jehoiachin's father, Jehoiakim. The date of the vision is given with precision and can be converted to July 31, 593 BC.

If he was thirty years old in 593 BC, then he was born around 623 BC, three years after Jeremiah began his ministry and two years before King Josiah found the lost Book of the Law as he was purifying the worship of the temple in the midst of his general religious reform (2 Kings 22–23).

Ezekiel, like Jeremiah, was born into a priestly family, which may have rejoiced to see King Josiah rescue Judah from idolatry. Josiah was pleased to see Assyria, which exerted political pressure on Judah, begin to weaken. He supported Babylon in its rebellion against Assyria. This policy led him to intercept Pharaoh Necho as the Egyptian army headed north to bolster Assyria against Babylon at the battle of Carchemish in 609 BC. Not only did Josiah fail to stop Necho, but also he lost his life in the process, bringing his son Jehoahaz briefly to the throne. After Babylon defeated the Assyro-Egyptian coalition, Necho retreated through Judah and meddled with the succession, replacing Jehoahaz with his brother Jehoiakim. It was Jehoiakim's rebellion that brought Nebuchadnezzar to the walls of Jerusalem in 597 BC. By the time he got there, though, Jehoiakim's son Jehoiachin was on the throne. Nebuchadnezzar subdued Jerusalem and deported the king and many other leaders to Babylon, including the young priest Ezekiel. This background explains why he is in Babylon at the time of his prophetic call.

The ministry of Ezekiel began after Jeremiah's was well under way, but from 593 to 586 BC they were both active, the former in Babylon and the latter in Judah. They both lambasted Judah for its sin.

Ezekiel issued striking prophetic oracles (*see* Ezekiel, Book of). He often backed up his prophetic oracles with symbolic actions that are striking and surely generated a great deal of attention and talk. In 4:12 God tells Ezekiel to eat food cooked over human dung in order to illustrate that the people of Judah will eat defiled food in exile. When he objects, God allows him to cook it over cow dung. In 4:1–8 God commands Ezekiel to draw the city of Jerusalem on a clay tablet and then lay siege to it. He was also to lie on his side one day for each year that Israel and Judah had committed sin, for a total of 430 days. Later, Ezekiel's beloved wife died, but at God's command he did not lament or mourn (24:15–27), again drawing attention to himself so that he could warn about God's coming judgment. Indeed, Ezekiel was mute except when God gave him a message to communicate to the people (3:24–27; 24:25–27).

Ezekiel's message was primarily one of judgment, but like most of the prophets, he also saw beyond the judgment to restoration (most notably chaps. 40–48). Ezekiel's prophetic vision extended well beyond the time that he lived. In the NT there are over sixty direct quotations or allusions to Ezekiel's prophecy, many of these found in the book of Revelation.

EZEKIEL, BOOK OF The book of Ezekiel is widely recognized as one of the most idiosyncratic of the OT prophetic books. Some rabbis prohibited anyone under the age of thirty from reading portions of the book (i.e., the visions of God's glory in chapters 1 and 10 might lead to dangerous speculations about the mystery of God).

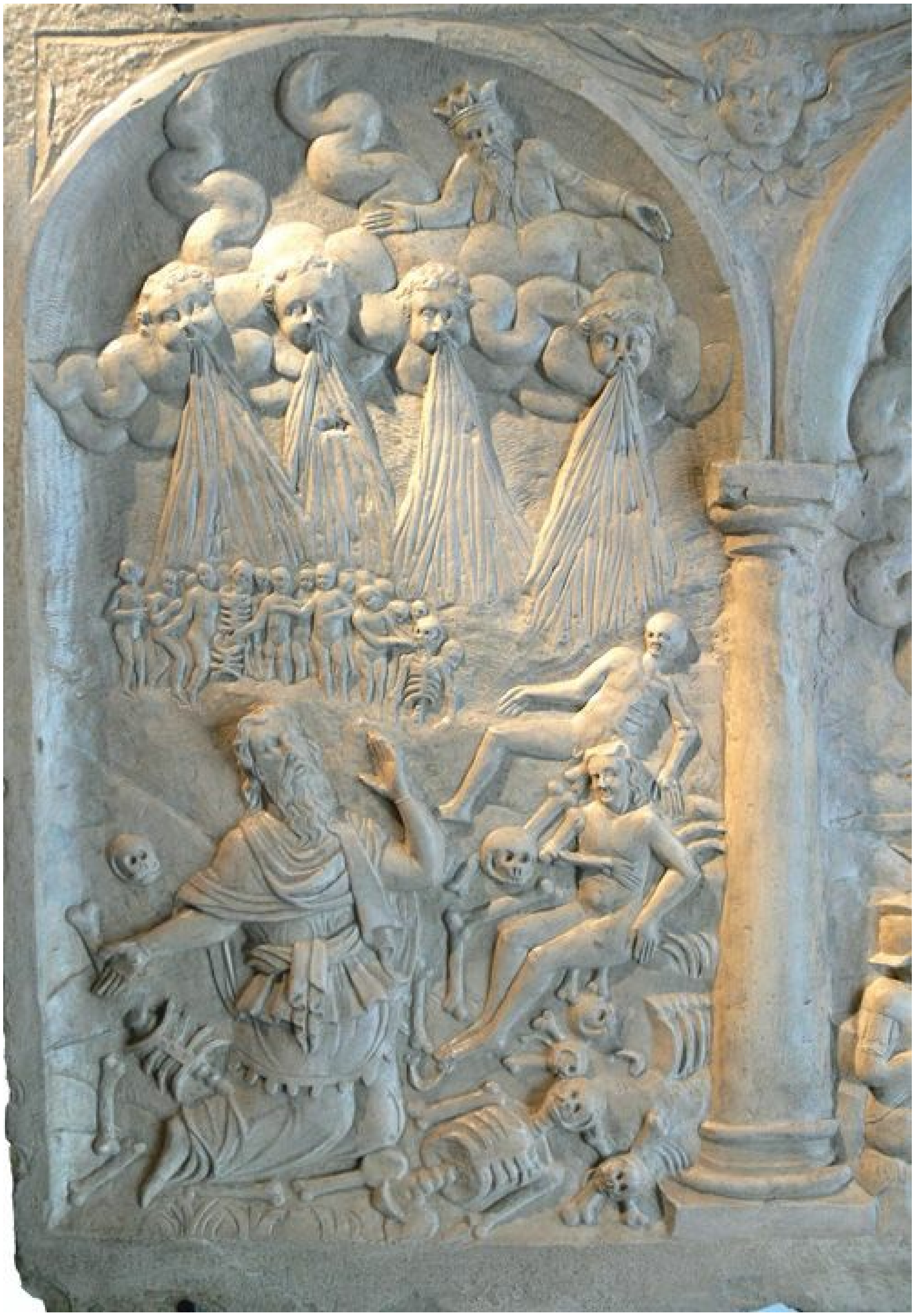
AUTHORSHIP AND DATE

Up until the beginning of the twentieth century, most scholars viewed the unparalleled extensive dating in the book (1:1–2; 8:1; 20:1; 24:1; 26:1; 29:1, 17; 30:20; 31:1; 32:1, 17; 33:21; 40:1), along with the symmetry achieved by deliberate thematic repetition (i.e., the "watchman" passages in 3:16–

21; 33:1–9; Ezekiel’s message of judgment/hope addressed to the mountains of Israel respectively in chaps. 6; 36) as indisputable proof that the book was the product of a single author. Even during the first one hundred years or so of historical-critical dominance in OT research, historical-critical investigations tended to confirm the traditional views of the unity, authenticity, and date of the book of Ezekiel, although the opinions of the majority of scholars began to shift early in the twentieth century.

For much of the first half of the twentieth century, issues of authorship, dating, and provenance of the prophet’s ministry dominated critical research on the book of Ezekiel. The book’s peculiarities lent themselves to various suggestions regarding the place of Ezekiel’s ministry. If, as 1:1–3 records, Ezekiel was called to prophetic ministry among the exilic community in Babylon, how does one explain Ezekiel’s apparent knowledge of particular events in Jerusalem, such as the death of Pelatiah (11:13) and the various forms of idolatry taking place in and around the temple complex in chapters 8–11? Furthermore, what is one to make of Ezekiel’s words to those who remained behind in Jerusalem (5:8–17; 11:5–12; 33:23–29)?

Many of those who sought to defend a straightforward understanding of the book’s own claims looked to mysticism or psychology to explain Ezekiel’s visionary involvement in events occurring some seven hundred miles away. Explanations for the apparent idiosyncrasies of his ministry—including extremely violent and graphic language, his extended period of “muteness,” various striking sign-acts, and the extended length and emotional intensity of his visionary experiences—tended to bleed into the discussion of how to understand his visionary experience of being transported to remote locations. Earlier solutions ranged from noting the similarities between Ezekiel’s experiences and those of the mystics to characterizing Ezekiel as having a “complex personality” and as one whose life was more attuned to the realities of the supernatural world.



Ezekiel’s vision of the dry bones (Ezek. 37:1–14) (Austria, sixteenth century AD)

Geographical solutions to account for Ezekiel’s apparent knowledge of events in Jerusalem include two suggestions. The first is that Ezekiel ministered only in Jerusalem. His preaching forms the core of chapters 1–39, and a later exilic redactor updated these chapters to address the concerns of an exilic audience and also added chapters 40–48. The second suggestion is that Ezekiel ministered in Jerusalem from 593 BC until the fall of Jerusalem, at which time he was taken into captivity in Babylon, where he continued his ministry among the exiles. The appeal of a dual-ministry approach is that it accounts for the double geographical focus of Ezekiel without resorting to ecstatic or supernatural flight from one city to the other or positing extensive secondhand editing of the book.

On the other hand, there is evidence from other biblical materials that ecstatic or visionary experiences of this sort were part of the prophetic tradition. Many of Ezekiel’s apparent idiosyncrasies actually resemble characteristics of the preclassical prophets. Viewing Ezekiel's ministry as part of an accepted cultural tradition provides a more persuasive explanation for the text as it stands. For example, the evidence of continued contacts between the Jerusalem and exilic communities (Jer. 29; Ezek. 33:21) suffices to explain whatever knowledge Ezekiel possessed of events in Jerusalem. The manner of their presentation in his visions is dictated by the cultural standards and expectations of a prophet operating under the influence of the "hand of Yahweh" and by the rhetorical goals of his preaching.

It is entirely plausible to suggest that the author of Ezekiel was an Israelite who was a rough contemporary of the tragic events surrounding the dismantling of the Judahite monarchy by the Neo-Babylonian Empire.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The book of Ezekiel itself yields pertinent information about Ezekiel's world, which, when supplemented with other biblical texts (2 Kings, Jeremiah, Daniel, and Habakkuk), enables us to reconstruct a working picture of the social, historical, and theological milieu in which Ezekiel lived and ministered.

In 701 BC the kingdom of Judah escaped annihilation by the Assyrians, as had befallen the northern kingdom in 722 BC, due in large part to the ministry of Isaiah and the faith of King Hezekiah (2 Kings 18:1–20:21; Isa. 36–37), albeit at a crippling financial expense in the form of heavy tribute to Assyria. After Hezekiah's death in 698 BC, his son Manasseh reversed his father's religious reforms, which meant disaster spiritually (2 Kings 21:1–18; 2 Chron. 33:1–11) and survival politically. Judah continued to exist for most of the seventh century BC as a vassal kingdom under Assyrian domination. The spiritual decline of Judah was briefly challenged during the reign of Josiah, who ruled in the years 640–609 BC. However, Jeremiah's strong invectives against empty religious formalism and social irresponsibility during much of Josiah's reign suggest that Josiah's attempts at religious reforms were only nominally successful and did not penetrate to the populace at large.

While Josiah was seeking to institute his reforms, power in the international scene was shifting. After the death of Ashurbanipal, the last great Assyrian ruler, the Assyrian Empire began to wane. The Neo-Babylonian Empire, founded by Nabopolassar (626 BC), dealt Assyria its final blow with the conquest of Nineveh (612 BC), followed by the destruction of Harran a few years later. This, coupled with the untimely death of Josiah in battle against the Egyptians at Megiddo (609 BC), spelled disaster for Judah (2 Kings 23:29–30; 2 Chron. 35:20–24). Nebuchadnezzar assumed leadership of Babylon after the death of his father (605 BC). Later that same year, Nebuchadnezzar defeated Egyptian forces at Carchemish and also ordered the deportation of some of the educated young Jewish men to Babylon (Dan. 1:1–4). This was followed by a second deportation in 597 BC, which included King Jehoiachin, Ezekiel, and about ten thousand Jews (2 Kings 24:14). Zedekiah was placed on the Judean throne as a puppet king. His rebellion against Babylon (588 BC) led to Nebuchadnezzar's one-and-a-half-year siege of Jerusalem before its final demise in 586 BC.

The political crisis of 597–586 BC led to a crisis of faith. The promises of an eternal Davidic kingdom (2 Sam. 7:7–16; Ps. 89:3–4, 35–37) and Yahweh's vow to set up his abode forever in the temple at Jerusalem (Pss. 68:16; 132:13–14) seemed to be failing. At the beginning of Ezekiel's ministry, the Davidic promise was already under a cloud: Jehoiachin, the rightful heir of the line of David, had been taken in captivity to Babylon, and in his place sat the puppet king Zedekiah. In addition, the land of Canaan had played a significant role in shaping the Israelites' understanding of themselves as Yahweh's chosen people (Gen. 12:1–3; Deut. 4:37–38; 7:1–11). Because true worship of God was so closely aligned with the Israelites' inheritance of the land (Deut. 12), to be outside the land immediately raised grave concern about their status before God (1 Sam. 26:19). To be outside the promised land would lead in a few short years to a questioning of whether true worship was even possible any longer (Ps. 137:4). Throughout this period, Ezekiel (and Jeremiah) consistently portrayed Nebuchadnezzar as an unwitting pagan king commissioned by Yahweh to execute the covenant curses on the recalcitrant southern kingdom.

Far from recognizing these events as such, many Israelites in the rebellion party, supported by rebellion prophets, asserted their claim to divine favor and denied the validity of prophetic indictments. They supported their claims with appeals to the miraculous deliverance from the formidable Assyrian army (701 BC), selective use of Scripture's focus on the inviolability of Jerusalem and the temple, the unconditional promises of an eternal Davidic kingdom (see above), and predictions by rebellion prophets of a quick return for the exiles (Jer. 28; 29:15–32; Ezek. 13).

From Ezekiel's perspective, the people of Judah were making a liar out of Yahweh. Yahweh had always demanded their exclusive worship. In light of their recent history of idolatry, the only appropriate response was to execute judgment on them (Ezek. 20:4–44). By denying this, the only explanation left to the rebellion party for the destruction of Jerusalem and exile was that a mighty and wicked kingdom that they intensely hated (Ps. 137:4) had bested Yahweh.

From this historical survey one may distill the overall situation faced by Ezekiel into a set of opinions probably shared by the majority of Ezekiel's fellow exiles. First, there was a widespread belief that it was proper to worship other deities in addition to Yahweh. Also, it was generally believed that the people of Judah were in good standing with Yahweh and were objects of his favor, and that he would shortly bring them deliverance. These beliefs combined to eliminate serious consideration of the possibility that destruction of the kingdom and exile were Yahweh's intention. Consequently, once the kingdom was destroyed and exile had become a reality, Yahweh's power and/or character became suspect in the minds of many. Furthermore, the perceived link between the land and the presence and blessing of Yahweh cast the exilic experience in an extremely negative light. For those gripped by these convictions, exile raised the specter of hopelessness. The sense of hopelessness was intensified by its conjunction with the belief that destruction of the kingdom and exile were undeserved. There was no way to integrate the outcome of the Babylonian crisis with their previously held beliefs about Yahweh and his purposes for Israel.

LITERARY CONSIDERATIONS

Structure and outline. There are several frameworks that can help the reader understand the "inner logic" of the book.

Tripartite structure. In chapters 1–24 the theme of God's impending judgment on the nation of Israel for violation of the covenant laws is emphatically repeated in both word and sign-act. Chapters 25–32 serve a Janus (double) function, connecting with chapters 1–24 by continuing the theme of God's judgment, now directed toward the foreign nations. The pronouncements of coming judgment in these chapters anticipate the last part of the book, with the message of hope for Israel that dominates chapters 33–48. The emphasis on divine judgment in the first half of the book is not a de facto statement that God is finished with Israel; rather, it is recognition that only by means of judgment (both of Israel and their neighbors) is future restoration and reconciliation possible. Many recognize a further subdivision in the third section, with chapters 33–39 focusing on the renewal of the nation and chapters 40–48 dealing with Ezekiel's temple vision.

This yields the following outline:

I. God’s Judgment on Israel (1–24)

II. God’s Judgment on the Foreign Nations (25–32)

III. Hope for Israel (33–48)
  A. Renewal of the nation (33–39)
  B. Ezekiel’s temple vision (40–48)

Visions. Visions open and close the book (chaps. 1–3; 40–48), with two additional visions in between: temple idolatry and the incremental departure of God’s glory as judgment is executed (chaps. 8–11), and the valley of dry bones (37:1–14).

The movement of God’s glory. Ezekiel’s sustained concern for the temple as the place where God’s glory dwells provides a unifying structure to the book as Ezekiel chronicles God’s glory coming to Babylon in his ominous inaugural vision (chaps. 1–3), the incremental departure of God’s glory from the temple and the city (chaps. 8–11), and the return of God’s glory in the vision of the new temple (chaps. 40–48).

Genre. The book of Ezekiel is considered by many to be a literary masterpiece composed of various genres, including extended visionary narrative (1–3; 8–11; 37:1–14; 40–48), allegory (16; 23), poetry (19; 26–28), parable (17; 24:3), and popular sayings (8:12; 9:9; 11:3, 15; 12:22, 27; 18:2; 33:10, 17, 20, 24, 30; 37:11). Other prophets quoted popular sayings (Isa. 40:27; Jer. 31:29; Amos 5:14; Hag. 1:2; Mal. 1:2, 6–7, 12–13), but the quotations are far more frequent in Ezekiel and are couched in uniquely theocentric language. In each case it is God who informs Ezekiel what the people are saying. Ezekiel uses popular sayings of the people to establish their hostility toward God and to vindicate God by demonstrating his covenant faithfulness. The unparalleled frequency of Ezekiel’s use of popular sayings in his oracles against the Israelites and the patently theocentric garb in which his counterreplies are clothed serve to anchor both the judgment and the hope of restoration in God alone. Ezekiel’s quotations serve as a foil for a frontal attack on the entire religious enterprise of his contemporaries in Jerusalem and Babylon. By citing these popular sayings and refuting them, Ezekiel skillfully reveals both the necessity and purpose of the exilic crisis. He turns the sayings of the people against them, exposing the depths of their opposition to God and thus furthering the purpose of vindicating God.

THEOLOGICAL MESSAGE

The sovereignty of God. The book emphasizes God’s sovereignty over all as Ezekiel challenged the false theology of his fellow Jewish exiles, which held that Yahweh, bound by covenantal oath, could not destroy Jerusalem. The formulaic expression (with variations) “After X occurs, then you/they will know that I am the LORD/I have spoken” occurs over sixty-five times in the book to emphasize God’s intervention in human events, including the exile and restoration (e.g., 7:27; 13:23; 29:16), to uphold the covenant and establish his kingdom.

The holiness of God. Israel’s sins had obscured God’s holiness in the sight of their neighbors (20:9). God’s holiness required both punishment of Israel’s sins and the continuation of his covenantal relationship with his people. God’s purging judgment and restoration would be a fulfillment of his covenantal obligations and would display his holiness (20:40–44; 28:25; 36:16–32).

Hope in the midst of judgment. God’s covenantal faithfulness would include restoration after judgment (chaps. 33–39). The final temple vision (chaps. 40–48) gives a picture of the restoration using typological images and cultural idioms with which the people were familiar.

NEW TESTAMENT CONNECTIONS

There are approximately sixty-five quotations and allusions to the book of Ezekiel in the NT. Echoes of Ezekiel are prevalent in John's Gospel (John 10:1–30 [Ezek. 34]; John 15:1–8 [Ezek. 15]) and the book of Revelation (Rev. 4:6–9 [Ezek. 1]; Rev. 20–22 [Ezek. 40–48]).

EZEL The place where David hid from King Saul until Jonathan could communicate Saul's intentions (1 Sam. 20:19–41). The precise meaning of the Hebrew word *'ezel* and the location it is intended to reference are uncertain. The Greek translation in the LXX would indicate that the phrase is not meant to be a proper noun, but merely "that stone heap." *'Ezel* also could be related to an Aramaic verb meaning "to leave." If so, it should carry the meaning "stone of parting," which in the narrative would signify a commemoration of the parting of David and Jonathan.

EZEM A town that was part of the traditional allotment given to the tribe of Judah, Simeon, or two towns with the same name. Ezem was located in the Negev area of Judah (Josh. 15:29) and also was part of the allotment given to the tribe of Simeon (Josh. 19:3; 1 Chron. 4:29). Simeon's tribal allotment was entirely surrounded by the allotment of Judah, so confusion about the town is not impossible. The exact location of the town is unknown.

EZER **(1)** A Horite chief among the sons of Seir (Gen. 36:21, 27, 30; 1 Chron. 1:38, 42), listed as sixth among seven sons in each of three lists. Also named as father of Bilhan, Zaavan, and Akan in both texts. **(2)** A descendant of Judah (1 Chron. 4:4). This genealogy does not give a direct lineage from any of Judah's sons, so the exact relationship is unknown. He is identified as the father of Hushah, which is also a Judahite village. **(3)** One of the sons of Ephraim (1 Chron. 7:21). He and his brother Elead were killed while attempting to steal livestock from the men of Gath. The Chronicler records that Ephraim mourned while being comforted by his relatives, and after his mourning he and his wife conceived another son whom they named "Beriah," meaning "misfortune" (7:23). **(4)** Chief of the Gadite warriors who supported David at Ziklag (1 Chron. 12:9). These warriors were described as fierce and swift, and skilled with shield and spear. Ezer was said to be a match for a thousand men in battle (12:14). **(5)** One of the Levites who worked to repair the wall of Jerusalem under Nehemiah's leadership. He is said to be the son of Jeshua and a ruler of Mizpah (Neh. 3:19). **(6)** One of the priests who blew trumpets at the dedication of the newly reconstructed wall of Jerusalem (Neh. 12:42).

EZION GEBER A town located at the northern end of the Gulf of Aqabah. The Bible locates it "near Elath in Edom, on the shore of the Red Sea" (1 Kings 9:26). However, the precise location is debated. Many scholars associate it with Tell el-Kheleifeh, which lies between modern Elath and Aqabah, about five hundred yards from the shore, but others identify it with the island of Jezirat al-Faraun, about fifteen miles south along the western coast of the Gulf of Aqabah. Still others speculate that it lies undiscovered under modern Aqabah.

The ruins of Tell el-Kheleifeh contain a citadel and storehouses surrounded by double casemate walls. The ruins do not predate the ninth century BC, so references to Ezion Geber in the itinerary of the wilderness wandering (Num. 33:35–36) and Solomon's naval activities there are problematic.

Jezirat al-Faraun offers a small natural harbor and contains evidence of Midianite pottery as early as the thirteenth century BC. Whatever the precise location, Ezion Geber represents the southernmost extent of Judean political and economic control, for it served as the gateway to Red Sea trade and stood near land routes to Arabia.

The ruins of Ezion Geber

From David to the end of the monarchy, control over Ezion Geber oscillated between Judah and Edom. David may have first captured it when he subdued Edom (2 Sam. 8:13–14). With the help of the Phoenicians, Solomon built a fleet of ships at Ezion Geber that brought immense wealth into Israel (1 Kings 9:26–28). After Solomon’s death, it may have been destroyed during Pharaoh Shishak’s invasion (1 Kings 14:25–26). Edom reasserted control over it until Jehoshaphat, in alliance with Ahaziah, built at Ezion Geber a fleet of merchant vessels, which God destroyed because of Ahaziah’s wickedness (2 Chron. 20:36–37). This is the last time Ezion Geber is mentioned by name.

From this point onward, nearby Elath is the focus of events in the area. Uzziah’s father defeated the Edomites, allowing Uzziah to build up Elath (2 Kings 14:22; 2 Chron. 26:1–2). The Syrians briefly controlled the area, but the Edomites reclaimed control until the Babylonian period (2 Kings 16:6). Elath was abandoned in the fourth century BC, and a Nabatean site developed farther east near Aqabah.

EZNITE A word occurring in the Hebrew text of 2 Sam. 23:8 that may give the ancestry or the hometown of a warrior named “Adino” (KJV, NASB). Since *’adino* and the following word, *ha’etsno* (“the Eznite”), are awkward in the sentence and absent elsewhere in the Bible, the NIV follows some LXX manuscripts and 1 Chron. 11:11, substituting “raised his spear” for “Adino the Eznite” (cf. ESV, RSV). See the NIV footnotes on 2 Sam. 23:8.

EZRA A priest and scribe of pivotal importance in the late postexilic period (Ezra 7:1–10:44; Neh. 8:1–18; 12:36).

The Babylonian exile ended in 539 BC, and due to a decree by Cyrus, many exiles returned to Jerusalem under the leadership of Sheshbazzar and Zerubbabel. The temple was rebuilt at that time (515 BC), though now, many decades later, Jerusalem was still largely ruined, and the people were in a state of spiritual depression.

The Persian king of the time, Artaxerxes I, gave Ezra permission to return to Jerusalem in order to restore the law of Moses as the law of the land. Ezra left in that king’s seventh year (458 BC). Artaxerxes was guided by a Persian state policy dictating that the empire’s vassals would be best ordered if allowed to restore their own native laws. God used this self-serving impulse for his own purposes.

Ezra brought a number of Levites along with him for the task of instructing the people in the law of God. As part of Ezra’s work, he also confronted sin in the community, the most notable of which was marriage between Jewish men and pagan wives. Such sins led to Israel and Judah’s problems in the first place, as foreign women led their husbands to adopt pagan religious practices. One need only think of Jezebel and Ahab and the Egyptian princess and Solomon. When he confronted these sinners, Ezra wept and tore his clothes, demonstrating his zeal that the people obey God.

The account of Ezra’s ministry is told in conjunction with that of Nehemiah, who arrived in 445 BC, commissioned to rebuild the wall, yet rarely is their work described together. They were together on the day that the people reaffirmed their intention to obey God’s law (Neh. 8:1, 9–10).

Ezra plays a significant role in the Jewish literature of the intertestamental period. He is remembered as the one who closes the OT canon, bringing all the books to completion and in a collection.

EZRA, BOOK OF The evidence is clear that the books of Ezra and Nehemiah originally formed a single book. It is not until the Middle Ages that manuscripts show a division between the two. Furthermore, the material in Neh. 8 (and perhaps also chaps. 9–10) is a continuation of the material that follows the story of Ezra begun in Ezra 7–10. Thus, some of the discussion that follows is also relevant for the book of Nehemiah.

The book of Ezra is named after Ezra, a self-described priest and teacher (7:11) of the Lord. This man was commissioned by the Persian king Artaxerxes I (r. 464–424 BC) to reestablish the law of the Lord in the land of Judah.

AUTHOR AND DATE

The issue of the author and date of Ezra must include the evidence of Nehemiah, since they were originally a single composition. These books are unique among the theological histories of the OT in that they contain large portions that are written in the form of memoirs, first-person accounts of people who participated in the events that are narrated. Ezra, for instance, speaks in the first person in parts of Ezra 7–10. However, the memoir is set within the framework of a form more typical to the histories of the OT: third-person omniscient narration. So, although traditionally the authorship of Ezra is associated with Ezra, there is no claim that the book as a whole was written by him; thus, this book, like so many of the histories of Israel, is anonymous.

As for the date of composition, we need to differentiate the memoirs, which come from the time of Ezra (his ministry begins in 458 BC) and the time of Nehemiah (his work begins in 445 BC), and the time of the third-person narrative that incorporates these memoirs. The latter contains no date, but none of the events narrated took place after around 400 BC, and perhaps the final composition of the book took place around this time and no later than 300 BC.

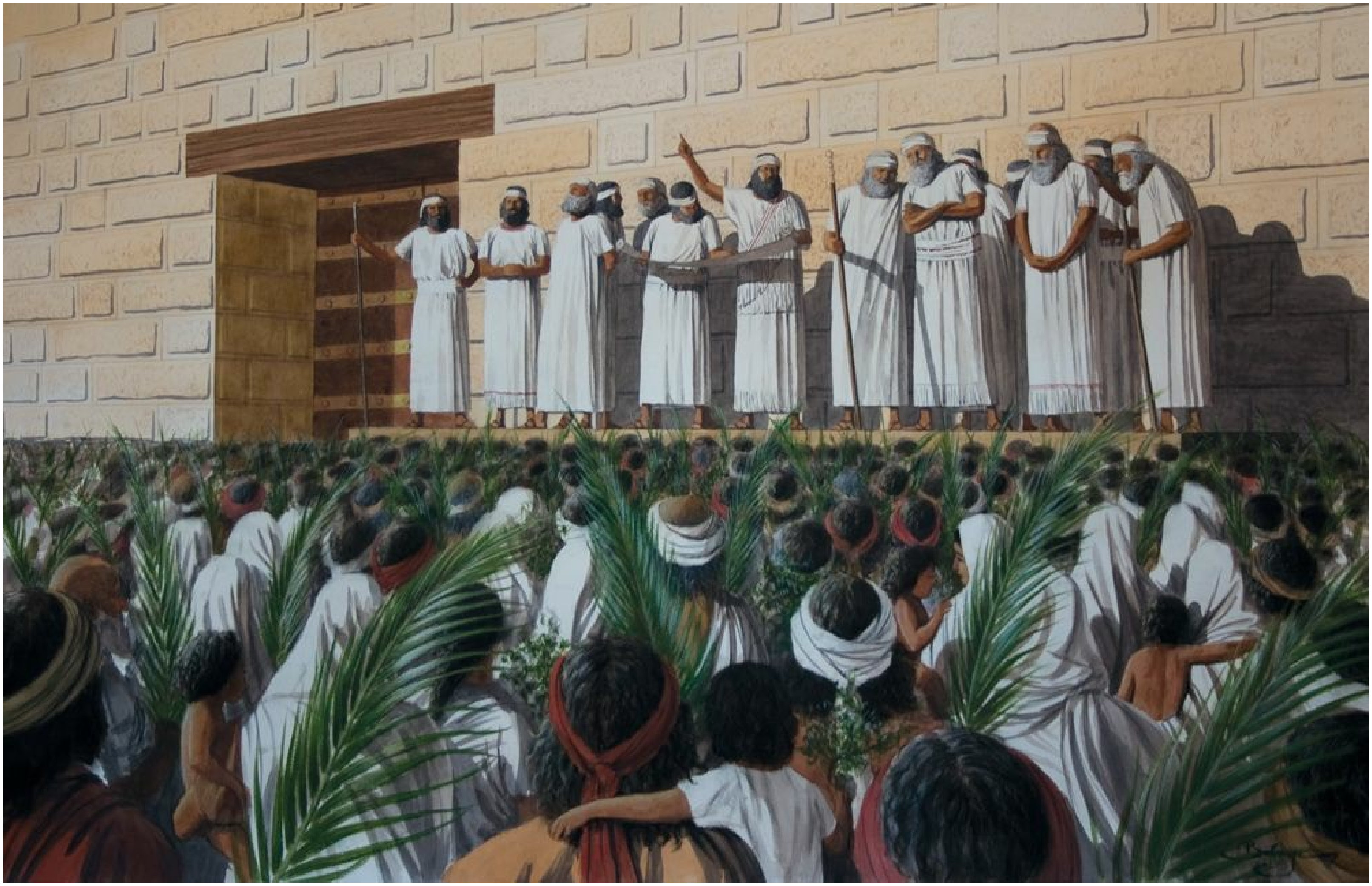


Illustration of Ezra reading the law

GENRE AND STRUCTURE

The book of Ezra is a theological history, a book that intends to communicate what actually happened in space and time but is selective, with the purpose of showing how God was working among the people of God in the postexilic period. As a theological history in the OT, however, Ezra and Nehemiah are unique in that they contain the memoirs of Ezra and Nehemiah (as detailed by the first outline below). The structure of the book of Ezra makes sense only when paired with Nehemiah, since, again, they were an original unity. The structure may be explained on the basis of its sources as follows:

I. A Historical Review (Ezra 1–6)

II. Ezra’s Memoirs, Part 1 (Ezra 7–10)

III. Nehemiah's Memoirs, Part 1 (Neh. 1–7)

IV. Ezra's Memoirs, Part 2 (Neh. 8–10)

V. Nehemiah's Memoirs, Part 2 (Neh. 11–13)

Or on the basis of the contents as follows:

I. Zerubbabel and Sheshbazzar Lead the People in Rebuilding the Temple (Ezra 1–6)

II. Ezra Leads the People by Reestablishing the Law (Ezra 7–10)

III. Nehemiah Leads the People in Rebuilding the Wall of Jerusalem (Neh. 1:1–7:3)

IV. Renewal, Celebration, Remaining Problems (Neh. 7:4–13:31)

THEOLOGICAL MESSAGE

The book of Ezra begins where Chronicles ends, with the decree by King Cyrus of Persia that the Jews be allowed to return to the land. The first six chapters narrate the events of the first phase of that return, from 539 until 515 BC. Zerubbabel and Sheshbazzar are the leaders of the people at this time, and their initial goal is to rebuild the temple. Once they start, however, opposition sets in, and the work stops. However, motivated in large part, as we know, by the prophets Haggai and Zechariah, the people finish the work, and the second temple becomes functional.

Nonetheless, over fifty years later, when the story of Ezra begins (Ezra 7–10), the condition of the people of God is not promising. King Artaxerxes of Persia allows Ezra, a priest and teacher, to lead a return back to Judah with the express purpose of reestablishing the law in the land. When he arrives, he finds that there are sinful practices such as illegitimate intermarriage between Jews and Gentiles, and he works to reestablish the purity of the people. The story of Ezra continues in the book of Nehemiah, where he is seen leading the people in a great renewal of the covenant as they reaffirm their commitment to obey God's law (Neh. 8–10).

CONTEMPORARY SIGNIFICANCE

The book of Ezra narrates two periods of return to the promised land from exile with two different primary purposes. The first group, led by Zerubbabel and Sheshbazzar, has as its main purpose the rebuilding of the temple. The primacy of the temple building is an indication of the importance of worship. The second group returns under the leadership of Ezra, whose purpose is to reestablish the observance of the law among God's people. God's word plays a central role in Ezra's reform, and reading about his ancient ministry reminds God's people today of the importance of Scripture.

Ezra's style of leadership also provides a model for contemporary leadership. Ezra is sensitive and empathetic. He takes the shortcomings and failures of God's people on himself. When the people sin, he tears out his own hair and sheds tears of disappointment. That this is not the only possible style of leadership is seen in the next book as we observe Nehemiah at work.

The work of Zerubbabel and Ezra (as well as Nehemiah) also illustrates that at times separation from pagan influences is necessary. Granted, Jesus breaks down the barrier between Jews and Gentiles (Gal. 3:28), but his followers should be distinguished by their new life in him (Gal. 4:8–11; 5:16–26).

EZRAH In modern translations (NIV, NRSV, NET, NASB), a descendant of Judah (1 Chron. 4:17 [KJV: “Ezra”]), not to be confused with the Ezra of the books of Ezra and Nehemiah. The final *h* likely reflects the Hebrew spelling of this name compared to the more common Aramaic spelling “Ezra.”

EZRAHITE This name occurs in 1 Kings 4:31 and in the superscriptions to Pss. 88–89. “Ezrahite” possibly signifies a clan name. Ethan and Heman, wise men worthy of mention as a standard for measuring the wisdom of King Solomon, were Ezrahites. Some have suggested that the name means “native.” If so, then “Ezrahite” would have signified someone of Canaanite origin, and Ethan and Heman would have been pre-Israelite sages.

EZRI A servant of David who was in charge of the farmers who cultivated the land (1 Chron. 27:26).

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FABLE Using a folklorist definition of fable as a story in which animals, plants, or inanimate objects take on human characteristics (i.e., are anthropomorphized), we can identify at least two fable stories in the OT. In Judg. 9:8–15 Jotham uses a fable to point out to the Shechemites their folly in asking Abimelek to be their king. In 2 Kings 14:9 King Jehoash of Israel uses a fable to point out to King Amaziah of Judah his folly in challenging Jehoash to a battle. Some have suggested that the allegory in Ezek. 17:1–10 could also be considered as a fable, but there is no anthropomorphizing in that passage.

Fable, more broadly defined as a fantastically incredible story, having no correspondence to reality, is used in some English translations to render the Greek word *mythos* (NIV: “myth”) in 1 Tim. 1:4; 4:7; 2 Tim. 4:4; Titus 1:14; 2 Pet. 1:16. Peter, in particular, denies that the apostles’ accounts about Jesus are fables.

FACE Biblical references to the face are both literal and metaphorical. The Hebrew word for “face” (*paneh*) frequently occurs in the plural in the OT (over 2,100 times), and it can express the numerous features of the face, that of God, humans, animals, and inanimate objects. It also can describe a surface, such as “the face of the ground” (Gen. 2:6 KJV) or “the face of the deep” (Gen. 1:2 KJV).

The concept of face must be understood in terms of the diverse emotional expressions and stratified social relationships of the biblical social world. This was a world of honor and shame, loyalty and betrayal. Where the modern person speaks of personal empowerment, the biblical person thought of social restoration. Life was tantamount to social acceptance. In the biblical world of strong corporate solidarity, the face was the most important part of a person’s body. Persons did not merely “contact” each other; rather, faces engaged each other. Face was synonymous with person (e.g., Lev. 19:32, where “the aged/elderly” is literally “the faces of the aged/elderly”). The face essentially describes interpersonal relationships.

Presence and nonpresence are noted in the expressions “hiding the face from” (Ps. 27:9) and “seeing the face of” (Gen. 32:20 KJV). These denote qualities of relationship through acceptance or rejection, especially to superiors. To “see someone’s face” who is a dignitary is to be granted a royal audience (Gen. 44:23). Yet it was not customary to show a sad face in a king’s presence (Neh. 2:2). A person could also try to hide his or her identity, since “face” marks a public expression of one’s character and social standing.

To literally “fall on the face” (Ezek. 1:28; Luke 5:12) shows humility and homage toward a superior. Personal intention or determination is shown in the expressions “set the face against/toward” (Ezek. 35:2) and “turn the face” (2 Kings 20:2). Dishonor and disrespect are expressed with a “fallen face” (Gen. 4:6; NIV: “downcast” face; cf. Gen. 40:7). Striking the face can be an act that humiliates (John 18:22), as with mutilation or having a soiled face (Lev. 21:18; 2 Sam. 19:4–5). By contrast, to speak “face to face” (Exod. 33:11) not only shows respect but also treats another as a social equal. Reflecting rich emotions, a face can be “cheerful” (Prov. 15:13), “aflame” with agony (Isa. 13:8), “red with weeping” (Job 16:16), and covered with “shame” (Ps. 69:7).

“Face” can be used as a metonym (i.e., substitution) for a person’s presence. Significantly, God’s rejection of a person or group can be expressed as them being hidden from his face (Gen. 4:14 KJV) or as God hiding his face from them (Isa. 54:8; Mic. 3:4; cf. Ps. 22:24). Those in distraught prayer ask why God has hidden his face (Job 13:24) or for how long (Ps. 13:1). Similarly, God acts against persons when he sets his face against them (Lev. 17:10; 26:17).

Believers anticipate the day when they will see God “face to face” (1 Cor. 13:12), having received the ultimate gift of God’s acceptance.

FACET A facet is a polygonal surface of a three-dimensional solid, such as a gemstone. Gemstone facets may be formed in nature, by cleaving (breaking the gem by striking it along planes determined by the crystalline structure of the gem), by abrasive rubbing or polishing, or, in modern times, by sawing with a thin metal disk. Biblical descriptions of gemstones are not sufficiently detailed to determine whether they included artificially formed facets, although some translations of Zech. 3:9 describe a stone with “seven facets” (NLT, NRSV; cf. NIV mg.; lit. “seven eyes”). Archaeologists have recovered numerous seals carved into semiprecious stones. These would have required the preparation of a smooth face, through abrasion, prior to incision of the delicate seal image.

FAIR HAVENS Fair Havens (Gk. *Kaloi Limenes*) is a harbor on the south-central coast of Crete. The ship carrying the apostle Paul to Rome stopped there after encountering difficult sailing from Cnidus (Acts 27:7–13). Paul pressed to spend the winter there, but he was overruled by the captain because of the port’s perceived deficiencies.

Fair Havens, Crete

FAITH, FAITHFULNESS The spectrum of meaning of "faith" and "faithfulness" may be applied both to God and to human beings. Cognates of "faith" are used interpersonally in human relationships but are used in the Bible specifically to denote the interaction between God and humanity, and human response to God. A question of theological pertinence is the degree to which one must distinguish between faith as an agent of personal belief and faith as an object of personal belief as pertaining to the relationship between God and human being.

In Hebrew the words most often translated "faith" or "faithful" are *'emunah* and *'emet*. In Greek the word rendered most frequently "faith" or "faithful" is *pistis*. In terms of their semantic domains, *'emunah* and *'emet* connote an objective sense of reliability (of persons) and stability (of inanimate objects); *pistis* conveys more of a subjective sense of placing confidence in a person, trusting in a person, or believing in a person or set of propositions. This subjective sense of *pistis* is correlated to considering the person or object of trust, belief, or confidence as reliable—"faithful." *Pistis* likewise is used to communicate the quality of this person or belief as "committed" and "trustworthy."

As noted, to some degree the meanings of the Hebrew and Greek terms overlap. However, certain dissimilarities are apparent as well. These observations play out in OT and NT expressions of faith. Martin Buber (1878–1965), a Jewish philosopher known for his academic work in the area of "faith," distinguished between two types of faith: OT/Judaic faith, typified as tribal, national, and communal trust and fidelity based on the covenant; and NT/Christian faith, characterized as individual persuasion or belief in something.

OLD TESTAMENT

Faith in the context of the OT rests on a foundation that the person or object of trust, belief, or confidence is reliable. Trust in Yahweh is expressed through loyalty and obedience. The theme of responsive obedience is emphasized in the Torah (Exod. 19:5). In the later history of Israel, faithfulness to the law became the predominant expression of faith (Dan. 1:8; 6:10). OT faith, then, is a moral response rather than abstract intellect or emotion.

Faithfulness as an attribute of God. Yahweh is presented in the OT as faithful to his promises, as faithfulness is a part of his very being. In the Torah the Israelites are reminded, "The LORD your God is God; he is the faithful God, keeping his covenant of love to a thousand generations of those who love him and keep his commandments" (Deut. 7:9). Not only is God presented as keeping his covenant, but also the prophet Hosea calls God "the faithful Holy One" (Hos. 11:12). Isaiah likewise presents faithfulness as an attribute of God (Isa. 49:7). The people can rest assured, for God is unchanging and reliable.

The psalmist speaks of Yahweh as the faithful God: "You have redeemed me, O LORD, faithful God" (Ps. 31:5 NRSV); "he remains faithful forever" (Ps. 146:6). The translation "faithful" is warranted in these instances in the psalms. Its connotations are "truth" and "trustworthiness." Yahweh is ascribed divine honor by his people recognizing and acknowledging his faithfulness and trustworthiness, and by responding to it in obedience as the people of God.

The faith of Abraham. Abraham's (Abram's) faith is used in the Bible as an example (Rom. 4:12; Gal. 3:6–9) in the sense that Abraham trusted God's faithfulness in a way unequaled by other characters in the OT. Abraham lived in Mesopotamia when God spoke to him in a vision and told him that his descendants would be as innumerable as the stars in the sky (Gen. 15:1–5). Abraham trusted that God would be faithful to keep his promise despite insurmountable obstacles. This trust was credited to Abraham as righteousness (15:6). God subsequently initiated a covenant with Abraham (15:7–21).

Abraham’s life was characterized by his obedience to God and by his considering God to be faithful, something well noted by the early church (Heb. 11:8–11, 17–19) and used as an example of faith in the Christian walk (12:1). The three best-known examples of Abraham’s obedience and hence trust in God’s faithfulness are found consecutively in the departure from his homeland, the birth of his son Isaac, and the offering of Isaac as a sacrifice.

When God said to Abraham, “Go from your country, your people and your father’s household to the land I will show you” (Gen. 12:1), Abraham went as commanded (12:4). He obeyed despite his cultural disposition toward staying in the area of his ancestry and kin, and he went without knowledge of an appointed destination. Elderly and childless (12:7, 11–12), Abraham considered offspring to be impossible. However, Abraham trusted that God would be able to raise offspring for him, believing that he would become a great nation (12:2). His offspring Isaac was later reminded of the obedience of Abraham (26:5). Abraham’s greatest challenge of trust in God’s faithful provision came when he was commanded to offer his son Isaac as a burnt offering (22:2). He was commended for fearing God without reservation (22:12).

When the priest and initial leader of the Maccabean revolt, Mattathias, gave his farewell speech to his sons as he faced death in 166 BC, he placed his deeds along the lines of biblical heroes of faith such as Abraham. With likely reference to Abraham offering Isaac, he said, “Was not Abraham found faithful when tested, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness?” (1 Macc. 2:52 NRSV). The early church likewise used this test in Abraham’s life as an example of his faithfulness, while at the same time claiming that the source for this faithfulness was found in faith—faith in God’s faithful provision (Heb. 11:17).

Faithfulness to the covenant. Faithfulness embodies the very core of the covenant relationship. God seeks a love relationship with humanity expressed in initiating his covenant. He is described as “abounding in love and faithfulness” (Exod. 34:6). His covenant love (Heb. *khesed*) is closely correlated to his faithfulness: “He is the faithful God, keeping his covenant of love” (Deut. 7:9). Throughout the OT, Yahweh is shown as loyal to his covenant. Yahweh’s righteousness is seen in his faithfulness in keeping the covenant even when his people were disloyal and did not acknowledge his faithfulness. He delivered his people out of Egypt because of his covenant love and righteousness, as the psalmist declared: “But from everlasting to everlasting the LORD’s love is with those who fear him, and his righteousness with their children’s children—with those who keep his covenant and remember to obey his precepts” (Ps. 103:17–18). He delivered them out of their subsequent exile, declaring them righteous because their repentant hearts trusted in his faithfulness and sought to obey his covenant. Yahweh said, “If I have not made my covenant with day and night and established the laws of heaven and earth, then I will reject the descendants of Jacob and David my servant and will not choose one of his sons to rule over the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. For I will restore their fortunes and have compassion on them” (Jer. 33:25–26).

God’s people, however, were expected to reciprocate and trust his faithfulness (1 Chron. 16:15–16). When God met with Moses on Mount Sinai, he instructed Moses to tell the Israelites to obey the commands fully and to keep the covenant. It was only then that they would be a treasured possession, a holy nation (Exod. 19:5–6). The Israelites were expected to follow in obedience and thus reciprocate God’s faithfulness. The people of Israel often failed, but David and other godly people chose to be faithful to God and walk in his truth (Ps. 119:30; Heb. 11:4–38).

Faith counted as righteousness. Whereas faith is used throughout the OT in reference to God’s faithfulness and loyalty, it is used in Hab. 2:4 as pertaining to the faith of the righteous: “But the righteous will live by his faith” (NASB). In Rom. 1:17 Paul specifies, “For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: 'The righteous will live by faith.' " He notes that God's righteousness, even as revealed within OT promises, is by faith ("faith to faith," or "faith, through and through"). By the parameters "from faith to faith," Paul intends to exclude works of righteousness, a theme that he carries consistently in the first four chapters of Romans. Justification, for Habakkuk's hearers, meant faithfulness, a single-minded focus on Yahweh to meet life's essential needs. For Paul, salvation by way of justification meant that reliance upon Christ alone was foundational. In Pauline theology, faith is a thread connecting the old covenant with the new covenant.

NEW TESTAMENT

Faith is a central theological concept in the NT. In relational terms, faith is foremost personalized as the locus of trust and belief in the person of Jesus Christ.

In the Gospels, Jesus is spoken of not as the subject of faith (as believing in God), but as the object of faith. In the Synoptic Gospels, faith is seen most often in connection with the ministry of Jesus. Miracles, in particular healings, are presented as taking place in response to the faith of the one in need of healing or the requester. In the Gospel of John, faith (belief) is presented as something that God requires of his people (6:28–29).

In the book of Acts, "faith/belief" is used to refer to Jews and Gentiles converting to following the life and teachings of Jesus Christ and becoming part of the Christian community. The book correlates faith in Christ closely with repentance (Acts 11:21; 19:18; 20:21; 26:18).

Paul relates faith to righteousness and justification (Rom. 3:22; 5:11; Gal. 3:6). In Ephesians faith is shown as instrumental in salvation: "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God" (Eph. 2:8).

In Hebrews, faith is described as "being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see" (11:1). Faith thus is viewed as something that can be accomplished in the life of the believer—a calling of God not yet tangible or seen. To possess faith is to be loyal to God and to the gospel of Jesus Christ despite all obstacles. In the letter of James, genuine works naturally accompany genuine faith. Works, however, are expressed in doing the will of God. The will of God means, for example, caring for the poor (James 2:15–16).

In 1 Peter, Christ is depicted as the broker of faith in God (1 Pet. 1:21), whereas in 2 Peter and Jude faith is presented as received from God (2 Pet. 1:1). In the letters of John "to believe" is used as a litmus test for those who possess eternal life: "You who believe in the name of the Son of God, . . . you have eternal life" (1 John 5:13).

Faith is rarely addressed in the book of Revelation. Rather, faithfulness is the objective. Christ is described as the faithful and true witness (Rev. 1:5; 3:14), the perfect example for believers. One of the believers in Asia Minor, Antipas, is identified as Christ's witness and faithful one (2:13). Those believers who, like Antipas, are faithful unto death, are called "overcomers" (2:10, 26). The faithless are thrown into the lake of fire, which represents the second death (21:8).

Faith and salvation. The role of faith in salvation is often hotly debated. Views are polarized between Christ as the object of faith and as the subject of faith. These views are designated as an objective genitive (faith in Christ), also known as an anthropological view, and a subjective genitive (the faithfulness of Christ), also known as a christological view. Thus, for example, Rom. 3:22 can be translated as "This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe" (cf. NRSV) or as "This righteousness from God comes through the faithfulness of Jesus Christ for all who believe" (cf. NET). In the latter translation the faithfulness of Christ is seen as the agent of salvation.

In Eph. 2:8 the phrase “For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith,” points to faith as instrumental in salvation. However, the source of that faith is not made clear. Does God provide the faith required to be saved, and thus the event is out of the hands of humanity? Or does salvation require a response from human beings in the form of faith—that is, trust?

In the Letter to the Romans, Paul indicates a correlation between grace and faith (Rom. 4:16; 5:1–2), and he shows that Abraham’s faith, his belief and unwavering hope in God’s faithfulness, was credited to him as righteousness (4:18–22). In the new covenant this righteousness likewise is credited to those who believe in God (4:23–24).

Faith and works. In Eph. 2:8–10 works are described as an outflow of the faith of believers: “For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.”

Faith and works are also related in the letter of James, where works appear to be a prerequisite of faith, for faith without works is dead (2:26). While at first sight this might appear to contradict a Pauline understanding of faith and works (Rom. 3:19–5:1; Gal. 2:15–3:24), James and Paul use the word “works” differently. Paul uses it in terms of “obedience to the law,” something obsolete as a requirement in the new covenant. James, however, writes with regard to works of charity, not works of obedience to Jewish ritualistic law. Authentic faith, then, shows the evidence of good works—charity, the fruit of the Spirit.

FAITH AND THE CHURCH

Whereas baptism was a public initiation rite into the first-century Christian community, it was faith in Christ Jesus that was understood as establishing one’s membership in the family of God (Gal. 3:26). This membership was available to both Jews and Gentiles. Faith, the shared belief system in and confession of Jesus’ salvific work, became the common denominator in the Christian community. In Ephesians, faith is identified as one of the unifying elements of the church (Eph. 4:5). The prayer of faith heals the sick person in the church, another unifying element of applying faith (James 5:13–15).

Faith as a spiritual gift. According to the apostle Paul, the gift of faith is closely related to the life and functioning of the church (1 Cor. 12:9). Mentioned among other gifts, or *charismata* (12:4), this aspect of faith is that benefit of salvation with which certain members of the church are graced and is used for the common good (12:7). This faith, then, is understood as edifying the Christian community at large rather than just the individual believer.

Faith and the Christian life. Christians are described as living by faith (2 Cor. 5:7). Not only does faith lead people to Christ, but also Christ subsequently dwells in believers’ hearts through faith (Eph. 3:17). This Christian faith is subject to testing (James 1:2).

Faith is presented by Paul as present at different levels of growth among believers. Some Christians are weak in faith (Rom. 14:1), whereas others are strong in faith (15:1). Faith can differ in its strength of conviction (4:20–22; 14:5). It is presented as something that can grow (2 Cor. 10:15).

Faith is grouped among gifts and virtues. Lifted out together with hope and love, faith is mentioned among gifts that edify believers in the church (1 Cor. 13:13). Likewise, faith is mentioned as a Christian virtue among the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22–23).

FALCON The falcon is a sharp-eyed bird of prey, listed in the OT as unclean (Deut. 14:13; Job 28:7). Numerous species of this bird exist in Israel.

FALL “The fall” refers to the events of the first human couple’s sin in the garden of Eden (Gen. 2–3). Although the word “fall” does not occur in the account, Christians have used the term to describe it, taking their cues from Paul’s writings (esp. Rom. 5:12–21). The term is important because it reflects an interpretation that the events in the garden are the entrance of human sin and that the sin has universal effects on humankind.

THE GENESIS ACCOUNT

The framework of the Genesis account runs as follows. The account begins with God’s creation of a man, Adam. God plants a garden filled with beautiful trees that bear good food. Among the trees, two in particular are pointed out: the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. God sets Adam in the garden and commands him that he can eat from any tree except one: the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. God says that it is not good for Adam to live alone and so, after other attempts, finally provides a suitable helper for him, a woman (Eve).

At this point, the narrative shifts its focus to the woman and a serpent. The serpent raises doubts about God’s commandment. The woman tells the serpent that disobeying God’s commandment leads to death. The serpent replies that she will not die, because God gave the commandment only to keep her from attaining what God possesses. The woman examines the tree; it is beautiful, has good fruit, and is able to make a person wise. She takes some fruit, eats it, and gives it to Adam, who is there with her.

The temptation and fall of Adam and Eve, depicted on a statue pedestal (Notre Dame, Paris, AD 1210–1220)

After Adam and Eve eat the fruit, they realize that they are naked, and they sew leaves together to cover their nakedness. God confronts them; Adam blames Eve; Eve blames the serpent. God pronounces a curse that affects the serpent, the man, and the woman. God then banishes Adam and Eve from the garden, setting a guard to keep them from returning and eating from the tree of life.

THE TRUTH ABOUT THE SERPENT'S CLAIMS

The first question of the narrative is concerned with the central tension of the narrative: Is the serpent telling the truth about the tree and God? When God commands Adam not to eat the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, he gives the penalty for disobedience: immediate death (Gen. 2:16–17). However, the serpent tells Eve that she will not die if she disobeys. In fact, what will happen is that her eyes will be opened so that she will know good and evil and be like God (3:4–5). At first glance, it appears that the serpent is precisely correct. Eve eats the fruit along with Adam, their eyes are opened, and now they are like God, knowing good and evil (3:6–7, 22). At the same time, there is no mention of death in the narrative.

However, a closer look reveals that, in fact, Adam and Eve do die. At the end of the narrative, three events take place: God pronounces curses, God banishes them from the garden that he has prepared for them, and God stations angelic sentries at the entrance of the garden to prevent Adam and Eve from eating from the tree of life. The first obvious sign of their death is that they are prevented from eating from the tree of life. By being denied access to the tree of life, they are condemned to death. It is often assumed that eating the fruit of that tree provides instant immortality, because of God's statement in Gen. 3:22: "The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever." However, this interpretation is not necessary. What is more likely in view is that the fruit of the tree restores the life of the partaker. One would, therefore, need to return to it to continue living. This interpretation helps explain why God does not deny Adam and Eve access to the tree while they are still in the garden. They are given life, though not immortality, while in the garden, so there is no need to deny them the tree.

Their death is also revealed in God's cursing and banishment. Toward the end of the Pentateuch, Moses draws out this connection as he relates it to the nation of Israel and the commandment(s) that God has given: "This day I call the heavens and earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live and that you may love the LORD your God, listen to his voice, and hold fast to him. For the LORD is your life, and he will give you many years in the land he swore to give to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob" (Deut. 30:19–20). Life equals blessings in the land that God has prepared; death equals curses outside the land that God has prepared. Therefore, when Adam and Eve disobey the commandment of God, they suffer death when God pronounces curses, banishes them from the garden, and prevents them from returning to the tree of life.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE TREE OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOOD AND EVIL

The second question pertains to the tree of the knowledge of good and evil: What is the significance of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil? To begin, one must discover what the knowledge of good and evil is. There are primarily three possibilities: moral awareness, exhaustive knowledge, and wisdom. Although each of these possibilities has merit, it is likely that wisdom is in view.

Knowledge and wisdom as well as good and evil are central concerns for the book of Proverbs, occurring proportionately more frequently in Proverbs than in any other book. The stated goal of the book of Proverbs is to teach wisdom and understanding to those who will read the book and heed its instruction (1:1–7). By gaining this wisdom, one is able to discern what is good and what is bad (2:9).

Alongside this wisdom background is the fact that when Eve considers eating from the tree, she notices that it is distinct from the other trees because it is desirable for making one wise (Gen. 3:6). Therefore, the knowledge of good and evil is associated with wisdom; however, when Adam and Eve eat the fruit of the tree, they attempt to gain wisdom outside God's stated will. This type of wisdom leads them to determine what is good and evil for themselves rather than trusting God for what he has provided as good (notice the number of times God declares something to be good in Gen. 1–3).

There are two more results of understanding the knowledge of good and evil as wisdom. First, the narrative sets up an important distinction that is highlighted in other biblical books: the distinction between human wisdom and divine wisdom. This contrast is an important emphasis for books such as Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, 1 Corinthians, Colossians, and James. Second, the narrative closely connects keeping the commandment of God with attaining wisdom. When Adam and Eve eat the fruit in disobedience, they determine for themselves what is good and bad. Obedience to the divine commandment requires trusting that what God has called good is good and what God has called bad is bad. Such is wisdom. The end of Ecclesiastes shares the same concern: “Now all has been heard; here is the conclusion of the matter: Fear God [the beginning of wisdom] and keep his commandments, for this is the duty of all mankind. For God will bring every deed into judgment, including every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil” (Eccles. 12:13–14).

THE EFFECT OF THE FALL ON HUMAN HISTORY

The third question to ask concerns the effects of the fall: How does the fall affect the rest of human history? First, the account shows that a war has begun. One conflict lies between God and the serpent. Everything that God affirms, the serpent rejects. However, as a sign of God’s sure victory, the serpent is cursed so that it must go about on its belly and eat dust (Gen. 3:14). Another conflict lies between the serpent (and its seed) and the woman (and her seed). God also declares that the serpent will lose in this conflict when the seed of the woman crushes the head of the serpent. Although the account is clear that the serpent is only a wild animal (3:1), it is also associated with all those who are like it, its seed. It is for this reason that Satan is called the “ancient serpent” (Rev. 12:9; 20:2).

Second, humanity finds itself relating to God differently. The sin in the garden is often called the “original sin.” The Bible does not specifically explain what effects the original sin has on each individual person, but it does show that Adam’s disobedience affects the rest of humankind (Rom. 5:12). Because of this original sin, death (i.e., natural death, curse, and exile) has entered the world so that everyone who remains in a natural state must experience death. However, Christ, through his life and work, brings life (i.e., eternal life, blessing, and communion) for those who believe in him.

FALLOW GROUND Unplowed or unseeded and thus barren land. Leaving a field fallow for a season is a method of increasing the ground’s fertility as well as controlling weeds. Instead of “fallow ground” (NRSV), the NIV uses “unplowed ground” (Jer. 4:3; Hos. 10:12). Israel was commanded to leave its fields, vineyards, and olive groves fallow once every seven years so that the poor and the beasts of the field might eat of the land’s yield (Exod. 23:11).

FALSE APOSTLES Dangerous teachers disguised as faithful gospel ministers. In 2 Cor. 11:5 Paul ironically calls a group of false teachers in the Corinthian churches “super-apostles.” These deceivers are “false apostles” (11:13) who, like Satan, pretend to be servants of righteousness (11:14–15) in order to deceive God’s people.

The false apostles in Corinth taught a threefold error: a false Christ, a false spirit, and a false gospel. The exact nature of the false gospel that they preached is uncertain, but it led Christians away from true devotion to Christ (2 Cor. 11:3). Their gospel depicted not a humbled and crucified Lord (see 1 Cor. 1:17–31) but rather a Christ who gave his followers exalted knowledge, supposedly making them superior to normal Christians (2 Cor. 11:6).

The false apostles of Corinth were likely of Jewish origin (2 Cor. 11:22), and thus they may have taught something similar to the heresies afflicting the churches addressed in Galatians and Philippians (see Gal. 2:4; Phil. 3:2–6). These preachers used deception (2 Cor. 4:2; 11:13) and were domineering (11:20) rather than meek and gentle like Christ (10:1; 13:4). Because of their skill in public speaking, the false apostles were popular according to the standards of that day, which often valued persuasiveness over truth (10:1–2). Paul was mocked because he did not speak with the eloquence and fluency of his opponents (see 10:10). Nonetheless, Paul’s boast was in the success of the gospel among his hearers (10:8, 12–18) and in his own weakness, which highlighted the power of God (11:16–12:10).

Revelation 2:2 speaks of false apostles who may have been the Nicolaitans mentioned in Rev. 2:6. John praises the church at Ephesus for refusing to tolerate the teachings of these false apostles.

FALSE CHRISTS, FALSE MESSIAHS Messianic pretenders in the NT who through dramatic “signs and wonders” posed a great temptation to the earliest Christians. False Christs or messiahs are specifically mentioned twice in the NT, both in sections of the Gospels describing the time of the return of Jesus Christ. First, Matt. 24:24 speaks of “false messiahs and false prophets” who will deceive many through spectacular miracles. Such figures are so convincing that they are even a threat to the faith of “the elect,” although Matthew has a strong hope that the elect ultimately will not fall victim to the deceptions of these pretenders. Mark 13:22 is a parallel passage to Matt. 24:24 and uses the same language to describe false Christs. Both passages are warnings to Christians to be vigilant in assessing the claims of any person who claims to be the Messiah returned to judge the world. The false Christs will be known as such because the actual second coming of Christ will be unmistakable and in the open, whereas the messianic pretenders plot in secret and will come to nothing (Matt. 24:26–28; Mark 13:23–29).

Other false messiahs in the earliest days of the church were those claiming to be Israel’s military and political saviors. A misunderstanding of the nature of the Messiah prompted by an exclusive focus on OT texts promising victory over Israel’s national foes (see Ps. 2; Hag. 2:20–23; Zech. 9:9–10; 12:7–13:1) paved the way for militaristic messianic pretenders to draw followers into armed conflict with the Roman authorities (such as Theudas and Judas the Galilean in Acts 5:36–37 and “the Egyptian” in Acts 21:38). Such false messiahs did not claim divine status, but they were a constant source of temptation for Jews and Christians in the first century because of their promise of victory over imperial Roman oppression.

FALSE PROPHET The law warns against those who claim to speak for God but whose words are not from God. Such false prophets are exposed when their predictions go unfulfilled, but even a prophet who makes true predictions is false if he or she encourages idolatry. False prophets must be put to death (Deut. 13:1–5; 18:20–22).

During the monarchy, some false prophets blatantly promoted Baalism (1 Kings 18:19; Jer. 2:8; 23:13). Others seemed orthodox but, motivated by greed (Jer. 6:13; 8:10; Mic. 3:5, 11; cf. Luke 6:26), actually said whatever people wanted to hear (1 Kings 22:6; cf. 2 Chron. 18:5; 28; Isa. 30:10; Jer. 5:31; Ezek. 22:27–28). A frequent mark of these prophets was that they stressed God’s faithfulness to promises of blessing while ignoring his faithfulness to promises of judgment. According to them, Israel would never be defeated, however much the people sinned (Jer. 6:14; 8:11; 23:17; Ezek. 13:10, 16; Mic. 2:6); the false prophets themselves set an example of licentiousness (Isa. 28:7; Jer. 23:14–15). Ironically, the complacency that this engendered increased Israel’s danger (Jer. 14:13–16; 23:19–22; 27:9–18; Lam. 2:14; Ezek. 13:5).

Often direct confrontations took place between true and false prophets (e.g., 1 Kings 18; Neh. 6:14; Jer. 20:1–6; 26:8–11; 28–29; Mic. 2:6). The true prophets pleaded with Israel to reject false prophecy (Jer. 23:16; 29:8–9). They pronounced judgment on both the prophets and their followers

(Isa. 9:14–15; Jer. 2:26; 4:9; 8:1; 13:13; 23:33–39; 50:36; Ezek. 13; Zeph. 3:4; Zech. 13:2–6). False prophets would become blind to the truth they denied and become unable to prophesy at all (Isa. 29:10; Ezek. 7:26; Mic. 3:6). Their false predictions would be frustrated (Isa. 44:25; Jer. 37:19), and in particular the exile that they said would never happen was now inevitable (Jer. 14:15–18).

False prophecy was as much a danger in the NT era as it was in the OT. Jesus warned that "wolves in sheep's clothing" would continue to lead many astray. Some would either promote the worship of false messiahs or even pretend to be the Messiah (Matt. 24:23–24; Mark 13:21–22), but, as ever, they could be identified by their "fruit" (Matt. 7:15–23; 24:11).

Paul said that any so-called prophet who opposed his own teaching, or who taught error while claiming that the teaching came from Paul himself, was false (1 Cor. 14:37; 2 Thess. 2:2; cf. 2 Cor. 11:4; Gal. 1:8). Luke called Elymas the sorcerer, who opposed Paul, a false prophet (Acts 13:6–12). More generally, Peter saw all heretical teachers as direct successors of the false prophets of the OT, denying the Lord and exploiting the people for gain (2 Pet. 2:1). They replicate the error of Balaam (2 Pet. 2:15–16). For John, the particular mark of the false prophet was the denial that Jesus is the Christ (1 John 4:1–3). The third figure in the bestial false trinity in John's Revelation is called "the false prophet" (Rev. 16:13; 19:20; 20:10) and entices men and women to worship the dragon rather than Jesus.

FALSE WORSHIP Devotion or service that is improper. Worship, whether false or true, generally consists of two aspects that are distinct but not necessarily separate: (1) the performance of certain rituals, including sacrifice, circumcision, baptism, and so forth; (2) the attitudes and activities that reflect devotion to a person or object. The first aspect shows worship as ritual, consisting of formal, regulated elements. The second aspect shows worship as devotion, consisting of a life of piety. False worship occurs when a worshiper fails in one or both of these aspects.

False worship included the worship of other gods such as the Canaanite goddess Astarte shown here.

FORMS OF FALSE WORSHIP

The Bible describes false worship occurring in three different ways: (1) the worshiper demonstrates devotion to anything other than God, (2) the worshiper performs a ritual contrary to its instructed observance, and (3) the worshiper performs a ritual while leading a life of unrepentant disobedience to God.

The most severe form of false worship is when a worshiper demonstrates devotion to anything other than God. This type of false worship may include worship as ritual in which a rite or ceremony is performed directly for another god. Some rituals are specifically mentioned in the Bible: passing children through fire (2 Kings 16:3; 17:17; 21:6), consorting with shrine prostitutes (esp. Hos. 4:14), and offering sacrifices to idols (esp. Lev. 17:7). This type of false worship may also include attitudes and actions that demonstrate a higher degree of devotion to something other than the true God. This devotion may be to another god or object, even material wealth (cf. Col. 3:5, where Paul equates greed with idolatry).

The second form of false worship involves performing a ritual contrary to its instructed observance. At Mount Sinai, God gives a code of laws that regulate the practice of making sacrifices and offerings, confining them to certain personnel (priests and Levites), certain circumstances (cleanness), certain animals or plants (depending on the sacrifice and the wealth of the offerer), certain times (Passover, Day of Atonement), and a certain location (tent of meeting, later the temple). On occasion, the law requires death as the penalty for failure to observe the rituals correctly (Exod. 30:20–38; Lev. 10:1–3; 16:2). This type of false worship is basically limited to the OT because of the highly regulated and ritualistic nature of Israel's worship. Although the NT contains rituals of worship, there is no indication of a censured method of observation, only of an improper attitude (1 Cor. 11:27–33).

The third form of false worship involves performing a ritual while living a life of unrepentant disobedience to God. The Bible addresses this type of false worship in several passages (1 Sam. 15:22; Isa. 1; Amos 4–5; Mic. 6). They demonstrate that even if the ritual is performed correctly and toward the true God rather than another god, a sinful lifestyle of the worshiper will invalidate the worship. Worship is not automatically accepted simply because it is performed in the right way by the right official at the right time for the right God; it has ethical demands (esp. Isa. 1:11–23; Jer. 14:7–10; Amos 4:4–13; 5:21–27). The prophets make it clear that God not only rejects worship from wicked, unrepentant worshipers but also abhors it (esp. Isa. 1:11–23; Amos 5:21–27).

RITUAL AND ETHICAL ASPECTS OF FALSE WORSHIP

Regardless of the form of false worship, God takes it seriously. Ritual and ethical aspects of worship are both important. The deaths of Nadab and Abihu provide a good example of the importance of the ritual aspects of worship; they died because they performed a ritual contrary to its prescribed manner (Lev. 10:1). The text does not connect their death to some ethical failing but rather states that they profaned God by their ritual disobedience (cf. 10:1–3).

On other occasions, the lack of proper ritual observance accompanies serious ethical failings. For instance, Hophni and Phinehas committed two great transgressions. First, they performed the sacrifices contrary to regulation for their selfish gain, falling short both ritually and ethically. Second, they committed acts of fornication at the place of worship (1 Sam. 2:13–17, 22). The judgment upon them was a result of both transgressions. Malachi rebukes the Israelites of his day because the animals that they brought for sacrifice, being diseased or disabled, were unacceptable according to regulation (Mal. 1:7–14). The ritual transgression revealed their lack of devotion to God, which was reflected in their ethical failings as well (2:8–12).

On the other hand, the Bible emphasizes the priority of the ethical aspects of worship over the ritual. When Saul does not wait for Samuel as Samuel commanded him but instead makes an offering before Samuel arrives, Samuel rebukes Saul because of his disobedience to Samuel's instruction (delivered as a word of the Lord), not because of his method for carrying out the ritual (1 Sam. 15:22). When Jeremiah speaks of the covenant at Mount Sinai, he emphasizes God's demand for devotion instead of the ritual observances (Jer. 7:22–23).

Other passages show that proper worship is possible even without a ritual element. Micah defines proper worship without ritual elements, but purely in ethical terms (Mic. 6:8). When asked about the proper place of worship, Jesus tells the Samaritan woman that the location is irrelevant, only that worship must occur in spirit and truth (John 4:19–24).

IDOLATRY

The most serious and most widespread form of false worship is idolatry. In a technical sense, idolatry is creating a physical representation of a deity. In a more general sense, idolatry involves any sign of devotion to anything other than the one true God. Idolatry in the OT consists of both making an image of God and making images of other deities. Both practices are forbidden in the Ten Commandments, which are a succinct presentation of God's ethical demands. The incident of the golden calf is a paradigmatic case of idolatry. Israel created a physical representation of the God who brought them up from Egypt (Exod. 32:1–8). Jeroboam followed this example by erecting two golden calves in Israel, again as images of the God who brought Israel up from Egypt (1 Kings 12:25–33). Although these cases involve an image of God, idolatry is usually closely connected with the worship of other gods (1 Kings 14:9; 2 Kings 17:7–12; 22:17). Idolatry is one of the main reasons for the exile of both the northern and the southern kingdoms (2 Kings 17:7–12; Isa. 2:8–22; Jer. 1:14–16).

FAMILY Most families in the ancient world were agrarian or engaged in raising livestock. Families that lived in cities led preindustrial lifestyles, often dwelling in cramped quarters. The majority of families resided in rural areas and villages.

People in the Bible were family-centered and staunchly loyal to their kin. Families formed the foundation of society. The extended family was the source of people's status in the community and provided the primary economic, educational, religious, and social interactions.

Marriage was not an arrangement merely between two individuals; rather, marriage was between two families. Family members and kin therefore took precedence over individuals. In the worlds of both Testaments, authority within families and communities was determined by rank among kin. Christianity was looked upon with hostility because it overthrew foundational values of Jewish and even Greco-Roman tradition. Service rather than rank became normative in family and community relationships.

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A sepulchre monument of a wealthy Roman family (late first century BC)

PATRIARCHAL STRUCTURES

A patrilineal system ruled in ancient Israel. Every family and every household belonged to a lineage. These lineages made up a clan in which kinship and inheritance were based on the patriarchs, the fathers of the families. These clans in turn made up larger clan groups and then tribal groups. The later Hellenistic and Roman world maintained patriarchal and patrilineal social structures as well.

Family discipline was in the hands of the father, the patriarch. The honor of the father depended on his ability to keep every family member under his authority (1 Tim. 3:4). Other male members of the family assisted the father in defending the honor of the family (Gen. 34).

ARISTOTELIAN HOUSEHOLD CODES

Not only was the biblical world patriarchal (male dominated), but also the later societal influence by Greek philosophers impacted the biblical text. The ancient Greeks viewed the household as a microcosm of society. Greek philosophers offered advice regarding household management, seeking to influence society for the greater good. This advice was presented in oral and written discourses known as “household codes.” Aristotle’s household codes, written in the fourth century BC, were among the most famous. Such codes consisted of instructions on how the paterfamilias (the male head of the household) should manage his wife, children, and slaves. The Stoic philosopher Arius Didymus summarized Aristotle's household codes for Caesar Augustus. He argued, "A man has the rule of this household by nature, for the deliberative faculty in a woman is inferior, in children it does not yet exist, and in the case of slaves, it is completely absent."

The Aristotelian household codes appear to be the background to NT texts that, at face value, appear to treat women as inferior to men (Eph. 5:22–6:9; Col. 3:18–4:1; 1 Pet. 3:1–7). All these texts are set in a Greco-Roman matrix, and the advice given to the congregations seems to have been of contextual missional value for the sake of the gospel rather than as a guide for family living for all times in all contexts.

MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE

Marriage in the ancient Near East was a contractual arrangement between two families, arranged by the bride's father or a male representative. The bride's family was paid a dowry, a "bride's price." Paying a dowry was not only an economic transaction but also an expression of family honor. Only the rich could afford multiple dowries. Thus, polygamy was minimal. The wedding itself was celebrated with a feast provided by the father of the groom.

The primary purpose for marriage in the ancient Near East was to produce a male heir to ensure care for the couple in their old age. The concept of inheritance was a key part of the marriage customs, especially with regard to passing along possessions and property.

Marriage among Jews in the NT era still tended to be endogamous; that is, Jews sought to marry close kin without committing incest violations (Lev. 18:6–17). A Jewish male certainly was expected to marry a Jew. Exogamy, marrying outside the remote kinship group, and certainly outside the *ethnos*, was understood as shaming God's holiness. Thus, a Jew marrying a Gentile woman was not an option. The Romans did practice exogamy. For them, marrying outside one's kinship group (not *ethnos*) was based predominantly on creating strategic alliances between families.

In Jewish customs, marriage was preceded by a period of betrothal. This state of betrothal was legally binding and left the survivor of the man's death a widow. A betrothed couple, like Joseph and Mary (Matt. 1:18), did not live together or have sexual intercourse. Yet their union was as binding as marriage and could be dissolved only through death or divorce.

Greek and Roman law allowed both men and women to initiate divorce. In Jewish marriages, only the husband could initiate divorce proceedings. If a husband divorced his wife, he had to release her and repay the dowry. Divorce was common in cases of infertility (in particular if the woman had not provided male offspring). Ben Sira comments that barrenness in a woman is a cause of anxiety to the father (Sir. 42:9–10). Another reason for divorce was adultery (Exod. 20:14; Deut. 5:18). Jesus, though, taught a more restrictive use of divorce than the Old Testament (Mark 10:1–12).

CHILDREN, PARENTING, AND EDUCATION

Childbearing was considered representative of God's blessing on a woman and her entire family, in particular her husband. In contrast to this blessing, barrenness brought shame on women, their families, and specifically their husbands.

Abortion commonly took place in the Greco-Roman world. Women therefore had to be encouraged to continue in their pregnancies (1 Tim. 2:15).

Children were of low social status in society. Infant mortality was high. An estimated 60 percent of the children in the first-century Mediterranean society were dead by the age of sixteen.

Ancient Near Eastern and Mediterranean societies exhibited a parenting style based on their view of human nature as a mixture of good and evil tendencies. Parents relied on physical punishment to prevent evil tendencies from developing into evil deeds (Prov. 29:15). The main concern of parents was to socialize the children into family loyalty. Lack of such loyalty was punished (Lev. 20:9). At a very early stage children were taught to accept the total authority of the father. The rearing of girls was entirely the responsibility of the women. Girls were taught domestic roles and duties as soon as possible so that they could help with household tasks.

Early education took place in the home. Jewish education was centered around the teaching of Torah. At home it was the father's responsibility to teach the Torah to his children (Deut. 6:6–7), especially his sons. By the first century, under the influence of Hellenism, Judaism had developed its own school system. Girls, however, did not regularly attend school. Many of the boys were educated in primary and secondary schools, learning written and oral law. Sometimes schools were an extension of the synagogues. Roman education was patterned after Greek education. Teachers of primary schools often were slaves. Mostly boys attended schools, but in some cases girls were allowed to attend school as well.

FAMILY AS AN ANALOGY

The relationship between Israel and God. Family identity was used as a metaphor in ancient Israel to speak of fidelity, responsibility, judgment, and reconciliation. In the OT, the people of Israel often are described as children of God. In their overall relationship to God, the people of Israel are referred to in familial terms—sons and daughters, spouse, and firstborn (Exod. 4:22). God is addressed as the father of the people (Isa. 63:16; 64:8) and referred to as their mother (Isa. 49:14–17).

The prophet Hosea depicts Israel as sons and daughters who are offspring of a harlot. The harlot represents faithless Israel. God is portrayed as a wronged father and husband, and both children and wife as rebellious and adulterous (Hos. 1–3). Likewise, the prophet Jeremiah presents the Mosaic covenant as a marriage soured by the infidelity of Israel and Judah (e.g., Jer. 2:2–13). The familial-marriage metaphor used by the prophets is a vehicle for proclaiming God's resolve to go beyond customary law and cultural expectations to reclaim that which is lost. A similar picture of reclaiming and restoring is seen in Malachi. One interpretation of Mal. 4:6 holds that it implicitly preserves an eschatological tradition of family disruption with a future restoration in view. The restored family in view is restored Israel.

The church as the family of God. Throughout his ministry, Jesus called his disciples to follow him. This was a call to loyalty (Matt. 10:32–40; 16:24–26; Mark 8:34–38; Luke 9:23–26), a call to fictive kinship, the family of God (Matt. 12:48–50; Mark 3:33–35). Jesus' declaration "On this rock I will build my church" (Matt. 16:18) was preceded by the call to community. Entrance into the community was granted through adopting the values of the kingdom, belief, and the initiation rite of baptism (Matt. 10:37–39; 16:24–26; Mark 8:34–38; Luke 9:23–26, 57–63; John 1:12; 3:16; 10:27–29; Acts 2:38; 16:31–33; 17:30; Rom. 10:9). Jesus' presence as the head of the community was eventually replaced by the promised Spirit (John 14:16–18). Through the Spirit, Jesus' ministry continues in the community of his followers, God's family—the church. *See also* Adoption.

FAMINE AND DROUGHT Famine was the most devastating catastrophe to an agrarian society. Caused by drought, crop failure, or siege (Ruth 1:1–2; 2 Kings 25), it often was accompanied by disease or war, which in turn brought adversity to many levels of society (Jer. 14:12; Matt. 24:7), including that of the animals (Job 38:41; Joel 1:20).

Dependence on rainfall caused some people to stockpile in anticipation of possible famine. In Egypt, Joseph implemented a grain ration that saved the people, supplied seed, and filled Pharaoh’s royal storehouses (Gen. 41:33–36; 47:23–24). Israel’s own temple contained storerooms (1 Chron. 26:15; Neh. 10:38–39). God used famine to encourage obedience from the Israelites (Deut. 11:17; 28:33) and as divine judgment upon them (Lev. 26:14–20; Jer. 29:17–18).

Famines had far-reaching results: price inflation, robbery, social exploitation, agricultural collapse, migration, and even cannibalism (Gen. 12:10; 26:1; Ruth 1; 2 Kings 6:24–29; Neh. 5:1–3; Lam. 2:20–21; 4:8–10). Therefore, faithfulness to God was a particularly vivid reality (Pss. 33:18–19; 37:19), and God’s blessings on the nation included its being free from famine (Ezek. 34:29; 36:29–30).

Joseph understood that God sent him ahead to Egypt to save his family from an international famine (Gen. 45:5–7). For forty years God tested the Israelites with hunger to rid them of self-reliance (Exod. 16:2–8; Deut. 8:2, 16). Moreover, God sent afflictions on Israel such as famine, drought, mildew, blight, and insects in order to arouse national repentance (Amos 4:6–12). This meant that sin and human suffering were tied to the land in interdependence (Lam. 4:3–4). Elijah’s contest with the Canaanite prophets of Baal vividly shows the theological implications of faith and food: Yahweh would prove that he was in control of nature’s forces (1 Kings 18:23–39; cf. Gen. 8:22). Even Elijah, however, required special divine care through this famine (1 Kings 17:1–6). For Amos, literal hunger funded his description of desperate spiritual hunger, “a famine . . . of hearing the words of the LORD” (Amos 8:11).

The Famine Stele, an inscription located on Sehel Island in the Nile, speaks of a seven-year drought and famine during the reign of the Third Dynasty pharaoh Djoser.

Jesus relived Israel's experience in his own wilderness testing and rejected the bread that he could make for himself (Matt. 4:3–4; Deut. 8:3). His success showed that scarcity and hunger are intended to develop humility and trust in God, the divine provider (Matt. 4:2), something that Israel did not learn very well. Jesus fed a second manna to five thousand people to draw them to the bread of life (John 6:35), but the crowds followed Jesus more for the food than for him (6:26–27). Famines are mentioned in the NT (Luke 4:25; Acts 7:11 [historical]; 11:27–30 [contemporary]).

Jesus taught that famines would be a sign of his coming. Yet, without ignoring physical food, Jesus highlighted the spiritual hunger and thirst of people (Matt. 5:6; John 4:14, 34; 7:37–38). Because eating is a powerful part of fellowship, heaven will merely remove the desperation of hunger, not the use of food (Gen. 43:34; Luke 22:15–16; Rev. 19:9; cf. 1 Cor. 4:11; Rev. 7:16; 21:4).

FAN *See* Winnowing Fork.

FARM, FARMING *See* Agriculture.

FARMER *See* Agriculture; Occupations and Professions.

FASHION In the NIV, “fashion” is a verb meaning “to craft, shape, form.” Often it is used pejoratively, as in the crafting of an idol out of wood, stone, or metal (Exod. 32:4; 2 Kings 19:18; Isa. 37:19; 40:19; 44:15; Hos. 13:2). Job speaks of the cunning and scheming of those who think they are wise but are godless: “their womb fashions deceit” (Job 15:35). In a positive sense, items are fashioned for God’s purpose: Aaron’s breastpiece is fashioned by “the work of skilled hands” (Exod. 28:15; cf. 39:8). God is the master craftsman who “fashioned and made the earth” (Isa. 45:18). But God’s fashioning is a synonym for creation rather than crafting; he fashions his work out of nothing.

In the KJV God’s fashioning extends to his creation of human beings (Job 10:8; 31:15; Ps. 119:73), his oversight of the human heart (Ps. 33:15), his ordaining of a person’s life span (Ps. 139:16), and his transformative work in the glorification of believers (Phil. 3:21).

The most common noun usage for the word “fashion” in the KJV OT is as a plan, blueprint, or specification (2 Kings 16:10)—for example, of the ark (Gen. 6:15), the tabernacle (Exod. 26:30), and the temple (1 Kings 6:38; Ezek. 43:11). “Fashion” is also used as a synonym for “likeness, appearance, manner, form” (Exod. 37:19; Mark 2:12; Luke 9:29; 1 Cor. 7:31; Phil. 2:8; James 1:11). Finally, Peter cautions believers against “fashioning [themselves] according to the former lusts” (1 Pet. 1:14 KJV), a warning not to model or conform to worldly desires.

FASTING The only command to fast appears in some translations of the instructions regarding the Day of Atonement (Lev. 16:29, 31; Num. 29:7; see NIV mg.); the Hebrew word *ʾanah* means “to deny oneself” (so NIV), implying more than abstaining from food. A second word, *tsum*, is used in more-specific instances of fasting, both corporate and individual, and both terms occur together in Ps. 35:13 and in Isaiah’s admonition about hypocritical fasting (Isa. 58:1–10).

Fasting, often linked with prayer, was one avenue of appeal to God in the face of crises, both national and personal. Moses ascended to Mount Sinai and was with God forty days and nights without eating bread or drinking water, both before and after the Israelites’ sin with the golden calf (Exod. 34:28; Deut. 9:8–18). David fasted when his son was dying (2 Sam. 12:15–23). Esther called all the Jews of Susa to fast for three days before she ventured before the king (Esther 4:15–17). Joel called the people to repentance and fasting as the land was devastated by a locust plague (Joel 1:13–14; 2:12). Forty days of fasting, an echo of Moses’ experience, prepared Jesus to face the devil’s temptations (Matt. 4:1–11 pars.).

The Old Testament prophets criticized Israelites who presumed that their religious obligations were met simply by fasting (Isa. 58:1–10; Zech. 7:1–5). When asked why his disciples did not fast and pray, Jesus indicated that sometimes fasting is inappropriate (Matt. 9:14–17 pars.). Luke recorded an addition to Jesus’ statement about new wine in old wineskins: “No one after drinking old wine wants the new, for they say, ‘The old is better’ ” (Luke 5:39), perhaps suggesting that the accumulation of fasting practices was “new wine” and they ought simply to observe the Day of Atonement.

FATE In the NIV the word “fate” appears only in the OT and primarily denotes the outcome of a wicked way of life, determined by God (e.g., Job 20:29). In Ecclesiastes, however (e.g., 2:14–15; 3:19), the author laments that the same fate overtakes both the righteous and the wicked, the wise and the foolish, and even humans and animals, charging God with capriciousness.

FATHER *See* Family; God.

FATHER-IN-LAW The father of an individual's spouse. Biblical examples include Laban, Rachel's father, the father-in-law of Jacob (Gen. 29:28); Jethro, father-in-law to Moses (Exod. 3:1); the unnamed father-in-law of the Levite who tried to delay or prevent him from taking his daughter away (Judg. 19:4–8); Eli, the father-in-law of the unnamed wife of Phinehas, who gave birth to Ichabod upon news of the capture of the ark (1 Sam. 4:19–20); Annas, the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the high priest at the time of Jesus (John 18:13).

FATHERLESS A child whose father (or father and mother) has died. Lacking the provision and protection of a father, the fatherless person is a needy member of society, often grouped together with the widow, the alien (a displaced person seeking refuge), the poor, and/or the innocent. The status of being an orphan appears as a premier example of suffering (Lam. 5:3; John 14:18). The OT promotes special efforts to care for the needs of the fatherless, while the NT lauds caring for them.

God's concern for the fatherless is evident in descriptions of his character and commands for their protection and benefit. These are complemented by condemnations, punishments, and curses for those who fail to care for the fatherless and by praise and blessings for those who do.

God himself cares for the fatherless and gives them justice (Deut. 10:18; Pss. 10:14, 18; 68:5; 146:9; Jer. 49:11; Hos. 14:3). He instructs Israel to care for the fatherless, a value that carries over for the church. In the OT, provision came in two forms. Every third year a harvest tithe was deposited in town to provide for the Levites, aliens, orphans, and widows (Deut. 14:27–29; 26:12–13). Additionally, harvesters were instructed to leave the harvest remains for the alien, orphan, and widow (Deut. 24:17–22). The fatherless should be included in community celebrations (Deut. 16:11–14). Multiple commands require giving justice to or forbid oppressing the fatherless (Exod. 22:22; Deut. 24:17; Ps. 82:3; Prov. 23:10; Isa. 1:17; Jer. 22:3; Zech. 7:10). Mistreatment of the fatherless or failure to give them justice brings condemnation, curse, or punishment (Job 6:27; 22:9; 24:3; 24:9; 31:21; Ps. 94:6; Isa. 1:23; 9:17; 10:2; Jer. 5:28; Ezek. 22:7; Mal. 3:5). In contrast, care for the fatherless is one mark of righteousness (Job 29:12–16; 31:17; Jer. 7:5–7). James includes care for widows and orphans as an essential part of the summary of true religion (James 1:27).

FATHER'S HOUSE

Old Testament. In ancient Israel, and more broadly in the surrounding region, the "father's house" (i.e., ancestral family) was the basic unit of kinship, more extensive than "brothers" (Gen. 46:31; Judg. 16:31) or the single "household" (Exod. 12:3) but smaller than the clan and tribe (note the contrasts in, e.g., Num. 1:2; Judg. 6:15). In genealogies the "father's house" is often rendered "family" (e.g., Exod. 6:14; Num. 1:2 and throughout the chapter; 1 Chron. 4:38). In some instances, the twelve tribes of Israel are construed as father's houses (Num. 17:2–6; 1 Sam. 2:28). In 2 Sam. 19:28 the extent of the "father's house" is well illustrated: clearly, Mephibosheth refers not to the nuclear family of his biological father but rather to the family of his grandfather Saul. In 1 Chron. 23:11, two small families are artificially combined into a single "father's house," illustrating that the concept was not strictly biological but instead corresponded to a set of social functions, in this case priestly service.

In addition to censuses and the organization of military service, other functions of the father's house included the reckoning of collective guilt (2 Sam. 14:9; 24:17; Neh. 1:6), delimiting retaliation in kin-based blood feuds (1 Sam. 22:16, 22; 2 Sam. 3:29; see also Judg. 2:12, 18), and defining a context for endogamous marriage (Gen. 24:38–40). The father's house played an important role in the life of women, who were identified with their father's house before marriage and could return to it in the event of widowhood, demonstrating a persistent connection to it (Lev. 22:13; Num. 30:4, 16; Deut. 22:21; Judg. 19:2–3; Esther 4:14; Ps. 45:10; see also the political significance for Abimelek of his mother's father's house in Judg. 9:1).

The expression "father's house" can also refer to a location (Gen. 12:1; 20:13; Judg. 14:19; 1 Sam. 18:2), and indeed this local sense may have largely overlapped with the kinship sense, as extended families inhabited large architectural compounds or even entire small villages.

New Testament. On two occasions Jesus referred to the temple in Jerusalem as his "father's house," once when he was a young man (Luke 2:49), and once when he drove merchants from the temple (John 2:16). On another occasion, he referred to a "place where I am going" as "my father's house" (John 14:2–4). In addition, we have two references to the "father's house" as a kinship unit (Luke 16:27; and possibly Acts 7:20).

FATHOM The distance between the fingertips of a man's outstretched arms, approximately six feet or two meters. This unit of length is used especially for measuring water depth. At one point in the story of Paul's voyage to Rome, the sailors twice took soundings and found that the water was twenty, then fifteen, fathoms (Gk. *orguia*) deep (Acts 27:28 KJV).

FATLING, FATTENED CALF A young domestic animal, whether of cattle or sheep, that has been specially fattened for sacrificial or other use. In the OT, it usually refers to a sacrificial animal of high quality, which signified that the best had been given. Fatlings were offered on festive occasions, as when David brought the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem (2 Sam. 6:13) and Adonijah put himself forward to succeed David as king (1 Kings 1:9, 19, 25). Even though they are valuable offerings, God rejects fattened calves and other sacrifices presented by those with impure hearts or who act unjustly (Isa. 1:11; Amos 5:22). People can be likened to fattened calves that God will slaughter as he triumphs over his enemies and purifies the land (Jer. 46:21; Ezek. 39:18). A fattened calf could be quickly killed to provide food for an unexpected visitor or specially prepared for a banquet (1 Sam. 28:24; Matt. 22:4). In Jesus' parable of the lost son, the father had a fattened calf slaughtered to express his joy that his errant son had returned home (Luke 15:23–30).

FAWN A young animal or young deer (Job 39:1; Jer. 14:5). The doe was known for her care of her fawns.

FEAR Fear, as it appears in Scripture, is a response ranging from respect and reverence to sheer panic and absolute terror.

PROPER AND IMPROPER FEARS

There are both proper, godly fears and improper, sinful fears. On the one hand, God has given us the ability to respond to rightly perceived fears. When Joseph heard that Archelaus was reigning in Judea, he "was afraid" to go there with Mary and Jesus (Matt. 2:22), and God directed him to go to Nazareth instead. On the other hand, Scripture gives us many examples of people who were overcome by sinful fear. After Adam had sinned, he heard God coming to him in the garden, and he said, "I was afraid . . . so I hid" (Gen. 3:10). Abraham was afraid for his life, so he pretended that Sarah was his sister (Gen. 20:2). King Saul disobeyed God's explicit commands because he "was afraid of the men" (1 Sam. 15:24). Fear can be both sinful in and of itself and something that leads to other sinful responses.

God understands our struggle with sinful fear and knows that we need someone who is stronger than our fears: God himself. David says, “When I am afraid, I put my trust in you” (Ps. 56:3). Ultimately, our hope is in Jesus Christ, who came to “free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death” (Heb. 2:15). The author of Hebrews goes on to tell us how we are to experience this victory through Christ: “For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin. Let us then approach God’s throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need” (Heb. 4:15–16).

Paul asks the question “Who [or, we could add, ‘what’] shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword?” (Rom. 8:35), and then gives his classic answer: “For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (8:38–39). The reality of a sovereign, loving God rules out any possibility that his people will ever find themselves in situations outside of his love and control. For the believer, “We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose” (8:28).

FEAR OF GOD

There is a popular saying: “The fear of God is the one fear that removes all others.” God wants to free people from wrong fears so that they can fear the one person really worth fearing: God himself. Jesus warned, “But I will show you whom you should fear: Fear him who, after your body has been killed, has authority to throw you into hell. Yes, I tell you, fear him” (Luke 12:5). Indeed, the one appropriate fear mentioned well over a hundred times in Scripture is a proper fear of God. The author of the book of Ecclesiastes concludes his wrestling to find meaning and purpose in life with these words: “Now all has been heard; here is the conclusion of the matter: fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the duty of all mankind” (12:13).

God’s frame of reference. What can a proper fear of God do for us? The answer from the book of Proverbs is that a proper fear of God is foundational to everything else in life: “the fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge” (1:7) and “the fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom” (9:10). Every area of life needs to be lived under the direction of God and for his glory, and without a proper fear of God, living a life pleasing to God becomes impossible. Having a proper fear of God involves seeing and responding to all the daily circumstances of life from God’s frame of reference. It is this proper fear of God that involves catching a glimpse of life as it truly is, and especially of God as he is in all his glory and splendor, that gives people the strength and encouragement they need to go through all the difficult experiences of life. Although there are many unanswered questions regarding the various tragedies and difficulties we experience, life does not begin to make sense until a person catches a glimpse of who God is and how he is at work behind the scenes in history and world events. No one can ever go far in a relationship with God apart from a proper fear of him. Instead, “the fear of the LORD is a fountain of life” (Prov. 14:27) that strengthens and sustains us.

Knowing and seeking God. What does fear of God look like? Proverbs 9:10, “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding,” places “fear” and “knowledge” in poetical parallelism. Apparently, knowing God and fearing him are really one and the same, like two sides of a coin describing the same reality. Similarly, not fearing God is simply another way of saying that a person does not know him. It is no surprise to discover that to fear God or be a “God-fearer” is one of the standard biblical descriptions for being a follower of God (Acts 10:2). In one sense, having a proper fear of God is simply one way of describing how one is in a proper relationship with God. Scripture is clear that for the ungodly, or even for the disobedient believer, there is a fear in the sense of terror or panic as one contemplates the coming judgment of God (Heb. 10:27, 31). But the believer should have confidence in God’s love and in the sufficiency of Christ’s atonement, so that this kind of negative fear is out of place. For the believer, the fear of the Lord is a respectful, reverential awe of God’s glory and majesty, leading inevitably to a changed life. This positive kind of fear should involve a positive seeking out of God and a new desire to please him, combined with a new dread of displeasing him. Proverbs is also very explicit about this purifying aspect of the fear of the Lord: “Through the fear of the LORD evil is avoided” (16:6).

Having a proper fear of God has an ongoing, moment-by-moment quality in much the same way that a spouse or parent naturally thinks about others in the family and wonders how they are doing. Whereas the wicked person does not seek God, and “in all his thoughts there is no room for God” (Ps. 10:4), the opposite is true of those who fear God: they regularly and inevitably find themselves thinking about God, reflecting upon him, respecting him, looking to him for his help and sustenance, valuing his view of things, and actively seeking to please and obey him in everything they do. Fearing God means that we trust him more than we trust ourselves or anyone else. Fearing God is both deciding for (Prov. 1:29 speaks of those who “did not choose to fear the LORD”) and living out an ongoing commitment of giving God the place he deserves in our lives. As Paul tells us, “Continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling” (Phil. 2:12). A person who has come to fear the Lord is never the same afterward.

FEAR OF ISAAC A term that Jacob applied to God in Gen. 31:42. “Fear of Isaac” is found in parallel with “the God of my father” and “the God of Abraham” (cf. Gen. 32:9). The word “fear” in these cases carries the sense “dread” or “terror.” See also Exod. 15:16; Deut. 2:25; 1 Chron. 14:17. With reference to God, see 1 Sam. 11:7.

FEASTS *See* Festivals.

FELIX The Roman governor of Judea when Paul was arrested in Jerusalem (Acts 21:27–36). He presided over Paul’s subsequent trial at Caesarea (23:3–24:27). Felix treated his prisoner with leniency and deferred judgment on the case. Several days later, Felix, along with his wife, Drusilla, listened to Paul discourse on the Christian faith, and his conscience became alarmed by what Paul taught (24:24–25). Felix dismissed Paul, but later he sent for Paul often to talk with him, hoping thereby to secure a bribe (24:26). Caught between his greed and his desire to keep favor with the Jews, Felix kept Paul in custody for a further two years until Porcius Festus became governor (24:27). The Roman historian Tacitus gives a negative assessment of Felix’s governorship that accords well with the biblical account (*Ann.* 12.54).

Coin minted for Judea during the governorship of Antonius Felix (AD 52–59)

FELLOE The KJV rendering in 1 Kings 7:33 of a Hebrew word referring to part of a wheel supported by the spokes. More-recent versions translate the word as “hub.” The word “felloe” is a variant of the word “felly,” both of them archaic.

FELLOWSHIP The common experience/sharing of something with someone else. In the NT, the most common Greek word group to express this idea has the root *koin-* (“common”), with the cognate verb *koinōneō*, noun *koinōnia*, and adjective *koinos*. But the concept of fellowship extends well beyond this single word family and finds expression in a variety of different contexts.

FELLOWSHIP BETWEEN THE MEMBERS OF THE TRINITY

The Gospel of John makes several claims about the fellowship that the members of the Trinity have experienced with each other from all eternity. Jesus claims, “I and the Father are one” (10:30) and “It is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work” (14:10). Regarding the Holy Spirit, Jesus says, “He will glorify me because it is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you. All that belongs to the Father is mine” (16:14–15). The Son has even shared in the Father’s glory from before the creation of the world (17:5). Within the unity of the Godhead, the individual members experience perfect fellowship as they share in the fullness of deity.

FELLOWSHIP BETWEEN JESUS AND OUTCASTS

During his earthly ministry, Jesus modeled God’s love for the marginalized by associating with them. Such fellowship often took the form of sharing meals with outcasts such as tax collectors and sinners (Mark 2:15–17; Luke 5:29–32; 7:36–50; 19:1–10), a practice that provoked sharp criticism from the Pharisees (Luke 15:1–2). In Luke 15:3–32, Jesus tells three parables in response to such criticism. These parables indicate that his fellowship with sinners demonstrates God's love for the lost and the joy that comes from restored fellowship with God. Such table fellowship served as a foretaste of the eschatological messianic banquet, when all of God's people (Jew and Gentile alike) will eat together in the kingdom of God as the fellowship of the forgiven (Matt. 8:11; Luke 13:29–30; Rev. 19:6–9).

FELLOWSHIP BETWEEN BELIEVERS AND GOD

The close and intimate fellowship that the members of the Trinity experience with one another is something that Jesus prays for his people to experience themselves (John 17:20–26). He asks that believers "may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me" (17:21). Just as the Father is in Jesus and Jesus is in the Father, believers are described as being in both the Father and the Son. The stated purpose for such fellowship is twofold: that the world may know and believe that the Father has sent the Son, and that the Father loves believers even as he has loved the Son (17:21, 23). Central to this fellowship between God and believers is the sharing of the glory that the Father and the Son experience (17:22). Jesus expresses similar truths in John 15:1–11 when he speaks of himself as the true vine and his followers as the branches who must remain in him because "apart from me you can do nothing" (v. 5).

Although fellowship with God is something that Christ has purchased for his people through his death and resurrection, it can be broken by sin in the believer's life: "If we claim to have fellowship with him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live out the truth" (1 John 1:6). When sin does break a believer's fellowship with God, we are reassured, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness" (1:9). This restoration of fellowship is based on the work of Jesus to plead our case before the Father (2:1).

Paul frequently speaks of the believer's fellowship with Christ, even though he rarely uses the word "fellowship" to speak of this reality. It is God who calls the believer into fellowship with Christ (1 Cor. 1:9), but such fellowship involves both the "power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death" (Phil. 3:10). When believers celebrate the Lord's Supper, they are participating in the body and blood of Christ (1 Cor. 10:16–17). Far more frequently, Paul expresses the concept of fellowship with Christ by his use of the phrase "with Christ." Believers have been crucified, buried, raised, clothed, and seated in the heavenly realms with Christ (Rom. 6:4–9; 2 Cor. 13:4; Gal. 2:20–21; Eph. 2:5–6; Col. 2:12–13; 3:1–4). They also share in the inheritance that Christ has received from the Father (Rom. 8:16–17) and one day will reign with him (2 Tim. 2:12).

FELLOWSHIP BETWEEN BELIEVERS AND OTHERS

The fellowship that believers have with one another is an extension of their fellowship with God. John wrote, "We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ" (1 John 1:3). Just as walking in darkness falsifies a believer's claim to fellowship with God, so also walking in the light is necessary for fellowship with other believers (1:6–7). Paul strikes a similar note when he says, "Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? What harmony is there between Christ and Belial? Or what does a believer have in common with an unbeliever?" (2 Cor. 6:14–15). The point is not to avoid all contact with unbelievers (cf. 1 Cor. 5:9–10), but rather that the believer is so fundamentally identified with Christ that to identify with unbelievers should be avoided.

Because they are joined to Christ by faith, believers share a wide variety of experiences and blessings with each other. In the broadest sense, they share in the gospel and its blessings (1 Cor. 9:23; Phil. 1:5–7; Philem. 6; 2 Pet. 1:4), especially the Spirit (2 Cor. 13:13–14; Phil. 2:1). But the most common shared experience is suffering. When believers suffer because of their identification with Christ, they are said to share in Christ's suffering (Phil. 3:10; 1 Pet. 4:13). In addition to this vertical element, there is a horizontal aspect. Because believers are united in one body (1 Cor. 12:12–13; Eph. 4:4–6), when one believer suffers, the entire body shares in that suffering (2 Cor. 1:7; Heb. 10:33; Rev. 1:9).

From the earliest days of the church, believers found very tangible ways to demonstrate that their fellowship was rooted in their common faith in Jesus. Immediately after Pentecost, "they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. . . . All the believers were together and had everything in common" (Acts 2:42–44). This common experience led believers to voluntarily sell their possessions and share with any who had a need (2:45; 4:32). This meeting of very practical needs was motivated by a common experience of God's abundant generosity in freely giving his Son (Rom. 8:32). The self-sacrificial sharing of resources became a staple of the early church (Rom. 12:13; Gal. 6:6; 1 Tim. 6:18) and provided an opportunity for Paul to demonstrate the unity of the church when he collected money from Gentile churches to alleviate the suffering of Jewish Christians in Judea (Rom. 15:26–27; 2 Cor. 8–9).

CONCLUSION

Biblical fellowship is not merely close association with other believers. The NT emphasizes what believers share in Christ rather than whom they share it with. True biblical fellowship between believers is an outworking of their fellowship with God through the gospel.

FERMENTED DRINK *See* Strong Drink.

FERRET The KJV rendering in Lev. 11:30 of the Hebrew word *'anaqah*. More-recent versions translate the word as "gecko," a species of lizard. It is listed in that verse among other reptiles as unclean animals that the Israelites must not eat.

FERTILE CRESCENT An area extending from the southwestern tip of modern-day Iran and the nation of Kuwait, arcing along both sides of the rivers Tigris and Euphrates up into modern-day Syria and southern Turkey, descending into Lebanon and Palestine, and eventually terminating at the southernmost portion of the Nile River in Egypt. The Fertile Crescent is surrounded on almost every side by mountain ranges, including the Taurus and Amanus ranges on the northern edge and the Zagros range, which straddles the border between Iran and Iraq in the east. The Syrian Desert forms the Fertile Crescent's primary southern boundary.

The Fertile Crescent is primarily made up of plains and gently rolling hills and is largely comprised of prime land for general agriculture and animal grazing, in contrast to the deserts or mountains surrounding it on all sides. Thus, many of the most important nonnomadic ancient cultures began in the Fertile Crescent, including the Sumerian, Babylonian, and Assyrian empires. Important cities mentioned in the Bible that are found in the Fertile Crescent include Babylon, Ur, and Nineveh in Mesopotamia (modern Iraq); Harran in present-day Syria; Jerusalem in the land of Palestine; and Alexandria and Memphis in Egypt.

FERTILITY CULT A pagan religious practice with the object of securing fertility of both land and the womb. Its history can be traced back to the earliest periods in human history, originating with the basic human desire for abundant life. Its theology is similar to that of sympathetic magic. A characteristic feature of fertility cults is sacral sexual intercourse by priests and priestesses or other specially consecrated persons—“cultic prostitutes” of both sexes—intended to emulate and stimulate deities thought to bestow fertility.

In the early third millennium BC, the Mesopotamians developed the sacred marriage rite, as an essential element of their religious faith and ritual. The rite involved a priestess who represented Inanna (or Ishtar), the goddess of love, and a king who represented the dying and rising god Dumuzi (or Tammuz). This ritual was performed on New Year’s Eve and was informed by the belief that the union of gods and goddesses would increase the fertility of land, people, and beasts. In the high temple of some ziggurats was found a bedchamber in which sacred marriage ceremonies took place. This sacred “prostitution” was celebrated all over the ancient Near East for about two thousand years. The Canaanite culture into which ancient Israel came has often been described in terms of the depraved fertility cult, which involved boisterous wine drinking and ecstatic frenzy culminating in self-laceration, self-emasculation, or sexual orgy. Child sacrifice was also considered a feature of the Canaanite fertility cult. Although the evidence from second-millennium BC Ugarit provides little support for this portrayal of the fertility cult in Canaan, judging from the late first-millennium BC evidence from Phoenicia and Greece, one cannot rule out the possibility that during the Israelite monarchy the religious cult did include some degree of depravity.

Fertility figurines from Cyprus

There are many allusions in the Bible to the Canaanite fertility cult. These can be seen in biblical injunctions or stories that directly or indirectly impugn the practices of "inhabitants of the land." Deuteronomy 23:18, for instance, states that God detests cultic prostitution. Later, 1 Kings 14:23–24 mentions, from the time of Rehoboam (tenth century BC), local shrines where male prostitutes were installed and Israelites engaged in "all the detestable practices of the nations." Asa expelled male prostitutes from Israel (1 Kings 15:12). Josiah also pulled down the houses of *qedeshim* ("sacred prostitutes") where women wove vestments in honor of Asherah (2 Kings 23:6–7). Jeremiah condemns the Israelites who engaged in the pagan cultic prostitution by asking, "Look up to the barren heights and see. Is there any place where you have not been ravished?" (Jer. 3:2). The cult of the Queen of Heaven (most likely Ishtar) may have been a fertility cult (44:15–30).

The influence of the Canaanite fertility cult on the Israelites is demonstrated by hordes of pillared figurines from the eighth and seventh centuries BC that were found in the debris of private homes in Jerusalem. The exaggerated sexual feature of the pillared figurines suggests that they were related to the cult of the mother goddess and were used as talismans to aid conception and childbirth. This discovery is not a surprise, given the prophetic condemnation of such images (Isa. 42:17; 44:9–17).

By Hellenistic times, cultic prostitution seems to have been well established as a fertility cult. The temple of Aphrodite in Corinth had more than a thousand cultic prostitutes. Strabo, the classical historian, claimed that the prosperity of Corinth was dependent on these temple prostitutes. When Paul warns his congregation in Corinth against immorality (1 Cor. 6:12–20), he is warning them not only against ordinary prostitutes but also against cultic prostitutes.

The theology of the fertility cult stands in stark contrast to that of Yahwism. The fertility cult is informed by the belief in the autonomous power of cyclical nature and the belief that the balance in nature may be restored by magical manipulations of the gods. In Israel's faith, however, Yahweh manifests himself not merely in the cyclical events of nature but rather in unrepeatable historical events, and in these events he, unlike the pagan gods, acts purposefully according to his sovereign will. Israel's religion, therefore, offered no ritual technique for manipulating the unseen powers of nature for selfish ends. Yahweh was no pagan maintainer of the status quo to be appeased by ritual; rather he was the one who had called Israel from bondage to a new future as his people and demanded their obedience.

FESTAL GARMENTS During the OT period, clothing for festive occasions probably differed little from ordinary clothes, except that they were more costly. White appears to have been considered a particularly festive color, perhaps because it was harder to keep clean. Scarlet, blue, and purple fabrics may have been featured because they were more difficult to dye and often imported. Some clothing was woven or embroidered with gold or silver thread or adorned with gold or silver ornaments (e.g., Exod. 28:6, 14).

One Hebrew word at times translated "festal garments," *makhalatsot*, is found only in Isa. 3:22; Zech. 3:4. In the first passage it is listed along with other articles of clothes, jewelry, and ornaments that the women of Judah wore in their pride but would lose when taken away into captivity. The other passage concerns Zechariah's vision about a clean garment given to Joshua the high priest to replace his filthy clothes, which represented his personal sins and the sins of his people during the exile. That the old was taken away and replaced encouraged the people that God had accepted them and restored the priesthood in Jerusalem.

FESTIVALS The Israelites gathered regularly to celebrate their relationship with God. Such festivals were marked by communal meals, music, singing, dancing, and sacrifices. They celebrated, conscious that God had graciously brought them into a relationship with him. Within this covenant he had committed himself to act on their behalf both in regular ways, such as the harvest, and in exceptional ways, such as deliverance from Egypt. At the festivals, Israel celebrated God's work in its past, present, and future and reaffirmed its relationship with this covenant God.

We know of Israel's festivals from several calendars in the Mosaic legislation (Exod. 23:14–17; 34:18–23; Lev. 23; Num. 28–29; Deut. 16:1–17), calendars further clarified by the prophets (e.g., Ezek. 45:18–25; Zech. 14), and narrative material (e.g., 2 Kings 23:21–23). Some read discrepancies between calendars as evidence of multiple sources, but this fails to account for the various purposes that these calendars served. The narrative and prophetic passages suggest that Israel did not observe these festivals as frequently as, and in the ways, God intended (e.g., Amos 8:5), but when Israel sought to renew its relationship with God, it often did so with a festival (e.g., 2 Kings 23:21–23).

PASSOVER AND THE FESTIVAL OF UNLEAVENED BREAD

Israel's religious calendar began with Passover, the day set aside to commemorate deliverance from Egypt. Occurring in spring, this single day was joined with a weeklong celebration known as the Festival of Unleavened Bread, during which all males were required to make a pilgrimage to the sanctuary and offer the firstfruits of the barley harvest (Lev. 23:9–14). Israel observed Passover with rituals that reactualized the night God's destroyer spared the Israelites in Egypt. A lamb was killed, and its blood was put on the doorposts of the homes and on the bronze altar in the sanctuary. The lamb was roasted and served with unleavened bread and bitter herbs while those partaking—dressed in their traveling clothes—listened to the retelling of the exodus story. No yeast was to be found anywhere among them, no work was to be done on the first and last days of the festival, and offerings were to be brought to the sanctuary (Num. 9:1–5; Josh. 5:10–11; 2 Kings 23:21–23; 2 Chron. 30; 35:1–19).

Early Christians associated Jesus' death with that of the Passover lamb (1 Cor. 5:7–8), encouraged by Jesus' comments at the Last Supper (described by the Synoptic Gospels as a Passover meal [e.g., Matt. 26:17–30]). Perhaps Jesus meant to emphasize that just as Passover and the Festival of Unleavened Bread reminded God's people of his deliverance and provision, his followers would find true freedom and full provision in him.

THE FESTIVAL OF WEEKS

Also known as the Festival of Harvest, the Day of Firstfruits, or Pentecost (because it occurred fifty days after Passover), the Festival of Weeks took place on the sixth day of the third month (corresponding to our May or June). This marked another occasion when all Jewish men were required to come to the sanctuary. They were to bring an offering of the firstfruits of the wheat harvest, abstain from work, and devote themselves to rejoicing in God's goodness.

Early in the NT period, if not before, this festival also became associated with the giving of the law on Mount Sinai. The Jews who assembled in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost as described in Acts 2 came to celebrate not only God's provision but also the revelation of his nature and will. Significantly, God chose this day to send the Holy Spirit, the One who would produce a harvest of believers and reveal God more fully to the world.

THE FESTIVAL OF TABERNACLES

So important was the Festival of Tabernacles (also known as the Festival of Ingathering or the Festival of Booths) that Israel sometimes referred to it as "the festival of the LORD" (Judg. 21:19) or simply "the festival" (cf. 1 Kings 8:65). Held from the fifteenth to the twenty-first of the seventh month (September–October), this was the third of the three pilgrimage festivals. For that week, Israel lived in booths to remind them of their ancestors' time in the wilderness. They also celebrated the fruit harvest. They were to "take the fruit of majestic trees, branches of palm trees, boughs of leafy trees, and willows of the brook; and you shall rejoice" before God for seven days (Lev. 23:40 NRSV). Avoiding all work on the first and last days of the festival, they were to mark the week with sacrifices, celebration, and joy. Also, every seventh year the law was to be read at this festival (Deut. 31:10–11).

The Mishnah, a collection of rabbinic laws compiled around AD 200 but often reflecting earlier traditions, records how Israel observed this festival during the early Roman period. As part of the celebration, men danced and sang in the courtyard of the temple while Levites, standing on the steps that led down from the court of the Israelites, played harps, lyres, cymbals, and other instruments. Two priests blew trumpets—one long blast, then a quavering one, then another long blast—while walking toward the eastern gate. When they reached the gate, they turned back toward the temple and said, “Our fathers when they were in this place turned with their backs toward the Temple of the Lord and their faces toward the east, and they worshiped the sun toward the east [referring to the apostasy of the Jews as described by Ezekiel]; but as for us, our eyes are turned toward the Lord” (*m. Sukkah* 5:4). Another part of this festival involved the drawing of water for a libation offering from the Pool of Siloam with great ceremony and joy. John 7 records Jesus’ secretive departure to Jerusalem for the Festival of Tabernacles, where he spent several days teaching in the temple courts. It was on the last and greatest day of the festival when Jesus invited those thirsty to come to him and drink.

THE FESTIVAL OF TRUMPETS

Occurring on the first day of the seventh month (September–October), this feast marked the beginning of the civil and agricultural year for the Jews; it was also referred to as Rosh Hashanah (lit., “head/beginning of the year”). Observed as a Sabbath with sacrifices and trumpet blasts, this day was intended for rest and to begin preparations for the coming Day of Atonement. The Mishnah makes this connection more explicit by identifying the Festival of Trumpets as the day when “all that come into the world pass before [God] like legions of soldiers” or flocks of sheep to be judged (*m. Rosh HaSh.* 1:2).

THE DAY OF ATONEMENT

Some festivals, like Passover, looked back to what God had done or was doing for his people; other festivals, like Trumpets and the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur), focused on the relationship itself. The latter was marked by repentance and rituals designed to remove the nation’s sins and restore fellowship with God. Coming ten days after the Festival of Trumpets, this was a solemn occasion during which the Israelites abstained from eating, drinking, and other activities. This was the only prescribed annual fast in the Jewish calendar, though other fasts were added in the fourth, fifth, seventh, and tenth months to mourn the Babylonian exile (Zech. 7:3, 5; 8:19).

In Leviticus, God clarified the purpose of this day: “On this day atonement will be made for you, to cleanse you. Then, before the LORD, you will be clean from all your sins” (16:30). Not only would the people be purified, but so also would the sanctuary, so that God could continue to meet his people there. Sacrifices were offered for both priest and people, and the blood was taken into the most holy place. Only on Yom Kippur could this room be entered, and only by the high priest, who sprinkled blood on the cover of the ark of the covenant. Leaving that room, he also sprinkled blood in the holy place (16:14–17) and then on the bronze altar in the courtyard.

Yom Kippur was marked by another ritual that symbolized the removal of Israel’s sins, this one involving two goats. One goat, chosen by lot, was offered as a sacrifice to God. The high priest placed his hands on the other goat and transferred to it the sins of the nation. He then released the goat into the wilderness, for “the goat will carry on itself all their sins to a remote place” (Lev. 16:22).

The Mishnah describes how this day was observed when the second temple stood. The high priest, having been carefully prepared, washed, and clothed, placed both hands on the head of a bull and confessed his own sins. After this, the lots were drawn for the goats; the goat to be sacrificed had a thread tied around its throat, while the other had a scarlet thread bound around its head. When the high priest had confessed the sins of the priests over the bull, it was slaughtered, and its blood was collected in a basin. Taking coals from the bronze altar and incense from the holy place, he then entered the holy of holies. There he placed the incense on the coals, filling the room with smoke to obscure the ark from his view. Returning to the holy place, he offered a short prayer, lest he pray too long and “put Israel in terror” that he had died performing the ritual. He returned to the courtyard and took the basin of blood back into the most holy place. Dipping his finger into the blood, he sprinkled it with a whipping motion, and repeated this seven times. He did the same with the blood of the goat chosen for sacrifice, and then he poured out the remaining blood at the base of the bronze altar.

Then the high priest laid his hands on the head of the scapegoat and said, “O God, thy people, the House of Israel, have committed iniquity, transgressed, and sinned before thee. O God, forgive, I pray, the iniquities and transgressions and sins which thy people, the House of Israel, have committed and transgressed and sinned before thee; as it is written in the law of thy servant Moses . . .” (*m. Yoma* 6:2). The goat was then led outside Jerusalem, where it was pushed down a ravine to its death, apparently to keep it from wandering back into the city.

The Mishnah recognized that rituals alone were insufficient for true forgiveness, for it contains this warning: “If a man said, ‘I will sin and repent, and sin again and repent,’ he will be given no chance to repent. [If he said,] ‘I will sin and the Day of Atonement will effect atonement,’ then the Day of Atonement effects no atonement. For transgressions that are between man and God the Day of Atonement effects atonement, but for transgressions that are between a man and his fellow the Day of Atonement effects atonement only if he has appeased his fellow” (*m. Yoma* 8:9).

The book of Hebrews uses the symbols of Yom Kippur to describe Jesus’ death. As the high priest entered the most holy place, so Jesus entered God’s presence, carrying not the blood of bull and goat but his own. His once-for-all death at the “culmination of the ages” (Heb. 9:26) not only allows him to remain in God’s presence (10:12) but also gives us access to God’s presence as well (10:19–22).

SABBATH YEAR

Every seven years, the Israelites were to observe a “Sabbath of the land” (Lev. 25:6 ESV), a time for the land to rest. They could not sow fields or prune vineyards, but they could eat what grew of itself (Lev. 25:1–7). Deuteronomy 15:1–11 speaks of all debts being canceled (some would say deferred) every seventh year, presumably the same year the land was to lie fallow. When Israel was gathered at the Festival of Tabernacles during this Sabbath Year, the law of Moses was to be read aloud. The Chronicler described the seventy years of Babylonian exile as “sabbaths” for the land, perhaps alluding to the neglect of the Sabbath Year (2 Chron. 36:21; cf. Lev. 26:43). Those returning from exile expressed their intent to keep this provision (Neh. 10:31), and it appears to have been observed in the intertestamental period (see 1 Macc. 6:48–53; Josephus, *Ant.* 14.202–10).

This year seems intended to maintain the fertility of the land and to allow Israel’s economy to “reset,” equalizing wealth and limiting poverty. Observing such a provision took great faith and firm allegiance, for they had to trust God for daily bread and put obedience above profit. Rereading the law at the Festival of Tabernacles reminded the Israelites of God’s gracious covenant and their required response.

JUBILEE

God instructed Israel to count off seven “sevens” of years and in the fiftieth year, beginning on the Day of Atonement, to sound a trumpet marking the Jubilee Year. As in the Sabbath Year, there was to be no sowing and reaping. Further, the land was released from its current owners and returned to those families to whom it originally belonged. Individual Israelites who had become indentured through economic distress were to be freed. The assumption underlying the Jubilee Year was that everything belonged to God. He owned the land and its occupants; the Israelites were only tenants and stewards (Lev. 25:23, 55). As their covenant lord, he would provide for their needs even during back-to-back Sabbath Years (Lev. 25:21). The year began on the Day of Atonement, perhaps to emphasize that the best response to God's redemptive mercy is faith in his provision and mercy to others. Although the Jubilee Year is commanded in the Mosaic law and spoken about by the prophets (Isa. 61:1–2; Ezek. 46:17), rabbis, and Jesus (Luke 4:18–19), Scripture is silent on how or if Israel observed this year.

NEW MOON

The beginning of each month was marked with the sounding of trumpets, rejoicing, and sacrifices (Num. 10:10; 28:11–15). There is some indication that work was to be suspended on this day, as on the Sabbath (Amos 8:5), and that people gathered for a meal (1 Sam. 20:5, 18, 24, 27). By faithfully observing this day, Israel was in a position to properly observe the remaining days, set up, as they were, on the lunar calendar. Paul learned of some in Colossae who were giving undue attention to New Moon celebrations (Col. 2:16).

PURIM

Beyond the festivals commanded in the law of Moses, the Jews added two more to their sacred calendar, one during the postexilic period and one between the Testaments. Both commemorated God's deliverance of his people from their enemies. A wave of anti-Semitic persecution swept over the Jews living in Persia during the reign of Xerxes (486–465 BC). God delivered his people through Esther, and the Jews celebrated this deliverance with the festival of Purim. Their enemies determined when to attack by casting lots, so the Jews called this festival "Purim," meaning "lots." It was celebrated on the fourteenth and fifteenth days of the twelfth month (February-March) with "feasting and joy and giving presents of food to one another and gifts to the poor" (Esther 9:22).

FESTIVAL OF DEDICATION

During the intertestamental period, the Jews came under great persecution from the Seleucids, who outlawed the practice of Judaism and desecrated the Jerusalem temple. After recapturing the temple, the Jews began the process of purification. On the twenty-fifth day of their ninth month, in the year 164 BC, the Jews

> rose at dawn and offered a lawful sacrifice on the new altar of burnt offering which they had made. The altar was dedicated, to the sound of hymns, zithers, lyres and cymbals, at the same time of year and on the same day on which the gentiles had originally profaned it. The whole people fell prostrate in adoration and then praised Heaven who had granted them success. For eight days they celebrated the dedication of the altar, joyfully offering burnt offerings, communion and thanksgiving sacrifices. . . . Judas [Maccabees], with his brothers and the whole assembly of Israel, made it a law that the days of the dedication of the altar should be celebrated yearly at the proper season, for eight days beginning on the twenty-fifth of the month of Chislev [December], with rejoicing and gladness. (1 Macc. 4:52–56, 59 NJB)

SUMMARY

What did God want to impress on his people by commanding and permitting these specific festivals? First, these festivals reminded Israel of God's help in the past, how he delivered them from Egypt, provided for them in the wilderness wanderings, or protected them from their enemies. Second, the festivals were occasions to celebrate God's present provision. He had promised to provide for his covenant partner; the festivals, especially those timed to occur at the harvest, were occasions to celebrate how faithfully he had kept that promise for another year and opportunities to commit to providing for the needs of others.

The festivals prompted the Israelites not only to look back to God's help in the past and recognize God's help in the present, but also to look ahead, anticipating the promised consummation. The OT announced God's intention to bring all nations into full allegiance, and the festivals were occasions to anticipate that day. Isaiah spoke of a festival in which all the nations would share: "On this mountain the LORD Almighty will prepare a feast of rich food for all peoples, a banquet of aged wine—the best of meats and the finest of wines" (Isa. 25:6). God promised to bless "foreigners who bind themselves to the LORD to minister to him, to love the name of the LORD, and to be his servants, all who keep the Sabbath without desecrating it and who hold fast to my covenant—these I will bring to my holy mountain and give them joy in my house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and sacrifices will be accepted on my altar; for my house will be called a house of prayer for all nations" (Isa. 56:6–7). Micah predicted a day when the nations would go on pilgrimage to Jerusalem (Mic. 4:1–5), and Zephaniah anticipated when God would "purify the lips of the peoples, that all of them may call on the name of the LORD and serve him shoulder to shoulder," even bringing offerings to the temple (Zeph. 3:9–10). According to Zechariah, a time was coming when "the survivors from all the nations that have attacked Jerusalem will go up year after year to worship the King, the LORD Almighty, and to celebrate the Festival of Tabernacles" (Zech. 14:16). Israel's festivals allowed them to look back at what God had done, was doing, and was going to do for them and, through them, for the whole world.

The Israelites experienced a wide range of emotions during these festivals, but the prevailing emotion was joy. They rejoiced in their selection by God, living "together in unity" (Ps. 133:1), in God's deliverance, provision, and protection, and in the hope of God's consummation of his plan. Over and over, God instructed them to gather and rejoice in his presence, suggesting a fourth insight: a God who desires his people's happiness must love his people.

Finally, the festivals were occasions to recognize God's rule over Israel. Especially in an agricultural economy such as Israel's, to refrain from work on the Sabbath and on festival days was to confess God's sovereignty over time and to admit dependence on God. To leave house and fields and travel to Jerusalem confessed faith in God to protect. Offerings of firstfruits confessed that the whole harvest came from God. When they gathered, it was in the sanctuary, God's palace, yet another reminder that God was Israel's king, and they were his subjects.

FESTUS Porcius Festus served as procurator (governor) of Judea from about AD 59 to 62, succeeding Marcus Antonius Felix (governed AD 52–59). Felix had imprisoned Paul in Caesarea Maritima as a political favor to a group of Jews who desired Paul's death, and Festus did not release him (Acts 24:27). Paul stood trial before Festus, but he appealed to be tried in Rome before Caesar's court, contrary to his opponents' desire that he be tried in Jerusalem (see Acts 25–26). Festus granted Paul's request, but first he remanded him to King Agrippa, before whom Paul presented his defense before being sent to Rome for trial (Acts 27–28).

Coins minted for Judea during the governorship of Porcius Festus (AD 59–62)

FETTER A chain or manacle applied to the ankles to restrict the movement of a prisoner (Job 13:27; Ps. 105:18 [NIV: “shackles”]). The biblical terms for fetters can also indicate handcuffs; context determines when ankle shackles are in view. Fetters were made of bronze (2 Sam. 3:34) or ropes (Ps. 2:3). Jesus healed a demoniac whose hands and feet had previously been bound in an unsuccessful effort to subdue him (Mark 5:4).

FEVER An increase in internal bodily temperature above normal—98.6° F (37.0° C), with some variation. The sensation often is associated with burning up from the inside (Job 30:30), what the rabbis call “fire of the bones” (*b. Git*. 70a), along with chills and trembling. Malaria may have been a significant and life-threatening cause. According to Galen, fever may result from either an excess of yellow bile, black bile, or phlegm (*cacochymia*), or from an excess of blood. In Leviticus it is linked to a wasting away of the eyes (26:16; KJV: “ague”) and reflects God’s punishment for covenant disobedience (cf. Deut. 28:22). Jesus healed Peter’s mother-in-law and the son of an official from fever (Matt. 8:14 pars.; John 4:52). Concerning the former, Matthew cites from the prophet Isaiah as a fulfillment of God’s promise to forgive and heal his people.

FIELD An unenclosed, cultivated parcel of land (Gen. 31:4; 34:7). A field may be distinguished from the uncultivated wilderness (Gen. 33:19; 36:35), vineyards (Num. 22:23–24), and cities (Deut. 28:3, 16), which are surrounded by walls. Stones demarcated fields (Deut. 27:17). In the case of adjoining fields, they often were separated by public paths (Matt. 13:4 pars.). For protection, many fields had watchtowers (Luke 14:28–30). Farmers often sowed a mixed crop, including fig trees for shade (1 Kings 4:25; Isa. 28:25). The most valuable crops, usually wheat, were planted toward the center. Pious Jews left the corners of their fields ungleaned for the poor. The rabbis later quantified the corners (Heb. *pe’ah*) as one-sixtieth of the field’s yield. Ruth took advantage of this provision, as did Jesus’ disciples (Ruth 2:1–7; Matt. 12:1–2 pars.).

FIELD OF BLOOD *See* Akeldama.

FIERY SERPENT *See* Venomous Serpent.

FIG, FIG TREE The Hebrew word *te'enah* signifies both the fig tree and its fruit, a staple in the Mediterranean diet. Figs represent God's blessing (Isa. 36:16; Mic. 4:4; Zech. 3:10), which Jesus symbolically revokes from the temple authorities by cursing a fig tree (Mark 11:12–14, 20–22).

Figs on the branch of a fig tree

FIGURED STONE In Lev. 26:1 some Bible versions (NASB, RSV, NRSV, ESV) use "figured stone" to translate the Hebrew phrase *'eben maskit*, referring to an idol made of carved stone as opposed to one made of molten metal. The KJV has "image of stone," the NIV "carved stone." In the OT, God prohibits the making or worship of any such idols and commands the Israelites to destroy all the Canaanites' "carved images and their cast idols, and demolish all their high places" (Num. 33:52). In Ezek. 8:12 *maskit* is used of idolatrous images of unclean animals being worshiped in secret rooms in the temple.

FIGUREHEAD An ornamental figure fixed to the prow of a ship, for decoration or to ward off danger. During his journey to Rome, Paul traveled on an Alexandrian ship with a figurehead representing the twin gods Castor and Pollux (Gk. *Dioskouroi* [Acts 28:11]). In contemporary Egyptian art, the ships of the Sea Peoples (including the biblical Philistines) are depicted with avian figureheads.

FILIGREE A type of ornamental metalwork, usually made by twisting fine wire into delicate shapes, often featuring floral or other decorative motifs. Gold filigree work was used for the settings of precious stones on the high priest’s garments (Exod. 28:11–20).

FILLETS Piece of silver connecting hardware used in the tabernacle (Exod. 27:10 KJV; NIV: “bands”).

FINANCIAL PLANNING Little, if anything, in the Bible directly addresses financial planning, but some principles are relevant. The obvious need for basic financial planning was used by Jesus as an illustration for the cost of discipleship: those who seek to build a tower must count the cost before they begin (Luke 14:28). The motivation for financial planning ought not to be fear or anxiety (Matt. 6:25–26), for God can be trusted to provide. Appropriate motivations for good financial planning include the desire to store up wealth as an inheritance for one’s children (Ps. 17:14), to provide for one’s household (1 Tim. 5:8), and to avoid the dangers of debt and dependence on others (1 Thess. 4:11–12).

Financial planning ought not to be considered a guarantee of wealth, since the future is unknown to people, and the success of any venture is dependent upon God’s will (James 4:13–15). Neither should storing up wealth be viewed as a goal in its own right, for such wealth will be of no ultimate benefit to its owner (Ps. 49:10; Prov. 11:4). Hoarded wealth will only rot away (James 5:2–3); wealth is given by God to be used (Luke 16:11). In particular, the acquisition of wealth by ungodly means will not benefit its owner and will end up in the hands of the righteous, although this may not occur until a future generation (Prov. 13:22; 28:8).

FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY Various levels of financial responsibility are recognized in the Bible: to one’s own household, the church, the state, and the poor. It is the responsibility of the head of a household to provide for its members, including immediate and extended family, servants, and slaves. This provision encompasses members of the wider family who have been left without independent means, such as widows and orphans. Paul instructs Timothy to ensure that children and grandchildren extend this care to their widowed mothers or grandmothers. Failure to provide for one’s family and household is a grievous sin (1 Tim. 5:4, 8, 16).

Financial provision for those whose lives are dedicated to ministry is the responsibility of the church. In the OT, the Levites, who were allocated no tribal land of their own to provide for their needs, received the tithe of the rest of the nation. In turn, they were to present a tithe of what they received in offering to God (Num. 18:26; Josh. 18:7). Similarly in the NT, the church has financial responsibility to provide for its ministers (2 Thess. 3:8–9; 1 Tim. 5:17–18).

Christians are also responsible for paying their taxes to the state, since this authority is also instituted by God to administer justice (Rom. 13:1–7).

The responsibility to provide for the poor rests with all righteous men and women. Although the church has a special responsibility to care for its own poor (2 Cor. 8:1–5; 1 Tim. 5:16), such charity is not restricted to the Christian poor but is extended to all who are in need (Prov. 14:31; 19:17).

FINERY Luxurious and attractive clothing, jewelry, and other adornments (e.g., Isa. 3:18). The same Hebrew word (*tip’eret*) is also used to describe beauty (2 Chron. 3:6), glory (Isa. 60:7), and arrogant pride (Isa. 10:12). In certain circumstances it was appropriate to adorn oneself in finery, as in the case of the high priest (Exod. 28:2). In other situations this display of wealth and beauty indicated an underlying attitude of pride, which was condemned (Isa. 3:18).

FINGER OF GOD The phrase “finger of God” occurs as an indicator that an action comes from God and not some other source. In Luke 11:20 Jesus uses this expression to reinforce the idea that his ability to cast out demons is a product of God’s power rather than of the devil’s power. The phrase may also indicate effortlessness on God’s part. In Exod. 8:19 the phrase indicates that Pharaoh’s magicians know that the power displayed is from God and not a trick of Moses. Likewise, in Exod. 31:18 and Deut. 9:10 the phrase attributes the authorship of the Decalogue directly to God.

FINING POT *See* Crucible.

FIRE

HUMAN USES AND METAPHORS

Fire is a basic necessity for various human activities such as cooking (Exod. 12:8; Isa. 44:15–16, 19; John 21:9), warming (Isa. 44:16; Jer. 36:22; John 18:18), lighting (Isa. 50:11), manufacturing (Exod. 32:24), and refining metals (Num. 31:22–23). Fire is also an important means of maintaining the purity of God’s people, used to punish sinners (the sexually immoral [Lev. 20:14; 21:9; cf. Gen. 38:24] and the disobedient [Josh. 7:25; cf. 2 Kings 23:16]) and to destroy idols (Exod. 32:20; Deut. 7:5, 25; 2 Kings 10:26), chariots (Josh. 11:6, 9), and the cities of Canaan (Josh. 6:24; 8:19; 11:11; Judg. 18:27). As an essential means of worship, fire is used to burn sacrificial animals (Gen. 8:20; Exod. 29:18; Lev. 1:9; 3:3; 9:10, 13–14, 20) and grain offerings (Lev. 2:2, 9; 9:17).

The Mosaic law has several regulations concerning fire. Regarded as work, starting a fire is forbidden on the Sabbath (Exod. 35:3). It is the responsibility of the priests to keep the fire burning on the altar (Lev. 6:9, 12–13). The use of an “unauthorized fire” for sacrifice is forbidden (note Nadab and Abihu’s death [Lev. 10:1–2; cf. Num. 3:4; 26:61; 1 Chron. 24:2]). Also, contrary to the Canaanite religious custom, burning children is forbidden (Deut. 18:10), though the Israelites failed to keep this command and elicited God’s judgment (2 Kings 16:3; 17:17; 21:6; Jer. 7:31; 32:35; note Josiah’s ban in 2 Kings 23:10).

As a metaphor, fire also signifies human anger (Ps. 39:3), wickedness (Isa. 9:18), self-reliance (Isa. 50:11), evil planning (Hos. 7:6–7), lust (Prov. 6:27–28), evil speech or tongue (Prov. 16:27; James 3:5–6), and, paradoxically, kindness to an enemy (Prov. 25:22; Rom. 12:20).

DIVINE USES AND METAPHORS

In the Bible, God is described as the ruler of fire (Ps. 104:4; cf. 1 Kings 18). Positively, God sends fire to signify his acceptance of worship (Lev. 9:24; Judg. 13:19–20; 1 Kings 18:38; 2 Chron. 7:1–3; cf. Luke 9:54). God also purifies his people by fire in order to provide them with abundance (Ps. 66:12), to cleanse them of their sins (Isa. 6:6–7), to refine them into the true remnant (Zech. 13:9), to restore true worship (Mal. 3:2–3), to bring forth genuine faith (1 Cor. 3:13, 15; 1 Pet. 1:7), and to give Christians a true joy of participating in Christ’s suffering (1 Pet. 4:12). God also promises to make his people like a firepot and a flaming torch that will burn the surrounding enemies (Zech. 12:6). Negatively, God uses fire to punish the wicked and disobedient (Gen. 19:24; Exod. 9:23; Num. 11:1; 16:35; 2 Kings 1:10, 12; Isa. 29:6; 34:9–10; 66:24; Ezek. 38:22; 39:6; Rev. 20:9). God is a farmer burning unfruitful trees (John 15:2, 6; cf. Matt. 3:10; 7:19; 13:40) and “thorns and briers” (Isa. 10:17). The eternal fire of hell is the place where God’s final judgment will be executed (Matt. 5:22;

25:41; Mark 9:45–49; Jude 1:7; note the “lake of fire” in Rev. 20:14–15; cf. 14:10; 21:8).

Fire is also a symbol used to image the indescribable God. It symbolizes God’s presence: a smoking firepot with a flaming torch (Gen. 15:17), the burning bush (Exod. 3:2; cf. Elijah’s expectation [1 Kings 19:12]), the pillars of fire and smoke (Exod. 13:21–22; Num. 14:14), the smoke on Mount Sinai and in the tabernacle and the temple (Exod. 19:19; Num. 9:15–16; Deut. 4:11–12; Isa. 6:4). Fire marks God’s protection: the “horses and chariots of fire” (2 Kings 6:17; cf. 2:11), the “wall of fire” (Zech. 2:5). Fire also represents God’s glory: God’s throne (Dan. 7:9; cf. Ezek. 1:4, 13; 10:2, 6–7), God’s form (Ezek. 1:27), the seven spirits of God before the throne (Rev. 4:5). God in his holy wrath is also likened to a burning fire (Pss. 79:5; 89:46; Isa. 5:24; 33:14; Jer. 15:14; Ezek. 21:31; 22:21; Hos. 8:5; note the expression “consuming fire” [Deut. 4:24; Isa. 33:14; Heb. 12:29]) and even to a fiery monster (Ps. 18:8; Isa. 30:33; 65:5; cf. Job 41:19–21). Fire is an important element in the description of the day of the Lord (Joel 2:3; cf. 2 Pet. 3:12). God’s words in the prophet’s mouth are likened to a fire (Jer. 5:14; 20:9; 23:29).

Fire is also used to speak of Jesus. John the Baptist refers to Jesus’ baptism as one with the Holy Spirit and fire (Matt. 3:11). Jesus identifies the purpose of his coming as casting fire on earth (Luke 12:49). The returning Jesus is portrayed as coming in “blazing fire” (2 Thess. 1:7), and the eyes of the glorified Christ are likened to “blazing fire” (Rev. 1:14; 2:18; cf. “flaming torches” in Dan. 10:6). In Acts 2:3 the Holy Spirit is portrayed as the “tongues of fire.”

FIREPAN A bronze or gold vessel with a handle used in tabernacle and temple worship. Three uses are mentioned in the Bible: carrying live coals to light fires for sacrifices, acting as a receptacle for spent wicks from lampstands, and burning incense. The first use was common in an age without matches. The third use, often translated “censer,” required powdered incense to be burned upon live coals.

FIRKIN A measure of volume used in the KJV at John 2:6 to describe the capacity of water jars. One firkin was equal to one *metrētēs* (about nine gallons), the unit of measure named in the Greek text.

FIRMAMENT In the understanding of the ancient Hebrew people, the firmament was a great vaulted ceiling that covered the earth. It was thought that the universe consisted of a great expanse of water beneath the earth, which sat like a disk on top of it. Above, there was another great expanse of heavenly waters, which was held back from the earth by a large dome, the substance of which was like stretched and beaten metal (Job 37:18). The prohibition of idols in Exod. 20:4 reflects this worldview. Holes in this dome allowed water to fall on the earth (Gen. 7:11; Ps. 78:23–24), and celestial bodies such as the sun and the stars were set within the dome and moved along it (Gen. 1:14–18). In Ezekiel’s vision of the four creatures, the firmament was “sparkling like ice” (Ezek. 1:22). Modern translations sometimes rework this concept into “sky,” which retains the meaning of the relevant passages but does not reflect the precise content intended by the biblical writers in their prescientific context. The presence of unscientific pictures of the universe such as the “firmament” should not trouble believers, as the intention of scriptural texts such as Ps. 19:1 is not to advance a particular view of the structure of the universe but rather to proclaim God’s glory in light of his craftsmanship in fashioning the complex and beautiful world.

FIRST AND LAST *See* Alpha and Omega.

FIRSTBORN The first child born to a married couple. In the OT it most commonly refers to the first male child, upon whom special privileges were bestowed. The OT describes some of the privileges associated with being the firstborn son: he would receive a double portion of the inheritance (a privilege codified in the law in Deut. 21:17), the paternal blessing (Gen. 27; 48:17–19), and other examples of favoritism (e.g., Gen. 43:33). The importance ascribed to the firstborn is also attested in the legislative requirement that the firstborn—people, animals, and produce—belong to Yahweh (Lev. 27:26; Deut. 15:19; and of people, note Num. 3:12–13), so stressing his primacy over Israel.

In some ancient Near Eastern cultures, the dedication of the firstborn to the deity manifested itself sacrificially (cf. 2 Kings 3:27; Mic. 6:7). Some have suggested that this idea is reflected in the OT, although 1 Sam. 1:11 indicates that in Israel some alternate form of dedication may have been understood. Nonetheless, Yahweh provided a redemptive alternative through sacrifice (Gen. 22; cf. Num. 3:12–13).

“Firstborn” language is also used figuratively in the OT. It is used of Israel as Yahweh’s firstborn in Exod. 4:22–23, wherein Pharaoh’s failure to release Yahweh’s firstborn results in the destruction of Egypt’s firstborn. God also declares the Davidic king to be his firstborn son in Ps. 89:27, highlighting the special favor that he would enjoy. “Firstborn” language can also be used figuratively to describe anything that receives a greater share, such as “the firstborn of Death” in Job 18:13 (NRSV) and “the firstborn of the poor” in Isa. 14:30 (NRSV).

Somewhat surprisingly, God does not adhere to the significance of primogeniture, frequently bestowing his favor on those who were not firstborn: Abel over Cain, Isaac over Ishmael, Jacob over Esau, Joseph and Judah over Reuben, Ephraim over Manasseh, Moses over Aaron, David over his brothers, and Solomon over Adonijah.

The NT presupposes an understanding of the significance of the firstborn. Jesus is specifically identified as Mary’s firstborn (Luke 2:7, 23). However, the description extends beyond mere notions of human primogeniture when Jesus is described as “firstborn over all creation” (Col. 1:15) and “firstborn from among the dead” (Col. 1:18; cf. Rev. 1:5). These expressions, in line with figurative use of “firstborn” language in the OT, express Jesus’ privileged place in both creation and the new creation.

FIRSTFRUITS The earliest ripening produce of the harvest (Exod. 23:16; Neh. 10:35) or, more generally, the highest-quality portion of any produce or manufactured commodity (Num. 15:20).

The firstfruit of the harvest is a symbol and harbinger of God’s blessing. Thus, God commands that sacrifices take place in which the “best of the firstfruits” are offered to him in thanksgiving and praise (Exod. 34:26; cf. Lev. 23:17; Deut. 26:2). The same principle applies to manufactured goods (Deut. 18:4), and all these events are accompanied by feasts and festivals (Exod. 23:16). Such ceremonial worship takes on renewed importance in the return from the exile, where they are connected to God’s worldwide rule and his claim upon the firstborn (Neh. 10:35–37; cf. Exod. 13:2–16).

Paul uses this OT background to metaphorically describe the resurrection, God’s final “harvest” of the earth. Jesus Christ, by virtue of his resurrection from the dead, is “the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep” (1 Cor. 15:20; cf. Rom. 8:29). The resurrection of Christ is the guarantee of an abundant harvest to come, in which those united to Jesus will be similarly raised into abundant life. There is therefore a two-part order to a single resurrection harvest: “Christ, the firstfruits; then, when he comes, those who belong to him” (1 Cor. 15:23).

Furthermore, since Jesus’ own resurrection has already taken place, believers, who are sealed with Christ through “the firstfruits of the Spirit,” enjoy now a foretaste of the abundant life to come (Rom. 8:23; cf. 2 Cor. 1:22; 5:5). Believers are therefore encouraged to live as those who have been born again by faith, “that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all he created” (James 1:18). Similarly, Paul sometimes uses the term “firstfruits” to describe the first converts in a region (Rom. 16:5; 1 Cor. 16:15 KJV), symbolizing the expectation of fruitful ministry and the intimation of worldwide salvation.

FIRST RAIN *See* Rain.

FIR TREE An evergreen whose wood was used in constructing Solomon’s temple (1 Kings 5:8; 6:15, 34), ships (Ezek. 27:5), musical instruments (2 Sam. 6:5), and idols (Isa. 44:14) and symbolically described God’s blessings (Isa. 41:19; 55:13; 60:13) and sovereignty (Ps. 104:17). The Hebrew word *berosh* is sometimes translated in English versions as “pine” (NKJV), “juniper” (NIV), or “cypress” (RSV, NASB).

FISH, FISHING Fish comprise a part of God’s created order (Gen. 1:26), given for humankind to rule (Gen. 1:28) and to eat, though some were considered unclean (those with no fins or scales [Lev. 11:9–12]). Fish comprised a meaningful part of the ancient Israelites’ diet for much of their history. They ate fish during their time in Egypt and longed for it in the wilderness (Num. 11:5). Once in Canaan, they could obtain fish from the Sea of Galilee, the Jordan River, and the Mediterranean Sea. Jerusalem even had a gate called the “Fish Gate” (Neh. 3:3; Zeph. 1:10), perhaps named for a fish market located near it inside the city. Nehemiah notes that men from the coastal city of Tyre imported fish to sell in Jerusalem (Neh. 13:16). Fish brought from such a distance probably had been preserved, perhaps by salting, smoking, or drying. The Gospels contain many references to fishing, since Jesus ministered near the Sea of Galilee and had fishermen among his followers.

Assyrian relief of a fisherman (seventh century BC)

Given the importance of fish and fishing, it is perhaps surprising that the Bible nowhere names specific types of fish. One simply reads that a “huge fish” swallowed Jonah (Jon. 1:17), or that Jesus multiplied “small fish” to feed a multitude (Mark 8:7–9). These small fish likely were sardines, caught in large quantities in the Sea of Galilee and preserved by salting. Other common native fish included a pan fish, the tilapia (today’s “St. Peter’s fish” from the story in Matt. 17:24–27); a type of carp, the barbel; and the largest native fish, the catfish, forbidden to observant Jews because of its lack of scales.

By contrast, in both Testaments one can find clear indications of how fish were caught. Large sea creatures might be speared or harpooned (Job 41:7), but usually fishermen used hook and line or one of several different types of nets (Isa. 19:8; Hab. 1:15). Jesus sent Peter out to fish with hook and line (Matt. 17:27). Peter and his brother Andrew also used a casting net (Matt. 4:18–20), a circular net up to twenty-five feet in diameter cast from shore or a boat. The net spread like a parachute and sank rapidly, trapping fish underneath. A system of cords drew the net together as it was pulled back in. Jesus’ disciples caught 153 fish with such a net (John 21:6–11). Professional fishermen also used a dragnet, the most common type of net used in antiquity (*see* Dragnet). Finally, they also used a trammel net, a standing net often spread between two boats. The trammel net was made of up to five sections, each about one hundred feet long. This net had three layers, two finer-meshed layers on either side of a larger-meshed, central layer. When fish swam into the net, they pushed one of the finer layers into the heavier layer and became entangled when they turned and tried to escape. The fishermen then pulled in the nets, disentangled the fish, and repeated the process, typically ten to fifteen times during a night's work. The story in Luke 5:1–11 reflects the use of trammel nets, with fishermen in two boats working hard through the night. Ancient commercial fishermen usually had to work at night because the fish could see the threads of their nets during the day.

FISH GATE A gate of Jerusalem in the wall north of the Temple Mount, it is first mentioned in Manasseh's rebuilding of the wall of Jerusalem (2 Chron. 33:14). Based on text and archaeology, the gate must have been located somewhere northwest of the temple on the hill of Moriah. It gets its name from the natural trade route coming north into the city from the ridge of Beth Horon, which led from the seacoast.

FISHHOOK Fishhooks are mentioned rarely in the Bible, and fishing with nets was more common in Palestine than fishing with hooks. Although different Hebrew words are used, "fishhook" is found in Job 41:1, Amos 4:2 (cf. Job 41:2; Isa. 19:8). The lone NT reference to a fishhook occurs in Matt. 17:27, where the Greek word for "fishhook" (*ankistron*) is obscured by the NIV's phrase "throw out your line," which is more literally rendered as "cast a fishhook" (cf. NRSV).

FITCH A type of seed named in the KJV at Isa. 28:25, 27 (NIV: "caraway"; NRSV: "dill") and Ezek. 4:9. The Hebrew word in Ezekiel (*kussemet*) is different from that in Isaiah (*qetsakh*) and actually denotes a type of grain (NIV, NRSV: "spelt"), not a seed.

FLAG In Exod. 2:3, 5; Isa. 19:6 the KJV translates the Hebrew word *sup* as "flag," and likewise the Hebrew word *'akhu* in Job 8:11, referring to reeds that grow along rivers or in marshes.

FLAGON A container for liquid mentioned in the KJV of various OT passages. In several instances (2 Sam. 6:19; 1 Chron. 16:3; Song 2:5; Hos. 3:1) the underlying Hebrew word (*'ashishah*) actually denotes a cake of raisins rather than a container (of wine) and is so translated in more-recent versions.

FLAGSTAFF The word "flagstaff" occurs once in the NIV, at Isa. 30:17 (NET: "flagpole"; NASB: "flag"), where it stands as a picture of the isolation that fleeing Israelites will leave in their wake.

FLASK A container used to hold various liquids. The term "flask" (Heb. *pak*) occurs three times in the NIV (1 Sam. 10:1; 2 Kings 9:1, 3 [ASV: "vial"]), referring to a small container of liquid, often perfume. In these cases, the flask contained oil used to anoint a king. Other English versions (RSV, ESV) also use "flask" to render the Hebrew *baqbuq* (Jer. 19:1, 10 [NIV, "jar"]), which was a container larger than the *pak* and the Greek *alabastros* (Matt. 26:7; Mark 14:3; Luke 7:37), an alabaster jar that normally held precious contents. Both the *baqbuq* and the *alabastros* were broken in the biblical narratives: the former as a sign of the impending destruction of Jerusalem, and the latter in order to anoint Jesus.

FLAX A plant with a single, thin, yellowish stalk that grows between one and three feet tall with vibrant blue flowers. Flax was a common and valuable crop, as its fibrous stalk could be dried, peeled, and then woven to produce fine linen. Flax is one of the earliest known textile materials. Linseed oil is derived from flax seed. The plague of hail destroyed Egypt’s flax crop (Exod. 9:31), and Rahab hid the two spies sent by Joshua under stalks of flax that she had laid out on the roof to dry (Josh. 2:6). Like any plant-derived material of antiquity, flax would become brittle and could be easily broken if burned. Thus, the description of the ropes on Samson’s arms as “charred flax” prior to his slaughter of the Philistines with the jawbone of a donkey (Judg. 15:14–15). The description of the “wife of noble character” depicts a prudent wife seeking “wool and flax” (Prov. 31:13). The prophet Isaiah speaks of God’s destruction of Jerusalem in terms of a destroyed flax crop, thus causing “those who work with combed flax [to] despair” (Isa. 19:9).

FLEET In partnership with Hiram king of Tyre, Solomon operated a fleet (KJV: “navy”) of trading ships (1 Kings 9:27; 10:22; 2 Chron. 9:21). Later, Jehoshaphat constructed a similar fleet, but as a result of his unholy alliance with Amaziah, the ships were wrecked before they could set sail (1 Kings 22:48; 2 Chron. 20:35–37).

FLESH Beyond its obvious literal sense, “flesh” denotes the physicality of one’s life in this world, often in contrast to the spiritual dimension. Both the OT (Heb. *she’er*, *basar*) and NT (Gk. *sarx*) use “flesh” to refer to the physical dimension of human existence, often assigning varying degrees of figurative and contextual nuances to the word. “Flesh” as the cover term for fallen humanity and sinfulness is a distinctive NT development. For example, the expression “all flesh” in the OT is often merely equivalent to the collective human race (e.g., Gen. 6:12; Isa. 40:5 KJV). Even when the term is used in contrast to “spirit” (e.g., Isa. 31:3; Jer. 17:5), “flesh” is not so much “antispiritual” as “nonspiritual.” John even refers to the mystery of incarnation as the Word becoming flesh (John 1:14).

It is mostly in Paul’s letters that we find clear depiction of flesh as the seat of the carnal and sinful nature of humanity. The flesh stands for the totality of destructive effects of the original sin on the human nature. Thus, the flesh is in essence the sinful nature that Adam left for all subsequent generations to inherit (Gal. 5:17). Before it is redeemed and transformed, it is “sinful flesh” (Rom. 8:3 NRSV) waiting to be condemned by the holy God and his law, and inevitably leading to death (7:5). It is inseparable from lust (Gal. 5:16; 1 Pet. 4:2). In the reprobate, unregenerate state, human nature in its entirety is under the control of the flesh (Eph. 2:3). Since corrupt humans basically sow the flesh and reap the flesh, they can neither please God nor obey the law (Rom. 8:3, 8). It is significant that salvation is expressed in terms of overcoming the flesh. In wrapping up an exhortation regarding spiritual life, Paul concludes that those who nailed their flesh to the cross along with its passions and desires are “those who belong to Christ Jesus” (Gal. 5:24).

FLESH AND SPIRIT Because we lack precise knowledge of the Hebrew and early Christian beliefs about the relationship between the physical body and one’s spirit, discussions about flesh and spirit are difficult. Throughout both Testaments the word “flesh” usually refers to the physical body of both humans and animals, while the word “spirit,” although less specific, generally refers to the persona of an individual, that part of a human that relates most closely to God. Contrasting these, the prophet Isaiah says that the enemy Egyptian horses are “flesh and not spirit,” and so he implies that the spirit is stronger than the flesh. Isaiah says that those living in Jerusalem should put their trust in God and not the flesh (Isa. 31:3).

Probably the most specific instance of flesh and spirit being discussed together is in John 3:6, where the author quotes Jesus saying, “Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit.” English translations capitalize the first of the two occurrences of the Greek word *pneuma* (“spirit”) in this verse, inferring that it is the Spirit of God who gives birth to the human spirit. Jesus tries to explain to Nicodemus that a person must be born again by the Spirit of God, much as a human birth produces human flesh.

In another passage, Jesus talks about the difference between the flesh and the spirit by first telling the disciples that they need to eat his flesh (John 6:53–54). This is taken to be a reference to the Eucharist and the need for the disciples to participate in that communion. Next, Jesus notes that his words are spirit and life; this draws a contrast between the physical “flesh” of the Eucharist service and the “spirit” of the words of God (John 6:63).

Paul, in the Letter to the Ephesians, draws a similar distinction between the flesh and the spirit when he says that the Christian struggle against the devil is “not against flesh and blood,” that is, against physical forces, but rather against “spiritual forces of evil” (6:12). Paul’s point is that Christians must not engage in warfare against physical forces of evil so much as they must struggle against those spiritual things that can harm one’s faith. This theme is again picked up in Phil. 3:1–11, where Paul says that circumcision of the flesh, which is a mutilation of the flesh, gains a person nothing, whereas those who worship by the Spirit of God have obtained the true circumcision and have gained Christ and the righteousness that comes through faith in him.

However, 1 John 4:1–3 warns that not every spirit is from God. John encourages his readers to “test the spirits” to determine whether they are truly from God. Interestingly, for John, this test involves the acknowledgment that Jesus came in the flesh from God.

FLESHHOOK The KJV rendering of the Hebrew word *mazleg*, referring to a “three-pronged fork” (NIV, NRSV) used by Eli’s sons to take their portion of a sacrifice as it was being offered (1 Sam. 2:12–15). It was considered a great injustice toward those offering sacrifices.

FLESH POT The KJV rendering of the Hebrew phrase *sir habbasar* in Exod. 16:3 (NIV: “pots of meat”; NRSV: “fleshpot”), where the Israelites complain about not having a fleshpot like they had in Egypt. The term refers to a pot (usually metal) used to cook meat, but it has evolved, today referring to a place of luxurious or hedonistic physical gratification.

FLINT A very hard stone that, because of its natural tendency to break into sharp pieces, often was used for tools or weapons. At least twice the Bible records that flint was used as a means to circumcise someone: Zipporah with Moses’ son, and Joshua with the uncircumcised who were preparing to enter the promised land (Exod. 4:25; Josh. 5:2–3). The rock from which water flowed during the Israelites’ desert wanderings was flint (Deut. 8:15 NRSV [NIV: “hard rock”), and Ps. 114:8 says that the flint was turned into a fountain. When commissioning Ezekiel, God says that his forehead will be harder than flint, that is, unaffected by the stubbornness of his listeners (Ezek. 3:9). Zechariah likens the people’s hearts to flint because they are unwilling to obey God’s commandments (Zech. 7:12).

FLOAT In 2 Kings 6:1–7 Elisha makes an iron ax head float after it was accidentally dropped into the Jordan River. The wood used to build the temple was floated by sea from the forests of Lebanon to Jerusalem (1 Kings 5:9; 2 Chron. 2:16).

FLOCK In the Bible, flocks generally consisted of herds of either sheep or goats or a combination of the two. Flocks were raised throughout the time span of the Bible and were a very important source of food, clothing, and economic wealth. They were highly adaptable to both the nomadic lifestyle of the patriarchs and the more settled culture of first-century AD life. Both animals provided meat, milk, cheese, wool, and leather for the people of Palestine. As evidenced by the large number of times the word "flock" is used in the Bible, flocks were an important part of life. Usually, it was the children's task to care for the flocks and protect them from predators, as David did when he watched his father's flocks (1 Sam. 17:34–37). In the NT, Jesus metaphorically calls himself the "good shepherd" (John 10:11). Christians under the care of a pastor were also often identified as flocks (Acts 20:28; 1 Pet. 5:2).

FLOGGING A method of punishment whereby the offender is whipped or beaten with rods. Although flogging is not assigned to punish specific crimes in pentateuchal law, Deut. 25:1–3 does refer to judges having guilty parties flogged and limits the number of lashes to forty. Romans used flogging as a precursor to crucifixion, but their method often involved the use of whips with shards of metal or bone incorporated into the strands. Thus, it could do a great deal of damage to the victim and is sometimes called "scourging." Jesus was subjected to flogging prior to his crucifixion (Matt. 27:26; Mark 15:15; John 19:1), and he warned that his followers would be flogged (Matt. 10:17; Mark 13:9). The lives of the apostles fulfilled these predictions, as flogging became a routine price for their outspoken faith (Acts 5:40; 16:23; 22:24–25; 2 Cor. 11:23; Heb. 11:36).

Statues depicting the flogging of Christ (fourteenth century AD)

FLOOD Recounted in Gen. 6:5–9:19, the flood is the event whereby God destroys all creatures except for Noah, his family, and a gathering of animals. The account is highly literary and God-centered. It opens and closes with Noah's three sons (6:10; 9:18–19). Noah's obedience is highlighted (7:5, 9, 16). God is the protagonist, and Noah remains silent.

Terminology. The Hebrew word for "flood" is *mabbul*, and the Greek word is *kataklysmos*. Outside of the Gen. 6–9 narrative and references to the flood in Gen. 10:1, 32; 11:10, *mabbul* occurs only in Ps. 29:10, probably a reference to the primordial water stored above the firmament in jars (cf. Gen. 1:7; 7:11). The LXX translates *mabbul* with *kataklysmos* in Sir. 40:10; 44:17–18; 4 Macc. 15:31. Hebrew Sirach and the Aramaic *Genesis Apocryphon* also use *mabbul* for the flood (Sir. 44:17; 1QapGen ar 12:9–10). All four uses of *kataklysmos* in the NT refer to the flood (Matt. 24:38–39; Luke 17:27; 2 Pet. 2:5).

The flood narrative. In Gen. 6:5–22, God observes the grand scale of human wickedness, determines to destroy all life, and selects righteous Noah to build an ark. God's "seeing" is judicial investigation (6:5, 13) that counters the sons of God who "saw" (6:2), just as his pained heart counters humankind's wicked heart (6:5–6). God's second statement, "I will wipe from the face of the earth the human race" (6:7), is his judicial sentence (cf. 3:15–19), affecting all life in the domain of human care (1:28; cf. Job 38:41; Ps. 36:6; Hos. 4:3; Joel 1:20).

The earth's corruption and violence (Gen. 6:12–13) reflect a spectrum of evil that has despoiled a creation that was once "very good" (1:31; cf. 6:17; 7:21; 8:17; 9:11). God's destruction responds to the moral corruption of the earth. The ark is a rectangular vessel designed for floating rather than sailing (6:14–15). Noah builds a microcosm of the earth to save its life. The boat's windowlike openings and three decks reflect the cosmology of Gen. 1 (heavens, water, earth [cf. 6:16]). God makes a promise that Noah will survive and receive a covenant from God (6:18), fulfilled in the Noahic covenant following the flood (9:9, 11, 14–17).

Genesis 7:1–24 recounts the boarding of the ark and then the rising waters. Two numbering systems are used by the narrator in the flood narrative: one for dates of Noah's age (day, month, year) and one for periods between flood stages. Both systems number between 365 and 370 days. The flood is portrayed as a reversal of the second and third days of creation. Watery boundaries that God once separated collapse (cf. 1:6–10). The rising flood is described in three phases: rising and lifting the ark (7:17), increasing greatly and floating the ark on the surface (7:18), and covering all the high mountains (7:19). Total destruction is amplified by reversing the order of creation—people, animals, birds (7:23)—with "all/every" occurring repeatedly in 7:21–23.

Genesis 8:1–22 recounts the disembarking and Noah's sacrifice. Genesis 8:1 is the structural and theological center, with God fulfilling (= "remember") his covenant promise for Noah's safety. The ark rests on one mountain within the range in eastern Turkey (Kurdistan). The earth's drying occurs as a process (8:3, 5, 9, 11, 13, 14), and echoes of creation reappear (e.g., "wind" [8:1; cf. 1:2]). Although the old curse is not lifted (cf. 5:29), God promises not to add to it (8:21). The flood has not reformed the human heart; it has only stopped the violence. God's oath of restoration reaffirms the seamless rhythm of seasons that comprise a full year (8:22).

Genesis 9:1–19 recounts the restoration of world order. Since murder was part of the antediluvian violence (6:11, 13), God's law recalibrates earthly morality (9:5). God's second postdiluvian speech encodes his plan for the broader preservation of creation (9:8–17). "My rainbow" is God's confirming sign (9:13). The meteorological phenomenon of the storm is now harnessed as an image of peace. The cosmic warrior "hangs up" his bow in divine disarmament. Humankind now shares the responsibility of justice with God, illustrated in Noah's first speech of cursing and blessing (9:20–27).

Ancient Near Eastern parallels. Without literary dependence on the biblical story, parallels to the biblical account exist in the Akkadian Atrahasis Epic, Gilgamesh Tablet XI, and the Sumerian King List. The exact relationship between the biblical account and these Near Eastern accounts is a debated subject. Perhaps they are variants of a similar story based on the same historical event.

FLOUR Finely ground wheat or other grain, made from the inner kernels of the grain and sifted to remove larger pieces of meal. Fine flour sometimes was used for baking bread (Gen. 18:6), but the "finest kernels of wheat" were regarded as a luxury product (Deut. 32:14; Ps. 81:16). This fine flour was used for making offerings (Exod. 29:2; Lev. 2:1–7). Coarser flour, or meal, was ground from the whole grains, and this was one of the most basic foodstuffs in ancient Israel (1 Kings 4:22). God's miraculous supply of oil and flour was sufficient to enable the widow at Zarephath to provide for her household in time of famine (1 Kings 17:8–16).

FLOWERS The blossoms of seed-bearing plants that contain the plant's reproductive organs. Used generally, "flowers" refers to the colorful array of blossoms that grew mostly in the open fields of the Holy Land. Numerous kinds of wild flowers could be found in the plains and mountains of Palestine. When winter rains were followed by the moderate temperatures of spring, renewal abounded (Song 2:11–12). Early spring blossoms presented an array of vibrant color and form. As early as January, cyclamen poured forth pink, white, and lilac blossoms, followed by various shades of red and pink of the crown anemones, poppies, and mountain tulips. The flowers of the diverse tuberous plants of the lily family also added to the colorful mosaic. Summer brought fields of chamomile and chrysanthemums, with their yellow and white daisylike flowers. The blossoms from plants such as mints, mustards, and other native herbaceous plants, along with those of flowering trees, shrubs, and field flowers, provided ample nectar for bees in the land of milk and honey (Num. 13:27). Healing or soothing ointments and various perfumes were produced from the essential oils extracted from the crushing of blossoms from a variety of flowers.

FLOWER IMAGERY

Traditionally, the language of flowers functions to illustrate some prominent themes, such as love and beauty. Flower imagery in descriptions of the tabernacle, of Solomon's temple, and in the Song of Solomon develops the themes of beauty, purity, sweetness, and love (Song 2:1–5; 5:13; Isa. 28:4). The Song of Solomon is set in a garden scene where the sensuous quality of flowers—their colors, shapes, and scents, their delicate touch—are analogous to the captivating sexuality of physical love. The spring setting assures that the flowers are at their pinnacle of brilliance and the air is filled with the fragrance of vine blossoms (Song 2:12–13).

Used metaphorically, flowers can also refer to transience, pride, restoration, and the glory of the holy and eternal. Such references are found in both Testaments. The short life of flowers is representative of the brevity and fragility of human life on earth (Job 14:2; Ps. 103:15; Isa. 40:6–8; 1 Pet. 1:24). After a brief moment of splendor, decline and decay are close behind. Such is the metaphor used in psalms, by the prophets, and in the NT for the life of a person who flourishes like the flower, is like the grass one day, but is gone the next day.

As surely as flower imagery points out our human mortality, it also serves to illustrate the judgment of the proud or ungodly, as when Isaiah prophesies the speedy downfall of the kingdom of Israel like flowers being trampled under-foot (Isa. 28:1–3), turned to dust (5:24), or cut off with pruning knives (18:5). Nahum sees God's power to rebuke his enemies in his ability to dry up seas and rivers and to make the many flowers of Carmel and Lebanon wilt (Nah. 1:4). James applies the flower imagery to describe the sudden departure of the rich person, passing away as quickly as the flowers of the field, whose beauty perishes under the burning heat of the sun (James 1:10–11).

The usual contexts of this flower imagery are judgment on the proud and the wicked, whose deeds will be short-lived. The insignificant and contemptible deeds of the wicked are contrasted with God's power; our human transience and frailty with God's permanence (Ps. 103:15); and our human weakness with the eternal word of God (Isa. 40:6, 8; 1 Pet. 1:24–25).

The flower can also represent a blessing. The righteous are compared to the flowering or flourishing of a plant (Isa. 5:24; 18:5; 28:1–4), since the flowering of a plant represents the peak of its life process, its most glorious moment. This beautifully pictures the restoration themes of the prophets as they utilize flower imagery. Isaiah's words "The desert and the parched land will be glad; the wilderness will rejoice and blossom. Like the crocus, it will burst into bloom; it will rejoice greatly and shout for joy" (Isa. 35:1–2; cf. 27:6) are one example of God's restorative ability to turn a wasteland into a garden. Hosea illustrates this theme: “I will be like the dew to Israel; he will blossom like a lily. Like a cedar of Lebanon he will send down his roots” (Hos. 14:5). The psalmists also sing of the righteous, not the wicked, flourishing like grass or the flower (Pss. 72:7, 16; 92:12–14). Proverbs too reminds us that the righteous will “flourish,” or break forth and sprout like foliage (Prov. 14:11).

FLOWERS NAMED IN THE BIBLE

The Bible often identifies flowering plants by a more generic name rather than mentioning specific flowers. Sometimes context can help in determining more specific species. According to 1 Kings 7:19–20, 26, lily blossoms, along with pomegranates, adorned the top of the bronze columns that stood before King Solomon’s temple. In a musical aspect, three psalms are identified as those to be sung to the tune “Lilies” (Pss. 45; 69; 80).

The most frequently mentioned specific flowers are traditionally translated “lily” and “rose” (though these are probably not accurate renderings since these flowers are not native to the region and so would have been unfamiliar to most readers). Many commentators believe that the phrase “lilies of the field” referred to the showy, attractive springtime flowers that grow profusely in the plains, pastures, and hills of the Carmel and Sharon regions. These flowers can include ranunculus, anemone, cyclamen, tulip, hyacinth, narcissus, crocus, iris, and orchid. The tulip, asphodel, star-of-Bethlehem, hyacinth, and related narcissus, daffodil, crocus, and iris inhabit the rocky ground and dry places of the hill country. The “lily of the valleys” of Song 2:1–2 is probably the blue hyacinth.

Cyclamen flowers in the Middle East

Consider Jesus' words "Observe how the lilies of the field grow; they do not toil nor do they spin, yet I say to you that not even Solomon in all his glory clothed himself like one of these" (Matt. 6:28–29 NASB). Although these flowers may not be true lilies but rather one of the numerous showy spring flowers such as the crown anemone, Jesus proclaims that the beauty of a single flower in a meadow was more striking than all the riches of Solomon, and that the flower did not concern itself with working and getting riches to be clothed. Jesus' comments about flowers demonstrate that their beauty was appreciated in Israel.

The flowers listed below are specifically named in various Bible versions.

Almond blossoms. The almond tree is among the first of flowering trees to bloom in the spring. Almond blossoms were part of the almond-tree design on the seven-branched lampstands of the tabernacle (Exod. 25:33–34; 37:19–20). In Eccles. 12:5, almond tree blossoms are likely an allegorical reference to an elderly person's hair turning white like the almond tree.

Camphire flower. In Song 1:14; 4:13, the KJV refers to camphire, while the NIV and most modern versions have "henna." The camphire is a small plant or shrub that bears highly scented, cream-colored flowers that hang in clusters and were used for orange dye.

Caperberry flower. The caperberry was a common prickly shrub with large, white flowers that produced small, edible berries. The berries had a reputation for exciting sexual desire, so the caperberry is used in Eccles. 12:5 to allude to the waning sexual potency that comes with age (NIV: "desire is no longer stirred").

Cockle flower. The KJV of Job 31:40 refers to a "cockle" (NIV: "stinkweed"), a plant whose name is spelled like the Hebrew word for "stink." This noxious weed with purplish red flowers grew abundantly in Palestinian grain fields.

Crocus. A plant with a long yellow floral tube tinged with purple specks or stripes. The abundant blossoms of the crocus symbolize beauty and splendor (Isa. 35:1).

Fitch. Named in the KJV at Isa. 28:25, 27 (NIV: "caraway"; NRSV: "dill") and Ezek. 4:9 (NIV: "spelt"). The flower referred to is probably the nutmeg flower, which is a member of the buttercup family; it grew wild in most Mediterranean lands. The plant is about two feet high, with bright blue flowers. The pods of the plant were used like pepper.

Lily. A symbol of fruitfulness, purity, and resurrection, this plant grows from a bulb to a height of three feet, with large white flowers. The term "lily" covers a wide range of flowers. The lily mentioned in Song 5:13 refers to a rare variety of lily that had a bloom similar to a glowing flame. The "lily of the valleys" (Song 2:1) is known as the Easter lily. The lily mentioned in Hos. 14:5 is more like an iris. The water lily or lotus was a favorite flower in Egypt and was used to decorate Solomon's temple (1 Kings 7:19, 22, 26; 2 Chron. 4:5). The "lilies of the field" (Matt. 6:28) probably were numerous kinds of colorful spring flowers such as the crown anemone (see NIV: "flowers of the field").

Mint. This aromatic plant, with hairy leaves, has dense white or pink flowers. It is listed with other spices and herbs as something that the Pharisees tithe (Matt. 23:23; Luke 11:42).

Myrtle branch. This bush has fragrant evergreen leaves. Its scented white flowers were used for perfumes. The bush grew to considerable height (Zech. 1:8, 10) and is listed among the trees used to build shelters during the Feast of Tabernacles (Neh. 8:15; see also Isa. 41:19; 55:13).

Pomegranate blossom. The blossom of the pomegranate tree is large and orange-red in color. The fruit of the tree was a symbol of fertile and productive land (Num. 13:23; Deut. 8:8; cf. Hag. 2:19) and was used to produce spiced wine (Song 8:2). Pomegranates were part of the decoration that adorned Aaron's garments (Exod. 28:33–34) and the temple of Solomon (1 Kings 7:18–20).

Rose. The Hebrew word translated as "rose" in Song 2:1 is translated as "crocus" in Isa. 35:1. Crocus was probably the family name of this flower.

Saffron. This is a species of crocus. Petals of the saffron were used to perfume banquet halls (cf. Song 4:14).

FODDER Feed for domestic animals. The Hebrew word *mispo'* suggests either a mixed feed of several kinds of grain such as barley, a common grain for livestock (e.g., Judg. 19:19; cf. 1 Kings 4:28), wheat, or vetches or a mix of finely cut straw, barley, and beans formed into balls. Silage refers to fodder that has been moistened and allowed to ferment slightly (Isa. 30:24). Fodder was salted to satisfy the animals' need for salt.

FOLLY *See* Fool, Foolishness.

FOOD

TYPES OF FOOD

In the biblical era, food consisted primarily of meats, cereals, vegetables, and fruits, though cereals and vegetables made up the bulk of the diet of people in the ancient Near East. Grains generally were ground into either coarse or fine flour. With or without leaven, the flour was made into a loaf of sorts, baked, and consumed. Usually, one grain was used for any particular bread, though in difficult times multiple types of grains could be combined to create a loaf large enough for consumption (Ezek. 4:9).

Vegetables and fruits were not as varied in the ancient cultures as they are today. Generally, among vegetables, the consumer was limited to various types of lentils, cucumbers, onions, and leeks. These were eaten raw or cooked. Fruits were limited to dates, grapes, melons, olives, and figs. Fruits generally were dried, but they were also eaten raw and prepared in various ways. Nuts, including almonds and pistachios, also were consumed (Gen. 43:11), as were pulses such as lentils and legumes such as beans (2 Sam. 17:28).

Meat consumption usually was reserved for festivals and special occasions. The most important animals used for consumption were sheep, goats, and cattle. Lamb was much more common as a dietary element than beef because it was less costly and more common. As prescribed by Scripture, the blood could not be consumed when eating meat (Lev. 17:10–11). Meat generally was boiled when prepared, though it could be roasted on a spit (1 Sam. 2:15). On a rare occasion, game meat was consumed, but this was considered a delicacy (Gen. 27:5–7). In order to be considered clean and capable of being consumed, the animal from which the meat was acquired had to have chewed a cud and have a divided hoof (Lev. 11:2–8).

Fish were consumed in good quantity but are mentioned much less often in the OT than in the NT, especially the Gospels. There is mention of the Fish Gate in Jerusalem (2 Chron. 33:14; Neh. 3:3; Zeph. 1:10), which suggests that fish were sufficiently available to merit their own marketplace in the city. Fish were salted and dried before their consumption and seem to have been primarily an import item in Israel's early history (Neh. 13:16), though by the time of the NT, Israel had obviously developed its own thriving fishing industry. To be ceremonially clean and fit for consumption, fish had to possess both fins and scales (thus shellfish were unclean; Lev. 11:9–12).

St. Peter’s Fish (Tilapia)

Animal by-products, such as honey, milk, and cheese, were a staple in Israelite diets (Deut. 32:14; Prov. 30:33; Isa. 7:15). These were stored in skins or in wooden vessels and sometimes were mixed to create a sweet milk or cheese. Milk was also used as a cooking element, though it was forbidden to cook a young goat in its mother’s milk (Exod. 34:26).

MEALS AND DIETARY ISSUES

A formal dinner or banquet typically consisted of an appetizer (usually something pickled), the meal proper, and a dessert. Wine was consumed, sometimes flavored with spices or honey. The people consuming the meal reclined at the table with their feet away from the food, thus allowing servants to continue to wash feet as necessary. Some sort of entertainment usually took place, including music, reading, or dialogue on some significant matter.

The early church struggled with various dietary issues. The first of these was the matter of the consumption of unclean animals. The events of Acts 10; 15 suggest that for the early church, these dietary laws were abandoned. In fact, of the OT regulations, only the one prohibiting the eating of meat with blood in it was enforced by the Jerusalem council (Acts 15:29). Paul seems to go further than this in stating that no food is unclean in and of itself (Rom. 14:14; cf. Mark 7:19). The second dietary issue centered not on the food itself, but rather on the prior use of that food, in this case meat, in pagan rituals and worship (*see* Food Sacrificed to Idols). Like most ancient Near Eastern cultures, the Greeks acquired some of their meat from the temples, which had a ready supply of it following religious rites and festivals. Most meat used for consumption had already been offered to an idol, and Christians debated whether it was appropriate to eat such meat. Paul responds to this question in 1 Corinthians, arguing that believers are free to eat such meat if their conscience is clear in doing so, but not if doing so offends or troubles the faith of fellow believers (1 Cor. 8; 10:23–11:1).

FOOD SACRIFICED TO IDOLS “Food sacrificed to idols” refers both to the part of pagan sacrifices that was burned for a god and what was left over, whether eaten at a temple meal or sold in a market. Since most meat in the first century was butchered at temples, Christians faced the dilemma of whether to eat it. At times, NT writers viewed it as spiritual adultery and forbade it, along with sexual immorality (Rev. 2:14, 20). At other times, believers were encouraged not to partake of it in order to preserve Christian harmony. Thus, when the members of the Jerusalem council determined that Gentile believers need not convert to Judaism, they included eating food sacrificed to idols among the four things to be avoided because they were particularly repulsive to Jews (Acts 15:20). In a setting where Jewish scruples were less influential, some Corinthian believers concluded that eating sacrificed meat would compromise their faith, since demons behind the idols received the offerings. Others felt free to eat such meat, trusting their knowledge that since idols were not really gods, meat sacrificed to them remained unaffected. Although Paul permits the purchase of meat in a market, since all things belong to the Lord (1 Cor. 10:25–26; cf. Ps. 24:1), and allows eating whatever unbelievers serve without asking questions, he rejects open participation in pagan sacrifices as incompatible with participation in the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. 10:21). He further exhorts his readers to set aside their freedom to eat meat if it would harm the conscience of either weaker believers or unbelievers (1 Cor. 8; 10:27–32).

FOOL, FOOLISHNESS Generally speaking, in Scripture the word "fool" is used to describe someone in a morally deprived state. It does not, as in contemporary American usage, refer to a person's lack of intellectual ability or to one whose actions convey those of a buffoon. Terms for "fool" appear all through Scripture, but wisdom literature contains the highest concentration. Proverbs uses over half a dozen words to describe the fool. All of them indicate some kind of moral breach and fall on a scale from the most morally hardened to the naive.

Obstinacy, recalcitrance, and closed-mindedness characterize the morally dense fool. Such individuals have no use for advice from others because they are "wise in their own eyes" (Prov. 3:7; cf. 12:15; 16:2). Fools frequently scoff at correction and rebuke (9:7–8, 12; 13:1; 14:6; 15:12; 19:25; 20:1; 21:11, 24; 22:10; 24:9). They manifest arrogance (21:24). Fools do not learn from their own mistakes or those of others but instead often repeat them (26:11). One of the main problems is that fools "lack sense," which ultimately implies that they lack character (see 6:32; 7:7; 9:4, 16; 10:13, 21; 11:12; 12:11; 15:21; 17:18; 24:30). Such a person consistently makes poor decisions and loses the appetite and passion necessary for acquiring wisdom.

According to the book of Proverbs, three qualities make up the essential nature of the fool. First, the fool is unwilling to learn by means of discipline (3:11–12; 17:10), or formal instruction (17:16), or a word of advice (12:15), or personal experience (26:11). Second, the fool lacks self-control. Both the speech (15:2) and the behavior (14:16) of fools demonstrate a lack of restraint. They take the path of least resistance to easy money (1:8–19) and easy sex (7:6–27). Third, the fool is the one who rejects the fear of the Lord (1:7).

All half a dozen terms used for "fool" indicate, to one degree or another, a moral breach. The one exception is *peti*, the word used to indicate the "simple" (e.g., Prov. 1:4; 19:25; 21:11). This word is at the other end of the moral spectrum from "fool" and refers to one who is young, vulnerable, and inexperienced. The simple are the gullible, impressionable persons. These individuals can be influenced for either good or ill, depending on whom they listen to. Both Woman Wisdom and Woman Folly make compelling calls to the simple (Prov. 9:6, 16). This simple youth will make moral mistakes along the way, but the *peti* has yet to harden into a full-fledged fool, one who is incorrigible and unteachable.

In the NT, the fool is the one who does not trust in God or in the power that God displays through the resurrection of Christ (Luke 24:25; Rom. 1:22; 1 Cor. 15:36). Jesus makes references to the fool when he tells the stories of the wise and foolish builders (Matt. 7:24–27) and the wise and foolish maidens (Matt. 25:1–13). Paul uses the term "foolish" to rebuke the Galatians for their refusal to accept the gospel (Gal. 3:1). However, in his correspondence with the church in Corinth, Paul reverses the conventional understanding of folly and uses it as a rhetorical strategy to communicate his message. He speaks of the message of the cross as foolishness to the world (1 Cor. 1:18). On another occasion, in order to argue against the arrogance of his opponents, Paul engages in “a little foolishness” (2 Cor. 11:1) as he boasts about his ministry, which is riddled with failure (2 Cor. 11–12).

FOOT The human foot is referred to in the Bible both literally (e.g., Exod. 21:24; Lev. 14:14; Luke 8:29) and figuratively (e.g., Prov. 4:27; Matt. 18:8; 1 Cor. 12:15), and the word “foot” is also used to represent the base of a mountain or a hill (e.g., Exod. 19:12; Josh. 18:16).

The common footwear was the sandal, which covered only the soles. Because roads were generally very dusty and dirty, feet needed to be washed frequently. Figuratively, a conquering king placed his foot on the neck of the conquered leader, symbolizing dominance (Josh. 10:24). Thus, placing someone under one’s foot represented total dominance (Ps. 110:1; 1 Cor. 15:25). To “sit at the feet” of a person indicated a willingness to learn from or serve a master (Luke 10:39; James 2:3). To “fall at the feet” showed a posture of humility (1 Sam. 25:24). The washing of feet was an act of hospitality (Luke 7:44) and a show of humility (John 13:4–15) demonstrated to an honored guest. To set foot in a place sometimes suggested that the person or people would take possession of it (Deut. 1:36; 11:24). The “feet of God” represent the salvation of God’s people (Zech. 14:4).

FOOTMAN Ancient armies used large numbers of footmen, or infantry soldiers (NIV: “foot soldiers”), in combination with smaller numbers of mounted warriors. Several biblical passages suggest that the ratio of footmen to chariots and cavalry ranged from about ten to one (2 Sam. 8:4) to a hundred to one (2 Kings 13:7).

FOOTSTOOL There are seven references in the OT to “footstool,” only one of which is literal (2 Chron. 9:18); the other six are variously figurative. In 1 Chron. 28:2 the ark of the covenant is apparently referred to as God’s footstool (though this imagery clashes somewhat with other texts that seem to regard the ark as the seat of his throne). Psalm 99:5 commands worship at God’s footstool, perhaps referring to the temple (so also Ps. 132:7; Lam. 2:1). In Isa. 66:1 God declares that the earth is his footstool (seeing the universe as his temple). In Ps. 110:1 God tells the anointed king that he will make his enemies “a footstool for your feet.” Paintings from ancient Egypt depict Pharaoh’s footstool adorned with carvings of conquered enemies, and correspondence from both Egypt and Mesopotamia indicates that vassals referred to themselves as the king’s footstool.

In the NT, all the references to “footstool” are quotations of, or allusions to, the aforementioned OT passages (Matt. 5:35; Luke 20:43; Acts 2:35; 7:49; Heb. 1:13; 10:13).

Captured enemies are carved into the side of the footstool of the statue of Ramesses II at the entrance to the temple at Abu Simbel, Egypt.

FOOTWASHING A common form of hospitality offered to travelers in biblical times. A host offered a basin full of water so that a guest’s feet could be cleaned upon entrance into the home. The dusty and dry climate of Palestine made footwashing important, as people often walked along dirt roads with nothing more than sandals on their feet. Footwashing was so common that hosts who failed to offer this basic expression of hospitality and comfort were severely criticized (Luke 7:44).

Although a staple of hospitality, footwashing was considered the lowliest of activities performed by a servant. It was so demeaning that Jews did not wash the feet of other Jews but rather left the task to Gentile slaves. More often, travelers simply washed their own feet rather than having the chore performed for them (Gen. 18:4; 19:2; 43:24; Judg. 19:21; Luke 7:44).

Because footwashing was performed by a person of inferior social status for a superior (1 Sam. 25:41), it would be unthinkable to reverse this socially accepted norm in a culture saturated with relative social status. So for Jesus, a superior, to perform this demeaning chore for his disciples, his inferiors, makes his object lesson all the more dramatic (John 13:5–17). Jesus washed his disciples’ feet to show them that no role is too lowly for him to show the extent of his love (13:1). Peter learned the necessity of spiritual cleansing when Jesus washed his feet (13:8). Jesus also taught his disciples the importance of following his example in their own lives by washing one another’s feet (13:14). No act of service is too lowly for Christ’s followers, and no one is too great to perform such a humble act.

Some early churches may have taken Jesus’ example literally (1 Tim. 5:10). Widows seem to have expressed their devotion by washing the feet of other Christians. Such good deeds need not be taken literally today and can be expressed figuratively in other culturally accepted acts of service. Nonetheless, some churches do perform ritual footwashings today.

FORBEARANCE The word “forbearance” is used in some English versions to translate various Hebrew and Greek words meaning “patience,” “endurance,” or “long-suffering.”

In the NT, the noun *anochē* is used with “kindness” and “patience” to note God’s patience with humankind in his offer of repentance (Rom. 2:4). He shows patience in the cross (3:25–26). Thus, forbearance is an attribute of God.

Jesus uses the verb *anechō* when he asks how long he will have to “put up with” the generation of his first coming (Matt. 17:17). Paul asks the Corinthians to bear with him as he defends his apostleship (2 Cor. 11:1), since they have well put up with false teachers (2 Cor. 11:19–20). He commands the disciples in the churches to be tolerant with one another (Eph. 4:2). Paul notes that he forbears or endures persecution (1 Cor. 4:12), and he commends the Thessalonians’ patience in the face of persecution suffered for the sake of the gospel (2 Thess. 1:4).

FORD A shallow part of a river where crossing is possible by wading. Before the building of bridges, fords were often the only point of passage. Particularly important in military troop movements, fords often were fortified. Those who held fords won battles (Judg. 3:28; 12:5–6); those who lost control of them were defeated (Jer. 51:32). There were fords in the rivers Jabbok (Gen. 32:22), Jordan (Josh. 2:7), and Arnon (Isa. 16:2). Jacob (Gen. 32:10), Gideon (Judg. 8:4), David (2 Sam. 10:17), Absalom (2 Sam. 17:24), and Abner (2 Sam. 2:29) all crossed the fords of the Jordan River.

FOREHEAD Several texts pertaining to the diagnosis of leprosy refer to the forehead (Lev. 13:41–43; 2 Chron. 26:19–20), possibly because it is an area of skin not covered by hair or clothing. Perhaps for the same reason, the forehead is often the location of an identifying mark, either of faithfulness (Ezek. 9:4–6; Rev. 7:3–4; 9:4; 14:1; 22:4) or apostasy (Rev. 13:16; 14:9; 20:4). These texts may be akin to passages in the Pentateuch instructing the Israelites to bind phylacteries on their foreheads—literally, “between your eyes” (Exod. 13:16; Deut. 6:8; 11:18). Aaron the priest is instructed to attach to his turban (i.e., on his forehead) a golden plaque inscribed with the words “Holy to Yahweh” (Exod. 28:36–38), intended to counteract any possible impurities of the people’s sacrifices.

In the writings of the OT prophets, the forehead is a symbol of obstinacy (Ezek. 3:7–9; Isa. 48:4). Jeremiah’s reference to the “brazen look of a prostitute” who refuses “to blush with shame” can be literally rendered “You have the forehead of a whore” (Jer. 3:3). This figure of speech may be an extension of the symbolism of stubbornness to the adulterous woman, or it may refer to the identification of prostitutes by some distinctive adornment of the forehead. Interestingly, Revelation describes a woman on a beast with a title written on her forehead, including the phrase “The Mother of Prostitutes” (Rev. 17:5).

FOREIGN AID The transfer of resources from one state to another. In contrast to tribute, which typically is extracted by force or threat from a less powerful state by a more powerful state, foreign aid can promote the international interests of an entity of equal or superior power to the recipient of aid. The sharing of resources among states is a matter that is subject to interpretation, both in biblical history and elsewhere, and it is not always easy to distinguish foreign aid (in the modern sense) from payments of tribute (2 Kings 17:3), the reciprocal exchange of wealth between equal partners (2 Sam. 5:11; 1 Kings 5:1; 9:12–14), aid rendered by a superior power to its vassal in fulfillment of treaty obligations (2 Kings 16:7), and joint ventures undertaken by two states for mutual profit (2 Chron. 20:36). After the Jewish exile, Persia provided substantial aid for the rebuilding of Jerusalem and its temple (Ezra 1:7–11).

FOREIGNER A person or group of people whose birthplace is other than the location in which they are currently residing. Genesis records God's covenant relationship with Abraham and his promise to create a vast nation from Abraham's offspring (Gen. 17:8–20). In the OT context, a foreigner is a person not born into the nation of Israel, determined by lineage traceable to Jacob, son of Isaac, son of Abraham. Foreigners in the land of Israel were allowed to partake of the Passover only if it was done in accordance with Israelite law (Exod. 12:48; Num. 9:14). The relationship between foreigners and the nation of Israel was not hostile. In fact, God reminds Israel of their own sojourn in Egypt and gives specific laws for the fair treatment of foreigners in their midst (Exod. 23:9; Lev. 19:10, 33–34; 23:22; 25:35; Deut. 10:19).

In the NT, the apostle Paul uses the concept with respect to a person's relationship to the kingdom of God. In Ephesians he refers to those without Christ as being "excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise" (Eph. 2:12), meaning that they exist outside of God's kingdom. Conversely, those believing in Christ have received "adoption as children" (Gal. 4:5 NRSV), meaning that they are no longer foreigners and are now counted as citizens of God's kingdom, as the offspring of the king clearly are.

FOREKNOW, FOREKNOWLEDGE In systematic theology, "foreknowledge" usually refers to the doctrine that God knows all things, events, and persons before they exist or occur and that this knowledge has been his from all eternity. No single Hebrew term in the OT corresponds to the English term; the concept is expressed rather on the phrase or sentence level. In the NT, the Greek verb *proginōskō* and noun *prognōsis* are translated "foreknow" and "foreknowledge," respectively. Recently in evangelical circles there has been intense debate as to whether foreknowledge and omniscience are in fact taught in the biblical texts.

OLD TESTAMENT

In the OT narratives, especially in the Pentateuch, there are numerous instances that indicate some limitations to God's knowledge in general and his foreknowledge in particular. God appears to be somewhat surprised by how wicked humanity has become before he decides to send the flood (Gen. 6:5). God comes down and discovers that the inhabitants of Babel have started to build a tower and considers how to stop the activity (11:5–7). God comes down to ascertain whether the outcry that has come to his ears about the sin of Sodom and Gomorrah is actually as bad as the reports would indicate (18:20–21). God tests Abraham by commanding him to offer Isaac as a sacrifice, and when Abraham begins to do so, he declares that now he knows that Abraham really fears him (22:1–18).

Often, narratives such as these are regarded by theologians as cases of anthropomorphism, statements made about God that speak of him as if he had human characteristics—in this case, limited knowledge. And certainly there are many other narratives in the Pentateuch that appear to give the opposite picture. God asks Cain where his brother Abel is, though he apparently already knows the answer (Gen. 4:9–10). God relates to Abraham the course that Israelite history will take for the next several hundred years (15:13–16). God seems to be in a real-time chess match with Pharaoh, but in actuality God knows all the moves that both he and Pharaoh will make before the game ever begins (Exod. 3:19–22; 4:21–23; 7:1–5).

Given this data, perhaps the better explanation for what is happening in these texts is not that the biblical narrator is employing anthropomorphism but rather that God is accommodating himself both to the characters in the narrative and to the narrator of the stories. That is, at this stage of revelatory history God is not yet revealing himself as fully omniscient and prescient of the future in its entirety. In the conceptual world of the ancient Near East, deities were regularly portrayed as being interactive—deliberating, investigating, discovering, making decisions, and so forth. God therefore may well have accommodated himself to the larger milieu in revealing himself to the patriarchs and earliest biblical narrators.

Whatever the case may be, later biblical revelation certainly seems to present God as fully omniscient and prescient. “Death and Destruction lie open before the LORD—how much more do human hearts!” (Prov. 15:11). Before words reach our tongues, God knows them completely (Ps. 139:4). No one has ever had to keep God informed or provide him with counsel (Isa. 40:13–14). There are no limits to his understanding (Ps. 147:5). The God of Israel challenges all idols and all other gods to a foreknowledge contest: if they are able, let them tell what is going to happen, as Yahweh does (Isa. 42:9; 44:6–8; 48:3–8). God alone makes the end known from the beginning (Isa. 46:10), and he has been doing so from ancient times (Acts 15:17–18). God knew Jeremiah long before he was ever a fetus (Jer. 1:5). Our prayers do not make God finally aware of our situation; he already knows what our needs are (Matt. 6:8). Indeed, God answers our prayers before they are even prayed (Isa. 65:24). “Nothing in all creation is hidden from God’s sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare” before his eyes (Heb. 4:13).

NEW TESTAMENT

One especially important exegetical question for the NT involves the precise meaning of the aforementioned Greek words, *proginōskō* (“foreknow”) and *prognōsis* (“foreknowledge”). The question concerns whether these words, in their contexts, are merely cognitive terms, indicating simply that God knows things before they happen, or whether the terms are volitional terms and/or affective terms. That is, do they indicate foreordaining and/or foreloving? Are they terms that have basically the same meaning as “election” and “predestination”?

Giving credence to this position is the fact that in some of the passages where these words occur there are other words that definitely refer to God willing things to happen. In Acts 2:23, Peter declares that Jesus was handed over to his crucifiers by “God’s deliberate plan and foreknowledge.” The verse can hardly mean that God decided to do this because he already knew it was going to happen. Rather, the terms “deliberate plan” and “foreknowledge” act together to convey the single idea of God’s complete control, planning, and sovereignty in the death of Jesus. Likewise, in 1 Pet. 1:20 the word does not mean that the Son was simply “foreknown” before the foundation of the world, but rather that he was “chosen” (NIV), “destined” (NRSV), “foreordained” (KJV).

In Rom. 11:2, Paul states that God has not rejected “his people, whom he foreknew.” Again, it is hard to read this as being only cognitive. Rather, the use of the term appears to imply some kind of “affective” foreknowing, a “setting his love upon” (cf. Deut. 7:7–8), a choosing. It is important to note that the text says God foreknew not things but people. On the one hand, God foreknew all people who would ever exist, but in this passage the foreknowing refers to a particular people. And the foreknowing most likely takes its sense from the use of the word “know” in the OT, which on numerous occasions refers to the relationship of acknowledgment and love between God and his people.

In the same way, in Rom. 8:29 “those God foreknew he also predestined,” “foreknew” again appears to be a volitional, affective term—that is, “those whom God set his love upon.” That it means that God knew how these people would respond to the gospel and then chose them seems to be excluded by passages such as Rom. 9:11–12, where God’s purposes in election are not determined by people’s actions. Finally, in 1 Pet. 1:1–2 the “elect” to whom Peter is writing are elect according to “foreknowledge of God”; not that God foreknew things *about* them, but that God foreknew *them*. This understanding of the terms in context seems preferable.

FORERUNNER A soldier who goes ahead of the main army as a scout, or a herald who travels ahead of a political delegation to announce the arrival in a city of an important figure such as a king. In the apocryphal book Wisdom of Solomon, “forerunner” is used to describe ravaging wasps that God sends ahead of Israel’s army as it invades to conquer the promised land (Wis. 12:8).

The only instance of “forerunner” in the NT is Heb. 6:20. Here the word is used to describe Jesus Christ’s entrance into the heavenly holy of holies by virtue of his sacrificial death. As a forerunner, Jesus enters into the fullness of God’s presence on behalf of everyone who trusts in him.

Although the specific word is not used, the concept of a forerunner is seen clearly in the ministry of John the Baptist. The OT prophets spoke of a messenger (Mal. 3:1; cf. 4:5–6) and herald (Isa. 40:3–9) who would come announcing salvation and the establishment of God’s kingdom on earth prior to the coming of the Messiah. The NT clearly indicates that John the Baptist is this herald (Matt. 3:1–12; 11:10; Mark 1:2–8; Luke 1:76; 3:1–18; see also John 1:6–8, 19–34). Using the language of the prophets, the Gospels describe John’s ministry as one of preparation for the ministry of Jesus Christ, a preparation focused primarily on personal and corporate repentance. John’s vivid preaching and effective ministry led to him being mistaken for the Messiah (Luke 3:15–16). John makes it clear that he is simply the forerunner (John 1:20, 23), the one who comes to “prepare the way for the LORD” (Isa. 40:3; cf. Mal. 3:1), the Lord who himself will usher in God’s kingdom in its fullness.

FORESAIL Either the main sail on a ship’s foremast or a smaller sail used to navigate in strong winds. After the ship transporting Paul to his Roman imprisonment had been caught in a storm for fourteen days, the crew ran aground at the island of Malta by hoisting the ship’s foresail (KJV: “mainsail”) to the wind (Acts 27:40).

FORESKIN The foreskin (prepuce) is removed from the male reproductive organ, usually of infants (Gen. 21:4; Lev. 12:3), in a ceremonial operation, circumcision. Other ancient cultures that practiced this rite include Egypt, Judah, Edom, Ammon, and Moab (Jer. 9:25–26). In similar fashion, Egyptian priests slit the foreskin and let it hang free.

Archaeology shows that Syrian warriors practiced circumcision around 3000 BC, but circumcision became central to Jewish faith. The rite lent itself to the powerful metaphor of “heart circumcision,” which designates a heart that is committed rather than stubborn (Deut. 10:16; cf. Lev. 26:41; Deut. 30:6; Jer. 4:4). However, the avoidance of circumcision in Hellenistic culture led some Jews to “hide” their circumcision through epispasm, an operation that restored the foreskin to its uncircumcised form (1 Macc. 1:15; 1 Cor. 7:18; Josephus, *Ant*. 12.237–41). *See also* Circumcision.

FOREST In ancient times much of the land of Palestine was covered with forests, especially on the foothills. These forests were, over time, cut down for building materials as well as to clear space for farming. For example, Joshua responded to Ephraim’s and Manasseh’s request for more land on which to settle by saying that they should clear as much of the forests of the hill country as they wished (Josh. 17:15). When David was running from Saul, he used the forest of Hereth as a hiding place (1 Sam. 22:5). A forest also played a significant role in the battle fought between the troops loyal to David and those loyal to his son Absalom. According to the story, “the forest swallowed up more men that day than the sword” (2 Sam.18:8). As Absalom was fleeing after defeat, he too was claimed by the forest when his head became stuck in a low-lying branch that prevented him from escaping (2 Sam. 18:9), whereupon Joab and his armor-bearers killed him. Throughout the OT there are examples in which a forest is personified as praising God (Ps. 96:12) or receiving punishment in the form of fire (Jer. 21:14).

Oak forest in Gilead

FOREST OF EPHRAIM A region within the territory assigned to the tribes of Joseph in the hill country of Ephraim, it ran across the Jordan, coming close to Mahanaim in the east (2 Sam. 17:27; 18:6–8). The region was claimed by the tribe of Joseph (the tribes of Manasseh and Ephraim) because their initial allotment was too small (Josh. 17:14–18), although it was acknowledged to be difficult ground. The battle between Absalom's and David's forces took place here, with the difficult terrain enabling David's smaller and more mobile force to win, though the forest still killed more than did the soldiers. Absalom died in the forest when his head became lodged in a tree, and he then was killed by Joab and his attendants (2 Sam. 18:9–15).

FOREST OF LEBANON, HOUSE OF THE *See* Palace of the Forest of Lebanon.

FORGE *See* Furnace.

FORGETFULNESS, LAND OF *See* Oblivion, Land of.

FORGIVENESS Contrary to common uses of the word "forgiveness," which are highly influenced by modernity's interest in psychology, the biblical concept identifies forgiveness as a theological issue to be understood in relational categories. Biblically speaking, to forgive is less about changing feelings (emotions) and more about an actual restoration of a relationship. It is about making a wrong right, a process that usually is both costly and painful. To capture the biblical sense, the English word "pardon" may prove more helpful.

TERMINOLOGY

Principally, God forgives by removing the guilt from transgressors and thereby releasing them from their deserved penalty. The OT term *kipper* speaks to the covering of sin (Deut. 21:8; Ps. 78:38; Jer. 18:23), and its use in connection with sacrifice signifies the idea of atonement. Like *salakh*, it communicates exclusively God's forgiveness of humans (Num. 30:5; Amos 7:2). The term *nasa'* refers to the removal of guilt, God lifting the burden of sin from the sinner (Exod. 32:32; Num. 14:19), but it also can be used of forgiveness between humans (Gen. 50:17).

In the NT, verbs such as *aphiēmi* (noun *aphesis*) and *apolyō* connote the idea of sending away or releasing, whereas *(epi)kalyptō* expresses the idea of covering. Other terms, such as *paresis* ("passing over" [Rom. 3:25]) further extend the idea of God's forgiveness: debt is canceled; God is exercising his forbearing love. Paul's preferred term is *charizomai*, which underscores the close correlation between grace and forgiveness (Rom. 8:32; Eph. 4:32; Col. 2:13; 3:13).

GOD'S FORGIVENESS

Forgiveness expresses the character of the merciful God, who eagerly pardons sinners who confess their sins, repent of their transgressions, and express this through proper actions. Forgiveness is never a matter of a human right; it is exclusively a gracious expression of God's loving care. Human need for forgiveness stems from actions arising from their fallen nature. These actions (or nonactions), whether done deliberately or coincidentally, destroy people's relationship with God and can be restored only by God's forgiving mercy (Eph. 2:1).

Under the Mosaic covenant, sin placed offenders under God's wrath among the ungodly. Rescue from this fate could be obtained by God's forgiveness alone, which was attained through repentance and sacrifice. Although sacrifice was necessary to express true repentance, it is a mistake to consider it a payment that could purchase God's forgiveness (1 Sam. 15:22; Prov. 21:3; Eccles. 5:1; Hos. 6:6). The forgiveness of God remains his free, undeserved gift.

Although the sacrificial system is done away with, or rather completed, through Christ (Heb.

10:12), NT teaching continues to recognize conditions for forgiveness. Since forgiveness restores relationship, the offender remains involved and must desire the restoration (Luke 13:3; 24:47; Acts 2:38). God does not grant his forgiveness without consideration of the offending party.

Jesus expresses this most clearly in the parable of the prodigal son (Luke 15:11–24). The son rebels against his father, squanders his wealth, and violates their relationship. The gracious and loving father remains willing to restore the relationship, but the reunion does not occur until the prodigal replaces rebellion with repentance; then, before he can even utter his sorrow, the eager father welcomes him back to a restored relationship. God remains free to forgive or not forgive, but sinners can rest assured of God's relationship-restoring forgiveness when they seek it in repentance. The forgiveness that God grants is full and restores things to an "as before" situation (cf. Ps. 103:12; Jer. 31:34), a point that the older son in the parable (Luke 15:25–32), who exemplifies religious self-righteousness, did not comprehend.

HUMAN FORGIVENESS

The biblical description of forgiveness between humans is rooted in this theological understanding and articulates a clear analogy between divine and human forgiveness. Human relationship with God provides a pattern for their relationship to each other (Matt. 5:23–24; 6:12, 14–15). They forgive because they have been forgiven (Luke 7:41–47; Col. 3:13). If, or when, their forgiveness of others remains absent, it questions, or even jeopardizes, their own relationship with God (Matt. 18:22–35).

Again, since forgiveness is a theological matter, the one being wronged remains obligated to work for the restoration of the relationship even if the wrongdoer does not repent. The one wronged should seek to win the offender back by showing mercy and eagerness to forgive as learned from God (Rom. 12:19–20). There is no formula for this God-inspired forgiveness and no limit to its zeal. Jesus met Peter's suggestion that the offer of forgiveness could be exhausted with an unequivocal no (Matt. 18:21–22). The offended must offer forgiveness every time the wrongdoer asks for it (Luke 17:3–4).

Most radical is the biblical mandate to forgive enemies. The OT often follows the common ancient Near Eastern notion that enemies are expressions of foreign deities, whom their own god(s) desires to destroy. It was therefore unimaginable that Israel (or Yahweh) should forgive a pagan god (e.g., Ps. 137:8–9). Jesus transforms this thinking and makes forgiveness a Christian duty (Matt. 5:43–48; cf. Rom. 12:20).

FORK A pronged implement whose types included ones similar to the modern pitchfork, those used in the sacrificial ritual (1 Sam. 2:13–14), and a farm tool for winnowing grain (Isa. 30:24; Jer. 15:7; Matt. 3:12; Luke 3:17).

FORMER RAIN *See* Rain.

FORNICATION The English verb "fornicate" comes from a Latin term describing the vaulted or arched structure of a ceiling, seen especially in the basements of buildings. Because prostitutes in the ancient world met clients under "fornicated" arches, the sexual usage of the term naturally followed. To fornicate was to visit a brothel, in the first instance. Later the term acquired the more general sense of illicit sexual activity. Thus, in the KJV, words such as "fornication" and "fornicate" are chosen to translate the NT Greek term *porneia*, which refers generically to sexual sin. Adulterers, homosexuals, pedophiles, and adults engaged in extramarital affairs were guilty of *porneia*, regardless of more specific labels that may apply.

Genesis 1:27 traces human sexuality back to the choice of God himself, who made male and female human beings. He might have done otherwise, but he created human beings as men and women, who complement each other's unique characteristics. The command "Be fruitful and increase in number" (Gen. 1:28) presupposes an attraction between men and women, leading to sexual activity and consequent reproduction. Adam could therefore say of Eve, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh" (Gen. 2:23), given how closely he relates to her and vice versa. The two become "one flesh" through sexual activity, as Paul's use of Gen. 2:24 makes clear. In 1 Cor. 6:16 the apostle argues that men who consort with prostitutes become one flesh with them, based on what Gen 2:24 implies; in this sense, sexual activity unifies. Thus, from a biblical standpoint, there is no such thing as "casual sex."

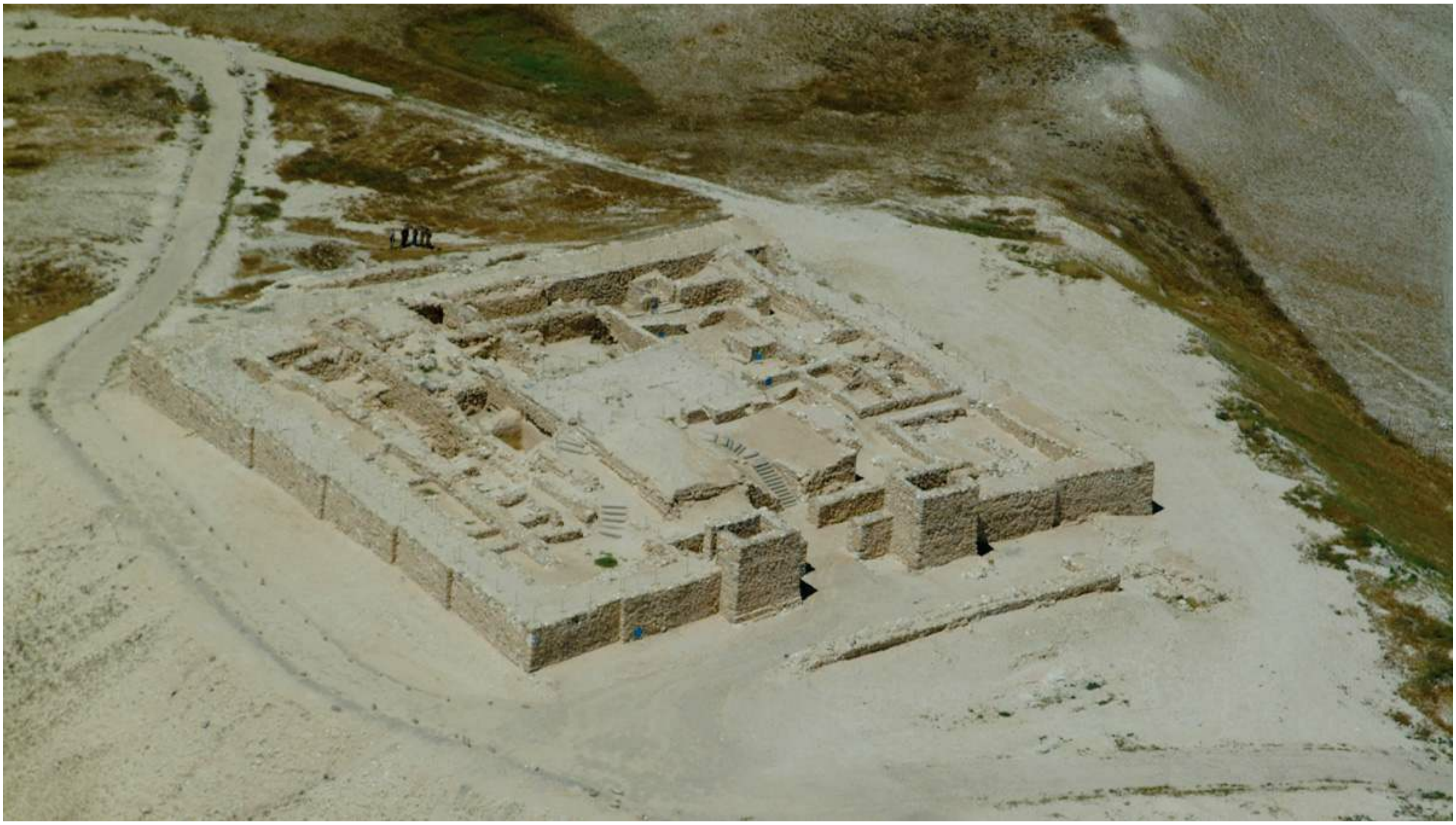
In Eph. 5:22–33 Paul argues that an analogy exists between the oneness of flesh that husbands and wives experience and the union of Christ with his bride, the church. Both relationships put servant leadership on display; and as such, a healthy marriage exposes fornication for the fraud that it is. Fornication divorces physical unity from the multidimensional oneness that husbands and wives are privileged to share.

Quite apart from the physical defects of *porneia*—most evident in such cases as homosexuality, bestiality, and pedophilia—it is also diseased at the social level. For these deviations are, of necessity, exploitative and sterile, and none of them could involve sacrificial leadership tending toward the holiness of husbands and wives. They are merely predatory. We therefore are not surprised to find the Bible forbidding homosexuality (Lev. 18:22; Rom. 1:26–27), bestiality (Lev. 18:23), rape (Deut. 22:23–29), adultery (Exod. 20:14), and various forms of sexual adventurism (e.g., 1 Cor. 6:18–20; 1 Thess. 4:3–8), including extramarital intercourse (Deut. 22:13–21).

FORT, FORTIFICATION In ancient Israel there were forts, fortification systems (forts protecting routes or borders), and fortified towns/cities. These came in all shapes and sizes (oval, rectangular, square, and rectangular with towers). The question becomes "Is it a fortified city/town, or is it a military outpost (i.e., fort/fortress)?" The answer depends on the size and location of the structure.

There are eight main Hebrew terms used in the Bible to describe a fortress or fortification. However, there is overlap in the use and translation of the terms. The NIV typically translates these words as "fortress," "stronghold," "refuge," or "citadel." Sometimes the terms are used poetically in a description of God (i.e., God is our "fortress"). The eight Hebrew terms are (1) *birah*—"fortress, citadel" (2 Chron. 27:4 [NIV: "forts"]; Neh. 2:8; 7:2); (2) *birta'*—"castle, citadel" (Aramaic word in Ezra 6:2; cf. the Akkadian term *birtu*, "fortress"); (3) *metsurah*—"fortress, stronghold" (Nah. 2:1; used with "city," it can function as an adjective: "fortified city"); (4) *misgeret*—"stronghold, bulwark" (2 Sam. 22:46; Ps. 18:45; Mic. 7:17 [NIV: "den"]); (5) *ma'oz*—"stronghold, refuge, fortress" (Judg. 6:26 [NIV: "height"]; Prov. 10:29; Dan. 11:7, 19, 31, 38–39; Nah. 1:7); (6) *metsudah*—"fastness, stronghold" (1 Sam. 22:4; 2 Sam. 22:2); (7) *matsor*—"rampart, stronghold" (Zech. 9:3); and (8) *misgab*—"height, stronghold, fortress" (Pss. 59:16–17; 62:2; Jer. 48:1).

In the tenth century BC the typical smaller fortress was oval, and the larger ones were rectangular, usually with hollow casemate walls with rooms on the inside (e.g., Tel Ein el-Qudeirat, 'Ain Qadeis, and Horvat Ketef Shivta). Many of these oval forts were located in the southern Negev to protect the border and trade routes. Forts usually stood on a height overlooking a trade route, and the local water supply often was a cistern in or near the fortress. Fortresses of the ninth and tenth centuries BC were rectangular, with (and without) corner towers and solid rather than casemate walls (e.g., Tel Arad, Tel Nagila, and Khirbet Abu et-Twein). The seventh- and sixth-century BC fortresses returned to hollow casemate walls for various reasons (e.g., Horvat Radum, Deir Baghl, Tel Ein el-Qudeirat [Kadesh-Barnea]).



The Israelite fortress at the city of Arad

FORTIFIED CITIES Cities commonly were built on a hill (for protection) near water, arable land for crops, and a regional highway for trade—all necessities for survival and growth. Biblical cities often were fortified with walls, gates, towers, and internal water systems, all of which allowed for a strong defense against enemies. Ancient city walls in Syria-Palestine often were casemates. Casemate walls were hollow on the inside and had rooms in them. The back room (and back wall) of a house was a part of the wall. This type of wall is revealed in the account at Jericho, where Rahab lets the spies down from her house through a window in the wall (Josh. 2:15). In the ninth and eighth centuries BC, when confronted with strong enemy battering rams, defenders filled casemate walls with dirt and/or stone.

When the Israelites came to spy out the land of Canaan for conquest, they anxiously noted that the cities were "large, with walls up to the sky" (Deut. 1:28; cf. Num. 13:28). This was the result of the city walls being built on top of a hill or mound, making them look even more imposing.

Solomon built Hazor, Megiddo, and Gezer, all with the same size and shape six-chamber gate system (1 Kings 9:15; cf. 2 Chron. 8:4–6). Solomon's son Rehoboam built fortified cities and a system of fortresses (2 Chron. 11:5–12). King Asa of Judah fortified Geba and Mizpah as border cities against the northern kingdom (1 Kings 15:22).

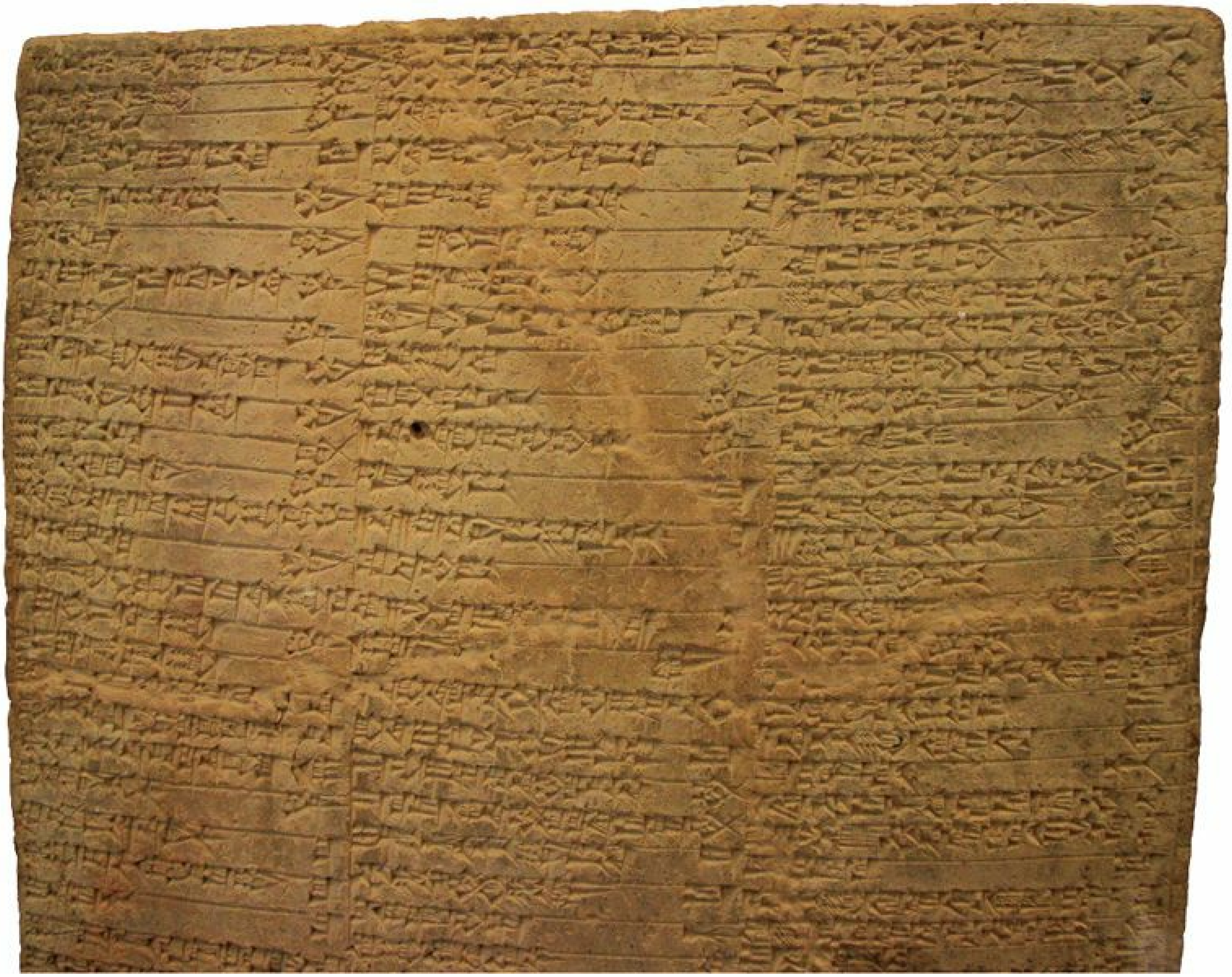
FORTRESS *See* Castle; Fort, Fortification.

FORTUNATUS A Corinthian Christian mentioned along with Stephanus and Achaicus in 1 Cor. 16:17–18 as having “supplied what was lacking” from the Corinthians and having “refreshed” Paul’s spirit. Fortunatus, Stephanus, and Achaicus visited Paul in Ephesus and probably delivered a letter from Corinth. Paul encouraged the Corinthians to honor them. It is likely that these three men delivered the letter that we know as 1 Corinthians to the church at Corinth.

FORTUNE AND DESTINY In Isa. 65:11 the prophet castigates those who forsake God and “spread a table for Fortune [Heb. *gad*] and fill bowls of mixed wine for Destiny [*meni*],” thus worshiping Gad and Meni, pagan gods of fate. The prophecy asserts that the fate of such persons is actually in the hands of Israel’s God: “I will destine you for the sword, and all of you will fall in the slaughter” (Isa. 65:12).

FORUM OF APPIUS The Forum of Appius (KJV: “Appii Forum”) was a market station forty-three miles south of Rome on the Appian Way. Some Roman believers traveled to this town to meet Paul on his way to imprisonment in Rome (Acts 28:15).

FOUNDATION Perhaps the most discussed foundation in the Bible is that of the temple. Solomon’s temple foundation was made from choice stones (1 Kings 5:17; 7:9), was laid “in the fourth year, in the month of Ziv” (1 Kings 6:37), and was “sixty cubits long and twenty cubits wide” (2 Chron. 3:3). The laying of the foundation for the second temple by Zerubbabel (Zech. 4:9), on “the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month” (Hag. 2:18), was accompanied by mixed emotions. Some were disappointed with its meager stature in comparison to the earlier one, while others simply rejoiced for the restoration of the temple (Ezra 3:3–12).



A dedicatory foundation brick for the Shamash Temple at Mari

God is said to have set his “foundation” on the holy mountain (Ps. 87:1), and the “Foundation Gate” is referenced in 2 Chron. 23:5 in relation to the temple. The earth is said to be set on a foundation (Job 38:4) whose cornerstone (*’eben pinnah*) was laid by God (38:6). The earth itself serves as the foundation of God’s dwelling, which is in the heavens (Amos 9:6; Zech. 12:1).

Figuratively, justice and righteousness are the foundation of God’s throne (Pss. 87:1; 89:14; 97:2), while divine judgment may be described as removal of a foundation (Jer. 51:26). Isaiah’s reference to the laying of a foundation stone in Zion (Isa. 28:16; 33:6) attains messianic fulfillment for the NT authors in the person of Jesus (1 Pet. 2:6; 5:10), who, in accordance with Zech. 10:4, is the cornerstone from Judah.

Laying a firm foundation is NT imagery for preaching or accepting the gospel. In the parables of Jesus a firm foundation (*themelios*), laid on rock rather than sand, is symbolic of wisdom and correct faith. Catastrophic destruction results from having the foundation set in the wrong place (Matt. 7:25; Luke 6:48–49; 14:29). “Foundation” language is heavily employed by Paul (Rom. 15:20; 1 Cor. 3:10–12), as well as by the author of Hebrews (6:1), in reference to the gospel. In a slightly different interpretation, apostles and prophets are described as the foundation of the church, with Jesus as the cornerstone (Eph. 2:20). Acts of goodness are commended as the laying down of a foundation for the world to come (1 Tim. 6:19; 2 Tim. 2:19), while the book of Revelation describes a heavenly city whose foundation is built with layers of precious stones (Rev. 21:19).

FOUNTAIN A source of running water. Often, the word “fountain” carries the connotation of handmade architecture designed to enhance access to or the aesthetics of a natural spring. The vocabulary of the biblical languages does not rigidly distinguish between artificial fountains and natural springs, so that several Hebrew (*’ayin*, *ma’yan*, *maqor*) and Greek (*pēgē*, *phrear*) words can be rendered “fountain,” “spring,” “flow,” and so forth, depending on the context.

In Proverbs, the phrase “fountain [*maqor*] of life” refers to the mouth of a righteous man (10:11), the law of the wise (13:14; cf. 18:4), the fear of the Lord (14:27; cf. Ps. 36:9), and understanding (Prov. 16:22). Similarly, Jer. 2:13 describes God as a fountain of living water, an idea echoed in Rev. 21:6. In Prov. 5:18 the fountain (along with wells, cisterns, streams, and springs) symbolizes the fecundity of marriage.

The “fountains of the deep” mentioned in Gen. 7:11; 8:2 (NIV: “springs of the deep”); Prov. 8:28 refer to a particular aspect of ancient cosmology: the notion that the terrestrial earth is supported by pillars (see Job 9:6; Ps. 75:3) above a subterranean sea. In the story of the great flood, the “fountains” of this sea, the “great deep,” were a source of the waters of the flood. *See also* Fountain Gate.

FOUNTAIN GATE A gate of Jerusalem located in the southern tip of the City of David. It was restored by Nehemiah (Neh. 2:14; 3:15; 12:37). During Nehemiah’s inspection of the wall, it was impossible for his mount to get through. The gate gets its name from either its leading to the spring of En Rogel or being where several water channels are located that watered the king’s gardens.

FOWLER A hunter of wild fowl or game birds. The Hebrew term *yaqosh* is ambiguous and can also refer to a person who hunts other animals. In biblical times, birds and larger game were hunted with traps or snares, as in Ps. 91:3: “Surely he will save you from the fowler’s snare.” In this passage and others the biblical protagonist is represented as the bird, and the biblical antagonist as the fowler (Ps. 124:7; Prov. 6:5). Jeremiah 5:26 characterizes the wicked of Judah as fowlers, and Hos. 9:8 likens hostility to God’s prophet to the use of a fowler’s snare.

FOX A carnivorous mammal with pointed ears and muzzle and a bushy tail (Neh. 4:3; Matt. 8:20; Luke 9:58), often viewed as an expendable pest (Judg. 15:4–5; Song 2:15). The fox came to represent a politically cunning person, as in the case of Herod Antipas (Luke 13:32).

FRACTURE In Lev. 24:20 a fracture is among the injuries that are to be repaid in kind: “Fracture for fracture, eye for eye, tooth for tooth.” The repayment of fractures is not mentioned in the otherwise quite similar passage in Exod. 21:24. The *lex talionis*, or law of retribution, is attested in other ancient Near Eastern law codes. Jesus commented on this law by commanding his followers to “turn the other cheek” (Matt. 5:38–39).

FRAME English Bible versions use the word “frame” to translate a variety of Hebrew terms in the OT, most of which refer to some kind of structural support. It can refer to the frame made of acacia wood and overlaid with gold that supported the tabernacle in the wilderness (Exod. 26:15–29); the “carrying frame” used to carry the utensils for the temple (Num. 4:10, 12); the frames for the borders, or side panels, of the stands used to transport the basins of the temple (1 Kings 7:28–36); and other objects. The term is also used for the human body, either in its fragility (Job 17:7; cf. Isa. 58:11) or its intricate design (Ps. 139:15).

FRANKINCENSE Also called “olibanum,” this fragrant resin from the spindly trees of the genus *Boswellia* (found in Somalia and southern Arabia [cf. Isa. 60:6; Jer. 6:20]) was highly prized by the ancients for its ritualistic, medicinal, crematory, and cosmetic uses (Lev. 2:1–2; Song 3:6; NIV: “incense”; cf. Rev. 18:13). Frankincense (Heb. *lebonah*; Gk. *libanos*), which was associated with divinity and used in worship (Exod. 30:34), was one of the gifts presented by the magi to the newborn Jesus (Matt. 2:11).

FREEDMEN, SYNAGOGUE OF THE A synagogue in Jerusalem whose members argued with Stephen. After they were unable to prevail over Stephen, they instigated the accusations that led to his stoning. Luke mentions five groups in Acts 6:9: the Synagogue of the Freedmen, Jews of Cyrene and Alexandria, and Jews from the provinces of Cilicia and Asia. Some scholars suggest that the Synagogue of the Freedmen was composed only of members from Cyrene and Alexandria. Thus, Luke was referring to two synagogues in Jerusalem disputing with Stephen, the freedmen and those from Cilicia and Asia. Others suggest that Luke was referring to one synagogue attended by Jews from each of the four areas mentioned. The Synagogue of the Freedmen was named for those who had been liberated from slavery, and some have identified the freedmen as descendants of Pompey’s prisoners. Pompey was the Roman general who seized control of Judea for Rome in 63 BC.

FREEDOM

HUMAN FREEDOM AND DIVINE FREEDOM

The concept of freedom has three aspects, the first one being legal, or *forensic*. We are free to watch television, visit Alabama, and collect stamps. In other words, we may do these things because no law forbids them, and no forces deter us. The second aspect is *potential*, by which we are free to do something if we can actually do it, apart from the question of legality. In this sense, one is free to lift ten pounds but not ten thousand pounds. The third aspect is *psychological*, meaning that persons are free who can make up their own minds, unaffected by forces that flatly determine what they think and desire. Most people, therefore, enjoy substantial freedom, defined in these three ways. They can and may do all sorts of things, and they are mentally stable. Nevertheless, human freedom is relative, not absolute. We are not God.

God’s freedom differs from our own at all three levels described above. First, God makes the rules (forensic). Second, he has the power to do whatever he likes (potential). He always reigns and never is subject to anyone or anything. Likewise, third, although God cannot violate his own logical principles, no external forces determine what he thinks and does (psychological). Consequently, God is absolutely free, and human beings are not. We lack God’s power and knowledge, and we must live by his rules. In fact, even our thoughts and desires are shaped by external factors, all of which trace back to God himself. He fashions us in our mother’s womb, and he sovereignly ordains our life experiences, the very ones that affect our desires and character (Ps. 139). Thus, our personality types and preferences are assigned to us by circumstance, and we act upon them in a mildly deterministic way. Of course, the biblical writers do not regard these factors as operating coercively, so that we make no actual choices in what we approve, decide, and become. Otherwise, God would not bother to reveal himself and his will for our lives. We are not rigidly preprogrammed agents; but then again, we do not have God's own kind of liberty.

FREEDOM AND DETERMINISM

Some critics of biblical theism might complain that a little determinism, in this sense, goes a long way toward depersonalizing human beings. If we live in the Christian world, the concern is, we must frankly and only refer to the prior causes of our actions and ignore their supposed rationales, since those causes threaten to override all other considerations. But some kind of determinism plays a role in any worldview that allows human behavior to be even fallibly predictable. A shallow rut is still a rut that we are in, and no plausible worldview can dodge this fact of experience. Furthermore, some worldviews leave no room at all for free human choices, even in the qualified sense that Christianity implies. Materialism (or naturalism) would fit this description because it reduces all events, including mental ones, to relentless physical processes. Within that system, human beings can no more choose to act than iron chooses to rust. It is no strike against a worldview that it entails some sort of determinism; the question is, rather, whether it leaves room for anything else.

In one sense, however, the biblical writers construe all of us as slaves. We live under the immediate (not ultimate) reign of sin and death, and we have been doing so ever since the events of Gen. 3. Joshua presupposes this sort of problem in telling the Israelites, "You are not able to serve the LORD," never mind their vows to do so (Josh. 24:19). In Ps. 51:5 David confesses, "Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me." Accordingly, Jeremiah says, "The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?" (Jer. 17:9). One could argue that humanity's captivity to sin is a background theme of the entire OT, and even one of its overall lessons. The apostle Paul, however, actually uses the human institution of slavery to illustrate how desperate the sinner's condition really is outside of Christ (Rom. 5–6). The unbeliever, though able to choose not to do evil in any particular case, cannot be righteous before God. The believer can still choose to sin—this side of glory—but will not do so habitually and unrepentantly. Using the terms introduced above, we might say that unregenerate persons lack the potential and psychological freedom to please God consistently. They will not desire to do so, and they will not succeed, whatever their transient desires are. The believer enjoys both kinds of freedom, relative to the lost person, but not absolutely. Glorification itself must and will consolidate the change.

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

Finally, the Christian view of salvation requires us to affirm "religious" liberty, which is a legal idea. We do not support laws that push people into churches and out of mosques and temples, because we believe that adults should make these choices voluntarily. Indeed, one cannot receive Christ in any other way, because a coerced decision involves no actual trust in him and confidence in what he promises. Moreover, the Bible says that God himself enables the believer to trust Christ, and he does so through the preaching of his word (Rom. 10:14–15; 1 Cor. 1:21; Eph. 2:1–10). Arm-twisting has no place within this framework, given its attempt to manipulate what the Holy Spirit effects. Only on the day of judgment will God impose his will on humanity coercively (Phil. 2:10–11). Thus, while every person has the duty to obey God's laws (Rom. 1–2), and though rejecting Christ compounds the sinner's guilt (Heb. 2:2–3), we have no biblical warrant to believe that the church has God's blessing to evangelize with red tape and rifles.

FREEDOM, DIVINE *See* Divine Freedom.

FREE WILL Some Bible translations use the term “free will” to describe an act that is voluntary or of one’s own accord (e.g., John 10:18 GW, MSG; 2 Cor. 8:3 NLT, RSV; Philem. 14 NASB, RSV). Freewill offerings are so called because they were offered voluntarily rather than out of necessity. In a theological sense, “free will” refers to the human ability to make choices apart from the predetermination or compulsion of God’s will. It therefore plays an important role in discussions about predestination and divine sovereignty. In theological and philosophical debates, free will is often contrasted with election or fate. At stake in such discussions are whether humans are free to act apart from, or even contrary to, God’s will; whether God and his will are affected by human choices; and what responsibility humans bear for the consequences of their decisions. *See also* Election; Freedom; Freewill Offering; Openness Theology.

FREEWILL OFFERING Occurring approximately twenty-two times in the OT, this term refers to sacrifices presented to God not by prescription or external compulsion, but from a motivation within the heart of the offerer. Some examples are the contributions that the Israelites made for building the tabernacle (Exod. 35:29; 36:3), gifts for the first temple (2 Chron. 31:14), and gifts for the construction of the second temple (Ezra 2:68). These gifts could either be monetary or animal offerings. The concept of the freewill offering may stand behind some of Paul’s teaching about giving in the Corinthian letters.

FRIEND, FRIENDSHIP The biblical concept of friendship involves a relationship of association that usually entails a degree of fondness and companionship. Examples of friends in the OT include David and Jonathan (1 Sam. 20) and Ruth and Naomi (Ruth 1:16–18; 2:11), whose relationships reflect a high degree of closeness, loyalty, honesty, and intimacy. The book of Proverbs relates these same ideals to friendship. Some examples are closeness (“there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother” [18:24]), loyalty (“do not forsake your friend and a friend of your family” [27:10]), honesty (“wounds from a friend can be trusted” [27:6]), and intimacy (“a friend loves at all times” [17:17]).

The Bible sometimes uses friendship terminology to describe human relationships with God. For instance, Moses is identified as a friend of God and privileged to speak with God face-to-face (Exod. 33:11). Also, in John 15:13 Jesus says, “Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.” Then, in dramatic fashion and with great emotion, Jesus describes the disciples as his “friends” (John 15:14–16), clearly a term meant to reflect these same qualities of closeness, loyalty, honesty, and intimacy.

In the Greco-Roman world of the NT, friendship was a popular topic. In fact, most first-century philosophers and historians wrote numerous essays about friendship. The topic’s importance is reflected in Dio Chrysostom’s statement that friendships are ultimate partnerships, even more sacred than kinship (*3 Regn.* 113). Other first-century Greco-Roman authors who wrote extensively on the subject of friendship include Seneca, Epictetus, and Plutarch. These authors often reflect upon Hellenistic proverbs that express ideas such as “friends are one soul” and “for friends all things are common.” These phrases actually date back to the time and writing of Aristotle (384–322 BC). It is likely that Aristotle’s concept of friendship was influenced by the writings of Plato (429–347 BC), who in turn was influenced by Pythagoras (c. 580–490 BC). This confirms that the Greco-Roman concept of friendship was built upon older Greek ideals that were still embraced during the NT era.

This fact is verified by Luke’s description of the early church believers having “everything in common" (Acts 2:44) and being "one in heart and mind" (4:32). Luke is alluding to the reality that those who were part of the early church were friends. However, in Luke's primitive church, friendship could be shared by the socially unequal and by people of different ethnicities, something that would be unusual according to first-century Greco-Roman social customs. Also, Luke's presentation of friendship in Acts rejects the need for reciprocity between friends. In other words, Christian friends are to serve and care for one another as an act of love, without expecting anything in return. Scholars of the NT have also seen Greco-Roman friendship ideals in the writings of Paul. Key passages include Paul's conflict resolution with the Corinthians (2 Corinthians), his reflection on the Galatians' hospitality (Gal. 4:2–20), and the structure of his letter to the Philippians (some see this as following the model of a Greco-Roman friendship letter).

These texts confirm that friendship is an important biblical concept. The OT ideals of closeness, loyalty, honesty, and intimacy are fully realized in the NT. Here, believers in Christ are entitled to a new kind of friendship with God. In turn, this divine friendship produces a new kind of relationship with others in the church. This relationship is characterized by loving commitment to one another and a generous sharing of goods and possessions to meet one another's needs. All of this results in a deep sense of closeness and unity ("a oneness of heart and soul"). In other words, in Christ, the church has the ability to produce the best of friends.

FRIEND OF THE KING A technical term denoting a royal adviser. Whereas in surrounding cultures, where equivalent expressions are found (cf. Gen. 26:26), a plurality of "friends" could serve the king, in Israel only one man appears to have held the position at any time (1 Kings 4:5; 1 Chron. 27:33). See also 1 Macc. 10:20; 13:36; 15:32; John 19:12.

FRINGES The Israelites were instructed to make tassels on the corners of their garments as visible reminders to obey God's commandments. Each tassel was to incorporate a blue cord (Num. 15:37–41). This follows a severe admonition against one who sins defiantly, thus blaspheming against God. In that context, the command to wear fringes demonstrates the need for visible warnings. A summary statement appears in Deut. 22:12.

When Jesus condemned the hypocrisy of the Pharisees, he noted their concern to make long fringes for the sake of appearance yet without maintaining justice (Matt. 23:4–6). There was also a supposition in the wider culture that power was bound up in the fringes on the garments. Those who suffered illness touched the "edge" of Jesus' garment (Matt. 14:36; Mark 6:56). A woman who had suffered with a hemorrhage for twelve years was healed by touching the *kraspedon* ("tassel, fringe, edge") of Jesus' cloak, and notably, he declared that power had gone out from him (Luke 8:40–48).

FROG With one exception (Rev. 16:13), every mention of frogs in the Bible is made in connection with the second great plague recorded in Exod. 8:1–15. This plague is recalled in Pss. 78:45; 105:30. The frogs were so numerous and widespread that there was no escape from them; they even hopped into the Egyptians' beds and cookware. This plague might have been directed against the Egyptian frog-fertility goddess, Heket (wife of Khnum, guardian of the Nile, who was struck in the first plague). It is notable that as with the first two Egyptian plagues (bloodied Nile, frogs), in Rev. 16:12–13 three demonic frog-spirits appear after another great river is struck, the Euphrates. Thus, even this exception follows the pattern of Exodus.

FRONTLETS In Exod. 13:16; Deut. 6:8; 11:18 the KJV renders the Hebrew word *totapot* as “frontlets” (NIV: “symbol”; NRSV: “emblem”), referring to the binding of God’s commandments on one’s forehead. The literal reading of this led to the custom of *tefillin* (a word found in *Targum Onqelos*, the Peshitta, and rabbinic literature), a pair of small leather boxes worn by Jews during prayer. Specific Scripture verses (Exod. 13:1–16; Deut. 6:4–9; 11:13–21) were written on small scrolls and placed in each box. One box was bound to the left arm and the other across the forehead, serving as a sign and a remembrance that God had brought the children of Israel out of Egypt. Exactly when the custom of wearing tefillin began is uncertain, but they have been found at Qumran and Murabba’at. The NT refers to tefillin as “phylacteries” (from the Gk. verb for “guard, keep”). In Matt. 23:5 Jesus condemned individuals who called attention to themselves by making their phylacteries “wide.” Certain tefillin found at Qumran and Murabba’at may shed light on the meaning of this statement. The tefillin placed on the head were not cubical but rectangular, with the breadth across the forehead greater in length.

FRUIT Literally, fruit is the seed-bearing part of a plant. It constitutes an important part of the diet in the ancient Near East. Common fruits are olives, grapes, and figs, though many other varieties of fruit are also available, including apples, apricots, peaches, pomegranates, dates, and melons. Fruit trees play a prominent role as a food source in God’s creation and preparation of the garden of Eden (Gen. 1–3). The law prohibits the Israelites from cutting down their enemy’s fruit trees (Deut. 20:19). The abundance of fruit trees characterizes the land that God has prepared for Israel (Deut. 8:8; Neh. 9:25) as well as the final restoration (Ezek. 47:12; Joel 2:22; Rev. 22:2).

One aspect of fruit is that it grows from a plant. This use of the term is often extended to represent what emerges from something else. Thus, fruit may represent offspring, whether human or animal (Deut. 7:13; 28:4), one’s actions (Matt. 7:16–20), the result of one’s actions or choices (Prov. 1:31; 10:16; Jer. 17:10), or words coming from one’s mouth (Prov. 12:14; Heb. 13:15). In the NT especially, producing much fruit symbolizes performing deeds that are pleasing to God (Matt. 3:8; 13:23; Mark 4:20; John 15:16; Rom. 7:4; Col. 1:10). Those who live by the Spirit produce the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22–23). The apostle Paul speaks of the first converts in a particular region as being firstfruits, probably referring to their conversion as the result of the gospel being preached in the area (Rom. 16:5; 2 Thess. 2:13).

FRUSTRATION The blocking or hindering of plans or desires. Plans may be frustrated due to lack of consultation (Prov. 15:22). People may try to frustrate the plans of others, either for good or for ill (2 Sam. 15:34; Ezra 4:5; Esther 2:21–23; 8:3; Ps. 14:6). God frustrates the plans of the wicked (2 Sam. 17:14; Neh. 4:15; Job 5:12; Ps. 146:9; Prov. 22:12; 1 Cor. 1:19; cf. Esther 6), but the plans of God cannot be frustrated (Isa. 14:27). Frustration is a general part of life in a sinful and cursed world, as Eccles. 5:15–17 observes. Paul describes the curse in Gen. 3 as the creation being “subjected to frustration” (Rom. 8:20) in the hope of a greater glory.

Although forms of the word “frustration” are not abundant in Bible translations, the feelings of frustration are common to many stories. Cain is frustrated that his offering is not received (Gen. 4:5–6). Amnon is frustrated because he desires Tamar (2 Sam. 13:2). David’s plans to trick Uriah were frustrated by Uriah’s upright character (2 Sam. 11). The psalms of lament are filled with frustrations. Such stories raise the character issue of what to do with frustrations. In seeking (the feeling of) relief, Cain and David murdered, and Amnon raped. And multiple stories tell of frustrated people making bad choices. The model of the psalms is to turn to God and give full voice to frustrations (though not over petty, selfish issues) and to persist in righteousness.

FRYING PAN In Lev. 2:7; 7:9 the KJV renders the Hebrew word *markheshet* as “fryingpan,” referring to a vessel used for cooking the cereal offering or boiling meat. More-recent versions translate it as “pan” (NIV, NRSV, NET) or “skillet” (GW). Another type of pan, *makhabat*, is translated as “griddle” (Lev. 2:5; 6:21; 7:9).

FUEL In biblical times, wood was the usual fuel for cooking (Ezek. 24:5) and burnt offerings (Gen. 22:3; Lev. 1:7). Wood itself was an offering after the exile (Neh. 10:34). Children gathered wood (Jer. 7:18; Lam. 5:13), as did aliens (Deut. 29:11), women (1 Kings 17:10), and in some cases men (Deut. 19:5). Gathering fuel was forbidden on the Sabbath (Num. 15:32). In general, woodcutting, like carrying water, was considered low-status work (Josh. 9:27). In wartime, wood became expensive (Lam. 5:4), and people resorted to burning excrement as fuel (Ezek. 4:12). Vines were used as fuel because they were useless as lumber (Ezek. 15:6; John 15:6). Isaiah mocks the worship of idols because the same piece of wood could yield both an idol and firewood (Isa. 44:15). Ezekiel refers to warfare as the burning of people as fuel (Ezek. 21:32) and to peace as the burning of weapons (39:9–10).

FULFILL, FULFILLMENT The various Hebrew and Greek words that express the idea of fulfillment occur hundreds of times in the Bible, and the concept often is present even when the specific word is not. At the basic level, fulfillment indicates a relationship between two (or more) things in which the second is said to “fill up” the significance of the first. Frequently this takes the form of a specific promise that is said to be fulfilled when the person, object, or event referred to comes to pass. There are countless examples of this type of fulfillment, some of which even quote the specific promise that is being fulfilled. The seventy years of Babylonian captivity prophesied by Jeremiah (Jer. 29:10) are said to be fulfilled when Cyrus permits the Jews to return to the land (Ezra 1:1–4). Jesus’ birth in Bethlehem (Matt. 2:1–6) fulfills the promise of a ruler who will shepherd Israel (Mic. 5:2).

But the concept of fulfillment goes beyond specific promises that are then said to be fulfilled in a particular person, object, or event. In the broadest sense of the term, one can say that the NT fulfills what the OT promises. After his resurrection, Jesus reminds his disciples, “Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms” (Luke 24:44). He then provides a summary of the entire OT message: “The Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem” (Luke 24:46–47).

Although all four Gospels describe Jesus as the fulfillment of the OT hope, Matthew places special emphasis on this by his use of the term “fulfill” when introducing OT quotes. He does so eleven times (1:22; 2:15, 17, 23; 4:14; 8:17; 12:17; 13:14, 35; 21:4; 27:9), most of which have no direct parallel in the other Gospels. In some of these examples the passage quoted from the OT specifically points forward to a future fulfillment, such as the promise in Isa. 7:14 of a child being born finding its fulfillment in the birth of Jesus (Matt. 1:23). But in other cases the OT passage said to be fulfilled does not appear to be a prediction at all in its original context. Commenting on Joseph, Mary, and the baby Jesus leaving Egypt to eventually settle in Nazareth, Matthew notes that this departure took place to fulfill “what the Lord had said through the prophet: ‘Out of Egypt I called my son’ ” (2:15). The quotation comes from Hos. 11:1, which says, “When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son.” In its original context, Hos. 11:1 is a straightforward statement of God leading the people of Israel out of their Egyptian captivity in the exodus. There is no indication that the prophet is predicting anything at all; he is instead recounting historical fact. But in that historical event Matthew sees an anticipation of Jesus' own exodus out of Egypt. The correspondence between the two events rests in recognizing that just as Israel was God's son (cf. Exod. 4:22), so too Jesus is the Son of God (Matt. 3:17), albeit in a much more profound way.

Fulfillment often takes place in stages. An example of this is seen in the numerous promises surrounding the day of the Lord. On the one hand, the prophets speak of the day of the Lord in a way that anticipates a catastrophic event in the near future (Isa. 13:6–9; Joel 1:15; Amos 5:18–19). But the language used is applied to multiple events, from the destruction of Jerusalem (Ezek. 13:5) to the crucifixion (Matt. 27:45–54) to the return of Christ (Matt. 24:29–31). In one sense all the promises of the OT find their initial fulfillment in Christ (2 Cor. 1:20) but await their consummation in the new heaven and new earth (Rev. 21–22). Thus, the claim that a promise has been fulfilled does not automatically imply that the promise has been exhausted. There may be additional "fulfillments" to the original promise.

FULLER The KJV and the NRSV use the antiquated English word "fuller" where the NIV uses "washerman, launderer" (2 Kings 18:17; Isa. 7:3; 36:2; Mal. 3:2). The term is derived from an equally antiquated transitive verb, "to full," which refers to felting wool together by beating it. Other translations make a distinction between the process of "washing" designated by one form of this Hebrew verb and the process of "fulling," which only appears as a Hebrew noun. *See also* Washerman's Field.

FULLER'S FIELD *See* Washerman's Field.

FULLNESS Generally, the idea of fullness in the Bible implies completeness. Often the term has been applied to Jesus, who is considered to be the fullness of God in humanity. Paul writes that God was "pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him" (Col. 1:19). Paul similarly says that in Christ "the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form" (Col. 2:9). Not only is Jesus considered to be the fullness of God, but also those who follow him are considered to have the opportunity to experience fullness from God (Col. 2:10; Eph. 3:19; 4:13). Furthermore, Paul emphasizes the need for the gospel to be preached in its fullness (Col. 1:25).

FULLNESS OF TIME This expression appears in Gal. 4:4; Eph. 1:10 NRSV (although with variation in the Greek: *chronos* in the former, *kairos* in the latter). In Gal. 4 the context suggests that God sent Christ at the most opportune time. In Eph. 1 the expression is more apocalyptic and looks forward to the occasion when this fullness takes place. There it designates the entirety of the era from the coming of Christ to the final culmination of all things. In Ephesians the fullness is both already present and awaiting its ultimate arrival when Christ returns and finalizes his rule.

Two factors appear to have especially made the time of the incarnation of Christ and the subsequent commissioning of the church to proclaim the gospel "to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8) the most opportune time in history. First was the Roman conquest of the Mediterranean world and the subsequent establishment of the Pax Romana ("peace of Rome"). As a result, travel was both very accessible and relatively safe. Second was the establishment of Greek as the common tongue. In fact, Greek-speaking Jews resided in nearly every major city of the Roman world. These two factors made the Roman world of the first century one of the most opportune places in human history for travelers such as Paul and Silas to traverse the Mediterranean region and proclaim the gospel.

Other factors further contributed to the ripeness of the era. Among them was the heavy cloud of anticipation among Jews in Palestine, awaiting a messianic deliverer who would free them from Roman oppression.

FURNACE In the ancient Near East a furnace was most commonly used for firing clay pottery to make it stronger and for shaping and purifying copper, iron (after the invention of iron), silver, or gold. A furnace was rarely used for heating, since a simple fire usually was sufficient when it got quite cold. In Dan. 3 the story is told of three Hebrew friends who were thrown into a furnace because they refused to worship an image of King Nebuchadnezzar, but miraculously they survived. There are also several images of the judgment of God being likened to the burning of a furnace (Ps. 21:9; Mal. 4:1; Matt. 13:42). Sometimes the purification that a furnace produced in metal was used metaphorically to symbolize the purification that God produced in humans (Isa. 48:10).

FURNACES, TOWER OF *See* Ovens, Tower of the.

FURNITURE In ancient Near Eastern cultures, how one decorated the house was not as essential a matter as it might be in cooler climates. The house served a more utilitarian function of providing shelter at night and a place to eat. Thus, furniture was very utilitarian in nature, and funds were better invested in other endeavors. A guest room would have but a few pieces of furniture, including a place to sit and work, a lamp, and a bed (2 Kings 4:10).

Poorer individuals would have slept on the floor, wrapped in a cloak, but for some, beds could be quite elaborate. Archaeology has uncovered evidence of beds of ivory, wood, and gold, and Og had a bed made of iron (Deut. 3:11). Indeed, Amos chastised the northern aristocracy for their beds of ivory (Amos 6:4). Some furniture served the multiple purposes of being a bed, a couch, and a seat for meals (Gen. 47:31; 1 Sam. 9:25).

The word translated “table” in the OT sometimes refers to a piece of leather that was spread on the ground. This allowed the table to be transported easily, as it could be gathered up and hauled on the beast of burden, even serving as a satchel of sorts for carrying household equipment. As the Israelites became more urbanized, the table took the form of a large woven mat or a plank of wood or metal, still close to the ground. With such tables, chairs were unnecessary.

Lamps had different forms. The most common was the clay vessel with the open top and a wick placed in the oil for burning. The second type of lamp was the candlestick. These could take the form of a single stick or the better-known multiple-stick candelabras such as the menorah. Closely related to the lamp was the brazier, used for warming a house or room in the winter (Jer. 36:22).

Chair from Thebes, Egypt (sixteenth–eleventh centuries BC)

Homes often contained a storage chest made of wood for keeping valuables. The chest usually was divided into compartments, and its contents could be accessed through side panels or through a lid on the top. There is archaeological evidence for a variety of such containers, including baskets, barrels, jars, and casks.

Furniture also had a sacred dimension when it was part of a ritual chamber or building. The tabernacle and the temple contained numerous items of furniture. While each piece of furniture in the sacred precincts seems to have had a companion piece in the common house, the sacred pieces generally were constructed of precious materials meant to express their sacredness and purity. The table of showbread displayed on Titus's triumphal arch is only about one foot in height, quite similar to the tables known to have been a part of Hebrew life and culture, though it was covered in gold. The ark of the covenant, altar of incense, and golden candlestick were meant to express that the temple was God's house. They too were similar in type to household furnishings, though clearly of greater value and importance.

In the NT era, a Jewish home would have been furnished much like those of the OT period, though this would vary depending on how Hellenized the owners were and how much money they had. Archaeological digs show that certain homes of this era had built-in benches in the walls and included steam rooms and other amenities designed for the owner's pleasure. Greeks and Romans generally reclined around a low table while lying on “couches” placed against the table.

FURROW A narrow trench dug in the ground, often by a plow, to prepare the ground for planting. In ancient Palestine a furrow was made by an animal-drawn wooden plow, or later, with an iron-tipped wooden plow. For example, in Job 39:9–10 God rhetorically asks Job whether he can control a wild ox in order to make a furrow. A furrow can also be used as an image of the infliction of oppression and pain (Ps. 129:3).

FUTURE HOPE Hope is one of the main themes of Scripture, and many of these hopes focus on the future. For example, Jeremiah gave his fellow countrymen in the Babylonian captivity this promise: “ ‘For I know the plans I have for you,’ declares the LORD, ‘plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future’ ” (Jer. 29:11). The apostle Paul picks up this theme of hope: “May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit” (Rom. 15:13).

HOPE BASED ON PROMISES

A believer’s hope focuses on several different kinds of promises. First, there are many promises of God’s assistance in the struggles and difficulties of life. Paul, for example, concludes, “For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom. 8:38–39). Christians can have the confidence that “no temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it” (1 Cor. 10:13).

Second, believers also have promises that God will be with them and go with them through the future experiences of physical suffering and death. Here the classic promise is found in words of the psalmist: “Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me” (Ps. 23:4). It is because of promises such as this that Paul can wonder whether it is better to die or to keep on living: “I am torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far” (Phil. 1:23).

Third, there are promises related to the whole constellation of events surrounding Jesus’ return and the conclusion of human history as we know it. Jesus’ return is described as “the blessed hope” (Titus 2:13). Furthermore, the trials and struggles of this present life will be over, and God will complete all his transforming work in our lives in one final moment of glorification. John describes this process this way: “When Christ appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is” (in 1 John 3:2). The classic depiction of the future hope is in Rev. 21–22, when “ ‘He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death’ or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away” (21:4).

THE PRESENT WORLD AND THE FUTURE HOPE

At the same time, it is no secret that the broader culture does not accept this future hope. Paul foresees, “The time will come when people will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear” (2 Tim. 4:3). Peter warns, “In the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires. They will say, ‘Where is this “coming” he promised? Ever since our ancestors died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation' " (2 Pet. 3:3–4). There is always the danger that "the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth" (Matt. 13:22) will choke out and negate whatever positive spiritual influences a person has received in this present life.

Christians are called to protect themselves from this danger of being sidetracked by the attractions of this present world by learning to live life with a daily sense of expectation for Jesus' return. Three verbs stand out in the description of this proper lifestyle: (1) "watch," in the sense of being spiritually alert and ready at any time (Matt. 25:13: "Therefore keep watch, because you do not know the day or the hour"; 1 Thess. 5:6: "So then, let us not be like others, who are asleep, but let us be awake and sober"); (2) "wait," in the sense of being prepared for a long wait (see the story of the five foolish virgins in Matt. 25:1–13); and (3) "work," making the best use of our time (see the parable of the talents in Matt. 25:14–30). Truly, "our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed" (Rom. 13:11). The biblical teachings on eschatology are given not merely as information but rather to transform us. The future hope described in Scripture is repeatedly used as the basis for exhortations as to how we should live our lives here in the present. Jesus did not simply affirm that these great events were to occur; he also emphasized the appropriate behavior in light of this future reality. "He who testifies to these things says, 'Yes, I am coming soon.' Amen. Come, Lord Jesus" (Rev. 22:20).

G

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GAAL The son of Ebed who came to Shechem along with his brothers to incite the citizens against Abimelek (Judg. 9:26–29). When the governor Zebul reported this rebellion to Abimelek, Abimelek attacked Shechem at dawn and drove Gaal and his brothers out of the city (9:30–41).

GAASH A mountain, not currently identified, in the hill country of Ephraim within the portion allotted to Joshua, where he was buried (Josh. 24:30; Judg. 2:9). Hiddai (called “Hurai” in 1 Chron. 11:32), one of David’s mighty men, also came from the region (2 Sam. 23:30).

GABA *See* Geba.

GABBAI A leader in the tribe of Benjamin who agreed to live in Jerusalem along with Sallai (cf. Neh. 12:20) after the return from exile (Neh. 11:8). The Hebrew text is problematic, and some prefer to translate it as “and his brothers [*we’ekhayw*] Gabbai, Sallai” (NRSV) instead of “and after him [*we’akhrayw*] Gabbai, Sallai” (MT; so also LXX; cf. NIV: “his followers, Gabbai and Sallai”).

GABBATHA An English rendering of the Greek transliteration of an Aramaic place name from the root *gbb*, probably meaning “high” or “elevated.” John gives this and the Greek name, *Lithostrōton* (“stone pavement”), together in describing Jesus’ trial before Pilate (John 19:13). Such a structure was commonly found in the marketplace of Roman cities. The exact location of the one in Jerusalem is unknown, but it is likely to have been on the east side of Herod’s palace. A previous suggested location, beneath the modern Sisters of Zion Convent, has been rejected because archaeologists have determined that the pavement there had not yet been laid at that time.

GABRIEL An angel who first appears in the book of Daniel (8:16; 9:21). His name means “strong man of God.” Gabriel functions as the spokesperson for God to the prophet, and in particular he explains the meaning of the visions that Daniel experienced. Although not mentioned by name in Dan. 10, he is likely the angel who comes to Daniel with the aid of Michael, another angel, to inform Daniel of the meaning of the vision recounted in Dan. 11. Gabriel is also sent to Zechariah and to Mary to inform them of the significance of the births of, respectively, John (the Baptist) and Jesus (Luke 1:19, 26).

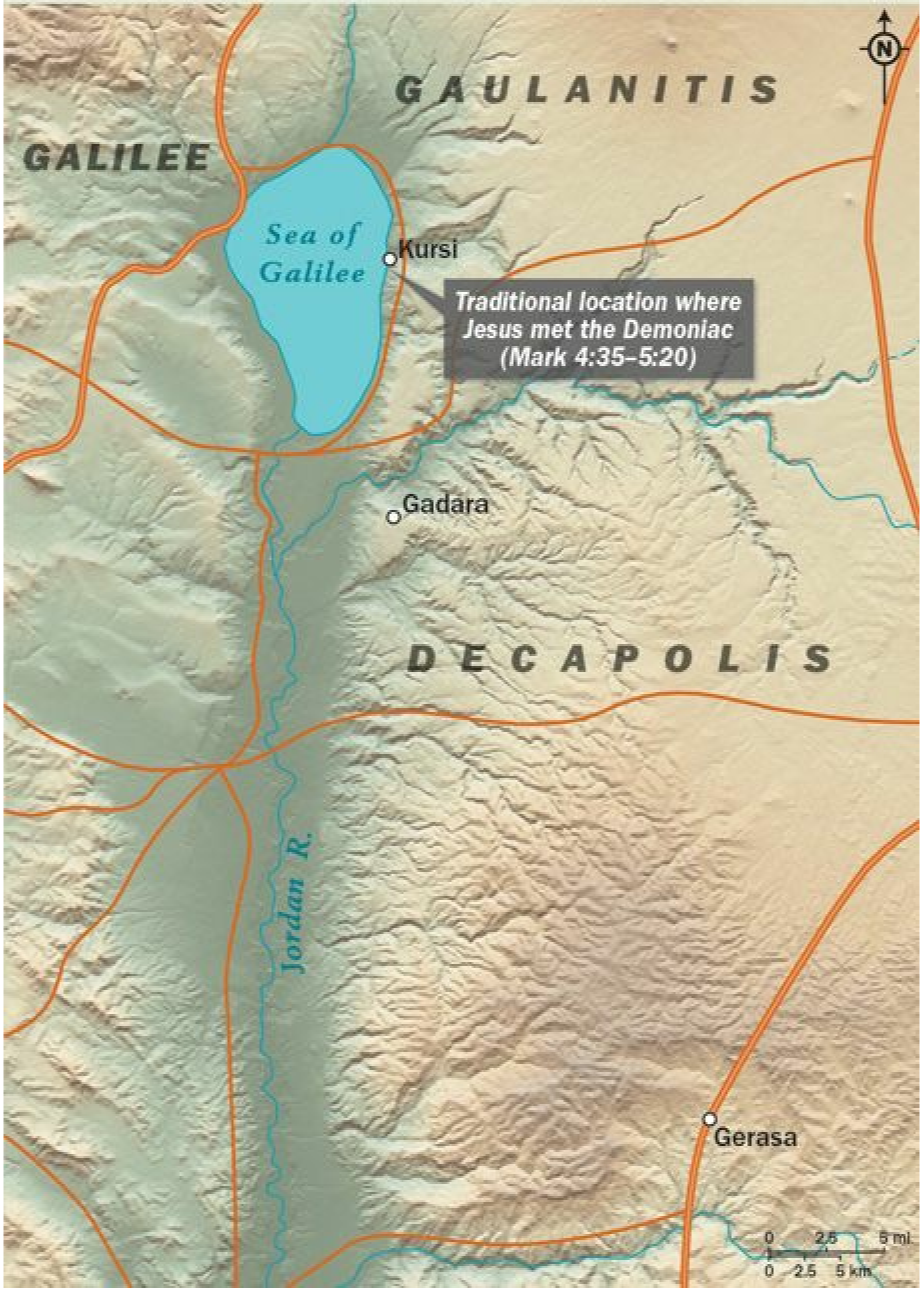
Relief of the archangel Gabriel (sixth century AD)

GAD **(1)** A son of Jacob, born to Zilpah, Leah’s maidservant. He was one of Jacob’s twelve sons, destined to become a tribe of Israel. His name can mean “luck,” and this is the etiology given in Gen. 30:11. **(2)** Another Gad, found in 2 Sam. 24, is called “David’s seer” (v. 11). He was the prophet who confronted David about the census he had taken and offered him three choices: famine, foes, or plague. Gad instructed him to buy Araunah’s threshing floor and build an altar there. When this was done and sacrifice made, the blight ended. Much earlier, he had advised David to return to the land of Judah during his tenure as persona non grata in Saul’s court (1 Sam. 22:5). **(3)** There is another Gad mentioned in Isa. 65:11, sometimes translated “Fortune,” as in the NRSV: “But you who forsake the LORD, who forget my holy mountain, who set a table for Fortune and fill cups of mixed wine for Destiny”—here perhaps the name of a god worshiped by some Israelites.

GAD, TRIBE OF One of the twelve tribes of Israel, descended from Gad, a son of Jacob born to Leah's maidservant Zilpah. After the conquest of Canaan, the tribe of Gad (sometimes referred to as the "Gadites") settled with the Transjordanian tribes, between Manasseh to the north and Reuben to the south, in a U shape that wraps around Bashan, the southern part of Manasseh. Sometimes the Bible equates the land with part of Gilead (Num. 32:25–26). One of its important cities was Ramoth Gilead (Josh. 21:38), where king Ahab was mortally wounded. Gad remained part of Israel until the kingdom came to an end, and its inhabitants eventually were taken into exile by the Assyrians.

GADARA A Decapolis city six miles southeast of the Sea of Galilee (modern Umm Qeis), the namesake for the region of the Gadarenes (Matt. 8:28).

GADARENES One of three principal variant names in all three Synoptic Gospels for the region where Jesus healed demoniacs after sailing with his disciples across the Sea of Galilee (Matt. 8:28–34; Mark 5:1–20; Luke 8:26–39). Most English translations select "Gadarenes" for Matthew and "Gerasenes" for Mark and Luke, leaving "Gergesenes" unselected. The exact location is disputed. Since all three Gospel accounts speak of "the region of" (Gk. *chōra*), which does not necessitate a discrete political territory, it is plausible for one location to be described with multiple names. A Decapolis city six miles southeast of the Sea of Galilee was called "Gadara," making the southeastern shore of the lake a possible location for the region of the Gadarenes. Ancient coins with the name "Gadara" often bear the image of a ship. Another Decapolis city thirty-five miles southeast of the lake was Gerasa (modern Jerash), making the region name "of the Gerasenes" somewhat fitting as well. No place named "Gergesa" has been identified, but some traditions relate the region of the Gergesenes to the eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee near modern Kursi. At the healing of the demoniacs, a herd of swine rushed over a cliff into the lake, and today Kursi is the most likely location on the eastern half of the Sea of Galilee, with clifflike structures near the water. Perhaps "the region of the Gadarenes/Gerasenes" extended along the southeastern and eastern shores of the Sea of Galilee.



REGION OF THE GADARENES

GAULANITIS
GALILEE
Sea of Galilee
Kursi
Traditional location where Jesus met the Demoniac (Mark 4:35–5:20)
Gadara
DECAPOLIS
Jordan R.
Gerasa
N
0 2.5 5 mi
0 2.5 5 km

GADDI A spy sent by Moses. He was the son of Susi of the tribe of Manasseh (Num. 13:11).

GADDIEL A spy sent by Moses. He was the son of Sodi of the tribe of Zebulun (Num. 13:10).

GADFLY An irritating, biting insect used by Jeremiah as a metaphor for Babylon in his prophecy about its impending attack upon Egypt (Jer. 46:20).

GADI Known only as the father of Menahem, who led a successful revolt and killed King Shallum of Israel in 752 BC. Menahem subsequently ruled the northern kingdom until 742 BC (2 Kings 15:14, 17).

GADITE *See* Gad, Tribe of.

GAHAM A son of Nahor, Abraham’s brother, with his concubine Reumah (Gen. 22:24).

GAHAR One of the ancestors of the temple servants (Nethinim) who returned to Jerusalem after the Babylonian captivity under the leadership of Zerubbabel in 539 BC or soon after (Ezra 2:47; Neh. 7:49). The fact that many of the names in the list of ancestors are foreign has led to the belief that they were originally prisoners of war who were pressed into service to perform menial tasks as they assisted the Levites.

GAIUS **(1)** Paul's missionary companion (along with Aristarchus) who was apprehended by an angry Ephesian crowd until being released at the urging of the city clerk (Acts 19:29). This is likely the same Gaius who traveled with Paul into Macedonia (20:4). **(2)** A member of the church in Corinth who was baptized by Paul (1 Cor. 1:14) and who showed great hospitality to the entire Corinthian church during Paul's time in that city (Rom. 16:23). **(3)** An elder in the church addressed by the author of 3 John who is praised for his faithfulness to the gospel (v. 1).

GALAL **(1)** A Levite, a descendant of Asaph, who returned to Jerusalem after the exile (1 Chron. 9:15). **(2)** A descendant of Jeduthun and ancestor of Obadiah (1 Chron. 9:16) and Abda (Neh. 11:17), two Levites who returned to Jerusalem after the exile.

GALATIA An ethnic-geographic area in northern Asia Minor inhabited primarily by peoples of Gaulic and Celtic extraction since the mid-fourth century BC. In 25 BC the Romans conferred provincial status not only on the northern ethnic-geographic Galatian area, but also on parts of Pontus, Phrygia, Pisidia, and Lycaonia, farther to the south. Some of the towns that Paul visited on his first missionary journey (Acts 13–14) were in the southern part of this area: Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe. Very little evidence remains attesting to the presence of either Jews or Christians in the Roman provincial area of Galatia in the first or second century AD, beyond reference in the NT and Christian writings drawing from the NT.

The location of the Galatian churches to which Paul writes in his letter to the Galatians remains a thorny problem. On the one hand, the address (Gal. 1:2) naturally seems to indicate the ethnic-geographic area of the north. On the other hand, if one takes Acts seriously, Paul never traveled in that area and thus had no chance to proclaim the gospel to the ethnic Galatians. Even Acts 16:6 places Paul over 125 miles southwest of this area. Thus, some scholars adopt the South Galatian hypothesis: Paul addresses his letter to people living in the southern part of the Roman province of Galatia and its environs.

GALATIAN An inhabitant of central Asia Minor (modern Turkey). Paul visited the Galatians (Acts 18:23) and wrote to them (Gal. 1:2). The Galatians were among several groups addressed in 1 Pet. 1:1.

GALATIANS, LETTER TO THE Galatians is often understood as the great letter teaching justification by faith in Christ alone. Paul inveighs against false teachers who teach Christians to supplement the work of Christ with their own keeping of the law as part of earning salvation.

This traditional reading has been powerful and edifying. However, setting Galatians within a plausible ancient social setting reveals further powerful functions of the letter. Galatians turns out to be more than a container delivering the timeless and vital doctrine of salvation by believing and not by doing. The approach to Galatians in this article seeks to establish plausible ancient social settings primarily through exploring a constellation of ancient Mediterranean cultural codes. This contextual orienting helps modern readers appreciate how issues that seem to us bizarre or insignificant might have been issues of life and death to people in different contexts.

SETTING AND MESSAGE

Cultural context. By the time of Galatians (mid-first century AD), a relatively common moral sensitivity existed among the diverse spectrum of Greco-Roman (pagan, Jewish, and Christian) intellectuals: self-mastery (*enkrateia*). The ideal person led a life of virtue by mastering powerful irrational passions, which led to excessive, weak, irrational, and evil behavior. Although people differed on the means to self-mastery, this general ideal defined broader notions about the successful life. Elites represented the ideal leader as one defined by self-mastery. This qualified such a person to rule others whose capacity for and attainment of self-mastery were inferior, to rule those who cannot even rule themselves. Authority figures projected this characteristic and perpetuated social worlds in which prestige and authority were bound up with the ideal of self-mastery. Many average people also made self-mastery an ideal, whether striving for it in their own lives or allocating authority and prestige to those perceived to have attained it. Various Jewish teachers presented Judaism, especially keeping its laws and studying its sacred writings, as the premier path to self-mastery and thus a happy life. Some pagans also conceived of Judaism, especially some of its laws, along these lines.

Certain Jewish views of Gentiles constitute another important cultural code. Many Jews read the OT as depicting the following concerning Gentiles: They were separated from Israel's God and his promises for his people, the Jews (Rom. 9:4–5; Eph. 2:11–13; 1 Pet. 2:10). They stood under God's condemnation, especially because they were idolaters controlled by their passions and sin, lacking self-mastery and the ability to live rightly (Rom. 1:18–32; Eph. 4:17–19; 1 Thess. 4:5; 1 Pet. 1:14, 18). Jews, on the other hand, were by definition God's special people, whom he had chosen over other nations (Deut. 7:6–8; 10:15; 26:18–19). He had watched over them and would ultimately rescue them. Gentiles would experience covenant blessing in and through Israel if they functionally became Jews by keeping the law, including the parts we understand as ceremonial-ritual law. The law was that special life-giving and regulating aspect of the covenant that God had revealed to Israel, which defined Jews as Jews (Lev. 18:1–5; 20:22–26; Deut. 4:1–8, 32–40; 6:24–25; 8:1–6; 10:12–11:32; 30:11–20; Josh. 1:7–9; Neh. 9:29; Pss. 119; 147:19–20; Ezek. 20:9–13, 21). Such law/Israel-centered conditions for Gentiles relate to a broader OT understanding: God had planned to restore the world through Israel, the locus of his saving activity. God would bless the nations in Abraham's descendants, Israel (Gen. 12:1–3; 17:4–6; 22:18; 26:4; 28:14). Various passages depict this happening as the nations were subjected to Israel, came to Israel, served Israel, presented Israel with their own wealth and possessions, and/or feared Israel's God (Gen. 49:8–12; Num. 24:9, 17–19; Isa. 11:10–16; 14:2; 45:23; 49:22–23; 51:4–5; 54:3; 55:5; 60:3–16; 61:5–6; 66:12–13, 18–21; Mic. 7:12–17; Zech. 2:11; 8:22–23). Other passages further elucidate the law-defined nature of such Gentile participation in the God of Israel's salvation (Gen. 17:9–14; Exod. 12:48; Isa. 2:2–5; 56:1–8; Jer. 12:14–17; Mic. 4:1–5; Zech. 14:16–21). God would condemn Gentiles who remain separate from Israel, especially Gentiles who harm Israel. For many Jews around the time of Galatians, salvation for Gentiles thus remained Israel-centered.

Many ancient Jews also construed the world through apocalyptic views of reality. This understanding conceived of the present visible world as characterized by the influence of evil supernatural beings (demons), suffering, and evil. One day God and his angels would completely triumph in the invisible heavenly reality; the events in this reality determine life in the lower visible world. Then the evil age of the present world of suffering would be over. Evil and suffering would be vanquished, God's people would be rescued, the agents of suffering in the old age would be judged, the Spirit would be poured out, the nations would come to Israel's God, and the heavenly reality would fully break in and renew the visible world. God's people, Israel, would experience ultimate salvation, having been rescued from the evil age. The law remained a defining reality in God's plans to rescue the world in most Jewish apocalyptic scenarios. Experiencing this salvation remained a matter of being part of God's righteous people, Israel.

Situation of the letter. With these cultural codes in view, the following situation for the letter of Galatians seems plausible. Paul proclaimed to some of the predominantly Gentile population of Galatia the good news ("gospel") of the God of Israel's salvation through Jesus the Messiah (Gal. 1:8–9, 11; 4:13). Some accepted this message of faith and devoted themselves to Jesus and the God of Israel (1:2, 9; 3:1–6; 4:14–20). After Paul left, other Christian teachers came to Galatia. They possibly claimed association with the Jerusalem church and, perhaps, with Peter and James. In line with some of the Jewish views of Gentiles discussed above, they taught that the Gentile Christians in Galatia must functionally become Jews and keep the law (for other examples of such early Christian teachers, see Acts 11:1–3; 15:1, 5). These other teachers probably drew on Scriptures and traditions about Abraham to make their arguments. The God of Israel would save his people, "the righteous," and through them the rest of the world, through the relationship that he had initially established with Abraham (Gen. 12:1–3; 17:4–6; 22:18; 26:4; 28:14). The teachers could easily show from the Scriptures that circumcision and the law defined God's relationship with Abraham and were always intended to do so (17:9–14; 26:5). They, like most contemporary Jewish writers, thought that obedience to the law (26:5) defined Abraham's faith toward God (15:6). If the Galatians were to be Abraham's descendants, they too must keep the law and be circumcised like their new father, Abraham. The teachers could also deploy passages from the Scriptures to the effect that everyone who did not keep the law was cursed (Deut. 27:26; cf. Gal. 3:10), but that everyone who kept the law would live (Lev. 18:5; cf. Gal. 3:12). For these teachers, Jesus the Messiah was part of the final stage in the God of Israel's law-shaped apocalyptic plan to rescue his people (the Jews) and, through them, the nations.

It seems that the teachers also capitalized on the moral sensitivity of self-mastery and the not uncommon understanding of the Jewish law as an ideal means for attaining it. Thus, they also urged the Galatians to keep the law through representing it as a means to attaining the prestigious moral and social ideal of self-mastery. Furthermore, the Galatians may have thought that the law offered them a concrete guide to life because of its numerous detailed prescriptions. It also provided substantive ways for the Galatians to reinforce their identity in the midst of their villages, especially because it commanded practices that could set them apart. As a result, at least some of the Galatian Christians decided to keep the law, perhaps seeking circumcision. They were persuaded that the God of Israel and Jesus only save those within the Jewish space defined by the law. These Galatians sought to keep the law, looking to its power for self-mastery.

OUTLINE

I. Greeting (1:1–5)

II. The Law-Defined Gospel Is a Different Gospel (1:6–10)

III. Paul's Gospel Is Straight from God (1:11–24)

IV. The Jerusalem Apostles Recognize Paul's Law-Free Gospel (2:1–10)

V. Paul and Peter on Whether Gentiles Should Live Like Jews (2:11–21)

VI. Works of the Law or Christ's Faithfulness? (3:1–5)

VII. Paul Addresses the Situation in Galatia (3:6–4:31)
  A. Scriptural arguments to answer Paul's question (3:6–14)
  B. Incorporation into Christ means incorporation into Abraham (3:15–29)
  C. Heirs versus slaves (4:1–11)
  D. The Galatians' past experience with Paul and the gospel (4:12–20)
  E. Heirs versus slaves: Sarah and Hagar (4:21–31)

VIII. Summary and Restatement of Paul's Argument (5:1–12)

IX. The Faithfulness of Christ and Communal Living (5:13–6:10)
  A. Freedom in Christ (5:13–15)
  B. Self-mastery (5:16–24)
  C. The way of the Spirit and Christ's cruciform faithfulness (5:25–6:10)

X. Conclusion and Summary (6:11–18)

STRUCTURE AND CONTENTS

I. Greeting (1:1–5). When Paul hears of this situation among the Galatian churches, he writes them a frustrated letter. He commences by stressing how Jesus, through giving himself for our sins, is God's means for delivering us from the present evil age (1:3–4). As Paul will make clear, Jesus and the law represent mutually exclusive means of deliverance (3:21–22). In contrast to most Jews, Paul will thus shockingly dissociate the law from the God of Israel's apocalyptic deliverance.

II. The law-defined gospel is a different gospel (1:6–10). Paul continues by making clear his point of view: despite what the other teachers say, their law-defined gospel is in fact a damnable "different gospel" (1:6–10).

III. Paul's gospel is straight from God (1:11–24). While the other teachers may claim that their gospel comes from the authoritative Jerusalem church, Paul explains that his gospel comes straight from God and not from other men (1:11–24).

IV. The Jerusalem apostles recognize Paul's law-free gospel (2:1–10). However, when he had met with the Jerusalem apostles, they had recognized his law-free gospel (1:18–2:10). Indeed, they had not forced Titus to be circumcised (2:3). Also, 1:18–2:10 represents Paul as an embodiment of the radical transforming power of the gospel. Whereas Paul previously had advanced far and zealously "in Judaism," persecuting the church, now he steadfastly serves the church and boldly stands against Jews who zealously seek to impose the law ("Judaism") on Gentile Christians.

V. Paul and Peter on whether Gentiles should live like Jews (2:11–21). Paul then narrates an account of an incident that speaks directly to the Galatian situation (2:11–21). Previously in Antioch Peter had acted so as to imply that Gentiles would have to live like Jews (e.g., keep the law) in order to truly be unified with God's people (2:11–14). Paul, however, has rebuked Peter (2:14). Paul continues with a speech about how Gentiles are made righteous ("justified") not within the space demarcated by the “works of the law,” but rather within the faithfulness of Jesus the Messiah (2:15–16). The works of the law, or the duties commanded by the law, do not define those who are “righteous”—that is, God’s true people who will be saved. Rather, the faithfulness of Christ defines God’s true people, the ones who believe in Jesus. Here Paul for the first time explicitly dissociates the law from the God of Israel’s apocalyptic salvation in Jesus (the) Christ. The law, which defines Gentiles as “sinners,” has been torn down in Christ’s crucifixion (2:17–18). Paul then presents himself as an embodiment of God’s saving work in Christ. In being crucified with Christ, he has died to the law. Paul no longer lives, but now Christ lives in him. The faithfulness of Christ, who loves him and has given himself for him, now defines Paul’s life, not the law (2:19–20). From a more traditional Jewish perspective, Paul has undermined God’s grace because he has marginalized the law, the premier means of grace and life that God has given to his people. In fact, however, the law is utterly opposed to Christ’s faithful saving death, which is the true means of God’s ultimate saving and gracious actions toward his people (2:21).

This understanding of 2:11–21 revolves around how Paul considers his entire discussion of justification, the faithfulness of Christ, and the words of the law to be dealing with the issue of whether Gentiles should be forced to live like Jews (2:14). This might seem surprising to us. Does this not reduce Paul’s discussion of the great doctrine of justification to dealing merely with social and identity issues? Within the logic of Jewish apocalyptic thought, however, issues of the identity of God’s people and what defines them are by definition ultimate salvation issues, not merely social issues. The God of Israel will rescue only his true people. Thus questions of who really constitutes his true people and how they are defined are paramount, life-and-death, salvation issues. Paul never abandons Jewish apocalyptic salvation logic; he simply redefines it around Christ and not the law.

This reading understands the phrase *pistis Christou* as “the faithfulness of Christ,” a shorthand reference to Jesus’ faithful saving death on the cross. Traditionally people translate the phrase as “faith in Christ.” In line with much recent scholarship, however, this discussion understands the phrase differently, while still recognizing that Paul considers belief in Christ to be of paramount importance: “so we also have believed in Christ Jesus in order to be justified by the faithfulness of Christ and not by the works of the law” (2:16 [all translations are the author’s]).

The landscape of the area of Galatia, present-day south-central Turkey

VI. Works of the law or Christ's faithfulness? (3:1–5). So far, Paul has not addressed the powerful scriptural arguments and appeals to the law as a means to self-mastery through which the opposing teachers have gained influence. As becomes clear from the rest of the letter, Paul does not anchor his counterarguments ultimately in interpretations of the Jewish Scriptures, possibly because the scriptural arguments of the opposing teachers would have more cogency. Again, they draw on understandings about Gentiles that they can easily ground in the God of Israel's sacred writings. Paul instead appeals directly to how the Galatians have experienced salvation initially. Have they received and experienced the workings of the Spirit "out of/from the works of the law, or from the message of (Christ's) faithfulness" (3:1–5)? Paul, of course, knows that the answer is "from the message of Christ's faithfulness" (often translated as "hearing with faith") apart from the works of the law. Paul thus plays a trump card that undercuts the opposing teachers. The Galatians have received the Spirit, a classic end-time blessing for the God of Israel's people, apart from the law. Thus, in Christ, God's people clearly cannot be defined by the law (see also Acts 10:44–11:18; 15:6–11). The law-defined gospel of the opposing teachers simply cannot be right, since the Galatians have received the Spirit and experienced salvation apart from the law. One cannot overstate the importance of this obvious argument from the Galatians' experience for Paul. This settles the entire issue within the logic of his letter. All of Paul's following arguments using the Jewish Scriptures presuppose that his readings of them, depicting Gentile participation in the God of Israel's people apart from the law, must be correct, and that the opposing teachers' arguments from Scripture also must be wrong.

VII. Paul addresses the situation in Galatia (3:6–4:31). For the rest of 3:6–4:31, Paul continues to address the situation in Galatia within the cultural codes and kinds of concerns sketched above. In 3:6–13 Paul launches into a densely packed excursus of scriptural arguments to set up an answer to his rhetorical question "Does he who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you do so out of/from the works of the law, or from the message of (Christ's) faithfulness?" (3:5). He sets up the answer to his question, which comes in 3:14, by focusing on the nature of the Galatians' Abrahamic sonship—that is, the nature of their identity as the God of Israel's special people. Paul argues that Christ's faithfulness, and not the law, defines their Abrahamic sonship. Within this excursus it seems plausible that Paul draws upon and undercuts texts that the opposing teachers have used (Lev. 18:5; Deut. 27:26). In 3:15–29 Paul elucidates how the Galatians' incorporation into Christ through his faithfulness can actually mean that they are incorporated into Abraham, become his descendants, and thus become "heirs according to promise" (3:29).

In 4:1–7 Paul restates parts of his preceding discussion in a different way, introducing the language of slavery. In 4:12–20 Paul returns to reminding the Galatians of their past experience with himself and the gospel. Paul has embodied Christ to them, and they to him. He has brought them Christ in his weakness, and they have accepted him as such. Their turn to the opposing teachers marks a departure from how they first received Paul.

VIII. Summary and restatement of Paul's argument (5:1–12). In 5:2–6 Paul quickly summarizes the substance of his arguments thus far, while in 5:7–12 he resummarizes the situation.

IX. The faithfulness of Christ and communal living (5:13–6:10). In 5:13–6:10 Paul finally depicts the positive content of the faithfulness of Christ for the Galatians. This section, in which Paul focuses on how the Galatians live communally, has been his driving focus all along. Not only must he offer something in place of the law for self-mastery in order to wrench the Galatians from the influence of the opposing teachers, but also Paul considers it absolutely necessary for the Galatians to live together in ways embodying Christ's other-oriented, cross-shaped faithfulness (2:19–20; 4:19; 5:13–6:10). Paul does not view the law simply as a neutral, ineffectual means to self-mastery; rather, he thinks that the law will positively work death, slavery, and irrational passions, the things that would bar the Galatians from inheriting the kingdom of God (5:22). Thus, 5:13–6:10 is the most important part of the letter for Paul. All his earlier arguments serve his purposes here.

Paul begins his positive sketch of the faithfulness of Christ in 5:13–15 by talking about their freedom in Christ (5:1). This freedom from the law by no means implies freedom from the obligation to live faithfully. In fact, this freedom paradoxically means freedom for the Galatians to become slaves to one another through love (5:13). This is what Paul means by the cross-shaped faithfulness of Christ defining God's people. This is what Paul means when he writes that he longs for Christ to be formed in them (4:19). Christ's faithfulness redefines the law itself, such that becoming slaves to one another through love by loving your neighbor fulfills the whole law (5:14; 6:2). In 5:13–14 Paul thus surprisingly informs the Galatians that freedom in Christ means other-oriented, love-driven (cf. 5:6), cross-shaped freedom. Cross-shaped faithfulness leading them to become slaves to one another through love is the only antidote to their biting and devouring one another (5:15), classic Greco-Roman language for describing the control of irrational passions.

Paul gets more specific in 5:16–25, explicitly moving his discussion within the discourse of self-mastery. His earlier arguments dissociating the Spirit and Christ's faithfulness from the law inform this passage, as does Paul's implicit association of the law and the opposing teachers with "flesh" in 4:29. Only by the Spirit can the Galatians overcome the desires of the flesh (5:16–17). In 5:18–19 Paul makes clear his association of the law with the desires of the flesh, especially in 5:19, where he speaks of the “works of the flesh,” an obvious play on his frequent phrase “works of the law.” The works of the flesh in 5:19–21 read like a catalog of the vices with which broader Greco-Roman moral discourse characterizes people who lack self-mastery. People who engage in such vices, who lack the struggle to self-mastery empowered by the Spirit, “will not inherit the kingdom of God” (5:21). Paul then spells out the positive content of the faithfulness of Christ for the Galatians in terms of the fruit of the Spirit. He concludes this list of virtues, which characterize people who have the Spirit, with *enkrateia*, “self-mastery” (5:22–23). He continues, “And the ones who belong to Christ have crucified the flesh, with its passions and desires” (5:24). Paul’s language here seems reminiscent of his earlier self-representation as one who has been crucified with Christ (2:19–20; see also 6:14–15). The Spirit, who belongs exclusively to those who are God’s children through Christ’s faithfulness and not the law (3:14; 4:4–6), empowers the Galatians to attain self-mastery. Not only does the law fail to help them attain self-mastery, but also, as part of the old “evil” age, it works with the desires of the flesh to produce everything contrary to self-mastery, everything that disqualifies people from inheriting the kingdom of God.

Paul continues in 5:25–6:10, stressing the way of the Spirit and Christ’s cruciform faithfulness. In 6:6–10 Paul underlines the ultimate importance of the Galatians living in accordance with the Spirit and not the flesh. For Paul, this does not imply that salvation and self-mastery result from the Galatians’ own autonomous effort. That would miss the point entirely. Only Christ’s faithfulness and the Spirit can bring about the cross-shaped lives and self-mastery of which Paul speaks. Apart from Christ’s faithfulness and the Spirit, the Galatians would remain people mastered by their passions and desires and cut off from God’s salvation and blessings, since they would not be Abraham’s descendants in Christ. At the same time, Paul writes the letter with such passion because he is convinced that where Christ’s other-oriented, cross-shaped faithfulness and self-mastery do not characterize people, God’s saving blessings are absent as well. Thus Paul “is again in the anguish of childbirth” until Christ is formed in them (4:19).

X. Conclusion and summary (6:11–18). Paul concludes in 6:11–18, summarizing most of his main points. The law and circumcision now count for nothing; only faithfulness working through love and new creation in Christ count for anything (5:6; 6:15).

For Paul in Galatians, the other-oriented, cross-shaped faithfulness of Christ offers a more concrete communal identity and practical way to life than the law ever could. The faithfulness of Christ and Spirit define the Galatians as a people of the new creation. Justification in Galatians involves more than the traditional doctrine. It involves the unification associated with the fruit of the Spirit, not the division and strife of the works of the flesh/law. It relates to and establishes the conditions for the radical and tangible other-oriented and cross-shaped communal faithfulness (of Christ) that must define God’s people.

GALEED An English rendering of the Hebrew word *gal’ed*, meaning “witness pile” (Gen. 31:47–48). The patriarch Jacob chose “Galeed” as the name for the pile of stones that he and his clan erected as a memorial of the covenant between Jacob and his father-in-law, Laban. The pile also marked the boundary that neither was to cross in order to harm the other. The Aramaic-speaking Laban instead used the equivalent Aramaic term “Jegar Sahadutha.”

GALILEAN Someone who lives in or originates from Galilee. Jesus grew up in the extremely southern part of Galilee, at Nazareth, and his first followers were drawn from throughout the region. Galilee had a population of about three hundred thousand people in two hundred or more villages, as well as several large cities (Josephus, *Life* 235). Galileans shared a unique dialect (Matt. 26:73; cf. Acts 2:7). The region had a reputation for fomenting rebellion (Luke 13:1; 23:5–6). The Pharisee Gamaliel mentions Judas the Galilean (Acts 5:37), who sparked a revolt against the census under Quirinius around AD 6 (Josephus, *J.W.* 2.118, 433; *Ant.* 18.23). Galilee was also associated with non-Jews (Gentiles) primarily because of the Decapolis, a league of approximately ten cities (Matt. 4:12–17, citing Isa. 9:1–2; Mark 7:31). However, archaeological evidence and the NT suggest that Galilean Jews, many of whom colonized the area during the rule of the Maccabees, retained close cultural and religious ties with Judea and the temple (Luke 1:26–27; 2:1–7, 39–40; John 4:45).

GALILEE The northern region of Israel. The name can mean "circle," "region," or "district." Determining the region's precise boundaries is difficult, but in Jesus' time it appears to have encompassed an area of about forty-five miles north to south and twenty-five miles east to west, with the Jordan River and the Sea of Galilee forming the eastern border. Josephus divides the region into Upper and Lower Galilee. Upper Galilee contains elevations of up to about four thousand feet and is comprised mostly of rugged mountains, while Lower Galilee reaches a maximum height of about two thousand feet and is characterized by numerous fertile valleys. Lower Galilee was the site of most of Jesus' ministry.

Galilee appears several times in the OT (e.g., Josh. 20:7; 1 Kings 9:11; 1 Chron. 6:76). It was part of the land given to the twelve tribes (Josh. 19). Since Galilee was distant from Jerusalem, which played the most prominent part in Jewish history, much of its history is not mentioned in the OT. Many of the references that do occur are military references, such as Joshua's defeat of the kings at the waters of Merom (Josh. 11:1–9) and the Assyrian removal of the northern kingdom of Israel (Isa. 9:1). However, its great beauty, particularly of mountains such as Carmel, Hermon, and Lebanon, was the source of numerous images and metaphors in the poetic and prophetic literature (e.g., Ps. 133:3; Isa. 33:9; 35:2; Jer. 46:18).

Galilee figures more prominently in the NT. Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and conducted much of his early ministry there. Luke specifically identifies Galilee as the place where Jesus' ministry began before spreading to Judea (Luke 23:5; Acts 10:37). Galilee is also portrayed as the place where Jesus will reunite with his disciples following the resurrection (Mark 16:7) and where he gives them the Great Commission (Matt. 28:16–20).

GALILEE, SEA OF *See* Sea of Galilee.

GALL An ambiguous term referring to bitterness or something bitter. The NIV uses "gall" six times to translate three different Hebrew words and one Greek word, although other translations use various other words in these texts. The first of these is *merorah*, translated in Deut. 32:32 as "bitterness." In the book of Job it is understood to mean "gall" (16:13 [here meaning "bile"]), "venom" (20:14), and the "liver" (20:25). The second word is *ro'sh*, which occurs about a dozen times and most often refers to poison or something poisonous (e.g., Ps. 69:21; Lam. 3:19). Some understand this word to refer to hemlock, while others believe it to be opium poppies or some other drug-yielding plant. Although identifications are numerous, perhaps it is best to understand *ro'sh* as an ambiguous term encompassing almost any drug, lethal or not. Another word sometimes translated as "gall" is *la'anah*, which frequently means "bitter" or "bitterness" (e.g., Prov. 5:4; Lam. 3:15). This word is also rendered as "wormwood" in some versions. The Greek word *cholē* functions as the catchall rendering for these Hebrew words. It occurs many times in ancient sources, though only twice in the NT, once as the gall mixed with wine offered to Jesus at his crucifixion (Matt. 27:34; cf. Ps. 69:21), and again as the metaphorical gall that symbolized the "bitterness" of Simon the Magician (Acts 8:23). It is likely that *cholē* is the word from which the English word "gall" is derived.

GALLERY An architectural term (Heb. *'attiq*) used in the description of Ezekiel's vision of the temple complex (Ezek. 41:15–16; 42:3, 5). The precise nature of the spaces mentioned is uncertain. See also the "galleries" in Song 7:5 KJV (Heb. *rahat* [NIV, NRSV: "tresses"]).

GALLEY A ship propelled by many oars. The term appears only in Isa. 33:21, where Isaiah prophesies that Jerusalem "will be like a place of broad rivers and streams" that no "galley with oars" or "mighty ship" will navigate.

GALLIM A town mentioned in Isa. 10:30, which implies that it was located between Gibeah and Laishah, just north of Jerusalem. After his falling out with David, Saul gave his daughter Michal, formerly David's wife, to Palti, an inhabitant of Gallim (1 Sam. 25:44). The obscurity of the term has led some to identify Gallim with similar-sounding locations, such as Gilgal (Josh. 15:7), Geliloth (Josh. 18:17), or Beth Gilgal (Neh. 12:29). The LXX mentions Gallim (Codex A; Codex B has Galem) in a text that is unparalleled in the Hebrew text, following Josh. 15:59.

GALLIO The proconsul of Achaia in the years AD 51–52. He was the brother of the Stoic philosopher Seneca, with whom he shared a reputation for anti-Semitism. In Acts 18:12–17, the Jews of Corinth bring Paul before Gallio's tribunal with the charge of persuading people to worship against the law. Since the charge is brought before the Roman proconsul, this probably refers to Roman law, not Jewish. Under Roman law, Judaism enjoyed the status of being a *collegium licita* (recognized religion), and so its members were exempt from the obligations of emperor worship. Christianity did not enjoy this status, and the Jewish prosecutors wanted Paul's preaching be seen as part of a *religio illicita* (illegal religion).

Inscription mentioning Lucius Junius Gallio as the proconsul of Achaia (AD 52)

Gallio did not allow Paul to speak, but he resolved that this was a dispute about words and the Jewish law; he refused to pass judgment. The Jews and Christians were left to settle the issue among themselves. Sosthenes, the ruler of the synagogue, was mistreated, and Gallio showed his total indifference by doing nothing. The fact that Gallio did not side with the Jews against the Christians may have given Christianity greater status in the Roman colony of Corinth. By including this account in Acts, Luke wishes to show that Christianity does not represent a threat to Rome.

GALLON The English word "gallon" is used in some Bible versions to render equivalent amounts for Hebrew or Greek measures. For example, the NIV translates the Greek for "one hundred *batous*" of olive oil (a *batos* was about eight or nine gallons) into its equivalent of "nine hundred gallons" (Luke 16:6). Similarly, the NIV translates the Greek for "two or three *metrētas*" (a *metrētēs* was about nine gallons) as "twenty to thirty gallons" (John 2:6).

GALLOWS The Hebrew word for "tree" (*'ets*) is translated as "gallows" in the book of Esther in several versions (e.g., ESV, NRSV, NASB; NIV: "pole"), indicating a structure upon which criminals were executed by being hanged by the neck until dead. Haman and his ten sons are hanged on a gallows seventy-five feet (fifty cubits) in height. This height measurement may have included the hill upon which the gallows stood.

GAMALIEL **(1)** Gamaliel the son of Pedahzur is mentioned in Num. 1:10; 2:20; 7:54, 59; 10:23. He is described as the chief of the tribe of Manasseh (Num. 2:20), and he is chosen to help Moses take the census in the wilderness. **(2)** Gamaliel (also known as Gamaliel the Elder or Gamaliel I), who is mentioned in Acts 5:34; 22:3, was a member of the Sanhedrin, a Pharisee, and a teacher of the law. He is reputed to have been the grandson of the famous sage and scholar Hillel (according to later tradition). He was a member of the Hillel party of the Pharisees, who were renowned for their more liberal interpretation of Scripture when compared with the more conservative Shammai party. In Acts 5:34–40 Gamaliel intervenes at the trial of the apostles before the Sanhedrin with a reasoned speech. Paul acknowledges him as his teacher in Acts 22:3. He is also mentioned in the Mishnah, which says, “When Rabban Gamaliel the Elder died, the glory of the Law ceased and purity and abstinence died” (*m. Sotah* 9:15).

GAMES The Bible contains little information about nonathletic games, but archaeology has revealed numerous types of board games and children’s games in Egypt, Mesopotamia, and Canaan. Although actual game pieces and dice have been found, information concerning the rules of the games is lacking. The Hebrew Bible does not describe anything like Greek or Roman games, but the NT makes numerous references to athletic competitions.

Greek games originated with funeral rites that commemorated heroes. The *Iliad* provides the earliest reference to Greek games as it describes games sponsored by Achilles in memory of Patroklos. The games became an integral part of Greek culture, honored the Greek gods, and were an essential element in a Greek education. Games were held at hundreds of local festivals across the Mediterranean, but the four Panhellenic games were the most prestigious. The games were accompanied by a sacred truce and held in sanctuaries. The Greeks trained and competed in the nude. Initially, running was the only competition, but by the second century AD Pausanius enumerated twenty-four contests, all of which were individual competitions. The specific contests varied from place to place, but the main events included running, chariot racing, long jumping, javelin throwing, discus throwing (2 Macc. 4:14), wrestling, boxing (1 Cor. 9:26), and the *pankration*, which was a form of all-out fighting. Some of the games included musical competitions. The prize, a wreath, was awarded only for first prize, and the winner of all four Panhellenic games was the *periodonikēs*. The victor returned home to a hero’s welcome, fame, and gifts. Some examples of cheating and bribery have survived, and those caught were fined.

The Olympic games, established in 776 BC, were the oldest and most prestigious of the Panhellenic games. They were held every four years in the sanctuary complex of Zeus in Olympia. The stadium was typically about 600 feet long, but Olympia’s was the longest, at about 630 feet, because of the tradition that Heracles had laid out the course. The remaining Panhellenic games were established about two hundred years later, in the sixth century BC. The Pythian games were held at the sanctuary of Apollo in Delphi. The Nemean games were held at the sanctuary of Zeus in Argos. The Isthmian games were administered by Corinth at the sanctuary of Poseidon.

The Romans preferred gladiatorial games and wild-game hunts over Greek games. Nevertheless, Romans were allowed to participate in the Panhellenic games. In fact, the emperors Tiberius and Nero participated. The Roman games were wildly popular with the people. By the second century

AD, 135 days of games were held each year in Rome. The Circus Maximus was the largest venue, allowing up to two hundred thousand spectators to attend the chariot races. The Colosseum, the largest amphitheater in the Roman Empire, was built in AD 80, financed with spoils taken during the First Jewish Revolt. It held fifty thousand spectators for the gladiatorial games. Prisoners of war, slaves, and criminals condemned to die were forced to fight as gladiators and face wild beasts. Gladiatorial games were held throughout the empire. Herod the Great threw condemned criminals to wild animals in his amphitheater near Jerusalem in order to delight the spectators (Josephus, *Ant*. 15.273–75). Paul refers to fighting wild beasts in Ephesus (1 Cor. 15:32), though this is likely a metaphor for his spiritual opponents. Roman-style games honored Rome and became a symbol of loyalty to the Roman Empire.

Jewish views toward Greek and Roman games varied. Some Jews, especially those in the Diaspora, embraced the games as spectators and participants (2 Macc. 4:9–14). During the reign of Antiochus IV, some Jewish youth participated in the gymnasium in Jerusalem. They even underwent surgery to cover the signs of their circumcision (1 Macc. 1:12–15). Herod the Great built amphitheaters, stadiums, and hippodromes throughout his kingdom, and Philo of Alexandria frequented the games. However, the authors of 1–2 Maccabees criticize the priests for neglecting their duties by attending the games. Furthermore, the religious association of the games led many conservative Jews to oppose the games.

Because Paul and his audiences were familiar with Greek and Roman games, he drew upon them as analogies to the Christian life. During Paul’s eighteen-month ministry in Corinth, the nearby Isthmian games were played. Through references to training and competition, Paul demonstrates the need to be disciplined, focused, determined as an athlete (1 Cor. 9:24–27; 2 Tim. 4:7; cf. Heb. 12:1). In contrast to the wreath won by Greek athletes, Christians strive for an eternal prize and a crown of righteousness (1 Cor. 9:27; Phil. 3:14; 2 Tim. 4:7–8).

GAMMAD A place of uncertain location mentioned in Ezekiel’s lament concerning Tyre (Ezek. 27). The “men of Gammad” (KJV: “Gammadims”) are one of several groups of people named in connection with Tyre. The men of Gammad specifically were “in [Tyre’s] towers” (27:11), meaning that they defended the city. The Hebrew word (*gammadim*) may be a reference to a type of warrior (cf. ASV: “valorous men”) and not a proper noun, but most modern translators understand “Gammad” to be a place name.

GAMMADIM *See* Gammad.

GAMUL The head of a division of priests during the reign of David (1 Chron. 24:17).

GANGRENE The decay or death of body tissue after an injury due to loss of blood supply. In ancient times it also referred to a spreading ulcer or cancer. Paul compares the unchecked spread of the teaching of those who indulge in “godless chatter” to gangrene (2 Tim. 2:17).

GANGS The word “gang” appears only rarely in English translations of the Bible (e.g., Judg. 11:3 NIV; 1 Kings 11:24 NLT), but other terms with a similar meaning—a group of people gathered together under common allegiance to accomplish some purpose, often malicious—occur throughout Scripture. Most prominent are groups of raiders who rob (Hos. 7:1) and pillage (1 Sam. 30:15–16). Generally, these groups are from outside Israel (e.g., 2 Kings 13:20; 24:2), though David has his own “raiding bands” (1 Chron. 12:18), and Job accuses God of besieging him with his “troops” (Job 19:12), using the same Hebrew word (*gedud*). Job loses his property to two such raiding parties (Job 1:15, 17). Hosea compares the actions of priests to marauders in ambush (Hos. 6:9). The bands that surround and threaten the life of the psalmist (Pss. 22:16; 86:14) might also be considered gangs. The Hebrew word there (*’edah*) also describes the followers of Korah who opposed Moses (Num. 16:5). In Egypt the Israelites were forced into work gangs (Exod. 1:11), and later Solomon conscripted the foreigners in Israel into his own slave labor force (1 Kings 9:21). In the NT, large crowds often threaten Jesus (Luke 4:29–30) and his followers (Acts 14:19; 16:22; 21:27). But with the exception of those from the chief priests led by Judas (Matt. 26:47; Mark 14:43; Luke 22:47; John 18:3) and the gang of over forty Jewish men who bound themselves in an oath to murder the apostle Paul (Acts 23:12–13), these groups do not seem organized enough to qualify as gangs.

GARDEN An enclosed farming area where vegetables and fruit trees are cultivated. Vineyards, orchards, and olive groves belong to a broader category of the garden. Gardens in biblical times generally were surrounded by a wall of mud-bricks or stones, along with a hedge of thorny bushes (Prov. 24:31; Song 4:12; Isa. 5:5). A booth or watchtower was set up to guard it from thieves and wild animals (Job 27:18; Isa. 1:8; 5:2). For irrigation, water was raised from wells or brought in through a canal system connected to rivers or springs.

Since most of the land of Canaan was a hilly and arid region, a well-watered garden was highly valued. Thus Balaam blesses the tents of the Israelites to be “like gardens beside a river” (Num. 24:6–7; cf. Ps. 1:3; Jer. 17:8). Notably, in Gen. 13:10 the Plain of Jordan, in its fertility from the ample water supply, is likened to two places: “the garden of the LORD” and “the land of Egypt.” The land of Egypt had developed vegetable gardens, with an irrigation system connected to the Nile (Deut. 11:10; cf. Num. 11:5). The garden of the Lord, or the garden of Eden, was also such a place of fruitfulness, with rivers and fruit trees, especially the tree of life (Gen. 2:9–10).

The garden of Eden also carries various connotations that are developed in the rest of the Bible. It is a place secluded from the world, where nakedness is not shameful (Gen. 2:25). Song of Songs describes the garden as a place of perfect love. It is also a meeting place between God and human beings (Gen. 2:16–17; 3:8–14; cf. idolatrous gardens in Isa. 1:29–31; 65:3; 66:17). More important, God is the gardener who planted it (Gen. 2:8).

The metaphorical identification of God as the gardener is frequently developed in the OT. In Deut. 11:10–12 the land of Canaan is described as a garden that God himself will take care of. Isaiah presents Zion as the vineyard that God planted and cultivated but decided to destroy due to its unfruitfulness (Isa. 5:1–7; cf. Jer. 12:10; Ezek. 19:10; Joel 2:3); after the time of its desolation, however, God also promises to restore and care for it (Isa. 27:2–6). Restored Zion is likened to a well-watered garden and even the garden of Eden (Isa. 51:3; 58:11; 61:11; cf. Jer. 31:12; Ezek. 36:34–35; 47:12).

Descriptions of God as the gardener perhaps convey the conception of kingship. Gardens belonged to socially prestigious people, especially royalty, as indicated by the references to the king’s garden at Jerusalem (2 Kings 25:4; Jer. 39:4; 52:7; Neh. 3:15) as well as the Persian palace garden (Esther 1:5; 7:7–8). But a royal garden was particularly regarded as the main achievement of a king (Eccles. 2:4–6; also note the story of Naboth’s vineyard in 1 Kings 21). The allusions to the garden of Eden in the taunt songs of the kings of Tyre, Assyria, and Pharaoh (Ezek. 28:13; 31:8–9, 16, 18) also support this relationship.

Metaphorical use of the garden continues in the NT. The people of God are described as the vegetation whose fruits reveal their identities (cf. Matt. 7:16–19). The need to bear fruit is particularly emphasized in the vineyard imagery of John 15, in which God is introduced as a farmer, Jesus as the vine, and believers as its branches. Paul mentions the bearing of fruit as the goal of Christian life (Rom. 7:4–5; Phil. 1:11; Col. 1:10), which is possible through the work of the Holy Spirit (Gal. 5:22–25). Revelation 21:1–22:5 describes the new Jerusalem as a restored garden of Eden, in the midst of which a river of life, issuing from beneath God's throne, provides abundant water for the tree of life on both sides.

Also noteworthy is the reference in the Gospel of John to the two gardens: the garden of Jesus' arrest (18:1–11) and the garden of Jesus' burial (19:41). Considering their location in Jerusalem and the usage of royal gardens for burial (cf. 2 Kings 21:18), it seems that John mentions the gardens in order to underline Jesus' kingship, which he particularly develops in John 18–19. Mary's perception of the risen Christ as a gardener possibly supports this interpretation (John 20:15).

GAREB **(1)** One of David's mighty men, called "the Ithrite" (2 Sam. 23:38; 1 Chron. 11:40). **(2)** A hill prophesied to be included in the new boundaries of Jerusalem (Jer. 31:38–40).

GARLAND English versions use the word "garland" to translate several Hebrew and Greek words referring to floral wreaths worn on the head, usually to bestow honor as a celebratory adornment. In the book of Proverbs, a garland indicates the honor bestowed on those who are wise (1:9; 4:9). A bridegroom wore a garland, while his bride was adorned with jewels (Isa. 61:10 NRSV). Laurel wreaths or garlands were given to victorious athletes in the Greek games (1 Cor. 9:25 [NIV: "crown"]), and the priest of Zeus in Lystra brought garlands as gifts for Paul and Barnabas to honor them as gods (Acts 14:13 [NIV: "wreaths"]). In the great day of salvation, God will symbolically be "a garland of glory" for his people (Isa. 28:5 NRSV [NIV: "glorious crown"]).

A bust of a Hellenistic man wearing a garland or wreath on his head (first century BC)

GARMENTS *See* Clothing.

GARMENTS, RENDING OF Tearing one's clothes as a way of manifesting deep emotion about some troubling phenomenon. Such situations included repenting sin, mourning, expressing outrage over unexpected or unacceptable circumstances, and seeking divine help in an imminent calamity (2 Kings 22:19; 2 Sam. 13:19, 31; Gen. 37:29; Esther 4:1). Priests were barred from making this emotional display, since their garments were sacred vestments (Lev. 10:6; 21:10; but cf. Matt. 26:65 // Mark 14:63). The Writings and the Latter Prophets emphasized inward (rather than outward) grief over sin (Ps. 34:18; Joel 2:13).

GARMITE A word used to describe Keilah, a descendant of Judah and Hodiah (1 Chron. 4:19). The meaning of "Garmite" is uncertain; it may denote Keilah's ancestry or his hometown, or it may indicate something else about him.

GARNER The KJV rendering of the Hebrew words *mazu* (Ps. 144:13) and *'otsar* (Joel 1:17) and the Greek word *apothēkē* (Matt. 3:12 // Luke 3:17), referring to barns or granaries.

GARRISON A military outpost or the soldiers stationed at a post located on a frontier or at a distance from the central headquarters of an occupying military force. In the OT, there were Philistine outposts in Israel when Saul was king (1 Sam. 10:5), which both he and his son Jonathan attacked (1 Sam. 13:3–4; 14:1, 4, 6, 11, 12, 15). David encountered a Philistine garrison encamped in Bethlehem (2 Sam. 23:13; 1 Chron. 11:17) and established his own garrisons in Damascus and in Edom (2 Sam. 8:6, 14; 1 Chron. 18:6, 13). During the time of the divided kingdom, King Jehoshaphat stationed garrisons in the cities of Judah and Ephraim (2 Chron. 17:12). In the NT, Paul escapes from the garrison-guarded city of Damascus (2 Cor. 11:32–33).

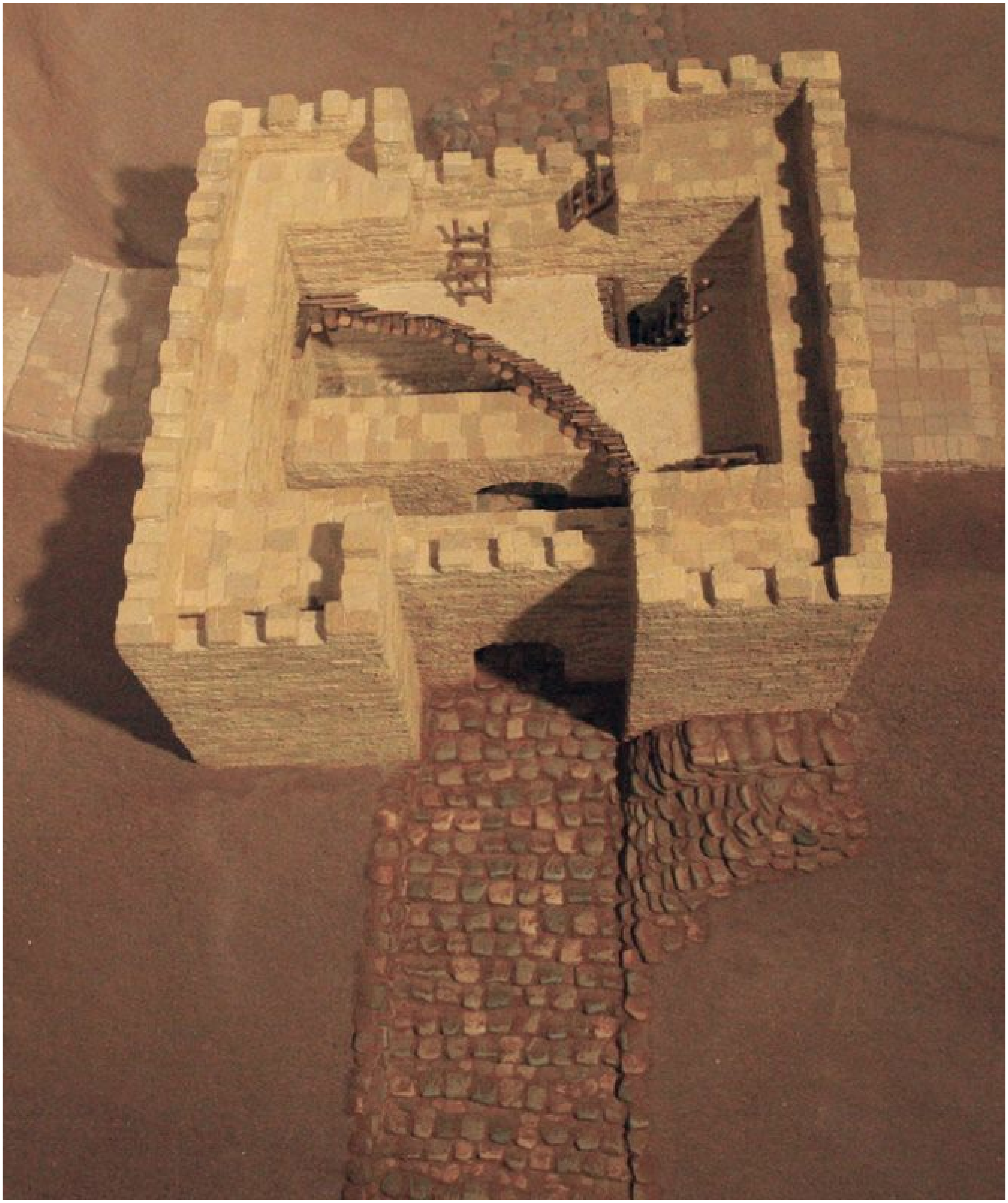
GASH The act of cutting the skin in a ritual of mourning (Jer. 41:5; 47:5) or as part of pagan religion (1 Kings 18:28). In the NIV, it is referred to as "cutting" or "slashing" oneself.

GASHAM, GASHMU *See* Geshem.

GATAM A descendant of Esau through his son Eliphaz (Gen. 36:11; 1 Chron. 1:36). One of the clans of the Edomites derives its name from Gatam (Gen. 36:16).

GATE A controlled point of entry into an otherwise enclosed area such as a city (Gen. 34:24; Ps. 122:2; Acts 9:24), camp (Exod. 32:26–27), tabernacle court (Exod. 35:17), palace (2 Kings 11:19), temple area (Jer. 36:10; Ezek. 40), prison (Acts 12:10), or house (Acts 10:17).

In the OT, the city gate has a central role in that city's military, economic, judicial, political, and religious aspects of life. A key component of the defense system of a city, the gate consists of doors fortified with bars (Judg. 16:3; Ps. 107:16; Nah. 3:13) and keeps invading armies out while also serving as the point of departure and return for the city's army (2 Sam. 18:4; cf. God the warrior entering in Ps. 24:7–8). The gate also may serve as the location where news of the battle is delivered (1 Sam. 4:18; 2 Sam. 18:24). The destruction of the city gate usually means the destruction of the city (Isa. 24:12).



A model of the Middle Bronze Age gate at Dan

In the economic life of the city, the gate functions as a place of commerce (Gen. 23; 2 Kings 7:1) and music (Lam. 5:14). At the entrance to the city gate, the city elders assembled daily to hear cases and render judgment (Job 29:7; Prov. 24:7). Along with the elders, there might be additional witnesses (Ruth 4:1–11; Ps. 69:12). For criminal cases, the gate may also be the location where punishment is enacted (Deut. 17:5; 22:24). Thus, the gate is to be a place where all people can come to obtain justice (2 Sam. 15:2–4; Isa. 29:21; Amos 5:15). The gate may hold a seat reserved for the king (2 Sam. 19:8) as well as the king's officials (Esther 2:19–21; 3:2–3). The city gate might also contain shrines to various gods (2 Kings 23:8; cf. Acts 14:13).

A city may have more than one gate (Jer. 17:19), each having a different name. For example, when Nehemiah sets out to rebuild the wall and gates of Jerusalem, there is mention of the Valley Gate, the Dung Gate, and the Fountain Gate (Neh. 2:11–17) as well as the Sheep Gate (3:1) and the Jeshanah Gate (3:6).

Some references to gates refer to those of the temple area (Ezek. 44; 46; Pss. 100:4; 118:19–20). In Ezek. 48 the temple area is to have twelve gates, each named after a tribe of Israel (Ezek. 48:30–35; cf. Rev. 21:12–25). The prophet Jeremiah proclaims the word of the Lord from both the city gate(s) (Jer. 17:19–27) and the temple gate(s) (7:1–4).

In the NT, Jesus raises the dead son of a widow at the town gate (Luke 7:11–17) and heals a lame man near the Sheep Gate (John 5:1–15). Peter heals a crippled man near the temple gate (Acts 3:1–10). Jesus mentions gates in his teaching, including a call to enter through the narrow gate of life (Matt. 7:13–14), and his parable of the sheep and the gate, in which Jesus refers to himself as the gate (John 10:1–18). *See also* City Gates.

GATE BETWEEN THE TWO WALLS A gate of Jerusalem located in the southeastern part of the city. It is through this gate that Zedekiah flees Nebuchadnezzar's attack on Jerusalem (2 Kings 25:4; Jer. 39:4; 52:7). The gate is located near the king's gardens and therefore would have overlooked the southern end of the Kidron Valley.

GATEKEEPER One who guards entrances into the city (at the gates), the palace, or the temple. Temple gatekeepers always were priests, who were charged to maintain the purity of the sacred area (1 Chron. 9:17–32; 2 Chron. 34:13; 35:15; Neh. 12:25). *See also* Doorkeeper.

GATE OF THE GUARD A gate of Jerusalem mentioned only in Neh. 12:39. It should be associated with the court of the guards (cf. Jer. 32:3; 33:1; 37:14–21; 38:6–28; 39:12–18). Based on the accounts of Jeremiah's imprisonment and the procession of Nehemiah, this gate was between the royal palace precinct and the Temple Mount.

GATES OF JERUSALEM AND THE TEMPLE The gates of Jerusalem and the temple have varied throughout history. Gates usually were given names that represented their function, activity, or the direction of travel. Most of what we know of gates during OT times is derived from Nehemiah's inspection and description of the destroyed city.

Jerusalem contained several gates during the OT period. On the eastern wall was the Fountain Gate. Just south of this gate was the Potsherd Gate, later becoming the Dung Gate. On the southwest corner was the Valley Gate. On the northern wall were the Ephraim Gate (later called "Middle Gate") and possibly the Fish Gate.

Gates that were either associated with or near the temple were the Muster Gate, Horse Gate, Gate of the Guard, and the Water Gate (possibly also called "East Gate"), the temple gate facing the north, New Gate, Horse Gate, and the upper Benjamin Gate (also Sheep Gate?).

Josephus recounts ten gates associated with the temple: four each on the north and south and two on the east. The gate that led to the court of the women may have been the Beautiful Gate (Acts 3:2), and the gate between the court of the women and the court of Israel probably was the Nicanor Gate. The Todi Gate was on the north; the Coponius Gate (Barclay's Gate), Wilson's Arch, and Warren's Gate were on the west. The south side of the Temple Mount had two large gates: the Double Gate and the Triple Gate. Josephus mentions only two city gates: the Gate of the Essenes and the Gennath Gate.

GATH One of the five major cities of the Philistines, each of which was ruled by its own lord (Josh. 13:3). Gath was situated close to the border of Judah. Since the Hebrew word *gat* means "winepress" and occurs in the names of several places (e.g., Gath Rimmon, Gath Hepher, Moresheth Gath), there may have been other towns of this name. Some of the biblical references (e.g., 1 Chron. 7:21; 8:13) may not be to Philistine Gath.

The most likely site of Philistine Gath is Tell es-Safi, overlooking the main north-south road through the Shephelah to the west of Jerusalem. Excavations here suggest that the site was inhabited in the pre-Israelite period and during the first millennium BC. Although the city was rebuilt in the Persian period after its destruction by the Babylonians, it seems to have been abandoned between the late first century BC and Crusader times.

At the time of the conquest, Gath (mentioned in the Amarna letters of the fourteenth century BC) was inhabited by the formidable Anakites, whom Joshua failed to dislodge (Josh. 11:21–22; see also Deut. 1:28; 9:2), and in David's day it still boasted warriors of great height and strength (2 Sam. 21:19–22; 1 Chron. 20:5–8). However, it was also one of the cities that God afflicted with tumors when the captured ark of the covenant was stored there (1 Sam. 5:8–9; 6:17), and the mighty Goliath of Gath was no match for God's anointed (1 Sam. 17:8–58).

On two occasions David fled from Saul to Achish, king of Gath. The first time, he was so scared of Achish that he feigned insanity and escaped as soon as he could (1 Sam. 21:10–22:1; cf. the superscription to Ps. 56). The second time, he settled down with six hundred men and their families to deceive Achish in a different way: he used Gath as a base to attack Israel's other enemies (1 Sam. 27:1–30:31), all the while claiming that he was wreaking revenge on Saul. When Achish himself defeated Saul and Jonathan, David was horrified by the thought that the town of Gath would hear of their deaths and gloat (2 Sam. 1:20). His horror is poetically echoed in Micah's eighth-century BC lament over a doomed Judah (Mic. 1:10).

David seems nevertheless to have made friends as well as enemies in Gath. Obed-Edom the Gittite was blessed rather than cursed when the ark was kept at his house before its final journey to Jerusalem (2 Sam. 6:10–11; 1 Chron. 13:3). After David had conquered Gath (1 Chron. 18:1), the six hundred Gittite mercenaries in his army were among his most loyal followers (2 Sam. 15:18–22).

Gath seems to have changed hands fairly frequently thereafter. We know that Achish ruled it in Solomon's day, when Shimei retrieved his runaway slaves from there (1 Kings 2:39–46), and that it was again in Philistine hands when Uzziah broke down its walls (2 Chron. 26:6). In between, however, we are told that Rehoboam of Judah fortified it (2 Chron. 11:8), and that in Joash's reign Hazael of Aram conquered it (2 Kings 12:17). The fact that Amos mentions Gath as "in Philistia" (Amos 6:2) but does not group it with the other four cities of the Philistines (1:6–8) may mean that it was under Israelite control at the time. Assyrian records from the eighth century BC describe several campaigns against rebellious Philistine cities, including the city of Gath (Annals of Sargon II).

GATH HEPHER A town in Zebulun on the border with Naphtali (Josh. 19:13), the home of the prophet Jonah (2 Kings 14:25). It is identified with Khirbet ez-Zurra', near the modern village of el-Meshhed, about three miles northeast of Nazareth (note connection of Jesus and Jonah in Matt. 12:39–41). An alternate spelling, "Gittah-Hepher," reflecting an alternate Hebrew form, is found in some older translations of Josh. 19:13.

GATH RIMMON One of the cities allotted to the tribe of Dan (Josh. 19:45), later given to the Kohathite clans of the Levites (Josh. 21:24). The parallel in 1 Chron. 6:69 says that the city was given to the Kohathite clans from Ephraim (but see Josh. 21:23, missing from the 1 Chronicles account, which locates the city in Dan). In Josh. 21:25 Gath Rimmon is placed in the territory of the half-tribe of Manasseh, but in the parallel in 1 Chron. 6:70 the town is called "Bileam." This confusion over Gath Rimmon is usually attributed to copyist error. Modern scholars identify Gath Rimmon with either Tell Jerisheh or Tell Abu Zeitun. The sites are near each other, and it cannot be determined with certainty which is the location of Gath Rimmon.

GAUZE, GARMENTS OF Some English translations of Isa. 3:23 (RSV, NRSV) use the phrase "garments of gauze" to describe an adornment worn by the women of Jerusalem that God will snatch away from them when he judges Jerusalem. The meaning of the Hebrew term (*gillayon*) is uncertain, however, and probably refers to a garment or scarf of some kind (TEV: "revealing garments"; JPS: "lace gowns"; REB: "scarves of gauze"; NET, HCSB: "garments") or to a mirror (NIV, ESV, NLT, JB, NAB). In Isa. 8:1 the same term is translated "scroll" or "tablet."

GAZA The biblical site of Gaza is located at Tell Harube/Tell 'Azza, which is beneath the modern Palestinian city of Gaza. It is strategically situated in southern Palestine near the Egyptian border and is approximately three miles from the Mediterranean Sea. Initial excavations were led by W. J. Phythian-Adams in 1922 under the auspices of the Palestine Exploration Fund. Additional excavations were directed by Asher Ovadiah in 1967 and 1976.

In the Late Bronze Age (1550–1200 BC), Gaza was under the control of Egypt. It is first mentioned in the annals of Thutmose III as the provincial capital of Canaan, and it functioned as an Egyptian administrative center in the Amarna and Taanach letters. At the beginning of the Iron Age (1200 BC), the Sea Peoples (especially the Philistines) took control of this coastal region. This scenario is reflected in Deut. 2:23, which states that the Caphtorites (i.e., the Philistines) displaced the Avvites. Joshua 11:22 also states that after the Israelite conquest, the giant Anakim only remained in Gaza, Gath, and Ashdod (they were most likely assimilated into Philistine culture, perhaps as mercenaries). These three cities, along with Ekron and Ashkelon, comprise the Philistine Pentapolis (Josh. 13:3; 1 Sam. 6:17–18). The Pentapolis remained unconquered at the end of Joshua's life (Josh. 13:3), even though Ekron, Ashdod, and Gaza were included in Judah's allotment (15:45–47). The Judahites took brief control of Gaza, Ashkelon, and Ekron, which they were unable to maintain due to the Philistines' employment of "iron chariots" on the plains (Judg. 1:18–19). During the period of the judges, Gaza is prominently featured in the exploits of Samson. The city is described as having a gate and a multistoried temple (Judg. 16:1–3, 26). After David's conquests of the Philistines, King Solomon is said to have dominion over a vast region including Gaza (1 Kings 4:24). In the second half of the eighth century BC, Gaza became an Assyrian vassal (under Tiglath-pileser III). King Hezekiah also briefly subdued the region (2 Kings 18:8), but Gaza remained an Assyrian vassal until the end of the seventh century, when the city was briefly occupied by Pharaoh Necho II and then fell to Nebuchadnezzar (see Jer. 47:1–2, 5). Gaza is mentioned in a number of prophetic oracles against Philistia (Jer. 25:20; 47:1; Amos 1:6–7; Zeph. 2:4; Zech. 9:5). It appears only one time in the NT, when Philip is traveling toward Gaza and encounters the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:26).

GAZATHITE *See* Gaza.

GAZELLE A small, fast antelope, the gazelle is mentioned over a dozen times in the OT. The animal was considered clean and permitted as food for the Israelites (Deut. 12:15, 22). It was a symbol of speed and agility (2 Sam. 2:18) as well as beauty and grace (Song 2:9).

Gazelles in the Judean desert

GAZER *See* Gezer.

GAZEZ **(1)** A son of Caleb by his concubine Ephah (1 Chron. 2:46a). **(2)** A grandson of Caleb, born to Haran, brother of the first Gazez (1 Chron. 2:46b), making the two Gazezes uncle and nephew.

GAZITE *See* Gaza.

GAZZAM One of the ancestors of the temple servants (Nethinim) who returned to Jerusalem after the Babylonian captivity under the leadership of Zerubbabel in 539 BC or soon after (Ezra 2:48; Neh. 7:51). The fact that many of the names in the list of ancestors are foreign has led to the belief that they were originally prisoners of war who were pressed into service to perform menial tasks as they assisted the Levites.

GEBA Situated on the eastern edge of the central Benjamin Plateau, Geba (modern Jeba) and its sister city, Mikmash (Mukhmas), were about six miles north of Jerusalem on a significant route from the Jordan Valley up into the hill country. Although a branch of the Wadi Qilt separates the two towns, a "saddle" across that deep valley made travel easier between them. This geographical feature emerges in the description of the Assyrian advance toward Jerusalem (Isa. 10:28–29).

The name "Geba" comes from the Hebrew three-letter root meaning "hill" and is sufficiently similar to "Gibeah" that some have suggested that Geba, Geba of Benjamin (1 Sam. 13:16), Gibeah (Judg. 19–20), Gibeah of Benjamin (1 Sam. 13:2, 15; 14:16), and Gibeah of Saul (e.g., 1 Sam. 10:26; 11:4) are the same location. The best reading of the texts, however, indicates that Geba and Gibeah are at least two separate locations (1 Sam. 13:2–3; Isa. 10:29). Gibeah of Saul is Tell el-Ful, approximately two miles south of Jeba.

During the early years of Saul's monarchy, the Philistines had an outpost at Geba, between the forces of Saul at Mikmash and those of Jonathan at Gibeah of Benjamin (1 Sam. 13:2–3). When they lost Geba to Jonathan, they regrouped at Mikmash, across the pass. Jonathan and his armor-bearer set out from Geba, descended into the wadi, climbed up the other side, and attacked and conquered the Philistine outpost (1 Sam. 14).

King Baasha of the north created a stranglehold on the southern kingdom by seizing Ramah, a critical crossroad point north of Jerusalem between Geba and Mizpah. Asa, king of the south, appealed to Ben-Hadad of Aram, who attacked the northern border of Baasha's territory. Asa wrested control of Ramah back from Baasha and fortified both Geba to the east and Mizpah to the west, making certain to hold the access routes to the central Benjamin Plateau from both east and west (1 Kings 15:16–22).

GEBAL, GEBALITE *See* Byblos.

GEBER The son of Uri, he was a governor of Gilead during the reign of Solomon (1 Kings 4:19). Whether Ben-Geber ("son of Geber"), mentioned in 1 Kings 4:13, is his son or is Geber himself is a matter of some speculation.

GEBIM A place mentioned only in Isa. 10:31, in a prophecy of the advance of the Assyrian army against Jerusalem. Its location is uncertain, but apparently it lay somewhere in the northern vicinity of Jerusalem, south of Anathoth.

GEDALIAH **(1)** The son of Ahikam and grandson of Josiah's scribe, Shaphan. After the exile of Zedekiah, he was appointed as governor over Judah by Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon in 587 BC (2 Kings 25:22–26; Jer. 39:14; 40:5–41:18). He not only protected the prophet Jeremiah but also gave the people similar advice, telling those who remained in Judah to serve the Babylonians. He ignored the warning of Johanan about an assassination plot and, after ruling for only two months, was killed by Ishmael, a representative of Baalis king of the Ammonites. A seal from Lachish appears to refer to him: "belonging to Gedaliah, who is over the house." **(2)** A son of Jeduthun, and a temple musician appointed by David to prophesy with instruments (1 Chron. 25:3, 9). **(3)** A priestly descendant of Joshua who obeyed Ezra's call to send away his foreign wife (Ezra 10:18). **(4)** The son of Pashhur, he was one of several officials of Jerusalem who convinced King Zedekiah to throw the prophet Jeremiah into a cistern because of his prediction of death and exile (Jer. 38:1–6). **(5)** The grandson of Hezekiah the king and grandfather of Zephaniah the prophet (Zeph. 1:1).

GEDEON *See* Gideon.

GEDER One of thirty-one conquered cities listed in Josh. 12:9–24 (v. 13). The preceding and following cities suggest either the southern Judean foothills or the northern Negev. Other places, such as Beth-gader, Gederah, Gederoth, Gederothaim, and Gedor, have similar names. An original reading of "Gerar" is possible if a copyist error is considered. Geder may have been the home of Baal-Hanan, a Gederite who was an officer appointed by David to be "in charge of the olive and sycamore-fig trees in the western foothills" (1 Chron. 27:28). Khirbet Jedur has been suggested as a modern location.

GEDERAH **(1)** A town in the territorial allotment of Judah in the western foothills (Josh. 15:36). Here lived some of the descendants of Shelah son of Judah, noted for their production of pottery for the king (1 Chron. 4:23). Its location is debated. Tell Judeideh north of Beth-Gubrin, Khirbet Judraya in the Elah Valley, Khirbet Jedireh in the Aijalon Valey, Kedron (modern Qatra), and the vicinity of Latrun have been suggested. **(2)** The home of Jozabad, one of David's ambidextrous warriors, who was called a "Gederathite" (1 Chron. 12:4). The town possibly was located at Jedireh near Gibeon.

GEDERATHITE *See* Gederah.

GEDERITE *See* Geder.

GEDEROTH A town in the territorial allotment of Judah (Josh. 15:41). This town was captured by the Philistines during the reign of Ahaz, who then requested help from the Assyrians to free the city (2 Chron. 28:16–21). The exact location of the town is unknown, but it likely was on the border between Israel and the Philistine cities in the foothills.

GEDEROTHAIM A town in the territorial allotment of Judah located in the western foothills of Judah (Josh. 15:36). There is some scholarly debate about whether this is the actual name of a town (separate from the previously mentioned town of Gederah in Josh. 15:36), a variant name of the town Gederah, or if "Gederothaim" should simply be translated literally (with "Gederah") as "Gederah and her sheepfolds."

GEDOR **(1)** A Judahite, the son of Penuel, and a descendant of Hur (1 Chron. 4:4). **(2)** A Judahite, the son of Jered (1 Chron. 4:17–18). **(3)** A Benjamite who was a great-uncle of King Saul (1 Chron. 8:29–31; 9:35–37). **(4)** A town in the hill country that was part of Judah's territorial allotment (Josh. 15:58). Joelah and Zebadiah, who defected from Saul to join David, were from Gedor (1 Chron. 12:7). **(5)** The Simeonites moved into the areas surrounding the town by this name (1 Chron. 4:39) when they needed room to expand because of the growth of their tribe. It is possible that this is the same town as in Josh. 15:58.

GE HARASHIM It is not entirely clear whether this is a person or a geographic location. The word occurs in a record of the clans of the tribe of Judah (1 Chron. 4:14). The NIV sees it as a place name, saying that Joab was "the father of Ge Harashim. It was called this because its people were skilled workers.” Thus, the NIV understands this word to be the place where this clan resided. The NASB, though in a footnote it recognizes the ambiguity, translates the word as a proper name: “Joab the father of Ge-harashim, for they were craftsmen.”

GEHAZI The servant of Elisha the prophet. Gehazi figures prominently in the stories of Naaman and the Shunammite woman. He was likely also the servant with Elisha whose eyes were opened to see the protecting heavenly horses and chariots of fire (2 Kings 6:17).

The Shunammite woman provided hospitality for Elisha, who sought to provide a favor in return. When Gehazi pointed out that she had no son, Elisha prophesied that she would have one the following year, which she did. Years later the boy died, and Gehazi took Elisha’s staff to place upon the boy until Elisha came and brought him back to life (2 Kings 4). After Naaman was healed of leprosy, Gehazi pursued Naaman with a contrived story designed to get clothing and silver from him. As punishment for his presumption, he became a leper (2 Kings 5:20–27).

GEHENNA This name is a Latin and Greek derivation of the Hebrew place name “Valley of Hinnom” (Neh. 11:30), the deep ravine on the southern end of the ancient city of Jerusalem. It was also called the “Valley of Ben Hinnom” (Jer. 19:2) and was the northern boundary of Judah from the time of the conquest (Josh. 15:8; 18:16). It marked the northern boundary of Judahite settlement in the time of Ezra and Nehemiah. This placed the city of Jerusalem just inside Benjamite territory. It became a name of infamy because pagan cultic places were located there during the time of the later monarchy (2 Kings 23:10; 2 Chron. 28:3; 33:6; Jer. 7:31; 32:35), cults that involved the sacrifice of children to Molek and Baal. Jeremiah renamed it the “Valley of Slaughter” (Jer. 7:32; 19:5–6).

It is easy to see, therefore, how in later Jewish writings Gehenna could become a metaphor for the fiery punishment that was the lot of the wicked on the day of judgment. This is reflected in NT usage. Jesus spoke about those who cursed others as being “in danger of the fire of Gehenna [NIV: ‘hell’]” (Matt. 5:22). He said that the fate of the wicked was to have their bodies “thrown into Gehenna [NIV: ‘hell’]” (5:29–30). It is a place of destruction (10:28), and fire is its tormenting and destructive element (18:9). Jesus described every hypocritical Pharisee as “a son of Gehenna [NIV: ‘hell’]” (23:15), for such hypocrisy would lead to their being sent there for punishment (23:33). The fact that this word is repeatedly found on the lips of Jesus (cf. Mark 9:43, 45, 47; Luke 12:5) means that this teaching cannot be dismissed as exaggeration or condemned as inconsistent with loving concern for the sinner facing punishment. Outside the Synoptic Gospels, “Gehenna” appears in the NT only in James 3:6 as part of his teaching on controlling the tongue. *See also* Hell; Hinnom, Valley of.

The Valley of Hinnom, also known as Gehenna

GELILOTH A town on the southern boundary of Benjamin's tribal allotment and the northern boundary of Judah's allotment (Josh. 18:17), near the Jordan River, where Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh built an "imposing altar" (Josh. 22:10–34).

GEM *See* Jewels, Jewelry; Minerals and Metals.

GEMALLI The father of Ammiel of the tribe of Dan, one of Moses' spies (Num. 13:12).

GEMARA Getting its name from a Hebrew word meaning "to complete, finish," the Gemara is the extensive rabbinic commentary on the Mishnah, the earliest compilation (c. AD 220) of Jewish oral legal material (halakah). Organized topically, together the Mishnah and the Gemara make up the encyclopedic compendium of rabbinic Jewish learning, the Talmud. After each Mishnah citation, the Gemara ranges through logical argument, illustrative narratives, biblical examples, ethical instruction, alternative interpretations, and legends in the process of responding to the Mishnaic text.

GEMARIAH **(1)** The son of Hilkiah, he was one of two envoys to Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon and the Judean exiles there (Jer. 29:3). **(2)** The son of Shaphan, a high official, he had a chamber at the temple (Jer. 36:10–12). Gemariah allowed the scribe Baruch to read Jeremiah's prophecies (36:10) and later tried to stop King Jehoiakim from burning Jeremiah's scroll (36:25).

GEMATRIA *See* Number Systems and Number Symbolism.

GENDER EQUALITY Although the Bible is dominated by a patriarchal perspective, as one would expect from the ancient Near East, there is also a valuing of women that comes to the surface. Although this falls short of what we would call "gender equality" today, the Bible does make overtures in that direction. Already in the Genesis creation story, men and women are described as the two halves of humanity, who together participate in the mandate to fill and subdue the earth (Gen. 1:26–28). Eve is created from the side of Adam, indicating equality in their very beings (2:21–23).

In his own ministry, Jesus includes women in ways that were unusual for his context. In first-century Palestine, learning from spiritual teachers was a privilege reserved exclusively for men. However, in the story of Mary and Martha (Luke 10:38–42), Jesus commends Mary for breaking her expected role as a woman in order to follow him and learn at his feet. Martha, however, receives a sharp rebuke for allowing domestic duties to hinder her discipleship. Jesus' first resurrection appearance is to women in all of the Gospels, even though the testimony of a woman was generally not considered valid in legal matters in first-century Palestine (although rabbinic literature suggests it was considered valid testimony for a woman to confirm a man's death). Jesus takes particular efforts to elevate the position of women, despite a possible tarnishing of his public image.

The concern for greater gender equality extends into the rest of the NT. Paul says that in Christ all are one regardless of ethnicity, status, or gender (Gal. 3:28). Paul also refers to women as coworkers in the gospel (Rom. 16:3) and as deacons (16:1). Although frequently cited in order to support a hierarchal family structure, the household codes (Eph. 5:21–6:9; Col. 3:18–4:1; Titus 2:1–10; 1 Pet. 2:18–3:7) are a step toward gender equality in the Greco-Roman culture, since secular household codes usually placed responsibilities on wives, not husbands. That Paul gives responsibilities to husbands is a significant shift toward a mutuality of devotion and obligation.

GENEALOGIES A biblical genealogy is a listing of names showing the interrelationships of individuals, clans, or nations. They are found mainly, though not exclusively, in the Pentateuch, Ezra-Nehemiah, and Chronicles. The arrangement of names in such listings is most often forward in time, from ancestor to descendant (e.g., Ruth 4:18–22, tracing a family line down to David), and this is the genealogy proper. At other times, names are listed in the opposite direction, backward in time, from the individual to ancestor (e.g., Ezra 7:1–5, where Ezra's ancestry is traced back to Aaron "the chief priest"), and this is, strictly speaking, a pedigree. The unusually lengthy pedigree (even by biblical standards) of Ezra "the priest" is an effective way to highlight his temple interest when he is first introduced to the reader. The pedigree of 1 Chron. 6:33–47 shows the impeccable Levitical credentials of Heman, Asaph, and Ethan, who served before the ark of the covenant under the leadership of David. Genealogical information is always supplied for a reason.

TYPES OF GENEALOGIES

The two main terms used in the OT are *toledot* ("genealogical history"; e.g., Gen. 2:4; 5:1; 6:9; NIV: "account") and *yakhas* ("genealogical record"; only in Neh. 7:5, but the related verb, "to register by genealogy," occurs in Ezra 2 // Neh. 7 and elsewhere). In Ezra-Nehemiah the supplying of a credible genealogy is necessary for acceptance as an Israelite (Ezra 2:59–60) or for securing priestly privileges (Ezra 2:61–63). The concern is not racial purity as such, but rather Israel's theological integrity (Ezra 9:1–2). The pejorative references to "genealogies" in 1 Tim. 1:4 and Titus 3:9 do not condemn the OT lists but instead reject the concocted genealogies in the mythic speculations of Jewish intertestamental books such as *Jubilees*.

Lineage is almost invariably traced through the male line. Most often in biblical narrative an individual is supplied only with a patronym (e.g., "Isaiah son of Amoz" [Isa. 1:1]), or sometimes three generations are specified (e.g., "Bezalel son of Uri, the son of Hur" [Exod. 35:30]). In Exod. 6:16–20 the foreshortened genealogy of Aaron and Moses is not to be understood as saying that there were only four generations between them and Levi.

Some genealogies involve ethnic and geographical relations—for example, between the nations of the ancient world in Gen. 11, and between Israel and surrounding peoples in Gen. 19:37–38; 25:1–4. In lists, the father-son relation can be broader than immediate descent and may refer to remote ancestors (grandson, great-grandson, etc.) (e.g., Ezra 5:1; cf. Zech. 1:1).

THE IMPORTANCE OF GENEALOGIES

Genealogies are an important feature of biblical storytelling. The modern reader should not simply leap over them, and the works of J. R. R. Tolkien show that genealogy is not dead in literary terms. When a biblical genealogy is supplied, it has a narratorial role. It contributes something essential to the presentation of the biblical writer. For example, 1 Chron. 1 is not a bare listing of names but rather, beginning with Adam, provides a world context for the history of Israel that follows; and 1 Chron. 2–9 emphasizes the twelve-tribal structure of God's people, thus preventing the misapprehension that Chronicles is just a history of the southern kingdom of Judah. Also, lists are usually not just names; they include thematically significant material contributing to the overall message of the particular book—for example, the technological advances of Cain's descendants told in Gen. 4:17–22 and the military exploits recounted in 1 Chron. 5:18–22.

The ten-generation genealogy of Gen. 5 bridges the antediluvian and the deluge eras. The repeated refrain "and he died" depicts the reign of death over the human race. Another ten-generation genealogy joins the flood generation to Abram (Gen. 11:10–26). In this case, the deleterious effect of sin on humans is shown by the gradual decrease in human life span. There is often an element of schema in biblical genealogies (e.g., the limitation of generations to ten). Genesis 5 displays the convention of the seventh generation, which is deemed worthy of special attention (Enoch). There is also the Bible's delight in multiples of seven—for example, the seventy nations in Gen. 10, the 3 × 14 generational schema in Matt. 1, and the seventy members in the pedigree of Christ in Luke 3:23–38. Hence, none of these genealogies should be understood as comprehensive in scope; rather, they are highly selective and stylized. Their purpose is to support and underscore the writer's theological message.

Because it is rare for females to be mentioned in biblical genealogies, when they are there is special significance—for example, Sarai in Gen. 11:29: though barren, she will become the mother of the line of promise; Rebekah in Gen. 22:23: she will become the wife of Isaac; the daughters of Zelophehad in Num. 26:33: their story will be elaborated in Num. 27; 36; the five women in the genealogy of Jesus (Matt. 1): several of them are non-Israelites, suggesting that Jesus comes as the Savior of the world.

GENERAL The commander of an army, second in command after the king (cf. Rev. 6:15; 19:18).

Israel’s army became more centralized during the monarchy. Abner, Amasa, and Joab are each referred to as the commander (NLT; cf. NIV) or general (NET) under Saul and David (1 Sam. 14:50; 2 Sam. 17:25; 20:23; cf. 1 Chron. 27:34 KJV). The Assyrian general bore the name or title “Tartan” (2 Kings 18:17; NIV: “supreme commander”).

GENERATION Generation has three primary meanings in the Bible: (1) a length of time, (2) a group of people of the same period of time, and (3) a stage in the line of a person’s lineage. It also has three metaphorical or secondary uses.

First, “generation” as a length of time generally involves the duration of time between a person’s birth and the birth of that person’s children. The number “forty” is often associated with the length of a generation because God made the Israelites wander in the wilderness for forty years so that one generation would pass away and another arise (cf. Num. 32:13). However, two points should be noted. First, the actual number of years was determined to be forty because the people had spied out the land for forty days (Num. 14:34), not because a generation lasted forty years. Second, the forty years applied to those who were age twenty or older. Since the purpose of the forty years in the wilderness was to allow one generation of adults to pass on (14:30–35), the forty years may represent the upper limit of the expected length of an adult’s life in the wilderness conditions, which would be sixty years. In fact, when Moses speaks to Israel on the plains of Moab, he mentions that Israel crossed the Zered Valley thirty-eight years after the wilderness wanderings had begun, and that the entire previous generation had died (Deut. 2:14). This comment shows that forty years has less to do with a generation than with the expected life span of an adult in the wilderness. Other passages provide no hints for the length of a generation, such that the specific length of a generation is not recorded in the Bible. Furthermore, since a generation represents the duration of time between a person’s birth and the birth of that person’s children, it is also not a fixed number but rather represents an imprecise period of time. In one passage “generations” are even set alongside “ages,” which represent longer durations of an indefinite period of time (Col. 1:26).

Second, “generation” often is used to represent a group of people of the same period of time. It may refer to a group of people who live during the same time (Gen. 7:1) or those who were born at approximately the same time (Exod. 1:6; Num. 32:13; Deut. 1:35).

Third, “generation” is also commonly used to represent a stage in the line of a person’s lineage. This use often is preceded by an ordinal number (first, second, third, etc.). On several occasions it occurs in a context highlighting the severity of sin. It occurs in the formulaic statement of God’s self-revelation found in Exod. 20:5; 34:7 and repeated in Num. 14:18; Deut. 5:9. God is described as loving, merciful, and forgiving, but also as jealous, not leaving the guilty unpunished to the third and fourth generation. It also occurs in legal contexts concerning the inclusion of Gentiles into the assembly of the Lord (Deut. 23:1–8). Its use in this way highlights the continuity of God’s work even through the transitions of a family from one generation to another.

Finally, the word “generation” often is used in a secondary way or in a formulaic statement. First, several times the word describes one aspect of God’s relationship to a particular person and his descendants or a nation. Sometimes it describes the long-lasting nature of God’s promise (Gen. 9:12; 17:7); at other times, it describes the long-lasting responsibility of the person and his descendants or a nation, especially as it relates to Israel and the law given at Sinai (Gen. 17:9–21; Exod. 12:14; 16:32–33; 27:21; 29:42). Second, the word may emphasize the continuous nature of a condition or obligation (Exod. 3:15; 17:16; Esther 9:28; Pss. 33:11; 45:17; 49:11; 72:5; 79:13). Third, the word refers to a particular class or type of people, such as the righteous (Pss. 14:5 [in some translations];

112:2) or the wicked (Deut. 32:5; Prov. 30:11 [in some translations]; Matt. 11:16; Mark 8:38; Luke 9:41; Acts 2:40).

GENESIS, BOOK OF The book of Genesis ("Origins") is well named because it provides the foundation for the rest of the Bible and speaks of the beginnings of the world, humanity, sin, redemption, the people of God, covenant, marriage, Sabbath, work, and much more. Genesis is the first chapter of the Pentateuch, a five-part story of the origins of the nation of Israel. Genesis is the preamble to that account, leading up to the pivotal moment of the exodus and the move toward the promised land.

AUTHORSHIP

As noted above, Genesis is the opening to the Pentateuch as a whole, so the question of the authorship of Genesis is connected to the question of the authorship of the Pentateuch as a whole. Genesis (and the entire Pentateuch) is anonymous, though Moses is said to have written down certain traditions that were included in the Pentateuch (Exod. 17:14; 24:4; 34:27; Num. 33:2; Deut. 31:22).

Later tradition speaks of the "law of Moses" (Josh. 1:7–8) or the "Book of Moses" (2 Chron. 25:4; Ezra 6:18; Neh. 13:1), though it is not certain whether these refer to the entire Pentateuch or merely to portions of it that were associated with Moses. The NT writers, as well as Jesus himself, speak of the Pentateuch in connection with Moses (e.g., Matt. 19:7; 22:24; Mark 7:10; 12:26; John 1:17; 5:46; 7:23).

The question of Moses' role in writing the Pentateuch is more complicated, however. For instance, there are indications that Genesis was updated well after the death of Moses. Traditionally, these passages are called "post-Mosaica," because they contain information that could be available only after the death of Moses. For example, Deut. 34 speaks of Moses' death and burial. Apparently so much time has elapsed since his death that the writer can say, "to this day no one knows where his grave is" (v. 6). The writer then states, "since then, no prophet has risen in Israel like Moses" (v. 10), which also presumes a considerable length of time has passed. Other examples include Gen. 11:31, which refers to Abraham's hometown as "Ur of the Chaldeans." Although Ur was a very ancient city, the Chaldeans were an Aramaic-speaking tribe that only occupied Ur long after the time of Moses. Similarly, in Gen. 14:14 a city by the name of "Dan" is mentioned, but we know from Judg. 18 that this city only received this name during the period of the judges.

Despite these considerations, some scholars are still comfortable ascribing some "essential" authorship role to Moses. (For the main alternative theory for the authorship and date of the writing of Genesis, *see* Documentary Hypothesis; Pentateuch.)

STRUCTURE AND OUTLINE

Genesis may be outlined in more than one way. One method is to follow the *toledot* formulas that serve as an organizing structure for the book. The phrase "these are the *toledot* of X" (where X is the personal name of the character whose sons are the subject of the narrative that follows) is repeated ten times: 2:4; 5:1; 6:9; 10:1; 11:10, 27; 25:12, 19; 36:1 (cf. 36:9); 37:2 (see also 10:32; 25:13). For instance, Gen. 11:27 begins, "These are the *toledot* of Terah" (NIV: "This is the account of Terah's family line"), while the account that follows is the story of Terah's son Abraham. *Toledot* is best translated as "family history" or "account." Hence, one can take Genesis as having a prologue (1:1–2:3) followed by ten episodes.

In terms of content and style, the book falls into three main units as follows:

I. The Primeval History (Gen. 1:1–11:26)

II. The Patriarchal Narrative (Gen. 11:27–36:43)

III. The Joseph Story (Gen. 37–50)

I. The primeval history (Gen. 1:1–11:26). The book opens with an account of creation given in two parts. Genesis 1:1–2:4a provides a creation account that describes the six days in which God created the heavens and the earth, followed by a seventh day of rest. Genesis 2:4b–25 then provides a second account of creation, this time with a focus on the creation of Adam and Eve. Genesis 3 then narrates the first sin of humanity, which introduces sin and death into the world. Genesis 4–11 provides four additional stories (the murder of Abel by Cain, the intermarrying of the "sons of God" with the "daughters of men," the flood, and the tower of Babel). These stories show a creation gone wrong, God's move to start over again with Noah and his family, and the persistence of sin thereafter. All of this leads to the story of the patriarchs, where God's plan to set things right takes a decisive turn. These stories are connected by genealogies that mark the march of time as well as provide significant theological commentary.

II. The patriarchal narrative (Gen. 11:27–36:43). The middle section of the book of Genesis turns its attention to the patriarchs, so called because they are the fathers of the nation of Israel. The style of the book changes at this point, so that rather than following the story of all the world and moving at a fast pace, the narrative slows down and focuses on God creating a people to obey him and to bring those blessings to the whole world (12:1–3). God now determines to restore the blessing lost at Eden by reaching the world through the descendants of one individual, Abraham.

Abraham's father, Terah, took Abram (as Abraham was then known), Abram's wife Sarai (Sarah), and Terah's grandson Lot and left Ur to settle in Harran in northern Mesopotamia. No explanation is given why. While they are settled in Harran, God commands Abraham to leave Ur in Mesopotamia and travel to Canaan. God promises that he will make him a great nation (implying land and many descendants), and that he will be blessed and will be a blessing to the nations (Gen. 12:1–3). That blessing requires Abraham and Sarah to have children, and this sets up much of the drama of his story. Often Abraham reacts in fear and not faith, but at the end of his story he has a solid confidence in God's ability to take care of him and bring all the promises to fulfillment (Gen. 22).

Isaac, not Ishmael (Abraham's son through Sarah's maidservant Hagar; see Gen. 16), is the conduit of the promises to future generations. Even so, Isaac is not a highly developed character in the book of Genesis, although his near sacrifice in Gen. 22 is certainly a matter of great interest. The episode in his life that receives the lengthiest attention is the courtship with Rebekah (Gen. 24), and there the focus is primarily on her.

The account of Isaac's life gives way to an account of his son Jacob. Jacob is a complex character. The first episodes of his story are about how he, the younger, inherits the blessing and becomes the conduit for the promise rather than his older brother, Esau. Jacob becomes an example of how God uses the foolish things of the world to accomplish his purposes. That the story of the patriarchs is a preamble to the story of the founding of Israel becomes obvious when Jacob's name is changed to "Israel" after he fights with God (Gen. 32:22–32) and his wives give birth to twelve sons, who give their names to the twelve tribes of Israel.

III. The Joseph story (Gen. 37–50). The third section of Genesis focuses on the twelve sons of

Jacob, in particular Joseph. A main theme seems to be God's providential preservation of the family of the promise, in the context of a devastating famine. Joseph himself expresses the theme of this section at the end of the narrative, after his father dies and his brothers now wonder whether he will seek revenge against them. He reassures them by his statement that although they had meant their actions to harm him, he knows that God has used these very actions for good, for the salvation of the family of God (Gen. 50:19–20). Yes, they had just wanted to get rid of him, but God has used their jealousy to bring Joseph to Egypt. The wife of his owner had wanted to frame him for rape, but God has used this false accusation in order to have him thrown into jail, where he meets two of Pharaoh's chief advisers. He had demonstrated to them his ability to interpret dreams, so when the chief cupbearer is restored to a position of influence, he can advise Pharaoh himself to turn to Joseph to interpret his disturbing dreams. These dreams have allowed Pharaoh, with Joseph's help, to prepare for the famine. Joseph has risen to great prominence in Egypt, so when the famine comes, he is in a position to help his family, and the promise can continue to the next generations.

Among other secondary, yet important, themes of the Joseph narrative are the rising prominence of Judah and the lessening significance of Reuben. Judah at first is pictured as self-serving (Gen. 38), but by the end of the story he is willing to sacrifice himself for the good of his father and family (Gen. 44:18–34). This story thus demonstrates why the descendants of Judah have dominance over the descendants of the firstborn, Reuben, in later Israelite history. Also, the Joseph story recounts how Israel came to Egypt. This sets up the events of the book of Exodus.

STYLE AND GENRE

Style. Genesis is written in Hebrew prose of a high literary style. Words are carefully chosen not only to communicate the message of the book but also to attract the reader's interest and attention.

Genre. Genesis is an account of the origins of the cosmos, humanity, and the people of God. Thus, it is proper to refer to the book as a work of history. Of course, there is more than one type of history. Some histories focus on wars, others on economics or politics. Moreover, Genesis is not history in the modern sense but follows ancient conventions, which do not call for scrupulous accuracy. The central concern of Genesis, as with the majority of biblical histories, is the relationship between God and his people. So, it is appropriate to identify Genesis as a theological history.

Some readers misunderstand the nature of the historical information that the book provides. For example, Gen. 1–2 communicates to the reader that it is the true God, not a god such as the Babylonian Marduk or the Canaanite Baal, who created the cosmos. The way some of the stories are told provides a challenge to rival stories from other ancient religions. One example is how the Bible describes the creation of Adam from the dust of the ground and the breath of God. This contrasts with the Mesopotamian creation account *Enuma Elish*, in which the god Marduk creates the first humans from the clay of the earth and the blood of a demon god. The biblical flood story also may be compared to other ancient flood stories, especially the account of the flood found in the Babylonian Epic of Gilgamesh. Genesis clearly interacts with such mythological stories to communicate important truths about the primeval period.

Cuneiform inscription of the Epic of Gilgamesh, which contains a flood narrative similar to that in Genesis

MESSAGE

The rich and complex book of Genesis presents a profound message concerning God and his relationship with human beings. This short article cannot do justice to the book's depth and importance, but it can point to what is perhaps its most important theme: God's blessing.

Genesis 1–2 teaches that God created Adam and Eve and blessed them. They had everything they needed in the garden of Eden. They enjoyed a perfectly harmonious relationship with God and with each other. They wanted for nothing.

Genesis 3 explains how this blessed existence was disrupted. By choosing to rebel against God, Adam and Eve ruptured their relationship with God and, in consequence, with each other as well. They were expelled from the garden of Eden.

Even in the midst of his judgment, however, God began the work of restoring the blessing to his human creatures (Gen. 3:15). Thus begins the relentless work of God to bring restoration to his people.

NEW TESTAMENT CONNECTIONS

Genesis is the foundation not just of the Pentateuch, and not just of the OT, but of the entire Bible. The story that begins with creation and fall is followed by the history of redemption, which continues into the NT and which understands Jesus Christ as the one whose death and resurrection serve to restore God's blessing to his people. The full restoration of relationship awaits the consummation of history and the new Jerusalem, which is described in language telling us that heaven is a restoration (and more) of the conditions enjoyed by Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden (Rev. 21–22, esp. Rev. 22:2).

Of the many allusions to and quotations of Genesis found in the NT, only a few representative examples may be described here.

Paul points to the Abrahamic promise of the seed in Gen. 12:1–3 and proclaims that Jesus is that seed (Gal. 3:15–16). This claim is surprising in light of the OT's clear understanding that it was the multiple descendants of Abraham constituting Israel who fulfilled this promise (Gen. 15:15). Paul would have known this, but he recognizes that Jesus is the ultimate descendant of Abraham, and that anyone who belongs to Jesus, Jew or Gentile, is also a participant in the Abrahamic promise (Gal. 3:29).

A second example comes from the way in which the author of Hebrews cites the Melchizedek tradition of Gen. 14:17–20. In Genesis, Melchizedek is a mysterious figure who is introduced as the priest-king of Salem (Jerusalem), whom Abraham acknowledges as a fellow worshiper of the true God. In order to make his argument that Jesus is the ultimate priest, the author of Hebrews connects Jesus with Melchizedek rather than with Aaron and asserts the superiority of Melchizedek because Abraham (and thus also Levi, Aaron's ancestor) paid respects to this man (Heb. 7:1–10).

A final example comes from the Joseph narrative. Earlier, we observed that the narrative shows how God used the evil actions of people in order to save many people. In this, the Joseph narrative anticipates the death of Christ, who was nailed to the cross by the hands of wicked people, but God used this very action to accomplish a much greater salvation than he did through Joseph (see Acts 2:22–24).

GENNESARET On the northwestern shore of the Sea of Galilee, Gennesaret (Matt. 14:34) gives its name to the surrounding fertile plain and to the lake (Luke 5:1).

GENTILES The word “Gentiles” is often used to translate words meaning “nations” or “peoples.” It has a Latin etymology from *gens*, meaning “clan” or “family” and, eventually, “race” or “people.” The Greek word *genos* (“race, kind”) has a close relationship. In the Bible it loosely refers to nations or peoples other than Israel. English Bibles often translate it as “nations,” “peoples,” or “races.”

OLD TESTAMENT

In general, within the OT, Gentiles are not God’s people. God chose Israel to be his people, not other nations (Deut. 7:6–8; 10:15; 26:18–19). Israelite ancestry determines membership in the covenant people. Some writings thus forbid Gentiles from becoming part of God’s people (Ezra 9–10; Neh. 13).

The OT more commonly envisions Gentiles experiencing covenant blessing through Israel if they functionally become Israelites by keeping the law, including the parts we understand as ceremonial-ritual law. The law is that special life-giving and regulating aspect of the covenant that God revealed to Israel, which defines Israel (Lev. 18:1–5; 20:22–26; Deut. 4:1–8, 32–40; 6:24–25; 8:1–6; 10:12–11:32; 30:11–20; Josh. 1:7–9; Neh. 9:29; Pss. 119; 147:19–20; Ezek. 20:9–13, 21).

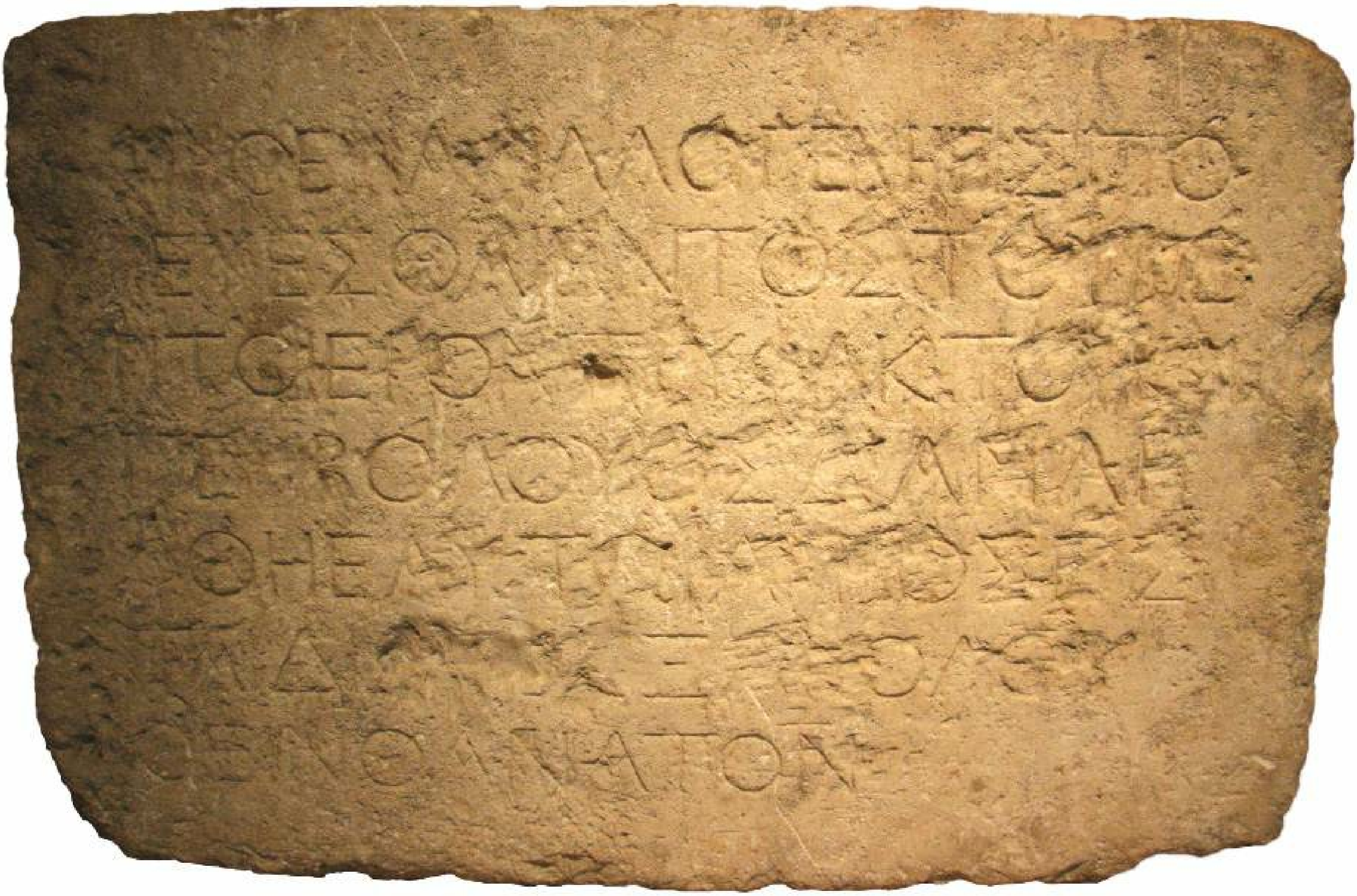
Such law/Israel-centered conditions for Gentiles relate to a broader OT understanding: God will reach and restore the world through Israel, the locus of his saving activity. God will bless the nations in and through Abraham’s descendants, Israel (Gen. 12:1–3; 17:4–6; 22:18; 26:4; 28:14). This covenant specifically involves keeping the law (e.g., circumcision [Gen. 17:9–14]). Some passages depict this happening through the nations being subject to Israel (Gen. 49:8–12; Num. 24:9, 17–19; Isa. 11:10–16; 14:2; 54:3). In other passages the nations will be blessed by Israel’s God as they come to Israel, bring back exiled Israel, serve Israel, present Israel with their own wealth, and/or fear Israel’s God (Isa. 45:23; 49:22–23; 51:4–5; 55:5; 60:3–16; 61:5–6; 66:12–13, 18–21; Mic. 7:12–17; Zech. 2:11; 8:22–23). Other passages further elucidate the law-defined nature of such Gentile participation in the God of Israel’s salvation (Exod. 12:48; Isa. 56:1–8; Jer. 12:14–17; Zech. 14:16–21). The portrait of the nations “flowing” up the mountain of God associates Gentile participation in God’s salvation explicitly with the law (Isa. 2:2–5; Mic. 4:1–5).

The Servant Songs in Isa. 40–55 also reflect this law/Israel-centered nature of salvation for the Gentiles. The servant, explicitly identified as Israel (41:8, 9; 42:18–19; 44:1–2, 21; 45:4; 48:20; 49:3; 54:17; see also 65:9; 66:14), serves as God’s instrument for reaching the nations (42:1, 6; 49:6; 52:15). The OT usually condemns Gentiles who remain separate from Israel to some form of judgment, especially Gentiles who have harmed Israel.

SECOND TEMPLE JUDAISM AND EARLY CHRISTIANITY

Second Temple Jewish sources exhibit diverse views about Gentiles, their nature, their possible relation to God, and their fate at the end. Many reflect something resembling the OT views. Israel as God’s people defined by the law, variously understood and contested among Second Temple sources, generally continues to be the locus of God’s ultimate blessing activities.

Situating Jesus and early Christianity within this matrix of Gentile sensitivities is illuminating. As the Jesus movement spread across the Mediterranean, proclaiming the ultimate salvation of the God of Israel in and through Jesus the Messiah, questions about how Gentiles experience this salvation of the Jewish God had paramount importance.



First-century inscription from the Jerusalem temple warning against Gentiles entering: “No intruder is allowed in the courtyard and within the wall of the surrounding temple. Whoever enters will invite death for himself.”

Some Christians, in line with traditional readings of the OT, thought that Gentiles must keep the law, becoming Jews to experience the God of Israel’s salvation in Jesus (Acts 11:1–3; 15:1, 5; Paul’s opponents in Galatia). Gentiles, after all, were separated from God and his salvation promises to Israel (Rom. 9:4–5; Eph. 2:11–13; 1 Pet. 2:10). They stood under God’s condemnation, especially because they were controlled by their passions and sin, lacking self-mastery and the ability to live rightly (Rom. 1:18–32; Eph. 4:17–19; 1 Thess. 4:5; 1 Pet. 1:14, 18).

However, various NT authors, such as Paul, contend that Gentiles need not keep the law, functionally becoming Jews, in order to participate in God’s ultimate salvation in Jesus. Christ, the climax of Israel itself, has replaced the law’s centrality and ultimacy with himself and his death and resurrection (Rom. 10:4). Through being united to Christ by the Spirit, Gentiles are, apart from the law, grafted into true, redefined Israel and become Abraham’s descendants, inheriting God’s promised salvation for Israel (Rom. 3:21–4:25; 8:1–17; 9:30–10:17; 11:13–32; Gal. 2:11–4:7; Eph. 2:11–22; 3:4–6). In Christ, by the Spirit, Gentiles attain self-mastery over their passions and sin and thus live rightly before God, inheriting the kingdom of God in Christ (Rom. 6:1–8:30; 1 Cor. 6:9–11;

Gal. 5:16–26; 1 Thess. 4:3–8). Various NT writings thus reconfigure the situation of Gentiles with respect to Israel's God because of what God did in Christ.

Debates about Gentiles, the law, salvation, and what Christ means for these issues persisted after Paul. Early Christians lacked an unequivocal saying from Jesus on the matter, and not all accepted Paul and some other NT writings.

GENUBATH The son of the Edomite ruler Hadad, he was born in Egypt while his father was living there following David's conquest of his kingdom (1 Kings 11:20). Genubath's mother was the sister of Tahpenes, the pharaoh's wife.

GERA **(1)** One of Benjamin's sons (Gen. 46:21). **(2)** The father of Ehud, a judge over Israel (Judg. 3:15). **(3)** The father of Shimei, a member of Saul's clan who cursed David (2 Sam. 16:5; 19:16, 18; 1 Kings 2:8). **(4)** The second son of Bela, Benjamin's firstborn (1 Chron. 8:3). **(5)** Another son of Bela is also called Gera in 1 Chron. 8:5, but this may be a textual error. **(6)** The son of Ehud, a Benjamite, who lived at the time of the exile (1 Chron. 8:7).

GERAH The smallest weight in the OT, about one-twentieth of a shekel (Exod. 30:13; Lev. 27:25; Num. 3:47; 18:16; Ezek. 45:12).

GERAR The site where Abraham deceived Abimelek king of Gerar by claiming that his wife, Sarah, was his sister (Gen. 20:1–2). Isaac would also make the same claim with respect to his wife, Rebekah (26:7). In the Table of Nations, Gerar is used as a geographical border for the southern extremity of Canaan (10:19). In the time of King Asa, when Zerah the Cushite came out to attack him, Asa and his army pursued them as far as Gerar and destroyed all the villages around it (2 Chron. 14:13–14). The ancient site is located between Beersheba and Gaza. It appears on the late sixth-century AD Madaba Map.

GERASA An ancient city located on the east side of the Jordan River, known today as Jerash. This largely Hellenistic city was located on the strategically vital north-south King's Highway. Gerasa was annexed by Roman Syria and later joined to the Decapolis. Josephus locates the city on the eastern border of Perea (*J.W.* 3.47). Jesus healed a demoniac in this region (Matt. 8:28–34; Mark 5:1–20; Luke 8:26–39). The problem with the miracle story is that Gerasa is some forty miles southeast of the Sea of Galilee, which is too distant from the shoreline where the events transpired. Mark and Luke probably mean the "region of Gerasa," and the event could have transpired in Gadara (Matt. 8:28) or Gergesa (according to some manuscripts), which are closer to the Sea of Galilee. *See also* Gadarenes.

GERASENES One of three principal variant names in all three Synoptic Gospels for the people of the region where Jesus healed demoniacs after sailing with his disciples across the Sea of Galilee (Matt. 8:28–34; Mark 5:1–20; Luke 8:26–39). *See also* Gadarenes; Gerasa.

GERGESENES One of three principal variant names in all three Synoptic Gospels for the people of the region where Jesus healed demoniacs after sailing with his disciples across the Sea of Galilee (Matt. 8:28–34; Mark 5:1–20; Luke 8:26–39). *See also* Gadarenes.

Gergesa, in the region of Gerasa

GERIZIM The twin peaks of Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal stand about forty miles north of Jerusalem in Samaria and flank the entrance to the Nablus Valley, the location of biblical Shechem. Gerizim, the southern mountain, rises 2,889 feet above sea level, and Ebal, the northern mountion, 3,083 feet. Together, they form a natural amphitheater.

Shechem was of strategic importance in antiquity because it sat on one of three major north-south trade routes through Canaan—the Ridge Route—and provided the only east-west passage in that area to the mountains of Ephraim. Abram took this route into the promised land, where the great trees of Moreh at Shechem became his first recorded stop. It was there, between Gerizim and Ebal, that he heard the voice of God and built an altar (Gen. 12:6–7). Although Shechem is rich in biblical history (e.g., Gen. 33:18–19; 34:2–26; Josh. 24:32; Judg. 8:31–9:57), each of the two mountains has specific individual significance.

Upon their entry into the promised land, Moses had commanded the Israelites to proclaim the blessings of obedience to the law on Mount Gerizim, and the curses of disobedience to the law on Mount Ebal (Deut. 11:29). Moses had further commanded that they build an altar of uncut stones on Ebal to bear the words of the law written in plaster (27:1–8). Moses had also specified that those six tribes descended from Jacob's wives stand on Gerizim, and the five tribes descended from the maidservants plus Reuben (Gen. 49:4) stand on Ebal (Deut. 27:11–14). After the conquest of Jericho and Ai, Joshua led a covenant renewal at the twin peaks, thereby fulfilling the Mosaic requirements (Josh. 8:30–35).

The final explicit mention in the OT of Mount Gerizim occurs in Judges. There, Jotham son of Gideon challenged the Shechemites for their loyalty to his half brother, the treacherous Abimelek (Judg. 9:7–21). A ledge about halfway up the mountain is popularly called "Jotham's Pulpit."

The character of Mount Gerizim changed after the exile, when the Samaritans emerged as a separate people group at enmity with the Jews. The Samaritan Pentateuch substitutes Gerizim for Ebal in Deut. 27:4, so the Samaritans constructed their own temple there in the fourth century BC, during the reign of Alexander the Great (it later was destroyed by John Hyrcanus in 128 BC). During her conversation with Jesus, the woman at Jacob's Well in Sychar, near Shechem, brought up the topic of ancestral worship on Mount Gerizim (John 4:4–38, esp. v. 20). *See also* Ebal.

GERSHOM **(1)** The elder son of Moses and Zipporah, born in Midian (Exod. 2:22; 18:3; 1 Chron. 23:15). His name, given by Moses, means "sojourner there," reflecting Moses' status as an alien in Midian. This Gershom is named as an ancestor of Jonathan, the priest of Micah and subsequently of the Danites (Judg. 17:7–18:30), as well as an ancestor to Shubael, called both chief and officer over the treasuries (1 Chron. 23:16; 26:24). **(2)** A descendant of Phinehas, he was among those who accompanied Ezra from Babylon to Jerusalem during the reign of Artaxerxes (Ezra 8:2). **(3)** An alternate spelling for Gershon son of Levi (see Gen. 46:11) in 1 Chron. 6. *See also* Gershon.

GERSHOMITES *See* Gershonites.

GERSHON Along with Kohath and Merari, Gershon was one of the three sons of Levi, and thus the ancestor of a group of Levites (Gen. 46:11). His name is spelled "Gershon" in Genesis, elsewhere in the Pentateuch (Exod. 6:16–17; Num. 3:17, 21), and in the initial listing of the genealogy in 1 Chron. 6 (v. 1). However, in the Hebrew the spelling reverts to "Gershom" in the remainder of the genealogy (1 Chron. 6:16, 17, 20, 43, 62, 71; see NIV mg.). *See also* Gershom; Gershonites.

GERSHONITES The descendants of Gershon (also spelled "Gershom") son of Levi (Gen. 46:11) were Libni (also known as Ladan) and Shimei and their descendants (Num. 3:18, 21; 1 Chron. 6:17, 43; 23:7–11). The Gershonites were counted in a census (Num. 4:22, 38–41) and received thirteen cities from Issachar, Asher, Naphtali, and Manasseh as their territorial allotment (Josh. 21:6, 27; 1 Chron. 6:62, 71 [ESV, NRSV: "Gershomites"]). During the wilderness period they were responsible for all activities concerning the tabernacle coverings, screens, and hangings (Num. 3:25–26; 4:21–28; 7:6–7). They also carried the ark of the covenant (Num. 10:17; 1 Chron. 15:7, 11–15). *See also* Gershon.

GERUTH Part of the name of an unidentified place near Bethlehem (Jer. 41:17). As Johanan son of Kareah led a remnant of the people of Judah toward Egypt in order to flee from Babylonian forces, the Hebrew text states that they stopped at *geruth kimham*, which means "the lodging place of Kimham" (KJV: "the habitation of Chimham"). The place may be named for Kimham, the son of Barzillai (2 Sam. 19:37–40); it possibly stood on land granted to Kimham by David in order to repay Barzillai for his material support of David (see 2 Sam. 17:27–29; 19:32).

GESHAM *See* Geshan.

GESHAN One of six children of Jahdai, along with Regem, Jotham, Pelet, Ephah, and Shaaph (1 Chron. 2:47). The family apparently descended from Caleb, although the connection between Caleb and Jahdai is unclear. Jahdai may indeed have been male or else one of Caleb's concubines. The name "Geshan" appears as "Gersom" in the LXX. *See also* Geshem.

GESHEM An Arab, king of Qedar, who resisted Nehemiah's efforts to rebuild Jerusalem's wall. He and his associates (Sanballat and Tobiah) appealed to the Persian king but ultimately were unsuccessful (Neh. 2:19; 6:1–2, 6). During the Persian period the Qedarites were located to the south of Palestine and in the Nile Delta region of Egypt. A reference to Geshem has been found on a silver container discovered at Tel el-Maskhuta in Egypt. "Gashmu" is an alternate spelling in Neh. 6:6 (see KJV).

GESHUR **(1)** An agricultural region east of the Sea of Galilee, settled about 2000 BC, whose population was not expelled during the Israelite conquest (Josh. 13:11, 13) and increased in the eleventh century BC. As an independent Aramean kingdom, Geshur allied with David when he married the Geshurite princess Maakah (2 Sam. 3:3). Their son Absalom lived in Geshur for three years after killing his half brother Amnon (2 Sam. 13:37–38). Geshur later allied with Aram-Damascus to capture Israelite territory in Gilead (1 Chron. 2:22–23), but it was decimated by the Assyrian king Tiglath-pileser III in 734 BC. **(2)** A region south of Philistia mentioned in Josh. 13:2 as territory yet to be taken in the Israelite conquest, but later won by David while he was among the Philistines (1 Sam. 27:8–11).

GESHURI *See* Geshurites.

GESHURITES Two people groups, one located northeast of Israel (Josh. 13:13), one south of Philistia (Josh. 13:1–3). *See also* Geshur.

GESTURES In the Bible, gestures are made with either parts of the body or items, such as clothing and rings, directly connected to the body. For this reason, it makes sense to classify biblical gestures in relation to the different body parts that are identified with the gestures. It is, however, challenging to know where to draw a line on classifying a gesture. For example, a devious person is described in Prov. 6:13 as one "who winks maliciously with his eye, signals with his feet and motions with his fingers." It is unclear whether this is a single gesture or multiple ones, and whether all signify different things or the same thing.

HEAD

Gestures that relate to the head range from simple head motions to semiviolent acts such as hair pulling. Simple head motions include lifting of one's head in honor (Gen. 40:13), bowing one's head in mourning (Ps. 35:14), tossing one's head in mockery and derision (2 Kings 19:21), and shaking one's head as insult (Ps. 22:7; Mark 15:29).

A common action is the shaving of the head, which can be for purification (Lev. 14:8–9; Num. 6:9; 8:7 [includes all body hair]), mourning (Deut. 21:11–13; Job 1:20; Isa. 15:2; Jer. 16:6; 47:5; 48:37; Ezek. 27:31; Amos 8:10; Mic. 1:16), remorse (Jer. 41:5), or shaming (Jer. 2:16). However, priests are forbidden from shaving their heads even in mourning (Lev. 21:5; Ezek. 44:20), while the high priest is to wear a turban on his head during sacrificial duties (Exod. 29:6).

Anointing of the head is done when a priest or king is installed (Exod. 29:7; Ps. 23:5) or simply as a sign of God's goodness and blessing on a person (Eccles. 9:8). Blessing may also involve placing a hand on the head of the person being blessed (Gen. 48:14–18; Exod. 29:19), while the same gesture on the head of sacrificial animals is a symbolic means of transferring sin (Lev. 3:2, 8, 13; 4:4, 15, 24, 29, 33; 8:18, 22).

In the OT, a woman's head can be shaved in mourning (Deut. 21:12–13; cf. Jer. 47:5), but in the NT, a shaved head can be a cause for disgrace (1 Cor. 11:5–6).

Face. Facial gestures range from expressions to actions such as touching or covering the face. A face can be downcast in anger (Gen. 4:5–6) or bowed to the ground in honor (Gen. 48:12), in dejection (Josh. 7:6), in humility (Ruth 2:10), in worship (2 Chron. 20:18; Ps. 138:2), in subjection, supplication, reverence (1 Sam. 20:41; 25:41; 28:14; 2 Sam. 14:4, 22; 18:28; 24:20; 1 Kings 1:23; 1 Chron. 21:20), or in dread (e.g., Moses before Yahweh [Exod. 3:6]).

The face can be covered or veiled as an indication of uncleanness (Lev. 13:45), in grief/mourning (2 Sam. 19:4; Ezek. 24:17), in resignation (1 Kings 19:13), with intent to deceive in adultery (Job 24:15), or in horror of judgment (Esther 7:8; Ezek. 12:6, 12). It can also be buried in the dust in remorse (Lam. 3:29).

God can be described as hiding or turning away his face against wickedness and evil (Deut. 31:18; 32:20; Ps. 34:16; Isa. 8:17; Jer. 33:5; Ezek. 7:22; 15:7; 20:46; 21:2) or in an act of withholding blessings (Job 13:15; Pss. 10:1; 13:1; 27:9; 30:7; 34:16; Isa. 54:8; 59:2; 64:7). God can also turn his face toward a place in judgment (Ezek. 4:3, 7; 6:2). In 1 Sam. 5:3–4 the idol of the Philistine god Dagon falls facedown before the ark of the covenant, apparently overpowered by Yahweh.

Acts of humiliation or dishonor can involve spitting in the face (Num. 12:14; Deut. 25:9; Job 17:6; 30:10; Isa. 50:6), slapping the face (1 Kings 22:24; 2 Chron. 18:23; Job 16:10; Lam. 3:30; Mic. 5:1), pulling a skirt up over someone's face in shaming judgment (Jer. 13:26; Nah. 3:5), and hooking and dragging someone by the nose (2 Kings 19:28). Although being struck on the cheek is humiliating, Jesus instructs his disciples to "turn the other cheek" as a sign of resistance to violence (Matt. 5:39; Luke 6:29).

One can lift one's face in worship (2 Kings 20:2; Job 22:26; Isa. 38:2) or in confidence (Job 11:15) and can fail to lift it in shame and disgrace (Ezra 9:6). Although the shaving of beards in mourning is common practice (Ezra 9:3; Isa. 15:2; Jer. 41:5; 48:37), the forced shaving of beards is an act of shaming and insulting (2 Sam. 10:4; 1 Chron. 19:4–5; Isa. 7:20; 50:6).

Eyes. Winking the eye is perceived as an evil, deceptive, or malicious act (Ps. 35:19; Prov. 6:13; 16:30). Eyes can be lifted up in worship and expectation (Pss. 121:1; 123:1).

Mouth. Pursed lips can characterize an evil person (Prov. 16:30), while a hand can be clapped over the mouth in awe and submission (Job 21:5; 40:4). Psalm 72:9 looks to the righteous king before whom the desert tribes will bow and whose "enemies lick the dust" in defeat.

Ears. An Israelite slave for life is to have a hole punched through his or her earlobe, held against a doorpost, with an awl (Exod. 21:6; Deut. 15:17). Blood is sprinkled on the lobe of the right ear for purification (Exod. 29:20; Lev. 8:23–24; 14:17), while supplication can be described as asking for the turning of an ear (2 Kings 19:16; Ps. 31:2). Turning one's ear signifies paying attention or taking something to heart (Ps. 49:4; Prov. 4:20; 5:13).

Neck. The neck can be adorned (Song 1:10) as a sign of pride and honor (Gen. 41:42; Judg. 5:30; Prov. 1:9; Ezek. 16:11) or outstretched in arrogance (Ps. 75:5 TNIV: "Do not lift your horns against heaven; do not speak with outstretched neck"). Jeremiah put a yoke on his neck as a prophetic sign of the approaching Babylonian conquest (Jer. 27–28). While putting someone's neck in a yoke is an act of triumphal conquest (Ps. 105:18), stepping on the neck of a subdued enemy is an act of subjugation and humiliation (Josh. 10:24).

BODY

Nakedness in public is considered shameful (Gen. 9:22–23; Nah. 3:5; Rev. 3:18), so that it is sometimes pictured as part of divine judgment (Deut. 28:48; Isa. 47:2–3; Lam. 1:8; Mic. 1:11) or as a sign of promiscuity (Isa. 57:8; Ezek. 16:36). An unkempt body can be a sign of mourning, as it is for Mephibosheth (2 Sam. 19:24). A certain kind of body covering is a sign of marriage proposal or protection (Ezek. 16:8; 23:18; Hos. 2:9). Body dismembering, even in war, is an act of humiliation (2 Sam. 4:12).

Chest. In self-mortification, one can pound one's chest in mourning (Ezek. 21:12) or in remorse (Jer. 31:19; Luke 18:13). The breasts of sacrificial animals are waved before God as a "wave offering" before being eaten (Exod. 29:26; Lev. 7:30; Num. 6:20).

Hand, arm. Hand gestures include motions such as lifting hands in worship, clapping hands in joy, and clapping a hand over one's mouth in awe. The expression "outstretched arm" (Exod. 6:6; Deut. 4:34; 5:15; 7:19; 9:29; 11:2; 26:8; 1 Kings 8:42; 2 Kings 17:36; 2 Chron. 6:32; Ps. 136:12; Jer. 21:5; 27:5; 32:17, 21; Ezek. 20:33–34) indicates power, might, strength. It is often used of God to indicate his ability to defeat powerful armies and enemies. God is implored by the psalmist to lift his hand and act for the sake of the righteous (Ps. 10:12).

Since the right hand is the hand of power, the act of sitting at the right hand indicates being favored (1 Kings 2:19; Ps. 110:1; Matt. 22:44; Mark 12:36; Luke 20:43; Acts 2:35; Heb. 1:3; 8:1; 10:12; 12:2; 1 Pet. 3:22). When taking an oath, one places a hand under the thigh/crotch (Gen. 24:2; 47:29), most likely the right hand (see Gen. 48:14, 17–18; Lev. 8:23; 14:14).

Clapping the hands can be a sign of awe (Ezek. 6:11), malice, or remorse (25:6), while a bared arm can be a sign of judgment (4:7). Job claps his hand over his mouth in awe of God and in submission and repentance (Job 40:4–5).

Hands can be lifted in worship (1 Kings 8:22; 1 Tim. 2:8), to beseech (Ps. 28:2), to protect and bless (Ps. 10:12), in an oath (Deut. 32:40), or to harm (Exod. 24:11; 1 Sam. 24:6, 10; 2 Sam.1:14; 18:12).

Pilate washes his hands to proclaim his innocence over the death of Jesus (Matt. 27:24), while 1 Pet. 5:6 urges believers to humble themselves "under God's mighty hand," so that in due time they will be lifted up.

Buttocks. Exposure of the buttocks can serve as a humiliating insult and provocation, as happens to David's men (2 Sam. 10:4; 1 Chron. 19:4) and Egyptian and Cushite captives (Isa. 20:4).

Leg. The leg or thigh is often a euphemism for the male reproductive organs, so that putting one's hand under a thigh in oath (Gen. 24:2; 47:29) may involve actually grabbing the genitalia. Animal thighs are waved to God in offering before being consumed (Lev. 9:21; 10:14; Num. 6:20), while oaths administered to uncover adultery cause a guilty woman's thighs to waste (Num. 5:2–27).

The most common gesture involving the knee is bowing, in worship or reverence (Deut. 33:3; Isa. 45:23; Rom. 11:4; 14:11; Phil. 2:10), in defeat (2 Sam. 22:40; Ps. 18:38; Isa. 60:14), in distress (Ps. 57:6), or in respect (1 Kings 1:31). In what seems to be a somewhat awkward position, Elijah puts his face between his knees in prayer (1 Kings 18:42).

Feet. Gestures involving the feet are probably the most common gestures in the Bible. Feet can be washed in hospitality (Gen. 18:4; 19:2; 24:32; 43:24; 1 Sam. 25:41), in ablution (Exod. 30:19, 21; 40:31), or in supplication (1 Sam. 25:41). Feet can be bathed in oil as a blessing (Deut. 33:24), uncovered in marriage proposals (Ezek. 16:8; cf. Ruth 3:4, 7), and stamped in remorse (Ezek. 25:6), and sandals can be removed from them in honor (Exod. 3:1–10) or disgrace (Deut. 25:9). The heavenly seraphs cover their feet in supplication before the throne of God (Isa. 6:2), while the feet of humans can signal deception (Prov. 6:13).

Enemies can be placed under one's feet in subjugation (1 Kings 5:3; Pss. 8:6; 18:39; 45:5; 47:3; 110:1; Mal. 4:3; Rom. 16:20), have their feet shackled or ensnared (Job 13:27; 33:11; Pss. 25:15; 105:18), and be forced to lick the feet of victors in humiliation and defeat (Isa. 49:23). The righteous will bathe their feet in the blood of their enemies in revenge (Pss. 58:10; 68:23).

Those overwhelmed can grovel at the feet of the powerful (2 Kings 4:27, 37; Esther 8:3; Matt. 28:9; Mark 5:33; 7:25; Acts 10:25), while those emboldened can rise to their feet in confidence (Ezek. 2:1–2; 3:24; Dan. 8:18).

In the NT, dust can be shaken off one's feet as an indication of divine judgment (Matt. 10:14; Mark 6:11; Luke 9:5), even as lying at a person's feet is a recognition of authority/submission (Matt. 15:30; Mark 5:33; Luke 8:28, 35, 41, 47; 10:39; 17:16; Acts 4:37; 5:2). A woman publicly washes Jesus' feet with her tears, wipes them with her hair, and kisses and perfumes them in what seems an act of love and repentance; but Jesus indicates that she has prepared his body for burial (Luke 7:38–46; John 11:2; 12:3). Jesus washes his disciples' feet as instruction on servanthood and discipleship (John 13:5–14).

Fingers, Toes. Different fingers seem to have different roles assigned them. A finger sprinkles blood in cleansing (Lev. 4:6, 17, 25, 30, 34; 8:15; 9:9; 14:16; 16:14, 19; Num. 19:4), while blood on the tip of the right thumb and on the right big toe is for cleansing (Exod. 29:20; Lev. 8:23–24; 14:17, 25, 28).

One wears a signet ring as a sign of power (Esther 3:10) or a gesture of restoration and forgiveness (Luke 15:22). But fingers can also motion in deception (Prov. 6:13) or point in blame (Isa. 58:9). Jesus writes with his finger on the ground, apparently as a gesture of indifference to those pointing accusing fingers (John 8:6).

CLOTHES AND SHOES

Garments. Garments attain significance as they are related to specific emotions. Wearing sackcloth and ashes in mourning is common (Gen. 37:34; Ezek. 7:18; 2 Sam. 3:31), while ripping garments in mourning is also frequently attested (Gen. 37:34; 44:13; Lev. 10:6; 21:10; Josh. 7:6; 2 Sam. 1:11; 3:31; 13:31; 1 Kings 21:27; 2 Kings 2:12; 19:1; Esther 4:1; Isa. 32:11; 37:1; Jer. 41:5).

Ripping someone's clothing to expose nakedness (Ezek. 16:39; 2 Sam. 10:4) or pulling a person's skirts up over the face (Jer. 13:26) is an act of shaming or insulting. But tearing one's clothes off can be a sign of fury (Matt. 26:65). Persons with defiling diseases are expected to warn off others by wearing torn clothes and shouting, "Unclean! Unclean!" (Lev. 13:45).

By laying their clothes at Saul's feet, the crowd may be acknowledging his authority in the stoning of Stephen (Acts 7:58).

Sandals. A woman can remove a man's sandal in contempt (Deut. 25:5–10), while a sandal can be removed by a kinsman-redeemer to indicate giving up a right or as a transfer of property (Ruth 4:7–8). A sandal can also be removed in mourning (Ezek. 24:17) or be cast over a piece of land to claim ownership (Pss. 60:8; 108:9).

PROPHETIC GESTURES

Prophetic gestures in the OT are mostly concerned with the call to repentance and approaching judgments upon failure to heed the warning. Jeremiah puts a yoke on his neck (Jer. 27–28; cf. Deut. 28:48), Ezekiel cooks with dung (Ezek. 4:12) and sleeps on his left side for 390 days and then on his right side for 40 days (4:5–6), Isaiah strips off his clothing (Isa. 20:2–3; 32:11), and Hosea marries an unfaithful wife (Hos. 1:1–3).

In the NT, Jesus cleanses the temple as an act of symbolic judgment (Matt. 21:12; Mark 11:15; John 2:15). He also breaks bread and drinks wine (Matt. 26:26; Mark 14:22; Luke 22:19; 24:30, 35; Acts 2:46; 20:11; 27:35; 1 Cor. 11:24–25) and washes his disciples' feet (John 13:1–13), thereby establishing symbolic Christian practices.

GETHER The third son of Aram, and a grandson of Shem (Gen. 10:23; 1 Chron. 1:17).

GETHSEMANE The place where Jesus, after agonized prayer, was betrayed by Judas and arrested by Jewish authorities. The name comes from the Aramaic word for "oil press," and Gethsemane probably had an olive orchard and an oil press. It likely was located near the Mount of Olives (Matt. 26:30; Mark 14:26; Luke 22:39), although its precise location is unknown.

Only Matthew and Mark specifically call the place "Gethsemane" (Matt. 26:36; Mark 14:32); Luke does not mention Gethsemane, but he does, with them, indicate that the events took place on the Mount of Olives (Luke 22:39). John describes the site as a garden, although he also does not mention it by name (John 18:1).

In Gethsemane, the disciples fell asleep after Jesus warned them against temptation. Jesus prayed three times for deliverance, but he resisted temptation and remained obedient to the will of God.

Ancient olive trees at the Church of All Nations on the Mount of Olives, the traditional site of the garden of Gethsemane

GEUEL A spy sent by Moses, he was the son of Maki of the tribe of Dan (Num. 13:15).

GEZER Located in the Aijalon Valley, Gezer guarded the route from the seacoast up to Jerusalem. Gezer (Tell Jezer, Tell Jazari) is a mound, thirty-three acres in size, situated in the foothills of Judah. It is known from biblical, Egyptian, and Assyrian sources. Gezer was a major Canaanite city-state throughout the second millennium BC. The city was destroyed around 1500 BC and rebuilt during the Late Bronze Age, when it came under Egyptian hegemony. Joshua defeated the king of Gezer, who was part of a Canaanite coalition (Josh. 10:33). Gezer remained in Canaanite hands throughout the period of the judges (Josh. 16:10; Judg. 1:29), even though it formed the boundary for Ephraim’s tribal allotment (Josh. 16:3) and was assigned as a Levitical city (Josh. 21:21). David fought against the Philistines near Gezer (2 Sam. 5:25; 1 Chron. 20:4).

Gezer was conquered by Egypt and given as a dowry to Solomon. Solomon fortified Gezer along with Jerusalem, Hazor, and Megiddo (1 Kings 9:15–17). Gezer was destroyed by Shishak (c. 950–925 BC). It was rebuilt and destroyed by the Assyrians under Tiglath-pileser III (733 BC). Gezer became known as Gazara in the Hellenistic period and became an important city for the Hasmonean rulers.

GEZRITES *See* Girzites.

GHOST An archaic expression for the word “spirit,” such as in “giving up of the ghost” (Job 11:20 KJV) or “child of the Holy Ghost” (Matt. 1:18 KJV). In modern translations the term is reserved for the Greek word *phantasma* (Matt. 14:26; Mark 6:49), which may refer to an apparition, and for a restricted sense of *pneuma* (often translated “spirit”), based on context (Luke 24:37, 39). In these occurrences the disciples potentially mistake Jesus for a ghost in the sense of being something less than what he had been before death—without flesh and bones (Luke 24:39). His passing through walls may have contributed to this misunderstanding (John 20:19). By eating a fish, however, Jesus demonstrates that his resurrected body is of a different order (Luke 24:42–43; cf. John 21:1–14). The Bible never denies the existence of ghosts, but it offers little about their origin and purpose. The Mesopotamians believed that neglect of the dead might result in the ghost’s malevolence, requiring a ritual. Those who died violently or tragically also required ritual. Evoking the spirits of the dead goes back at least as far as Homer. We find a similar view in the story of the raising of the spirit of Samuel by the medium at Endor (1 Sam. 28:1–25). The Bible condemns the practice (Lev. 19:31; Deut. 18:10–11; 1 Chron. 10:13–14).

GHOST, HOLY *See* Holy Spirit.

GIAH A place of uncertain location near Gibeon and Jerusalem, mentioned in the account of Joab and Abishai’s pursuit of Abner (2 Sam. 2:24). It lay near the hill of Ammah, where Joab halted the pursuit. The reading “Giah” may have resulted from scribal error (various LXX manuscripts have *Gai* [“Ai”] or *pharanx* [“valley”]).

GIANTS Various terms in the OT have been interpreted as references to giants. “Anakim,” “Emim,” and “Zamzummim” (ESV, NRSV, NKJV; NIV: “Anakites,” “Emites,” “Zamzummites”) are the names designated by individual nations (i.e., the Israelites, the Moabites, and the Ammonites) for the giant aboriginal inhabitants of their respective territories (Num. 13:31–33; Deut. 2:10–21). “Rephaim” and “Nephilim,” on the other hand, are more general designations that are not necessarily restricted to specific territories. The two terms are difficult to define, but they seem to designate certain types of people such as those with legendary qualities or reputation (Gen. 6:4; Num. 13:33; Deut. 2:11; 3:11; 1 Chron. 20:4). Thus, Rephaim and Nephilim are not necessarily people of gigantic proportions, but a gigantic person would certainly be regarded among them (Num. 13:33; Deut. 2:11; 3:11). It is likely that all these terms had pejorative meanings (e.g., “Nephilim” might literally mean “fallen ones”). Furthermore, these terms share a common literary function in that they designate people who must be destroyed or displaced. Their demise was something that God required or even executed himself (e.g., Deut. 2:21; 9:1–6; Amos 2:9).

Some scholars have theorized that the biblical references to giants are a form of military hyperbole, or that they are embellished legends stemming from the sight of megalithic structures, but these theories fail to account for the fact that the Bible represents giants as living simultaneously (and interacting) with the Israelites. The Bible even preserves the personal names of giants such as “Og,” “Talmai,” and “Goliath.” Although no gigantic skeletal remains have yet been recovered from excavations, there is some evidence for giants in Egyptian texts. Papyrus Anastasi I describes Canaanites who were four or five cubits tall (i.e., between 7 and 8.5 feet) in the late thirteenth century BC. The Execration texts also refer to a place called “Anaq” (cf. “Anakim”) in southern Canaan (c. 1800 BC).

GIBBAR The head of a clan that was part of the early return to Judah from Babylonian captivity in 539 BC or soon after (Ezra 2:20).

GIBBETHON A city located in the tribal territory of Dan in west-central Israel (Josh. 19:44) and allotted to the Levites (21:23). In subsequent years the Philistines and the Israelites struggled to control the site. During the fighting at Gibbethon, Baasha slew Nadab and took the northern crown (1 Kings 15:27–28), and later Omri’s troops proclaimed him king there as well (1 Kings 16:15–17). Gibbethon is likely identified with Tell el-Melat, on the edge of the coastal plain, three and a half miles west of Gezer.

GIBEA A grandson of Caleb and his concubine Maakah. His father was Sheva (1 Chron. 2:49).

GIBEAH **(1)** A town located within the borders of the tribe of Benjamin. Gibeah is infamous as the setting where the men of the city raped and murdered the concubine of a Levite who had lodged in the city for the night. In response to this brutal act, an army of Israelites from all the other tribes engaged in battle against Gibeah and the Benjamites, killing all but six hundred men and burning the city (Judg. 19–20). Hosea refers to these events when he compares the sins of Israel in his time to the depravity of Gibeah (Hos. 9:9; 10:9).

Gibeah was the hometown of Saul (1 Sam. 10:26; 15:34; Isa. 10:29), and as such it played a central role during his reign. It was to Gibeah that the elders of Jabesh sent messengers to Saul requesting help (1 Sam. 11:1–5), and from Gibeah that Saul directed his campaign against the Philistines (1 Sam. 13–14). Later, David handed over two of Saul’s sons and five of his grandsons to the Gibeonites to be hanged in Gibeah in retaliation for Saul’s misdeeds (2 Sam. 21:5–6). The final biblical references to Gibeah appear in Isaiah and Hosea in connection with the impending invasion of Assyria (Isa. 10:29; Hos. 5:8).

Some references to Gibeah are problematic. Since *gibe'ah* is the Hebrew word for "hill," there is some question whether "Gibeah of God" in 1 Sam. 10:5 (NIV) is a reference to Saul's hometown or to a high place and should thus be translated as the "hill of God" (KJV, NASB). Similarly, the word *gibe'ah* in the Benjamite town list in Josh. 18:28 might better be translated as "hill." Although the NIV translates "Gibeah and Kiriath" here, indicating two distinct towns, the Hebrew MT reads *gibe'at qiryat* and may refer to the hill of Kiriath Jearim, where the ark of the covenant was located for several years (1 Sam. 7:1–2). Finally, Gibeah occasionally is mentioned in close connection with a town called "Geba," and some uncertainty exists whether these are distinct cities or linguistic variants of the same name (cf. Judg. 20:10; 1 Sam. 13:3, 16).

Gibeah is identified by most scholars with modern Tel el-Fûl, located about three miles north of Jerusalem. Excavations by W. F. Albright in 1922–23 and 1933 and by P. W. Lapp in 1964 identified five periods of occupation dating from Iron Age I (1200–1000 BC) to the early Roman era (c. AD 70). Finds from the second period (Iron Age IIA, 1000–900 BC) include the remains of a fortress that Albright attributed to Saul, although others suggest it was built by the Philistines and later occupied by Saul. Remains of a second fortress from Iron Age IIA and a third from Iron Age IIB–C (900–586 BC) were also found.

(2) A town located within the borders of the tribe of Judah (Josh. 15:57).

(3) A town located in the hill country of Ephraim that had been given to Phinehas, the son of Eleazar and the grandson of Aaron. Eleazar was buried there (Josh. 24:33).

GIBEAH OF GOD The site identified by the prophet Samuel as the location of Saul's encounter with a group of prophets and his subsequent filling by the Spirit of the Lord (1 Sam. 10:5–6). Other versions render the Hebrew phrase *gibe'at ha'elohim* as "hill of God" (KJV, NASB) or "Gibeath-elohim" (NRSV). *See also* Gibeah.

GIBEATH The KJV preserves this alternative Hebrew spelling of the city Gibeah in Josh. 18:28. *See also* Gibeah.

GIBEATH-ELOHIM *See* Gibeah of God.

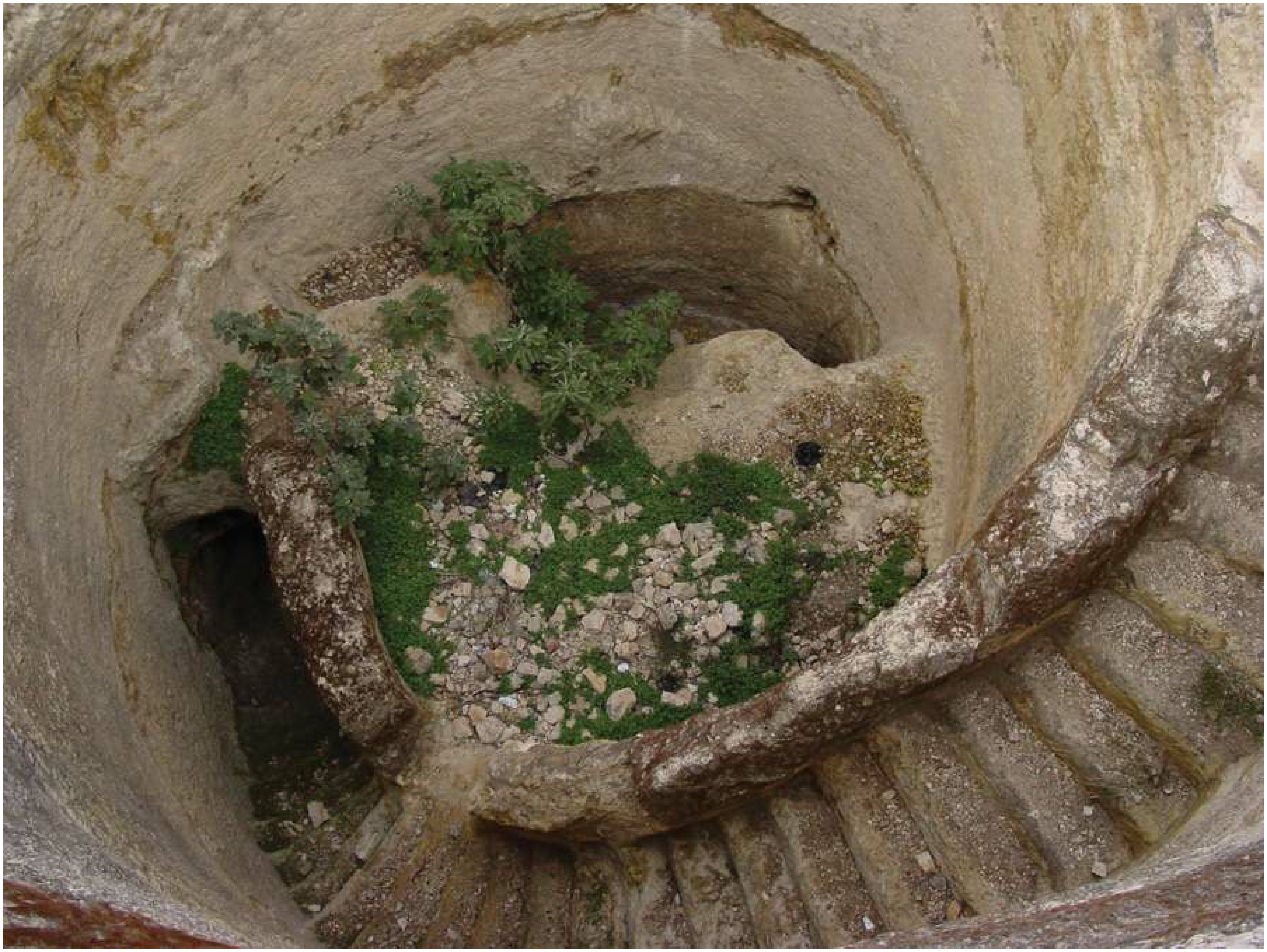
GIBEATH HAARALOTH The place where Joshua performed circumcision on a group of Israelites, hence the Hebrew name, meaning "hill of the foreskins" (Josh. 5:3 KJV, NET). After crossing the Jordan River into Canaan near Jericho, God commanded Joshua, before continuing the conquest, to make knives of flint (found in the region) and circumcise the Israelite males who had been born during the wilderness journey (Josh. 5:4–7).

GIBEATHITE A resident of Gibeah. In 1 Chron. 12:3, Shemaah is referred to as a Gibeathite.

GIBEON The town of Gibeon has been located at the site of el-Jib, an Arab village, about five and a half miles north of Jerusalem. The site was first identified by Edward Robinson in 1838 and was verified by several archaeological digs in the 1950s and 1960s. The discovery most helpful in positively identifying Gibeon was the numerous jar handles found inscribed with the name "Gibeon," which apparently were part of a royal storehouse there.

Geographically, Gibeon was significant because it guarded an important crossroad between the main thoroughfare running east up into the hills from the coastal plain and the main road running north to Bethel and south to Jerusalem. The town lies within the territory of the tribe of Benjamin, although it likely did not become part of Benjamin until after the beginning of the monarchy, when the tribal designation would have been less important. Because of its strategic location approximately halfway between Bethel and Jerusalem, Gibeon was the site of numerous battles between the northern and southern kingdoms.

Gibeon first appears in the Bible when the Gibeonites, using old clothes, old shoes, and moldy bread, pretended to be foreigners from far away and tricked Joshua into a peace treaty. Joshua honored the treaty, although he relegated the Gibeonites to do menial labor (Josh. 9:3–10:15). When their neighbors attacked the Gibeonites, the Israelites fulfilled their obligations and went to the Gibeonites' defense (Josh. 10:1–15).



The stairs to the cistern in Gibeon

Gibeon factors in several events during the lives of Saul, David, and Solomon. Men loyal to Saul's household and David's men faced off in a strange contest around the "pool of Gibeon." Twelve pairs of men fought, with each contest resulting in both men dying (2 Sam. 2:12–17). In James Pritchard's excavations of Gibeon, he found what is undoubtedly the pool referred to in this story. The pool was thirty-seven feet in diameter and eighty-two feet deep, with a spiral staircase on the side. The pool gave the city access to freshwater within its walls. It was part of the water defenses of the city, which also included a tunnel leading to a spring that provided additional water to the city. Gibeon was also the site of several of the events in Absalom's revolt against David.

Gibeon also was an important cultic center and high place in the early monarchy. The tabernacle was situated in Gibeon for some time (1 Chron. 16:39). God twice appeared to Solomon at Gibeon. Once, God appeared in order to ask Solomon what he wanted, to which Solomon responded that he wanted wisdom (2 Chron. 1:2–13). On another occasion, God assured Solomon that he had heard his prayer (1 Kings 9:2–9). This second encounter with God took place after the construction of the temple, which suggests that Gibeon was religiously important even after the temple was built. Gibeon is recorded as one of the cities captured by Shishak during his campaign against Israel shortly after the death of Solomon.

Although Gibeon is rarely mentioned after the partition of the kingdom, the archaeological data suggest that the city was a vital economic asset during the entire monarchy. Gibeon was also the site of Gedaliah's assassination. Gedaliah was the Babylonian-appointed Jewish governor after the destruction of Jerusalem. Some Gibeonites were taken to Babylon during the exile and then returned with Nehemiah to help him build Jerusalem's wall (Neh. 3:7–8).

Besides the pool, the tunnel, and jar handles, several other archaeological discoveries at Gibeon have been found. Other handles have been found that are inscribed with different common Jewish names, and several have what appear to be royal-seal stamps. An industrial area has been excavated, revealing several large-scale wineries and wine cellars, indicating that Gibeon was a center for wine production and distribution. The fortifications of Gibeon have also been excavated, exposing a large wall all the way around the city, measuring thirteen feet in width in some places.

GIBEONITE *See* Gibeon.

GIBLITE *See* Byblos.

GIDDALTI One of the fourteen sons of Heman, King David's seer (1 Chron. 25:4). When twenty-four lots were cast during the time of David to allocate musical duties for the worship of God, Giddalti and his sons and relatives received the twenty-second lot (1 Chron. 25:29).

GIDDEL **(1)** One of the ancestors of the temple servants (Nethinim) who returned to Jerusalem after the Babylonian captivity under the leadership of Zerubbabel in 539 BC or soon after (Ezra 2:47; Neh. 7:49). The fact that many of the names in the list of ancestors are foreign has led to the belief that they were originally prisoners of war who were pressed into service to perform menial tasks as they assisted the Levites. **(2)** An ancestor of a family that belonged to the "servants of Solomon" (Ezra 2:56; Neh. 7:58) and returned with Zerubbabel in 539 BC or soon after. Little is known about this group except that it likely performed menial functions at the temple, since it is grouped with the "temple servants" (*see* Nethinim). The name of the group suggests that it was formed during the period of Solomon, though it could have been so named because Solomon built the first temple.

GIDEON The fifth judge described in the book of Judges (6:1–8:35). After Deborah's victory over the Canaanites, Israel again falls into sin, so God turns Israel over to a new oppressor, the Midianites and their allies.

In the past, when Israel has repented as they do in Judg. 6:7, God has immediately brought them a judge to rescue them. This time, however, God first sends a prophet, who berates them for their continual apostasy (6:8–10). Still, the narrative next focuses on Gideon, whom God commissions to rescue Israel from Midian (7:14). Like Barak before him (4:8), however, Gideon does not immediately agree, but rather sets conditions for his participation, asking for a sign. Even after receiving the sign, he first of all acts only locally, tearing down his father's idolatrous shrine and building a proper altar to Yahweh (6:26–27). Although the people want to punish Gideon out of fear of the Midianites, his father defends him and renames his son "Jerub-Baal," which means "Let Baal contend with him" (6:32).

At this point, the conflict grows more serious as the Midianites and their allies amass against Israel. Even after the Spirit of the Lord comes upon Gideon, he still sets conditions on God asking for yet another sign, this time putting a fleece in front of God and asking that it be wet while the ground is dry. Even though God meets this condition, Gideon demands a second trial, and only after that is successful does he proceed.

The successful battle against the Midianites is best known for the prebattle dismissal of many of the Israelite troops. Many respond to Gideon's call to arms. As God demands, Gideon insists that fearful troops leave, but even after ten thousand men leave, twenty-two thousand remain. Ultimately, God instructs Gideon to have the troops drink from the waters of the Wadi Harod. The three hundred who drink water by lapping it with their hands to their mouths are chosen, and with these Gideon wins a great victory. There is nothing special about these three hundred troops. God knows that Gideon has a propensity to self-glorification ("by my hand" [Judg. 6:36]), and God wants to ensure that Israel will not boast in its own strength and will know that it is God who has brought deliverance.

Although Gideon is hesitant and apparently distrustful in answering God's call, events during and after the battle show his true nature. His humility is in evidence (cf. Judg. 6:15) when he refuses the Israelites' request to be their king (though later he names one of his sons "Abimelek," meaning "My father is king"), insisting that God alone will rule them (8:22–23). However, a request of his own becomes an occasion for Israel to plunge back into idolatry when he fashions an ephod from plundered enemy gold, which the Israelites then worship (8:24–27). Even so, the book of Hebrews (11:32) considers him an example of faith.

GIDEONI The father of Abidan, who was the tribal leader of Benjamin during the wilderness wanderings (Num. 1:11; 2:22; 7:60, 65; 10:24). *See also* Abidan.

GIDOM A place mentioned in connection with the Israelite pursuit of warriors of the tribe of Benjamin. After routing the Benjamites, the men of Israel pursued them eastward from Gibeah toward the wilderness "as far as Gidom" (Judg. 20:45). Six hundred Benjamites escaped to the rock of Rimmon (20:47). Gidom's exact location remains unknown.

GIFT OF TONGUES Both speaking in tongues and interpreting tongues are listed among the various gifts of the Spirit that God may choose to give to believers according to his will (1 Cor. 12:10, 28). The act of speaking in tongues is referred to as "glossolalia" (from Gk. *glōssa* ["tongue"] and *laleō* ["speak"]).

NARRATIVE RECORD

Instances in which believers exercise the gift of tongues are recorded in three biblical narratives, with Acts 2 detailing the most notable occurrence. When the Holy Spirit first was poured out upon Christian believers gathered at Pentecost, visible tongues of fire were accompanied by a Spirit-enabled ability to speak in languages that were foreign to them (2:3–4). In this instance, the tongues spoken are identified as the actual human languages and dialects of various people groups who resided throughout the Mediterranean world (2:8–11). The phenomenon resulted in the ability of many to hear the wonders of God in their native languages and prompted both curiosity and scoffing (2:12–13).

A similar outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon Cornelius and his fellow Gentiles in connection with the ministry of Peter was accompanied by speaking in tongues (Acts 10:44–46). This ability to speak in tongues provided undeniable evidence that God had indeed poured out the Holy Spirit upon Gentile Christians by manifesting the Spirit's presence in a way comparable to the initial Pentecost experience of the Jewish Christians (11:15–18). A final account from the Pauline ministry notes the coming of the Holy Spirit upon a dozen disciples in Ephesus with the accompanying ability to speak in tongues (19:6). The text does not reveal what languages were spoken in either of these latter episodes.

It is sometimes argued that the gift of tongues normally accompanies Christian salvation or baptism with the Holy Spirit and is a gift that believers should earnestly seek. However, this argument cannot be sustained by the historical narratives of Acts. All three recorded instances of tongues detail the gift coming upon groups of people rather than individuals, and the gift is poured out upon them without their praying for it or seeking it out in any way. Furthermore, these are the only three instances in Scripture where tongues clearly accompany salvation, whereas numerous other Lukan accounts of the salvation of various individuals (Acts 2:41; 4:4; 8:36–39; 13:12, 48; 16:14, 34), including Paul (9:1–19; 22:6–16), contain no mention of the gift of tongues.

PAUL'S TEACHING

The first-century Corinthian church exercised a variety of spiritual gifts, including the gift of tongues. When Paul writes to that church, he includes teaching designed to correct various abuses of these spiritual gifts. A lengthy discussion about spiritual gifts in 1 Cor. 12–14 affirms the practice of speaking in tongues in the Corinthian assembly under certain conditions (14:39–40) while also relegating it to a status lower than the gift of prophecy (14:5). By its very nature, Paul asserts, those who speak in tongues are not understood by their human audience; utterances in tongues speak to God, not to human beings (14:2). Therefore, on its own, glossolalia cannot edify those who hear it unless an interpretation is also provided for them. For this reason, Paul directs the Corinthians to other spiritual gifts (14:6) that can function to build up the church (14:12). Nonetheless, Paul affirms the practice of glossolalia in the Corinthians' public worship when it is limited to two or three speakers, when it is done in an orderly manner with the speakers taking turns, and when it is coupled with interpretation so that the church can be edified by its message (14:26–27).

CONTEMPORARY DEBATES

Three questions dominate modern discussions about the gift of tongues: (1) What is the primary purpose of speaking in tongues? (2) What is the nature of the language spoken when the gift of tongues is exercised? (3) Does the gift of tongues continue beyond the apostolic era? Answers to these questions vary and reflect diverse theological positions.

Primary purpose. One position maintains that when the Spirit gives the gift of tongues, it is always a public exercise that produces infallible revelation from God. The primary, or perhaps sole, purpose of this gift of miraculous utterance is as a sign to authenticate the gospel proclamation and thus contribute to the common good of the church as a whole by reaching unbelievers with the gospel in a powerful way. Proponents of this view find support in 1 Cor. 14:22, where Paul speaks of tongues as a sign for unbelievers. Also, the Pentecost experience, narrated in Acts 2, can be understood as a use of tongues that fits into this framework. Opponents object to this interpretation by noting that it was Peter's subsequent sermon rather than the gift of tongues itself that served an evangelistic purpose.

Others find biblical support for an additional private use of tongues by believers in their prayer and praise directed toward God (1 Cor. 14:2, 28). Although the teaching in 1 Cor. 14 focuses on whether and how tongues are to be used in the public assembly, some adherents of this position point to 14:14–19 for evidence of Paul's own use of the gift of tongues in his devotional life. This use of tongues is thought to contribute to the common good of the church through the personal edification of the individual believers who practice this gift (14:4) and who make up the believing community.

Nature of the language. It is not entirely clear from Scripture whether the tongues spoken by those with the gift of tongues are human languages otherwise unknown to the speaker, whether they consist of otherworldly (heavenly, angelic, spiritual) languages, or whether both constitute valid options. The record of Pentecost in Acts 2 is the only scriptural narrative of tongues that explicitly identifies the languages spoken by those exercising the gift of tongues; they are human languages. However, three NT passages are cited in support of the broader view.

First, in 1 Cor. 13:1 Paul alludes to the possibility of speech "in the tongues of men or of angels." While this may affirm the idea of an angelic language being spoken by believers with the gift of tongues, those who limit tongues to human languages see in this statement hyperbole rather than a description of reality.

Second, when Paul discusses tongues in 1 Cor. 14:2, he indicates that no one who hears understands the language. This statement is easily true if the language spoken is "angelic," but it would also be true of a human language generally unfamiliar to those in the Corinthian worship assembly.

Finally, Rom. 8:26, by describing the Spirit's intercession in prayer as groans and utterances too deep for words, may support the idea that the gift of tongues consists of a spiritual rather than a human language. Opponents argue that this text in no way speaks of the gift of tongues.

Continuation beyond the apostolic era. Finally, nowhere does Scripture expressly teach that the gift of tongues will continue throughout the entire church age, nor does it clearly state a time, be it the end of the apostolic period, the closing of the NT canon, or some other time, when the gift of tongues will cease. Because the NT describes the gift of tongues functioning among believers in the first century, many believe that the gift of tongues continues to be expressed by God's new covenant people today.

Continuationists argue that Scripture nowhere anticipates a change in the Holy Spirit's work or empowerment for ministry, and so the life of Christians today should be similar to that of NT believers with regard to the expected and empowering presence of tongues.

On the other hand, cessationists believe that passages such as Eph. 2:11–21 identify the first century as a unique, foundational time in salvation history, characterized by apostolic leadership and an open canon. Just as there are no longer apostles today, one should not be surprised if the practice of miraculous gifts, including the gift of tongues, should significantly decrease or stop entirely following that foundational time. Some also point to 1 Cor. 13:8 as evidence that a time will come when the gift of tongues will end.

Others opt for an intermediate position, arguing that while speaking in tongues is not the standard for the church era, it is possible that the gift continues to operate today on a more limited scale, most likely only in places where the gospel is making inroads for the first time, a situation comparable to that of the NT era.

GIFT(S), GIVING The giving of gifts in the Bible has several nuances. It can refer to a goodwill gift or a peace offering given to a friend or relative (Prov. 18:16; 21:14). Thus, when Jacob seeks to make peace with his brother Esau, he sends gifts to him before they meet (Gen. 32:13; 33:10). Similarly, when Abigail intercedes with David on behalf of Nabal, she gives David a gift (1 Sam. 25:27).

Ezekiel 46:17 illustrates that some gifts are regulated if they came from an inheritance. There are several references in the NT to the gifts of one local church to another (Acts 11:30; 1 Cor. 16:3; 2 Cor. 8:12, 20; 9:5; Phil. 4:17). The giving of these gifts has a positive effect for both those in need and those who give the gift.

Gifts are a traditional part of bridal arrangements in the Bible. Thus, Shechem requests to know the bride-price and gift when he asks for Dinah as his wife (Gen. 34:11–12). Likewise, Pharaoh gives a captured city as a dowry for his daughter’s marriage to Solomon (1 Kings 9:16).

Gifts are integral in honoring another in hospitality and in approaching someone about a service. Israel instructs his sons to take gifts to Pharaoh when they go to purchase food (Gen. 43:11). It is customary to bring a gift to a man of God or prophet when asking for advice or prophetic insight (1 Sam. 9:7; 1 Kings 13:7; 2 Kings 5:15; 8:8–9). People bring Solomon gifts when they seek an audience with him (1 Kings 10:25). Additionally, gifts are part of the process of establishing a treaty (1 Kings 15:19; 2 Kings 16:8; 20:12).

Of course, gifts can be used for ignoble purposes as well. David sends a gift to Uriah in an effort to cover up his own sin (2 Sam. 11:8).

Sacrifices of every type are conceived of as a gift to the deity with the intent of seeking favor or making restitution for sin (Lev. 22:18; Num. 31:52). Even mandatory offerings and dedicated land are considered gifts under the notion that God, as the Creator, owns all (Ezek. 45:16; 48:12, 20). This idea of giving a gift to God demonstrates the cost involved in approaching the deity. Interestingly, the priests and Levites who are associated with the sacrifices are described as a gift from God to the rest of the people (Num. 18:6–7).

The intentions behind the gift are important to God. Jesus states that one cannot be giving gifts to God and simultaneously holding on to contention with another in the community of faith (Matt. 5:23–24). Jesus commands that thankfulness to God be followed with the prescribed sacrifice (Matt. 8:4). Yet, an unwillingness to help others should not be hidden behind an ostentatious dedication to giving to God (Matt. 15:5; Mark 7:11). Likewise, Jesus warns against being overly legalistic about gifts and their benefit (Matt. 23:18–19).

On a fundamental level, gift giving has its origin in the gracious nature of God. God is the giver of all good gifts (James 1:17). He gives children to mothers (Gen. 30:20). A good life and reward for work are also gifts from God (Eccles. 3:13; 5:19). Jesus describes himself as a gift of God (John 4:10). Likewise, the Holy Spirit is God’s gift (Acts 1:4; 2:38; 11:17) and cannot be purchased with money (Acts 8:20). This gift of the Holy Spirit is given to Jew and Gentile alike (Acts 10:45).

Both grace and salvation are gifts from God (Rom. 5:15–17; 6:23; Eph. 2:8; 3:7; Heb. 6:4; 1 Pet. 3:7). Finally, spiritual gifts are part of God’s good gifts (Rom. 1:11). These gifts are meant to help the church so that nothing needed for ministry is lacking in the body of Christ (Rom. 12:6; 1 Cor. 1:7;

7:7; 1 Tim. 4:14; 2 Tim. 1:6; 1 Pet. 4:10). Spiritual gifts are all governed by the greatest gift, that of love (1 Cor. 13:2; 14:1).

GIFTS, SPIRITUAL *See* Spiritual Gifts.

GIHON **(1)** The second of the four rivers that stemmed from the garden of Eden (Gen. 2:13). The identity of the Gihon River is unknown, though much debated. Scholars taking its reference to be more literal in its geography have argued for locations in Mesopotamia, assuming the ancient river to be long since dried up. Still others, believing this portion of Genesis to be more symbolic in intent, have argued for different locations from Egypt to India and even in Jerusalem itself.

(2) A spring located southeast of Jerusalem's Old City. It lies on the eastern perimeter of the City of David in the modern village of Silwan. The Gihon spring was the primary source of water for Jerusalem in ancient times. Archaeological evidence suggests that the spring has been in use as far back as two thousand years before King David conquered Jerusalem (c. 1000 BC). Naturally connected to an underground cave, the Gihon siphons water once every few hours as the cave fills. This "gushing forth" (from which the name "Gihon" may have come) can occur as many as five times a day, producing up to three hundred thousand gallons of water in the rainy season.

Because of the Gihon's importance, a series of underground water systems has been constructed to make use of its waters. One of these is King Hezekiah's (727–698 BC) tunnel, which brought Gihon's waters to the Pool of Siloam (2 Kings 20:20; 2 Chron. 32:30). It was at the Gihon that David had Solomon anointed to be king over Israel (1 Kings 1:28–48). The spring is also mentioned in connection to the wall that King Manasseh (698–642 BC) rebuilt (2 Chron. 33:14).

GILALAI One of the musicians who took part in the ceremony dedicating Nehemiah's wall (Neh. 12:36). Gilalai was an associate (or possibly a relative) of Zechariah son of Jonathan and was part of the first procession, led by Ezra.

GILBOA A crescent-shaped hill at the northern end of the Israelite hill country where it borders the strategic and open Jezreel Valley. Gilboa's location made it a natural staging ground for military action. Gideon brought his troops to the spring of Harod (Judg. 7:1) at the base of Gilboa before defeating the Midianites camped across the valley. Later, King Saul brought his troops to Gilboa to battle the Philistines camped across the valley, only to die with his sons on Gilboa (1 Sam. 28:4; 31:1, 8; 2 Sam. 1:6, 21).

GILEAD The southern section of the Transjordan, with the Jordan River to the west, Bashan to the north, Ammon to the east, and Moab to the south. The Jabbok River ran across it from east to west, and "Gilead" could be used either more widely to describe the whole area or more narrowly to describe the land either south or north of the Jabbok. It was a high, fertile region, famed for its healing balm and spices (Gen. 37:25; Jer. 8:22; 46:11) as well as its pastures and livestock (Num. 32:1; 1 Chron. 5:9; Song 4:1; 6:5).

Jacob named Gilead after the heap of stones that witnessed his covenant with Laban (Gen. 31:21–55). "Gilead" also became a personal and clan name (Num. 26:29–30; 27:1) when, following the Israelites' defeat of Sihon the Amorite on their way to Canaan (Deut. 2:36; Josh. 12:1–3), the region was allotted to Reuben, Gad, and part of Manasseh (Num. 36:1; Deut. 3:10–15).

Gilead

Israel drew some of its national leaders from Gilead (Judg. 10:3; 11:1) and defended it keenly against Gentile enemies (1 Sam. 11). However, there was often tension between the tribes east and west of the Jordan (Josh. 22:10–34; Judg. 5:17; 12:1–7). When David fled from Absalom (2 Sam. 17:22), crossing into the Transjordan was viewed as having left the land (2 Sam. 17:22; 19:9). Returning across the river was like a reenactment of the conquest (2 Sam. 19:15). There is similar symbolism in the Jordan crossings made by Elijah, a prophet from Gilead, and his successor, Elisha (1 Kings 17:3; 2 Kings 2:8, 14).

After the division of the kingdom, Israel's hold on the Transjordan became increasingly tenuous. Two alliances between Israel and Judah failed to win Ramoth Gilead back from the Arameans (1 Kings 22; 2 Kings 8:28–29), and Hazael later conquered the entire region (2 Kings 10:32–33). After a brief respite under Jehoash (2 Kings 13:25), Pekah lost Gilead to Tiglath-pileser III of Assyria (15:29).

Nevertheless, Gilead remained a prized possession of Yahweh (Pss. 60:7; 108:8; Jer. 22:6). Hosea may have condemned Gilead's sinfulness (Hos. 6:8; 12:11), but the prophets also looked forward to a day when Gilead's conquerors would be punished (Amos 1:3, 13) and its richness would be restored to Israel (Jer. 50:19; Obad. 1:19; Mic. 7:14; Zech. 10:10).

GILEADITE *See* Gilead.

GILGAL The most famous place of this name was not far from Jericho. Eusebius placed it two miles from Jericho, it appeared on the ancient Madaba Map, early pilgrims claimed to have "seen the stones," and from the seventh to twelfth centuries AD there was a church at the place of pilgrimage. However, archaeologists have not been able to identify the site definitively in modern times.

Gilgal was Israel's first camp after crossing the Jordan, marked by a cairn of twelve stones from the riverbed (Josh. 4:19–20). It was called "Gilgal" because this sounds like the Hebrew word *galal*, meaning “to roll away.” When the people had been circumcised and had celebrated their first Passover in the promised land, God told them that he had “rolled away the reproach of Egypt” (5:9). It was at this base camp that Israel settled the question of Caleb’s inheritance (14:6–14) and fell for the Gibeonites’ deception (Josh. 9), and from which they set out on their southern campaign (Josh. 10). In the next generation, the angel of the Lord went up from there to Bokim to confront them with their sinfulness (Judg. 2:1).

The prophet Samuel visited Gilgal regularly to judge the people (1 Sam. 7:16), as well as to offer sacrifice (10:8) and to proclaim Saul as king (11:14–15). David returned to his kingdom through Gilgal after Absalom’s death, effectively retracing Joshua’s steps (2 Sam. 19:15, 40). Later, Elijah and Elisha passed through Gilgal just before Elijah miraculously crossed the Jordan eastward and Elisha then miraculously crossed back (2 Kings 2:1–14). On his return to Gilgal, Elisha removed poison from stew and multiplied bread for the famine-stricken people (2 Kings 4:38–44).

The stones at Gilgal were meant to be a perpetual reminder of God’s faithfulness in the conquest (Josh. 4:21–24; Mic. 6:5). However, when Ehud turned back at Gilgal to assassinate Ekron, they were already described as “the stone images [i.e., idols] near Gilgal” (Judg. 3:19). It was there that Saul forfeited his kingship first by offering sacrifice himself instead of waiting for Samuel to do so (1 Sam. 13) and then by setting aside captured livestock for sacrifice rather than destroying them according to God’s instructions (1 Sam. 15). By the eighth century BC, Gilgal was one of the cult sites of the northern kingdom and was notorious for false worship (Hos. 4:15; 9:15; 12:11; Amos 4:4; 5:5).

“Gilgal” could also mean, more generally, “stone circle,” so there may have been several places of this name. It is not clear, for instance, whether the Gilgal on the border of Judah (Josh. 15:7) and the Beth Gilgal from which temple singers came after the exile (Neh. 12:29) are the same as the famous Gilgal. Moses mentions a place called “Gilgal” in his directions to recite the covenant blessings and curses on Mounts Gerizim and Ebal (Deut. 11:30). Since Gilgal was not among mountains, either this is a different Gilgal or Moses is simply locating the mountains relative to Israel’s base camp in the Arabah, or Jordan Valley. *See also* Beth Gilgal.

GILO *See* Giloh.

GILOH A town located somewhere in the southern Judean hill country (Josh. 15:51), it was the home of David’s counselor Ahithophel (2 Sam. 15:12). Giloh’s precise location is unknown, but based on the known towns in the same list (Josh. 15:48–52), Giloh was perhaps fifteen to twenty miles southwest of Hebron.

GILONITE A person from the Judean town of Giloh. David’s counselor Ahithophel was a Gilonite (2 Sam. 15:12).

GIMZO A city in the northern Judean foothills conquered by the Philistines during the reign of King Ahaz (eighth century BC). A weakened Judah faced pressure from Israel and Aram to the north, and the Philistines and the Edomites were conquering parts of southern and western Judah (2 Chron. 28:17–19). Gimzo apparently is identified with modern Jimzu in the Aijalon Valley, approximately six miles north-northeast of Gezer.

GIN The KJV translates two Hebrew words, *pakh* and *moqesh*, as “gin”; the NIV translates these terms as “trap” or “snare.” The two Hebrew terms are similar in meaning and sometimes appear in proximity to each other (Ps. 140:5; Isa. 8:14; Amos 3:5). See also Job 18:9; Ps. 141:9.

GINATH The father of Tibni, who apparently was killed while vying with Omri for the Israelite throne (1 Kings 16:21–22).

GINNETHON One of the priests who signed the covenant of renewal along with Nehemiah (Neh. 10:6). Ginnethon returned with Zerubbabel and Joshua (12:4). Meshullam is named as the head of Ginnethon’s priestly family in the days of Joiakim the high priest (12:16).

GIRDLE The KJV renders several Hebrew words and one Greek word as “girdle,” referring to an object worn around the waist that may be decorative or functional and crafted of yarn, linen, cloth, or leather. The NIV typically uses the terms “belt,” “sash,” or “waistband.” *See also* Clothing.

GIRGASHITES Descended from Ham the son of Noah (Gen. 10:16), the Girgashites comprised one of the original tribes of Canaan whose land was promised to Abraham (15:21). They were defeated by Joshua in the conquest (Josh. 24:11). A similar name is mentioned in the Ugaritic texts of Ras Shamra, nine miles north of modern Latakia.

GIRZITES One of three people groups whom David raided while he was living in Philistine territory during the reign of Achish, king of Gath (1 Sam. 27:8). The Girzites, as well as the Geshurites and the Amalekites, lived to the southwest of Israel. In modern versions, the name also appears as “Gizrites” and “Gezrites.” The different readings are supported by two similar alternate spellings of the name preserved in Hebrew manuscripts.

GISHPA Along with his associate Ziha, Gishpa (KJV: “Gispa”) was in charge of the “temple servants” (KJV: “Nethinims”) after the Jews’ return from exile (Neh. 11:21). Since Ziha appears immediately before Hasupha in Ezra’s and Nehemiah’s parallel lists of ancestors of the temple servants (Ezra 2:43; Neh. 7:46), it is possible that Gishpa and Hasupha are the same person. Notice also that the spellings of the names “Gishpa” and “Hasupha” in Hebrew differ only by the first letter.

GITTAH-HEPHER *See* Gath Hepher.

GITTAIM A Benjamite city to which the people of Beeroth fled and settled as aliens (2 Sam. 4:3). It is unknown when this occurred. Some of the returning Benjamites settled there after the exile (Neh. 11:33). The Gath mentioned in 1 Chron. 7:21; 8:13 appears to have been a Benjamite settlement. It is possible, though not certain, that Gittaim can be identified as that Gath. This Gath is not the same Gath where the Philistines temporarily held the ark of the covenant (1 Sam. 5:8). Ras Abu Humeid, near Lydda, has been suggested as the modern location of Gittaim.

GITTITES Inhabitants of the city of Gath were known as Gittites.

GITTITH A transliteration of a Hebrew word used in the superscriptions of Pss. 8; 81; 84. Its significance is uncertain. The word might designate a musical instrument or a musical sign denoting how the psalms were to be sung.

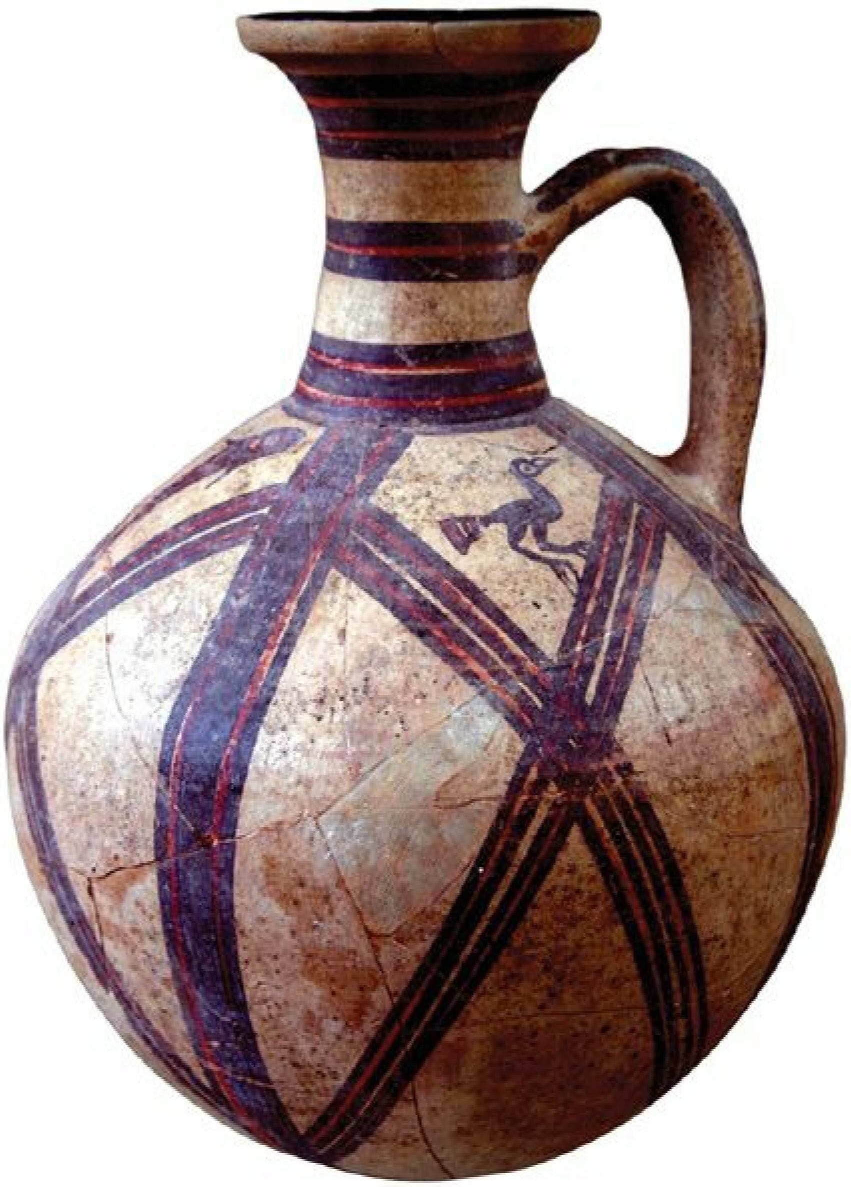
GIZONITE A description given to Hashem, one of David's mighty men. It only occurs once in the Bible, in 1 Chron. 11:34: "The sons of Hashem the Gizonite, Jonathan son of Shagee the Hararite." The location of Gizon is unknown, but it may refer to one of the towns in Judah.

GIZRITES *See* Girzites.

GLAD TIDINGS The KJV rendering of the Greek word *euangelizō*, referring to the proclamation of the "good news" or "gospel" (Luke 1:19; 8:1; Acts 13:32; Rom. 10:15). *See also* Gospel.

GLASS Rarely mentioned in the Bible, glass is referenced once in the OT and four times in the NT. The OT reference (translated "crystal" in the NIV) occurs in Job as one of several precious commodities that cannot buy wisdom: "Neither gold nor crystal [glass] can compare with it, nor can it be had for jewels of gold. . . . The price of wisdom is beyond rubies" (Job 28:17–18). In the NT, all four references to glass occur in Revelation, with the first two passages describing a glassy sea, and the two others describing the city of the new Jerusalem. Both references to a glassy sea lead into a song that glorifies God. In Rev. 4 there is "what looked like a sea of glass, clear as crystal," located before the throne of God (v. 6). Around this throne are situated four living creatures that sing to God. Revelation 15 describes those who had been victorious over the beast and his image standing beside "what looked like a sea of glass glowing with fire" (v. 2) and holding harps and singing to God. In Rev. 21 the new Jerusalem is described as a "city of pure gold, as pure as glass" (v. 18); and not only the city, but also its street: "The great street of the city was of gold, as pure as transparent glass" (v. 21).

GLAZE Glaze is a vitreous (glasslike) substance applied as a liquid (slip) or powder to a ceramic vessel prior to firing. During firing, the glaze bonds permanently to the ceramic, making it less porous. Pottery making in biblical times incorporated a variety of glazes and slips, often in decorative patterns. These are important for the classification and dating of pottery by archaeologists. Proverbs 26:23 refers to an earthenware pot that has been glazed (NIV: "a coating of silver dross") to resemble a more expensive metal vessel. Such vessels often were burnished after firing to increase this artistic effect.



Late Bronze Age Philistine pottery with a glaze design

GLEANING Mosaic law prohibited farmers from harvesting the crops—usually grain, grapes, or olives—on the edges and corners of their land, going through the crops a second time, or picking up that which fell on the ground (Lev. 19:9–10). This prohibition was a means of providing for the poor and strangers among the people and for those who could not own land, who were then allowed to glean, or gather, what was left behind by the harvesters (Ruth 2:6–9). The prophets used gleaning figuratively to represent destruction (Isa. 17:5; Jer. 6:9; Mic. 7:1).

GLEDE In Deut. 14:13 the KJV renders the Hebrew word *ra'ah* as "glede," referring to a bird designated as unclean for the Israelites' consumption. "Glede" was a name for the kite, a bird of prey; the second bird named in the KJV of Deut. 14:13, the "kite," was a different bird of prey. The NIV renders the name of the first bird of Deut. 14:13 as "red kite" and the name of the second as "black kite." The list of detestable birds in Lev. 11:13–19 does not include the bird called the "glede" in the KJV.

GLORY The tangible presence of God, experienced as overwhelming power and splendor. The main Hebrew word referring to glory, *kabod*, has the root meaning “heavy” (1 Sam. 4:18), which in other contexts can mean “intense” (Exod. 9:3; NIV: “terrible”), “wealthy” (i.e., “heavy in possessions” [Gen. 13:2]), and “high reputation” (Gen. 34:19; NIV: “most honored”). When used of God, it refers to his person and his works. God reveals his glory to Israel and to Egypt at the crossing of the sea (Exod. 14:4, 17–19). He carefully reveals his glory to Moses after Israel’s sin with the golden calf in order to assure him that he will not abandon them (33:12–23).

God’s glory is often associated with a cloud. Perhaps better stated, God’s glory often is intentionally obscured by a cloud so that people are not overwhelmed by the radiance of his presence. Such is the case on top of Mount Sinai as Moses ascends it (Exod. 24:15–18). God’s glory as associated with the cloud is also closely connected to the tabernacle and the temple. When the tabernacle is completed, God makes his presence known there by filling it with the cloud that represents his glory (Exod. 40:34–38). Later, the temple too is filled with God’s glory made manifest in the cloud (1 Kings 8:10–11). The ark of the covenant, the most potent symbol of God’s presence, is also seen as a manifestation of his glory (1 Sam. 4:21–22).

God’s glory is overwhelming, and human beings cannot experience its fullness and survive. Thus, glory is often connected with God’s acts of judgment. For instance, when Korah the Levite and Abiram the Reubenite rebel in the wilderness, God appears ready for judgment against the people in the form of the glory-cloud (Num. 16:19–21), though Moses’ intercession spares the bulk of the people from the judgment that comes on the leaders of the rebellion (see also 16:41).

The Psalms celebrate God’s glory. Psalm 24 is an example. The original setting of the psalm is likely the return of the ark of the covenant from the battlefield. The priest at the head of the army, led by the ark, asks a priest or gatekeeper, “Lift up your heads, you gates; be lifted up, you ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in.” The priestly gatekeeper asks, “Who is this King of glory?” eliciting the response, “The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle.” Many other psalms share this theme or call on Israel to glorify the Lord (see Pss. 29:9; 34:3; 63:3; 104:31 as examples).

The prophets have the privilege of intimate fellowship with God and profound experiences of God’s glory. Isaiah accepts his commission as a prophet in a vision of the throne room of God. He sees angelic figures calling out: “Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory” (Isa. 6:3). Ezekiel reports an amazing encounter with God in his glory that causes him to fall facedown on the ground (Ezek. 1:28).

In the NT the glory of God is made real in the person of Jesus Christ (John 1:14; Heb. 1:3). He is, after all, the very presence of God. When he returns on the clouds, he will fully reveal God’s glory (Matt. 24:30; Mark 13:26; Luke 21:27).

GLOSSOLALIA *See* Gift of Tongues.

GLUTTON A person who is habitually greedy or eats excessively. Gluttony is associated with stubbornness, rebellion, and drunkenness (Deut. 21:20). Excessive overeating or gluttony is condemned in Proverbs. Rather than be a glutton, one should “put a knife” to one’s throat (Prov. 23:2). The glutton will become sleepy, lazy, and poor (23:21), and the friend of gluttons “disgraces his father” (28:7). Jesus is derided as a “glutton and a drunkard” (Matt. 11:19; Luke 7:34) because of his lifestyle, which, unlike that of John the Baptist, is not ascetic. In this case, the accusation is in the general sense of a person given to excessive living in contrast to religious teachers who fasted and mourned frequently. In Titus 1:12 Cretans are said to be liars, evil, and “lazy gluttons.”

GNASHING OF TEETH The act of grating or grinding one's teeth together. The phrase is frequently found in the OT as an expression of anger. Most often the wicked gnash their teeth toward the righteous (Pss. 35:16; 37:12; 112:10; Lam. 2:16). In the teaching of Jesus, the gnashing of teeth is associated with a place of future punishment, especially in the Gospel of Matthew (8:12; 13:42, 50; 22:13; 24:51; 25:30). In the NT, gnashing of teeth is often associated with the place of outer darkness, where there is weeping. In this case, the gnashing of teeth may be an expression of anger and hence the continual refusal to repent. In the context of punishment, the picture may also express futility in the face of judgment.

GNOSTICISM The designation used by many modern scholars for a religious system that they discern behind certain writings from the second century AD onward, a system that some early Christian writers considered heretical. The term stems from the Greek word *gnōsis*, meaning "knowledge." Acknowledging the diversity of so-called gnostic groups, modern scholars typically understand gnostics to share a specific set of beliefs: the world is an evil place; those with special knowledge know this and can escape only if they have the special knowledge; Christ is a divine revealing being who brought this special knowledge and thus a way to salvation.

Until 1945, scholars relied almost entirely on early Christian opponents of the gnostics for understanding them. Irenaeus, a bishop of the late second century AD who wrote the five-volume *Against Heresies*, featured prominently in discussions of gnosticism. The discovery of the Nag Hammadi library in Egypt in 1945 finally allowed scholars to read the writings of ancient gnostics themselves. The *Gospel of Thomas*, the *Gospel of Philip*, and the *Gospel of Truth* remain some of the better-known writings from this library.

On the basis of studying early opponents of gnosticism and the gnostic writings discovered with the Nag Hammadi library and elsewhere, scholars typically posit the following tenets and system of thought as defining and underlying the diverse gnostics of the ancient world.

GNOSTIC BELIEFS AND CHARACTERISTICS

Strong metaphysical dualism. Gnostics construe the world in thoroughgoing dualistic terms. Two realms exist, that of matter and materiality versus that of spirit. The material world is evil or inferior, while the spiritual realm defines good. The inferior and evil material world comes not from the high God of the spiritual realm, but from an inferior being. Many gnostic myths function to explain the catastrophe of the creation of the material world.

The spiritual-divine realm. Originally only the High God, perfectly good, existed. He remains beyond human understanding as a perfect being unlike anything knowable from our perspective as material beings. This God did not create the inferior material world. Instead, he created other divine beings also made of spirit. They and their offspring are often called "Aeons." Some couples of Aeons further produced divine beings. The divine realm thus has a population of spiritual beings at varying distances from the High God. In some myths one of the Aeons, Sophia (Greek for "wisdom"), made a mistake and fell from the divine world; somehow, in her fall, she generated imperfect offspring. Some, or one, of these inferior or even evil divine beings created the material world. "Demiurge" (Greek for "craftsman") is a common name for the creator divine being. Sometimes the inferior divine being created the world in order to trap Sophia, preventing her return to the spiritual realm. She was divided up into many pieces and encased in the flesh of humans. Thus a divine-spiritual spark resides in some people.

Human beings. Some people have this divine spark of Sophia within them and can thus know their true alienation from the material world. Others, however, lack the spark and exist totally as a part of the material world. They, like other aspects of the Demiurge's material creation, are destined for death and destruction. Those with the divine spark, however, can experience salvation through special knowledge that will liberate their divine spark. These are the gnostics.

Christ the divine revealer. As imprisoned spirits, gnostics need special knowledge to awaken their divine spark so that they will know their need of liberation. This special knowledge also brings liberation. Among other things, it involves revelation so that they can have self-knowledge, to know their situation, the situation of the world, and how it came about. Different gnostic groups conceive of the specific form of the special knowledge differently. Sometimes it involves passwords for the spirit to help it get by evil divine beings on the journey to the spiritual realm. In this system a divine being from the spiritual realm must descend and reveal special knowledge, the way to liberation. Within gnostic systems Christ is such a divine revealing being. He came to impart liberating knowledge. Gnostics understand Christ either as only apparently a man while on earth or, more commonly, as a divine being who inhabited a righteous man, Jesus, starting at his baptism. Sometime before the crucifixion, the divine being, Christ, departed from the man Jesus. Gnosticism's radical cleavage between the material world and the spiritual world results in salvation and Christ only relating to gnostics regaining their purely spiritual existence. Jesus' death lacks any traditional atoning significance.

Life in the material world. In the material world, gnostics often live among other Christians in churches. They can confess just as other Christians do, though only they know the true and deep, secret meanings of what they confess and read in church. Not all Christians are gnostics, and thus not all can have knowledge of the true mysteries of the universe. Gnostics divide humanity into three classes: gnostics, who eventually will rejoin the spiritual divine realm; regular Christians, who will not experience ultimate salvation but will enjoy some level of salvation; and all other people, who lack any part of the divine within them and will be destroyed with the rest of the Demiurge's world. Opponents of the gnostics often related stories of their engaging in extreme deviant, antisocial, and wicked behavior, especially excessive and deviant sexual acts. Scholars generally analyze such charges as typical polemical tropes, having little credibility. Nevertheless, some gnostics translated their negative views of the material world and the body into libertine behavior, believing that they could live however they wished. Others, however, lived ascetic and antisocial lives because they sought to cultivate a life separate from the desires and needs of the material world and body. Regardless, gnostics devalue the body and material world. Christ and salvation involve liberation from the material world.

Ways of reading the Bible. Gnostics frequently engage in "protest exegesis," deliberately inverting the meanings and values of Jewish and Christian sacred writings. Thus, they often treat the serpent as a positive figure, read the fall of humankind as a story of the chaos in the divine realm, treat Cain as a positive figure, and understand the Creator God of the Jewish Bible as a lower (possibly evil) divine being. This corresponds to an attitude of protest among the gnostics, protest against the material world and even other Christian groups that really function as part of the world system, ignorant of the true mysteries.

RECONSIDERING "GNOSTICISM"

When scholars speak of ancient gnosticism, they have in view the religious system described above and the writings representative of it, especially the gnostic myths of the fall and how the present situation transpired. Over the years, many scholars have debated whether gnosticism predates

Christianity or emerges as a development from Christianity. One prominent scholar traces the origins of gnosticism to certain disgruntled ancient Jews. Many scholars distinguish between elements of the gnostic system found earlier than Christianity and the gnostic system that only appears subsequent to the advent of Christianity.

The foregoing material approximates what most scholars mean by "gnosticism." Other scholars, however, reject this construction. Beyond the extreme diversity of the sources that we have (which renders identifying a clear "system" of gnosticism problematic), the very category "gnosticism" may need revision or abandonment. Furthermore, some of the characteristics sketched above are simply misunderstandings and mischaracterizations of the ancient data, especially the depiction of gnostics as protest people who consistently practice value-reversal readings of sacred writings. No so-called ancient gnostics ever referred to themselves as such, at least not in their own extant writings. The traditional readings of Irenaeus and other early Christian antiheretic writers, which buttress the traditional approach, may require revision as well. Irenaeus, for example, does not operate with a category of gnosticism that resembles modern scholars' view of gnosticism. He includes numerous groups among his catalog of heretics, to which he applies some of the vocabulary of knowledge, which modern scholars would never place within our category of gnosticism. To the extent that Irenaeus classifies various groups under the category "gnosis," he simply indicates false teaching and does not intend to phenomenologically categorize them as modern scholars do with the rubric "gnosticism."

"Gnosticism" is therefore a modern category applied to an incredibly diverse set of ancient religious specialists and their followers who became prominent in the early centuries of Christianity. Although commonalities existed between many of them in terms of their intellectual religious practices and writings, these are better understood as reflections of a somewhat common set of ancient philosophical-religious sensitivities. It seems that some such newer ancient religious movements involved people who gave their construction of Jesus (or Christ) a prominent place in their system. The commonalities do not stem from some fundamental, however loose or diverse, unity or religious system approximated by the modern category "gnosticism."

GOAD A stick, often with a pointed end, used to control oxen or other animals. In the OT, "goad" translates two Hebrew terms. It is used of literal goads in 1 Sam. 13:21 (*dorban*); Judg. 3:31 (*baqar*). In Eccles. 12:11 goads are used in parallel with "embedded nails" to refer to the action of the "words of the wise," meaning that the sages could give direction to one's path in life, the metaphor perhaps also implying that their guidance could sometimes be painful. In Acts 26:14, "kick against the goads" refers to futile struggle against a greater power. This expression also appears in other Greek writings and thus probably is an idiom.

GOAH A place mentioned only in Jer. 31:39 (KJV: "Goath") as being on the future, expanded border of the city of Jerusalem. Goah's location is unknown; it possibly was to the southwest of the city, near the Hinnom Valley.

GOAT A cloven-hoofed ruminant, the domestic goat (*Capra hircus*) has been vital to the culture of Palestine. The considerable value of this animal is reflected in Jacob's "gift" of two hundred female goats and twenty male goats, a symbolic restoration of what he stole from Esau (Gen. 32:14; cf. 1 Sam. 25:2–3; 2 Chron. 17:11).

Goats

The diverse by-products from goats illustrate their practical significance for life: milk (Prov. 27:27), goatskin bottles for water and wine (Mark 2:22), goat's hair garments and tents (Exod. 35:26; 1 Sam. 19:13; Heb. 11:37), and the prized meat of the kid (Judg. 6:19; Luke 15:29). Sacrificially, numerous offerings required a goat, including burnt offerings (Lev. 1:10) and peace offerings (Lev. 3:12). Israel's Day of Atonement required two goats: one for a sin offering and another delivered to Azazel (Lev. 16:6–26).

Goats generally are darker in color, while sheep tend to be white (Gen. 30:32; Song 1:5). The resilience of goats was superior to sheep, adding to their worth. Israel's leaders are compared to goats who have abused the sheep (Zech. 10:3; cf. Dan. 8:5, 8, 21). NT eschatology replaces the "self-centered" goat with the "helpless" sheep (Matt. 25:31–46).

GOATH *See* Goah.

GOATSKIN Mentioned twice in the NIV, goatskins serve to disguise Jacob as his brother and thus he receives Esau's blessing from their aging father, Isaac (Gen. 27:16). In the book of Hebrews, goatskins are said to be the clothing of prior persecuted individuals of faith (Heb. 11:37).

GOB This place is mentioned only in 2 Sam. 21:18–19 as the location where David's warriors defeated Philistine champions in single combat. The parallel account in 1 Chron. 20:4–5 states differently that the first of these battles took place at Gezer rather than at Gob. The archaeological identification of Gob is uncertain, but suggestions have included Tel el-Melat (most likely Gibbethon) and Khirbet Qeiyafa (a tenth-century BC fort in the Valley of Elah).

GOBLET A drinking vessel usually associated with wine. In Song of Solomon the man likens the woman's navel to a goblet that never lacks wine (Song 7:2), using a word that elsewhere means "bowl" (Exod. 24:6). In Isaiah the cup of God's wrath is described as a goblet of wine that makes people stagger (Isa. 51:17).

GOD For Christians, God is the creator of the cosmos and the redeemer of humanity. He has revealed himself in historical acts—namely, in creation, in the history of Israel, and especially in the person and work of Jesus Christ. There is only one God (Deut. 6:4); "there is no other" (Isa. 45:5). Because "God is spirit" (John 4:24), he must reveal himself through various images and metaphors.

IMAGERY OF GOD

God's character and attributes are revealed primarily through the use of imagery, the best and most understandable way to describe the mysterious nature of God. Scripture employs many images to describe God's being and character. Some examples follow here.

God is compared to the father who shows compassion and love to his children (Ps. 103:13; Rom. 8:15). The father image is also used by the prophets to reveal God's creatorship (Isa. 64:8). Jesus predominantly uses the language of "Father" in reference to God (Mark 8:38; 13:32; 14:36), revealing his close relationship with the Father. God is also identified as the king of Israel even before the Israelites have a human king (1 Sam. 10:19).

The Psalter exalts Yahweh as the king, acknowledging God's sovereignty and preeminence (Pss. 5:2; 44:4; 47:6–7; 68:24; 74:12; 84:3; 95:3; 145:1). God is metaphorically identified as the shepherd who takes care of his sheep, his people, to depict his nature of provision and protection (Ps. 23:1–4). The image of the potter is also employed to describe the nature of God, who creates his creatures according to his will (Jer. 18:6; Rom. 9:20–23). In Hos. 2:4–3:5 God is identified as the long-suffering husband of the adulterous wife Israel. In the setting of war, God is depicted as the divine warrior who fights against his enemy (Exod. 15:3).

God is also referred to as advocate (Isa. 1:18), judge (Gen. 18:25), and lawgiver (Deut. 5:1–22). The image of the farmer is also frequently adopted to describe God's nature of compassionate care, creation, providence, justice, redemption, sanctification, and more (e.g., Isa. 5:1–7; John 15:1–12). God is often referred to as the teacher (Exod. 4:15) who teaches what to do, as does the Holy Spirit in the NT (John 14:26). The Holy Spirit is identified as the counselor, the helper, the witness, and the guide (John 14:16, 26; 15:26). God is often metaphorically compared to various things in nature, such as rock (Ps. 18:2, 31, 46), light (Ps. 27:1), fire (Deut. 4:24; 9:3), lion (Hos. 11:10), and eagle (Deut. 32:11–12). In particular, the Davidic psalms employ many images in nature—rock, fortress, shield, horn, and stronghold (e.g., Ps. 18:2)—to describe God's perfect protection.

Last, anthropomorphism often is employed to describe God's activities. Numerous parts of the human body are used to speak of God: face (Num. 6:25–26), eyes (2 Chron. 16:9), mouth (Deut. 8:3), ears (Neh. 1:6), nostrils (Exod. 15:8), hands (Ezra 7:9), arms (Deut. 33:27), fingers (Ps. 8:3), voice (Exod. 15:26), shoulders (Deut. 33:12), feet (Ps. 18:9), and back (Exod. 33:21–22).

NAMES AND ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

The OT refers to God by many names. One of the general terms used for God, *ʾel* (which probably means "ultimate supremacy"), often appears in a compound form with a qualifying word, as in *ʾel ʾelyon* ("God Most High"), *ʾel shadday* ("God Almighty"), and *ʾel roʾi* ("the God who sees me" or "God of my seeing"). These descriptive names reveal important attributes of God and usually were derived from the personal experiences of the people of God in real-life settings; thus, they do not describe an abstract concept of God.

The most prominent personal name of God is *yahweh* (YHWH), which is translated as "the LORD" in most English Bibles. At the burning bush in the wilderness of Horeb, God first revealed to Moses his personal name in sentence form: "I AM WHO I AM" (Exod. 3:13–15). Though debated, the divine name "YHWH" seems to originate from an abbreviated form of this sentence. Yahweh, who was with Moses and his people at the time of exodus, is the God who was with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. According to Jesus' testimony, "the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob" is identified as the God "of the living" (Matt. 22:32). Hence, the name "Yahweh" is closely tied to God's self-revelation as the God of presence and life. (*See also* Names of God.)

Many of God's attributes are summarized in Exod. 34:6–7: "The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished; he punishes the children and their children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation." Below are further explanations of some of the representative attributes of God.

Holiness. The moral excellence of God is the attribute that underlies all other attributes. Thus, all God's attributes can be modified by the adjective *holy*: holy love, holy justice, holy mercy, holy righteousness, holy compassion, holy wisdom, and so forth. God is the only supremely holy one (1 Sam. 2:2; Rev. 15:4). God's name is also holy; those who profane God's name are condemned as guilty (Exod. 20:7; Lev. 22:32). God is depicted as the one who has concern for his holy name, which the Israelites profaned among the nations; God actively seeks to restore the holiness of his defiled name (Ezek. 36:21–23). God's holiness is revealed by his righteous action (Isa. 5:16). Not only is God holy, but also he expects his people to be holy (Lev. 11:45; 19:2). All the sacrificial codes of Leviticus represent the moral requirements of holiness for the worshipers. Because of God's character of holiness, he cannot tolerate sin in the lives of people, and he brings judgment to those who do not repent (Hab. 1:13).

Love and justice. Because "God is love," no one reaches the true knowledge of God without having love (1 John 4:8). Images of the father and the faithful husband are frequently employed to portray God's love (Deut. 1:31; Jer. 31:32; Hos. 2:14–20; 11:1–4). God's love was supremely demonstrated by the giving of his only Son Jesus Christ for his people (John 3:16; Rom. 5:7–8; 1 John 4:9–10). God expects his people to follow the model of Christ's sacrificial love (1 John 3:16).

God's justice is the foundation of his moral law and his ways (Deut. 32:4; Job 34:12; Ps. 9:16; Rev. 15:3). It is also seen in his will (Ps. 99:4). God loves justice and acts with justice (Ps. 33:5). God's justice is demonstrated in judging people according to their deeds—punishing wickedness and rewarding righteousness (Ezek. 18:20; Ps. 58:11; Rev. 20:12–13). God establishes justice by upholding the cause of the oppressed (Ps. 103:6) and by vindicating those afflicted (1 Sam. 25:39). God is completely impartial in implementing justice (Job 34:18–19). As with holiness, God requires his people to reflect his justice (Prov. 21:3).

God keeps a perfect balance between the attributes of love and justice. God's love never infringes upon his justice, and vice versa. The cross of Jesus Christ perfectly shows these two attributes in one act. Because of his love, God gave his only Son for his people; because of his justice, God punished his Son for the sake of their sins. The good news is that God's justice was satisfied by the work of Jesus Christ (Rom. 3:25–26).

Righteousness and mercy. God's righteousness shows his unique moral perfection. God's nature, actions, and laws display his character of righteousness (Pss. 19:8–9; 119:137; Dan. 9:14). "Righteousness and justice" are the foundation of God's throne (Ps. 89:14). God's righteousness was especially demonstrated in the work of Jesus Christ (Rom. 3:21–22). God's righteousness will ultimately be revealed in his final judgment (Rev. 19:2; 20–22; cf. Ps. 7:11).

The English word "mercy" renders various words in the original languages: in Hebrew, *khesed*, *khanan*, *rakham*; in Greek, *charis*, *eleos*, *oiktirmos*, *splanchnon*. English Bibles translate these variously as "mercy," "compassion," "grace," "kindness," or "love." The word "mercy" is chosen here as a representative concept (cf. Ps. 86:15). God's mercy is most clearly seen in his act of forgiving sinners. In the Psalter, "Have mercy on me" is the most common form of expression when the psalmist entreats God's forgiveness (Pss. 41:4, 10; 51:1). God's mercy is shown abundantly to his chosen people (Eph. 2:4–8). Because of his mercy, their sins are forgiven (Mic. 7:18), their punishments are withheld (Ezra 9:13), and even sinners' prayers are heard (Ps. 51:1; Luke 18:13–14). God is "the Father of mercies" (2 Cor. 1:3 NRSV).

God keeps a perfect balance between righteousness and mercy. His righteousness and mercy never infringe upon each other, nor does one operate at the expense of the other. God's abundant mercy is shown to sinners through Jesus Christ, but if they do not repent of their sins, his righteous judgment will be brought upon them.

Faithfulness. God's faithfulness is revealed in keeping the covenant that he made with his people. God "is the faithful God, keeping his covenant of love to a thousand generations of those who love him and keep his commandments" (Deut. 7:9). God is faithful to his character, his name, and his word (Neh. 9:8; Ps. 106:8; 2 Tim. 2:13; Heb. 6:13–18). God's faithfulness is clearly seen in fulfilling his promise (Josh. 23:14). God showed his faithfulness by fulfilling all the promises that he made to Abraham (Gen. 12:2–3; Rom. 9:9; Gal. 4:28; Heb. 6:13–15), by having Solomon build the temple that he promised to David (2 Sam. 7:12–13; 1 Kings 8:17–21), and by sending his people into exile in Babylon and returning them to their homeland (Jer. 25:8–11; Dan. 9:2–3). God's faithfulness was ultimately demonstrated by sending Jesus Christ, as was promised in the OT (Luke 24:44; Acts 13:32–33; 1 Cor. 15:3–8).

Goodness. Jesus said, "No one is good—except God alone" (Mark 10:18). God demonstrates his goodness in his actions (Ps. 119:68), in his work of creation (1 Tim. 4:4), in his love (Ps. 86:5), and in his promises (Josh. 23:14–15).

Patience. God is "slow to anger" (Exod. 34:6; Num. 14:18), which is a favorite expression for his patience (Neh. 9:17; Pss. 86:15; 103:8; Joel 2:13). God is patient with sinful people for a long time (Acts 13:18). Because of his patient character, he delays punishment (Isa. 42:14). For instance, God was patient with his disobedient prophet Jonah and also with the sinful people of Nineveh (Jon. 3:1–10). The purpose of God's patience is to lead people toward repentance (Rom. 2:4).

God of the Trinity

The Christian God of the Bible is the triune God. God is one but exists in three persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (Matt. 28:19). The Son is one with the Father (John 10:30); the Holy Spirit is one with God (2 Sam. 23:2–3). All three share the same divine nature; they are all-knowing, holy, glorious, and called "Lord" and "God" (Matt. 11:25; John 1:1; 20:28; Acts 3:22; 5:3–4; 10:36; 1 Cor. 8:6; 2 Cor. 3:17–18; 2 Pet. 1:1). All three share in the same work of creation (Gen. 1:1–3), salvation (1 Pet. 1:2), indwelling (John 14:23), and directing the church's mission (Matt. 28:18–20; Acts 16:6–10; 14:27; 13:2–4).

GOD, NAMES OF *See* God; Names of God.

GOD-FEARER A technical term in NT times for a non-Jew who feared and recognized Israel's God, the true God, but stopped short of becoming a full-fledged Jewish proselyte. "God-fearer" could also be used in a general sense of individuals from any background who reverence and respect God in a proper way. The book of Ecclesiastes illustrates this general usage when the author says, "I know that it will go better with those who fear God [NIV 1984: "God-fearing men"], who are reverent before him" (Eccl. 8:12).

Four verses in the book of Acts illustrate the specialized usage of this expression. The first two involve Peter's sharing of the gospel with the Roman centurion Cornelius. In Acts 10:2 Cornelius and his family are described as being "devout and God-fearing," and in 10:22 Cornelius himself is described as being a "righteous and God-fearing man, who is respected by all the Jewish people." In 13:16 Paul addresses two groups of people present in the synagogue service at Antioch of Pisidia, "Fellow Israelites and you Gentiles who worship [lit., 'fear'] God, listen to me!" Paul repeats this same distinction later in this same sermon: "Fellow children of Abraham and you God-fearing Gentiles" (13:26).

Throughout the OT there are occasional glimpses of God's concern for all peoples. God promised Abraham that through his "offspring all nations on earth will be blessed" (Gen. 22:18). Many of the psalms reveal this same cosmic scope of God's salvation, where "all the nations you have made will come and worship before you, Lord; they will bring glory to your name" (Ps. 86:9). Jonah is undoubtedly the classic story of outreach to the Gentiles. But it is in the book of Acts that this outreach reaches full stride, and it is these God-fearers who represent one key dimension in this fresh outpouring of God's grace upon humanity.

In order to understand the God-fearers, it is important to know who they are and who they are not. They are Gentiles, like Cornelius (who is so important to the spread of the gospel that two entire chapters are devoted to him in Acts), who are attracted to what they hear about the wonder and marvel of God in the Jewish synagogues. At the same time, Cornelius and others like him are not Jewish proselytes. Although the OT is silent on the exact process by which a Gentile could become officially incorporated into the Jewish faith, Jewish practice had developed clear guidelines during the intertestamental period. A Gentile who wanted to convert to Judaism not only had to follow the Jewish beliefs and practices (including the food laws and Sabbath observance), but also had to make a trip to Jerusalem and offer a sacrifice in the temple. If a male, that person also had to be circumcised. For many Gentiles, it was the obstacle of circumcision that often was too much for them. Consequently, many remained in this in-between status: attracted to Judaism but not willing or able to go all the way toward becoming a full-fledged "naturalized citizen"—a Jewish proselyte. The good news of the NT was that God rewarded their spiritual hunger: the gospel was for them as well.

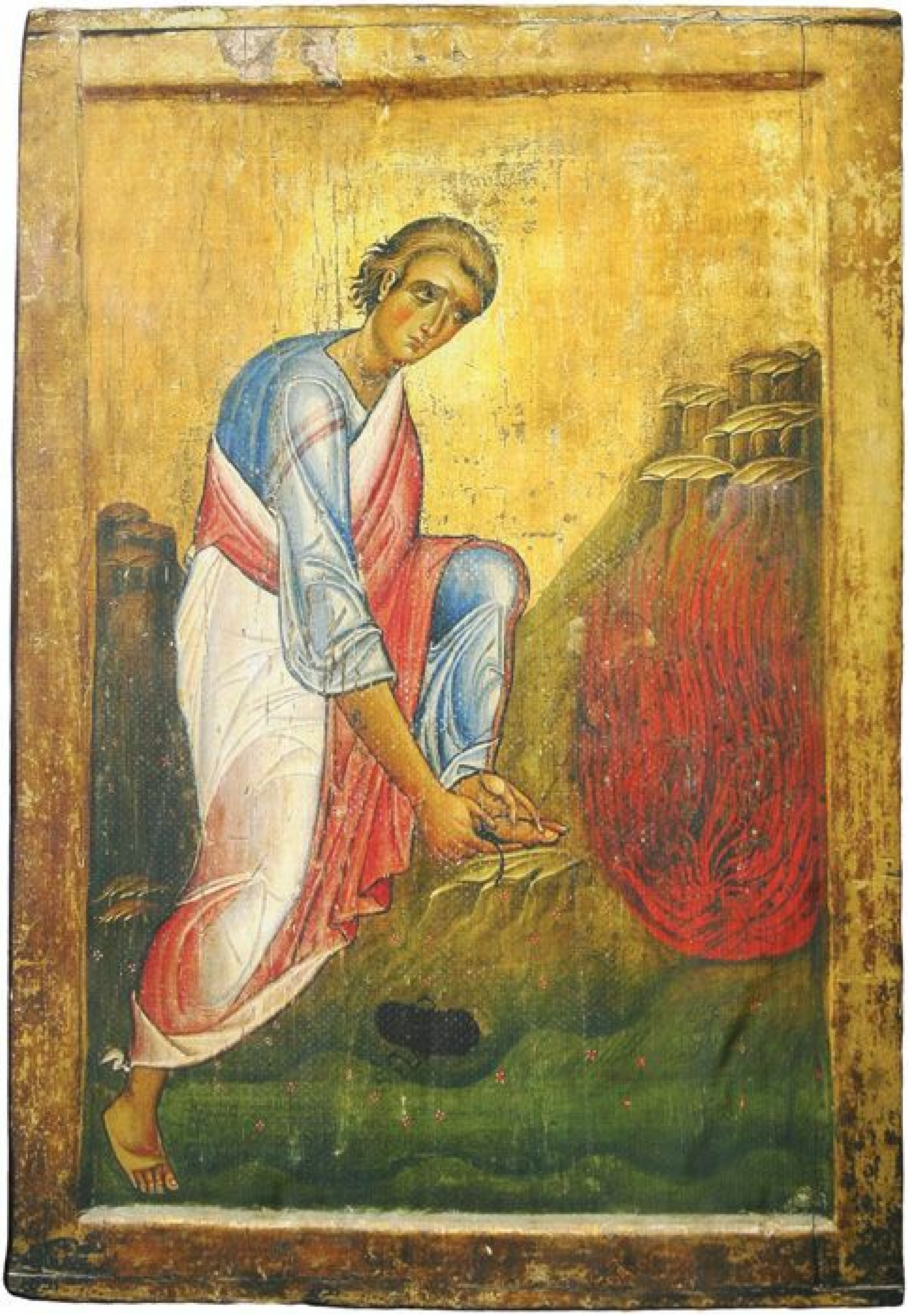
GODHEAD A term that refers to the essential fullness of God as one being in three persons. The suffix "-head" is archaic, such that the word can be understood as "Godhood." The fullness of God's being, the Godhead, dwells in Christ bodily (Col. 2:9). The Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son (John 15:26). "Godhead" appears three times in the KJV, translating the Greek words *theios* (Acts 17:29; cf. 2 Pet. 1:3–4), *theiotēs* (Rom. 1:20), and *theotēs* (Col. 2:9), which more-recent versions render variously as "deity," "divine being," and "divine nature."

GODLESSNESS That which is inconsistent with proper reverence and worship of God. In Rom. 1:18–32 Paul describes the nature of godlessness as he writes about people "who suppress the truth by their wickedness" (v. 18), who choose not to glorify God though they know he is God (v. 21). Other NT texts speak of godless myths (1 Tim. 4:7), godless chatter (1 Tim. 6:20; 2 Tim. 2:16), or godless people like Esau (Heb. 12:16). Several OT passages (e.g., Job 8:13; Prov. 11:9; Isa. 10:6) also speak against the godless, who are fundamentally at odds with God and his will.

GODLINESS The common English translation for the Greek term *eusebeia*, meaning "godliness" or "piety." The Greek term appears ten times in the Pastoral Epistles (1–2 Timothy; Titus), four times in 2 Peter, and once elsewhere in the NT (Acts 3:12). It refers to appropriate honor and respect given to God and the kind of lifestyle that results from this piety. Paul encourages Timothy to have nothing to do with godless myths and old wives' tales, but rather to "train yourself in godliness" (1 Tim. 4:7 NRSV). While physical exercise is of some profit, godliness "has value for all things" (4:8). Together with contentment, it results in great gain (6:6), far greater than the illusive power of riches. False teachers have an outward show of godliness, but their lifestyle denies its power (2 Tim. 3:5).

GOD OF THE FATHERS This expression refers to a particular scholarly theory concerning the patriarchs in Genesis and their worship of God. According to this theory, which is in harmony with the Documentary Hypothesis, in the patriarchal age the name "Yahweh" was not known. The patriarchs referred to God by various other names, of which the most general and theologically significant is "God of the fathers." This technical phrase may be couched in the formula "God of [someone's] father(s)" (Gen. 31:5, 29, 53; 46:3; Exod. 3:13; 4:5) or "God of [name of patriarch(s)]" (Gen. 24:12; 28:13; 32:9; 46:1; Exod. 3:6). God himself used both of these formulas when he revealed himself to Moses in the burning bush (Exod. 3:6). The relationship between "God of the fathers" and various names compounded with "El" (El Elyon, El Roi, El Olam, El Elohe Yisrael, El Bethel, and El Shaddai) is a matter of debate.

Ancient Near Eastern evidence shows that the formula "God of the fathers" referred to one's personal god. In the Old Assyrian tablets from Abraham's time, "A god of your father" (*il abika*) is invoked as a witness. These personal gods served as protective deities. Most scholars agree that the formula in the Bible originally referred to the personal protector god and family god of the patriarchs.



Icon of Moses at the burning bush, where God revealed himself to Moses as the God of his fathers
(St. Catherine’s Monastery, Sinai, Egypt)

The phrase “God of the fathers” plays a theologically significant role throughout the Bible. This solemn formula emphasizes the intimate connection of the present with ancient history, namely, the faith of forefathers. In the story of the burning bush (Exod. 3), for example, the formula connects Moses’ generation to the promise and blessing that God gave to the patriarchs. In Deuteronomy (1:11, 21; 4:1; 6:3; 12:1; 26:7; 27:3), it emphasizes the continuity between the author’s generation and the earlier generation in Israel. For the exilic and postexilic generations, the phrase emphasizes the heinousness of their apostasy (see the pledge not to forsake “the God of their fathers” in 2 Chron. 34:32–33 NASB). Also, in the NT, the phrase reminds the Christians that the God of their experience is the same as the God revealed to the ancient patriarchs (Mark 12:26; Matt. 22:32; Acts 3:13; 5:30).

GODS, PAGAN

DEFINITION OF TERMS

The term “pagan” has two separate but related definitions in the English language, both of which are somewhat misleading when applied to religions in the ancient Near East. The first definition defines a pagan as someone who follows a less-established religion or a person who is outside the mainstream of belief within a given society. Applying this definition to an ancient Near Eastern religion is somewhat misleading because often within biblical society the Jewish or Christian belief system was the religion that was outside the mainstream. Being outside the mainstream certainly was a fact of life for first-century Christians, who often were persecuted as if they were atheists and for their failure to acknowledge a pantheon of gods, which was a mainstream belief. In OT society the competing religions, especially the Canaanite and Babylonian pantheons, certainly were more widely accepted and followed. Even within Israelite society these non-Israelite religions offered a viable alternative to the religion of Yahweh. Thus, if one were to use this definition either in the OT or the NT, it likely would need to be applied to the religion of the Jews and Christians and not the prevailing religions of the Canaanites, the Babylonians, the Greeks, or the Romans.

The second English definition of the term “pagan” involves the worship of the gods or forces of nature that control the world. This definition is applied specifically to agrarian societies, where the changing of seasons, the bringing of favorable weather and growing conditions for the crops, the possibility for prosperity that good weather brings, and a general desire for fertility are part of the religious understanding and belief system. While this definition certainly applies to many of the non-Israelite religions followed by the Israelites’ neighbors and to some of the Greeks and Romans of the NT, it also would apply to many of the followers of Yahweh in the OT who saw Yahweh as the God of the mountains and storms in direct conflict with the Baal myth, which ascribed these traits to Baal (see below). Therefore, it is prudent to remember that the label “pagan gods” is anachronistic and should be used with care when discussing the religions described in the Bible.

On a related note, the terminology of “idolatry” is also often misunderstood. Most of the non-Israelite religions discussed in the Bible would have understood the images of their gods to be representations of the deity (or even a throne or meeting place for the god) rather than an object of worship in its own right. While they would have believed that the god dwelled in the object and was present when worship was being performed, they would not have believed that the object was the god. Most of the idols made in the ancient Near East are indistinguishable from one another unless one observes their specific weapons. This, coupled with the idol’s anthropomorphic representation, rather than a heavenly representation, suggests that the concern for early worshipers was not to worship an inanimate image, but rather to see a representation of the god who indwelled the image if worshiped correctly. It was the presence of the god that was desired. Thus, the prohibition against images in the OT is a prohibition against trying to depict Yahweh in any physical form.

When dealing with the non-Israelite gods of the Bible, it is helpful to divide them into historical periods. Within the OT, the major groupings of non-Israelite gods should include the gods of the Canaanites and the gods of the Babylonians (which are very similar to the gods of the Assyrians). To a lesser degree the gods of the Philistines, the Egyptians, and the Persians can also be considered. In the NT, the gods of the Greeks and the Romans (which often are assimilated Greek gods with new names) can be considered. Along with these somewhat artificial historical divisions are innumerable personal gods and local gods worshiped by small groups of people or even by a single town or village. For example, Gen. 31:30 references Laban’s gods, which Rachel steals when she leaves home to travel with Jacob. These personal gods likely played a huge role in the day-to-day life of the average person, but most often they are lost to history. Similarly in the NT, the mystery religions of the Greeks and the Romans likely played an important role in the lives of many people, but they are difficult to reconstruct because of the limited amount of documentation that has survived.

CANAANITE PANTHEON

There is considerable overlap between the Canaanite pantheon and those of the Mesopotamian cultures, and often this can create some confusion about the deities being discussed, especially their names and functions. Further complicating matters, the descriptions of gods within the Mesopotamian pantheons often have fluid identities, as different textual traditions conflict with each other at times. Both the Canaanite and the Babylonian pantheons borrow heavily from the Sumerian pantheon, which adds both to their similarities and to the possibility of confusion.

Without question, the most important god within the Canaanite pantheon was Baal. The story of Baal, often called the "Baal Cycle," describes the life and deeds of Baal. The cult of Baal was a fertility religion, and all the events of Baal's life were connected to the changing seasons and nature's fertility. The Baal Cycle also explained how the worship of Baal affected the agricultural success of farmers. This detailed story of Baal was all but unknown, except for a few details that could be gleaned from the Bible, prior to the accidental discovery of the city of Ugarit and its extensive library in 1928 by a farmer plowing his field. The city of Ugarit appears to have been a major trading center between the years of about 1450 and 1200 BC. Besides Baal, other important deities within the pantheon were El, the elderly, long-bearded father god; Asherah, El's wife, or occasionally portrayed as Baal's wife or sister; and Mot, the god of death, usually represented as a snake.

Figurine of a Canaanite warrior god

Baal was the god of weather, especially thunder, lightning, and rain (Baal is almost always depicted with a lightning bolt in one hand and a rod of power in the other). Other representations or symbols of Baal include the bull (the strongest and most powerful animal of the ancient Near East), water, mist, dew, grain, oil, and any other symbol of fertility. Worship of Baal was intended to keep him happy in order to assure the coming of spring (preferably, early), the necessary rain for crops, and finally the lengthening of summer so that two crops could be planted and harvested. The second crop, which often was the crop that a farmer could sell for a profit (the first being reserved for the farmer's own food), was especially tied to the favor of Baal. Baal was worshiped not only in hope of agricultural prosperity but also for family fertility in terms of children and for help in battle. The primary means for producing and keeping the favor of Baal was by offering the firstfruits of any harvest to him. When the first portion of a crop was harvested, it was expected that a portion of that harvest (most often a tithe) be offered to Baal in hopes of receiving his favor and extending the growing season. Not only were the first of the crops to be given to Baal but also the firstborn of all herded animals. It was also a common practice for the firstborn of a family to be given to Baal in human sacrifice. Baal is often referred to as Molek in the Bible (e.g., Jer. 19) when describing human sacrifice. Another practice of Baal worship was ritual sexual intercourse between a worshiper and a priest or a priestess. This ritual sexual activity was thought to increase the fertility of the worshiper, thereby increasing the chances of having more children.

Apparently for much of the history of Israel, especially during the monarchy, Baal worship offered an enticing alternative to the worship of Yahweh. In fact, the stories of Elijah and Elisha serve as a direct polemic against Baal worship. Most of the stories of Elijah and Elisha use the symbols of Baal to demonstrate that Yahweh is much stronger than Baal. By the time of the first century AD, Baal worship was a thing of the past, but some vestiges of the worship remained. For example, in the Gospels Jesus says that a person cannot worship both "God and money" (KJV: "mammon") (Matt. 6:24; Luke 16:13). The Greek word translated "money," *mamōnas*, is borrowed from Aramaic and actually refers to the worship of Baal, but by Jesus' time it had evolved to take on the more generic definition "prosperity."

Along with Baal, the worship of Asherah, a female member of the pantheon, was common. Although scholars are not completely sure of its form, it is believed that the reference in the OT to "Asherah poles" was likely a reference to a phallic symbol that represented fertility (Judg. 6:26; 1 Kings 14:23). Recently, several references to Asherah have been discovered in Kuntillet 'Ajrud in northeastern Sinai, dated to about the eighth century. These inscriptions say that Asherah was the consort of Yahweh rather than Baal, providing further evidence for the amount of syncretism present in Israel during the monarchy. Another female deity, Ashtoreth (known also by her Mesopotamian name, "Ishtar"), is called "Queen of Heaven" several times in the book of Jeremiah (7:18; 44:17–19, 25).

In relationship to the infiltration of Baal worship into the northern kingdom is the debate about the nature of the "sin of Jeroboam" that was instituted by Jeroboam I when he, along with the ten northern tribes, ceded from Israel (1 Kings 12:25–33). At issue is whether Jeroboam was instituting a new religion based on the calves, thus becoming syncretistic with these tribes' northern Phoenician neighbors (which would have been tantamount to introducing Baal worship into Israel), or simply rejecting the centrality of Jerusalem for Yahweh worship (which only a few years before had been centralized in Jerusalem by Solomon's temple, resulting in the disenfranchisement of the Levites outside Jerusalem). Clearly, the southern kingdom viewed the events as apostasy, but whether the northern tribes did is unclear. Amos, for example, seems to focus his criticism of the cult at Bethel not on the worship itself but rather on the hypocrisy of the worshipers, who were not following the law as prescribed in the Torah.

A Roman altar to an unknown god

BABYLONIAN PANTHEON

Although debate continues over the exact relationship between the two, the Babylonian pantheon had many elements similar to the Canaanite pantheon. There are dozens of primary documents about the religion of Babylon; the most important of them include the *Enuma Elish*, a creation story and apologetic for Marduk the chief of gods; the Atrahasis Epic, which has a version of the flood story in it; and the Epic of Gilgamesh, which describes the quest for eternal life by King Gilgamesh. Within the Babylonian pantheon, Marduk is the chief of gods, who is also the patron god of Babylonia. The *Enuma Elish*, which describes the creation of the world, deals primarily with the ascension of Marduk to the role of chief god by destroying the forces of chaos represented by the monster Tiamat and bringing order to both the pantheon and the natural world. Marduk, like Baal, had retained the most powerful cosmic weapons, which include water, rain, and war. The Epic of Gilgamesh describes the journey of King Gilgamesh, who is part human and part divine, in search of immortality. During the course of his trip, he learns that eternal life is reserved for the gods, and humans must make their mark on the world by what they do during their lives. The Babylonian religion and pantheon exerted its strongest influence on Israel during the exile. The biblical text clearly has been influenced by these Babylonian beliefs. However, the Bible consistently presents these viewpoints as contrary to the true worship of Yahweh and insists that only Yahweh deserves worship as the true creator of the world, vanquisher of chaos, and provider of prosperity and life.

OTHER ANCIENT NEAR EASTERN PANTHEONS

The Egyptian gods are mentioned only briefly in the Bible. The most overt references to the gods of Egypt are found in the story of the ten plagues, which most scholars believe was a direct attack on the deities of Egypt by Yahweh. It is unclear if the calf described in Exod. 32 should be understood as an Egyptian god, a completely new or different god, or as a forbidden representation of Yahweh.

Little is known about the Philistine pantheon of gods, but it appears to be quite similar to the Canaanite pantheon (if not the same with local variations). The Philistines' chief god, referred to in the Bible as "Dagon" (Judg. 16:23; 1 Sam. 5:2–7; 1 Chron. 10:10), likely also went by the name "Baal-Zebul" ("Lord Prince"), which in the OT is mocked by being changed to "Baal-Zebub" ("Lord of the Flies") (2 Kings 1:2–3, 6, 16). In the NT, this god is recalled when the Pharisees accuse Jesus of being in league with Satan (Matt. 12:24; Luke 11:15 [Gk. *Beelzeboul*]). Because the Philistines were known as the Sea Peoples, it is not surprising that this deity had several fishlike qualities (including a fish tail).

NEW TESTAMENT RELIGION

In the NT, the Greek pantheon that was subsumed by the Roman pantheon was the common religious expression of the day. Like other ancient pantheons, these pantheons tried to explain the natural world by the involvement of various deities in nature. Proof that Jews living in the province of Judah were under constant pressure to assimilate to the Greek religion is provided in the reports of the books of Maccabees that describe the Jewish revolt against the Seleucids in what was essentially a religious war against assimilation. In the Gospels, little is said about the Greek or Roman pantheons, but the book of Acts contains several reports of Paul's interaction with the Greeks and their religious practices. Especially notable is Paul's interaction with the Athenians when he debated philosophers who were followers of the "Unknown God" (Acts 17:23). Three other deities are named in Acts, including Artemis in Ephesus (Acts 19:24, 27–28, 34–35), whom the Romans called "Diana," and Zeus and Hermes (Acts 14:12–13), called "Jupiter" and "Mercury" by the Romans, whom Paul and Barnabas were mistaken for in Lystra when Paul preached and healed a crippled man.

SUMMARY

The problem of God's people Israel worshiping other gods permeates most of biblical history. These reports range over time from the early story of Rachel in Genesis, to the period of the judges when Micah's images (Judg. 17:1–6) and Gideon's ephod (Judg. 8:26–27) were worshiped, to when Solomon and his wives were worshiping foreign gods (1 Kings 11:5–8), to the time of Ahab when all Israel followed Baal, whom Elijah vanquished on Mount Carmel (1 Kings 18:16–46). Depending on when one dates the book of Deuteronomy, the strong prohibitions against idolatry either went unheeded (if Moses wrote the book) or were a culminating statement of the anti-idolatry Deuteronomistic writer just before the exile. There is considerable debate about when Israel became an exclusively monotheistic nation (if it ever did), but by the eighth century BC, Isaiah and Amos castigate worshipers of these false gods. Clearly, by the time of Jeremiah, some factions within Israel (the prophet included) have begun to question whether the gods of the other nations even exist (Jer. 2:28). Finally, with the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem, ironically, the worship of other gods is ended. It is certain that by the time of the first century AD, the evolution to a monotheistic view is complete, and Paul can claim that an "idol is nothing" (1 Cor. 8:4), and that any sin is tantamount to idolatry (Eph. 5:5).

GOG AND MAGOG This infamous pair is known to most readers of the Bible from Rev. 20:8. They stand for all the nations of the world, which are enticed by Satan to attack the saints in the end times. This text universalizes Ezek. 38–39, where “Gog, of the land of Magog, the chief prince of Meshek and Tubal” (38:2–3), is the commander of a coalition (38:2–7) to be gathered in an unprovoked attack on a restored, defenseless Israel. He acts not on his own initiative but rather is impelled and ultimately destroyed by God (38:21–23; 39:2–6). Some have suggested that the mysterious Gog derives from the historical figure Gyges, a seventh-century BC king of Lydia located in western Asia Minor, or Gaga, a god mentioned in the Ras Shamra texts of ancient Ugarit. Others believe that the name “Gog” is derived from “Magog,” since Magog, the land “in the far north” from which Gog came (Ezek. 38:2, 15; 39:6), can be translated as “place of Gog.” Magog is associated in the Table of Nations (Gen. 10:2) with Meshek and Tubal, eponymous sons of Japheth whose territories are presumed to lie somewhere in the vicinity of modern Turkey.

GOIIM *See* Goyim.

GOLAN Probably located about twenty miles directly east of the Sea of Galilee, Golan is one of the OT cities of refuge (Deut. 4:43; Josh. 20:8). Golan is later given by Joshua, Eleazar the high priest, and the Israelite tribal family leaders to the Gershonites, a clan of Levites, out of the land originally allotted to the tribe of Manasseh (Josh. 21:27; 1 Chron. 6:71).

GOLD *See* Minerals and Metals.

GOLDEN CALF Made by Aaron while Moses was on Mount Sinai, the golden calf was an image fashioned from gold jewelry donated by the Israelites, who grew impatient waiting for Moses as he spent forty days and nights receiving instructions from God (Exod. 32). It became an object of idolatrous worship and a cause of corrupt behavior.

Opinions differ as to whether the calf was intended as a substitute for the absent Moses (who later appears literally “horned” [Heb. *qaran*] in Exod. 34:30 [cf. Douay-Rheims version; NIV: “radiant”]), or for Yahweh, or as a pedestal for Yahweh (like the cherubim above the ark of the covenant). The bovine form of the image is possibly due to Egyptian influence. The word “calf” could be the writer’s contemptuous term for what may have been thought of as a bull image (symbolizing strength), or it may have been intended to refer to a bull in its prime.

Calf/bull idol from the ancient Near East

Moses’ response on seeing the image is to smash the two tablets containing the Ten Commandments, signifying the end of the covenant between God and Israel. He burned the image, pulverized it, scattered it on the water, and made the Israelites drink it. While initially it seemed uncertain whether there could be any future for the covenant, Exod. 33–34 serves to resolve this.

The episode of the golden calf lived long in Israel’s memory as the paradigm instance of apostasy (Ps. 106:19–20; Acts 7:41). King Jeroboam I repeated the offense, setting up golden calves at Dan and Bethel (1 Kings 12:28) to discourage citizens of the northern kingdom from traveling to the southern capital Jerusalem, where their allegiance might switch to the Davidic king.

GOLDEN RULE A modern term for Jesus’ maxim “Do to others what you would have them do to you” (Matt. 7:12; cf. Luke 6:31). Jesus emphasizes this point by stating that its practice encapsulates both the Torah and the Prophets—the foundation of Judaic culture (Matt. 7:12). Gold’s high value connotes the extreme worth of this guiding principle for human interaction.

GOLGOTHA The site of Jesus’ crucifixion, just outside the wall of Jerusalem. “Golgotha” is from an Aramaic word meaning “skull.” The three references to Golgotha in the Gospels (Matt. 27:33; Mark 15:22; John 19:17) also identify the location in Greek as “Place of the Skull” (*kraniou topos*). The English name “Calvary” is based on the Latin term *calvaria* (“skull”). The site is linked to skulls perhaps because it was regularly used for executions or, less likely, it physically resembled a skull. *See also* Calvary.

GOLIATH Goliath was the Philistine champion whom David killed in one-on-one combat with a stone hurled by a sling (1 Sam. 17). David's victory led to a rout of the Philistines and personal rewards and prominence in Israel. Goliath was considered a giant. While the MT measures him at 9' 6" (NRSV: "six cubits and a span"), another textual tradition (preserved in the DSS, the LXX, and Josephus [*Ant*. 6.171]), give his height as 6' 9" ("four cubits and a span"). From a copying perspective, the 6' 9" height is easier to explain as original. The average Israelite was about 5' 3", but Saul was head and shoulders taller, perhaps 6'.

GOMER **(1)** The wife of Hosea the prophet. God commanded Hosea to marry Gomer, though he also describes her as "an adulterous wife" (Hos. 1:2). The purpose behind God's command was to provide an illustration of his own relationship with his people, which, like a marriage, was to be intimate and exclusive. Israel, however, was worshiping other gods, just as Gomer was sleeping with other men.

It is uncertain whether Gomer was a prostitute at the time Hosea married her or whether she had promiscuous tendencies that she acted on after marriage. Some commentators even argue that Hosea did not really marry such a woman but that this part of the book of Hosea is a parable. Whichever is the case, more than Israel's sin is illustrated by Hosea and Gomer's relationship. In Hos. 3 God commands the prophet to buy her back and marry her again even though she is a prostitute. He is to prohibit her adulterous activities. In the same way, God will not completely break off his relationship with adulterous Israel.

(2) In the Table of Nations (Gen. 10) Gomer is the son of Japheth, the son of Noah. He typically is identified as the ancestor of the Cimmerians, an Indo-European people who lived in what is now southern Russia, north of the Black Sea, in the second millennium BC, but who threatened Assyria around 700 BC. Gomer is also mentioned along with Gog and Magog in Ezek. 38:1–6, representing Israel's northern enemies.

GOMORRAH *See* Sodom and Gomorrah.

GONG A loud percussion instrument, perhaps a bell or a cymbal, Paul compares the sound of the gong (Gk. *chalkos*) to the use of the spiritual gift of tongues devoid of love. Literally, the gong is a "sounding brass" (1 Cor. 13:1; see KJV).

GOOD Whereas the Greeks identified the good as an abstract ideal toward which people should strive in all their actions, the Bible identifies goodness as an attribute of God, who is personal (Ps. 25:8–10). Therefore, God is the ultimate standard of goodness.

Creation itself expresses God's goodness. Human beings are fearfully and wonderfully made (Ps. 139:14). We have been given the capacity to enjoy the many blessings of God's creation (Ps. 145:9, 16), and to bring the potentialities of creation to their full expression by cultivating and subduing the earth (Gen. 1:28; Ps. 8). We are created in God's image to do good by living according to God's purposes. Evil came into the world when Adam and Eve looked to something in creation instead of God as the source of ultimate good (Gen. 3).

In his goodness, God has chosen goodness. If we were to shine God's goodness through a prism, its color spectrum would include love, mercy, grace, kindness, faithfulness, righteousness, beauty, and perfection to redeem his people, who have lost their capacity for good through sin. Jesus is the good shepherd who lays down his life for his sheep (John 10:11). God showers his benevolence upon both the evil and the good (Matt. 5:45). For believers, God uses everything, even their suffering, to bring about their good, namely, Christlikeness (Rom. 8:28–29).

GOODMAN The KJV uses “goodman” five times to translate the Greek word *oikodespotēs*, referring to the owner or master of a house or estate. The goodman was responsible for defense of the house (Matt. 24:43; Luke 12:39) and might employ people to work his land (Matt. 20:11). See also Mark 14:14; Luke 22:11. In Prov. 7:19 the KJV reads “the goodman” as opposed to “my husband,” the reading in the LXX and most modern versions (the Hebrew reads literally, “the man”).

GOOD NEWS *See* Gospel.

GOPHER WOOD The wood that many Bible versions identify as being used to construct Noah’s ark. “Gopher” is a transliteration of the Hebrew word *goper*, found only in Gen. 6:14. The NIV renders it “cypress,” acknowledging that the meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain. Other suggested translations include “pine,” “cedar,” “fir,” “reed,” and “willow.”

GOSHEN **(1)** A region in northeast Egypt along the eastern Nile Delta. The extent of the region is uncertain, but it is identified with the area around Wadi Tumilat up to Lake Timsah. The LXX translates “Goshen” as “Gesem of Arabia” (Gen. 45:10) and may identify it with the Egyptian name for Arabia. Geshem of Arabia, a foe of Nehemiah, may be associated with this area (Neh. 2:19). Ramesses II built his capital on the ruins of the Hyksos capital Avaris and called it Pi-Ramesses, which is probably the same Rameses that the Israelite slaves built (Exod. 1:11). Goshen was either roughly equated with the “land of Rameses” or a part of it (Gen. 47:6). Joseph settled his family there because it was “the best of the land,” good for tending herds, and was near him (Gen. 45:10, 18; 46:34). Goshen later became the place of Israel’s enslavement. While Egypt faced the plagues, Goshen was spared (Exod. 8:22).

(2) A region in southern Judah conquered by Joshua (Josh. 10:40–42; 11:16). **(3)** A town in the southern hill country of Judah (Josh. 15:51).

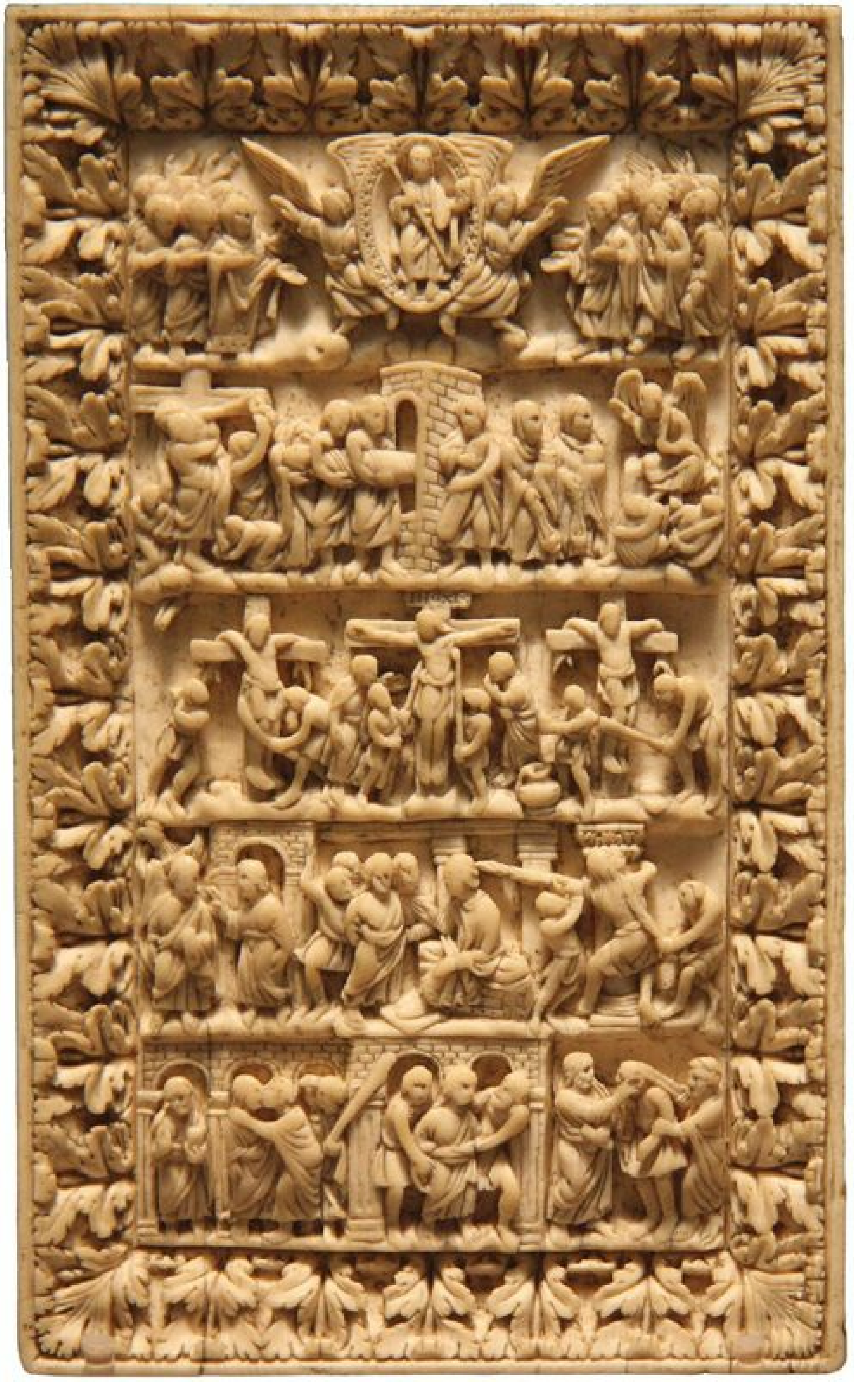
GOSPEL The English word “gospel” translates the Greek word *euangelion*, which is very important in the NT, being used seventy-six times. The word *euangelion* (*eu* = “good,” *angelion* = “announcement”), in its contemporary use in the Hellenistic world, was not the title of a book but rather a declaration of good news. *Euangelion* was used in the Roman Empire with reference to significant events in the life of the emperor, who was thought of as a savior with divine status. These events included declarations at the time of his birth, his coming of age, and his accession to the throne. The NT usage of the term can also be traced to the OT (e.g., Isa. 40:9; 52:7; 61:1), which looked forward to the coming of the Messiah, who would bring a time of salvation. This good news, which is declared in the NT, is that Jesus has fulfilled God’s promises to Israel, and now the way of salvation is open to all.

THE GOSPEL MESSAGE

The apostle Paul recognizes that the gospel is centered on the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus (1 Cor. 15:1–5). He states that this gospel is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes (Rom. 1:16), a sacred trust (1 Tim. 1:11), the word of truth (Eph. 1:13), and an authoritative pronouncement that requires a response (Rom. 10:16; 2 Cor. 11:4; 2 Thess. 1:8). The declaration of this good news is found on the lips of Jesus in the Synoptic Gospels (Matt. 11:5; Luke 4:18), who calls people to respond in repentance and belief (Mark 1:15). The good news is also in the early apostolic preaching, where it is associated with the proclamation of Christ (Acts 5:42; 8:35; 11:20).

The records of apostolic preaching in Acts are records of the earliest public declaration of this gospel. The apostle Peter gives three such speeches (Acts 2:14–41; 3:11–4:4; 10:34–43), whose content can be summarized as follows. The age of fulfillment has dawned through the birth, life, ministry, and resurrection of Jesus Christ (2:22–31), which has ushered in the “latter days” foretold by the prophets (3:18–26). Jesus, by his resurrection, has been exalted to the right hand of God as the head of the new Israel (2:32–36), and the Holy Spirit has been given to the church as the sign of Christ’s present power and exaltation (10:44–48). This age will reach its consummation at the return of Christ (3:20–21), and in response to this gospel an appeal is made for repentance, with the offer of forgiveness, the Holy Spirit, and salvation (2:37–41).

This declaration of the gospel is concerned primarily with what was preached rather than what was written. Itinerant preachers of this gospel were known as “evangelists,” which in Greek is closely related to the term *euangelion* (Acts 21:8; Eph. 4:11; 2 Tim. 4:5). Some scholars believe that during the stage of oral transmission, the gospel accounts developed a certain form through repetition, which helps explain some similarities between later written accounts of the gospel.



Ivory plaque showing the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, the essence of the gospel (ninth century AD)

FROM ORAL TO WRITTEN GOSPEL

Later, this “oral” gospel was written down, for several reasons. With the rapid spread of Christianity, as recorded in the book of Acts, a need arose for a more efficient dissemination of the message of Jesus than was available by oral means. Furthermore, there was a need to keep the message alive because some of the apostles had died (e.g., James in Acts 12:2) and many churches were facing opposition and persecution. The written Gospels would facilitate catechetical and liturgical needs and encourage persecuted Christians to continue following Jesus by telling the story of his faithfulness through great suffering. These written Gospels would also contain examples of those who persevered in following Jesus and of those who denied him and betrayed him. These accounts about Jesus and those who followed him became foundational documents for the early church.

It should be noted that the gospel was not written down in order to give it greater authority. The first-century context was largely an oral culture, in which storytelling and the rehearsal of facts was integral. Papias, a leader of the church in Hierapolis in Asia Minor who died around AD 130, states his preference for oral tradition rather than written information about Jesus: “For I did not think that information from books would help me as much as the word of a living and surviving voice” (Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 3.39.4). There is, however, a traceable trajectory from the gospel preached by the apostles to the written accounts that bear the names of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. It is generally held that the authors/editors of the four canonical Gospels were using oral and/or written sources (Luke 1:1–4), and that their respective Gospels were written in the second half of the first century.

The majority of biblical scholars hold that Mark was the first Gospel to be written (c. AD 66). According to tradition, its editor/author was John Mark, a close friend of the apostle Peter (1 Pet. 5:13) and a part-time companion of the apostle Paul (Acts 12:12; Col. 4:10; 2 Tim. 4:11). This tradition is not without basis. Papias says, “Mark, who had indeed been Peter’s interpreter, accurately wrote as much as he remembered, yet not in order, about that which was either said or done by the Lord” (Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 3.39.15). This tradition is also outlined by Clement of Alexandria, who, around AD 200, wrote, “When Peter had publicly preached the word at Rome, and by the Spirit had proclaimed the gospel, then those present, who were many, exhorted Mark, as one who had followed him for a long time and remembered what had been spoken, to make a record of what he said; and that he did this, and distributed the Gospel among those that asked him” (Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 6.14.5–7; cf. 2.15.1–2).

It is widely held that Matthew and Luke used Mark as one of their sources: of the material in Mark, over 97 percent is repeated in Matthew and over 88 percent in Luke. Matthew and Luke also contain material that appears to come from a common written source that is not found in Mark. Scholars have named this source as “Q” (from the German *Quelle* = “source”), although this may be a collection of sources rather than a single document.

Furthermore, the association of the Fourth Gospel with the apostle John goes back to Irenaeus (c. AD 180), who states, “John, the disciple of the Lord, who leaned on his breast, also published the gospel while living at Ephesus in Asia” (*Haer.* 3.1.1, as cited in Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 5.8.4). By the second century, the term “gospel” is used for the written accounts of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus (e.g., *Did.* 11.3; 15.4). Justin Martyr (c. AD 140) refers to the “memoirs of the apostles” (*1 Apol.* 67) and Irenaeus (c. AD 180) mentions the four canonical Gospels by name (*Haer.* 3.11.7).

THE PURPOSE AND GENRE OF THE GOSPELS

Purpose. The Gospels were written to convey theology and to create and confirm faith. They do not give an objectively neutral account of the life of Jesus; they enthusiastically endorse their protagonist and condemn those who oppose him. They differ from traditional biographies in that they give little information about the chronology of Jesus’ life. Only two of the Gospels, Matthew and Luke, tell of the events surrounding Jesus’ birth. Luke alone tells of an event in Jesus’ childhood

(Luke 2:41–52). It is virtually incidental that Jesus worked as a carpenter and had brothers and sisters (Mark 6:3). A large percentage of each of the four canonical Gospels is devoted to the last week of Jesus' life; of the sixteen chapters of Mark's Gospel, six are devoted to the one week from Jesus' entry into Jerusalem until his resurrection.

The primary intentions of the authors/editors of the written Gospels were not to give biographical details but rather to lead the reader to an acknowledgment of the identity of Jesus and a belief in the purpose of his mission (Luke 1:4; John 20:31). Their theological purposes, however, do not necessarily compromise their commitment to historical accuracy. Jesus is presented as a real, historical figure who lived within a specific historical time frame. Luke appears to be more concerned than the other evangelists with historical details, giving a rough date for Jesus' birth (Luke 2:1–2) and a more specific time for Jesus' baptism (3:1–2).

Genre. The discerning reader of the Gospels is forced to ask questions concerning the literary genre(s) of these texts. Such a discussion is imperative, as the interpretation of a section of any piece of literature will largely be determined by the function of the text within a certain literary genre. Prior to the 1970s, most NT scholars believed that the Gospels formed a unique literary genre and were therefore distinct from other first-century literary forms. This conclusion was based on the belief that the written Gospels were collections of smaller sections sewn together by the evangelists, and that the documents as a whole lacked coherence. Since then, this presupposition has been challenged, largely because scholars have seen that the Gospel writers were real editors and authors who were not just collecting primitive source material but were using that material to write a larger story about Jesus. The written Gospels therefore have overall coherence and purpose; they were written in such a way as to bring about a desired response in the reader. Such an overall intention may have stronger similarities with different genres in the Greco-Roman world of the NT.

The Gospels have been associated with several genres. They bear some resemblance to aretalogies, which were narratives about divine persons in antiquity from which flowed moral instructions. These stories often involved miraculous events at the subject's birth or death or during life, and they included the presence of both disciples and opponents. Within these aretalogies, the narrative was secondary to the morality. An association with aretalogies, therefore, would encourage the reader to give greater attention to moral teaching than to events in which this teaching is embedded. Similarly, others have seen the Gospels as essentially a collection of wisdom sayings set in a historicized narrative; this view again gives priority to sayings and is doubtful of the historicity of the narrative. Such views that downplay the narrative, and particularly the miracles in Jesus' life, have led others to argue the opposite extreme, which sees the Gospels, and Luke-Acts in particular, as examples of ancient novels, with their focus on miracle stories. Many scholars have rejected the emphasis on either sayings or narrative, arguing that the literary genre that the Gospels most closely resemble is ancient biographies (*bioi*). These contained praise for the protagonist, rhetoric, moral philosophy, and a concern for character.

Although the Gospels use different literary motifs that are reflective of different genres of the Greco-Roman world, they do not exactly replicate a known genre. They contain material not found in other Hellenistic literature of the time—for example, the fulfillment of OT expectations and their desire to address particular issues faced by the early church, such as opposition; the Gentile mission; the need to redefine Israel in the light of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection; and the nature of Christian discipleship. Unlike other literature of the time, they do not name their authors, and with the exception of Luke, they lack traditional literary devices such as prefaces. They are therefore to be seen as unique, or at least as a distinct subgenre of ancient biographies.

CANONICAL AND NONCANONICAL GOSPELS

The progression from the events of Jesus' life to the oral preaching of this gospel to the first-century writing of the story led to the acceptance of the Gospels according to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John into the NT canon. There is also a significant body of literature that is normally referred to as the noncanonical gospels. These later documents were neither widely accepted nor viewed as authoritative, but they provide useful insights into the nature of early Christianity. A significant noncanonical gospel is the *Gospel of Thomas*, which is part of a large collection of works discovered at Nag Hammadi (Egypt) in 1945. The *Gospel of Thomas* does not contain a resurrection account and is primarily a collection of sayings.

The canonical Gospels are not more authoritative than other sections of Scripture, but because they focus on Jesus' ministry, with particular attention to his death and resurrection, they draw the attention of the reader to the fulfillment of God's purpose in the life and work of Jesus, the Messiah. They are therefore of great importance within Scripture.

GOSPELS, SYNOPTIC *See* Synoptic Gospels.

GOUGING THE EYES This brutal practice effectively ended a person's military career, even if only performed on one eye (1 Sam. 11:2; cf. 4Q51 10; Josephus, *Ant.* 6.71). It could also be punitive (2 Kings 25:7; 4 Macc. 5:30). The loss of both eyes made one a dependent or slave, since only the simplest work could be done (so with Samson [Judg. 16:21]). Eye gouging also refers figuratively to either enslaving or deceiving someone (Num. 16:14) and to the severe measures to take against one's own sin (Matt. 5:29; 18:9).

GOURD A hard-skinned fruit related to melons, cucumbers, and squash. When Elisha instructed his servant to make stew, one of the prophets unknowingly gathered poisonous gourds, which were cut up and added to the mix. After the mistake was discovered, Elisha threw meal into the pot so that it would not poison those who ate it (2 Kings 4:38–41). In the story of Jonah, although some versions follow the LXX by calling it a "gourd" (Gk. *kolokynthē*), the miraculous shade plant that he encountered after he left Nineveh probably was a castor-oil plant, which can quickly grow to five or ten feet (Jon. 4:6, 9). In Solomon's temple ornamental gourds were carved into the cedar paneling and the bronze sea (1 Kings 6:18; 7:24).

GOVERNMENT The term "government" may refer to the philosophy that shapes a nation or people's institutions, customs, and laws or, more specifically, to actual offices and structures to enact this philosophy. Generally speaking, government serves to bring order and direction to a people. This can be accomplished through the rule of one, or a few, or many. As a constituent portion of bringing order, some sort of entity for enforcement and protection must be created. This usually takes the form of a military or police force.

The biblical worldview emphasizes the rule of God over everything, inherent in his position as the Creator. Since, however, God did imbue humanity with authority over creation and with the capacity for relationship, his government can find expression in the actions and decisions of human beings (1 Sam. 8:7–9; Rom. 13:1–4). The successful ruler will be the individual who understands his or her place before God and who desires to lead God's people with humility and justice (1 Kings 3:7–9).

BEFORE THE MONARCHY

Clan. The earliest forms of governmental relations apparently were in the extended family or clan. The progenitor of the clan normally was the patriarch, who led several families, all of which were to some degree related to him. The patriarch was responsible for land allotments and maintenance of the family's spiritual life and well-being (Gen. 13:8–9; 31:22–35; Job 1:4–5). He was responsible for forming contractual agreements under which the family functioned, in relation both to land acquisitions and to marriages (Gen. 21:22–34; 24:1–11; 26:26–33). He alone decided to whom the patriarchy passed when he died, and his power was almost absolute (Gen. 27), though there is some indication that God desired a husband's first responsibility to be to his spouse rather than to his father (Gen. 2:24).

Tribe. Beyond the clan, the next larger societal unit was the tribe. Although tribes were for the most part still related genetically, the distance of the relationship permitted the inclusion of persons from outside the family. This may have been the case with Caleb, who is identified both as a member of the tribe of Judah (Num. 13:6) and as a descendant of the Kenizzites, who were Edomites (Gen. 36:9–11; Num. 32:12). If modern nomadic tribes are any indication, the governmental structure of the related tribes was a type of confederation coming together for defensive purposes. The decisions would have been made by a group of elders from the various clans. Like the clan chief of the smaller structures, the tribal elders could make covenants and were responsible for keeping order in the tribe (Deut. 21:19; Ruth 4:1–12; 2 Sam. 5:3).

During the period following the exodus and before the time of the judges, Israel's tribal structure was maintained, though with a single leader. The leadership of Moses and Joshua was in many ways a precursor to the offices of both judge and king. The men had considerable power, and opposition to their leadership often was dealt with harshly (Num. 12; 16). Yet, their rule was established through presence of the Spirit of God rather than physical lineage. The weight of leading such a large body of people had its difficulties, and it is related that Moses delegated some of his authority to judges who rendered decisions for the people (Exod. 18).

Judges. The period of the judges witnessed a devolution of sorts in the governmental structures of Israel. The relationship between the various tribes was somewhat strained, and it seems clear from the narrative that no judge ever led more than a handful of tribes. Although these judges were like Moses and Joshua in that they were imbued with power by the Spirit of God, their focus was almost solely military in nature, and the everyday aspects of governance seem to have been left to the individual tribes. There was little sense of ordered society, and lawlessness and anarchy seem to have been the order of the day. In two cases, those of Gideon and Abimelek, attempts were made to found petty kingdoms (Judg. 8:22–23, 30–31; 9:1–21). Similarly, Jephthah seems to have established a minor kingdom east of the Jordan, in Gilead (Judg. 11:6–11). However, these attempts were transitory in nature and lacked the stability that grows out of a unified identity. Indeed, one of the roles of the judges seems to have been to solidify the people's resolve for permanent leadership in the form of a monarch, which they hoped would raise them to greatness and standing in the world (1 Sam. 8:1–6).

THE MONARCHY

The period of the monarchy represented a strong centralized government invested in the mind and decisions of a single man. The term "king" was applied symbolically to any great leader, but above all it was applied to God, to whom Israel's throne rightfully belonged (1 Chron. 28:5; 29:23; Ps. 2). With the office of the king came a bureaucracy designed to increase efficiency, but which sometimes involved corruption.

Establishing the monarchy. The first ruler called "king" was Saul, son of Kish, though he is often referred to as a prince or a chieftain rather than a king (1 Sam. 13:13–14). It is difficult to say whether this related specifically to the level of office that he possessed or if it was a sort of disparaging comparison to David, who was viewed by the biblical writer as a true king. As king, David took possession of the great fortress of Jerusalem. In many ways, he combined the ecclesiastical and the military headship of the nation through the movement of the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem and the purchase of the threshing floor for the temple. Solomon attempted to further break down the old tribal divisions by dividing the whole country into administrative districts (1 Kings 4:7), not according to tribal divisions, but instead after the pattern established during the Egyptian hegemony of Canaan that had existed several centuries earlier. The kingdom was divided into two separate kingdoms at the death of Solomon, but for the people of God the monarchy had become the standard of government through which God ruled. This monarchial expectation found expression in the messianic hope of Israel (Ezek. 47).

The role of the king. The chief duty of the king was to act as the commander in chief of the army. With the establishment of a monarchy, the people gained a standing army that could be kept in the field for protection of the nation (1 Sam. 13:2). The king was also intimately connected with the religious organization of the people. He was considered a central component of the cult, so that major moments in his life were cause for worship (Pss. 2; 45; 110). It is certain that the king, especially after David, performed priestly functions. David wore an ephod (1 Chron. 15:27), and Solomon addressed the people in the temple (1 Kings 8:14). Indeed, the coronation itself identified the king as both priest and king (Ps. 110:4). The fact that Solomon built the temple and played a significant role in its dedication shows the intimate relation that the king had with the national sanctuary, which was attached to his palace. The king also served as judge (1 Kings 3:16–28; 7:7) over his people, and he determined the economic structures of the society, including taxes, monetary weights, and covenants with other nations. The king did not hold absolute authority, however, and like the rest of Israel, he was subject to the law (Deut. 17:14–20).

Successors and officers. Once the kingship had been established, the hereditary principle arose naturally. Saul's son Ish-Bosheth maintained a small kingship of northern tribes for some time after Saul's death (2 Sam. 2:8–10). Still, the king appears to have had the right to select which of his descendants would be his successor (1 Kings 1). When the decision was made, the people often proclaimed their satisfaction at the result (1 Kings 1:25; 2 Kings 14:21), and a ceremony of anointing took place. Sometimes the anointing was a private affair (2 Kings 9:6), but the presence of certain psalms related to the ceremony itself suggests that, generally speaking, it was a national event and time of worship (Ps. 2:2).

The bureaucracy that came with the king meant the installation of several new offices. The chief officer of the king was the commander of his army (2 Sam. 2:8; 8:16). Another high-ranking military officer was the captain of the bodyguard, who was not placed under the orders of the commander of the army (2 Sam. 8:18; 23:22–23). The king also had more domestic officers, such as the officer over the household (2 Kings 18:18), the court historian, the court secretary, various deputies and advisers, and the king's friend (2 Sam. 8:16–18; 1 Kings 4:1–6).

Revenue. The means of sustaining the state varied by era and king. While it is true that the king had his own flocks and land (1 Sam. 8:15–17; 1 Chron. 27:25–28), he could also, depending on how strong he was, raise revenue through gifts from vassals (1 Kings 4:21; 10:25) and through the spoils of war (2 Chron. 27:5). Starting with the control and regulation of trade routes during the reign of Solomon, the king maintained a stream of revenue through taxation of merchants moving through the land and trade with other nations.

AFTER THE EXILE

The period following the exile witnessed a transition in the government of Israel. Apart from a very short period from about 160 to 60 BC, Israel was under the control of foreign powers. These various empires ruled with a variety of methods, determined by their own philosophy of government.

Persian rule. The Persians established a rule based largely on a sort of benevolent dictatorship, though there are multiple accounts of vicious responses to any notion of rebellion from its vassals. In 539 BC Cyrus permitted the Jews to return from their captivity in Babylon to Jerusalem and showed them certain favors. One of his successors, Darius I (r. 522–486 BC), continued the liberal policy of Cyrus toward the Jews and played a major role in the rebuilding of the temple at Jerusalem (Ezra 5:13–17; 6:1–15). He also organized the Persian Empire to facilitate the easy collection of tribute from subject nations. He ultimately divided the kingdom into twenty provinces ruled by governors, a system maintained through the remainder of his dynastic line. Another important development during this period was the increase in power of the Jewish priesthood. With no Jewish monarchy in place, governmental power in Israel became concentrated in the office of the high priest.

Greek and Roman rule. Alexander the Great and his successors brought Hellenism into the Jewish experience. His acquisition of power was distinctly different because it was not simply a political one. Its cultural and spiritual influence was much more significant. The people were subjected to new language, art, thought, and philosophy. The struggle that ensued divided the Jewish population into competing groups, one dedicated to the preservation of the old ways and one more receptive to the Hellenistic life.

The coming of the Romans brought with it a more complex balance of power, with authority shifting between the high priest, vassal kings appointed by the Romans, and Roman governors called “prefects” and “procurators.” Among the kings of this period, Herod the Great was the most successful and important. Herod gained control of the region with the help of Augustus Caesar and Marc Antony, being invested with the office by the Roman senate and then winning an important military victory over Jerusalem in 37 BC. Herod was hated by the Jews because of his pagan commitments, his cruelty, and his desire to Hellenize Judea. His children did not enjoy his success or his power, however, and following his death Roman influence and intervention in Judea became more direct and significant.

Excavated tomb of Herod the Great

The priestly class also held significant power in the office of the high priest and in the Jewish high court, the Sanhedrin. The Sanhedrin addressed issues such as legal procedure, verdicts, and decrees of a political nature and also dealt with questions relating to the temple, priesthood, and sacrifices. The Sanhedrin was in many respects the highest political authority (although its control was always mitigated by Roman power and presence). It could deal with most criminal cases, though its authority was limited in capital cases.

The Roman presence in the region was represented by the governance of prefects and procurators. These governors were appointed by Rome over Judea after the removal of Archelaus in AD 6, and over all of Palestine at the death of Herod Agrippa. Prefects and procurators were the highest power in their province, but they answered to the legate and ultimately to Caesar. They lived primarily in Caesarea, but they traveled to Jerusalem for high festivals or in the case of civil unrest. They tended to have as little contact as possible with the Jews unless their own personal interest demanded it. Decisions concerning everyday life were left to the Jewish authorities. With Roman citizens living in their areas, the procurators had direct influence; however, such citizens could go over the procurator’s head and appeal to Caesar if they did not receive the sentence that they desired.

GOVERNOR

OLD TESTAMENT

The English word "governor" is used to translate a number of Hebrew words. The term indicates one who has been designated with authority over a certain region, especially under the rule of a king or emperor. The position of governor is found throughout the Pentateuch, the Writings, and the Prophets. Notable in the OT are the governors appointed by the foreign kings both at home and in occupied territories.

There are several notable governors in the OT. After being sold into slavery in Egypt, Joseph was exalted to governor of Egypt, second only to the king. Thus, his brothers bowed before him (Gen. 42:6). Solomon, during his reign, established twelve governors, each one responsible for supplying provisions to the king one month out of the year (1 Kings 4:7), and Solomon received tribute from them (1 Kings 10:15; 2 Chron. 9:14).

One notable governor was Gedaliah, ruler of the Jewish remnant left in Judah during the deportation, who reported to the king of Babylon (Jer. 40:11). Later, he was assassinated by Ishmael (Jer. 41:2). This provoked great fear, causing some to flee to Egypt (Jer. 41:17–18).

Another notable individual who governed the Jewish people upon their return to Jerusalem after the captivity was Sheshbazzar, governor under Cyrus (Ezra 5:14). He had been entrusted with the vessels for the house of God in Jerusalem that had been taken by Nebuchadnezzar (1:7–8). This same Sheshbazzar had begun building the foundation of the temple by the legal decree of Cyrus the king (5:14–6:6). Subsequently, Zerubbabel (under Darius I) became governor and completed the foundation and the rest of the temple (Ezra 3–6; see also Hag. 1:1–15). He and the other workers are said to have had their spirits stirred to do the work (Hag. 1:14).

Nehemiah, who led the people in restoring the wall of Jerusalem for the safety and restoration of the city, was governor over his people (under Artaxerxes I) and had a true heart of compassion toward the poor. His sympathy for them was so deep that he did not take the regular allotment of food and other goods that the other governors took by right (Neh. 5:14–15). The governors who had gone before ruled and taxed heavily. Nehemiah deemed this an illegitimate way to live among God's people. At the reading of the law along with Ezra the priest and the other Levites, Nehemiah directed the attention of the people to the proper response to the word of God (Neh. 8:9–10).

NEW TESTAMENT

In the NT, the most common word for governor is *hēgemōn*. As in the OT, governors were appointed by higher authorities who delegated to them the authority to rule.

The office of governor was very important in Israel during the NT period. Herod the Great had ruled Israel during the years 37–4 BC. At his death in 4 BC, three of his sons took over the kingdom with the approval of Caesar Augustus. Archelaus ruled Judea and Samaria, Herod Antipas (Herod the Tetrarch) was tetrarch of Galilee and Perea, and Philip was tetrarch of Iturea and Traconitus (see Luke 3:1; Josephus, *J.W.* 2.93–97). The Jewish people revolted against Archelaus in the ninth year, and he was stripped of his rulership and banished in AD 6 (Josephus, *J.W.* 2.111). His kingdom was turned into a Roman province, with Coponius ruling as governor. From this time until the reign of Herod Agrippa I, Judea was ruled by a line of governors (called "prefects" or "procurators"). In AD 41 Herod Agrippa I began to rule and eventually governed roughly the same territory as did Herod the Great, his grandfather. His rule, however, lasted only three years. In the period AD 44–66 governors again ruled in Judea, among them Felix and Festus, with whom the apostle Paul had audience.

Of note among these governors was Pontius Pilate, appointed in AD 26 by Tiberius. Pilate's fortunes seemed to wax and wane with those of General Sejanus, with whom he shared many political and social views. When he first arrived in Palestine, Pilate provoked protests by secretly bringing army standards bearing the images of Roman emperors—idols in Jewish eyes—into Jerusalem (Josephus, *Ant.* 18.55–59). On another occasion demonstrations broke out when Pilate used money from the temple treasury to build an aqueduct for Jerusalem (Josephus, *Ant.* 18.60–62). Pilate sent soldiers to surround and attack the protestors, many of whom were killed. Luke 13:1 refers to a similar episode near the temple mount in which Pilate massacred some Galileans, "whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices." Typical of the Romans, Pilate met protest with ruthless and overwhelming force. At Jesus' trial, though Pilate knew that Jesus was innocent (John 18:38), he condemned Jesus to crucifixion to avoid antagonizing the religious leaders. This kind of action was characteristic of Pilate. He was an unscrupulous and self-seeking leader who loathed the Jewish leadership but feared antagonizing them. Josephus notes that during the tumult of the Samaritans (to assemble at Mount Gerizim), Pilate put them to flight, killing some of them. The Samaritans complained about Pilate's murderous ways to Vitellius, who was friendly to them, and he recalled Pilate to Rome to answer before Tiberius, but Pilate took so long getting there that Tiberius was dead when he finally arrived (Josephus, *Ant.* 18.85–89). Pilate was eventually removed from office, and we hear nothing else from him.

Two other Judean governors who appear in the NT are Felix and Festus, who played a role in the apostle Paul's trial (Acts 24–26). Felix's wife, Drusilla, was a Jewess, and she was with him at Paul's second hearing. On this second occasion Paul reasoned powerfully with Felix, so much so that Felix became frightened about the future and sent Paul away. His fear notwithstanding, Felix sought to exploit the situation for monetary gain (no doubt, bribes were common), but Paul made no response. Two years later Felix was replaced by the next governor, Porcius Festus. Festus heard the defense of Paul (Acts 26) and sent him to Rome after his appeal, though both Festus and Herod agreed that Paul could have been set free had he not appealed to Caesar (Acts 26:30–32).

Coin minted during the reign of Herod the Great. Herod started his rise to political power as governor of Galilee.

On one occasion in the NT, the word “governor” is translated from the word *ethnarchēs*. Aretas of the Nabateans was the ethnarch in Damascus and laid siege to capture the apostle Paul, but Paul escaped through a window in the wall, probably at night (2 Cor. 11:32–33).

As opposed to a governor, a “proconsul” (*anthypatos*) was a ruler of a senatorial province and so was appointed by the Roman senate rather than the emperor. These provinces were usually more loyal and peaceful and thus had little need of a strong military presence. Such was the case with the proconsul on Cyprus who lived in Paphos, Sergius Paulus. This man is noted by Luke as intelligent and ready to hear the message of Paul and Barnabas. The sorcerer Elymas (Bar-Jesus) sought to turn the proconsul from the faith and so was struck blind at Paul’s command. This Roman proconsul, a man of political stature on Cyprus, then became a believer (Acts 13:4–12). Another proconsul, Gallio, ruled in Achaia during Paul’s sojourn there on his second missionary journey. From information gained from ancient written sources, chiefly the Gallio Inscription, the beginning of his tenure as proconsul in Achaia occurred between AD 50 and 52. When Paul was brought to trial before Gallio, Gallio tossed the case out as a religious squabble (Acts 18:12–16). In another reference to the proconsulate, Paul’s detractors in Ephesus were told by the town secretary to take their complaints against Paul to the proconsuls of that area, lest they be accused of provoking a riot and an illegal assembly (19:38–41).

Jesus himself had previously prophesied that the disciples would testify before kings and governors (Matt. 10:18), something that was fulfilled by Paul as he spoke before Herod, Felix, Festus, and Nero. Additionally, Luke noted Quirinius as the governor of Syria when the first census was taken, around the time of Jesus’ birth (Luke 2:2).

The apostles note that the community of faith is to submit to rulers such as governors as they execute their God-ordained task, since the praise of good and punishment of evil is also the interest of the divine creator and ordainer of such persons (1 Pet. 2:14; cf. Rom. 13:1–5). The community of faith is also to pray for all in authority (including governors, though not mentioned specifically), so that the church will be able to lead a quiet existence in godliness (1 Tim. 2:1–2).

GOYIM A transliterated plural form of the Hebrew word *goy* (“nation, Gentile”), and the name of several places. As a place name, it is also spelled *Goiim*. **(1)** As a plural noun, *goyim* occurs more than four hundred times in the OT, referring predominantly to non-Jewish peoples. Its Greek counterpart is *ethnos*, from which the English word “ethnic” comes. **(2)** The kingdom of King Tidal (Gen. 14:1, 9). In Gen. 14 King Tidal of Goyim joined King Kedorlaomer of Elam and two other kings in an effort to put down a rebellion in the Dead Sea region. When Abram’s nephew Lot and his household were captured, Abram rescued Lot and defeated the four-king coalition. Scholars have tried to identify King Tidal and his kingdom. Most believe that he was a Hittite king leading his own multination coalition, but there are other proposals. **(3)** A municipality in Gilgal appearing in the list of kings Joshua conquered (Josh. 12:23). “Goyim in Gilgal” is replaced by “Goiim in Galilee” in some translations (NRSV, ESV) that follow the LXX for this verse. If this is to be preferred, then this Goyim in Galilee is likely the same as in Isa. 9:1 (see next item). **(4)** A part of the Galilee region called “Galilee of the nations [*goyim*]” (Isa. 9:1; cf. Matt. 4:13–16). Here most translations render *goyim* as “Gentiles” or “nations.” Harosheth Haggoyim, the home of the Canaanite army commander

Sisera (Judg. 4:2) and the site of his confrontation with the Israelite commander Barak, may also be linked to this location.

GOZAN A city-state to which many Israelites were deported by the Assyrians following the defeat of the northern kingdom of Israel and Samaria in 722 BC (2 Kings 17:6; 18:11; 19:12; 1 Chron. 5:26). Gozan probably was located in northwestern Mesopotamia on the Habor River, one of the tributaries of the Euphrates (identified as the "river of Gozan" in 1 Chron. 5:26; today, the Khabur River). The city probably is to be identified with Tel Halaf, an archaeological site on the southern banks of the river. Assyrian documents discovered at Tel Halaf have Hebrew-sounding names on them, perhaps the names of exiles deported from Samaria.

GRACE Grace is the nucleus, the critical core element, of the redemptive and sanctifying work of the triune God detailed throughout the entire canon of Scripture. The variegated expressions of grace are rooted in the person and work of God, so that his graciousness and favor effectively demonstrated in every aspect of the created realm glorify him as they are shared and enjoyed with one another.

The biblical terminology informing an understanding of grace defines it as a gift or a favorable reaction or disposition toward someone. Grace is generosity, thanks, and goodwill between humans and from God to humans. Divine expressions of grace are loving, merciful, and effective. The biblical texts provide a context for a more robust understanding of divine gift. The overall redemptive-historical context of grace is the desire of the eternal God to bring glory to himself through a grace-based relationship with his creation. The Creator-Redeemer gives grace, and the recipients of grace give him glory.

OLD TESTAMENT

Genesis. The grace of the creation narratives is summarized with the repeated use of the term "good" (Gen. 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31). God is good, and he made a good creation with abundant gifts for Adam and Eve to enjoy. When Adam and Eve rebelled against God, he righteously judged and graciously provided for an ongoing relationship. God clothed the naked Adam and Eve (3:21) and announced that the seed of the woman would yield a redeemer (3:15).

Grace in the postcreation narratives (Gen. 4–6) is focused on individuals. God looked with favor on Abel and his offering (4:4), and Noah found grace in God's eyes (6:8). God looked at and had regard for the offering of Abel (Gen. 4). Jacob confessed to Esau that God graced him with descendants and with possessions (33:5).

Grace and graciousness also characterize interaction between individuals. The Jacob and Esau exchange uses grace vocabulary for the gift and the disposition of grace. Jacob invited Esau to accept his gift if he had a favorable disposition toward him (Gen. 33:11). The covenant son Joseph received favorable treatment from the prison warden because of his disposition toward him (39:21).

Exodus. The exodus narrative recounts how the seed of Abraham multiplies, is redeemed, and then is given the law, which defines the relationship of God to Israel. All these events are tied to the gracious promises that God made to Abraham and his descendants (Gen. 12; 15; 17; see also Gen. 21; 27).

The grace associated with the redemption of Israel from Egypt is celebrated in the song of Exod. 15. God's victory over the Egyptian army and his covenant fidelity to the patriarchs are the song's themes. Moses and the Israelites sing because God heard Israel's groaning; he remembered his covenant with Abraham and looked on Israel with concern (2:24). God made Egypt favorably disposed toward Israel (3:21) and parted the sea for Israel to escape (11:3; 12:36). The confession "He is my God . . . my father's God" ties together major sections of redemptive history and affirms the constancy of God's grace throughout the periods (15:2). God's tenacious covenant loyalty (*khesed*) to the nation and his covenant grace (15:13) to Israel cannot be merited.

The giving of the law in Exod. 20 is prefaced by a gracious and powerful presentation of God to the nation in Exod. 19. In the organization and development of Exod. 19–20, grace themes emerge. The grace associated with redemption and covenant life is marked in Exod. 19. God took Israel from Egyptian bondage, redeemed it, and brought the nation to himself (19:4). Through this action, the nation will become a special treasure, a holy nation, a kingdom of priests (19:5–6). In sum, Israel exists because God created, loved, and redeemed it.

Second, the Decalogue of Exod. 20 follows upon the redemption effected by God, defining how Israel will relate to its God. In this sense, law is viewed as a gift that expresses the divine will. When compared and contrasted with ancient Near Eastern laws, Torah reflects the grace of God's character and his genuine concern for the poor, slaves, aliens, and widows. In addition, there is a grace ethic that motivates obedience to the law. The motivational statements in the Decalogue in Exod. 20 relate to the grace of redemption (v. 2), the righteousness of God (vv. 4–7), the creation work of God (vv. 8–11), and long life (v. 12).

Exodus 32–34 is a key passage that links the covenant with grace terminology. This section begins with the story of the golden calf (chap. 32) and ends with the account of Moses' radiant face (34:29–35). The grace terminology is observed in 33:19; 34:6–7. The context of 33:19 involves Moses meeting with God face-to-face. According to 33:12–17, Moses wanted to know who would be left after the purge of 33:5. He acknowledged God's favor in his life and wondered who else might enjoy it. Moses reminded God that the nation was his people (33:13). The grace of this account is God's assurance of his presence with Israel and the unmerited purposeful expression of his grace.

Exodus 34:6–7 employs a series of adjectives in a grace confessional statement. This statement arises out of God's instructions to Moses to cut two new tablets of stone like the first ones (34:1; see also 24:12), which were broken after the incident of the golden calf (32:19). God descended in a cloud, stood with Moses, and proclaimed his name to him (34:5). The rhetoric of the passage emphasizes the speech of God, who defines himself in connection with covenant making. God is merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and distinguished by steadfast love.

Grace and covenant loyalty. These key passages are foundational for understanding the grace and steadfast loyalty of God expressed in the subsequent events of covenant history. Grace and *khesed* are expressed in connection with covenant curse implementation (Num. 14:18; Hos. 4:1; 6:4, 6), in the overall structure of Deuteronomy (5:10; 7:9, 12), in the Davidic covenant (2 Sam. 7:15; 1 Chron. 17:13), in the future hope of Israel (Isa. 54:8), in restoration (Jer. 32:18), in the new covenant (Jer. 31:31), and in exile (Dan. 9:4).

To round out the OT discussion, we may note that covenant siblings were to be gracious and loyal in their ongoing relationships with one another. The book of Ruth illustrates covenant grace in action (2:2, 10, 13). In addition, grace is to be expressed toward the poor (Prov. 28:8), the young and the old (Deut. 28:50), and those who suffer (Job 19:21).

NEW TESTAMENT

The NT focus of grace is developed in keeping with the foundation laid in the OT. The triune God is the center and source of grace: it is the grace of God (Rom. 1:7), the Spirit of grace (Heb. 10:29), and the grace of Christ (John 1:17). The grace of God revealed in the OT is unveiled uniquely in the person and work of Christ.

The Gospel of John. The canonical development of the grace theme between the Testaments is explained in the opening chapter of John's Gospel. Jesus Christ is the Word, who was with God, who is God, and who created the world (John 1:1–3). Christ then became flesh and dwelled among us (1:14). In doing so, he made known the glory of God to us. At this point in the development of chapter 1, John connects Christ (the Word) with the adjectives describing God in Exod. 34:6 to affirm that Christ has the very same virtues that God has. The assertion in John 1:17 that Jesus is full of grace and truth parallels the statement in Exod. 34:6 of God's steadfast love and faithfulness. In Christ we are able to see the glory that Moses hoped to see in God (John 1:18). Christ is both the message and the messenger of grace and truth.

The Epistles and Acts. The NT Epistles develop the "full of grace and truth" statement about Christ (John 1:14) in several ways. The grace and truth found in Christ are given to his servants (1 Cor. 1:4) and are a reason for praise (2 Cor. 8:9; Gal. 1:6, 15; Eph. 4:7; 1 Tim. 1:2; 2 Tim. 2:1). This grace from Christ is effective in bringing about redemption and sustaining a life of godliness. Ephesians 2:8–9 is the classic statement affirming that God's favor is the source of salvation. Paul makes this point by repeating "it is by grace" in 2:5, 8 and clarifying the grace of salvation with the "it is the gift of God" statement in 2:8. This design of salvation celebrates the incomparable riches of Christ's grace and the expression of his kindness to us (cf. Eph. 1:7). Salvation is devoid of human merit, gifts, or favor (2:8). Keeping the law as a means of entrance into a relationship with God and as a means of gaining favor with God is antithetical to the nature of grace. God's favor expressed to people in salvation is an expression of his sovereign will.

Romans 5 declares many of the same themes found in Eph. 2. In Rom. 5 Paul contrasts the action and result of Adam's transgression with the obedience of Christ. Salvation is God's grace and gift brought by the grace of one man, Jesus Christ (v. 15). The gift and grace of Christ brought about justification.

The effective operation of God's grace in salvation is illustrated in the historical narratives of Acts. The men involved in the heated debate of the Jerusalem council (Acts 15:2) affirmed the salvation of the Gentiles by grace after hearing the report of Barnabas and Paul (15:12). Those in Achaia (18:27) are another illustration of an effective operation of grace.

The grace of God that saves is also the grace that sanctifies. Titus 2:11 declares that redemptive grace instructs the redeemed to say no to a life of ungodliness. The instructional nature of grace is highlighted in the development of the Titus 2 context. The teacher in 2:1–10, 15 is Titus, who is to nurture godly people. There is a change of instructors in 2:11, with grace now teaching. Redemptive grace works in harmony with sanctifying grace to provide for godly living.

According to Titus 3:8, those who trust in the generosity of God's grace should devote themselves to doing what is good. By God's grace, justified sinners will find their delight and satisfaction in the promises of God for a life of persevering godliness.

Grace also functions as an enablement for life and ministry. Paul often rehearses this feature of grace in his letters. In Rom. 1:5 Paul testifies about the grace associated with a commission to be an apostle. When reflecting on his role in the church, he affirms that by God's grace he has been able to lay a foundation (1 Cor. 3:10). Paul's testimony in 1 Cor. 15:10 demonstrates the essential role of grace in making him who he is and effectively enabling what he does. Giving is also viewed as an exercise of grace (2 Cor. 8:7) reflecting the grace received by individual believers. This gift of grace for life and ministry is somehow recognizable. Peter, James, and John recognized it in Paul (Gal. 2:9). It was upon the apostles (Acts 4:33), and it was seen in the church of Antioch (11:23).

Given the source and the effective nature of grace, one can understand the appropriateness of appealing to grace in greetings and salutations (Rom. 1:7; 16:20; Gal. 1:3; 6:18).

Common grace. Finally, grace does operate beyond the context of the elect and the work of salvation and sanctification. Theologians define this as "common grace." God's sending rain and giving creatures intellectual and artistic abilities are expressions of common grace.

GRAFT To transplant plant tissue from one plant to another. Paul employs an extended metaphor in Rom. 11:16–24 using the language of arboriculture. The olive tree was used to symbolize Israel in the OT (Jer. 11:16; Hos. 14:5–6) and was widely cultivated in the ancient world for fruit production. In contrast, the "wild olive shoot" (Rom. 11:17) was uncultivated and symbolizes Gentiles (11:13). The normal arboricultural procedure was grafting cultivated branches into an uncultivated plant. Here, however, Paul intentionally reverses this procedure and describes the splicing in of Gentiles like a wild branch on an established plant (Rom. 11:19; cf. Ps. 92:12–13) with the intention of rejuvenating the tree. Although this could conceivably lead to Gentile boasting, Paul's reversal implies that even the branches that are now cut off still belong to the tree (Rom. 11:24).

GRAIN Grain formed the staple of the Israelite diet and was imperative for sustaining life (Gen. 42:2). Families harvested and brought grain to the threshing floor, where it was winnowed. It was eaten parched or raw, in the form of bread or porridge (Lev. 23:14). The most common types were wheat and barley, but others such as emmer and millet are attested (Ezek. 4:9). Grain also formed an integral part of the sacrificial system (Lev. 2; Num. 7). *See also* Heads of Grain.

GRANARY Granaries and silos were used for grain storage. They were constructed above or below ground. During the Late Bronze Age (1550–1200 BC) and the Iron Age (1200–586 BC), they were often found as pits, stone-lined or plastered. Some were smaller, used in private family compounds, while others were for public use and extremely large, such as the one at Megiddo dated to 725 BC. The biblical description places the public granaries in particular buildings called "storehouses" or "barns" (Deut. 28:8; 2 Chron. 32:28). These buildings often were strategically located in specific cities throughout the kingdom designated for storage (2 Chron. 8:4, 6; 17:2).

A wooden model of a granary (Thebes, Egypt, c. 1850 BC)

GRASS The normal foodstuff of livestock in biblical times, grass consisted of various kinds of fast-growing, ground-covering plants (Num. 22:4; 1 Kings 18:5). Several types of grass were native to Israel, including short-lived grasses that sprang up during the rainy season and died down shortly afterward, as well as longer-lasting dune grasses. Dried grass, or hay, does not appear to have been harvested but needed to be removed before the new growth appeared (Prov. 27:25). The various words for “grass” can also indicate other vegetation, some of which was suitable for pasture, and some of which was even used for human consumption (Gen. 3:18; Matt. 13:26).

Because of its shallow roots, grass is quick to grow and quick to wither. This transience provides a suitable metaphor for human mortality (Ps. 90:5–6; Isa. 40:6; 1 Pet. 1:24), in contrast with the permanence of God’s word. It also illustrates the fleeting success of the wicked (Ps. 92:7), in contrast to the security of the righteous. Grass is the quickest indicator of changes in growing conditions, and thus it was also a barometer of God's blessing on his people (Ps. 72:16). Grass is considered the most mundane of plants, of little value, yet even this plant is valued by God, who is said to clothe the grass with the splendor of lilies (Matt. 6:28–30).

GRATE, GRATING "Grate" (KJV) or "grating" (other versions) is the term used for the "bronze network" of the tabernacle's altar of burnt offering. The grating had rings at its corners that housed carrying poles. See Exod. 27:4; 35:16; 38:4–5, 30; 39:39.

GRATITUDE *See* Thanksgiving.

GRAVE The grave refers to the physical place of burial or metaphorically to death (Job 3:22; 5:26; Jer. 20:17; Nah. 1:14) or to devouring destructiveness (Ps. 5:9; Jer. 5:16). The main types of graves used by the Israelites were holes dug in the ground, natural caves, or hewn chambers. The ossuary, or bone box, came into use in Roman times. Christians also made use of catacombs.

Israelite custom, and that of the Semitic peoples generally, was burial. They did not practice embalming, as the Egyptians did, nor cremation, like the Greeks and the Romans. Burial was an important part of respecting the dead, lest the body be desecrated by enemies or animals. And while the body might be washed or perfumed, it was not preserved. After the body decayed, the bones might be relocated. Touching the dead, their bones, or a grave brought seven days of uncleanness (Num. 19:16). It was a disgrace for a body to be eaten by animals (Ps. 79:2).

Due to the speed of decomposition, burial took place as soon as possible, typically within twenty-four hours. A nomadic way of life favored in-ground burial, with the gravesite possibly covered with stones or marked by a monument. Advanced preparation for a site could be made by securing a cave or hewing out an area of soft rock. Greco-Roman influence led to more-elaborate tomb architecture. The outer walls might be whitewashed, which perhaps protected from defilement due to accidental contact. But the contrast between their outer appearance and their contents made such tombs a point of comparison for rebukes from Jesus and Paul (Matt. 23:27; Acts 23:3).

Upon Sarah's death, Abraham purchased the cave of Machpelah for use as a family gravesite (Gen. 23). Jacob, however, buried Rachel in the ground for the sake of immediacy and marked her grave with a pillar that survived into the monarchy (Gen. 35:20; 1 Sam. 10:2).

The embalming of Jacob and Joseph was unique, because of Joseph's prominence in Egypt. Embalming permitted Jacob's body to be transported to the family gravesite (Gen. 50:13). Joseph also gave instructions for his bones to be moved when Israel left Egypt (Gen. 50:25; Exod. 13:19). In Egyptian theology, proper burial and close association with Pharaoh were important for the afterlife. Joseph's instruction about his gravesite represents both his confidence that God would take Israel out of Egypt and his rejection of Egyptian religion.

Burning the bodies of Saul and his sons was unusual. The men of Jabesh Gilead retrieved the decomposing bodies, which the Philistines had placed on display; they burned them, buried the bones, and then fasted during the seven-day period of defilement for handling a dead body. David later had the bones reburied at their family gravesite (2 Sam. 21:14).

Most graves were outside the cities, though the kings of Judah were buried inside the city of David (2 Chron. 16:13).

The tourist site of the "tomb of Absalom" in Jerusalem is from the wrong century, as is true of other famous gravesites.

GRAVEL Loose particles of stones, worn or pounded by water. Gravel is used metaphorically in Prov. 20:17 to refer to the worthlessness of things obtained by fraud. According to Lam. 3:16, gravel is strong enough to break one’s teeth.

GRAVEN IMAGE *See* Idol, Idolatry.

GRAVING TOOL In Exod. 32:4 the KJV renders the Hebrew word *kheret* as “graving tool” (NIV: “tool”; NET: “engraving tool”), referring to an implement that Aaron used in constructing the golden calf, either to shape the idol itself (KJV) or to make a mold to form the molten gold (NRSV).

GRAY *See* Colors.

GREAT A title often given to leaders by virtue of their military, cultural, or administrative accomplishments. Notable biblical examples are Cyrus the Great, Darius the Great, Alexander the Great, and Herod the Great. In Acts 8:9–10, the Samaritan magician Simon Magus is given the title “the Great Power of God” (NIV) or “the power of God that is called Great” (NRSV), thus perhaps identifying him as either God himself, a lesser god, or a powerful representative of God.

GREAT SEA *See* Mediterranean Sea.

GRECIAN This term can refer to Greek influence of various sorts, including language, culture, or religion. In the NIV 1984 the Greek term *hellēnistai* is translated “Grecian Jews” (NIV: “Hellenistic Jews”), referring to Greek-speaking Jewish Christians (Acts 6:1) or Greek-speaking Jews (Acts 9:29). *See also* Hellenists, Hellenistic Jews.

GREECE Ancient Greece was a federation of several loosely affiliated city-states located on the islands of the Aegean Sea, the land south of the Balkan Peninsula, west Asia Minor, and Crete.

THE MINOAN CIVILIZATION (C. 2000–1400 BC)

Archaeological evidence shows that as early as the fourth millennium BC there were already human inhabitants in the Aegean basin. Early migrants from Asia Minor came to settle in Crete (c. 2600 BC) and started its civilization at Knossos and Phaistos. It was called “Minoan,” after the mythical king Minos. The Minoan civilization reached its peak around 1600 BC, when sophisticated palaces, highly developed metal work, and fine pottery were produced. The popular religion was the worship of the Mother Goddess. Not only did the Minoans excel in arts and crafts, but also they were literate and developed a syllable-based (non-Greek) writing system known as Linear A. Minoan culture came to a sudden end around 1400 BC, probably due to internal turmoil, natural disasters, and foreign invasion.

THE MYCENAEAN CIVILIZATION (C. 1450–1200 BC)

The Mycenaeans may have arrived in the Early or Middle Bronze Age, and eventually they took over the Cretan palace settlement in 1450 BC and thus dominated the Aegean region for a time. The discovery of the city of Mycenae gave rise to the name “Mycenaean.” During this period, the Greek mainland enjoyed prosperity. While retaining their own culture, the Mycenaeans were greatly influenced by the Minoans, as indicated by their pottery, luxury items, and religious symbolism. They were great engineers who built remarkable bridges and citadels. One of the finest examples of their handiwork was the gold masks that were buried together with their warriors. They employed a form of Greek language, known as Linear B, evidence of which has been discovered at Knossos, Pylos, Tiryns, Mycenae, Thebes, and elsewhere. Between 1250 and 1150 BC, for unknown reasons, all the Mycenaean palace citadels were destroyed.

THE AGE OF EXPANSION (C. 1200–800 BC)

Already in the thirteenth century, the Greeks were scattered all over the eastern Mediterranean, as far as the coast of southern Palestine. Migration increased around 1200 BC, driven by population growth and the accompanying demand for food and space, which led to colonization in other regions. By the eighth century BC, great cities (e.g., Troy) along the northwest coast of Asia Minor had been taken by the Aeolians. The Dorians dominated the south of the Balkan Peninsula and eventually founded Sparta, while the Ionians settled in the east-central area of the Balkan Peninsula and founded Athens. This period was known as the Dark Age because of a lack of cultural advancements, and the art of writing was largely lost after the Mycenaean civilization was destroyed.

THE ARCHAIC PERIOD (C. 800–500 BC)

Great changes took place in this period. The rise of the city-state (*polis*) not only provided stability, where leagues were formed among individual city-states, but also brought forth the establishment of institutions such as gymnasiums, symposiums, and temples. Trading with the Phoenicians allowed the Greeks to adopt and perfect their alphabet. Military defense was enhanced with huge city walls, and architecturally sophisticated buildings of various kinds were constructed. The first Olympian games were held during this period, in 776 BC. Science and philosophy began to be taught; lyric poetry expressing human emotions was created; and various gods (e.g., Zeus) were honored in their sanctuaries, which were overshadowed by mystery religions in the sixth century BC (e.g., Demeter, Dionysus, and Orpheus).

Greek settlements were established in southern Italy, the northern Aegean, and along the northern coast of Africa. At this time, two important city-states representing two very different cultures came into the picture. Sparta was made up of unwalled villages and ruled by kings, while Athens was a walled city governed first by the aristocrats, later by tyrants. Sparta was famous for its disciplined army, while Athens boasted of its superior naval force. The social structure of Sparta produced a political system that upheld the interest of the states, while Athens developed a legal system that laid the foundation for democracy.

Perhaps most important in this age were the Persian Wars. As the Greeks continued to expand into the southern Balkan Peninsula and to the north of the Black Sea, and to establish colonies in the Mediterranean, they encountered the superpower of that time. By 500 BC, Darius I of Persia controlled the Greek world, except the mainland of the Balkan Peninsula. Although on several occasions the Persians tried to invade mainland Greece, Athens (in alliance with Sparta) was able to successfully defeat them, rendering them powerless for a long period.

THE CLASSICAL PERIOD (C. 500–338 BC)

After the Persian Wars, Greek civilization advanced significantly into what is now known as Classical Greece. Political leadership shifted from Sparta to Athens, which held naval hegemony, dominating the Aegean islands and the coast of Asia Minor. According to the Athenian historian

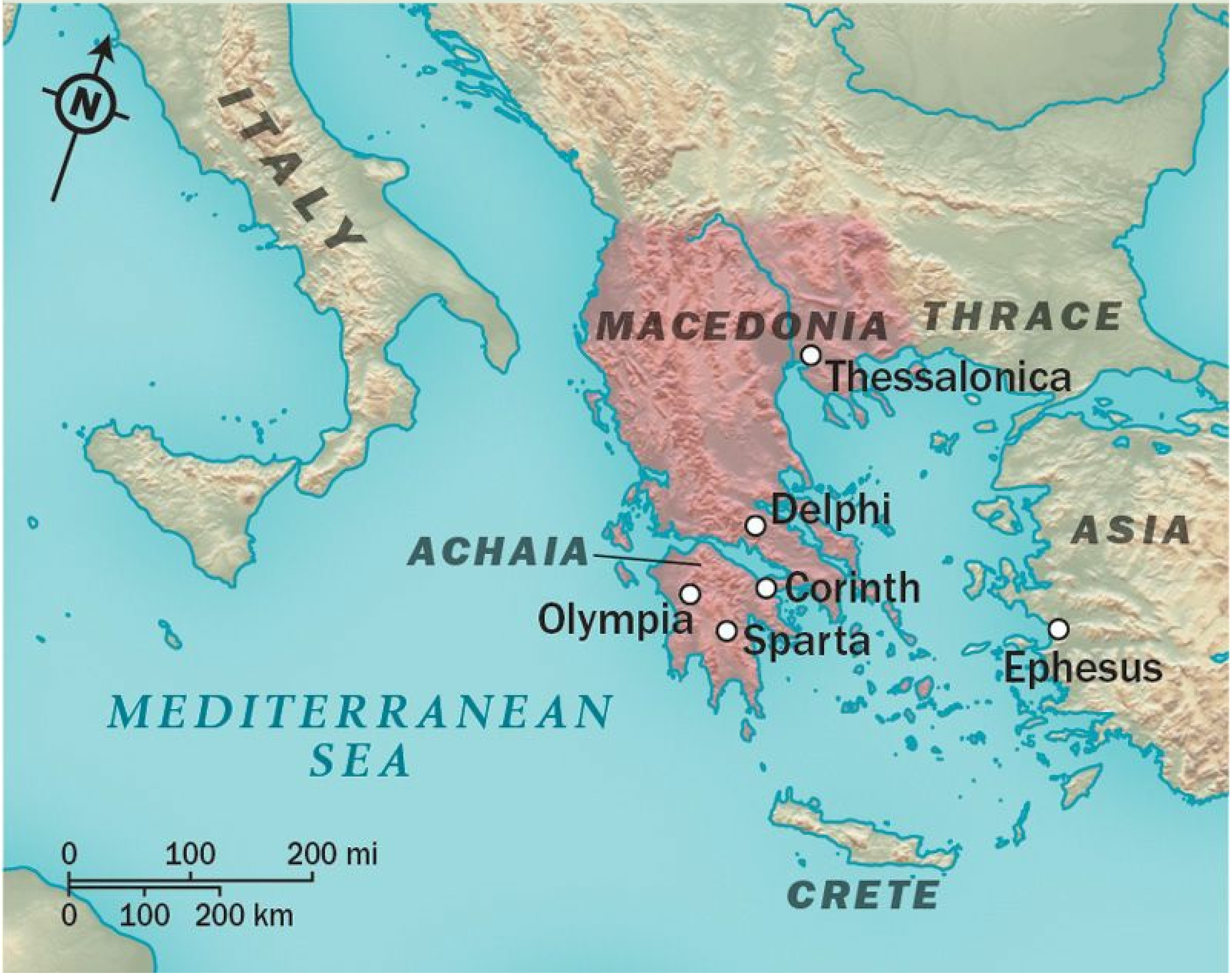
Thucydides, the growth of Athenian power, which posed a threat to neighboring city-states, caused the Peloponnesian War (c. 431–404 BC). With the aid of the Persians, Sparta defeated Athens, tearing down its Long Walls, which guarded the city and its port of Piraeus, and making it an ally.

This period was a golden age for the Greeks, with the flowering of democratic institutions, architecture, literature, and art. Massive buildings were constructed, such as the Parthenon (447–438 BC), the Athena Nike (427–424 BC), the Erectheion (421–407 BC) on the Acropolis, and the Theseion (449 BC) on the Agora. Greek writings of history, poetry, philosophy, comedy, and tragedy flourished. Thanks to the works of great historians such as Herodotus and Thucydides, events that transpired in ancient Greece have been made known to us. The four greatest Greek playwrights, Aeschylus, Aristophanes, Euripides, and Sophocles, were products of this period. Some of the greatest plastic arts were produced during this time, such as the statue of Athena Promachos (458 BC). Great thinkers, such as Socrates and Plato, were born during this period. The end of Classical period Greece, however, was marked with endless civil wars and wars with the outside forces.

THE HELLENISTIC PERIOD (338–146 BC)

Philip II of Macedon defeated the Greeks at the battle of Chaeronea in 338 BC and took control of the entire Balkan Peninsula. His son Alexander the Great further expanded his territory all the way to India. Although his empire crumbled after his death (at the age of thirty-three), Alexander contributed so much to the furtherance of Greek culture and language that this age is known as the Hellenistic period, a time when Greek culture and language became widespread and dominant. Greece became a region of Macedon until 196 BC, when Rome declared it independent.

GREECE DURING THE ROMAN PERIOD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MEDITERRANEAN SEA
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THE ROMAN PERIOD (146 BC–AD 100)

In 148 BC Rome defeated Macedon, making it a Roman province. Two years later, Rome further took control of Greece, and in 46 BC the province of Achaia was created. These two provinces were not only strategic for Rome; they also became the centers of the NT church. The Greek language became the lingua franca and the language of the NT. Paul’s second and third missionary journeys brought him to Macedonia and Achaia (Acts 16:11–20:6). During the Roman period, Greece continued to be a cultural and intellectual center, and Greek influence even went beyond that of early Christianity.

GREEK LANGUAGE The OT was written in Hebrew, with some parts in Aramaic, but the NT comes to us exclusively in Greek. Greek developed from an Indo-European language spoken by the people referred to in the *Iliad* as the Achaeans. It is suggested that primitive Greek speakers migrated from the area north of the Black Sea and began to settle in the Aegean Sea area around 2000 BC. These people groups called themselves “Hellenes.” Later the Romans called them “Greeks.”

CLASSICAL VERSUS KOINE

Classical Greek is commonly dated to the years 900–330 BC. Although three notable dialects of Greek were prevalent (Doric in the west, Aeolic in the north, and Ionic in the east), a dialect of the Ionic family known as Attic, the language of Athens and the great writers Thucydides, Herodotus, Plato, Aristotle, and Demosthenes, eventually gained supremacy. It was this form of Greek that Alexander the Great took with him on his conquests.

Koine (lit., “common”) Greek became the new lingua franca in the years 330 BC–AD 500. Koine Greek, which itself was influenced by the Hebrew and Aramaic of the OT, was closely related to the language of the LXX. This common form of Greek is in part the result of the imposition of Greek upon nonnative Greek speakers. The Koine Greek of the NT reflects the style of writing found in the papyri and ostraca discovered in the Egyptian desert. These writings are more a nonliterary Koine—found in wills, deeds, receipts, and private letters—and not the polished Greek of the literary works. While the literary writers of the day tried to imitate the Attic models by means of an artificial literary tradition, the Greek of the NT has much more in common with the spoken Greek of the average person.

One of the distinctive elements of Koine Greek at the time of the NT was the tendency toward greater simplicity. Although this is a natural occurrence within a language over time, it became accelerated when the Greek language was forced upon nonnative Greek speakers. The Koine Greek of the NT, then, may be characterized by the relative absence of subtle nuances among words, the replacement of complex forms by simpler ones, and the almost complete disappearance of the optative mood. Other changes include the increase in the use of pronouns as subjects, more adverbs, pronunciation and vocabulary differences, and the tendency toward more-explicit expressions.

FEATURES OF BIBLICAL GREEK

Greek is a highly inflected language. Inflection refers to changes that words undergo in accord with their grammatical function in a sentence. With regard to verbs, the changes reflect the word’s aspect (similar to the English tense [see below]), voice (active or passive), and mood (generally speaking, mood refers to the author’s attitude toward the kind of reality behind the statement: whether the action actually took place or whether it is merely a potentiality). For nouns and adjectives, these changes reflect the word’s gender (masculine, feminine, or neuter [similar to the English pronouns “he,” “she,” “it”]), number (singular or plural), and case (nominative, genitive, dative, and accusative [technically, a fifth but rarely used case is the vocative]). It cannot be overstated that grammar is always secondary to context. Thus, one should not seek to find too much meaning in the form of a word, or the meaning of a word, without contextual warrant.

Verbs: tense, aspect, and mood. Whereas English verbs employ tense (past, present, future, past perfect, etc.), which strongly links the action of the verb to a time, Greek verbs reflect a verbal aspect. Aspect primarily refers to the way the action of the verb is viewed by the author. Consequently, the time (past, present, future, etc.) is secondary at best. This distinction is especially important for verbs that are not in the indicative mood (the mood utilized by an author to speak in terms of reality rather than potentiality). In the indicative mood, the aspect generally reflects the time of the event.

For years, one of the most debated features of biblical Greek was the verb in the aorist tense (aspect). It often was suggested that the aorist reflects a onetime event that occurred in the past. Modern scholarship is nearly unanimous today that the aorist serves instead as the default aspect. That is, authors used the aorist when not wishing to make any specific pronouncement regarding the action of the verb. The aorist functions as the simple or undefined aspect. Therefore, in biblical Greek the statement "I *studied* Greek," if in the aorist, would have been the author's way of simply stating that this event occurred. The use of the aorist alone would not have made any assertion about the duration of the action (I studied for ten minutes, months, or years) or as to whether this act was completed (I know Greek well). Thus, John 11:35 says, "Jesus *wept*." The use of the aorist here does not tell us how long he wept. Some have argued that since the aorist is used in reference to Christ's death (Rom. 5:6), it means that Jesus died once and for all. Although this conviction is true, its truth derives not from the use of the aorist, but rather from the context of Scripture.

Two other aspects occur in the Greek NT. The imperfective aspect regards an action as a process or as habitual. The perfective aspect views the action as completed with ensuing results (I *have studied* Greek [and still remember it]).

Biblical Greek employs two moods. The mood of a Greek verb indicates whether the author viewed the action as one that actually occurred or one that was merely potential. Greek verbs in the indicative mood tend to suggest that the author viewed the action as something that either has happened, is happening, or will happen. It is very important to note that in the Greek NT verbs consistently have temporal relations only in the indicative mood. The potential mood in biblical Greek displays a variety of potentialities. The subjunctive mood often expresses a contingency, a hope, or a desire for the event to occur. The optative mood, which was prominent in Classical Greek but had fallen almost completely out of use by the time of the NT, expresses a possibility or a wish. The imperative mood is the mood for a command or prohibition.

Nouns and adjectives: case. Nouns and adjectives are inflected by means of various cases, depending on the function of the noun or the adjective in the sentence.

The nominative case is used primarily for the subject of a Greek sentence. In the absence of a noun or noun phrase in the nominative case, the subject of the Greek sentence is found in the pronominal suffix of the verb. Pronouns in the nominative, though much more common in biblical Greek than in Classical Greek, are not grammatically necessary, and thus they often express a degree of accent or stress (cf. the use of "you" and "I" in the Greek text of John 7:8, 28, 34, 36, 47; 8:14, 15, 22, 23, 31, 38, 41, 44, 46, 47, 49, 54).

The genitive case is the most varied in its use. Generally speaking, it is the case of possession, source, or separation. Nouns and adjectives in the genitive case are often translated into English by adding the preposition "of." The ambiguity inherent in the genitive case is evidenced even in English. Note, for example, Rev. 1:1: "The revelation of [NIV: "from"] Jesus Christ" (in Greek, "Jesus Christ" in the genitive case). Does this mean that the revelation is *from* Jesus Christ or *about* Jesus Christ?

The dative case is used to indicate location, instrumentality, accompaniment, or reception, as well as for the indirect object of the verb. Nouns and adjectives in the dative case are often translated into English by adding the preposition "to" or "for."

The accusative case serves as the primary case for the direct object of the verb. This case generally connotes the ideas of extension or limitation of an act or movement.

A fifth case, less common than the others, is the vocative. The vocative is reserved for the purpose of direct address. It often serves as a discourse marker, as in “My dear children” in 1 John 2:1, 12, 28; 3:7, 18; 4:4; 5:21.

Word order. One of the important by-products of the inflections found in biblical Greek is the measure of freedom afforded to authors in regard to word order (the order of words in a sentence is referred to as syntax). This relative freedom allows authors to emphasize words or phrases by means of their location in the sentence.

GREEN The color primarily associated with vegetation (Gen. 1:30; 9:3; Exod. 10:15), particularly the new growth after rain (2 Kings 19:26; Isa. 37:27; Mark 6:39). *See also* Colors.

GREETING

GREETING CUSTOMS IN BIBLICAL TIMES

We know of greeting customs in biblical times from narrations of greetings and from instructions on greeting.

In biblical Hebrew, the phrase usually translated “to greet” is literally “to inquire of someone’s well-being [*shalom*]” (e.g., Exod. 18:7; 2 Sam. 20:9 [cf. the English greeting “How are you?”]). In some instances, we see people “blessing” one another as a form of greeting: “Just as he finished making the offering, Samuel arrived, and Saul went out to greet [lit., ‘bless’] him” (1 Sam. 13:10). Ruth 2:4 provides an example of the words that passed between individuals in such a greeting: “Just then Boaz arrived from Bethlehem and greeted the harvesters, ‘The LORD be with you!’ ‘The LORD bless you!’ they answered.” The formula had changed little by the first century AD, when Gabriel said to Mary, “Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you” (Luke 1:28). Luke reports that “Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be” (1:29), though the source of her consternation is unclear, since the angel’s greeting closely approximates that of Boaz. Perhaps this is the very point: the angel was speaking in a distinctively “biblical-sounding” vernacular, which raised the concerns of the young, first-century AD woman.

Paul often instructs the recipients of his letters to greet one another with a “holy kiss” (Rom. 16:16; 1 Cor. 16:20; 2 Cor. 13:12; 1 Thess. 5:26; see also 1 Pet. 5:14). Tragically, a kiss of greeting was the signal by which Judas Iscariot betrayed Jesus (Matt. 26:48–49). Other examples of greeting with a kiss include Gen. 29:11, 13; 33:4; 45:15; Exod. 4:27; 18:7; 2 Sam. 20:9; Prov. 7:13. In other cases, kisses were exchanged as a farewell greeting (Gen. 31:28, 55; 48:10; 50:1; Ruth 1:9, 14; 1 Sam. 20:41; 2 Sam. 19:39; 1 Kings 19:20; Acts 20:37). Jesus taught his disciples to be generous with their greetings; after all, even pagans will greet their brothers and sisters, but a Christian must extend greetings even beyond the narrow circle of kinship (Matt. 5:47). When entering a home, Jesus taught, his disciples were to greet the inhabitants (Matt. 10:12). At other times, however, Jesus told his disciples to forgo greetings along the road in the interest of arriving quickly at their destination (Luke 10:4).

GREETING AND SOCIAL RANK

In the examples of Ruth 2:4 and Luke 1:28 above, the greeting is initiated by the person of higher status. Boaz was a wealthy landowner greeting fieldworkers, and Gabriel was an important angel greeting a young, unmarried woman. An analogy may be drawn to another social norm, the notion that it was appropriate for the greater person to bless the lesser: “Without doubt the lesser is blessed by the greater” (Heb. 7:7). Elsewhere in the Bible, the opposite practice is referred to, when Jesus criticizes the teachers of the law and the Pharisees because, among other honors, “they love to be greeted with respect in the marketplace and to be called ‘Rabbi’ by others” (Matt. 23:7). When Paul went to Rome, believers from that city traveled about forty miles to meet and greet him as he approached the city (Acts 28:15), thus according to him the honors due a traveling dignitary in antiquity (cf. Mark 9:15; 1 Thess. 4:17).

EPISTOLARY GREETINGS

Like modern letters, ancient correspondence began with a salutation (Acts 15:23; 23:26; James 1:1) (*see* Salutation). In particular, Paul used the greeting at the beginning of his epistles as an occasion for theological elaboration in addition to its use as the identification of the writer and the recipients of the letter. To the end of his letters, Paul often appended individually directed greetings, as well as greetings in the name of friends with whom he sent the letter (Rom. 16:3–16; 1 Cor. 16:19–21; 2 Cor. 13:12–13; Phil. 4:22–23; Col. 4:10–15; 2 Tim. 4:19–21; Titus 3:15; Philem. 1:23; see also Heb. 13:24; 1 Pet. 5:13; 2 John 13; 3 John 14).

GREYHOUND In Prov. 30:31 the KJV translates the Hebrew phrase *zarzir motnayim* (lit., “that which is girded in the loins,” thus “narrow-waisted”) as “greyhound,” but most modern versions prefer “strutting rooster” (as in the Targum).

GRIDDLE One of the cooking implements used for preparing grain offerings to God (Lev. 2:5 [KJV: “pan”]). It was a flat frying surface, distinct from the “pan” (Lev. 2:7 [KJV: “fryingpan”]). See also Lev. 6:21; 7:9.

GRIEF AND MOURNING Grief is great sadness or sorrow or the circumstances that produce such; mourning refers to expressions of grief. Grief and mourning are often thought of in conjunction with death, but they may occur with regard to any personal or national tragedy (2 Sam. 13:19), the impending prospect of tragedy (Esther 4:3; Isa. 37:1), or repentance prompted by prophetic word of tragedy, sorrow over sin, or both.

The expressions of mourning in the Bible include weeping (Gen. 23:2), wailing (Esther 4:3; Isa. 15:3; Mark 5:38), tearing clothes and wearing sackcloth (Gen. 37:34; 2 Sam. 3:31), lying on the ground (2 Sam. 13:31), putting dust and ashes on the head or sitting on dust and ashes (Ezek. 27:30), fasting (2 Sam. 3:35; 12:16), singing songs of lament (2 Sam. 1:17–27; 3:32–35), pulling hair out of one’s beard (Ezra 9:3), cutting the hair (Jer. 7:29), uncovering the head (Lev. 10:6), removing sandals (Ezek. 24:17, 23), covering the lips or mouth (Ezek. 24:17, 22; Mic. 3:7), and employing professional mourners (Jer. 9:17; Matt. 9:23; Mark 5:38). Some pagan mourning practices were prohibited, such as slashing the body, cutting patterns into the body (tattooing?), and the somewhat obscure act of making the forehead bald (Lev. 19:28; Deut. 14:1; cf. 1 Kings 18:28).

Thus, grief and mourning were anything but stoic and brief. Grief was expressed both physically and vocally, often loudly, with expressions ranging from inarticulate groaning to poetic compositions in song. Although women may have been prominent among professional mourners, expressing grief was not considered unmasculine. Several times David was a leader in expressing grief. That the expression of grief should be brief, relatively dispassionate, and primarily characteristic of women was a Greek development that entered the church through people such as Augustine, who, for example, felt grieved that he had very briefly grieved the loss of his mother.

Paul’s admonition that believers should not grieve as do those who have no hope (1 Thess. 4:13) should not be construed as a dictum that it is wrong to grieve. The thought of the resurrection is a comfort in, not a replacement for, grief. Even Jesus wept at the death of Lazarus, knowing full well that he would soon resurrect him (John 11:25, 35, 40). Further, saints who have died and gone to heaven lament (Rev. 6:10). Grief is restricted for active-duty priests and once for Ezekiel, but these are clearly special circumstances and illustrate the normalcy of giving expression to grief. Ezekiel was to moan with a groaning for the dead (often misread as groaning silently) when his wife died, but he was not to engage in any mourning rites (Ezek. 24:15–27). This illustrated to Judah the circumstances that they would face, without opportunity to mourn properly for their dead. Ezekiel 8:14 indicts the women of Jerusalem for “mourning for Tammuz,” a pagan ritual involving the cycle of life, death, and rebirth of the Babylonian god Dumuzi.

Songs of lament are common in the OT. David composed a song of lament honoring the deaths of Saul and Jonathan (2 Sam. 1:17–27). After Joab’s unauthorized killing of Abner, David also sang a lament for Abner and required Joab to participate in mourning rituals (3:31–37). David also mourned his own sons: the unnamed son of Bathsheba (12:16–18), Amnon (13:30–33), and Absalom (18:33–19:4). In the case of Bathsheba’s son, David mourned in advance of the boy’s death, which had been prophetically proclaimed through Nathan. As the consequences of his sins continued, he progressively became undone in the mourning of his other sons. Also, funeral songs are used as the form of some prophetic material (Ezek. 19:1–14; 26:17–18; 27:2–9, 25–36; cf. Jer. 22:18; Amos 5:16). Not all laments are funeral songs per se. Compare also the book of Lamentations and the psalms of lament, also known as complaint psalms.

Expressions of grief and mourning were called for as part of repentance, combining both fear of punishment and depth of sorrow over sin (2 Chron. 34:19; Isa. 15:3; Joel 1:13).

GRISLED In Gen. 31:10, 12; Zech. 6:3, 6 the KJV translates the Hebrew term *barod* as “grisled,” referring to animals that are “spotted” or “dappled” (NIV).

GROVE In some texts the KJV, following the LXX and the Vulgate, mistranslates the Hebrew word *’asherah* as “grove” (Deut. 16:21; Judg. 6:25–26; 1 Kings 16:33). Behind the word is an outlawed tree or wooden cult symbol of the Canaanite goddess Asherah.

GUARANTEE *See* Deposit; Pledge.

GUARD God puts Adam in the garden of Eden to literally “guard” it (Heb. *shamar*, Gen. 2:15; NIV “take care of it”), but on account of sin he must be removed. God places cherubim to guard against intruders (cf. 1 Sam. 26:15; Song 5:7; Isa. 21:11), to guard the way to the tree of life (Gen. 3:24). God “preserves” the faithful (Ps. 31:23) and “guards” their lives (Prov. 24:12) from trouble (Ps. 32:7), from violent people (Ps. 140:1, 4), and from the enemy’s plan (Ps. 64:1). The noun *mishmeret* derives from *shamar* and is found in both military (2 Sam. 20:3; Neh. 7:3; Isa. 21:8) and cultic (Num. 8:26; 1 Chron. 9:27; Ezek. 40:46) contexts.

Relief showing a procession of mourners (tomb of Merymery, Saqqara, c. 1391–1353 BC)

Several verbs are used in the NT to render the sense “to guard.” Most pertinent is *phylassō*, which is used of “guarding” prisoners (Luke 8:29; Acts 12:4; 28:16) and personal property (Luke 2:8; 11:21; Acts 22:20). Paul exhorts Timothy to guard the deposit of faith entrusted to him (1 Tim. 6:20; 2 Tim. 1:12), and people are encouraged to guard themselves against covetousness (Luke 12:15), idols (1 John 5:21), and lawlessness (2 Pet. 3:17). God also serves as a guard who safely delivers his people (John 17:12; 2 Pet. 2:5) and promises to protect them from the evil one (2 Thess. 3:3).

GUARDIAN *See* Custodian.

GUARDIAN-REDEEMER *See* Kinsman; Redemption, Redeemer.

GUDGODAH Deuteronomy 10:7 lists Gudgodah among the encampments of the Israelites during their wilderness journey. This listing corresponds to Num. 33:32, which suggests that Hor Haggidgad is an alternate appellation. The site cannot be identified, although some have conjectured a linguistic connection to Wady Gudaghid, west of Petra.

GUEST One who receives hospitality at another's home or table. Hospitality was a matter of honor in ancient times. It was shameful to mistreat a guest (Judg. 19:23). A guest received special portions at the table (1 Sam. 9:22–24; Esther 1:3), although the guest of a Levitical priest was not allowed to eat the sacred offering (Lev. 22:10). Job's misfortunes alienated him from his guests (Job 19:15), but the guests of the metaphorical Woman Folly fared worse (Prov. 9:18).

Guests abound in Jesus' parables about banquets and weddings (Matt. 22:10–11; Mark 2:19; Luke 14:16; 19:7). Jesus himself was often a guest (Luke 7:49; 14:7; 22:11; John 2:10). King Herod's misguided concern for his dinner guests caused the death of John the Baptist (Matt. 14:9; Mark 6:22, 26).

GUEST ROOM A room for guests to lodge or dine in. The same Greek word, *katalyma*, is used for the inn (probably actually a guest room in a private residence) that was unavailable for Mary to give birth to Jesus (Luke 2:7) and for the upper room made available for the final Passover meal of Jesus with his disciples (Mark 14:14; Luke 22:11). Paul requests that Philemon prepare him a guest room (Philem. 22).

GUILE Deceitful cunning, usually employed in taking advantage of others through scheming and underhanded methods (e.g., Exod. 21:14; Pss. 32:2; 34:13; 55:21; 2 Cor. 12:16 KJV; 2 Macc. 12:24; 1 Pet. 2:1 NRSV). Although Nathaniel is not initially impressed with Jesus' messianic credentials, Jesus nevertheless praises him for his straightforwardness: "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile" (John 1:47 KJV [NIV, NRSV: "no deceit"]). The reference to an Israelite may be a pun on the meaning of Jacob's name, which means "deceiver" (see Gen. 25:26; 27:35–36; cf. Gen. 28:12 with John 1:51). Judas Iscariot is an unfortunate contrast (John 12:6). God cannot lie (Titus 1:2), and therefore his word is without guile or "pure" (cf. 1 Pet. 2:1–2; 3:10).

GUILT Although the concepts of sin and guilt often overlap, a basic distinction between the two can be established. In the biblical sense, sin is basically violation of divine stipulations (what a person does or does not do), whereas guilt is the resulting state, or one's "legal" status (what that person has become as a result). In essence, one commits sin and becomes guilty (Hab. 1:11).

The state of being guilty is further distinguished from the punishment that it draws, because one can be pronounced guilty and still be exempted from punishment. Nor should guilt be mistaken for the emotional response of the culprits toward themselves and their victims. No matter how sincere it may be, remorse does not eliminate the guilt.

In the biblical sense, guilt is something objective and separate from the will or intention of the culprit. One can pay back debt and render the obligation fulfilled. One cannot, however, cancel one's own guilt. In the sacrificial system of the OT, the offender must perform restitution to the victim and also give a guilt offering to God. This reflects the notion that in committing sinful acts in violation of God's laws, the culprit has offended not only the victim but also God. This is what David means in Ps. 51:3–4 (with his sin in full display before God, David realizes that he has sinned against God and God alone).

This is why those who scoff at the guilt offering are fools (Prov. 14:9). By doing this, they insult God's being and character. Such a biblical view of guilt implies that forgiveness and restoration should come from without, from source(s) other than the culprit and victim. The Bible affirms that the only one capable of offsetting the cost of human sin is the sinless Christ, "the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). His life was laid on the cross and offered as the acceptable sacrifice for the totality of guilt, and as a result it freed those who believe in him from the obligation of the guilt.

GUILT OFFERING *See* Sacrifice and Offering.

GULF A large inlet of an ocean similar to a bay but generally longer and more enclosed by land. The term appears only once in the NIV, with reference to the "gulf of the Egyptian Sea" (Isa. 11:15). The term is also used in the KJV in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus for the "chasm" (NIV; NRSV) that separates the rich man's place of torment from Lazarus's place of bliss at Abraham's side (Luke 16:26).

GULL A seabird listed as one of the unclean birds (Lev. 11:16; Deut. 14:15; KJV: "cuckow").

GUM, GUM RESIN Gum is a sticky, elastic substance formed from the breakdown of certain elements in the cell wall of plants. To harvest it, the bark of certain trees was cut and removed, which allowed the gum to exude and be collected. As can be seen from the contents of the Ishmaelite caravan (Gen. 37:25 NASB, ESV; NIV: "spices"), gum was an important trade commodity in the ancient Near East. Gum is similar to resin, and together they create a type of gum resin, of which frankincense is the most prominent biblical example. Referred to in the KJV and several other versions as "stacte," gum resin (Heb. *natap*) was used in the priestly perfume (Exod. 30:34). This perfume symbolized the presence of God in the sanctuary, and its abuse was punishable by ostracism (Exod. 30:38).

GUN CONTROL The effort to limit the private citizen's access to firearms, with special reference to handguns and assault rifles. The Second Amendment of the U.S. Constitution forbids the federal government from disarming its citizens entirely, because light-infantry weapons are needed in defense of free states. Nevertheless, the public policy debate continues, given the periodic use of firearms against innocent people, especially in schools, churches, and public facilities. Advocates of gun control argue that criminalizing the sale and possession of deadly weapons would reduce violent crime. Advocates of gun owners' rights make the opposite claim: violent criminals would offend less often if ordinary people were allowed to carry concealed weapons for self-defense. The Bible does not forbid deadly self-defense in all cases, particularly where one's very life may be threatened (Exod. 22:2–3), but deadly force, using any sort of weapon, is the option of last resort.

GUNI **(1)** The son of Naphtali (Gen. 46:24; 1 Chron. 7:13) and eponymous ancestor of the Gunites (Num. 26:48). **(2)** The grandfather of Ahi, a chief of Gad (1 Chron. 5:15).

GUNITES A clan in the tribe of Naphtali mentioned during the second census in the wilderness (Num. 26:48).

GUR The ascent located near Ibleam where King Jehu pursued and fatally wounded King Ahaziah (2 Kings 9:27). It has been suggested Gur should be identified with Khirbet en-Najjar, locating it on the east side of Wadi Belameh.

GUR BAAL The village where Uzziah, king of Judah, received assistance from God in his campaign against the Philistines and the Arabs (2 Chron. 26:7). The Philistines located to the west and the Arabs to the south of Israel were likely threatening the borders of Uzziah's kingdom. Gur Baal possibly is located among Judah's southern tribes on the border between Judah and Philistia, but others have suggested an alternative location to the east, in the region of Edom.

GUTTER A water channel incorporated into the architecture of a building or town. Archaeologists have uncovered extensive and elaborate water systems in several sites of the biblical era. In 2 Sam. 5:8 David proposes the invasion of Jebusite Jerusalem through its water channels.

GYMNASIUM In the ancient world, a place for physical training and Greek education. The English word "gymnasium" comes from the Greek word *gymnos*, meaning "naked," referring to the fact that Greeks exercised in the nude. As a foundational institution of the Greek city and inseparable from the Greek way of life, the gymnasium was a sign of Hellenism within Israel and a point of conflict with those who viewed Hellenism as a violation of the law. In 175 BC Jason the high priest asked Antiochus IV to build a gymnasium (1 Macc. 1:14; 2 Macc. 4:9). Many Jews, including priests, embraced Hellenism and participated in the gymnasium (2 Macc. 4:14). Some even underwent surgery to remove signs of their circumcision (1 Macc. 1:15). This cultural clash contributed to the Maccabean revolt. By the first century AD, the activities of the gymnasia were well known in Jewish culture. Philo of Alexandria (20 BC–AD 50), a Jewish philosopher and commentator, spoke positively of the training received in a gymnasium (*Dreams* 69). Paul used the activities of the gymnasium as metaphors for Christian living: running (1 Cor. 9:24–27), boxing (1 Cor. 9:26), and wrestling (Eph. 6:12). In 1 Tim. 4:8 Paul uses the Greek term *gymnasia* to mean "physical training" and acknowledges its value.

Within the gymnasium complex athletes trained in multiple sports, including running, boxing, wrestling, and javelin throwing. The gymnasium combined physical training with education in literature, philosophy, rhetoric, and music. Though open to all male citizens, it was primarily used by boys between the ages of fifteen and twenty.

The gymnasium complex contained a running track and a *palaistra*, a central courtyard surrounded by colonnades with rooms for dressing, oiling, and powdering. The complex also included baths and classrooms. A library was usually nearby or a part of the complex.

The *gymnasiarch*, who was elected to a one-year term, supervised all aspects of training and education and provided for the needs and supplies of the gymnasium. He also employed professional trainers and teachers.

Ruins of the ancient gymnasium at Sardis

H

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HAAHASHTARI A name or term that appears in the list of Judah's descendants (1 Chron. 4:1–23). A descendant named "Ashhur" (1 Chron. 4:5) had two wives, including Naarah. The text says that Ashhur and Naarah had three sons, Ahuzzam, Hepher, and Temeni, whose names are followed by "Haahashtari," referring either to a fourth son or a family line, the Ahashtarites (Ashurites), a description of the preceding names (1 Chron. 4:6).

HABAIAH *See* Hobaiah.

HABAKKUK Little biographical information is given regarding Habakkuk, but much is communicated about him in the short book that bears his name. His name comes from a Hebrew word meaning "to embrace." Nothing is said of his lineage or historical context, though twice he identifies himself as a prophet (Hab. 1:1; 3:1). His use of poetry, visions, woe oracles, and music and his description of the temple make his identification as a temple prophet appealing.

Habakkuk describes two roles that he fulfills in his calling from God. First, as a prophet he brings the concerns of the people to God. Second, as a watchman he receives and interprets the response of God to the people. Thus, he serves the dual roles of interceding on behalf of the people to God and mediating the messages from God to the people.

The primary textual clue to the historical context in which the prophet ministers is in Hab. 1:6, in which the Babylonians are depicted as ruthless destroyers of God's people and their territory. Accordingly, the prophet best seems to fit sometime in the latter years of the seventh century BC. Attempts to identify Habakkuk with others in Scripture, such as the son of the Shunammite woman (2 Kings 4:16) or the watchman in Isa. 21:6, are speculative and do not fit the context of Hab. 1:5–6.

Several apocryphal traditions have arisen concerning Habakkuk. In the Old Greek version of the apocryphal book Bel and the Dragon, he is described as "the son of Jesus" from the tribe of Levi and a contemporary of the prophet Daniel (vv. 1–2). Further traditions regarding Habakkuk appear in the Pseudepigrapha, midrashim, and other extrabiblical works.

The book of Habakkuk reveals a man of intense concern, thoughtful reflection, profound conviction, careful obedience, and godly character. He brings two primary concerns to God. First, the prophet bemoans God's tolerance of the sin of his people. Second, once assured of God's judgment, the prophet questions God's use of a more ungodly nation to judge Israel's sin. God patiently answers his servant's concerns, and Habakkuk promises to wait for the fulfillment of God's plan and to deliver it clearly while faithfully maintaining his duty.

HABAKKUK, BOOK OF Habakkuk prophesied, as did Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Zephaniah, during the turbulent period that saw the rise of the Babylonians and the ultimate destruction of Jerusalem. Like them, he was a warning sign that judgment was coming. On the other hand, he is unlike these other prophets in that his initial burning concern is how God is executing judgment: by means of a people seemingly more wicked than those being punished.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The superscription (1:1) names Habakkuk (formed from a verb meaning “to embrace”) as the author of the book, and the superscription at the beginning of the prayer in 3:1 continues that attestation. However, the book gives us no more information about him, not even his father’s name or the name of his hometown. Some commentators have detected liturgical elements in his prophecy and have concluded that Habakkuk was a prophet connected to the temple, but the argument is neither compelling nor particularly important to the interpretation of the book.

The date of the prophecy is clearer: it was during the time when God was “raising up the Babylonians” (1:6), placing the delivery of the oracles, if not the writing itself, in the period between 626 and 587 BC. In 626 BC Babylon began its power surge when Nabopolassar, a Chaldean chieftain, rebelled against Assyria. Success was not immediate. It was not until 612 BC that the Babylonians, with the help of the Medes, took Nineveh the capital. Then in 609 BC Pharaoh Necho II traveled up the coast from Egypt to Syria to support the remnants of the Assyrians, who had settled under a new king, Ashur-uballit II. On his way through Palestine, he was attacked by Josiah king of Judah, but the latter was killed in his attempt to stop the Egyptians from bolstering Assyria. The Egyptians, though, were unsuccessful in their attempt to save the Assyrians and create a buffer between Babylon and their interests in the south, and Necho himself suffered defeat at the Battle of Carchemish in 605/604 BC. Soon, Babylon’s rise brought it to the doorstep of Judah (Dan. 1:1–2), leading eventually to a two-pronged deportation of leading citizens (598 and 587/586 BC), the second of which was devastating in its destruction of the city of Jerusalem. It was in this time period that the book of Habakkuk was written, though the specific events are not named.

STRUCTURE AND OUTLINE

Habakkuk is a prophet whose writings communicate God’s word about the future. In this, Habakkuk is a typical prophet. The structure of this short book may be seen in the following outline:

I. Superscription (1:1)

II. God Responds to the Prophet’s Lament about the Violence of the Wicked (1:2–11)

III. God Responds to the Prophet’s Lament about God using the Babylonians (1:12–2:5)

IV. Woe Oracles against the Oppressors (2:6–20)

V. Poem of the Divine Warrior (3:1–19)

THEOLOGICAL MESSAGE

The book begins with the prophet’s laments and God’s responses. The laments of the prophet express questions about the justice of God. How can God allow internal (1:2–4) and external (the Babylonians; 1:12–17) wickedness to succeed? God responds that the wicked eventually will receive what is due them, but he is going to use the Babylonians to bring judgment on his people. In the light of these truths, God tells Habakkuk (and through him all readers) that “the righteous will live by his faith” (2:4 NASB [cf. Gen. 15:6]), just as Abraham did. God eventually will judge those whom he uses to bring punishment on his people (2:6–20). The final section (chap. 3) is a magnificent, and perhaps ancient, poetic portrait of God the warrior that Habakkuk includes in his work. In this way, the prophet records his own acceptance of God’s ways in the world.

NEW TESTAMENT CONNECTIONS

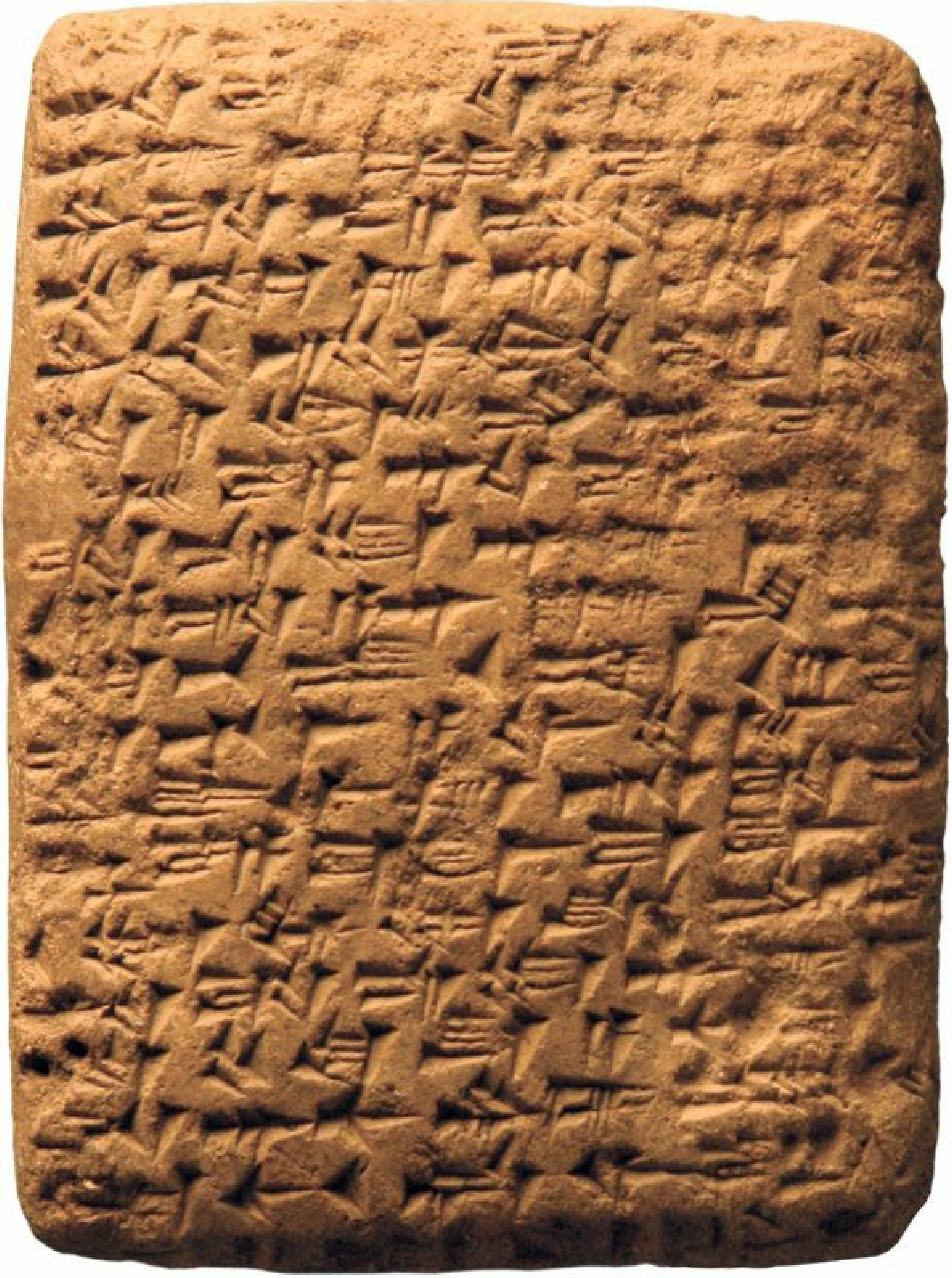
Like Habakkuk, God’s faithful people today often wonder why it seems as though the wicked and the oppressors come out on top. God, through Habakkuk, informs the reader that this is not the true and ultimate state of things. The wicked surely will be judged. For now, the people of God must “live by faith” (see Rom. 1:17; Gal. 3:11, citing Hab. 2:4).

HABAZZINIAH The grandfather of Jaazaniah, a member of the religious sect of the Rekabites mentioned in Jer. 35:3. The name means “Yahweh has made me joyful,” expressing the joy of the mother at the birth of her son.

HABERGEON A Middle English term for a breastplate, body armor, or a coat of mail. The KJV uses the term five times to translate three different Hebrew words. In 2 Chron. 26:14; Neh. 4:16 the Hebrew term *shiryon* is variously translated in modern versions as “breastplates,” “body armor,” “armor,” “coats of armor,” and “coats of mail.” The second term, *shiryah*, in Job 41:26 is recognized today not as body armor but as an offensive weapon, a “javelin” (NIV, NLT, NASB, RSV, NRSV), “lance” (JPS), “arrow” (HCSB), or “dart” (NET). The meaning of the third term, *takhra’*, in Exod. 28:32; 39:23 is debated, and it may refer to a collar of some kind (NIV: “collar”; NLT: “woven collar”), an “opening in a garment” (RSV; ESV), or a “coat of mail” (NASB; NRSV).

HABIRU A term referring to various people of diverse ethnic background, appearing over a widespread area from the twenty-first to the twelfth centuries BC. The preferred spelling in contemporary scholarship is “Apiru.” They were frequently mentioned in correspondence, known as the Amarna letters, between Egypt and Canaan in the fourteenth century BC, one of the possible periods when the Hebrews entered the land of Canaan. Habiru is not to be equated with “Hebrew,” as some scholars formerly thought.

The Habiru are mentioned in texts from a wide range of societies and locations, including Egypt, Canaan, Ugarit (Phoenicia), the Hittites (in modern Turkey), Mari and Alalakh (Syria), Nuzi (to the north of Assyria), and Babylonia. The names of people identified as Habiru in the texts are of various ethnic origins, including East Semitic (the Babylonian and Assyrian branch of Semitic), West Semitic (the branch of Semitic including Hebrew, Aramaic, and related groups west of the Euphrates), Hurrian (a people north of Assyria), and other non-Semitic origins. The people referred to as Habiru appear to include soldiers and mercenaries, migrant or menial workers, traveling bands who sometimes are marauders, and settled peoples. Descriptions of the Habiru usually are negative.



An Amarna letter in which Yapahu, king of Gezer, begs the pharaoh for help in defending his city against raids by the Habiru

Since the term is not ethnic or geographic, it probably refers to displaced people who were considered foreigners and/or outsiders of lower class. They seem typically to have stayed together in groups and to take what work they could, including acting as mercenaries. They may have settled in some locations and become considered part of the local society, or they may have raided settled peoples for their own sustenance.

The meaning of the name “Habiru” is uncertain. Because the cuneiform (Babylonian) system of writing did not distinguish *b* from *p*, or *h* (*khet*) from ‘ (*ayin*), it was uncertain that it should be read “ ‘Apiru” until that reading was confirmed by alphabetic texts from Ugarit (on the Syrian coast across from Cyprus). The root could relate to “dirt clods, dust.” The other designation for these people, the Sumerian logogram SA.GAZ, may refer to restive migrants, robbers, or murderers.

The Egyptian texts from Amarna include many letters between Pharaoh and the rulers of cities in Canaan. The Canaanite rulers frequently complain to Pharaoh about the Habiru people and ask for military reinforcements. Because the Hebrews were foreigners who attacked the cities of Canaan, some have wondered if the term “Habiru” included references to the Hebrews. But the alliances and style of warfare exhibited by the Habiru demonstrate that the term could not refer exclusively (if at all) to the Hebrews.

HABITATION The word “habitation” does not occur in the NIV, but it is fairly common in the KJV and the NASB. Generally, it refers either to a person’s home (Isa. 32:18) or, more commonly in the Bible, to the geographic location of one’s home (e.g., Ps. 79:7). It also is commonly used as a reference to the place where God lives in the heavens (Deut. 26:15; Ps. 68:5), the temple (Ps. 26:8), or the city of Zion (Ps. 132:13). The psalmist also envisions God as the psalmist’s habitation in times of trouble (Ps. 71:3).

HABOR A tributary of the Euphrates (the modern-day Nahr el-Khabur). It was a destination to which the exiles from Samaria (2 Kings 17:6; 18:11) and Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh were deported (1 Chron. 5:26).

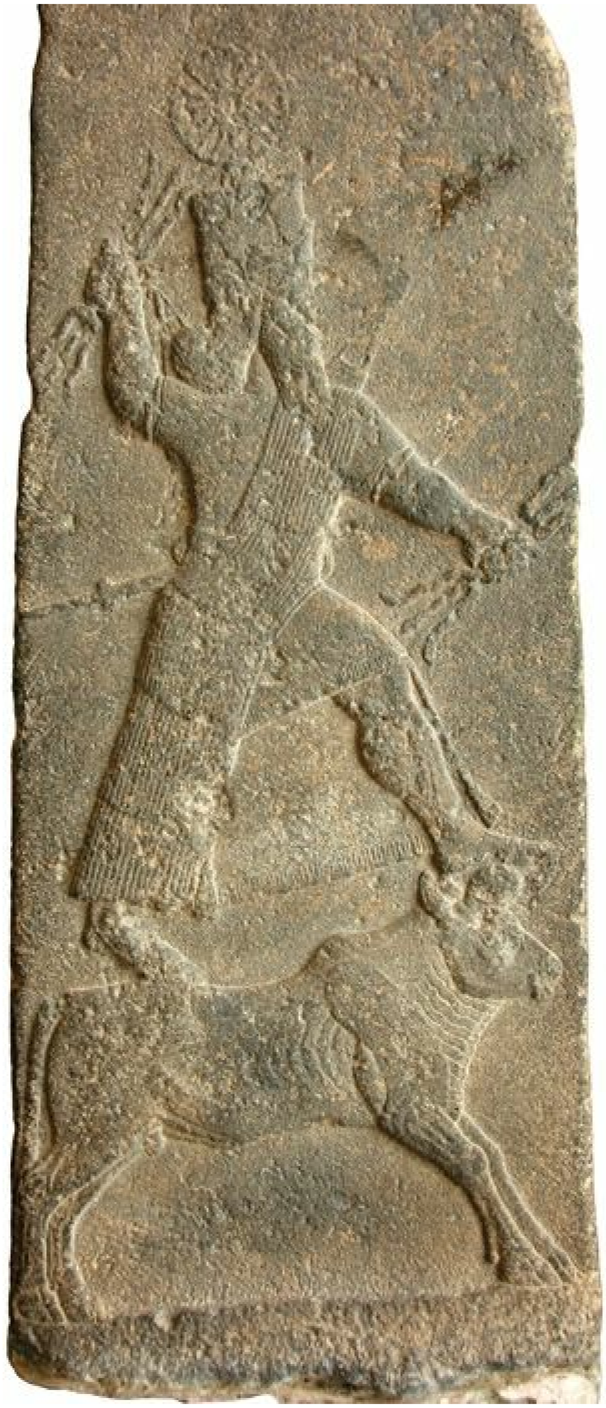
HACALIAH *See* Hakaliah.

HACHILAH *See* Hakilah.

HACHMON, HACHMONI *See* Hakmoni, Hakmonite.

HACMONI, HACMONITE *See* Hakmoni, Hakmonite.

HADAD **(1)** The eighth son of Ishmael (Gen. 25:15). **(2)** Son of Bedad, the fifth ruler in the Edomite king list (Gen. 36:35). **(3)** The eighth ruler in the Edomite king list (1 Chron. 1:50), called “Hadar” in most MT manuscripts of Gen. 36:39. **(4)** A member of the royal family of Edom who as a child survived Joab’s massacre of its royal house and fled to Egypt. Later he returned to Edom as one of the adversaries that God raised up against Solomon as a punishment for his apostasy (1 Kings 11:14–22). **(5)** An ancient Semitic storm god. *See also* Baal.



A stela of the storm god Hadad threatening with his lightning

HADADEZER The king of Zobah defeated by David. In David's time, Hadadezer's sphere of influence extended southward to the northern Transjordan and eastward to the Upper Euphrates. Hadadezer encountered David's army in battle on three occasions. First, when David sent an army under the command of Joab against the Ammonites, who had insulted David's ambassadors, the Aramaean coalition army led by Hadadezer marched to the relief of the besieged city of Rabbath at the request of the Ammonites (2 Sam. 10:1–14). Second, when Hadadezer, unwilling to lose face after being routed by Joab, raised a new army "from beyond the River" under the command of Shobach, David himself moved to Helam and defeated the Aramean army (10:15–19). Third, David later took vengeance on Hadadezer for his interference in the Ammonite war (8:3–8) by invading the heartland of Hadadezer's realm. These campaigns by David against the Arameans and the Ammonites resulted in his securing control of the King's Highway.

HADAD RIMMON In Zech. 12:10–14 Hadad Rimmon serves a figurative function in underscoring the intensity of the mourning for "the one they have pierced." But its identity is still debated. Traditionally, it has been taken as denoting a place on the Plain of Megiddo, where Judah and Jerusalem mourned for the death of Josiah. Some modern scholars, however, find in Hadad Rimmon a compound name of two gods who are similar in nature, Hadad (a Syrian storm god) and Ramman ("thunderer" in Akkadian). "The weeping of Hadad Rimmon," then, would refer to mourning rites for the deity (cf. Ezek. 8:14).

HADAR *See* Hadad.

HADAREZER *See* Hadadezer.

HADASHAH A town in the western foothills that was part of the tribe of Judah's traditional territorial allotment (Josh. 15:37). Its exact location is unknown.

HADASSAH *See* Esther.

HADATTAH *See* Hazor Hadattah.

HADES A transliteration of the Greek word referring to the place of the dead. In addition to referring to the place of the dead, the term sometimes is used to signify death itself. During the OT period the Hebrew term *she'ol* was used to indicate the realm of the dead, and when the OT was translated into Greek, the translators employed the term *hadēs* when rendering *she'ol*. In the OT both righteous (Gen. 37:35) and unrighteous (Num. 16:30, 33) individuals go to Hades/Sheol at death. It is also usually specified as being located in a downward direction (Ps. 55:15; Isa. 14:15). Throughout apocryphal and other intertestamental Jewish literature, *hadēs* appears very frequently (e.g., Tob. 3:10; Sir. 21:10; *Sibylline Oracles*).

The Greek word *hadēs* is used ten times in the NT, and English translations vary in their rendering of the term. For example, the NIV translates it as "Hades" (Matt. 11:23; 16:18; Luke 10:15; 16:23; Rev. 1:18; 6:8; 20:13–14) or "the realm of the dead" (Acts 2:27, 31). It is occasionally used in conjunction with the idea of a place of punishment or torment (Luke 16:23), though the NT more frequently uses the Greek word *geenna* (a transliteration of Aramaic) when indicating future punishment in the afterlife. It is much more common to find *hadēs* associated with death, such as the four occasions in Revelation where the two concepts are linked together (1:18; 6:8; 20:13–14). *See also* Gehenna; Hell.

HADID A town listed along with Lod and Ono to which some of the Babylonian exiles returned (Ezra 2:33; Neh. 7:37; 11:34). It is located in the northern Shephelah, approximately three and a half miles east of Lod, identified with modern Tel al-Haditha.

HADLAI The father of Amasa, one of the Ephraimite leaders during the reign of Pekah. Amasa was one of four leaders who protested against their kinsmen who were going to bring guilt on their people by taking Judahites captive (2 Chron. 28:11–12).

HADORAM (1) According to the Table of Nations (Gen. 10), the sons of Joktan, which included

Hadoram, were a federation of Arab tribes located in South Arabia. It is possible to take the name as referring either to a tribe or a locality, the former being more likely (Gen. 10:27; 1 Chron. 1:21). **(2)** The son of Tou, king of Hamath, he was sent with gifts to David by his father when David defeated Hadadezer, king of Zobah (1 Chron. 18:9–10). Interestingly, the parallel account in 2 Sam. 8:9–10 records the name "Joram" for Hadoram. This was likely an alternate appellation of "Hadoram," in which the theophoric element "Hadad" was removed from the name and replaced with the theophoric element of Yahweh's name to fit the Israelite context. **(3)** The taskmaster appointed by Rehoboam to oversee the forced labor that he imposed upon the Israelites. The Israelites became incensed and stoned him to death, causing Rehoboam to flee (2 Chron. 10:18 [NIV: "Adoniram," from the parallel account in 1 Kings 12:18; the LXX has "Adoniram" in both texts]).

HADRACH *See* Hadrak.

HADRAK The land mentioned in Zech. 9:1 associated with Damascus, Hamath, Tyre, and Sidon, all of which were Aramean city-states. There are a few extrabiblical references to the city, and perhaps the most telling is Hadrak's mention in Tiglath-pileser III's annals. The annals mention it as one of the nineteen districts that allied to support Azariah of Judah in 742 BC. It is located in Syria, north of Damascus and possibly is identified with present-day Tel Afis, approximately twenty-eight miles southwest of Aleppo.

HAELEPH A town allocated to the tribe of Benjamin after the conquest (Josh. 18:28). It is located in the vicinity of Jerusalem, perhaps identified with Lifta, a village west of Jerusalem, or Nephtoa, a village between Benjamin and Judah. Based on its rendering in a particular Greek text, some have suggested Haeleph should be joined with the previous name and read as a single town, Zela-Haeleph.

HAFT In Judg. 3:22 the KJV renders the Hebrew term *nitsab* as "haft," referring to the handle of Ehud's dagger (NIV: "handle"; NRSV: "hilt").

HAGAB One of the ancestors of the temple servants (Nethinim) who returned to Jerusalem after the Babylonian captivity under the leadership of Zerubbabel in 539 BC or soon after (Ezra 2:46; missing from the list in Neh. 7). The fact that many of the names in the list are foreign has led to the belief that they were originally prisoners of war who were pressed into service to perform menial tasks as they assisted the Levites. The name is also found on an ostracon (shard of pottery) from Lachish.

HAGABA *See* Hagabah.

HAGABAH One of the ancestors of the temple servants (Nethinim) who returned to Jerusalem after the Babylonian captivity under the leadership of Zerubbabel in 539 BC or soon after (Ezra 2:45; Neh. 7:48: "Hagaba"). The fact that many of the names in the list are foreign has led to the belief that they were originally prisoners of war who were pressed into service to perform menial tasks as they assisted the Levites.

HAGAR The Egyptian maidservant whom Sarah offered to her husband, Abraham, as a solution to her own infertility (Gen. 16). When Hagar became pregnant, she treated Sarah disrespectfully, resulting in Hagar's dismissal. On instruction from the angel of the Lord, Hagar returned and bore Ishmael when Abraham was eighty-six years old. While Hagar received God's promise that her son would have many descendants, he was not the one through whom God's promises to Abraham would be fulfilled (Gen. 12:1–3; 15:4; 17:19). Following the birth of Isaac to Abraham and Sarah, the tension between the two women resulted in Sarah sending Hagar and Ishmael off into the desert, where God reaffirmed his commitment to Ishmael (Gen. 21:9–19).

Paul uses Hagar and Sarah to represent two covenants. Hagar represents the covenant given on Mount Sinai, the law that brings slavery and characterizes the earthly Jerusalem. The child born to Sarah as a result of God's promise represents the citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem, who are free (Gal. 4:22–27).

HAGARENES, HAGARITES *See* Hagrites.

HAGERI *See* Hagri.

HAGGADAH AND HALAKAH The term "haggadah" comes from a Hebrew root meaning "to explain" or "to demonstrate." With reference to rabbinic literature, the religious texts of early Judaism, the noun has three applications: (1) a story, legend, or folktale; (2) an exegesis of Scripture; (3) material of a nonlegal nature. In the last sense, the literary category of haggadah stands in contrast to halakah, those portions of rabbinic literature dealing with religious/legal pronouncements derived from Scripture and oral tradition. From a rabbinic perspective, the stipulations of halakah are considered binding, whereas those of haggadah are not. The distinction "nonlegal" should not be overstated, since haggadah often offers dramatic explication of legal matters. Perhaps a more precise statement is that haggadah illustrates and dramatizes the legal principles and rules simply stated in halakah. In this manner, haggadah may be considered a more imaginative initiative in the development of Jewish traditions, although such an expansive approach in the application of older traditions is not absent in halakah.

The Hebrew root of "halakah," in verbal expression, means "to walk." The legal rulings of halakah are considered by the rabbis, through an interpretation of portions in Genesis, to find their basis in the created order. From the same point of view, the legal sections of the Pentateuch are the sources of halakic rulings; the expanded legal corpus of halakah is an interpretation of biblical material, an extension of legal principles beyond the concrete circumstances of biblical material undertaken by rabbinic academies. A second perspective from rabbinic sources, however, sees halakah as the repository of oral traditions going back to extrabiblical divine communication on Mount Sinai through the rabbis, the Sanhedrin, the elders of Israel, Joshua, and Moses.

HAGGAI A Hebrew prophet in the sixth century BC who, along with Zechariah, was used by God to encourage the beleaguered returnees to Jerusalem from captivity in Babylon to complete the long-delayed rebuilding of the temple. Little is known of his background or previous occupation.

HAGGAI, BOOK OF The book of Haggai is the tenth book in the collection known as the Minor Prophets or the Book of the Twelve. Haggai was a contemporary of Zechariah, and the two prophets had an overlapping purpose: to encourage their generation to rebuild the temple. Though short and similar in theme to Zechariah, Haggai has its own interests, and it repays close reading.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The superscription (1:1) attributes the book to a man named "Haggai" (related to the Hebrew word *hag*, meaning “festival”). Though mentioned in Ezra 5:1–2; 6:14, these texts add nothing substantial to the little knowledge that we have about Haggai from the book itself, except that he was responsible for the prophetic speeches contained in the book. These speeches are placed in a narrative context, but it is speculative to argue that anyone other than Haggai was responsible for the book.

Haggai and Zechariah are unusually precise in the dates that they give their oracles. They are dated to a fairly brief period during the reign of the Persian king Darius I (see table 1).

Table 1. Dates Given in the Oracles of Haggai and Zechariah

Reference	Year/Month/Day of Darius’s Reign	Date BC	Content
Hag. 1:1	2/6/1	Aug. 29, 520	Temple to be built
Hag. 1:15	2/6/24	Sept. 21, 520	Work on temple resumed
Hag. 2:1	2/7/21	Oct. 17, 520	Glory of the temple
Zech. 1:1	2/8/–	Oct./Nov. 520	Zechariah’s authority
Hag. 2:10, 20	2/9/24	Dec. 18, 520	Zerubbabel as God’s signet
Zech. 1:7	2/11/24	Feb. 15, 519	First night vision
Zech. 7:1	4/9/4	Dec. 7, 518	An issue about fasting
Ezra 6:15	6/12/3	Mar. 12, 515	Temple completed

A Persian soldier, part of the royal bodyguard of Darius I, during whose reign Haggai prophesied

The situation that Haggai addresses begins in 587/586 BC with the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple by the Babylonians and the beginning of the exile. Not all the people of Judah were taken to Babylon, but the vast majority of the leaders were.

In 539 BC the Persian Empire, led by Cyrus the Great, defeated Babylon and inherited its vast empire, including its vassals, among which was Judah. From the start, the Persians adopted a different foreign policy. They allowed all the Babylonian vassals to return to their homelands to rebuild their temples (this policy is recorded in a contemporary cuneiform text known as the Cyrus Cylinder). Cyrus announced his intentions to the Jewish people through what has come to be known as the Cyrus Decree, in which he describes how God has called him to have the temple rebuilt (2 Chron. 36:23; Ezra 1:2–4).

While one might have expected droves of Jewish exiles to return home, that was not the case. Many had heeded Jeremiah’s call to settle down in the place of their exile (Jer. 29:5–6), but among the early leaders of those who did return was Zerubbabel, a Davidic descendant who became governor of the Persian province of Yehud (the Persian period name for Judah). Haggai addressed his letter to Zerubbabel and to Joshua, the high priest at the time.

Zerubbabel came back to Jerusalem in 539 BC (or soon after) and immediately rebuilt the altar and the foundation of the temple (Ezra 3:2–10), but then the work faltered. A number of factors contributed to the cessation of work, including conflicts between the returnees and those who took over their land while they were in exile (Jer. 52:15–16; Ezek. 11:3, 15). The need to establish their own holdings in the land distracted them from the work on the temple. Neighboring people and local Persian officials also put roadblocks in the way of reconstruction (Ezra 4:1–5; 5:3–5).

After several years of inactivity on the part of the returnees, God raised up Haggai and Zechariah to exhort the people to get their priorities straight. The people responded to their message and work resumed, with the result that the second temple was finished in 515 BC.

OUTLINE AND CONTENT

The book of Haggai is a narrative presentation of four of Haggai’s prophetic oracles:

I. Superscription (1:1)

II. Oracle Urging the People to Rebuild the Temple and the People’s Positive Response (1:2–15)

III. Oracle of Encouragement concerning the Glory of the Second Temple (2:1–9)

IV. Oracle Encouraging the People to Stay Pure and Receive a Blessing (2:10–19)

V. Oracle of Divine Blessing to Zerubbabel (2:20–23)

The first oracle (August 29, 520) is a disputation whereby God challenges his people for tending to their own houses and fields while neglecting the construction of the temple. The people respond positively and start building the temple just a few weeks later (1:15). The second oracle (October 17, 520), given just a few weeks after construction has commenced, is a divine encouragement that although the second temple is not as physically grand as the first one, God’s glory will make this temple greater than the first. The third and fourth oracles are delivered on the same day (December 18, 520 BC). The third oracle contains a dialogue between God and the people concerning holiness and uncleanness. The point seems to be that the people want to acquire holiness from the temple just by working there. It is not contagious, however. They will have to work at being holy. On the other hand, something can be made unholy by coming into contact with something unclean, so the temple can become defiled if a sinful and unrepentant people come into contact with it. The final oracle is a divine pronouncement that Zerubbabel is of special significance to God and his purposes. While this could lead some to think of Zerubbabel as the expected deliverer (the Messiah), that is not the role he plays.

THEOLOGICAL MESSAGE

The oracles of Haggai are clearly and specifically dated, so modern readers know that they reflect his prophetic ministry during a four-month period in 520 BC. The historical background to his message begins with the early return from exile under Sheshbazzar and Zerubbabel, the latter being frequently mentioned in Haggai. Soon after the return, the altar was rebuilt, and sacrifices began to be offered in the temple area, but the temple itself was still in disarray. The focus of Haggai's concern is that God wants his people to get busy reconstructing the temple. They have been hesitant, according to Haggai, because of their own economic struggles. God, through Haggai, tells his people that they must first take care of their religious obligations, and then God will bless them with personal well-being.

In addition, Zerubbabel plays an important role in the prophecy of Haggai. He is a descendant of David and a leader in postexilic Judah. His presence may have given rise to the expectation of the reestablishment of the Davidic monarchy, or at least that seems to be the implication of the last verses of the book, based on 2 Sam. 7:1–11.

NEW TESTAMENT CONNECTIONS

Haggai and Zechariah's call to return to the task of rebuilding the temple had its intended influence. The people of God set to work on the temple and finished it in 515 BC. Haggai's message continues to be relevant, however, especially as he calls readers to get their priorities straight. In essence, the principle behind Haggai's call is to "seek first the kingdom of God" (cf. Matt. 6:33). He reminds God's people that God comes first, and then other matters fall into their proper place.

On the other hand, whatever greater expectation there was regarding Zerubbabel never really materialized. Although used for God's purposes, he fades from biblical history. The expectation of a Davidic ruler was not fulfilled at that time, and this led to intensified expectation. The NT authors understand that the Davidic covenant came to fulfillment in Jesus Christ.

HAGGEDOLIM The father of Zabdiel. Zabdiel was the chief officer of a priestly clan that was elected to live within Jerusalem's city wall once Nehemiah completed it (Neh. 11:14). It is also possible that "Haggedolim" is not a proper name, but rather that in the Hebrew phrase *ben-haggedolim* the second word should be translated literally to read "Zabdiel, son of [one of] the great men" (cf. KJV).

HAGGERI *See* Hagri.

HAGGI One of the sons of Gad and grandsons of Jacob who traveled with Gad into Egypt to be saved by Joseph during a famine (Gen. 46:16). Later, Haggi was considered the clan leader of the Haggites (Num. 26:15).

HAGGIAH A Levite who was a temple musician. His father was Shimea, and his son was Asaiah (1 Chron. 6:30).

HAGGITES One of the clans descended from Gad listed in Moses' census (Num. 26:15).

HAGGITH One of David's wives, the mother of David's fourth son, Adonijah (2 Sam. 3:4; 1 Chron. 3:2). Her son attempted to force the succession when David was old, but he was undermined by the prophet Nathan and David's wife Bathsheba, who interceded with the aged king on behalf of Solomon (1 Kings 1:1–27).

HAGIOGRAPHA "Hagiographa" is from the Greek for "holy writings." The term refers to the third and last division of the threefold Hebrew canon, the Ketubim (the first two divisions being the

Law [Torah] and the Prophets [Nebiim]). It is a loose collection comprising (in the Hebrew order) the poetic books (Psalms, Proverbs, Job), the Megilloth or Five Scrolls (Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther), the apocalyptic book of Daniel, and historical books (Ezra-Nehemiah, Chronicles). Other appellations for this portion of the Hebrew Scriptures abound in earlier sources: “writings of David” (2 Macc. 2:13); “other books” (prologue to Sirach); “the Psalms” (Luke 24:44). It is not clear, however, precisely which books are included in these designations. The Christian canons do not place these books in a single corpus, preferring instead to classify according to literary genus.

HAGRI The father of Mibhar, one of David’s thirty mighty men (1 Chron. 11:38). The Hebrew of the parallel text in 2 Sam. 23:36 has *bani haggadi*, “Bani the Gadite” (KJV, NRSV, NET), which the NIV renders as “son of Hagri” in harmony with 1 Chron. 11:38. These two verses make it difficult to understand who Hagri is and may involve a textual corruption. *See also* Hagrites.

HAGRITES A nomadic tribe listed among the enemies of Israel (Ps. 83:6). Presumably descended from Hagar, the maidservant of Sarah who bore Ishmael (Gen. 16). Because the tribe of Reuben trusted in God, they were enabled to defeat the Hagrites (1 Chron. 5:10, 19–21). Jaziz the Hagrite was in charge of all of David’s flocks of sheep (1 Chron. 27:31). Mibhar son of Hagri, one of David’s warriors, could have been a Hagrite (1 Chron. 11:38). However, the text of a parallel in 2 Sam. 23:36 may be evidence that “Hagri” should have originally read “the Gadite.” This could have arisen through the confusion of an original *dalet* (the Hebrew letter *d*) for a *resh* (the Hebrew letter *r*), which is a common copyist mistake. *See also* Hagri.

HAHIROTH *See* Pi Hahiroth.

HAI *See* Ai.

HAIL **(1)** A form of precipitation consisting of balls of ice or compact snow. Of the nearly thirty occurrences of “hail” in the OT, twenty refer to hail as God’s weapon used against Egypt. The seventh exodus plague is a theophanic hailstorm, causing death for the first time (Exod. 9:18–33; cf. Pss. 78:47–48; 105:32). Hail is part of the weaponry of God as divine warrior (Ps. 18:12). God keeps “stockpiles” of hail for battle (Job 38:22–23; cf. Rev. 8:7; 16:21). Hail can both defend and punish Israel (Josh. 10:11; Isa. 28:2) but also glorify God (Ps. 148:8). **(2)** A word of greeting (Matt. 27:29; Mark 15:18; John 19:3) or a verb meaning “to greet or summon” (1 Sam. 14:12 ESV, NRSV, NASB). *See also* Greeting.

HAIR A number of Hebrew and Greek words are used in the Bible to refer to hair and hairstyles. Most of the references are to human hair (e.g., Lev. 19:27), but occasionally animal hair is intended (Matt. 3:4; Rev. 6:12). God numbers the hairs of our head (Matt. 10:30); not one hair will perish if God is the protector (Isa. 46:4; Luke 21:18).

Hairstyles varied throughout the ancient Near East according to place and period. For example, the Egyptians shaved their heads, but Semitic men and women generally wore their hair long and admired black hair (2 Sam. 14:26; see also Song 5:11, where hair is described as wavy). Ancient Near Eastern tomb paintings and reliefs depict Semitic men with thick black hair and pointed beards and women with their long, black hair tied and hanging down the back. As a sign of age, white hair was regarded with great respect (Lev. 19:32; Prov. 16:31). Much later, at the time of the apostle Paul, long hair on men was considered shameful (1 Cor. 11:14), while for women long hair was the ideal (11:15).

Beards and hair were dressed, adorned, anointed with oil, perfumed, and curled (2 Kings 9:30; Eccles. 9:8; Isa. 3:18–24; Matt. 26:7). The NT, however, advises moderation in hairstyles (1 Tim. 2:9; 1 Pet. 3:3–6). Barbers used razors to cut hair and beards (Ezek. 5:1; cf. Isa. 7:20). To shave or pluck out another person's hair was a grave insult (2 Sam. 10:4–5; Isa. 50:6). It was also uncommon to untie a woman's hair in public (Num. 5:18; cf. Luke 7:38).

An ancient comb discovered at Qumran

Cutting or shaving hair often had social or religious significance. During times of mourning and affliction, hair on the head and beard was shaved or plucked out (Ezra 9:3; Isa. 15:2; Jer. 16:6). Sometimes the beard was left untrimmed (2 Sam. 19:24). A Nazirite was not to cut his hair during the days of his vow (Num. 6:5). At the conclusion of the vow, his hair was offered with a sacrifice (Num. 6:18). Offering hair for the dead and cutting the corners of the beard was prohibited in the law (Deut. 14:1; Lev. 19:27). Priests were not to shave their heads or allow their hair to grow long (Lev. 21:5; Ezek. 44:20). Prophets may have marked themselves by a partial shaving of the head (1 Kings 20:35–43; 2 Kings 2:23).

HAKALIAH The father of Nehemiah, who was the governor of Jerusalem and who helped to organize the building of the wall of Jerusalem (Neh. 1:1; 10:1). The KJV spells the name as "Hachaliah."

HAKELDAMA *See* Akeldama.

HAKILAH A hill near where David hid from Saul when Saul was trying to kill him (1 Sam. 23:19; 26:1, 3).

HAKKATAN The father of Johanan, the leader of the family of Azgad, who returned to Judah with Ezra (Ezra 8:12).

HAKKORE *See* En Hakkore.

HAKKOZ **(1)** A variation of the name “Koz” in the ASV of 1 Chron. 4:8. **(2)** A priestly clan, listed seventh of those ministering in the temple contemporary with David (1 Chron. 24:10). This clan was excluded after the exile because their genealogical records were lost (Ezra 2:61–62; Neh. 7:63–64). **(3)** Grandfather to one who repaired a section of Jerusalem’s wall (Neh. 3:4, 21). *See also* Koz.

HAKMONI, HAKMONITE **(1)** Either the father or an ancestor of Jashobeam, one of David’s champions (1 Chron. 11:11). The confusion comes from the Hebrew phrase *ben-khakmoni* (NRSV: “son of Hachmoni”), where the ending of *khakmoni* ordinarily would indicate that it is not a proper name but rather a familial or tribal affiliation. However, using the formula “son of” for a people group would be somewhat inconsistent, so the phrase is rendered “a Hakmonite” in the NIV. It is possible that *takhkemoni* in 2 Sam. 23:8 (NIV: “Tahkemonite”; NRSV: “Tahchemonite”) is a variation. **(2)** Either the father or ancestor of Jehiel, who took care of King David’s sons (1 Chron. 27:32). The same issues apply as in 1 Chron. 11:11, but here the NIV translates the phrase as “son of Hakmoni.”

HAKUPHA One of the ancestors of the temple servants (Nethinim) who returned to Jerusalem after the Babylonian captivity under the leadership of Zerubbabel in 539 BC or soon after (Ezra 2:51; Neh. 7:53). The fact that many of the names in the list of ancestors are foreign has led to the belief that they were originally prisoners of war who were pressed into service to perform menial tasks as they assisted the Levites.

HALAH A district in Media to which Israelites were taken after their revolt against Assyria. According to 2 Kings 17:6, “In the ninth year of Hoshea, the king of Assyria captured Samaria and deported the Israelites to Assyria. He settled them in Halah, in Gozan on the Habor River and in the towns of the Medes” (cf. 2 Kings 18:11; 1 Chron. 5:26). The location of this area of Assyria is uncertain. The texts in which Halah is mentioned seem to imply that it was near Gozan and the Habor River, which lie in modern-day Syria. *See also* Gozan.

HALAKAH *See* Haggadah and Halakah.

HALF-SHEKEL TAX Paid in March for the upkeep of the temple, particularly the sacrifices (Matt. 17:24–27 [NIV: “two-drachma temple tax”]; cf. Josephus, *Ant.* 18.312). The law required every male who was twenty-years-old and older to give a half shekel (Exod. 30:13–16). Nehemiah made the tax annual, but at one-third shekel (Neh. 10:32). The amounts stated in the law and in the cycle of Nehemiah were eventually conflated. Even Jews living in the Diaspora paid the tax (Philo, *Embassy* 156; *Let. Aris.* 40).

Silver shekels like these were used to pay the temple tax

HALF-TRIBE In the Bible the term “half-tribe” describes the portion of the tribe of Manasseh that settled on the eastern side of the Jordan River (e.g., Josh. 18:7; 22:1). A portion of the tribe of Manasseh also received land on the western side of the Jordan River, and the Bible uses the term to distinguish between the two portions. The term can also refer to the tribe of either Ephraim or Manasseh, since they are the offspring of the tribe of Joseph.

HALHUL A town in the hill country of Judah (Josh. 15:58).

HALI A town on the border of the tribe of Asher (Josh. 19:25).

HALL A large room, usually in a palace or a temple (1 Kings 6:3). The hall, or main room, in Solomon’s temple was surrounded by smaller side rooms (1 Kings 6:5), had entrance doors framed with olive wood (1 Kings 6:33), and was paneled with juniper decorated with gold (2 Chron. 3:5). Solomon’s throne room was called the “Hall of Justice” (1 Kings 7:7). Queen Esther waited outside the king’s hall, or throne room, for an audience with the Persian king (Esther 5:1). A royal or official banquet room is a hall (1 Sam. 9:22; Esther 7:8; Song 2:4; Dan. 5:10; Matt. 22:10).

In the KJV, the governor’s palace, or praetorium, where Jesus was led after his arrest is identified as a hall (Matt. 27:27; Mark 15:16) or hall of judgment (John 18:28, 33; 19:9), as are the courtyard where Peter first denied Jesus (Luke 22:55) and the palace of Herod Agrippa, where Paul was kept under guard (Acts 23:35). When Paul could no longer preach in the synagogue in Ephesus, he held daily discussions in the lecture hall of Tyrannus (Acts 19:9).

HALLEL The Hebrew verb “praise” (in the imperative form). *Hallel* is used generally to refer to psalms that contain the command “Hallelujah (“praise the LORD”; “jah” is a shortened form of YHWH [“Yahweh”], which is typically translated as “LORD”). It also designates Pss. 113–118, which are collectively referred to as the Egyptian Hallel because they begin with “Praise the LORD” and refer to the exodus and Passover sacrifice. These psalms were read liturgically during Jewish festivals. Their use during family Passover celebrations makes it likely that the hymn sung by Jesus and his disciples after the Last Supper included some of these psalms. Psalm 136 is known as the Great Hallel, as it entreats worshipers to praise God for his great works in creation and salvation from Israel’s enemies. The Psalter ends with five psalms that each begin and end with “praise the LORD” (Pss. 146–150).

HALLELUJAH A transliteration of the Hebrew phrase *halelu yah*. The first word is an imperative form of the verb *hallal*, which means “to praise.” The second word is a derivation of the name of God, “Yahweh,” typically translated as “LORD,” and is the object of the verb. Thus, “hallelujah” means “praise the LORD.” This phrase has become idiomatic for Christian communities, so that the Hebrew pronunciation of “hallelujah” and its use as an exclamation of praise have been preserved. The phrase occurs twenty-four times in the Psalms, beginning at Ps. 104:35, and appears the most frequently in the last five psalms (Pss. 146–150).

HALLOHESH One of the “leaders of the people” who sealed the covenant with God following Ezra’s public reading of the law (Neh. 10:24). Hallohesh is also named as the father of Shallum, who made repairs to Jerusalem under Nehemiah (Neh. 3:12).

HALLOW *See* Dedicate, Dedication; Holy; Sanctification.

HALT An older word meaning “lame,” used in the KJV at Matt. 18:8; Mark 9:45; Luke 14:21; John 5:3. *See* Lame, Lameness.

HAM **(1)** The second of Noah’s three sons, his descendants included Cush, Mizraim (Egypt), Put, and Canaan. After Ham informed his brothers that he saw their naked father, Noah cursed Ham’s son Canaan, who was possibly involved. The name can designate one branch of Ham’s descendants, the Egyptians, or their land (Pss. 78:51; 105:23, 27; 106:22). **(2)** A city inhabited by the Zuzites that was attacked by Kedorlaomer during the time of Abraham (Gen. 14:5).

HAMAN According to the book of Esther, King Xerxes appointed Haman over all the other nobles in his empire (Esther 3:1). However, Mordecai, Esther’s cousin, refused to pay respect to him, and Haman sought not only to kill Mordecai but also to destroy all the Jewish people.

To accomplish his purpose, Haman convinced Xerxes to determine a day (by lots [Heb. *purim*]) for their destruction. That day was set for almost a year later, and Mordecai, hearing of the plot, persuaded Esther to intervene. The result was the death of Haman, not Mordecai, and the victory of the Jewish people over their enemies. The festival of Purim commemorates this event.

Modern readers often miss the reason for the hatred that existed between Mordecai and Haman. Mordecai was a descendant of Kish and thus also a descendant of King Saul (Esther 2:5), while Haman was an Agagite, which indicates that he was a descendant of the royal line of Amalek (3:1). The story thus goes back to Exod. 17:8–15, when the Amalekites were the first to attack Israel as they left Egypt. For this, God decreed that their memory should be blotted out (Deut. 25:17–19). Saul had his chance when he defeated King Agag of Amalek, but he did not complete the task (1 Sam. 15). Haman’s demise is the completion of this story.

HAMATH A Hittite city strategically positioned on the Orontes River and the main trade route running south from Asia Minor. Located about halfway between Damascus and Aleppo, it is frequently mentioned with reference to Israel’s northern border—“the entrance to Hamath” or Lebo Hamath (Num. 13:21; 1 Kings 8:65). David received tribute from its king (2 Sam. 8:9–10), and Solomon built storage cities in the area (2 Chron. 8:4). During the exile, some Israelites settled there

(Isa. 11:11), and some of its inhabitants were similarly transported to Samaria (2 Kings 17:24).

The Stela of Zakkur, discovered in 1903 in the territory of the ancient kingdom of Hamath, reads in part, "I am Zakkur, king of Hamath and Luash."

HAMATHITES Mentioned in the Table of Nations as descendants of Canaan (Gen. 10:18; 1 Chron. 1:16), they apparently had either founded or were associated with Hamath.

HAMATH ZOBAH Possibly a variant of "Hamath," since no other site with this name is known. Otherwise, the compound name may have been used to refer to an extended region including both Hamath and Zobah, an important Aramean kingdom dating from the eleventh century BC, located between Damascus and Hamath. The only biblical reference to Hamath Zobah states that Solomon captured it and built storage cities in the area (2 Chron. 8:3–4). Solomon's building program indicates that the region was under his control for a period of time. One important LXX manuscript reads “Beth Zobah” (“house of Zobah”) instead of “Hamath Zobah.” If this reading is correct, the text may simply state that Solomon battled and exerted dominion over the house or kingdom of Zobah.

HAMITES Descendants of Noah’s son Ham. A group of Hamites had once lived in the land near Gedor before the Simeonites settled there (1 Chron. 4:39–40).

HAMMATH **(1)** A fortified town in Naphtali (Josh. 19:35), located two miles south of Tiberias on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee (modern Hamman Tabariyeh). Its name derives from the hot springs found there. Since the time of Josephus, the hot springs have maintained a reputation for their healing powers. Hammath may be identical with Hammoth Dor (Josh. 21:32) and Hammon (1 Chron. 6:76), a Levitical city in Naphtali. **(2)** A town nine miles south of Beth Shan (modern Tel el-Hammeh). The stela of Pharaoh Seti I (1303–1290 BC) at Beth Shan recounts how his army defeated the king of Hammath who invaded Beth Shan. If Hammath in 1 Chron. 2:55 is taken as a place name denoting the home of the Kenites, it may refer to this town or to one farther south. **(3)** “The father of the Rekabites” and the forefather of the Kenites (1 Chron. 2:55).

HAMMEDATHA The father of Haman, the enemy of the Jews mentioned in the book of Esther. He is identified as an Agagite (Esther 3:1), but nothing else is known of him. His name is Persian.

HAMMELECH In Jer. 36:26; 38:6 the KJV erroneously translates the Hebrew word *hammelek* as a proper noun, “Hammelech.” The Hebrew word is composed of the definite article (*ha*) and the word for “king” (*melek*) and is properly translated in more-recent versions as “the king.”

HAMMER Three different Hebrew words are translated as “hammer,” likely indicating that various types of hammers were used in ancient Israel. The exact function of each is not entirely clear, and the references to each are somewhat vague. Judges 5:26 refers to a “workman’s hammer” (Heb. *halmut*). Judges 4:21; 1 Kings 6:7; Isa. 44:12; Jer.10:4 mention a hammer with which one drives nails or tent pegs, possibly referring to a mallet (Heb. *maqqebet*). The third type, mentioned in Isa. 41:7; Jer. 23:29; 50:23, is a hammer used for smoothing and crushing stones (Heb. *pattish*). Complicating our understanding of the various hammers is the LXX, which typically uses the same generic word to translate the various Hebrew terms. The Hebrew at times also suggests that the words may be interchangeable (cf. Judg. 4:21 with 5:26). Hammers were likely made of stone in the earlier periods and later consisted of both stone and metal with a wooden handle.

HAMMERED GOLD Gold was sometimes hammered into thin sheets for gilding other surfaces. This technique was used for various temple furnishings, including the altar and the inner sanctuary (1 Kings 6:20–35) and also for idols (Isa. 40:19). Hammered gold could also be made into objects such as candlesticks (Exod. 25:18) or shields (1 Kings 10:16–17).

HAMMERED SILVER Hammered silver was used in a similar way to hammered gold for the decoration of less valuable objects. Jeremiah 10:6–10 describes its use as part of a vain attempt to cover up the worthlessness of idols.

HAMMERED WORK Wreathlike scrollwork of a spiral design above and below the animal figures of the bronze panels of the ten movable stands for the lavers in Solomon’s temple (1 Kings

7:29 [NRSV: “beveled work”]). These contributed to the elegance, style, and beauty of highly functional and ceremonial pieces.

HAMMOLEKETH The sister of Gilead, she gave birth to three sons, Ishhod, Abiezer, and Mahlah, who were clan leaders in Manasseh (1 Chron. 7:18).

HAMMON **(1)** A town that was part of the border of Asher’s traditional territorial allotment (Josh. 19:28). **(2)** A town given to the Gershonite Levites in the tribe of Naphtali (1 Chron. 6:76).

HAMMOTH DOR A Levitical town in Naphtali (Josh. 21:32). It may be the same as Hammath (Josh. 19:35) or Hammon (1 Chron. 6:76).

HAMMUEL The son of Mishma, the father of Zakkur, and a descendant of Simeon (1 Chron. 4:26).

HAMMURABI

KING OF BABYLON

Hammurabi was the sixth king of Babylon’s first dynasty. He reigned for forty-three years and was highly successful as both a military leader and a domestic administrator. His accession is usually dated between the mid-nineteenth and mid-eighteenth centuries BC; a more precise date does not seem attainable at present. As a personal name, “Hammurabi” (sometimes spelled “Hammurapi”) probably is of Babylonian origin. It seems to include an initial element, *hammu* (“paternal uncle”), and a secondary element, *rapi* (“healer” or “healthy”), and it is known to have been used for both royal and nonroyal persons. The name is attested as late as the thirteenth century BC and as far from Babylon as Ugarit, in modern-day Syria (Ras Shamra). It has been suggested that Hammurabi of Babylon may have been the historical personality behind Amraphel of Shinar, who is mentioned in Gen. 14. That suggestion now seems unlikely, however, since it has been shown that the Hebrew name “Amraphel” is more likely a Hebrew appropriation of an Amorite name.

Politically, Hammurabi was responsible for the consolidation of Mesopotamia under Babylonian rule. He appears to have accomplished this by building an extensive coalition of local kings to aid in the defense of his own borders and then, after turning against his former allies, prosecuting a successful eight-year campaign against territories to his north. In addition to his political and military successes, Hammurabi seems to have been a highly effective domestic administrator. Thus, numerous official documents and royal inscriptions testify to the respect paid to Hammurabi by his contemporaries. Moreover, the flowering of Babylonian linguistic and literary pursuits during his time suggests a high degree of material prosperity under his leadership.

Relief showing Hammurabi with his arm raised in worship (1792–1750 BC)

THE CODE OF HAMMURABI

Any description of Hammurabi’s significance for the field of biblical studies must include a discussion of the legal code that bears his name. The Code of Hammurabi (CH) was first discovered in 1901. It was inscribed in the Old Babylonian dialect of Akkadian, on a diorite stela eight feet in height, and originally contained an extensive prologue and epilogue as well as no less than 280 individual laws. Since then, numerous additional fragments of the same code have been unearthed at sites throughout Mesopotamia, and there is some evidence to suggest that the original literary tradition was still being copied by scribes, at least as a device for training in scribal practice, as late as the first millennium BC.

Structure and content. The prologue stresses Hammurabi’s appointment by the gods as a wise lawgiver, although Hammurabi is unlikely to have been responsible for the composition and arrangement of CH as an independent work of legal creativity. In fact, the existence of similar, but fragmentary, law codes from other Mesopotamian sources suggests that the compilation of standard legal material was a common practice in the ancient Near East long before Hammurabi’s time. Other significant topics in the prologue include his role as a guardian of the powerless and his righteousness in cultic matters pertaining to the patron deities of the various cities under his control.

The body of laws comprising CH is loosely organized according to common legal categories, and solid lines are sometimes inscribed on the tablets in an apparent attempt to indicate the logical transition from one set of laws to another. Among the topics treated in CH are judicial procedure; theft and robbery; slave sales and matters pertaining to slaves; agricultural and irrigation work; pledges, debts, deposits, and loans; real estate sales and rentals; marriage, matrimonial property, and sexual offenses; inheritance, adoption, and foster care; assault and bodily injuries; rates of hire for equipment; laborers and artisans; failure to complete contracted tasks; renters' and shepherds' liabilities and goring oxen.

Individually, the various provisions of CH usually begin with the introductory construction "If X (happens) . . ." and often present a complex or problematic situation in light of which all simpler cases could, presumably, be adjudicated. Thus, the first provision of CH reads, "If a man accuses another man and charges him with homicide, but cannot bring proof against him, that man's accuser will be killed." This kind of presentation has been understood to suggest that the grave nature of the crime of homicide, as well as the appropriate punishment for such a transgression, would already have been obvious for the original audience. The concern of CH, then, was to confirm what was intuitively true by applying the same principles to a more complex set of circumstances.

The epilogue presents Hammurabi as a great military leader. It also calls for the public display of Hammurabi's laws as a testimony to his righteousness, a consolation for those who seek righteousness, and an example to future rulers. CH closes with blessings for the memory of Hammurabi and injunctions against those who would deface his monuments.

Purpose. Interestingly, however, there is very little documentary evidence that such codes were actually used as a standard for the adjudication of individual cases. In fact, some documents suggest that Mesopotamian legal and economic practice may actually have been incompatible with the precepts laid out in CH in many cases. These facts have led some to question what the real purpose of codes such as CH may have been. Theories range from codifications of existing legal practice, intended to provide legal precedents for real cases; to the product of scribal schools, reflecting the intellectual processes of that social group; to royal propaganda, laying claim to the moral and legal legitimacy of the ruler.

Similarities to biblical laws. Some similarities between CH and the biblical laws are apparent even on a superficial reading of the texts themselves, and more-detailed observations about the various parallels have been well documented almost since the discovery of CH. Some of these similarities include common legal concerns and injunctions, as well as a certain uniformity of expression and a degree of organizational similarity, although it may be possible to generate many additional parallels as well. Thus, it has sometimes been suggested that the biblical material may have been borrowed from CH before its incorporation into the Pentateuch.

In spite of these claims, the similarities between CH and the biblical legal material are somewhat superficial, and direct literary dependence between them is very difficult to establish. Apart from the fact that CH is itself a part of a legal tradition that appears already to have been well established throughout the ancient Near East by Hammurabi's time, distinctions between CH and the biblical legal material should also be mentioned. On the one hand, CH is presented as the work of a human author (Hammurabi) who was commissioned by the gods to act as a lawgiver for his own subjects. The biblical laws, by contrast, claim to have been the work of a divine author (Yahweh) and present Moses as a highly significant human intermediary, but not actually as a maker of laws in his own right. Moreover, there are very few direct correspondences between the two. Instead, the two bodies of legislation exhibit a few common areas of concern and a much larger collection of divergent content, some of which may be highly significant in one tradition and entirely lacking in the other. Thus, in any attempt to discern the relationship between the two traditions, the similarities between CH and the biblical legal material must be weighed against the incongruities. The most reasonable conclusion to be drawn from such an analysis seems to be that although Hammurabi predates biblical law by several hundred years at least, the two bodies of legislation are components of the same ancient Near Eastern legal matrix and therefore reflect many of the same concerns and modes of expression. Though probably not dependent on CH, biblical law may be a later manifestation of a larger ancient Near Eastern legal tradition.

HAMONAH A town that, according to Ezekiel, is located in the Valley of Hamon Gog, where Israel's battle with Gog and Magog will take place and where the war dead from this cataclysmic battle will be buried (Ezek. 39:15–16). Because of the enigmatic nature of this passage, there is debate about whether this town is an actual geographic location or a symbolic place. The name "Hamonah" means "multitude" and could simply refer to the numbers that have died in battle.

HAMON GOG A valley where Israel's battle with Gog and Magog takes place, described in the enigmatic text of Ezek. 39:11, 15. This valley is where the war dead from this cataclysmic battle will be buried.

HAMOR The biblical Shechem traditions refer to an individual named "Hamor" who is a Hivite (Gen. 34:2; cf. "Emmor" in Acts 7:16 KJV). He is also called the "father of Shechem" (Gen. 33:19; Josh. 24:32; Judg. 9:28), which may refer both to the geographical name and to the personal name of his most prominent son. Just as "Shechem" may be a double entendre, so "Hamor" may have multiple nuances. For example, "Hamor" may simultaneously function as a personal name and as an allusion to treaty activity. The latter theory is related to the fact that the Hebrew term *khamor* actually means "donkey," and that Amorites (in the Mari texts) ratified treaties by slaughtering donkeys.

HAMRAN *See* Hemdan.

HAMSTRING The act of cutting the large tendon in the back of a horse's hind leg (also oxen in Gen. 49:6) in order to make the animal unusable for combat. Joshua obeyed God's command to hamstring captured horses (Josh. 11:6, 9 [so as not to rely on military ability?]), but David was less thorough (2 Sam. 8:4; 1 Chron. 18:4).

HAMUEL *See* Hammuel.

HAMUL A son of Perez and a grandson of Judah (Gen. 46:12; 1 Chron. 2:5). He was the leader of the Hamulite clan in the tribe of Judah (Num. 26:21).

HAMULITES People from the clan of Hamul, the grandson of Judah and son of Perez (Num. 26:21).

HAMUTAL The mother of King Jehoahaz of Judah, the son of King Josiah (2 Kings 23:31). She was also the mother of King Zedekiah (2 Kings 24:18; Jer. 52:1), who became king after both Jehoiakim (Jehoahaz's half brother) and Jehoiachin (Jehoahaz's nephew) were deposed.

HANAMEEL *See* Hanamel.

HANAMEL The son of Shallum, Jeremiah's uncle. Jeremiah purchased a field in Anathoth from his cousin Hanamel to redeem it during the Babylonian invasion of Jerusalem (Jer. 32:7–9, 12). This action expressed faith in God's promise to restore the people to the land.

HANAN **(1)** A Benjamite, one of eleven sons of Shashak (1 Chron. 8:23). **(2)** A Benjamite, one of six sons of Azel, and a descendant of Saul (1 Chron. 8:38; 9:44). **(3)** The son of Maakah, he was one of David's mighty men (1 Chron. 11:43). **(4)** The head of a family of temple servants who returned to Jerusalem after exile (Ezra 2:46; Neh. 7:49). **(5)** A Levite who interpreted the law during Ezra's reforms (Neh. 8:7) and who also sealed Nehemiah's covenant (Neh. 10:10). **(6, 7)** Two signers of Nehemiah's covenant (Neh. 10:22, 26). **(8)** The son of Zakkur, he was trustworthy and so was appointed as an assistant to Pedaiah, whom Nehemiah put in charge of the storehouses (Neh. 13:13). **(9)** Jeremiah 35:4 includes the phrase "the room of the sons of Hanan son of Igdaliah." This Hanan may have been the leader of a guild of prophets or priests living within the temple.

HANANEL A tower along the northern wall of Jerusalem. It appears that the tower was between the Sheep Gate and the Fish Gate (Neh. 3:1). The exact location is uncertain. Some have posited that this tower and the Tower of the Hundred guarded the northwest side of the Temple Mount. Jeremiah predicted that the tower would be rebuilt (Jer. 31:38), and Nehemiah records that the tower was indeed rebuilt and consecrated with the newly reconstructed wall of Jerusalem (Neh. 3:1; 12:39). The Nehemiah passage may have been intended to demonstrate the fulfillment of this promise; however, Jeremiah's promise says that the city will never again be destroyed (Jer. 31:40). After Jerusalem's destruction in AD 70, the rebuilding led by Nehemiah cannot be seen as the final fulfillment of Jer. 31:38. Zechariah speaks of the tower as part of the elevated Jerusalem in God's eschatological kingdom (Zech. 14:10). This tower may have literary significance, alluding to the certainty of God's eschatological promises.

HANANI **(1)** A prophet who prophesied against King Asa of Judah because Asa trusted the military might of the Arameans rather than trusting in God. Because of this prophecy, Asa had Hanani put into prison (2 Chron. 16:7–10). **(2)** The father (perhaps the same person as in 2 Chron. 16:7–10) of Jehu, a prophet during the reigns of King Baasha of Israel and Jehoshaphat of Judah (1 Kings 16:1; 2 Chron. 19:1). Jehu, who should not be confused with the king by the same name, was also a recorder of the history of Israel (2 Chron. 20:34). **(3)** A Levite who was the son of Heman. He was part of the temple workers entrusted with the ministry of prophesying with music (1 Chron. 25:4, 25). **(4)** A priest listed among those guilty of marrying a foreign wife (Ezra 10:20). **(5)** The brother of Nehemiah who reported to Nehemiah the sad state of the wall in Jerusalem (Neh. 1:2). Later, Nehemiah placed him in charge of the gate of Jerusalem (Neh. 7:2). **(6)** A musician who participated in the celebration, organized by Nehemiah, of the completion of the wall (Neh. 12:36). This may be the same person as in Neh. 1:2; 7:2.

HANANIAH **(1)** The son of Azzur from Gibeon, he was a false prophet in the time of the prophet Jeremiah. He took the yoke off the neck of Jeremiah and broke it, saying that the "yoke of Babylon" would be broken, which is contrary to Jeremiah's prophecy. Because Hananiah led people to believe lies, he died in the seventh month of that year in accordance with the prediction of Jeremiah (Jer. 28).

(2) One of three godly companions of Daniel. His name was changed to “Shadrach” by the Babylonians (Dan. 1:6–7, 11, 19; 2:17). **(3)** The father of Zedekiah, he was one of the officials during Jehoiakim’s reign (Jer. 36:12). **(4)** A grandfather of Irijah, who was the captain of the guard who arrested Jeremiah (Jer. 37:13–15).

(5) A son of Zerubbabel, grandson of King Jehoiachin, who was a descendant of David (1 Chron. 3:19, 21). **(6)** A postexilic Benjamite, a son of Shashak (1 Chron. 8:24). **(7)** One of fourteen sons of Heman, he was a postexilic musician and chief of the sixteenth of the twenty-four groups of musicians trained and skilled in music for the Lord (1 Chron. 25:4, 23). **(8)** One of the royal officials under King Uzziah of Judah (2 Chron. 26:11).

(9) A son of Bebai, he put away his foreign wife under Ezra’s leadership (Ezra 10:28). **(10)** A perfume maker who helped to rebuild the wall of Jerusalem under the leadership of Nehemiah (Neh. 3:8). **(11)** A son of Shelemiah, he helped repair the wall of Jerusalem under the leadership of Nehemiah (Neh. 3:30). **(12)** The commander of the citadel in charge of the whole city of Jerusalem along with Hanani, Nehemiah’s brother, because “he was a man of integrity and feared God more than most people do” (Neh. 7:2). **(13)** One of the leaders of the people who sealed the covenant with Nehemiah (Neh. 10:23). **(14)** The head of the priestly family of Jeremiah in the time of Joiakim the high priest, he was present at the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem in the time of Nehemiah (Neh. 12:12, 41).

HAND In addition to its most obvious anatomical meaning, “hand” may also refer to the finger (Gen. 41:42), the wrist (Gen. 24:22), or the entire arm (2 Kings 5:18).

A hand impression from Khirbet el-Kom

Symbolic uses. The Bible attests to many symbolic references. To put a hand to the mouth is indicative of silence (Job 21:5). Putting it upon one's head is a gesture of sadness and mourning (2 Sam. 13:19). Hand clapping expresses either joy (Ps. 47:1) or derision (Job 27:23). Lifting up one or both hands is a gesture accompanying an oath (Deut. 32:40), blessing (Lev. 9:22), prayer or worship (Pss. 28:2; 63:4). To shake one's hand indicates defiance (Isa. 10:32) or derision (Zeph. 2:15). The Jews in Jesus' time washed their hands before a meal for ritual cleansing (Matt. 15:2), while Pilate washed his hands to indicate his innocence (Matt. 27:24).

The laying on of hands is associated with many meanings in different contexts in the Bible. Its symbolic meaning in the context of sacrifice, however, is still debated. The idea of transfer of the offerer's guilt, which is explicit in case of the scapegoat in Lev. 16:21–22, does not easily apply to the laying on of hands in the context of sacrifice. The laying on of hands, for example, is part of a fellowship offering, a sacrifice that has little concern with expiating sin. This has led some scholars to posit the idea that by laying hands on the animal the offerer either acquires the merits of the sacrifice or ensures that the sacrifice intended for specific offering will be used solely for that purpose. The laying on of hands is also associated with a nonsacrificial context: commission for a special task. Moses laid hands on Joshua when appointing him leader of the people of Israel (Num. 27:18–23). In the same way, the Israelites were instructed to lay hands on the Levites (Num. 8:10). It is also through the laying on of hands that Saul and Barnabas were appointed as missionaries for the Gentiles (Acts 13:2–3). It is also associated with miraculous healing (Matt. 9:18) and the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:17–19). (*See also* Laying on of Hands.)

Idiomatic and figurative uses. The term "hand" forms numerous idiomatic expressions in the Bible, some of which passed into European languages through translations of the Bible. The following are only selective examples: "To put one's hand to" means "to undertake" (Deut. 12:7; Luke 9:62); "to slack one's hand" is synonymous with negligence and neglect (Josh. 10:6); "to hide or bury the hand in the dish" is descriptive of the slothful (Prov. 19:24); "to put one's life into one's hand" means to risk one's life (1 Sam. 19:5); "to fill the hands" means to consecrate (Exod. 32:29; NIV: "set apart"). The phrase "hand of God" or "hand of Yahweh" may denote a pestilence (1 Sam. 5:6; 6:3, 5). A similar usage of "hand of [a god]" as illness is found in both Ugaritic and Akkadian sources.

Several figurative uses of the hand occur in the Bible. The hand often connotes power or strength. When the men of Ai realized their dilemma, they had no "hand" to flee (Josh. 8:20). Also, the Israelites were commanded to bring a gift according to their "hand" at the Feast of Tabernacles (Deut. 16:17). The psalmist rebuked the Israelites for forgetting God's "hand," which redeemed them from their oppressor (Ps. 78:42). The hand is sometimes synonymous with "side." The "hand" of the road refers to the side of the road, and the "hand" of a river to its bank. Used alone, "hand" can indicate a place, as in Deut. 23:12–13, where the Israelites are ordered to designate "a hand" outside the camp for a latrine. The hand may be used metonymically for the person. In this sense, the penalty is exacted "from the hand" or "at the hand" of the transgressor (Gen. 9:5; Ezek. 33:8). Finally, "the right hand" connotes a position of prestige or prominence. Jacob's preference for Ephraim, the second son of Joseph, was expressed by the laying on of his right hand (Gen. 48:13). Yahweh ordered the messianic king to sit at his right hand (Ps. 110:1). Jesus said, referring to himself, "You will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven" (Matt. 26:64; Mark

14:62).

HANDBREADTH A unit of length using the breadth of the palm at the base of the fingers, perhaps 3 to 3.5 inches. It was used to measure items in the tabernacle (Exod. 25:25), Solomon's temple (1 Kings 7:26), and Ezekiel's temple (Ezek. 40:5, 43) or metaphorically for the brevity of life (Ps. 39:5).

HANDKERCHIEF A cloth for wiping perspiration from the face. People in Ephesus used handkerchiefs that had touched Paul to cure the illnesses of the sick and exorcise evil spirits (Acts 19:12). The same Greek word (*soudarion*) is used for the facial burial cloths of Lazarus and Jesus (John 11:44; 20:7) and for the cloth used by the wicked servant to store his coin in the parable of the ten minas (Luke 19:20).

HANDLE The grip of an ax (Deut. 19:5 NRSV) or a sword (Judg. 3:22), or the latch of a door (Song 5:5). The movable basins for the temple had four handles (1 Kings 7:34).

HANDMAIDEN *See* Maid, Maiden.

HANDS, LAYING ON OF *See* Laying on of Hands.

HANDSTAVE In Ezek. 39:9, in a list of weapons that the people of Israel will burn for fuel, the KJV translates the Hebrew expression *maqqel yad* as "handstave." The Hebrew word refers to a rod, staff, or stick, and in this context of weaponry it may refer to a war club (e.g., NIV) or a javelin (NLT).

HANES An Egyptian city to which Israel sent envoys to solicit Egypt's help against the Assyrian invasion (Isa. 30:4). Isaiah repeatedly rebukes Israel for seeking help from the Egyptians instead of trusting and depending on God. The location of Hanes is debated. Some identify it with modern Ahnas el-Medina in southern Egypt, seventy miles from Cairo. Others identify it with modern Hanes in the north, east of Tanis.

HANGING **(1)** The status of an object that is suspended from a point situated above it (e.g., Ezek. 15:3). Objects that are described as hanging in the Bible include curtains (Exod. 40:21), harps (Ps. 137:2), pieces of armor (Ezek. 27:10–11; cf. Song 4:4), a millstone (Matt. 18:6), a snake (Acts 28:4), and Absalom (2 Sam. 18:9–10).

(2) A form of capital punishment that involves suspending the condemned subject from a tree or gallows. In the OT, death by hanging can be the fate of a captured enemy king, such as the king of Ai (Josh. 8:29). Hanging also may be the fate of those who conspire against or offend a king, such as possibly happened with Pharaoh's chief baker (Gen. 40:19, 22). Traditionally, hanging was understood to be the fate of the two officials who conspired against King Xerxes (Esther 2:23) and of Haman, who conspired against the Jews of Xerxes' kingdom (Esther 7:9–10; some recent interpreters understand their fate to be impalement). In the NT, the crucifixion of Jesus is described as a hanging (Acts 5:30; 10:39; cf. Luke 23:39).

The significance of hanging an offender transcends the act of killing. Hanging often involves humiliation and a public declaration. For instance, Joshua hangs five rival kings from trees after they have been executed (Josh. 10:22–27). When the Philistines find the dead bodies of Saul and his sons, they dismember them and hang the bodies on the wall of Beth Shan (1 Sam. 31:8–13; 2 Sam. 21:12) and Saul's head in the temple of Dagon (1 Chron. 10:10). After David orders the death of Recab and Baanah, he has their bodies hung by the pool in Hebron without hands and feet (2 Sam. 4:12). After the ten sons of Haman are killed, Xerxes approves Esther's request that their corpses be hung in public display (Esther 9:12–14). Lamentations speaks of the disgrace that has befallen Jerusalem, including how princes are hung by their hands (Lam. 5:12).

Hanging also holds theological significance. In a case of capital offense resulting in a hanging, Israel is instructed that the corpse must not be left hanging overnight, but rather must be buried that same day to avoid desecrating the land, "because anyone who is hung on a tree [NIV: "pole"] is under God's curse" (Deut. 21:23; cf. Gal. 3:13).

(3) A form of suicide performed by two individuals in the Bible. Ahithophel hangs himself after he sees that his advice to Absalom regarding the revolt against David has not been followed (2 Sam. 17:23). Judas Iscariot hangs himself after he realizes that he has betrayed innocent blood by offering Jesus to the authorities (Matt. 27:5; cf. Acts 1:18–19).

HANIEL *See* Hanniel.

HANNAH The mother of Samuel and one of two wives of Elkanah from Ramathaim. She was regularly provoked by his other wife, Peninnah, who had children, because God had closed her womb (1 Sam. 1:6). But one year, while worshiping at Shiloh, she prayed for a son, whom she promised to dedicate to God (1:9–11). Although the priest Eli mistook her distress for drunkenness, he subsequently blessed her. She later gave birth to Samuel and dedicated him (1:26–28), and annually she provided him with a robe (2:19). Hannah's prayer (2:1–10) is often noted for its resemblance to the later prayer of Mary the mother of Jesus (Luke 1:46–55), both of which celebrate God's humiliation of the rich and powerful and exaltation of the poor and lowly.

HANNATHON A town that was part of the northern boundary of the tribe of Zebulun's traditional territorial allocation (Josh. 19:14). It sat on one of the major trading roads in Palestine. Though mentioned only once in the Bible, it is mentioned twice in the Amarna letters and once in the annals of Tiglath-pileser III.

HANNIEL **(1)** The son of Ephod, he was appointed representative of Manassah when the land of Canaan was allocated for each tribe (Num. 34:23). **(2)** One of the three sons of Ulla from the tribe of Asher (1 Chron. 7:39).

HANOCH, HANOCHITES *See* Hanok.

HANOK **(1)** One of Midian's sons and Abraham and Keturah's grandsons (Gen. 25:4; 1 Chron. 1:33). **(2)** One of Reuben's sons who went to Egypt with Reuben and was the clan father of the Hanokites (Gen. 46:9; Exod. 6:14; Num. 26:5; 1 Chron. 5:3).

HANOKITES *See* Hanok.

HANUKKAH The Festival of Lights, or Hanukkah, which means "dedication," commemorates the victory of Judas Maccabeus over Antiochus IV (Epiphanes) in 164 BC and, specifically, the resulting rededication to God of the temple in Jerusalem. Antiochus was a vicious Seleucid king of Syria who, after his expulsion from Egypt, invaded Jerusalem to extend his power by forcing the Jews to Hellenize. He desecrated the temple by sacrificing to Zeus and conducted a reign of terror for three years until his defeat by the Maccabees.

Based on the account of the cleansing of the temple in 1–2 Maccabees (esp. 1 Macc. 4:36–61), Hanukkah is celebrated for eight days beginning at sundown on 25 Kislev, which usually falls in December. The traditional reason for eight days is given in the Babylonian Talmud, where the rabbis explain that the Maccabees found one day's worth of undefiled oil to light the temple menorah, and it miraculously lasted for eight days.

To mark the holiday, Jewish families progressively light nightly a special Hanukkah menorah with eight candles plus a ninth candle, the shamus, from which the others are lit. Other traditions have developed around Hanukkah, including giving gifts, eating latkes (fried potato pancakes), and playing games with a dreidel (a four-sided top). Each face of the dreidel is marked with one of four Hebrew letters: *nun*, *gimel*, *he*, and *shin*. These letters are an acronym for the Hebrew words "A great miracle happened there." In Israel, *shin* is replaced with *pe* for the Hebrew word "here."

HANUN **(1)** King of the Ammonites. After Hanun's father, Nahash, died, David sent messengers to comfort him because of Nahash's relationship with David (2 Sam. 10:1–2; 1 Chron. 19:1–2), but Hanun did not trust David's intentions, humiliated the messengers, and incited a war against Israel. Israel won and conquered the Ammonites (2 Sam. 12:30–31; 1 Chron. 20:1–3). **(2)** A man who helped rebuild the wall of Jerusalem in Nehemiah's time with the aid of the inhabitants of Zanoah (Neh. 3:13). **(3)** The sixth son of Zalaph, he helped rebuild the wall of Jerusalem (Neh. 3:30). He possibly is the same person as in Neh. 3:13.

HAPHARAIM One of the sixteen towns allotted to the tribe of Issachar when Joshua allocated the land of Canaan to Israel (Josh. 19:19). Many scholars identify it with et-Taiyibeh, a site approximately ten miles southwest of the southern tip of the Sea of Galilee.

HAPIRU *See* Habiru.

HAPPIZZEZ A priest whose family received the eighteenth of twenty-four lots when lots were drawn during the time of David to determine the order in which priests would minister in the temple (1 Chron. 24:15).

HARA One of the places to which Tiglath-pileser, king of Assyria (744–727 BC), deported the tribes of Israel living east of the Jordan River (1 Chron. 5:26). Identifying its location is problematic. Hara is named nowhere else in the Bible, including the similar passages of 2 Kings 17:6; 18:11. Furthermore, an analysis of the Hebrew and LXX texts of these three verses suggests that "Hara" may have appeared in 1 Chron. 5:26 due to a problem in textual transmission. If "Hara" is intended, it likely was a region near Halah, Habor, and the "river of Gozan" in northern Mesopotamia.

HARADAH An encampment during Israel's journey in the wilderness (Num. 33:24–25).

HARAN **(1)** A son of Terah and brother of Abraham. He was the father of Lot as well as of Milkah and Iskah. Haran died in Ur of the Chaldeans, where he was born, before Terah took his family and set out for Canaan (Gen. 11:26–32). **(2)** A son of Ephah, the concubine of Caleb, and father of Gazez

(1 Chron. 2:46). **(3)** A son of Shimei (1 Chron. 23:9). *See also* Harran.

HARAR *See* Hararite.

HARARITE Five times within the lists of David's mighty men the designation "Hararite" appears (2 Sam. 23:11, 33 [2×]; 1 Chron. 11:34–35). Those called "Hararites" presumably came from a place called "Harar" (note, e.g., the NLT of 2 Sam. 23:11: "Shammah son of Agee from Harar"); however, Harar is not mentioned directly in the Bible, and its location remains unknown. "Ararite" was apparently a Hebrew alternative spelling for "Hararite" (2 Sam. 23:33; see the NASB).

HARBEL TEV rendering of the city of Riblah (Heb. *hariblah*) in Num. 34:11. *See also* Riblah.

HARBONA One of King Xerxes (Ahasuerus) of Persia's seven personal attendants, whom he commanded to bring Queen Vashti to his banquet (Esther 1:10). Because he worked with the harem, he was a eunuch. He also was in attendance when Haman's plot against the Jewish people was uncovered (7:9).

Harbona was a eunuch in the service of the king, like the eunuchs shown on this relief from Khorsabad (721–705 BC).

HARBONAH *See* Harbona.

HARDNESS OF HEART Hardness of heart describes a spiritual condition of active resistance against God and his ways. In a certain sense this kind of resistance is found in every human being ever since the fall in Gen. 3. Every human being inherits a sin nature from Adam (Rom. 5:12–14) that naturally and inevitably imparts a predisposition to sin. Daniel 5:20 associates a hardened heart with pride, a virtually universal shortcoming. However, hardness of heart often describes more unusual and significant opposition to God. Although it is still possible for God in his grace to rescue people in any spiritual condition, right up until the point of death, the more actively someone resists God, the less likely it is that God will intervene in that person's life. At the same time, there is always hope, since even Jesus' own disciples were described as having hard hearts (Mark 6:52). Yet, a deliberately hardened heart is always a serious offense against God because it involves "storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God's wrath, when his righteous judgment will be revealed" (Rom. 2:5).

One of the puzzles and mysteries of Scripture is that God himself is often described as being the one who hardens the hearts of various individuals. Pharaoh in the exodus story is a classic illustration. In Exod. 4:21 God says to Moses, "I will harden his [Pharaoh's] heart so that he will not let the people go." Other times, more ambiguous language is used, such as in 7:13, where "Pharaoh's heart became hard." Still other times, Pharaoh himself is described as being actively involved in this process, such as "when Pharaoh saw that there was relief, he hardened his heart and would not listen to Moses and Aaron" (8:15). The best way to understand this situation is to see hardness of heart as a combination of the active will of fallen human beings and the mysterious workings of a sovereign God. (Salvation and spiritual growth are similar spiritual realities in that both of these also involve a mysterious combination of God's direct involvement in people's lives and the necessity of their own human response.) Since the Bible so frequently warns against the danger of a hardened heart, there are clearly genuine opportunities for people to cry out to God for mercy and deliverance from this awful situation.

HARD SAYING/TEACHING Words that are difficult to interpret (Dan. 5:12 [KJV: "hard sentences"; NIV: "riddles"]) or to accept (Jesus' teaching about eating his flesh and drinking his blood [John 6:60; cf. 14:24; 18:19). See also Acts 4:2, 18; 5:28; 17:16–21.

HARE The Hebrew word *'arnebet* in Lev. 11:6; Deut. 14:7 is variously translated "rabbit" (NIV) or "hare" (NRSV, ESV, RSV, NET, NLT). Like rabbits, to which they are related, hares appear to chew a cud, although they do not. Israel has several indigenous species.

HAREM A harem typically was a large group of women (wives, concubines, virgins, plus any small children) associated with a king; they lived together in a secluded, restricted area of his palace and often were attended by eunuchs. Harems were common in the royal courts of the ancient Near East, including in Israelite royal life (2 Sam. 3:7; 5:13; 12:11; 19:5; 21:11; 1 Kings 11:3–4; 1 Chron. 3:9; 2 Chron. 11:21; Ps. 45:14; Eccles. 2:8).

The book of Esther describes a lengthy process where the women of Xerxes' court were gathered (2:3) in competition (2:4, 9), separated from family (2:11), and groomed (2:12), and, unless especially fortunate, had one night each with the king before being relegated to the second harem (2:13–14).

HAREPH The son of Hur, the grandson of Caleb, and the father (or founder) of Beth Gader (1 Chron. 2:51). He was part of the tribe of Judah.

HARETH *See* Hereth.

HARHAIAH The father of Uzziel. Uzziel was a goldsmith who worked on repairing Jerusalem's wall under the direction of Nehemiah (Neh. 3:8).

HARHAS Tikvah's father and Shallum's grandfather (2 Kings 22:14). Shallum was the husband of the prophetess Huldah. She warned Josiah that the people had not followed God's law, but because of Josiah's responsiveness and humility, God would withhold judgment until Josiah died (22:15–20).

HAR-HERES *See* Heres.

HARHUR One of the ancestors of the temple servants (Nethinim) who returned to Jerusalem after the Babylonian captivity under the leadership of Zerubbabel in 539 BC or soon after (Ezra 2:51; Neh. 7:53). The fact that many of the names in the list of ancestors are foreign has led to the belief that they were originally prisoners of war who were pressed into service to perform menial tasks as they assisted the Levites.

HARIM **(1)** A descendant of Aaron who was made priest under King David (1 Chron. 24:8). He probably was the ancestor of one of the remnant families that came back from the exile with Zerubbabel (Ezra 2:32; Neh. 7:35, 42). His descendants continued in the line of priesthood (Ezra 2:39). Some of them were found guilty of marrying foreign women, so they divorced their wives and offered guilt offerings for that evil (Ezra 10:18–21). **(2)** An ancestor of Malkijah, who was one of the people who repaired the wall of Jerusalem (Neh. 3:11). **(3)** A priest who signed Nehemiah's covenant to obey God's law (Neh. 10:5). **(4)** A clan leader who signed Nehemiah's covenant to obey God's law (Neh. 10:27).

HARIPH One of the "leaders of the people" who sealed the covenant with God following Ezra's public reading of the law (Neh. 10:19). Hariph is also named in a record of the returnees under Zerubbabel (Neh. 7:24). The parallel text in Ezra 2:18 gives the name "Jorah."

HARLOT The term "harlot," used especially in the KJV, RSV, and NASB, may refer either to cultic prostitutes who served in the temple or to women who provided sexual service for monetary gain. The NIV uses the term "harlot" only once, in Hosea 4:14, as a synonym for "prostitute." *See also* Prostitution.

HARMAGEDON An alternate transliteration of a word in the Greek text of Rev. 16:16 (NIV: "Armageddon"). Literally, it means "mountain of Megiddo." It is uncertain whether the term is being used literally in this verse or symbolically for a battlefield. *See also* Armageddon; Megiddo.

HARMON Speaking to the upper-class women of Samaria, God declares through Amos, "You will be cast out toward Harmon" (Amos 4:3). The identification of this place has been obscure since antiquity. Ancient versions suggest "Mount Remman" (LXX), "Armenia" (Symmachus), and "Hermon" (Vulgate). Because *har* is the Hebrew word for "mountain," "Harmon" might indicate the mountain around the nation of Minni (mentioned in Jer. 51:27), Amana (mentioned in Song 4:8), Mannai (in Assyria), or Hermal (in Syria). The other option is to identify “Harmon” with one of several similar-sounding Hebrew common nouns, including “palace” (KJV), “fortress” (NLT), or “dung heap” (NEB). If Amos’s threat is one of foreign deportation of captives, then it is attractive to understand “Harmon” as a place name. On the other hand, if the text is referring to the removal of corpses from a city following a siege, the translation “dung heap” is preferable.

HARMONY OF THE GOSPELS The desire to harmonize the differences between the canonical Gospels can be traced back to the second century, when Tatian (a second-century apologist) combined the four Gospels into one document known as the *Diatessaron* (Greek for “out of four”). This combined Gospel was used in the Syrian churches in the third and fourth centuries until it was replaced by the four canonical Gospels in the fifth century.

MATERIAL COMMON TO MORE THAN ONE GOSPEL

All four Gospels portray Jesus as leading a group of disciples, preaching, healing, performing miracles, being crucified, and being raised from the dead. Matthew was written for a Jewish or Jewish Christian audience, reminding them that Jesus fulfills the Hebrew Scriptures. Mark was written for a Gentile audience, focusing more on narrative than on teaching and portraying Jesus as a man of miraculous, powerful action. Luke shows Jesus as one who is especially concerned for the poor and those on the fringes of society. John explains that Jesus, the eternal Word of God, is not a second god, but rather the one true God, sent by the Father to renew Israel.

People who are familiar with the content of the Gospel stories often confuse the information from different accounts. For example, there is actually no single story in the Bible about a “rich young ruler”: only Matthew describes the man as young (Matt. 19:20), and only Luke mentions that the man was a ruler (Luke 18:18).

Some material is found in all four Gospels, including information about John the Baptist, the miracle of the feeding of the five thousand, and the story of the crucifixion and the resurrection (although the individual accounts of the resurrection differ). Some material appears in three Gospels, especially in Matthew, Mark, and Luke. These three Gospels have therefore been labeled the “Synoptic Gospels” (*syn* = together, *optic* = view). Stories found in all three Synoptic Gospels include the transfiguration (Matt. 17:1–13; Mark 9:2–13; Luke 9:28–36); the healing of Jairus’s daughter and of a woman with a flow of blood (Matt. 9:18–26; Mark 5:21–43; Luke 8:41–56); and the rich young ruler (Matt. 19:16–30; Mark 10:17–31; Luke 18:18–30). The details do not agree in every respect in each account, but clearly they represent the same story and exhibit linguistic dependence on the same source(s).

A significant amount of material appears in two of the four canonical Gospels. Matthew and Mark have the story of a Syrophoenician woman (Matt. 15:21–28; Mark 7:24–30), and both Mark and Luke tell the story of a widow’s offering to the temple treasury (Mark 12:41–44; Luke 21:1–4). The most significant body of teachings and sayings found in two Gospels is the material shared by Matthew and Luke. Each of the Gospels contains material that does not appear in any other Gospel. Mark has the smallest amount of such material, John the largest.

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN AND THE SYNOPTIC GOSPELS

Based on a study of the material common to more than one Gospel, and the material unique to one

Gospel, John's Gospel usually is seen as distinct from the other three. The most likely explanation for this is that John was written later, with knowledge of the other Gospels, and therefore the author saw no need to repeat most of this material (except what was central to his purposes). Some of the distinctive features of John's Gospel are the use of terminology such as "love," "light," "life," "truth," "abide," "knowledge," "world," and the "I am" statements. Furthermore, certain Synoptic terms are either rare or absent—for example, "kingdom," "demons," "power," "pity," "gospel," "preach," "repent," "parable," "tax collector." More so than the Synoptics, John is written from the vantage point of the resurrection and with the aid of hindsight as well as the Spirit. This is why the author of John's Gospel does not refrain from adding commentary to Jesus' words (e.g., 2:21–22; 7:39; 11:51–52; 12:16).

The Synoptic Gospels are more interrelated. In passages that appear in these three Gospels, there is often very close verbal agreement between them (e.g., the healing of the leper [Matt. 8:2; Mark 1:40–44; Luke 5:12–14]; the question of Jesus' authority [Matt. 21:23–27; Mark 11:27–33; Luke 20:1–8]), implying a common source. In many sections that are found in all three Synoptic Gospels, two agree extensively and the third diverges (e.g., Matt. 20:24–28 and Mark 10:41–45 against Luke 22:24–27). When two Gospels agree and one disagrees, Matthew and Mark often agree against Luke, and Luke and Mark often agree against Matthew; but Matthew and Luke do not often agree against Mark and never do so in regard to the order of material. At other points, the Gospel accounts diverge quite significantly when referring to the same events. The infancy narratives in Matthew are quite different from those in Luke. The two accounts of the parable of the wedding banquet (Matt. 22:2–14; Luke 14:16–24) differ so significantly that it is difficult to decide whether they are two versions of the same parable or two different stories. Reports on the resurrection diverge across all four Gospels.

It is possible that these similarities and differences can be traced back to the oral presentation of the gospel. Apostolic preaching would have formed itself into set ways of retelling the events of Jesus' ministry through repetition. These accounts may have been told originally in Aramaic before being translated into Greek to facilitate the Gentile mission. The authors of Matthew, Mark, and Luke could have been drawing from this common tradition in writing their Gospels. There is probably a degree of truth to this theory, but it cannot explain all the data. The theory does not account for similarities and differences in the order of events, nor does it explain why Matthew and Luke always return to Mark's order after they deviate from it. A common oral tradition does not adequately explain similar editorial comments (e.g., cf. Matt. 24:15 with Mark 13:14), which suggest a common written source.

Some have argued that the apostles or others wrote records of the words of Jesus (memorabilia), which were collected and written down topically, from which the Synoptic Gospels were composed. As the church grew numerically and geographically, various collections of these memorabilia were made. Again, this is not beyond the realm of possibility; however, working against this theory is the complete absence of any reference to such records. Furthermore, as with the oral theory, it does not explain agreement in the order of material. It does, however, highlight the probability that the evangelists were using written sources.

MARKAN PRIORITY AND Q

On the assumption that the writers of the Synoptic Gospels employed a written source(s), several scholars have tried to reconstruct this original written Gospel from the material in the Synoptic Gospels. This document, which scholars call the *Urevangelium* (German for "original Gospel"), ended up bearing very close similarities with the Gospel of Mark. This is not surprising, since nearly all of Mark is repeated in Matthew and Luke. This led to the belief that Mark was the most primitive Synoptic Gospel, and that it was a common source for Matthew and Luke.

This belief in Markan priority, which has gained increasing popularity since the nineteenth century, has helped explain the similarities among the Synoptic Gospels. Traditionally, Matthew was thought to be the first Gospel to be written, hence the order of the Gospels in our NT. This belief in Matthean priority was upheld by several early church writers such as Augustine, who saw Mark as an abridgement of Matthew (*Cons.* 1.2). Augustine may have been more influenced by the traditional ordering of the Gospels than by an analysis of the Gospels themselves. Mark's Gospel does not read like an abridgement; it is the shortest Gospel, but individual sections of it typically are longer and more detailed than in Matthew.

There are many reasons why the priority of Mark is probable. It is the shortest Gospel, containing 661 verses, whereas Matthew contains 1,068 and Luke contains 1,149. When their content is compared, 97.2 percent of Mark is paralleled in Matthew, and 88.4 percent of Mark is paralleled in Luke. It is easier to understand Matthew and Luke as using Mark and choosing to add additional material to it than to think of Mark as using Matthew, Luke, or both and deciding to omit material such as the birth narratives and the Sermon on the Mount. Mark has simpler Greek, which includes an extensive use of the present tense, redundancies (e.g., Mark 1:32: "that evening after sunset"; cf. Matt. 8:16: "when evening came"; Luke 4:40: "at sunset"), and various colloquialisms (e.g., the word for "mat" in Mark 2:4). Mark alone among the Gospels uses Aramaic terms such as *abba* (14:36), *talitha koum* (5:41), and *ephphatha* (7:34), although Matthew also mentions *Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani* (Matt. 27:46; Mark 15:34). It is easier to see how Luke and Matthew would have "improved" Mark than the reverse.

If we accept the priority of Mark, and Luke and Matthew's dependence upon it, there are still the sections of Matthew and Luke that bear strong similarities with each other. From an analysis of the text of Matthew and Luke, it appears that these two evangelists did not know each other's works. If one knew of the other's work, why the divergence in some material such as the birth narratives? Alongside this, however, there are close similarities in other material: Matthew has 4,290 words that have parallels in Luke but not in Mark, and Luke has 3,559 words that have parallels in Matthew but not in Mark. The solution appears to be that Matthew and Luke were dealing with some material that they held in common, and that each of them also had other material that he drew on independently. The material held in common is commonly called "Q" (from the German word *Quelle*, meaning "source"); the material unique to Matthew is called "M" and that which is unique to Luke, "L." Whether Q was a document is unknown, although it is more likely to be a collection of sources, as is also the case with M and L.

Many scholars argue that Q was a written rather than an oral source, based on the exact word parallels in the Greek text (e.g., Matt. 6:24 and Luke 16:13, where 27 of the 28 words are exactly the same). The presence of doublets (double accounts of the same incident) in Matthew and Luke may show dependence by the respective evangelists on both a Markan and a Q source (e.g., Luke 8:16; cf. Mark 4:21; Luke 11:33; cf. Matt. 5:15). Some scholars have tried to explain the sources geographically: Markan material originated in Rome, Q material in Antioch, M in Jerusalem, and L in Caesarea, but such speculations are far from proven.

SUMMARY

Within all of this, in seeking to understand the harmony of the Gospels, it is important to be aware of what we do not know. Many of the solutions focus on a history behind the text to which we do not have access. Modern literary critics have tended to focus more on the text itself than its prehistory. There is merit in this because it affirms the priority of the text and allows the reader to understand how a part of the text functions within the larger literary unit. It also allows the evangelists to be more than collectors of sources, to have written distinctive theological accounts. Their different emphases may explain some of the differences between the Gospels. This approach, however, also has its dangers. Some who focus on the text over its original intent distance the text from the author's purpose and therefore open the door for subjective interpretations that deny the difference between a correct and an incorrect reading of the text. It also raises the danger of reading an ancient text through modern eyes, losing sight of the original context.

The church has been well served by four Gospel traditions. The fact that esteem for the text has stopped overharmonization has been of great benefit, as the readers of the Gospels can appreciate various hues and emphases between the different accounts of the ministry of Jesus.

HARNEPHER One of the sons of Zophah of the tribe of Asher (1 Chron. 7:36).

HARNESS The term "harness" occurs three times as a verb in the context of restraints for oxen and horses (Job 39:10; Jer. 46:4; Mic. 1:13) and once for the human tongue (Ps. 50:19). In the KJV the term is also used as a synonym for armor (1 Kings 20:11; 22:34; 2 Chron. 9:24; 18:33).

HAROD A valley and spring in northern Israel where Gideon assembled his troops before the battle recorded in Judg. 7. The narrow Harod Valley connects the Jezreel Valley and the Jordan Rift Valley between the cities of Jezreel and Beth Shan. This fertile valley boasts several springs, including the spring of Harod (7:1). Here, before Gideon's army went into battle and defeated the Midianites, God reduced their numbers based on how the soldiers drank from the spring. After the battle, the Midianites fled southeast down the Harod Valley on their way back across the Jordan River. Years later, King Saul assembled his army in the same vicinity before his final, deadly battle with the Philistines (1 Sam. 28; 31).

Looking east down the Harod Valley

HARODITE Two of David’s mighty men, Shammah and Elika, were from Harod. The lists of David’s mighty men refer to Shammah the Harodite (2 Sam. 23:25) and Shammoth the Harorite (1 Chron. 11:27), the latter likely being a textual corruption.

HAROEH The son of Shobal, progenitor of Kiriath Jearim. The name in Hebrew means “the seer.” The same Hebrew word, *ro’eh,* is used by Hagar when she names God *’el ro’i*, meaning “God who sees me” (Gen. 16:13). The reading “Haroeh” (1 Chron. 2:52) may be corrupt, and many commentators choose to read it as “Reaiah,” based on the similar Calebite genealogy in 1 Chron. 4:2.

HARORITE *See* Harodite.

HAROSHETH *See* Harosheth Haggoyim.

HAROSHETH HAGGOYIM A place in northern Canaan that was home to Sisera (Judg. 4:2), the general who led the Canaanite coalition against the Israelite forces under Deborah and Barak. Sisera gathered the Canaanite chariotry from Harosheth Haggoyim at the Kishon River (4:13), which drains the central Jezreel Valley. They set out to cross toward Mount Tabor on the north, where the Israelite troops had mustered. After the Canaanite attack failed, the Israelites pursued the Canaanites back to Harosheth Haggoyim (4:16). This would seem to be located in the southern Jezreel Valley, across the Kishon from Mount Tabor. However, the name (which means “Harosheth of the Gentiles/Nations”) does not appear in any ancient sources outside of Judg. 4, and no suitable archaeological sites have been found in the vicinity. Some suggest that it was located in the narrow valley leading from the Jezreel toward the Mediterranean. Others argue that it was not a site but rather the region on the southern edge of the Jezreel Valley controlled by non-Israelites.

HAROSHETH OF THE GENTILES *See* Harosheth Haggoyim.

HARPOON Found only in Job 41:7, “harpoon” refers to the barb or spear that pierces the skin of the powerful Leviathan (perhaps a crocodile or some mythical creature). The term “harpoons” parallels “fishing spears” in the second half of the verse.

HARRAN A city or region approximately sixty miles north of the confluence of the Euphrates and the Balikh rivers. Abraham moved from Ur to Harran en route to Canaan (Gen. 11:26–12:5). There, Eliezer acquired Rebekah as a wife for Isaac (24:1–67), and Jacob later resided, marrying Leah and Rachel (29:1–30).

HARROW An agricultural implement designed to break up dirt clods and soften soil before the sowing of seed or to cover seeds after they have been sown. Biblical references are to the object itself (2 Sam. 12:31; 1 Chron. 20:3; NIV: “iron picks”) as well as to the verb “harrowing,” meaning the use of a harrow in a field (Job 39:10; Isa. 28:24; Hos. 10:11 NRSV).

HARSHA **(1)** One of the ancestors of the temple servants (Nethinim) who returned to Jerusalem after the Babylonian captivity under the leadership of Zerubbabel in 539 BC or soon after (Ezra 2:52; Neh. 7:54). The fact that many of the names in the list of ancestors are foreign has led to the belief that they were originally prisoners of war who were pressed into service to perform menial tasks as they assisted the Levites. **(2)** A Babylonian site where some exiles lived (Ezra 2:59). The clan of Harsha’s name may be associated with this place name.

HARUM The father of Aharhel, a Judahite clan leader (1 Chron. 4:8).

HARUMAPH The father of Jedaiah, who made repairs to the wall of Jerusalem opposite his house under the direction of Nehemiah (Neh. 3:10).

HARUPHITE Shephatiah the Haruphite was an ambidextrous man who, although related to Saul, defected from him to serve with David (1 Chron. 12:5). The designation “Haruphite” implies that he was from the clan of Hariph (Neh. 7:24; 10:19) or of Hareph (1 Chron. 2:51) or from an unknown town by either name.

HARUZ The father of Meshullemeth, who became the wife of Manasseh, king of Judah, and the mother of Manasseh’s royal successor, Amon. Haruz was from Jotbah (2 Kings 21:19).

HARVEST The harvest was a major event on the yearly calendar of Israel’s agrarian society (Lev. 25:11; Judg. 15:1; Ruth 1:22; 2 Sam. 21:9–10). Life was dependent on the harvest. As a result, God set certain rules with respect to the harvest to help the Israelites keep proper priorities. Every seven years and every fiftieth year, the people were to give the land a rest (Exod. 23:10; Lev. 25:20–22). The people were to rest on the Sabbath, even during the harvesttime (Exod. 34:21). Some portions of crops were to be left in the field so that the poor might have food (Lev. 19:9; 23:22; Deut. 24:21). The people were to acknowledge God as the source of the harvest by offering the first of the produce (Lev. 23:10). Celebrating the harvest was commanded (Exod. 23:16; Deut. 16:15; Isa. 9:3). Planning for the harvest was a mark of wisdom (Prov. 6:8; 10:5; 20:4). Even as a good harvest was the blessing of God (Ps. 67:6; Isa. 62:9), so a bad harvest was a curse from God and the plight of a fool (1 Sam. 12:17; Job 5:5; Prov. 26:1; Isa. 18:4–5; Jer. 8:13, 20; Joel 3:12; Mic. 6:15). Failure to acknowledge God for the harvest was a sin (Jer. 5:24).

Harvesting wheat

The harvest is often used in Scripture as an analogy. The prophets talk about the negative harvest of idolatry (Isa. 17:11). Israel is called the firstfruits of God’s harvest (Jer. 2:3). Hosea uses the idea of harvest to indicate that God’s people have a future (Hos. 6:11). In the Gospels, the harvest is used as an analogy for those needing to hear the good news (Matt. 9:37–38), for the end times (Matt. 13:24–30; Rev. 14:15), and for a lesson about unfaithful leadership (Matt. 21:33–46; 25:24). In the remainder of the NT, the harvest analogy usually refers to Christian growth and salvation (Rom. 1:13; 1 Cor. 9:10–11; 2 Cor. 9:10; Gal. 6:9; Heb. 12:11; James 3:18).

HARVEST, FEAST OF Another name for the Feast of Weeks (cf. Exod. 23:16; 34:22; NIV: “Festival of Harvest/Weeks”). *See also* Festivals.

HASADIAH A son of Zerubbabel, a descendant of King Jehoiachin (1 Chron. 3:20).

HASENUAH *See* Hassenaah.

HASHABIAH **(1)** A Levite from the family of Merari. He was the son of Amaziah and the father of Malluk, and his descendant Ethan was a priestly musician in the time of King David (1 Chron. 6:45). **(2)** A Levite from the family of Merari. He was the son of Bunni and the father of Azrikam, and his descendant Shemaiah was among the first to resettle in Jerusalem after the exile (1 Chron. 9:14; Neh. 11:15). **(3)** A priestly musician during David's reign. He played under the supervision of his father, Jeduthun, one of the three chief musicians under King David's direct oversight (1 Chron. 25:3, 19). **(4)** The leader of the Hebronite family charged with the religious and governmental affairs west of the Jordan River during David's reign (1 Chron. 26:30). **(5)** The son of Kemuel, he was an officer over the tribe of Levi (1 Chron. 27:17). **(6)** A Levitical chief who participated in the great Passover of King Josiah (2 Chron. 35:9).

(7) A Levite from the family of Merari, he journeyed with Ezra from Babylon to Jerusalem and assisted in the transportation of gold and silver for the temple (Ezra 8:19, 24). **(8)** The ruler of the half-district of Keilah. He helped Nehemiah rebuild the wall of Jerusalem (Neh. 3:17). He may be the same person as in Ezra 8:19, 24–25. **(9)** A Levite leader listed among those who signed the covenant of national renewal with Nehemiah (Neh. 10:11; 12:24). He may be the same person as in Ezra 8:19, 24. **(10)** The son of Mattaniah and the father of Bani, his grandson Uzzi was the chief officer of the Levites in Jerusalem under Nehemiah's governance (Neh. 11:22). **(11)** The head of the priestly family of Hilkiah when Joiakim was high priest (Neh. 12:21).

HASHABNAH One of the "leaders of the people" who sealed the covenant with God following Ezra's public reading of the law (Neh. 10:25).

HASHABNEIAH **(1)** The father of Hattush, who worked on repairing the wall of Jerusalem under the leadership of Nehemiah (Neh. 3:10). **(2)** One of the Levites who participated in the ceremony of confession and repentance after Ezra's reading of the law (Neh. 9:5).

HASHABNIAH *See* Hashabneiah.

HASHBADDANAH A man who was part of the group that stood on the platform with Ezra (on his left side) when he read the Torah to the people after returning from the Babylonian captivity. It is likely, though not certain, that he was a Levite (Neh. 8:4).

HASHEM A Gizonite whose sons were part of David's thirty mighty men (1 Chron. 11:34). In a parallel passage, 2 Sam. 23:32, his name is recorded as "Jashen."

HASHMONAH One of the places where the Israelites camped during their wanderings through the wilderness (Num. 33:29–30). The exact location is unknown.

HASHUB *See* Hasshub.

HASHUBAH A son of Zerubbabel, a descendant of King Jehoiachin (1 Chron. 3:20).

HASHUM The head of a clan that was part of the early return to Judah from Babylonian captivity in 539 BC or soon after (Ezra 2:19; Neh. 7:22). Seven members of this clan were later found guilty of intermarriage (Ezra 10:33). Hashum is also listed as one who stood by Ezra during the reading of the law (Neh. 8:4) and who sealed the covenant (10:18).

HASHUPHA *See* Hasupha.

HASIDEANS Hasideans are "pious ones." They are not mentioned in the canonical material, but the author of 1 Maccabees describes them as "mighty warriors" who were willing to die for the law (1 Macc. 2:42). At first they fought alongside Judas Maccabeus, but later they naively sought to make peace with the Hellenizers (1 Macc. 7:13; cf. 2 Macc. 14:6). They may have been forefathers of the Pharisees and the Essenes.

HASMONEANS A priestly family that led a Judean revolt against the Seleucids, starting around 167 BC (the "Maccabean revolt"). They eventually gained varying degrees of independence for Judea and established themselves as high priests and, for a few, as kings. They continued ruling, in differing capacities, until Rome made Herod king in 37 BC. *See also* Maccabees.

HASRAH A man described as the "keeper of the wardrobe," probably a royal official. His granddaughter-in-law was Huldah the prophet (2 Chron. 34:22). In the parallel text, 2 Kings 22:14, the same person is called "Harhas."

HASSENAAH According to Neh. 3:3, the men who rebuilt the Fish Gate during Nehemiah's effort to reconstruct the wall of Jerusalem were the "sons of Hassenaah." The name is likely associated with Senaah (Ezra 2:35; Neh. 7:38), one of the groups of returnees from the exile; in Hebrew, adding the definite article to "Senaah" results in "Hassenaah." "Hassenaah" may have been the name of a person, a place, or both.

HASSENUAH Two individuals are identified as being sons of fathers named Hassenuah (1 Chron. 9:7; Neh. 11:9). "Hassenaah" (Neh. 3:3) seems to be a variant spelling and may refer to the same family.

HASSHUB Several contemporaries of Ezra and Nehemiah have this name, which the KJV sometimes spells as "Hashub." It is difficult to determine how many distinct persons there are. **(1)** The father of Shemaiah, a Levite who settled in Jerusalem after the return from exile (Neh. 11:15; 1 Chron. 9:14). **(2)** One of the rebuilders of Jerusalem in the days of Nehemiah (Neh. 3:11, 23). **(3)** One of the "leaders of the people" who sealed the covenant with God following Ezra's public reading of the law (Neh. 10:23).

HASSOPHERETH An ancestor of a family that belonged to the "servants of Solomon" (Ezra 2:55; Neh. 7:57 ["Sophereth"]) and returned with Zerubbabel in 539 BC or soon after. Little is known about this group except that it likely performed menial functions at the temple, as it is grouped with the "temple servants" (*see* Nethinim). The name of the group suggests that it was formed during the period of Solomon, though it could have been so named because Solomon built the first temple.

HASUPHA One of the ancestors of the temple servants (Nethinim) who returned to Jerusalem after the Babylonian captivity under the leadership of Zerubbabel in 539 BC or soon after (Ezra 2:43; Neh. 7:46). The fact that many of the names in the list of ancestors are foreign has led to the belief that they were originally prisoners of war who were pressed into service to perform menial tasks as they assisted the Levites.

HAT In Dan. 3:21 the KJV renders the Aramaic word *karbela'* as "hat," referring to the head covering of Daniel's three friends as they are thrown in the furnace (NIV: "turban"; NASB: "cap").

HATACH *See* Hathak.

HATE, HATRED A feeling of animosity, a disposition toward hostility, rejection, or negative favoritism.

Hate is as old as the conflict between Cain and Abel or as the rebellion of Satan. Many stories involve hatred and animosity between people (e.g., Gen. 37:4; 2 Sam. 13:22). Beside humans hating each other, people hate God and that which is morally upright (Exod. 20:5; Deut. 5:9; 7:10; 32:41; Pss. 68:1; 81:15; 120:6). It is correct, however, to hate sin (Pss. 97:10; 101:3; Prov. 8:13), as God does (Ps. 5:6; Prov. 6:16–19; Isa. 61:8; Rev. 2:6), though he takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked (Ezek. 18:23; 33:11). The two great commandments oppose the tendency to hate by calling us to love God wholly and love our neighbor as ourselves (Lev. 19:18; Deut. 6:5; 10:12; Matt. 22:37; Mark 12:33; Luke 10:27). The reverse is also commanded: we should not hate our neighbor (Lev. 19:17) nor even hate our enemy, but rather do good and pray for our enemy (Exod. 23:4–5; Prov. 25:21; Matt. 5:44; Luke 6:27; cf. Deut. 10:19). Hateful actions are not necessarily motivated by hateful feelings, as a father who does not give needed punishment to his son is said to treat him with hatred (Prov. 13:24).

With regard to a hate crime, the main issue was intent—that is, whether an accident had occurred or whether a murder had been committed deliberately, "with malice aforethought" (Num. 35:20). Hate was a criterion of intent and had to be established by multiple witnesses for the two parties involved. Having hate did not garner greater punishment or make it a worse crime; hatred signified that it was a crime because it was intentional (Deut. 4:42; 19:4, 6, 11; Josh. 20:5).

With regard to marriage, in a polygamous marriage there was a danger of preferential treatment: a loved wife and a hated wife. The law forbids reducing the care of one wife in favor of another (Exod. 21:10) and protects the rights of the firstborn son even if he is born to the hated wife (Deut. 21:15–17). Hatred may be expressed by either party withholding conjugal relations. This probably lies behind the description in Gen. 29:31 of Jacob hating Leah (some translations say "unloved").

Rejection, favoritism, or preference may be called "hate," as in the case of a nonpreferred wife in a polygamous marriage, in not choosing Esau to continue the covenant line (Mal. 1:2–3; Rom. 9:13), or in not having a greater love for Christ than anything else (Matt. 6:24; Luke 14:26; John 12:25).

HATHACH *See* Hathak.

HATHAK A eunuch who served the Persian king Xerxes (Ahasuerus) and was assigned to Queen Esther. Esther used Hathak as a messenger and intermediary to communicate with her cousin Mordecai when Mordecai was trying to inform Esther about Haman's decree of extermination against the Jews and motivate her to take action (Esther 4:5–10).

HATHATH One of the two sons of Othniel (1 Chron. 4:13).

HATIPHA One of the ancestors of the temple servants (Nethinim) who returned to Jerusalem after the Babylonian captivity under the leadership of Zerubbabel in 539 BC or soon after (Ezra 2:54; Neh. 7:56). The fact that many of the names in the list of ancestors are foreign has led to the belief that they were originally prisoners of war who were pressed into service to perform menial tasks as they assisted the Levites.

HATITA A priestly gatekeeper at the time of the early postexilic period (Ezra 2:42; Neh. 7:45).

HATTIL An ancestor of a family that belonged to the "servants of Solomon" (Ezra 2:57; Neh. 7:59) and that returned with Zerubbabel in 539 BC or soon after. Little is known about this group except that it likely performed menial functions at the temple, as it is grouped with the "temple servants" (*see* Nethinim). The name of the group suggests that it was formed during the period of Solomon, though it could have been so named because Solomon built the first temple.

HATTUSH **(1)** A descendant of Zerubbabel, and a son of Shemaiah or Shekaniah (1 Chron. 3:22). Irregularities in the text might indicate that Hattush was the brother of Shemaiah and son of Shekaniah (cf. Ezra 8:2; 1 Esd. 8:29). He was the head of David's descendants who accompanied Ezra from Babylon. **(2)** The son of Hashabneiah who helped rebuild Jerusalem during Nehemiah's time (Neh. 3:10). **(3)** A leader who signed the covenant of renewal during the days of Ezra (Neh. 10:4). **(4)** A priest who accompanied Zerubbabel and Shealtiel in returning to Jerusalem (Neh. 12:2), probably the same person as Neh. 10:4.

HAURAN An area of land located east of the Jordan River and north of the Yarmuk River, encompassing the biblical territory of Bashan. It was one of the eastern boundary markers for the territory of Israel mentioned in Ezek. 47:16, 18. Hauran was mentioned as part of one of the campaigns of Shalmaneser III and later was conquered by Tiglath-pileser III. It is also mentioned as part of the campaign of Ashurbanipal. After the exile, the Jews, the Greeks, and the Nabateans vied for control of this territory. It was subjugated by the Maccabeans in the second century BC before coming under Roman control. Today the area is known as Jebel ed-Druze.

HAVEN A port or harbor that allows safe anchorage for boats (Gen. 49:13; cf. Ps. 107:30). *See also* Fair Havens.

HAVILAH **(1)** A son of Cush (Gen. 10:7; 1 Chron. 1:9). **(2)** A son of Joktan, descendant of Shem (Gen. 10:29; 1 Chron. 1:23). The name has been related to the name of certain Arabic tribes. **(3)** A land surrounded by the Pishon River and used to describe the location of the garden of Eden. It is characterized by its abundance of fine gold, bdellium, and onyx stones (Gen. 2:11–12). Although the passage is somewhat enigmatic, it appears that Havilah lies outside the garden. Havilah is used elsewhere in connection with Shur to describe the boundaries of the land of the Ishmaelites (Gen. 25:18) and the geographical extent of Saul's victory over the Amalekites (1 Sam. 15:7). Havilah lies outside the land of Israel. It likely refers to some part of Arabia or to Arabia in general, since this region is characterized by gold, bdellium, and onyx stones and is associated with the Ishmaelites; its name may be associated with the name of a region in southwest Arabia.

HAVVOTH JAIR A group of Amorite villages captured by the Manassehite Jair (Num. 32:41; Deut. 3:14) during the Israelite conquest of the land east of the Jordan River. The name means “the villages of (the person) Jair.” These villages were located in the Bashan region east of Galilee. Moses granted these villages to the half-tribe of Manasseh (Deut. 3:13). Curiously, the sons of a later Gileadite judge, also named “Jair,” are said to have controlled thirty towns in Gilead, which are also called “Havvoth Jair” (Judg. 10:4), apparently implying a connection between the judge Jair and the naming of the region.

The number of villages that comprised the region appears to fluctuate somewhat throughout Israelite history. Some biblical texts (Deut. 3:13–14; Josh. 13:30; 1 Kings 4:13) indicate that Havoth Jair consisted of sixty villages, while Judg. 10:4 seems to view thirty villages comprising the region (associated with the thirty sons of the Gileadite judge). Alternatively, 1 Chron. 2:22 indicates that Jair comprised twenty-three villages, which together with the surrounding villages of Kenath total sixty villages (1 Chron. 2:23). This may be due to differing traditions as to which villages were to be included within the region proper, or it may indicate fluctuations in population and/or actual changes in territorial boundaries throughout Israelite history.

HAWK Hawks, like other birds of prey, are unclean (Lev. 11:16; Deut. 14:15). Numerous species of hawk and falcon exist in Israel, some being migrants (Job 39:26). It is uncertain which Hebrew word refers to which.

HAZAEL The king of Damascus around 842–800 BC, Hazael was a high officer of Ben-Hadad before he seized the throne by assassinating him (2 Kings 8:7–15). Although Hazael was a usurper, whom Assyrians called “the son of a nobody,” his reign brought the kingdom of Damascus to the zenith of its power. The Israelites, however, remembered him as the perpetrator of horrible cruelties against them (2 Kings 8:12). Thus, later, when Amos predicted vengeance upon Damascus, he foretold that fire would consume “the house of Hazael” (Amos 1:4).

Ivory carving depicting King Hazael of Damascus (Arslan Tash, eighth century BC)

In 2 Kings 9:15–17 Hazael appears as the ally of Yahwism against Baalism. He indirectly aided Jehu's coup against Joram (9:14–15). After successfully withstanding an attack by Shalmaneser III (841 BC), he turned to menace the kingdoms of both Israel and Judah throughout the reigns of Jehu and Jehoahaz. He took the whole of the Transjordan south up to the Moabite frontier (10:32–33) and reduced the Israelite army to a minimum (13:7). Joash king of Judah had to bribe Hazael with the treasures stripped from the temple and the palace to save Jerusalem (12:17–18). After Hazael's death, he was succeeded by his son Ben-Hadad III, which prompted Jehoash son of Jehoahaz to take back the land Hazael had taken from his father (13:24–25). Hazael's empire came to an end when the Assyrian king Adad-nirari III conquered Damascus in 796 BC.

HAZAIAH An ancestor of Maaseiah and a resident of Jerusalem during the time of Ezra and

Nehemiah (Neh. 11:5).

HAZAR The name “Hazar” comes from a Hebrew root meaning “enclosure” and refers to a village or a permanent enclosed settlement without a wall. It always occurs in the plural except when prefixed to names of places (Hazar Addar, Hazar Enan, Hazar Gaddah, Hazar Hatticon, Hazar Shual, Hazar Susah, Hazar Susim). The term may refer to seminomadic settlements; however, it should not be confused with a mobile encampment. In Hebrew the word may also refer to a palace court or the courtyard of a private dwelling place. *See also* Hazerim.

HAZAR ADDAR A village listed in Num. 34:4 as part of the southern boundary of Canaan, southeast of Kadesh Barnea. It is now associated with the modern location of ‘Ain Qedeis in Egypt.

HAZAR ENAN Part of the ideal northeastern border of Israel (Num. 34:9–10), also in Ezekiel’s vision of a restored Israel (Ezek. 47:17; 48:1). The location is unknown, but many have suggested Qaryatein, approximately seventy miles northeast of Damascus.

HAZAR ENON *See* Hazar Enan.

HAZAR GADDAH One of the towns along the southern border of the territory of Judah (Josh. 15:27). The exact location is unknown but may be near Beersheba.

HAZAR HATTICON *See* Hazer Hattikon.

HAZARMAVETH A son of Joktan in the Table of Nations (Gen. 10:26; 1 Chron. 1:20). Found in the line of Shem, Joktan was a son of Eber and an ancestor of South Arabian tribes.

HAZAR SHUAL Listed on the southern border of the territory of Judah (Josh. 15:28), it is also listed in the tribal inheritance of Simeon (Josh. 19:3; 1 Chron. 4:28). Some of the people of Judah lived there after the return from exile (Neh. 11:27).

HAZAR SUSAH, HAZAR SUSIM Listed in the inheritance of Simeon (Josh. 19:5 in fem. sg., *susah*; 1 Chron. 4:31 in masc. pl., *susim*). Most of Simeon’s allotment is also listed within the territory of Judah, so in Josh. 15:31 “Sansannah” may be an older name associated with the town that perhaps was changed at the time of Solomon. Its modern location is not known for certain but may be at either Khirbet esh-Shamsaniyat or Sbalat Abu Susein, twenty miles west of Beersheba.

HAZAZON TAMAR *See* Hazezon Tamar.

HAZEL In Gen. 30:37 the KJV translates the Hebrew word *luz* as “hazel,” referring to a nut tree that is more precisely identified as an almond tree (so NIV, NRSV).

HAZELELPONI *See* Hazzelelponi.

HAZER HATTICON *See* Hazer Hattikon.

HAZER HATTIKON Part of the ideal northeastern boundary of Israel, on the border of Hauran in

Syria (Ezek. 47:16). The location is unknown, but on the basis of the context it has been suggested that the text should read “Hazar Enan” (Ezek. 47:17).

HAZERIM In Deut. 2:23 the KJV translates the Hebrew word *khatserim* as a place name, “Hazerim,” whereas more-recent translations interpret it as a common noun, “settlements” (NRSV) or “villages” (NIV). *See also* Hazar.

HAZEROTH Third stop for the Israelites on the wilderness journey after leaving Mount Sinai (Num. 11:35; 12:16; 33:17–18). Here, Miriam and Aaron confronted Moses regarding his Cushite wife (12:1). Their attack seemed to be broader than the ethnicity of Moses’ wife, deriving from their jealousy that God spoke only to Moses (12:2). God heard their complaint and called them to the tent of meeting, where he appeared at the entrance in a pillar of cloud and vindicated his servant Moses, reminding them that he spoke with Moses “face to face.” Subsequently, in judgment, God’s presence left the tent of meeting, and Miriam became leprous. Upon Moses’ intercession, God restored her to health one week later.

HAZEZON TAMAR An Amorite village defeated by Kedorlaomer and his allies (Gen. 14:7). In the narrative it appears to be between “En Mishpat (that is, Kadesh)” and “the Valley of Siddim.” If so, this site may be identified with the Tamar in Ezek. 47:19; 48:28 and would be the modern location of Ain Husb (twenty miles south of the Dead Sea). According to 2 Chron. 20:2, an army of Moabites and Ammonites passed through it on the way to attack Jehoshaphat. Here, Hazezon Tamar is identified as En Gedi (on the west side of the Dead Sea). If both of these designations are correct, it is unlikely that both texts refer to the same location. *See also* En Gedi; Tamar.

HAZIEL A Levite in the Gershonite group during the time of David and/or Solomon, he was one of the three sons of Shimei (1 Chron. 23:9).

HAZO The fifth son of Milkah and Nahor (Gen. 22:22).

HAZOR **(1)** From both a biblical and an archaeological point of view, the most important place named “Hazor” was at modern Tell el-Qedah, a site in the Huleh Valley some eight miles north of the Sea of Galilee. The site was occupied beginning in the third millennium BC (Early Bronze Age). The Middle Bronze Age city was destroyed by burning, but the site was rebuilt in the Late Bronze Age (sixteenth to thirteenth centuries BC) and flourished as a Canaanite city-state. This city was destroyed in the thirteenth century BC in an event that some have correlated to the conquest of the land under Joshua (Josh. 11:13 [see below]). The city was built up and fortified again during the period of the Israelite monarchy, under Solomon (1 Kings 9:15) and again under the northern Omride dynasty. Following the destruction by the Assyrian king Tiglath-pileser III (2 Kings 15:29), the site served as an Assyrian garrison before finally being abandoned in the fourth century BC.

Excavations at Hazor

Hazor figures prominently in several biblical accounts and, consequently, in several important debates concerning the Bible and history. As noted above, Hazor is among several cities that Joshua was supposed to have conquered (Josh. 11:13). In the case of Hazor, the destruction of the city by burning is noted as an exceptional circumstance. The king of Hazor was named “Jabin” (Josh. 11:1), a name that appears later in the time of Deborah and Barak, when Hazor was once again a center of Canaanite power (Judg. 4:2, 17) and hostile toward the Israelites. Although archaeological discoveries do not uniformly corroborate the biblical descriptions of the overall program of Joshua’s conquest (Ai and Jericho are notable problems), the evidence at Hazor of a massive destruction by fire in the late thirteenth century BC suggests a historical underpinning for Josh. 11:13. In terms of broader biblical chronology, this correlation presupposes a late date for the exodus.

Hazor once again rises to prominence in biblical history in the war waged by Deborah and Barak, when it is again ruled by a powerful Canaanite king named “Jabin” (Judg. 4:2 [ostensibly in the Iron Age I period, 1200–1000 BC]). The Bible gives no account of the resurgence of Hazor following its destruction by Joshua, though the name of its ruler and his Canaanite identity suggest a certain degree of continuity between the city that Joshua utterly destroyed and the foe of Deborah. As for the archaeological evidence, there is none for a fortified royal Canaanite city of the type implied in Judges. Following the destruction of the Late Bronze Age city, there was little activity until the tenth century BC.

The tenth century BC saw the construction of massive fortifications at Hazor, including a large gate. Following the biblical account, this evidence belongs to Solomon's program of building throughout the country and corresponds to the identification of Hazor as one of several regional administrative capitals (1 Kings 9:15). This statement has been contested by those who would date the rise of the Israelite state to the time of the Omrides (and thus relegate the united monarchy of David and Solomon to the realm of legend); Hazor (along with Megiddo and Gezer) is among the sites whose interpretation is central to the debate over the "high" and "low chronologies" of Israelite history. At any rate, the "Solomonic" city was destroyed in the late ninth century, possibly as a part of the invasion of the Aramean king Ben-Hadad (1 Kings 15:20 [Hazor is not mentioned, though it is encompassed in the region more generally described; see also Josh. 19:36–37]).

The Bible does not describe a subsequent rebuilding of the city, but it was again destroyed by the Assyrian king Tiglath-pileser III in 732 BC (2 Kings 15:29), an event evidenced in the archaeology of the site. The repeated destructions of Hazor testify to the importance of its site along the "Way of the Sea" from Egypt to the northern Levant.

(2) Jeremiah 49:28–33 describes Nebuchadnezzar's campaign against "Kedar and the kingdoms of Hazor." Based on the association with Kedar and the description of Hazor as "a nation that has neither gates nor bars" (49:31), and a people with camels and herds (49:32), the Hazor of this passage appears to be a nomadic tribal entity rather than the heavily fortified city of Solomonic times.

(3) In its description of Judahite territory, Josh. 15:23–25 refers to Hazor (15:23), Hazor Hadattah, and "Kerioth Hezron (that is, Hazor)" (15:25). Based on the occurrence of these place names in a list of Judahite sites, they are distinct from the northern city (Tell el-Qedah).

(4) Nehemiah 11:33 lists Hazor among the settlements of the Benjamites after the exile. It is not clear whether this location is distinct from those listed in Josh. 15:23–25.

HAZOR HADATTAH A town that was part of the tribe of Judah's traditional territorial allotment (Josh. 15:25). It was located in the southernmost part of Judah, near the border with Edom. Although the KJV translates the name as two separate towns, most scholars believe that Hazor Hadattah is one town.

HAZZEBAIM *See* Pokereth-Hazzebaim.

HAZZELELPONI The daughter of Etam, and the sister of Jezreel, Ishma, and Idbash, listed in the genealogy of Judah (1 Chron. 4:3). The exact relationship of Etam to Judah is unclear due to a textual ambiguity. The Hebrew reads "these the father of Etam." It has been suggested that something was omitted by a copyist between "these" and "father." If so, then it is possible that Etam may not have been her father, but rather a brother. Since many of the other names are place names, it has also been suggested that "Hazzelelponi" is the place name of an unknown location.

HAZZOBEBAH A son or daughter of Koz, descending from Judah (1 Chron. 4:8). Other versions translate this name as "Zobebah."

HEAD In both Testaments "head" can refer to the literal head of the physical body or be symbolic of leadership and the source of provision.

The physical head played a significant role in Jewish and Christian customs. Cutting off an opponent's head was a symbol of victory (1 Sam. 17:46; 1 Chron. 10:9–10). The consecration of priests and kings was done by anointing the head with oil (Exod. 29:7; Lev. 8:12; 1 Sam. 10:1).

Contrition and shame were displayed by covering one's head (2 Sam. 15:30; Jer. 14:3). Grief was expressed by casting dust or ashes on the head (Job 1:20; 2 Sam. 13:19; 15:32; Lam. 2:10; Ezek. 27:30; Rev. 18:19) or shaving one's own head (Job 1:20; Jer. 16:6). The head was the place for receiving blessing, as when Jacob laid his hands on Manasseh and Ephraim to bless them (Gen. 48:14), or guilt, as when Solomon declared that the guilt over the blood of the two Israelite commanders murdered by Joab would rest "on the head of Joab and his descendants forever" (1 Kings 2:33). Lifting up the head was associated with the giving of life in terms of success (Gen. 40:13; Judg. 8:28; Ps. 27:6).

Because of the prominent physical role of the head as the topmost and preeminent part of the body, it was often used as a symbol for leadership and the source of provision. Ancient medical writers such as Hippocrates and Galen viewed the head as the leading member of the body. Ancient political writers adapted the idea and applied it to military and political leaders, such as Nero, who was called the "head" of Rome. For the political writers in particular, the emphasis often was on the power and authority of the head.

Examples of this use of "head" as leader and source of provision in the Bible include Judg. 10:18, where the leaders of Gilead declare that whoever launches the attack against the Ammonites will be the head of the inhabitants of Gilead. After the elders successfully appeal to Jephthah, the people make him "head and commander" over them (Judg. 11:11). Christ's ruling function is emphasized in Col. 2:10, where he is called the "head over every power and authority." In Eph. 4:16 Paul states that Christ as the head is the one "from [whom] the whole body . . . grows and builds itself up in love."

In the NT, Paul's use of the metaphor for the relationship between Christ and the church and husbands and wives is particularly significant. When Paul applies the metaphor to Christ and the church, he implies that Christ provides both leadership to the body as well as the nourishment needed for its continued growth. Thus, in Col. 2:19 the head is the one "from whom the whole body . . . grows as God causes it to grow," and in Eph. 5:23–24 Christ is "the head of the . . . body," the one to whom the church submits.

Paul uses the head/body metaphor in reference to Christ with some flexibility. Whereas Christ is the head of the church, his body, in Ephesians and Colossians, in 1 Cor. 11:3 his headship is part of a series in which God is the head of Christ, Christ is the head of man, and man is the head of woman. In Eph. 1:22 he is head over the entire universe.

In Eph. 5:21–33 the head/body metaphor is applied to the relationship between husbands and wives, and specifically in comparison with Christ and the church's relationship as head and body. As Christ is the head of the church, so is the husband the head of the wife. Thus, both provide leadership and growth to their respective bodies. It is important to note that the husband's role as head is defined in terms of loving his wife and bringing her to holiness. The husband's headship does not consist of an arbitrary power over his wife, especially one based on his own interests and whims. Rather, it is a sacrificial leadership that reflects Christ's love for the church. It is a leadership in which he gives his life for his wife as Christ gave his life for the church and nourishes her by providing what is most beneficial for her. *See also* Head of the Church.

HEADBAND, HEADDRESS Similar to turbans, these items of clothing were wrapped around the head primarily to provide protection from the sun (1 Kings 20:38) or because they were required for priests (Exod. 29:6; Zech. 3:5). Due to Israel's climate, they were likely used with great frequency, and ancient art confirms their widespread use. The Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser III (858–824 BC) depicts King Jehu with a pointed cap. The Lachish reliefs, portraying Sennacherib's defeat of the

Judean city Lachish, picture men with fringed headscarves covering their ears. The women are pictured with a mantle pulled over the head. Married women in Israel were required to wear a veil covering their head, but unmarried women had veils to cover the face (Gen. 24:65; 38:14–15). In NT times women wore a veil especially in worship contexts (1 Cor. 11:2–16).

HEAD OF THE CHURCH A metaphor used by the apostle Paul to speak of Christ's relationship with the church, which he calls the "body of Christ" (1 Cor. 12:27). With the headship image Paul highlights Christ's authority over all things (Eph. 1:22) and his vital union with the body (1:23). He portrays Christ as the goal of Christian maturity and growth (4:15) and as one deserving the church's submission (5:23). Paul also employs headship language in the midst of a presentation of Christ as preeminent and divine, the creator and unifier (Col. 1:18).

When the Greek word for "head" (*kephalē*) is used figuratively of a person, it frequently depicts one of superior rank who occupies a role of authority over another (similar to the "headmaster" of a school). Possibly, *kephalē* can be used to describe one who is the source of another (similar to the "headwaters" of a river) or to merely emphasize an organic relationship of unity and interconnectedness with a body. *See also* Head.

HEADS OF GRAIN The grain-bearing head of a cereal plant. Harvested with a sickle and threshed, the extracted kernels were eaten fresh (Deut. 23:25), roasted as grits (Lev. 2:14, 16), or ground into flour for bread. Jesus' disciples are criticized for, on the Sabbath, plucking heads of grain, rubbing off the husks with their hands, and eating the kernels (Luke 6:1–5 pars.).

HEADSTONE *See* Capstone.

HEALING The restoration to full health of one who has been ill or injured. The Bible makes a few brief references to standard "medical" attempts to heal people. For example, Jeremiah mentions a balm of Gilead (Jer. 8:22; 46:11), and Isaiah orders a "poultice of figs" to be applied to a boil on King Hezekiah (Isa. 38:21). But medical treatment in the biblical world was primitive and often based more on superstition than on understanding. Before the advent of modern medicine, most injuries and sicknesses were quite serious; treatments and therapies were rarely effective. Most of the healing mentioned in the Bible, therefore, is of a miraculous nature and associated with divine empowerment.

Old Testament. In the OT, the occurrences of healing miracles, as well as other miracles, are not evenly distributed throughout Israel's history but instead are concentrated in two time periods: that of the exodus, and that of Elijah and Elisha (1 Kings 17–2 Kings 13). During these two eras, miracles in general, and healing in particular, authenticated God's prophets and leaders and authenticated the word of God spoken by these prophets and leaders.

The OT prophets, Jeremiah in particular, frequently use the imagery of wounds and sickness to describe the apostasy and the terrible spiritual situation of Israel and Judah. In his first twenty-nine chapters, while Jeremiah is bemoaning the fact that the people of Judah have turned to other gods and refuse to repent, he regularly uses imagery of sickness and wounds. He declares that Israel/Judah is wounded and/or sick, but that there is no healing for them, only judgment. He asks, for example, "Is there no balm in Gilead? . . . Why then is there no healing for the wound of my people?" (Jer. 8:22). This theme is repeated in the book (8:15; 10:19; 14:19; 15:18).

In Jer. 30–33, however, Jeremiah turns to the glorious restoration brought about by the coming

Messiah. Part of this glorious restoration, Jeremiah declares, will be a drastic reversal from a time of sickness with no healing (symbolizing sin and defiance) to a time characterized by healing and health. For example, in 30:12–15 God uses physical sickness and wounds in his imagery to describe the serious, incurable spiritual sickness in Jerusalem. Yet in stark contrast to statements like these, in the passages that follow God looks to the messianic future and proclaims, “But I will restore you to health and heal your wounds” (30:17). Isaiah uses similar imagery, but he expands it by adding that people will ultimately be healed through the suffering and the wounds (i.e., the death) of the coming Messiah (Isa. 53:4–5).

New Testament. In the Gospels, healing is a significant component of Jesus’ ministry. Although the prophets used sickness/healing imagery primarily in a metaphorical sense to describe the spiritual condition of Israel and Judah, Jesus actually fulfills their prophecies both figuratively and literally. That is, not only does Jesus heal people spiritually, providing forgiveness and restoration to wholeness, but also he frequently heals people physically (blindness, leprosy, paralysis, etc.), ironically fulfilling figurative prophecies in a literal manner. The Greek word for “to save” (*sōzō*) can also mean “to heal,” thus adding to this dual idea of literal healing that is also figurative of spiritual salvation. For example, when Jesus turns to the bleeding woman who touches him in faith, he declares to her, “Your faith has healed [*sōzō*] you” (Mark 5:34). Here the word *sōzō* can indicate either physical healing (her bleeding had stopped) or spiritual healing (forgiveness of sins and deliverance from judgment).

Sarcophagus showing the healing of two blind men and the woman with the issue of blood (AD 375–400)

Jesus frequently heals people throughout his ministry here on earth. His acts of healing authenticate him as the fulfillment of specific OT messianic prophecies and also highlight the fact that he comes in great power, a power that identifies him with the Lord, the great healer in the OT. In addition, Jesus’ acts of healing announce and characterize the inbreaking of the kingdom of God, underscoring that in the ultimate consummation of the kingdom all sickness (as well as blindness, leprosy, lameness, etc.) will be eliminated. This theme is continued at the end of the book of Revelation as John depicts the tree of life growing on both sides of the river of the water of life. The leaves from this tree, John concludes, “are for the healing of the nations” (22:1–2).

HEALING, DIVINE *See* Healing.

HEALTH The concept of health is translated by no less than twelve different words in the Bible, incorporating the physical, social, and spiritual dimensions of life. Perhaps the most inclusive biblical term for health is the Hebrew word *shalom*, often translated “peace,” which embraces both the private (health, wholeness, prosperity, deliverance) and public (friendship, absence of war) spheres of life, with the basic sense of wholeness and well-being (e.g., Lev. 26:6; Num. 6:26; Pss. 7:4; 29:11; Prov. 14:30; Lam. 3:17). *Shalom* is God’s presence and favor toward his people, who share these graces with their neighbors (Matt. 10:13; John 14:26–27).

Physically, a healthy person enjoys fullness of body (Ps. 73:4; Dan. 1:15), without being overweight (Judg. 3:17). John the elder wishes Gaius “good health” (*hygiainō*) in 3 John 2. Another quality is a sound mind, the ability to produce benefit for others and cope with loss and suffering. Oppression and poverty hinder well-being. Health is also a joyous feeling of restoration after illness (Isa. 38:16). The Greek adjective *hygiēs* (“whole,” “healthy”) and related verb *hygiainō* (“be whole/healthy”) are commonly used of the results of healing in the Gospels (e.g., Matt. 12:13; 15:31; Luke 5:31; 7:10; John 5:9, 11).

Scripture also presumes a spiritual component to health (Ps. 38:3; Prov. 3:7–8). Although the Gospels distinguish illness from demonic oppression, the line is not as thick as we find in the works of Hippocrates (c. 460–370 BC), the father of Western medicine, who argues that diseases have natural origins. The gospel unequivocally denies ultimate well-being without reconciliation between the Creator and the creation, source and derivation, God and human being.

HEART Physiologically, the heart is an organ in the body, and in the Bible it is also used in a number of metaphors. The NT uses the Greek term *kardia* similarly to the OT Hebrew terms *leb* and *lebab* and in some cases depends on OT usage.

MIND AND EMOTIONS

Metaphorically, the heart refers to the mind, the will, the seat of emotions, or even the whole person. It also refers to the center of something or its inner part. These metaphors come from the heart’s importance and location.

Mind. The heart refers to the mind, but not the brain, and in these cases does not involve human physiology. It is a metaphor, and while the neurophysiology of the heart may be interesting in its own right, it has no bearing on this use of language. We also should not confuse some modern English idioms or distinctions as being related to the biblical viewpoint. The Bible does not make a distinction between “head knowledge” and “heart knowledge,” nor does it employ language making the “heart” good or superior and the “head/mind” bad, inferior, or merely intellectual. It does not prize the emotional over the thoughtful; it has a more integrated viewpoint.

Deuteronomy 6:5 issues the command to love God with all one’s heart, soul, and strength. When the command is repeated in the Gospels, it occurs in three variations (Matt. 22:37; Mark 12:30; Luke

10:27). Common to all three is the addition of the word "mind." The Gospel writers want to be sure that the audience hears Jesus adding "mind," but this addition is based on the fact that the meaning of the Hebrew word for "heart" includes the mind.

The mental activities of the metaphorical heart are abundant. The heart is where a person thinks (Gen. 6:5; Deut. 7:17; 1 Chron. 29:18; Rev. 18:7), where a person comprehends and has understanding (1 Kings 3:9; Job 17:4; Ps. 49:3; Prov. 14:13; Matt. 13:15). The heart makes plans and has intentions (Gen. 6:5; 8:21; Prov. 20:5; 1 Chron. 29:18; Jer. 23:20). One believes with the heart (Luke 24:25; Acts 8:37; Rom. 10:9). The heart is the site of wisdom, discernment, and skill (Exod. 35:34; 36:2; 1 Kings 3:9; 10:24). The heart is the place of memory (Deut. 4:9; Ps. 119:11). The heart plays the role of conscience (2 Sam. 24:10; 1 John 3:20–21).

It is often worth the effort to substitute "mind" for "heart" when reading the Bible in order to grasp the mental dimension. For example, after telling the Israelites to love God with all their heart, Moses says, "These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts" (Deut. 6:6). Reading it instead as "be on your mind" changes our perspective, and in this case the idiom "on your mind" is clearer and more accurate. The following verses instruct parents to talk to their children throughout the day about God's words. In order for parents to do this, God's requirements and deeds need to be constantly on their minds, out of their love for him. Similarly, love for God and loyalty are expressed by meditation on and determination to obey his law (Ps. 119:11, 112). The law is not merely a list of rules; it is also a repository of a worldview in which the Lord is the only God. To live consistently with this truth requires careful, reflective thought.

Emotions and attitude. The heart, as the seat of emotion, is associated with a number of feelings and sentiments, such as gladness (Exod. 4:14; Acts 2:26), hatred (Lev. 19:17), pride (Deut. 8:14), resentment (Deut. 15:10), dread (Deut. 28:67), sympathy (Judg. 5:9), love (Judg. 16:15), sadness (1 Sam. 1:8; John 16:6), and jealousy and ambition (James 3:14). The heart is also the frame of reference for attitudes such as willingness, courage, and desire.

IDIOMS

The word "heart" also appears in several idioms.

Hardness of heart. A hard heart is obstinate or averse (Mark 3:5), while a tender heart is humble (2 Kings 22:19). In the book of Exodus the translations typically say that God or Pharaoh hardened Pharaoh's/his heart. These passages in Exodus use not the Hebrew words for hardness but rather those for being heavy or for strengthening. The neutral sense of strengthening the heart takes on nuances in context for being bold or obstinate. Pharaoh was strengthened in his opposition to God, and this obstinacy fits the idiom of having a hard heart.

Uncircumcised/circumcised heart. An uncircumcised heart is a metaphor for an obstinate and rebellious heart, while a circumcised heart is linked to being humble and faithful (Lev. 26:41; Deut. 30:6; Jer. 4:4; Acts 7:51). Perhaps the metaphor is based on the role of circumcision in the covenant.

"A man after his [God's] own heart" (1 Sam. 13:14). This description of David may mean either "according to his [God's] choice" (cf. 2 Sam. 7:21), stressing God's choice over the people's choice, or it may mean "in accordance with his [God's] desire" (1 Sam. 14:7; 1 Kings 15:3), referring to how David showed conformity with God's agenda.

All the heart. The phrase "with all [one's] heart" in some cases means "wholeheartedly" or "single-mindedly," which emphasizes unity of purpose and focus. In other cases it seems to mean, more broadly, "with all of one's thinking or perspective" and implies the work of adjusting our worldview away from common cultural assumptions and toward God’s teaching.

Say in one’s heart. This expression denotes talking to oneself (i.e., thinking) rather than out loud or indicates reflection or deliberation. There are several warnings not to lie to oneself—that is, not to deliberate, believe, and act on the stated false premise.

Take [a matter] to heart. To take something to heart is to take it very seriously or to give it high priority.

HEARTH A type of fire pit used either for cooking purposes or for warmth. King Jehoiakim used one in his winter house. Archaeologists have suggested that this hearth was a three-legged copper or bronze piece (Jer. 36:22 [NIV: “firepot”]). Hearths also may have been as rustic as a hole in the ground or a raised mud-brick structure (cf. Isa. 29:2; 30:14). Certain architectural features of hearths were characteristic of certain cultures, such as the freestanding hearths found in Philistine contexts but never in a Canaanite setting. The hearth is also associated with the sacrificial altar (Lev. 6:9). According to Ezekiel’s descriptions, the hearth had four horns protruding from the top (Ezek. 43:15).

HEATH In Jer. 17:6; 48:6 the KJV translates the related Hebrew words *’ar’ar* and *’aro’er* as “heath” (NIV: “bush”; NASB: “juniper” in Jer. 48:6), referring to a desert bush located in the Arabah. The Hebrew word *’ar’ar* also means “naked,” which aptly describes the small scalelike leaves that clothe the bush. The word is used by the prophet to suggest the barrenness of those who trust in humankind rather than God and contrasts with the tree by the water in Jer. 17:8.

HEATHEN *See* Gentiles.

HEAVEN The present abode of God and the final dwelling place of the righteous. The ancient Jews distinguished three different heavens. The first heaven was the atmospheric heavens of the clouds and where the birds fly (Gen. 1:20). The second heaven was the celestial heavens of the sun, the moon, and the stars. The third heaven was the present home of God and the angels. Paul builds on this understanding of a third heaven in 2 Cor. 12:2–4, where he describes himself as a man who “was caught up to the third heaven” or “paradise,” where he “heard inexpressible things.” This idea of multiple heavens also shows itself in how the Jews normally spoke of “heavens” in the plural (Gen. 1:1), while most other ancient cultures spoke of “heaven” in the singular.

The Abode of God

One of the challenges in understanding “heaven” as the present dwelling place of God involves God’s omnipresence. In one sense, God is present everywhere. David asks in Ps. 139:7, “Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence?” He answers that regardless of whether he goes as high up as anyone can go (“up to the heavens”), as low down as anyone can go (“in the depths), as far east as anyone can go (“the wings of the dawn”), or as far west as anyone can go (“the far side of the sea”), God is still there (Ps. 139:8–9).

Although God is present everywhere, God is also present in a special way in “heaven.” During Jesus’ earthly ministry, the Father is sometimes described as speaking in “a voice from heaven” (Matt. 3:17). Similarly, Jesus instructs us to address our prayers to “Our Father in heaven” (6:9). Even the specific request in the Lord’s Prayer that “your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven” (6:10) reminds us that heaven is a place already under God’s full jurisdiction, where his will is presently being done completely and perfectly. Jesus also warns of the dangers of despising “one of these little ones,” because “their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father in heaven” (18:10). Jesus “came down from heaven” (John 6:51) for his earthly ministry, and after his death and resurrection, he ascended back “into heaven,” from where he “will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven” (Acts 1:11).

At times, “heaven” becomes virtually a synonym for God himself. In the parable of the prodigal son in Luke 15, the son confesses to his father, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you” (v. 21). This son’s sin against “heaven” has nothing to do with environmental issues such as air pollution, and everything to do with his relationship with God. Note also Matthew’s expression “the kingdom of heaven” versus “the kingdom of God” used elsewhere.

THE FINAL DWELLING PLACE FOR BELIEVERS

Given this strong connection between heaven and God’s presence, there is a natural connection in Scripture between heaven and the ultimate hope of believers. Believers are promised a reward in heaven (“Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven” [Matt. 5:12]), and even now believers can “store up for [themselves] treasures in heaven” (6:20). Even in this present life, “our citizenship is in heaven” (Phil. 3:20), and our hope at death is to “depart and be with Christ, which is better by far” (1:23). Since Christ is currently in heaven, deceased believers are already present with Christ in heaven awaiting his return, when “God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him” (1 Thess. 4:14).

However, this picture of heaven is more complicated. It is true that heaven is sometimes used in Scripture to refer to the present abode of all departed believers who have left this present life and entered the intermediate state between death and the bodily resurrection (2 Cor. 5:4). It is this hope in a bodily resurrection that sets Christianity apart from other religions. Ultimately, the Christian hope is not that people will receive new physical bodies and float around some ethereal “heaven” like astronauts in outer space for all eternity. Instead, God has created human beings with physical bodies to inhabit a physical world, and our future hope is one of new resurrection bodies inhabiting new heavens and a new earth (Isa. 65:17; 66:22; 2 Pet. 3:13). Just as there will be a certain continuity between the bodies of believers in this present life and their new resurrection bodies (we will know one another), there will also be a certain continuity between this present earth and the new earth to come. Yet, at the same time, everything will also be changed and made new and perfect, as God has designed it to be (Rom. 8:18–21).

The clearest description of this new reality is found in Rev. 21–22, where John describes how he “saw ‘a new heaven and a new earth,’ for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away” (21:1). Here is “the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband” (21:2), when “God himself will be with them and be their God. ‘He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death’ or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away” (21:3–4). Even better than all the descriptions of such things as streets of “gold, as pure as transparent glass” (21:21) is that God himself will come and dwell in the midst of his people. As Paul has phrased it, “Now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face” (1 Cor. 13:12). The day will come when we will see God as he is, in all his glory (1 John 3:2).

Two other ideas complete our picture of life in these new heavens and new earth. Heaven will be a place of continued activity and service. Notice Jesus’ blessing in Matt. 25:21: “Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things.” The other principle is that there will be different degrees of reward. Although our ultimate reward is simply being with God himself, Paul also reminds us that if what believers do with their lives “survives, the builder will receive a reward,” and if what they do “is burned up, the builder will suffer loss” (1 Cor. 3:14–15 NRSV). Our choices make a difference for time and eternity (cf. Rev. 14:13). *See also* Heavens, New.

HEAVENLY CITY *See* Heavens, New.

HEAVENLY COUNCIL The idea of the divine council appears throughout the remains of the ancient Near East, including the OT. Taking various forms, it generally involves numerous deities subservient to an overall patriarchal divine figure (or couple)—for example, El in Ugaritic materials, and Yahweh in the OT. Some forms of the mythic pattern situate the council on the cosmic mountain, which connects the heavens and earth. Just as life, fertility, and order radiate out from the cosmic mountain, so too do the decisions of the divine council determine life and history from there. The messenger or prophet is often conceived of as someone who has been granted access to the divine council, frequently by vision, and who is charged to communicate its reality-determining decisions. Often the council has four tiers of divinities, ranging from the overall divine patriarchal figure or couple, through major deities controlling significant aspects of creation, down to the lower tier of messenger and intermediary gods who enact decisions of the council. Some sources depict the council as a divine family.

The heavenly council appears in the OT, though the lower tiers have been collapsed into one other tier of divinities subservient to Yahweh. Psalm 82 constitutes a classic example. God upbraids the lower gods for not executing their ruling tasks properly. It also reflects the common notion of lower gods ruling over peoples or other aspects of creation (see also Deut. 32:8–9). Another example of the divine council, in 1 Kings 22:5–28, highlights the role of the prophet as one granted access, through vision, who proclaims its decisions. Job 1–2 and Zech. 3 also provide glimpses of the divine council interacting. Note here the “sons of God” in Job 1:6 (KJV; NIV: “angels”), perhaps reflecting the divine family aspect of the council. See also the “Let us” or “us” passages from the divine voice in Genesis, wherein Yahweh communicates with the rest of the deities about actions to undertake (1:26; 3:22; 11:6–7). Numerous other passages in the OT manifest the notion of the divine council, either referring directly to it or indicating the existence of other deities alongside Yahweh and envisioning their council together. In the Second Temple period and within apocalyptic thought, the lower deities begin more consistently to be conceived of as angels. The Bible generally assumes the existence of other deities but views them as creatures rather than the Creator and restricts worship to the one true God.

HEAVEN OF HEAVENS *See* Highest Heaven.

HEAVENS, NEW There is at least some confusion surrounding the ultimate hope that God has planned for his people. Many have assumed that the references in Scripture to heaven mean that our ultimate destiny is essentially to become disembodied spirits, floating around in outer space. Such a view is actually far closer to the Greek concept of the immortality of the soul (where the soul is understood to be imprisoned in a physical body and freed only at death) than it is to the Christian view of a bodily resurrection. God chose to create humanity as a unity of a physical body and a nonmaterial soul or spirit. Death is described as the “last enemy” in 1 Cor. 15:26 because it involves the unnatural separation of the physical body from the inner person of the soul/spirit (see Eccles.

12:7). The clear NT hope is that God will raise our physical bodies so that people will have resurrected bodies for all eternity.

The biblical concept of the bodily resurrection naturally leads to the future hope of new heavens surrounding a new earth. This hope of a new heavens and a new earth is mentioned in Isaiah's prophecy where God "will create new heavens and a new earth" (Isa. 65:17), which "will endure before" him (66:22). However, it is in Rev. 21–22 that John gives us a detailed description of "a new heaven and a new earth" (21:1). It is no surprise that Peter says that "we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth" (2 Pet. 3:13).

One of the key questions here involves the relationship between this present world order and that of the age to come. Here there is both discontinuity and continuity. On the one hand, Peter tells us, "The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything done in it will be laid bare" (2 Pet. 3:10). At the same time, just as there was a definite continuity between Jesus' earthly body and his resurrection body, and in the same way that there will be a continuity between our own present earthly bodies and our future resurrection bodies (which will be "sown in weakness . . . raised in power" [1 Cor. 15:43]), so too should we expect a continuity between the present heavens and earth and those to come. The Christian hope is a supernatural transformation whereby redeemed humanity's resurrection is linked to the renewal of the whole creation (Rom. 8:18–25; 1 Cor. 15:20–28; Phil. 3:20–21).

HEBER **(1)** A descendant of Asher and son of Beriah who is listed as the head of a clan (Gen. 46:17; Num. 26:45; 1 Chron. 7:31). **(2)** A Kenite who separated himself from his people and lived at the great tree in Zaanannim near Kedesh (Judg. 4:11). He was married to Jael, who rescued Israel from their Canaanite oppressors. Taking advantage of the fact that Jabin, the Canaanite king, was on friendly terms with the Kenites, Jael lured the fleeing Sisera, commander of Jabin's army, into her tent. After hiding him and giving him a drink, she pounded a tent peg through his temple while he slept (4:17–21). **(3)** A descendant of Judah and a son of Mered by his Judean wife (1 Chron. 4:18). He was the father of Soco. **(4)** A descendant of Benjamin and a son of Elpaal (1 Chron. 8:17). **(5)** In the Lukan genealogy of Jesus, the name "Eber" appears in the Greek text (Luke 3:35), which some versions translate as "Heber" (KJV, NASB), and others as "Eber" (NIV, NRSV, NET).

HEBERITE *See* Heber.

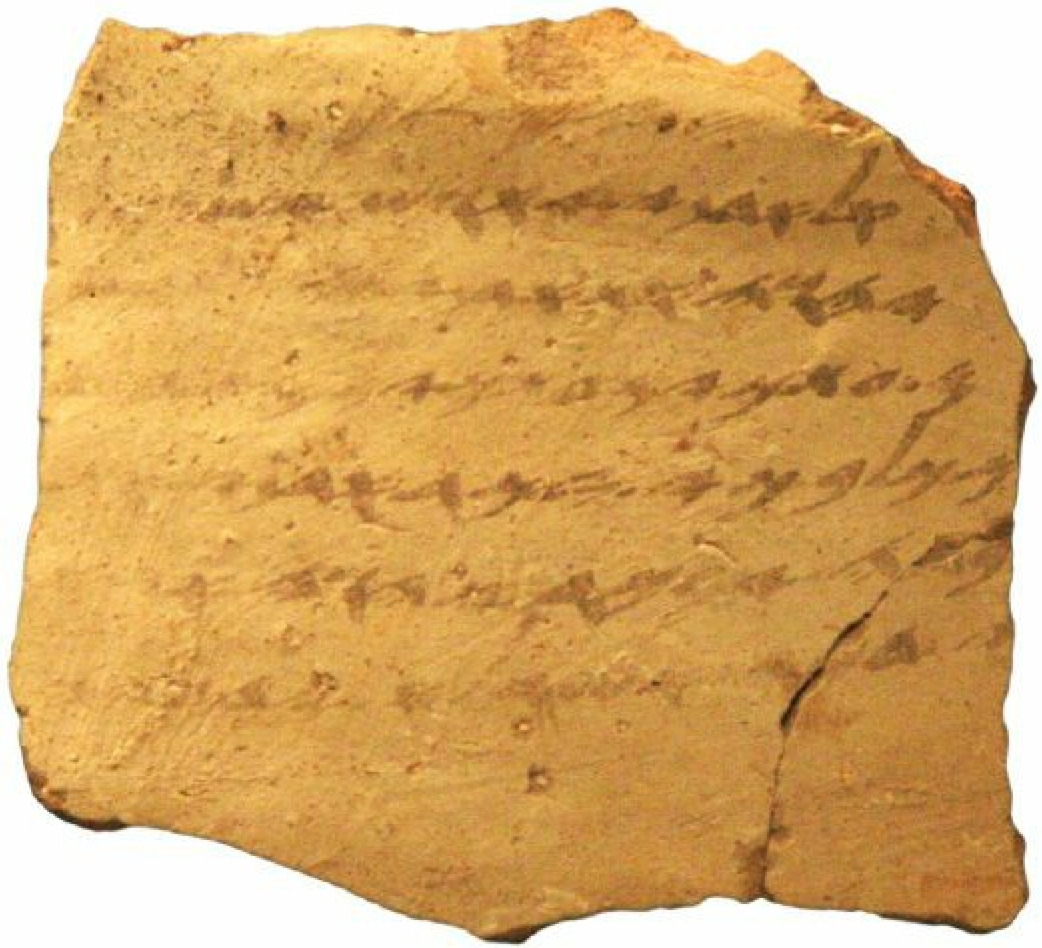
HEBREW LANGUAGE Hebrew, the primary language of the OT, belongs to the branch of Afro-Asiatic languages commonly referred to as Semitic.

HISTORY

Early Hebrew belongs to the Northwest Semitic family, sharing grammatical, morphological, and syntactical features with other ancient cognate (or related) languages, particularly Ugaritic (thirteenth century BC) and Aramaic. Based on minimal evidence tracing the chronology of Canaanite linguistic development, combined with surviving archaic Hebrew poetry dated as early as 1400 BC, it appears that Hebrew may have emerged as a distinct language during the transition from the Late Bronze Age II to Iron Age I (1400–1200 BC). Although archaeologists have discovered a few Hebrew inscriptions on pottery and tools, significant evidence for written Hebrew appears much later, probably around the ninth century BC, when the corpus of existing Hebrew documents and inscriptions expands to include the Gezer Calendar, large earthenware jars or pithoi from Kuntillet

‘Ajrud, the Siloam Inscription, letters from Arad and Lachish, and seals from the sixth through eighth centuries BC. While copies of early Pentateuchal texts and the later discovered DSS employ a Paleo-Hebrew or early script, the square script commonly used in current copies of the Hebrew Scriptures was borrowed from Aramaic.

Scholars normally divide biblical Hebrew into three distinctive periods: Early Biblical Hebrew (EBH), represented by the oldest poetic compositions; Classical Biblical Hebrew (CBH), extending from the preexilic period until the postexilic era; and Late Biblical Hebrew (LBH), characteristic of the Persian period. A vernacular, or spoken form of the language, Mishnaic Hebrew, replaced Classical Biblical Hebrew following the destruction of the second temple. Mishnaic Hebrew reflects two main types: *tannaim*, typically associated with the Mishnah, Tosefta, and halakic midrashim; and *amoraim*, which may be subdivided into Palestinian and Babylonian.



One of the Lachish letters, which provide evidence of written Hebrew from an early date

GRAMMAR AND SYNTAX

Hebrew, read from right to left, is an alphabetic language consisting of twenty-two characters. The accurate vocalization, or pronunciation, of the text remained undocumented until the Tiberian vowel system was devised by the Masoretes to preserve the integrity of the text in light of fading familiarity with biblical Hebrew and to systematize pronunciation through the development of a consistent vowel system. However, in the early consonantal text, the consonants *waw*, *yod*, and *he* functioned as *matres lectionis* (“mothers of reading”), marking the presence of final and medial vowels. Interestingly enough, the DSS, exemplifying *plene* (“fuller”) spelling of many biblical Hebrew words, reinforce the general accuracy of the Masoretic Text, completed between AD 600–1000. In addition, the Masoretes preserved variants within the consonantal text by inserting one reading in the text, called a *kethib*, and placing the alternative reading, called a *qere*, in the margins.

Most Hebrew words derive from a triconsonantal root, although a few quadradical roots exist. Nouns, separated by grammatical gender, may be divided into two categories: masculine and feminine. There are three grammatical numbers, referring to singular, dual, and plural forms. Dual forms are relatively rare, and normally they denote nouns that name things occurring in pairs, such as hands, eyes, and ears. Phrases and clauses generally agree in number and gender. While a comparative analysis of cognate languages yields some evidence for early case endings signifying genitival relationships, those relationships usually are expressed through the binding (or connection) of a construct form with the following noun. For example, the construct spelling of "sons" combined with the noun "Israel" may be translated "sons of Israel." Direct objects are often marked with a prefixed *ʾet*. The participle, typically classified as a nominal verb, often translates as ongoing action. The participle normally is marked for stem (such as Niphal, denoting passive action) and for number and gender, and it can function verbally or adjectivally.

Hebrew verbs do not have tense as it is normally understood in Western languages. Instead, each Hebrew verb is characterized by stem, aspect, person, gender, and number. The Hebrew verbal system exemplifies seven primary stems, or "themes" (sometimes called *binyanim*), describing "kinds" of action. The Qal stem functions as the basic or indicative stem, while the Niphal, characterized by a prefixed *nun*, functions as passive or reflexive or indicates resultative or tolerative action. The Piel, identified by the doubling of the second root letter, may indicate denominative, intensive, factitive, or declarative function. The Pual serves as the passive of Piel, while the Hiphil, often identified by a prefixed *he* and an *î* infix, usually denotes causation. Hophal denotes the passive of Hiphil, and the Hithpael stem highlights repeated, reciprocal, or reflexive action. Scholars have also identified "old Qal passives," from Pual and Hophal forms that have no corresponding active stems. There are also a number of minor stems, such as Polel, Polal, and Hithpolel, marked by a reduplication of the final root letter of a hollow (a verb with the letter *yod* or *waw* as the second consonant) verb or a geminate (a verb derived from a root with two consecutive, identical consonants); Palal, marked by the reduplication of the third root consonant; and Pilpel, identified by reduplication of a biconsonantal root. Finally, one Hebrew word for "worship" occurs in the rare Hishtaphel stem.

Authorities disagree concerning whether the verbal system reflects a tense or an aspectual system. There are three tenses, or aspects of action, in biblical Hebrew. The Qatal, or "perfect" form, denotes completed action, while the Yiqtol, or "imperfect" form, implies an imperfective or incomplete aspect of verbal action. A third form, Wayyiqtol, commonly known as the "preterit," represents sequential aspects of past or completed action, as opposed to a verb with a prefixed *waw* consecutive, a marker that functions by picking up the aspect of action from the verb form that spatially precedes it. The "infinitive absolute" is a flexible form that can replace any verb as well as function in an adverbial role, emphasizing or modifying a second verb that immediately follows it.

Verbal forms are often inflected to convey volitional forms, such as imperatives, jussives, and cohortatives, though in many cases a jussive or cohortative can be pinpointed only through context, since spellings of the imperfect and the volitional forms may be identical. Modal uses of the verb, such as "can, may, let, should," are discernible only from context, since they own no distinctive markers.

Other parts of speech include prepositions, clause markers, independent personal pronouns, and demonstratives. Word order in a typical Hebrew sentence begins with the verb, followed by the subject. A disruption in word order represents the writer's deliberate attempt to highlight or emphasize the displaced subject or object. Other biblical Hebrew compositions, such as poetry, have distinctive characteristics that distinguish them from narrative texts in the OT, and these provide a further avenue of investigation, along with syntax and morphology.

HEBREWS, LETTER TO THE The Letter to the Hebrews and the Letter to the Romans constitute the two great pillars of theology in the NT. Hebrews brings a high Christology and increases Christian understanding of Christ's role as priest and pioneer of faith. From this book, deductions can be made regarding the early church's understanding of OT interpretation and its view of typology.

Hebrews ends like a letter, but it does not begin like one. In particular, it lacks the names of the writer and the recipients. From the content, though, it is evident that this work is meant for a certain audience, familiar with the author. The author shows a loving pastoral concern for his readers, teaching them, exhorting them, and rebuking them when necessary. He gives them models of faith to encourage them and instructs them to encourage one another. The author describes the work as "my word of exhortation" (13:22). The book is often identified as a sermon.

AUTHOR

The letter is, strictly speaking, anonymous. No author is mentioned, and few clues as to his identity exist. He is known by his readers (13:19) and has a pastor's heart for them (6:9). He and his audience are second-generation Christians; that is, they did not hear Jesus during his ministry but rather are dependent upon those who did (2:3). He is a companion of Timothy (13:23) and thus possibly in the circle of Paul. The letter shows that he has great organizational and rhetorical skills; he is intelligent and well educated; his writing indicates that he is likely from a Greek-speaking culture and is a converted Hellenistic Jew familiar with the Greek version of the OT. And he is a creative theologian with perspectives found nowhere else in the NT.

Early church tradition offers no name for the author. The letter's later attribution to the apostle Paul probably granted it the authority necessary for canonicity, though problems with that view were readily apparent. The Greek is unlike Paul's, and the rhetoric and theology are much different as well. The themes present in Hebrews are of only tangential interest to Paul. All the Pauline Epistles bear his self-identification, because he felt that his status as an apostle added authority to his words. And Paul did not consider himself to be a second-generation Christian, since he had seen the Lord himself (Gal. 1:12). Although the Catholic and Eastern Churches continue to ascribe the work to Paul, the Protestant Church has almost completely abandoned that idea.

In the absence of a known author, almost every name in the NT has been suggested, including Apollos, Barnabas, Luke, and Silas. While each name has merits and problems, too little is known to prove or disprove any prospective author. Yet, even without Pauline or other known authorship, the book maintains its authority.

AUDIENCE

The original readers almost certainly were a house church, part of a network of churches in an urban setting, likely either Jerusalem or Rome, with Rome being slightly preferred. The recipients were a specific group rather than the church at large as in the General Epistles (James, 1–2 Peter, 1–3 John, Jude); the author knew their circumstances (10:32; 12:4; 13:17, 24). They were Jewish

Christians who, possibly because of persecution, were in danger of drifting back into the Judaism they had left (see 10:32–39). The letter was written probably in the late 60s, as evidenced by the fact that there is no mention of the temple's destruction, which occurred in AD 70. Given the reasoning of the author, it is quite hard to imagine that he would not mention this event were he writing after that date.

THEMES

Hebrews presents two main themes. The first is faith and perseverance, especially in the face of persecution. Jesus is the pioneer of salvation through suffering (2:10) and can help those being tempted (2:18); he has been faithful to the one who appointed him (3:2) as the Son over God's house (3:6), which is Christians who hold firmly to their confidence and hope (3:6). Christians share in Christ, if they hold their convictions firmly to the end (3:14). This is possible because Jesus is the great high priest, having ascended into heaven (4:14). A person falling away, not holding firmly, cannot be brought back again to repentance (6:4–6). Jesus has sacrificed himself once for all (7:27). Christians must hold unswervingly to the hope they profess, for the one who promised is faithful (10:23). Those who do will be richly rewarded (10:35–36).

Role models of faith are portrayed in chapter 11, the so-called Faith Chapter. The author presents Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, and other OT figures as examples of living by faith. These serve as a "cloud of witnesses," demanding "perseverance [in] the race marked out" for Christians (12:1). Jesus is the "pioneer and perfecter" of faith, enduring the cross and shame (12:2). Christians should endure hardship as discipline (12:7), which will produce a "harvest of righteousness" (12:11).

The second theme is the superiority of Christ, presented in a series of escalating comparisons between Jesus and every aspect of Judaism. The Son is a superior revelation from God (1:1–2). He is superior to the angels (1:4–14) and even to Moses (3:2–6). The Son's Melchizedekian priesthood is superior to the Levitical priesthood (7:1–25). The new covenant brought by the Son is superior to the Mosaic covenant (8:6–13); the Son's sacrifice is superior to the sacrifices offered under the Mosaic law (9:1–10:18).

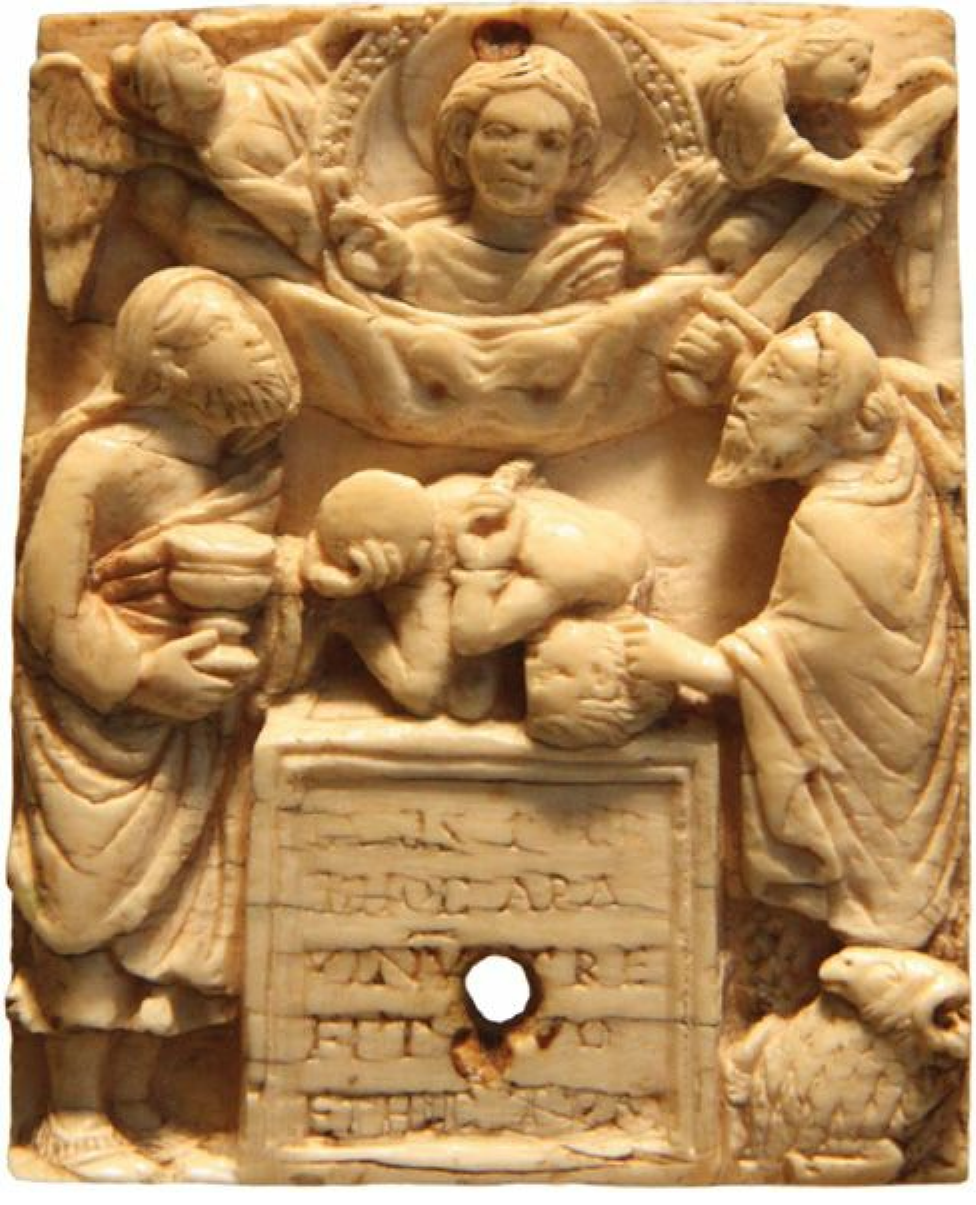
THEOLOGY

The author brings his unique perspective to the work of Christ—his special roles as both high priest and sacrifice. Because Jesus lives forever, he has a permanent priesthood (7:24), which is not a function of his ancestry but rather is "on the basis of the power of an indestructible life" (7:16). He meets the requirements of a priest, being "holy, blameless, pure, set apart from sinners, exalted above the heavens" (7:26). He is a "priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek" (7:17, quoting Ps. 110:4). Melchizedek is a once-mentioned figure from Gen. 14:18. He was the king of Salem, a "priest of God Most High." Abraham, and by extension Levi, paid him a tithe and received a blessing from him. Therefore, Melchizedek is superior to Levi, and his priestly order is superior to Levi's. This priesthood, in fact, replaces the Levitical priesthood because the earlier priesthood could not produce perfection (Heb. 7:11), being "weak and useless" (7:18).

The Levitical priests had offered their sacrifices repeatedly, year after year, first for their own sins, then for those of the people. They had used the blood of bulls and goats to cleanse the tabernacle and accessories, because without the shedding of blood there can be no forgiveness of sin (9:22). There had been many priests, as death claimed each one. The priests, in all their weaknesses, had been appointed by the law. The sanctuary in which they serve is a “copy and shadow” of what is in heaven (8:5).

In contrast to the Levitical high priest, Jesus sits at “the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven” (8:1) and serves in the true tabernacle not made by human hands. He has been appointed not by the law but by the oath of God, which came after the law. He has no need to offer sacrifices day after day; his sacrifice was “once for all” (7:27), coming at the culmination of the ages to do away with sin (9:26). In fact, the repeated nature of the Levitical sacrifices serves as proof of their ineffectiveness. Had they been effective, they would have ceased. But “it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins” (10:4), even when offered in accordance with the law (10:8). The worshipers had been left with the same guilty consciences. Christ had “entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood” and obtained eternal redemption for all believers (9:12), sprinkling their hearts to cleanse them from guilty consciences (10:22)

Because of this, Christ is the mediator of the new covenant, prophesied in Jer. 31:31, which is superior to the Mosaic covenant. The first covenant has been made obsolete and will soon disappear (Heb. 8:13), as the new covenant is “established on better promises” (8:6). The tabernacle had been designed to demonstrate that there was no way into the most holy place for anyone but the high priest. Now, the blood of Jesus has opened a way through the curtain, allowing believers to “draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full assurance of faith” (10:22).



Ivory altar fragment showing Christ blessing the sacrifices of Melchizedek and Abraham (eleventh century AD)

EXHORTATIONS

Hebrews consists of theology interspersed with exhortations to the readers to persevere in the face of persecution, not to drift away from their new faith. These hortatory passages also serve as warnings. Because the new covenant is superior to the old one, its violation carries proportional penalties: since every violation of the old covenant had been met with its just punishment, “how shall we escape if we ignore so great a salvation?” (2:3). Believers must encourage one another, so that no one becomes “hardened by sin’s deceitfulness” (3:13). As recipients of new access to God, Christians must hold unswervingly to the hope, because God is faithful. This new access has completely replaced the old; there is no sacrifice remaining to forgive deliberate sinning. As those rejecting the law of Moses had died without mercy, those insulting the Spirit of grace will be punished more severely (10:29). Christians should consider “him who endured such opposition” so as not to “grow weary and lose heart” (12:3).

The author rebukes his readers for being lazy: “We have much to say about this, but it is hard to make it clear to you because you no longer try to understand” (5:11); but he patiently moves on beyond elementary teaching to teaching of Christian maturity (6:1). He warns them sternly that there is no reverse gear: those who have entered the sphere of Christian faith cannot fall away and then reenter at will; apostates would be “crucifying the Son of God all over again” (6:6). But then he softens the rebuke as a pastor: “Even though we speak like this, dear friends, we are convinced of better things in your case— the things that have to do with salvation” (6:9).

The author also shows great interest in the Sabbath rest promised to Moses. Those who had disobeyed were denied the rest (3:18), but the promise of entering his rest still stands (4:1). In fact, the Sabbath rest that remains is superior, or else it would not still be offered (4:8), and Christians must make every effort to enter that rest so that no one will perish (4:11).

OUTLINE

The Letter to the Hebrews is very organized yet difficult to outline, owing to the manner in which the author handles his transitional material. The main theological argument (the superiority of the Son) is presented as a series of overlapping and interlocked comparisons interspersed with pastoral exhortations to perseverance. The connection between sections is often a keyword used in one section and then picked up and expanded in the next.

I. Introduction (1:1–4)

II. The Son Is Superior to the Angels (1:5–14)

III. Warning: Do Not Reject the Word Spoken through God’s Son (2:1–4)

IV. Jesus Is the Perfect Pioneer of Salvation because of His Suffering (2:5–18)

V. The Son Is Superior to Moses (3:1–19)

VI. The Sabbath Rest Is Still Available and Is Superior to the OT Rest (4:1–13)

VII. The Son Is a Superior High Priest (4:14–5:10)

VIII. Rebuke: You Are Still Spiritual Children (5:11–6:3)

IX. Warning: There Is No Return to the Former Covenant (6:4–12)

X. Jesus Completes the Oath God Gave Abraham (6:13–20)

XI. Jesus Is a Priest of Melchizedek's Order, Superior to Levi's Priesthood (7:1–25)

XII. The Priestly Function of Jesus Is Superior to That of the OT Priest (7:26–8:6)

XIII. The New Covenant of Jesus Is Superior to the Mosaic Covenant (8:7–13)

XIV. The Tabernacle of the New Covenant Is Superior to the Old (9:1–7)

XV. The Sacrifice of Christ Is Superior to the OT Sacrifices (9:8–10:20)

XVI. Exhortation to Persevere (10:21–39)

XVII. Faith Models (11:1–40)

XVIII. Exhortation to Righteous Living (12:1–13:17)

XIX. Closing Personal Greetings (13:18–25)

HEBRON **(1)** A son of Kohath, grandson of Levi, and uncle of Moses, Aaron, and Miriam (Exod. 6:18; Num. 3:19; 1 Chron. 6:2).

(2) The son of Mareshah, and either the grandson or great-great-grandson of Caleb (1 Chron. 2:42).

(3) A city located in the Judean hills eighteen miles south-southeast of Jerusalem, identified with modern El-Khalil in the West Bank, in an area well supplied with water from nearby wells and springs. There are several archaeological sites in the vicinity, but biblical Hebron has been positively identified with Tel Hebron (Jebel er-Rumeidah). Excavations there uncovered evidence of intermittent occupation ranging from the Early Bronze Age I (3300–3000 BC) to the Late Arab period (AD 1291–1516). Significant finds include a city wall from the Middle Bronze Age II (2000–1550 BC), an Akkadian cuneiform tablet, and five jar handles bearing the royal *lmlk* ("for the king") stamp.

Hebron (also known as Kiriath Arba) played a significant role in OT narratives. After Lot chose to dwell in Sodom, Abram settled near the oaks of Mamre in Hebron (Gen. 13:18). When Sarah died, Abraham purchased land in Hebron for her burial (Gen. 23). Both Isaac and Jacob lived in Hebron, and from there Jacob sent Joseph to inquire about his brothers' welfare (35:27; 37:14). When Moses sent twelve spies into the promised land, their glimpse of the large inhabitants of Hebron significantly influenced their negative report about the prospects for invasion (Num. 13:22, 33).

During the period of the conquest, Hebron's king was among five kings whom Joshua killed after they attacked Gibeon (Josh. 10). Joshua went on to fight at Hebron, destroying the city and its Anakite inhabitants (11:21). The city was then deeded to Caleb (15:13), but later it was given to the Levites and became a city of refuge (20:7; 21:13).

Hebron played a prominent role during the united monarchy. After Saul died, God instructed David to go to Hebron. There the men of Judah anointed him as king, and he reigned from there for seven and a half years (2 Sam. 2:1–11). During this time, several sons were born to David in Hebron, and it was there that Joab, David's commander, murdered Abner in revenge for his brother's death (2 Sam.

3; 1 Chron. 3:1–4). When David’s authority became widely recognized, the elders of all the Israelite tribes came to Hebron and anointed him king over all Israel. He then moved his capital to Jerusalem after capturing it from the Jebusites (2 Sam. 5:1–10; 1 Chron. 11:1–9). When Absalom later conspired to become king, he chose Hebron as his headquarters (2 Sam. 15:1–10).

Hebron is next mentioned as one of the cities that Rehoboam fortified for the defense of Judah (2 Chron. 11:10) and as one of the locations where returning exiles settled (Neh. 11:25). During the Hasmonean period, Judas Maccabeus gained control over Hebron from the Edomites (Idumeans) (1 Macc. 5:65).

Present-day Hebron

HEBRONITE *See* Hebron.

HEDGE In agriculture, a protective barrier placed around a vineyard to facilitate growth. A divine hedge may surround an individual (Job 1:10) or a nation (Isa. 5:5–7), enabling prosperity. The removal of a hedge has consequences (Job 1:11–19; Isa. 5:5–7). It also describes the placement of an obstacle that entangles an individual (Job 3:23; Hos. 2:6; cf. Mic. 7:4).

HEDGEHOG The Hebrew word *qippod* (Isa. 14:23; 34:11; Zeph. 2:14) sometimes is translated as “hedgehog” (NRSV, NASB, ESV). Hedgehogs are small, spiny, nocturnal animals, characterized by their habit of rolling up into a ball when threatened. They were indigenous in the ancient Near East. However, the other creatures mentioned in these verses are birds. The KJV translates *qippod* as “bittern,” but it is more likely that this word refers to some kind of owl (as in the NIV).

HEEL, LIFTED The Hebrew expression “to lift one’s heel,” occurring in Ps. 41:9 (KJV; NIV: “turned against me”), represents a friend who has become an enemy. In John 13:18 (see NIV mg.) Jesus uses the phrase to describe the one who would betray him, noting the event as a fulfillment of Scripture.

HEGAI A eunuch in the service of King Xerxes (Ahasuerus) who was in charge of the harem at the point when Esther was chosen queen (Esther 2:3, 8, 15).

HEGE *See* Hegai.

HEGLAM In 1 Chron. 8:7 the NRSV takes the Hebrew word *heglam* as an alternative name for “Gera, that is, Heglam.” Other translations, such as the NIV, treat it as a verb: “Gera, who deported them.”

HEIFER A young cow, typically one that has not produced offspring. Heifers assisted people by plowing (Deut. 21:3) and producing milk, which could be curdled into cheese (Isa. 7:21). Samson compares the animal allegorically to his wife (Judg. 14:18). Jeremiah does the same with Egypt, which will be tormented by a Babylonian gadfly (Jer. 46:20). Hosea compares Israel to a stubborn heifer (Hos. 4:16). The lives of heifers were required for special sacrifices (Gen. 15:9; 1 Sam. 16:1–2). Their sacrifice also purged bloodguilt from the land as a consequence of murder when the culprit was unknown (Deut. 21:1–8). Through an elaborate ritual, the ashes of a red heifer were mixed with water for purification from uncleanness caused by coming into contact with a corpse (Num. 19:1–22; cf. Heb. 9:13).

HEIR *See* Inheritance.

HELAH A wife of Ashhur, progenitor of Tekoa. She bore Zereth, Zohar, and Ethnan, whose names are associated with towns in southern Judah (1 Chron. 4:5, 7).

HELAM The location where Hadadezer, king of Zobah, and his commander, Shobach, regrouped after their defeat by Israel (2 Sam. 10:16). After David was informed, he took his troops to Helam, where a second battle ensued. The Israelites were victorious again, killing over forty thousand, including Shobach. The exact location is unknown. Some have identified it with Aleppo, but the better suggestion is to follow the LXX of Ezek. 47:16, which locates it between Damascus and Hamath.

HELBAH A town in the territory of Asher from which the Canaanites were never expelled (Judg. 1:31). This name may be a spelling corruption of “Ahlab,” which occurs earlier in the verse, and therefore the same town, or more likely it is linked with Hebel of Josh. 19:29 (NET; NRSV: “Mahalab”), another town in the territory of Asher.

HELBON A district listed in Ezekiel’s lament over Tyre, known especially for the production and trade of wine (Ezek. 27:18). Helbon is to be associated with the modern town Halbun, located thirteen miles north of Damascus; this area is still known for viticulture.

HELDAI **(1)** One of David’s commanders, commissioned to be head of the division of people in the twelfth month. The division consisted of twenty-four thousand and concerned all that came in and went out related to the armed services (1 Chron. 27:15). He was a Netophathite from the territory of Judah and from the line of Othniel, judge of Israel (see Judg. 3:9–10). Given the appearance of the names of the other eleven commanders in 1 Chron. 11:10–47, it is probable that Heled of 1 Chron. 11:30 and 2 Sam. 23:29 (KJV, NRSV: “Heleb”) should be equated with Heldai. **(2)** A returned Babylonian exile who was to participate in the crowning of Joshua, the high priest (Zech. 6:10). The gold and silver for the crown were to be taken from him. “Helem” in 6:14 (KJV, ESV) probably refers to the same person (so NIV, NRSV).

HELEB *See* Heled.

HELECH *See* Helek.

HELED The name “Heled” (2 Sam. 23:29; KJV, RSV: “Heleb”) is likely an alternate for Heldai, who is listed among David’s men (1 Chron. 27:15). The names of the other men from 1 Chron. 27 appear in parallel lists in 2 Sam. 23; 1 Chron. 11:30, allowing for the connection. *See also* Heldai.

HELEK **(1)** The ancestor of the Helekite clan of Gilead, a smaller tribe of Manasseh (Num. 26:30; Josh. 17:2). Hebrew inscriptions from the eighth to seventh centuries BC mention both an individual and a location with this name, meaning “allotment.” **(2)** A place mentioned in Ezekiel’s oracle against Tyre (27:11; NRSV, ESV: “Helech”). The LXX, followed by the KJV and the ASV, translate this as the Hebrew noun for “army” with the second-person suffix attached: “your army.” Based on the Hebrew consonants, this is a possibility, but it is an unlikely interpretation. Helech is more likely a city from which Tyre hired mercenaries to fight in its army. It is located north of the Taurus Mountains in southeast Asia Minor, present-day Turkey.

HELEKITE *See* Helek.

HELEM **(1)** An Asherite and the father of Zophah, Imna, Shelesh, and Amal (1 Chron. 7:35). **(2)** One of the returning exiles from Babylon sent with gold and silver supplies for the temple and the crown of the high priest (Zech. 6:14). This probably is the same person as Heldai in Zech. 6:10 (so NIV, NRSV).

HELEPH The first town mentioned as part of the southern boundary for the territory of the tribe of Naphtali (Josh. 19:33). It is mentioned in the Talmud, but its modern identification is uncertain. Some have associated it with Khirbet ‘Irbadah, which would make it near Mount Tabor and close to the point of intersection for the tribes of Manasseh, Naphtali, and Zebulun.

HELEZ **(1)** An Ephraimite among David’s mighty men, he was the commander of an army division of twenty-four thousand soldiers. He is identified as a Paltite/Pelonite (2 Sam. 23:26; 1 Chron. 11:27; 27:10). **(2)** The son of Azariah, a Judahite (1 Chron. 2:39).

HELI An otherwise unknown person in Jesus’ genealogy mentioned only in Luke 3:23 as the father of Joseph. Scholars have proposed various solutions for the differences between Luke’s (3:23–38) and Matthew’s (1:1–17) genealogies for Jesus. Tertullian suggested that Luke gives Joseph’s ancestry and Matthew gives Mary’s ancestry (which does not fit Matthew’s “begat” formula). Annius of Viterbo suggested the reverse: Matthew gives Joseph’s, and Luke gives Mary’s (which does not fit

Luke’s explicit claim to be giving Joseph’s). Others have suggested that Luke gives Joseph’s natural ancestry via Heli, and Matthew gives Joseph’s legal ancestry via Jacob (which does not fit Matthew’s “begat” formula). Perhaps a better suggestion is that Matthew gives Joseph’s natural ancestry via birth to Jacob, and Luke gives Joseph’s legal ancestry (via adoption, levirate marriage, or other legal arrangement) by Heli. Julius Africanus (AD 170–245) had an unnecessarily complicated version of this scenario.

HELIOPOLIS The name “Heliopolis” is Greek for “city of the sun.” **(1)** The Greek name for the city referred to in Hebrew as “On” or “Aven” (Gen. 41:45, 50; 46:20; cf. Ezek. 30:17) (the Hebrew spellings are similar). It is one of the oldest cities in Lower Egypt, dating from the predynastic period. Its ruins are found at Tel Al-Hisn, Ain Shams, and Matariyeh, which are about ten miles northeast of Cairo.

Heliopolis was the center of worship for Re, the sun god, and Atum, the creator god. The priests of Heliopolis were among the most powerful in Egypt. They officiated at all the major festivals and produced one of the major versions of Egyptian religion and mythology. The prominence of the priesthood is reflected in the description of Joseph marrying Asenath, the daughter of Potiphera, the priest of On (Gen. 41:45, 50; 46:20). The Egyptians called the city by a name that means “city of pillars.” Its temples were embellished with many obelisks, to catch the first rays of the morning sun. Jeremiah prophesied the destruction of the obelisks and temples in Heliopolis (Jer. 43:13; cf. Ezek. 30:17). The city flourished as a seat of learning until it was eclipsed by Alexandria.

(2) The Greek name for Baalbek in Lebanon.

HELKAI The head of the priestly family of Meremoth during the high priesthood of Joiakim and the governorship of Nehemiah (Neh. 12:15).

HELKATH This town was allotted to Asher as part of its inheritance and later was passed on to the Gershonites to serve as a Levitical city (Josh. 19:25; 21:31). Its location is unknown but probably was near the eastern border of Asher. It is referred to as “Hukok” in 1 Chron. 6:75.

HELKATH HAZZURIM The plot of ground near the pool in Gibeon where twelve men each from the armies of Joab and of Abner perished at each other’s hands (2 Sam. 2:16). Although the initial match ended in a draw, the ensuing battle, which was part of the war between David and Ish-Bosheth after Saul’s death, ended with a resounding victory for David’s army.

HELL The place where the lost are assigned by God to eternal punishment of both body and soul (Matt. 10:28). This agony of eternal torment in hell is the greatest of all possible tragedies.

At times, there is confusion about this topic, since the English word “hell” is used in different ways in our English Bibles. Sometimes it is used to translate the Hebrew word *she’ol* or the Greek word *hadēs*, which refer generally to the place of the departed dead. Other times it is used more properly to translate the Aramaic-derived Greek word *geenna*, which refers to the place of the eternal punishment of the wicked following the final judgment. This second usage will be the focus of this present study.

This topic of the afterlife unfolded only gradually in Scripture. “Gehenna” originally referred to the Valley of Hinnom near Jerusalem, the location of the notorious sacrificial offerings of children by fire to the god Molek by Ahaz (2 Chron. 28:3) and Manasseh (2 Chron. 33:6). Later, the meaning of this term was extended to the place of fiery punishment in general. Still later, the geographic location of this place of punishment was shifted to under the earth, but the idea of fiery torment continued. By NT times, the Pharisees clearly believed in the punishment of the wicked in the afterlife.

It is primarily in the teachings of Jesus that the reality of a place of eternal punishment comes into clear focus. Jesus describes hell as involving unquenchable fire (Matt. 18:8–9; Mark 9:42–43, 48), a place where the worm does not die (Mark 9:48). Jesus also pictures the extreme anguish of those who suffer the ultimate punishment of being "thrown outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matt. 8:12).

The idea of a severe eternal punishment for the lost is also taught by the apostles. At the return of Christ, those living outside a proper relationship with God will experience sudden destruction (1 Thess. 5:3) when the angels will come "in blazing fire" and "punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus" (2 Thess. 1:6–9). The author of Hebrews speaks of the "fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God" (Heb. 10:27). Revelation describes how "the smoke of their torment will rise for ever and ever" (Rev. 14:11), and how the ungodly will be cast into "the fiery lake of burning sulfur" (21:8).

One significant controversy related to this topic is annihilation or conditional immortality (taught by, e.g., Seventh-Day Adventists and Jehovah's Witnesses), where the lost cease to exist, either immediately following death or after a limited period of punishment. Appeals for this view are found in the language applied to the wicked such as "death" (Rom. 6:23; James 5:20), "destruction" (Matt. 7:13; 10:28), and "perishing" (John 3:16). Yet other Scriptures speak of the place of punishment as being where "the worms that eat them will not die, the fire that burns them will not be quenched" (Isa. 66:24), and where "God's wrath remains on them [present tense]" (John 3:36), and as being "everlasting," "eternal," or "for ever" (Isa. 33:14; Matt. 18:8; 25:46; 2 Thess. 1:9; Rev. 20:10). Historic orthodoxy has generally maintained that the bliss of the redeemed and the punishment of the unsaved will continue for all eternity.

Another controversy involves universalism, the belief that ultimately all will be saved following death, possibly after a period of punishment. Yet this view, as attractive as it might be to human nature, falls short of the teachings of Scripture about "the coming wrath" for the ungodly (Matt. 3:7). The Roman Catholic belief in purgatory and the practice of praying for the dead represent other denials of the standard position that one's eternal destiny is inevitably fixed at the time of death.

Another question involves how literally or figuratively to take the language of unquenchable fire and worms that do not die (Mark 9:48). Will the fire be the same as the fire that we know on earth? And will there be literal worms? It is best to conclude simply that such punishment will be the worst that we can possibly imagine. Jesus clearly and emphatically warns about the dangers of hell as the greatest of all tragedies, characterized by "weeping and gnashing of teeth" (an expression found seven times in the Gospels).

There is also the question of whether there will be degrees of punishment in hell. In Mark 12:40 Jesus implies that there will be degrees of punishment, telling of hypocrites who will receive greater condemnation, and in Luke 12:47–48 speaking of some who will "be beaten with many blows," whereas others who have less knowledge of their master's will will "be beaten with few blows." The underlying principle both in the degrees of reward in glory and in the degrees of punishment in hell is this: "From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked" (Luke 12:48).

HELLENISM Traditionally, the noun "Hellenism" refers to the phenomenon of so-called Greek cultural influence, especially in the eastern Mediterranean, in the aftermath of Alexander the Great. As Alexander conquered the Near East, he worked to establish Greek culture and institutions within the conquered cities and areas. Over time, native populations adopted Greek culture in varying degrees. The adjective "Hellenistic" thus represents something as a part of this phenomenon, usually indicating some form of a "native" culture having a veneer of "Greek" culture. Although differences exist, scholars of antiquity understand the Hellenistic period to commence shortly after Alexander the Great, toward the end of the fourth century BC, and to conclude sometime in the several centuries after Christ.

CULTURAL MIXING AND CONFLICTS

The traditional approach mentioned above requires some nuancing. Hellenism cannot properly be understood as the phenomenon of Greek cultural influence. No pure strain of Greek culture existed that could influence pure strains of native cultures. Even before Alexander, various cultural practices of the Near East (Palestine, Mesopotamia, etc.) had impacted people among the Greeks farther West. Furthermore, cultures are not active agents. Rather, people who engage in various inherited social practices (including patterns of thinking), often associated with some specific ethnic group or culture, are the active agents who transmit practices, adopt new ones, influence other peoples' practices, and thus effect "cultural mixing."

Many scholars now understand Hellenism as simply the mixture of cultural practices throughout the Mediterranean in the aftermath of Alexander. It happens that much of our ancient data, such as extant writings and architecture, reflect a mixture in which features usually perceived as Greek have greater prominence. It is best to keep in mind that elites and authority figures who usually produced the extant data (writings, buildings, etc.) often desired to associate themselves with the new ruling power as a way of maintaining friendly relations with the new power. In this case, such elites might adopt, and make a show of adopting, the practices associated with Alexander and the various "Greek" institutions that he established in cities he conquered.

Another set of ancient data also depicts the opposite picture: an essential conflict between native peoples and the new, foreign, Greek-Hellenistic culture. In this case too, however, one must keep in mind the strategic nature of a person adopting stances and practices of overt resistance and representing such conflict as a fundamental reality. One cannot generalize about the nature and extent of Hellenistic cultural mixing. It varied widely between different areas and among various types of people. Furthermore, many people likely did not engage in this mixing of cultural practices with conscious reflection on it. Even with such qualifications, in this understanding the following constitute the basic elements of Hellenism: the spread of Greek as a lingua franca across the Near East; the establishment by Alexander and spread of "Greek" civic institutions such as the gymnasium/school; the phenomenon of various classes of people either associating or not with the new Greek civic institutions; and the study of Classical Greek literature among the educated in the Near East. To these basic elements, of course, one could add a host of other assorted practices.

Herod the Great built Greek-style theaters and a hippodrome in Jerusalem, as seen in this model of first-century Jerusalem (Israel Museum).

HELLENISM AND JUDAISM

Especially because of how certain ancient Jewish specialists represented key moments in Jewish history (e.g., the producers of 1 Maccabees and 2 Maccabees), scholars traditionally depict an essential difference between Judaism and Hellenism. Some deep essence of Judaism existed that fundamentally conflicted with the deep essence of Hellenism and Greek culture. Whereas Judaism fundamentally conceived of the body and the universe in a unitary way and taught the resurrection of the body, Greek culture fundamentally operated with a Platonic-dualistic view of the body and universe and taught the immortality of the soul. Whereas Judaism was essentially conservative and involved keeping its laws, which kept Jews separate from the broader world, Hellenism was essentially liberal and prized breaking down traditional barriers and assimilating everyone to universal “Greek culture.” Scholars have often identified the truest form of ancient Judaism with the writings that overtly represent a conflict between faithful Jews and Hellenistic sympathizers. To the extent that an ancient Jew “adopted” elements of Hellenistic culture, he or she was a syncretizer who distorted Judaism. Eventually, a major military and social conflict was sparked: the Maccabean Revolt. Pious faithful Jews went to war to protect their essential Judaism against the dangers of Hellenizing Jews, whose collaboration with Hellenistic rulers eventually brought about laws against being Jewish. Understanding ancient Judaism and the Jewish context of early Christianity involves grasping the historical and theological issues generated by the fundamental conflict between Judaism and Hellenism.

Although elements of the traditional approach outlined above have validity, it must be sharply qualified in various areas. For one thing, it describes the situation in terms of the explanation of a minority among ancient Jewish intellectuals. In addition to not representing the diverse spectrum of other Jewish elites and intellectuals, it certainly does not approximate the views of most average

Jews. The conception of Judaism as a monolithic entity also misses the mark. Jews who believed in the immortality of the soul and construed the world in terms of Stoic philosophical categories were no less Jewish than Jews who rejected such categories. They were simply different. Most important, like many other ancient Jewish intellectuals, the most vehemently anti-Hellenistic Jews wrote in Greek, using literary forms and strategies common within Greek literature. Even Jewish writings written in Hebrew manifest Hellenistic features. For example, some of the Dead Sea Scrolls work with medical theories predicated upon Classical Greek views of the body. One should not think that because something is Jewish, it is less likely to be Hellenistic.

All forms of ancient Judaism of which we are aware were Hellenized to some degree. To some extent they manifested a mixture of cultural practices, even at the level of patterns of thought. Thus, all forms of Judaism, including that practiced by Jesus, the authors of the NT, and other early Christians, were to some extent Hellenistic. Setting Jesus and the writings of the NT within the broad matrix of Jewish-Hellenistic practices and ways of understanding the world aids in understanding them.

For example, Jewish apocalyptic thought and literature developed and continued taking shape among Jewish specialists within Hellenistic cultural mixing. Its semidualistic views of the world along with its various conceptions of the afterlife make sense as part of broader Hellenistic views. Jesus and other early Christians explicitly taught and wrote about God’s salvation in Christ within such Hellenistic-Jewish apocalyptic matrices. Thus, Paul’s apocalyptic conceptions of the afterlife, redefined around Christ, in 1 Cor. 15 involve understandings of the resurrection body in categories common to Hellenistic philosophy. It will be a body composed of the lighter heavenly substances associated with the upper divine realm and not the heavier flesh-and-blood substances of the lower world, just as most Hellenistic philosophical sensitivities conceived afterlife possibilities for existence. In this way, Paul’s Jewish apocalyptic belief of the God of Israel’s end-time blessing of resurrection, which happened first and foremost in Christ, also completely involved broader Hellenistic views. Jesus and early Christians lived in the Hellenistic world of long-standing and continuous cultural mixing.

HELLENISTS, HELLENISTIC JEWS The Hellenists (*hellēnistai*), or “Hellenistic Jews,” mentioned in Acts 6:1 are Greek-speaking Jewish Christians who immigrated back to Israel and are distinguished from the native-born, Aramaic-speaking “Hebraic Jews.” The two groups are involved in a dispute over the distribution of food among widows. The principal spokesperson of the Hellenists is Stephen, who is later martyred for his faith (Acts 7; his opponents are also Hellenistic Jews [6:9]). The same Greek word is used to refer to Greek-speaking Jews in Antioch (9:29) and to non-Christian, Greek-speaking Gentiles (11:20; NIV: “Greeks”). Paul himself was a Hellenistic Jew, born in Tarsus in Cilicia (21:37; 22:3). It is evident from Paul’s life that being a Hellenist did not necessarily mean he was less committed to Jewish laws and customs (see Phil. 3:5–6).

HELON The father of Eliab, who was the tribal leader of Zebulun during the wilderness wanderings (Num. 1:9; 2:7; 7:24, 29; 10:16).

HELP, HELPING Among the gifts divinely distributed to the church is the gift of helping others (1 Cor. 12:28). The apostles acknowledged friends from whom they and others received help, including Apollos (Acts 18:7), Phoebe (Rom. 16:1–2), and Silas (1 Pet. 5:12).

HELPER In Gen. 2:18–25 the lone man is provided with a “helper.” This is not necessarily an unromantic view of the marriage relationship (cf. Gen. 1:27–28a), but the main thought is of companionship and partnership (cf. Eccles. 4:9–11). Also, the word “helper” does not require a subservient or demeaning function but rather can include active intervention, such as God himself renders (e.g., Ps. 33:20: “[The Lord] is our help and our shield”). The man needs help to carry out the mandate of Gen. 1:28b, so a wide-ranging helping role is in view. The helper must be “suitable for him” (Gen. 2:18b), that is, come alongside him, as his opposite and complement, and so no mere lowly assistant will be adequate for the task. (*See also* Help Meet.)

The psalms portray God as the helper of his needy people (Pss. 10:14; 30:10; 54:4; 70:5; 72:12; 146:5). The exodus deliverance is described by using the motif of God as “my helper” (Exod. 18:4). On the other hand, when God acts to judge wicked nations, no human helper (or ally) can provide protection (Isa. 30:5; Jer. 47:4; Ezek. 30:8). In the crisis of persecution forecast in Dan. 11:34, the “little help” (= helper) may be Judas Maccabeus, though the main point is that the godly will not be totally bereft of divine support. Among the charismatically gifted individuals who are to act for the common good listed by Paul in 1 Cor. 12:28 are those able to help others, though the kind of help in mind (distinguished from healing and administration) is not specified.

HELP MEET In Gen. 2:18, 20 the KJV translates the Hebrew phrase *’ezer kenegdo*, used to describe Eve’s relationship toward Adam, as “help meet.” The NIV translates the words as “a helper suitable” (for Adam), but finding a precise English equivalent is difficult in part because this is the only place in the Bible where these two words occur together. Other translations prefer “helper who is just right” (NLT) or “helper as his partner” (NRSV). The Hebrew word *’ezer* (“helper”) is often used of God or an aiding human prince or army, and thus it does not denote subordination (e.g., Ps. 30:10). The Hebrew word *kenegdo* implies mutuality, matching, or correspondence. Those words together make Eve a “suitable helper” (cf. NET: “a companion who corresponds to him”). The disagreement regarding appropriate gender roles makes this a hotly debated text. *See also* Helper.

HELVE In Deut. 19:5 the KJV translates the Hebrew word *’ets* as “helve,” an archaic word that refers to the handle of an ax or weapon.

HEM **(1)** In the Bible, usually the bottom of a robe. For example, the high priest’s robe had a hem that included golden bells and pomegranates sewn onto it so that they made noise when the high priest moved, presumably to let people know that the priest was still alive when he entered the holy of holies (Exod. 28:33–35; 39:24–26). Often, touching the hem of a robe was considered a sign of submission (such as Saul grabbing Samuel’s in 1 Sam. 15:27). Similarly, it could be an act of entreaty by an inferior toward a superior, as in Zech. 8:23: “In those days ten people from all languages and nations will take firm hold of one Jew by the hem of his robe and say, ‘Let us go with you, because we have heard that God is with you.’ ” The Gospels describe a woman who was healed simply by touching the hem of Jesus’ robe (Matt. 9:20 // Mark 5:27 // Luke 8:44).

(2) A verb to describe the action of surrounding or trapping someone (Ps. 139:5; Hab. 1:4).

HEMAM *See* Homam.

HEMAN **(1)** A worship leader during the time of King David (1 Chron. 16:42), a descendant of Levi through Kohath and Joel (1 Chron. 6:33). Heman was one of King David’s seers, which involved prophesying as well as musical worship (1 Chron. 25:1, 4–5). Two of Heman’s famous colleagues were Asaph and Jeduthun. **(2)** A descendant of Judah through Zerah (1 Chron. 2:6) whose name appears in the inscription of Ps. 88 as “Heman the Ezrahite.” He was known for his wisdom (1 Kings 4:31). Some have suggested that he is the same person as in 1 Chron. 6:33; 16:42; 25:1, 4–5).

HEMATH *See* Hamath; Hammath.

HEMDAN The first son of Dishon and a grandson of Seir the Horite who lived in the land of Edom (Gen. 36:26). In some versions of 1 Chron. 1:41, in the genealogy of Esau, he is called “Hamran” (NKJV, NRSV; see NIV mg.).

HEMLOCK The KJV twice uses “hemlock” to refer to a bitter plant, each time translating a different Hebrew word. The word in Hos. 10:4, *ro’sh* (NIV: “poisonous weeds”), is translated as “gall, venom, poison” elsewhere in the KJV, and the word in Amos 6:12, *la’anah* (NIV: “bitterness”), is translated elsewhere as “wormwood.”

HEMORRHAGE The word “hemorrhage” is sometimes used to refer to a “flow of blood” or “discharge of blood” related to a woman’s reproductive organs (Lev. 12:7; cf. Matt. 9:20), which rendered her ritually unclean. The impurity of menstruation made a woman unclean for seven days and was transmitted to anyone or anything she touched (Lev. 15:19–24). Thus, sexual intercourse with a woman during this period was prohibited (Lev. 18:19; 20:18; cf. Ezek. 22:10). A woman suffering from irregular or prolonged bleeding was considered clean only after the bleeding had ceased for seven days (Lev. 15:25–28). Jesus healed a woman who had been suffering from bleeding for twelve years (Matt. 9:20–22; Mark 5:25–34; Luke 8:43–48). Instead of Jesus becoming unclean by her touching his garment, the power of his holiness cleansed her. The woman, who had been excluded from worshiping in the temple due to her physical “uncleanness” (Lev. 15:31), was transformed by grace and now a member of Jesus’ new family.

HEMORRHOIDS Hemorrhoids result from the painful swelling of veins in the region of the anus, often accompanied with bleeding. God may have inflicted the Philistines with this condition—what the biblical writer calls “tumors” (1 Sam. 5:6, 9, 12; 6:4–5, 11, 17)—as punishment for capturing the ark of the covenant from the Israelites and setting it beside their agricultural god, Dagon. But most scholars now presume that a form of bubonic plague is being described. The KJV translation “emerods” is probably responsible for this traditional interpretation.

HEN **(1)** The son of Zephaniah, one of four men memorialized by the priestly crowns that were to reside in the temple (Zech. 6:14). **(2)** The bird, a domestic fowl, that Jesus uses as a metaphor to describe God’s desire to protect the children of Jerusalem like the hen does her chicks (Matt. 23:37; Luke 13:34). Unlike chicks, which would readily accept such protection, Jerusalem is known for its stubborn refusal. *See also* Chicken.

HENA Hena appears beside Ivvah in the speech of the Assyrian field commander (2 Kings 18:34; 19:13; Isa. 37:13) to King Hezekiah. Interpretations of this term range from a city (possibly Anah on the middle Euphrates near Damascus), to a verb meaning “sent wandering” (Targum) or “displaced” (Symmachus’s Greek translation), to a deity identified with the sixth station of the moon. Difficulties are present with each interpretation.

HENADAD A Levite family among the returnees with Zerubbabel (Ezra 3:9). Members of this family participated in the rebuilding of Jerusalem under the direction of Nehemiah (Neh. 3:18, 24) and sealed the covenant with God following Ezra’s public reading of the law (Neh. 10:9).

HENNA Henna blossoms are fragrant flowers that are sometimes used to produce perfume Song 1:14; 4:13; KJV: “camphire”).The henna plant is also used to create dyes. *See also* Camphire; Flowers.

HENOCH *See* Enoch.

HEPHER **(1)** A son of Gilead and eponymous ancestor of the Hepherite clan in Manasseh (Num. 26:32–33; 27:1; Josh. 17:2–3). **(2)** A son of Ashhur from the tribe of Judah (1 Chron. 4:6). **(3)** One of David’s mighty men (1 Chron. 11:36). **(4)** One of thirty-one Canaanite royal cities destroyed by Joshua (Josh. 12:17), which later became one of the territories of King Solomon’s deputy Ben-Hesed (1 Kings 4:10).

HEPHERITE *See* Hepher.

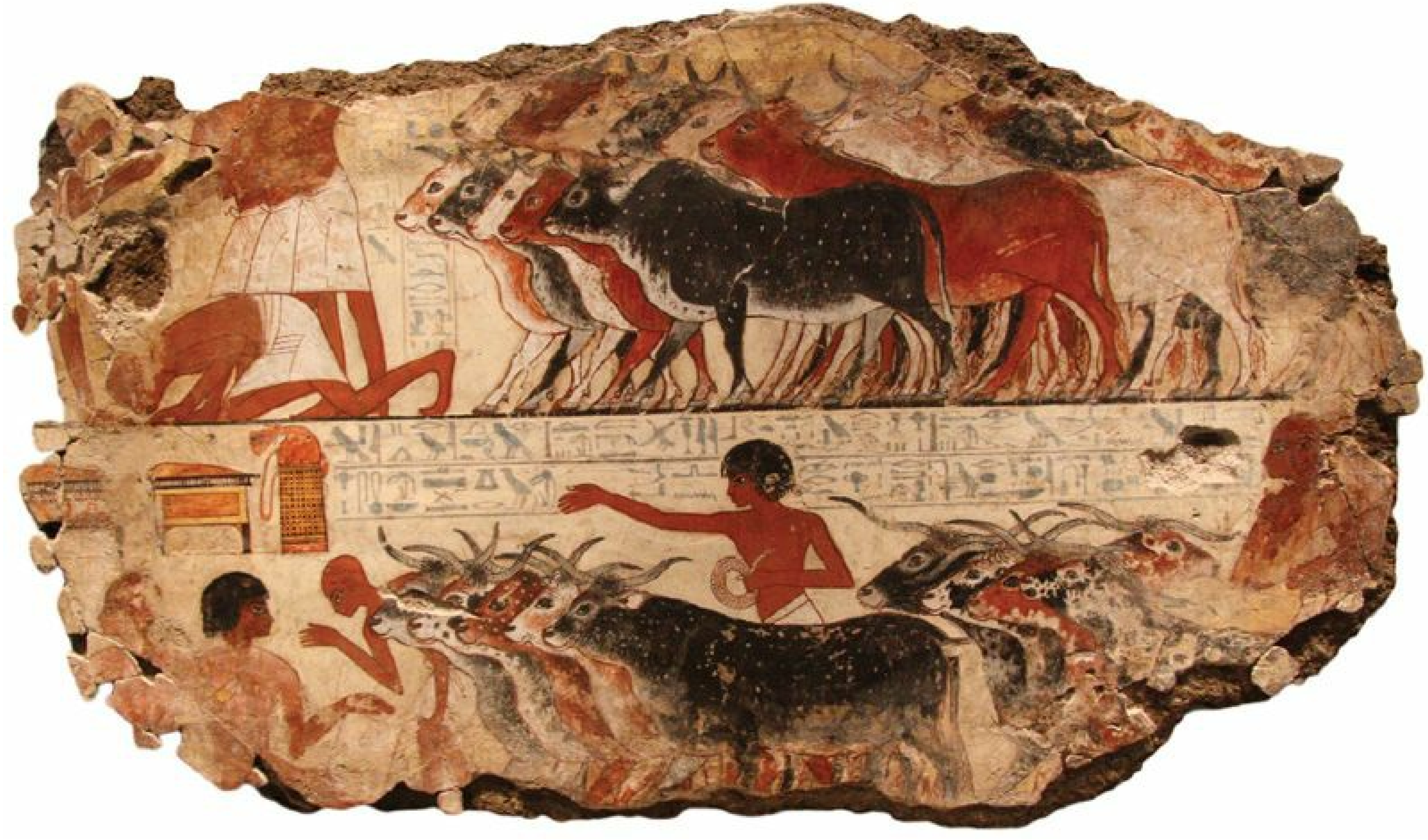
HEPHZIBAH **(1)** The mother of King Manasseh of Judah and presumably the wife of Hezekiah (2 Kings 21:1). **(2)** A symbolic name, meaning “my delight is in her,” that God gives to Jerusalem after the return from exile (Isa. 62:4). The name provides a contrast with Jerusalem’s earlier names, “Deserted” and “Desolate.” It is God’s declaration that he will once again take delight in Jerusalem.

HERALD A messenger commissioned to deliver a proclamation on behalf of a royal personage or God. King Nebuchadnezzar’s herald announces that all subjects must worship a golden statue or else be thrown into a blazing furnace (Dan. 3:4). God instructs Habakkuk to record his oracle regarding the future destruction of Babylon on a tablet so that it might be delivered by a herald (Hab. 2:2). Paul was appointed as an apostle and a herald of the gospel to the Gentiles (1 Tim. 2:7; 2 Tim. 1:11).

HERBS, BITTER *See* Bitter Herbs.

HERD A group of domesticated animals. In the OT, a herd (*baqar*; generally cattle and/or oxen) is often distinguished from a flock (*tso’n*; sheep and/or goats), and Israelites often had both (Deut. 15:19). From a herd, an Israelite could take an animal to eat (Gen. 18:7) or sacrifice (Lev. 1:2–3). In the NT, the Greek word commonly translated “herd” (*agelē*) is used only of swine (Matt. 8:30; Mark 5:11; Luke 8:32). A “flock” (*poimēn*) is made up of sheep or goats.

HERDSMAN, HERDER English versions generally use the term “herdsman” or “herder” when referring to those who care for cattle, preferring the term “shepherd” when the care of sheep is in view. Herders usually were hired workers who protected their employers’ livestock and led the herd to grazing areas. In at least two biblical instances (Gen. 13:7–8; 26:20), quarreling arose between herders. Amos is referred to as a herdsman in some translations (7:14 KJV, NRSV).



This fragment from a tomb painting shows herdsmen bringing cattle before the owner, Nebamun

HERES **(1)** A mountainous region, along with Aijalon and Shaalbim, inhabited by the Amorites. The tribe of Dan was unable to expel them from this region during the conquest of Canaan (Judg. 1:34–35). **(2)** The region through which Gideon returned after defeating Zebah and Zalmunnah. Gideon captured the two Midianite kings and routed their armies (Judg. 8:13). **(3)** Part of the name of the location of Joshua’s burial place. The name is given as “Timnath Heres” in Judg. 2:9. It was located near Mount Gaash in the territory of Ephraim. The town is also described as Timnath Serah in Josh. 19:50; 24:30.

HERESH A Levite and a descendant of Asaph, he was among those who returned to Jerusalem after the exile (1 Chron. 9:15).

HERESY The English word “heresy” comes from the Greek *hairesis*, which is used in the NT to refer to a sect, party, or school. It is used to describe the Pharisees and the Sadducees (Acts 5:17; 15:5; 26:5), and Christians are referred to in this way, although only by outsiders (24:5, 14; 28:22). Paul strongly condemns the tendency for Christian communities to separate into factions, and he even lists factions as an obvious act of the sinful nature (1 Cor. 11:19; Gal. 5:20; cf. Titus 3:10). When using this word, he seems primarily concerned with the fractious attitudes of people in the church who violate Christian unity rather than incorrect doctrine.

It is in the later NT writings that we see the word “heresy” used in connection with incorrect belief that is “destructive,” bringing “condemnation” to those that teach it (2 Pet. 2:1–3). The connotations from this passage—heresy as a false teaching—became the dominant meaning for the word. Perhaps the use of the word "heresy" in this fashion came from the common condemnations by the early church of both false teachings and schismatics who separated themselves from the wider Christian community.

As generally used today, the word "heresy" indicates a deviation from accepted Christian teaching and belief extensive enough to be considered an invalid and incompatible interpretation of the faith. Heretics (those who believe or expound heresies) claim an allegiance to the Christian faith, but they hold convictions that are perceived by the church universal to fundamentally alter the faith as received from the apostles.

Most heresies involve a misunderstanding of the person of Christ or the relations of the persons within the Trinity. For example, a group of early believers who followed the teacher Arius taught that Jesus was the "first creation" of God the Father, and that he was really only quasi-divine. This may seem like a subtle and irrelevant distinction to some, but it has the effect of making God ultimately unknown to the world, since the incarnation was not really God in the flesh, and Jesus is only another pale intermediary rather than true Lord. Councils of church leaders (bishops) declared Arianism incorrect at the Council of Nicaea in AD 325, and thus it is considered a heresy.

There is general agreement among the branches of Christianity (Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, Protestant) about the falsehood of many heresies that have appeared in the history of Christianity, but there is still disagreement regarding some issues, as the Roman Catholic Church proclaimed Martin Luther a heretic in his lifetime. While the church certainly must remain eternally vigilant against the spread and acceptance of false and erroneous teachings, all too often the word "heresy" is used carelessly to reinforce the very divisions that Paul would have condemned.

HERETH The forested region into which David and his men fled from King Saul after being instructed by the prophet Gad to leave the stronghold of Moab (1 Sam. 22:5). The exact location is unknown, though perhaps from the association with David's sojourn in the cave of Adullam, some scholars identify Hereth with nearby Kharas, which is between Adullam and Giloh.

HERITAGE That which is given or designated as an enduring possession or lot, sometimes as recompense. "Heritage" is the common translation in the KJV in many instances where more-recent versions read "inheritance" (e.g., Jer. 2:7; Joel 2:17; Mic. 2:2). Sometimes "heritage," which is more abstract than "inheritance" in modern English, is preferred in modern versions to speak broadly of recompense, either for godliness (Ps. 61:5; Isa. 54:17; 58:14) or for ungodliness (Job 20:29; 31:2). Other times, "heritage" is chosen when the object in question is human (Pss. 94:5; 127:3; Isa. 47:6; Jer. 50:11), or when the lasting nature of the object is prominent (Pss. 135:12; 136:21–22).

HERMAS Paul greets a certain Hermas, possibly a leader in one of the Roman household churches (Rom. 16:14). Another Roman Christian, a prophet, with the same name and perhaps the brother of Bishop Pius (c. AD 140–154), wrote *Shepherd of Hermas*.

HERMENEUTICS *See* Biblical Hermeneutics.

HERMES **(1)** A Greek deity (equivalent to the Roman god Mercury) associated with science and eloquence, he was said to have appeared with the god Zeus around Lystra (Ovid, *Metam.* 8.611–724). A crowd in Lystra identified Paul as Hermes and Barnabas as Zeus after Paul healed a man who could not walk (Acts 14:8–12). **(2)** A Christian greeted by Paul (Rom. 16:14). He is not specified as Jewish (cf. Rom. 16:7, 11, 21), and in Rome the name “Hermes” was typical of (former) slaves.

HERMETIC LITERATURE Writings associated with the Greco-Egyptian deity Hermes Trismegistos, who was a combination of Hermes (the Greek god of eloquence and science) and Thot, an Egyptian moon god and scribe of the gods, whose title, meaning “the thrice greatest,” was added to the name. The *Corpus hermeticum* consists of seventeen philosophical and theological tractates, mostly ascribed to the god himself, who often is quoted instructing his son. These were probably first written in Greek from the second to fifth centuries AD. The earliest known manuscript contains tractates 1–14 and is probably from the eleventh century AD. Numerous references to and citations of lost Hermetic works are found in the church fathers, and other important finds come from Nag Hammadi. The *Corpus hermeticum* was once thought to predate Plato but now is seen as a later development from Platonic, Stoic, Neo-Pythagorean, and some Jewish ideas. The literature is fairly abstract overall, and questions remain as to whether the movement existed primarily as a school of thought or also included its own cultic community. Although no literary dependency is evident, the texts are relevant for NT studies because they illuminate the cultural milieu surrounding early church history and the composition of the NT.

The literature has affinities with Pauline and Johannine literature as well as with gnostic works. Regarding shared religious expression with the NT, God is called “light and life” (*Corp. herm.* 1.12; 13.18–19; cf. John 1:4, 9), and the idea of rebirth (*palingenesia*) appears (*Corp. herm.* 13; cf. John 3:3; Titus 3:5; 1 Pet. 1:23), as do the ideas of individual salvation and baptism. But death does not come because of sin (*Corp. herm.* 1.20; cf. Rom. 5:12), and the idea of incarnation is rejected (*Corp. herm.* 4.9). Similarities with cosmological ideas found in gnostic literature also appear: dualism between spirit and matter, creation of the material world as a tragic mistake, the physical body as evil, and salvation from the empirical world via knowledge (*gnōsis*).

HERMOGENES An apostacized believer whom Paul names while writing from prison (2 Tim. 1:15). Paul claims that Hermogenes, Phygelus, and everyone else in the province of Asia have deserted him. Paul’s disappointment with Hermogenes is mentioned in the context of his exhortation not to be ashamed of suffering for the sake of the gospel.

HERMON, MOUNT The highest mountain in ancient Israel, with its highest peak reaching over 9,200 feet. Due to its height, its peak is snow-covered year-round, causing abundant dew in comparison to the arid land in that region, with its melting ice serving as a major source of the Jordan River.

Mount Hermon

The Canaanites referred to Hermon as Sirion or Senir (Deut. 3:9), as do some biblical texts (e.g., 1 Chron. 5:23). It is located above the Lebanon Valley (Josh. 11:17) and above Mizpah (11:3), where Joshua pursued the Canaanite kings and defeated them at the Waters of Merom (11:1–7). Hermon is identified with the modern Jebel es-Sheik (Arabic for “mountain of the sheik”), about thirty miles southwest of Damascus.

Hermon formed the northern frontier of Israel’s Amorite conquests (Deut. 3:8; Josh. 11:17). Before the Israelites conquered the region, the Hivites dwelled there (Judg. 3:3), and it was ruled by King Og of Bashan (Josh. 12:4–5) and the Amorite king Sihon (Josh. 13:10–11) and was known as “the area of the Gebalites [NIV: “Byblos”]” (Josh. 13:5).

Ancient Near Eastern mythology associated high mountains with the dwelling of the gods, so it is no surprise that the Canaanites regarded the mountain as sacred. Archaeologists have discovered some Iron Age (1200–586 BC) remains on the summit and more than twenty temples dating from later times. This probably explains references in the Bible to “Baal Hermon” (Judg. 3:3) and “Baal Gad below Mount Hermon” (Josh. 13:5).

Hermon is mentioned fifteen times in the Bible (Deut. 3:8, 9; 4:48; Josh. 11:3, 17; 12:1, 5; 13:5, 11; Judg. 3:3; Pss. 42:6; 89:12; 133:3; Song 4:8; 1 Chron. 5:23). It is known for its lions and leopards (Song 4:8) and pine trees (Ezek. 27:5). It is praised for its dew (Ps. 133:3) and mentioned in reference to other mountains (89:12), the Jordan River (42:6), and the power of God (29:6). Hermon is not mentioned in the NT, but due to its geographical proximity to Caesarea Philippi, some have suggested it was the location for Jesus’ transfiguration, which Mark 9:2 locates on a “high mountain.”

HERMONITES The Hebrew plural *khermonim* (lit., "Hermons") appears only in Ps. 42:6 (42:7 MT) and is rendered in the KJV as "Hermonites" (NIV: "heights of Hermon") referring to the multiple peaks of Mount Hermon (cf. NASB). *See also* Hermon, Mount.

HEROD Several kings of the Jews, related by birth, had the name "Herod." The Herods formed a royal dynasty that flourished during the time of Christ and the early church. The founder of the dynasty was Antipater, who was appointed by Caesar in 47 BC as procurator of Judea. The Herods, being partly Edomite (descended from Esau) as well as loyal servants of Rome, were never fully accepted by their Jewish subjects. The family history was characterized by lust, intrigue, and bloodshed. They opposed the Christian faith, sometimes violently, being responsible for the attempted murder of Jesus (Matt. 2:16), the beheading of John the Baptist (Matt. 14:1–12), and the execution of the apostle James (Acts 12:2).

(1) Herod I (Herod the Great), son of Antipater, known as King Herod (Matt. 2:1; Luke 1:5). He ruled Palestine in the years 37–4 BC with Roman consent. A skillful politician, he managed to retain the favor of Rome by deftly switching allegiances when necessary. A capable ruler in some respects, he engaged in extensive building works. His finest project was the beautification of the temple, which he hoped would win Jewish favor. The rabbis would later say, "Whoever has not seen Herod's building has not seen anything beautiful."

His rule, however, was marred by paranoia, suspicion, and cruel jealousy. He had some of his wives and sons killed for suspected plotting. In Matthew's Gospel he is visited by wise men looking for "one who has been born king of the Jews." Subsequently, he massacred the male infants of Bethlehem, trying to rid himself of this new, royal challenger (Matt. 2:1–11). Upon his death, his kingdom was divided among three of his sons, Herod Antipas, Herod Archelaus, and Herod Philip.

(2) Herod Antipas, son of Herod the Great, also known simply as Herod or as Herod the tetrarch (Matt. 14:1; Luke 3:19). He was given jurisdiction over Galilee and Perea, which he ruled from 4 BC to AD 39 (Luke 3:1). For this reason, when Pilate heard that Jesus came from Galilee, he sent him to Antipas for questioning (Luke 23:6–12).

He is infamous for his role in the death of John the Baptist, which later haunted him (Matt. 14:1–12; Mark 6:14–29). Jesus referred to him as "that fox," alluding to his predatory destructiveness for having killed John the Baptist, who criticized him for taking his half brother's wife, Herodias, in marriage. He also sought to kill Jesus (Luke 13:31–32). Jesus warned the disciples of the yeast of Herod (Mark 8:15). Yeast was a metaphor sometimes used to describe how evil spreads and corrupts the whole person, perhaps a reference to Herod's lust for Herodias and his murderous opposition to God's word and Son. (*See also* Antipas.)

(3) Herod Archelaus, ethnarch of Judea, Samaria, and Idumea (4 BC–AD 6) and son of Herod the Great (Matt. 2:22). (*See also* Archelaus.)

(4) Herod Philip, son of Herod the Great and Cleopatra of Jerusalem; he was tetrarch of Iturea and Traconitis in the years 4 BC–AD 34 (Luke 3:1). He rebuilt Paneas and named it "Caesarea Philippi" after the emperor and himself (Matt. 16:13; Mark 8:27). Apparently, he married his niece Salome III, the daughter of Herodias and his half brother Herod son of Mariamne II.

(5) Herod (Philip), son of Herod the Great and Mariamne II, he was married to Herodias, who left him for his half brother Antipas (Matt. 14:3; Mark 6:17; Luke 3:19). Though sharing a common name, this is a different son of Herod the Great than the Herod Philip of Luke 3:1.

(6) Herod Agrippa I, grandson of Herod the Great, also called "King Herod" in Scripture (Acts 12:1). At the height of his power (r. AD 37–44), he ruled an area coextensive with that of his grandfather. He persecuted the early church, killing James the brother of John. Encouraged by the Jews, he imprisoned Peter, intending to put him on trial, until an angel of God miraculously intervened to free him. He died prematurely in Caesarea when struck down for not giving glory to God (Acts 12:20–25).

(7) Herod Agrippa II (reigned in Chalcis AD 48–52, in Iturea AD 52–c. 93), the son of Herod Agrippa I. Prompted by the governor Festus, he gave audience to the apostle Paul to make his defense. He rejected Paul's attempt to persuade him of the truth of the Christian faith (Acts 25:13–27; 26).

HERODIANS Since the term "Herodians" appears only three times in the NT (Matt. 22:16; Mark 3:6; 12:13), it is unclear whether it refers to a political party or more generally to supporters of the Herodian dynasty. Herod Antipas, son of Herod the Great, ruled as tetrarch of Galilee during the period of Jesus' ministry, and this is likely where the Herodians were based. In all three NT appearances they are conspiring with the Pharisees against Jesus. This is unusual in one sense because the Herodians were favorably disposed toward the Roman authorities (who kept Herod in power), while the Pharisees generally opposed Roman rule. Nonetheless, both groups had reason to fear Jesus and his influence among the people, the Pharisees for religious reasons and the Herodians for political ones. Herod and his supporters would have been leery of any popular messianic movement that might provoke a peasant revolt among Herod's disgruntled subjects. *See also* Jewish Parties.

HERODIAS The unscrupulous wife of Herod Antipas who instigated the beheading of John the Baptist (Matt. 14:1–12; Mark 6:14–29). Herodias deserted her first husband, Herod Philip, son of Herod the Great and Mariamne II, to marry his half brother Herod Antipas (Matt. 14:3; Mark 6:17; Luke 3:19). When John the Baptist publicly denounced the legality of the marriage (cf. Lev. 18:16; 20:21), Antipas imprisoned him and Herodias sought revenge. Opportunity came through her daughter, Salome, whose dancing so pleased Antipas that he foolishly swore an oath promising anything she wanted.

HERODION A Christian living in Rome to whom Paul sent greetings and calls "my relative" (Rom. 16:11; NIV: "fellow Jew"). This description could denote a blood relation, but since Paul uses the same Greek term (*syngenēs*) to describe at least five other individuals (Rom. 16:7, 21) and elsewhere in the letter to refer to fellow Jews (Rom. 9:3), it more likely indicates a kinsman of the same race. The name implies a connection with Herod's household.

HERODIUM One of the fortress palaces built by Herod the Great to protect his kingdom. This imposing conical-shaped hill, not mentioned in the Bible, is located about seven and a half miles from Jerusalem and is clearly visible from Bethlehem. According to Josephus, Herod was buried there following his death in Jericho. This was confirmed in 2007, when the Hebrew University of Jerusalem announced the discovery of Herod's burial site, on the northeast slopes of the hill.

HEROD'S PALACE Herod the Great (73–4 BC) built a number of palaces throughout his kingdom, including those in Jerusalem, Caesarea, Jericho, the Herodium, and Masada, but two play an important role in the NT. The only explicit NT mention of "Herod's palace" (Acts 23:35) refers to the palace (or praetorium) built by Herod in Caesarea Maritima, which was used during the period of

Acts as the headquarters of Roman governors in Judea. When Paul was rescued from a group of his Jewish opponents plotting to kill him (Acts 23:12–22), the governor Felix held Paul in Herod's Palace until his Jewish accusers arrived from Jerusalem to charge him face-to-face (Acts 23:35).

Another of Herod's palaces was the magnificent residence built to provide protection for the Upper City of Jerusalem. This palace consisted of two main buildings, each with banquet halls, baths, and accommodation for hundreds of guests. It was surrounded by groves, canals, ponds, and fountains. This palace became the official residence of the Roman governors who came to Jerusalem during the major Jewish festivals, and it is likely that Jesus' Roman trial before Pilate took place here in the palace's courtyard, or praetorium (Mark 15:16; cf. John 18:28, 33; 19:9). This is more likely than the traditional location at the Antonia Fortress overlooking the temple, since Pilate is unlikely to have been staying in the somewhat spartan barracks of Antonia.

HERON A tall wading bird (Heb. *'anapah*) that eats fish and other small creatures, it is listed as unclean (Lev. 11:19; Deut. 14:18). Several species exist in Israel.

HESHBON A Moabite city that Sihon the Amorite king captured and made his royal capital (Num. 21:26–30). When Israel requested permission to pass through his territory, Sihon refused and instead attacked the Israelites. However, under the leadership of Moses, Israel defeated Sihon and captured Heshbon (Num. 21:21–31; Deut. 2:24; Josh. 12:2; Judg. 11:19–26).

The city appears to have changed hands many times throughout biblical history. Initially, the city was distributed to the tribe of Reuben, which "rebuilt" the city (Num. 32:37). Subsequently, Heshbon was passed over to the tribe of Gad (Josh. 13:27), which then assigned it to the Levites (Josh. 21:39). Judges 11:26 notes that Israel occupied Heshbon and surrounding settlements for several centuries. However, Judg. 3:14–30; 11:13–28 assert that the kingdoms of Ammon and Moab controlled the region (though not mentioning Heshbon particularly) at different times. By the time of Isaiah (and later in the time of Jeremiah), Moab had recaptured Heshbon (e.g., Isa. 15:4; Jer. 48:2), possibly under King Mesha during the height of Moabite prosperity. Josephus notes that by the time of Alexander Jannaeus, Israel had again conquered Heshbon (*Ant.* 13.397). The region of Heshbon is noted for its vineyards, wells, grasslands, and pools (Num. 21:22; Isa. 16:8–9; Song 7:4).

The ruins of Heshbon

Most have identified biblical Heshbon as Tell Hesban, located in the highland plateau of Transjordan. Excavations reveal that the site was occupied continuously from 1200 BC and was likely an agricultural village that was fortified. Material remains (bowls and jars) from this period found on both sides of the Jordan suggest that the same people group occupied both sites. This concurs with the biblical claims that Israel occupied both sides of the Jordan during this period. However, there is very little evidence of earlier (Bronze Age) remains that could help identify it as the capital city of the Amorites (Num. 21:26). There is not enough archaeological data to either support or disprove that a battle for the city took place between Sihon and Moses. Since the whole site has not been excavated, it may be that evidence of Amorite occupation could be found elsewhere on the site. Alternatively, the site may not have been correctly identified.

HESHMON A town allocated to Judah at the time of Joshua (Josh. 15:27).

HESLI *See* Esli.

HETH The second son of Canaan, and the patronymic ancestor of the Hittites (Gen. 10:15; 23:10; 1 Chron. 1:13 KJV, NASB [cf. RSV]; NIV: “Hittite[s]”). These Hittite descendants of Heth were the Neo-Hittites, who maintained some of the culture but not the ethnicity of the Indo-European Hittites.

HETHLON A location mentioned in Ezekiel’s vision of the new city and the new temple. The "road to Hethlon" served as the northern border of the land that God instructed Ezekiel to divide as an inheritance among the tribes of Israel (47:15; 48:1). The vision occurred in the twenty-fifth year of the captivity of Judah, as Ezekiel was instructed to declare to Israel everything that God showed him (40:1, 4). The exact location is unknown, though it may have been associated with the entrance to Hamath, which is located at the northern border of Lebanon (48:1; cf. Num. 34:8).

HEW To "hew" is to chop, cut, or carve something. In the KJV, the term is applied to wood used for building (Jer. 6:6), stone used for the Ten Commandments (Exod. 34:1, 4; Deut. 10:1, 3), rock from a quarry (2 Chron. 2:2), or graven images (Hab. 2:13). In the NIV, it is applied exclusively to rock and used in parallel with "cut" (Isa. 22:16; 51:1). The KJV also uses the term "hewers" to represent a group of skilled workers who cut wood for use in building projects (NIV: "woodcutters, woodsmen"). *See also* Woodworker.

HEXATEUCH A modern name for the first six books of the Bible (Genesis through Joshua), viewed by some scholars as a unit instead of the traditional grouping of the first five books (Pentateuch). This scholarly construct was promoted by Gerhard von Rad as a more natural canonical unit, since it is only in Joshua that God's promise to the patriarchs of the possession of Canaan becomes a reality. There are, however, overwhelming reasons to retain the Pentateuch as the preferred collection. The death of Moses is a watershed (Deut. 34). The book of Joshua is also closely connected to Judges. The note of promise and expectation at the close of Deuteronomy better fits biblical theology generally.

HEZEKI *See* Hizki.

HEZEKIAH **(1)** The fourteenth ruler of the kingdom of Judah (727–698 BC). He was the son of Ahaz, an impious king, but Hezekiah reversed his father's religious policies and worked hard at promoting true worship of Yahweh. Though not perfect, he, along with Josiah, is remembered as one of the two best kings to rule Judah.

He was not sole ruler of Judah until 715 BC, and he was serving as coregent with Ahaz when the northern kingdom fell to the Assyrians in 722 BC (2 Kings 18:9–12). Perhaps the fate of the northern kingdom led Hezekiah to initiate religious reform in Judah.

Although Judah was not incorporated into the Assyrian Empire when the northern kingdom fell, it was always under that great kingdom's shadow and threat, likely paying annual tribute. It appears that Hezekiah participated in an area-wide revolt against Assyria after the death of Sargon II in 705 BC. In response, the new Assyrian king, Sennacherib, threatened Jerusalem in 701 BC. The Assyrian army successfully took many Judean cities, and its envoys appeared at the walls of Jerusalem. The prophet Isaiah assured Hezekiah that the capital would not fall, and it did not (2 Kings 18:17–19:37; 2 Chron. 32:1–23; Isa. 36–37).

According to 2 Kings 20:20, Hezekiah constructed a tunnel that brought water inside the walls of the city. The tunnel still exists today and takes the water from the Gihon spring to the Pool of Siloam. It is a remarkable engineering achievement, and an inscription found on the wall inside the tunnel indicates that it was built during Hezekiah's reign.

After the Assyrian siege, Hezekiah fell sick, and Isaiah announced that he would die (2 Kings 20:1–11; Isa. 38). Hezekiah turned to God in prayer, and God granted him fifteen additional years of life, giving the king the remarkable sign of the sundial whose shadow moved backward.

Even Hezekiah, though, had his bad moments. After showing a Babylonian leader, Marduk-Baladan, the temple treasures, thus revealing an inclination to trust foreign powers rather than God, Hezekiah heard from Isaiah that his descendants would suffer the consequences of his action (2 Kings 20:13–21; Isa. 39).

(2) A forefather of the prophet Zephaniah (Zeph. 1:1; KJV: "Hizkiah"). **(3)** The ancestor of a family listed among those that returned from the Babylonian exile (Ezra 2:16; Neh. 7:21). **(4)** One of the leaders of the returned exiles, he participated in the sealing of the covenant at the Ezra-Nehemiah renewal ceremony (Neh. 10:17; KJV: "Hizkijah"). He may be the same as 3.

HEZION The grandfather of Ben-Hadad I, king of Aram (early ninth century BC) (1 Kings 15:18).

HEZIR **(1)** A priest contemporary with David who was assigned the seventeenth of twenty-four positions in the priestly order of service (1 Chron. 24:15). **(2)** One of the "leaders of the people" who sealed the covenant with God following Ezra's public reading of the law (Neh. 10:20).

HEZRAI *See* Hezro.

HEZRO One of David's mighty men (2 Sam. 23:35 [Qere and some manuscripts: "Hezrai"]; 1 Chron. 11:37). He was a native of Carmel, thus a Carmelite. The mighty men are often referred to as "the Thirty" (2 Sam. 23:23; 1 Chron. 11:25), although 2 Sam. 23:39 says that there were thirty-seven.

HEZRON **(1)** A grandson of Jacob and son of Reuben (Gen. 46:9; Exod. 6:14; 1 Chron. 5:3). His descendants were the Hezronite clan of Reuben (Num. 26:6). **(2)** A great-grandson of Jacob, grandson of Judah, son of Perez, and the father of Ram (also known as Aram and Arni), listed in the ancestry of David and Jesus (Gen. 46:12; Ruth 4:18–19; 1 Chron. 2:5–9; 4:1; Matt. 1:3; Luke 3:33). The Chronicler makes a point to note that Hezron married again in old age (sixty) and fathered Segub and Ashhur, who was born after Hezron died (1 Chron. 2:21–24). His descendants were the Hezronite clan of Judah (Num. 26:21). **(3)** One of the cities marking the southern border of the territory allotted to the tribe of Judah in the conquest of Canaan, lying somewhere between Kadesh Barnea and Addar (Josh. 15:3).

HEZRONITE *See* Hezron.

HIDDAI One of David's thirty mighty men, an Ephraimite from the brooks of Gaash (2 Sam. 23:30). In 1 Chron. 11:32 he is called "Hurai."

HIDDEKEL The third of four rivers mentioned stemming from the river originating from the garden of Eden (Gen. 2:14), flowing east from Eden to Assyria. Whereas the KJV transliterates the Hebrew *khiddeqel*, more-recent versions use the better-known name of this river, "Tigris." The other three rivers are Pishon, Gihon, and Euphrates. Hiddekel/Tigris is also the site of Daniel's vision in the third year of Cyrus (Dan. 10:4).

HIEL The man from Bethel who rebuilt Jericho (1 Kings 16:34). He sacrificed his two sons, Abiram and Segub (or lost them to natural causes), and buried them under the foundation and city gates of Jericho respectively in fulfillment of the prophetic word pronounced by Joshua (Josh. 6:26).

HIERAPOLIS A city located in the ancient Roman province of Asia in what is today the southwestern region of Turkey. Hierapolis, along with Colossae and Laodicea, were within twelve miles of one another and together comprised the three major cities of the Lycus River Valley during the first century AD. The city is mentioned explicitly once in the NT (Col. 4:13), in conjunction with its two prominent neighboring cities. The Christian community in Hierapolis may have been founded by Epaphras, one of Paul's missionary companions. The city was known for its hot springs of water, and there may be an allusion to them in the address to the nearby church at Laodicea in Rev. 3:15–16.

A colonnaded street in Hierapolis leading toward Domitian's gate

HIEROGLYPHICS Literally meaning "sacred carving," hieroglyphics is a system of writing using pictorial characters. Glyphs can represent sounds or ideas or function as determinatives that provide additional information such as word breaks. Although pictograms usually are associated with Egyptian priestly writing, other languages used them instead of alphabetic letters. The discovery of the Rosetta Stone, written in Greek, demotic, and hieroglyphics, allowed scholars to decipher hieroglyphics. The earliest hieroglyphs date from 3200 BC, and the monumental use of hieroglyphs ended with the closing of all non-Christian temples in AD 396 by Theodosius I.

HIGGAION In Ps. 9:16 (MT 9:17) the Hebrew word *higgayon* appears to be a technical musical term and thus is transliterated as “Higgaion.” The same Hebrew word elsewhere is translated as “meditation” (Ps. 19:14 [19:15 MT]), “melody” (Ps. 92:3 [MT 92:4]), and “mutter” (Lam. 3:62). The word appears to be derived from the verb *hagah*, which means “to meditate, speak” (e.g., Ps. 1:2). It may refer to a reflection set to meditative music.

HIGHEST The designation “Highest” or “Most High” is commonly used for God. It represents God’s exalted status above all others. It occurs primarily in OT poetic or prophetic passages (e.g., Num. 24:16; Deut. 32:8; Pss. 7:17; 9:2; 18:13), although it occurs in the NT as well (e.g., Mark 5:7; Luke 1:35; Acts 7:48; Heb. 7:1). Melchizedek king of Salem and “priest of God Most High” praises God using the title “God Most High,” which Abram then uses to specifically identify God Most High as “the LORD” (Gen. 14:19–20, 22).

HIGHEST HEAVEN The expression “highest heaven” (Heb. *sheme hashamayim*, lit., “heavens of heavens” [cf. KJV]) is used in the OT to point to the greatness of God. Praying to God, Solomon commented, “The heavens, even the highest heaven, cannot contain you” (1 Kings 8:27; 2 Chron. 6:18). Even these highest heavens are simply a part of God’s creation (Neh. 9:6), belong to him (Deut. 10:14), and praise him (Ps. 148:4).

HIGH GATE *See* Upper Gate.

HIGH HEAPS In Jer. 31:21 the KJV translates the Hebrew word *tamrurim* as “high heaps,” referring to what more-recent versions render as “guideposts.”

HIGH PLACES In the OT, “high places” were places of worship, probably so named because hilltops were the preferred sites for such shrines (though alternative explanations are offered). They do not imply the presence of a temple building, but rather might consist simply of outdoor altars and could be associated with other religious objects such as sacred stones and fertility symbols (1 Kings 14:23). In the only description we have of the appearance of high places, they are disparaged as being “gaudy” (Ezek. 16:16).

Before Israel entered the land of Canaan, such shrines were centers of pagan fertility religion, the worship of the Baals. The Israelites were instructed that, on entering the land, they were to destroy all such shrines (Num. 33:52; Deut. 33:29). This they failed to do, and although not every Israelite high place had Canaanite origins, it appears that many did. Perhaps because of their Canaanite background and the continued presence of some Canaanite worshipers in Israel’s midst, the high places, while notionally becoming places of Yahweh worship for Israel (2 Kings 17:32; 18:22; 2 Chron. 33:17), were places where this worship was debased by pagan associations and practices, even to the extent of child sacrifice (Jer. 7:31) and prostitution (if this is to be taken literally in Ezek. 16:16; 43:7). The worship of Yahweh at these shrines became indistinguishable from Baal worship (2 Kings 17:11; 23:5), and some were specifically erected to foreign gods (1 Kings 11:7; Jer. 32:35). While perhaps deliberately not called a “high place,” the altar that Elijah repaired on Mount Carmel became a focal point for calling for an end to such syncretism (1 Kings 18).

High places had priests to officiate at their rituals, though often not from the line of Aaron (1 Kings 12:31; 2 Kings 17:32; 23:5).

The books of Samuel do not seem to comment negatively on the worship of Yahweh at the high places. In 1 Sam. 9:12–25 is an account of the prophet Samuel’s sacrifice at a high place, and it is at a high place that Saul encountered a prophetic band and received the Spirit of the Lord following his anointing by Samuel (10:5–13).

Aerial view of the high place at Dan

Even before the construction of the temple in Jerusalem, Solomon received a negative comment for his sacrifice at the high places (1 Kings 3:3). In Solomon's time, the high place at Gibeon, where the tabernacle was erected, was considered the most important of the high places (1 Kings 3:4; 2 Chron. 1:3). For the writer(s) of 1–2 Kings, continued worship at the high places was a constant source of frustration. It is clear that following the construction of the temple in Jerusalem, at least, they considered that all sacrificial worship should be centralized in Jerusalem.

Even some of the best kings disappointingly failed to remove the high places (1 Kings 15:14; 22:43; 2 Kings 12:3; 14:4; 15:4, 35). The only kings who managed the removal of the high places were Hezekiah (2 Kings 18:4) and Josiah (23:4–20). It has generally been considered that the instruction of Deuteronomy concerning "the place the LORD your God will choose from among all your tribes to put his Name" (Deut. 12:5) required the centralization of all worship, and that this agenda is driving the ideology of the writer(s) of 1–2 Kings (cf. the use of "Name" at 1 Kings 3:2). While the words of Deuteronomy are capable of being understood in a way that allowed for multiple places where God might set his name at any one time, the tabernacle with its ark symbolizing God's covenant presence could be in only one place, and the corruption that characterized the local shrines meant that the ruthless abolition of all local shrines was the only way forward for a faithful king such as Josiah.

Micah 1:5 likens Jerusalem (probably with particular reference to the temple) to a high place because of its unfaithfulness and corruption.

HIGH PRIEST The high priest was the leader of the Levitical clan that oversaw Israel's sacrificial system, whether directly performing sacrifices or supervising others. As no fixed terminology was set, he could also be referred to as the anointed priest, head priest, chief priest, or simply the priest. He was considered the holiest person in Israel, his position corresponding to the most holy place in the tabernacle or temple, so that he was the only one allowed behind the veil to perform sacrifices on the Day of Atonement (see Lev. 16).

THE ROLE OF THE HIGH PRIEST

Israel's first high priest was Moses' brother, Aaron, who was chosen by God and instructed in his duty. Many of the directions that he received were binding on every high priest who followed him. In addition to taking part in offering various types of sacrifices, he was required to enter the tabernacle twice daily to burn incense and tend the lamps (Exod. 30:7–8). An added responsibility may have been to place twelve loaves of bread on the table in the tabernacle each Sabbath (Lev. 24:5–8; Ezek. 44:16). Once a year, on the Day of Atonement, the high priest entered the most holy place to sprinkle the blood of a sacrificial goat on the mercy seat of the ark of the covenant, to atone for the sins of his people.

The high priest needed to be particularly careful to maintain his holy status (Lev. 21:10–15). Like other priests, he was not allowed to touch a corpse, but he alone was forbidden to enter a house where there was a dead body. He was not permitted to become unclean after the death of his mother or father or to tear his clothes as a sign of mourning. To prevent his offspring from being defiled, he was instructed to marry only a virgin of his own people.

Like all Israelite priests, the high priest was anointed for his position. This signified that he was set aside by God and empowered for his task. The high priest was distinguished from his brothers by his special clothing (Exod. 28). In addition to the linen tunic, sash, and turban worn by all priests, the high priest normally wore a breastpiece, an ephod containing the Urim and Thummim, and a robe. The breastpiece was a pouch made of blue, purple, and scarlet yarn with thin strips of gold woven into it. Attached to the ephod by four braided gold chains, the breastpiece was set with twelve stones, each of which was engraved with the name of a tribe, so that the high priest represented all of Israel before God. The Urim and Thummim were placed in the pouch, to be used by the priest when seeking special direction from God.

The ephod, made of the same material as the breastpiece, was a sleeveless garment fastened by a belt made of the same material. Two onyx stones, each engraved with the names of six of the tribes of Israel, were set in gold filigree and attached to the shoulders of the ephod. The robe, made of blue cloth and reinforced at the neck, probably was worn under the ephod. Golden bells and pomegranates alternated around its hem, the bells ringing whenever the priest entered the holy place so that he would not die. To distinguish this turban from those worn by other priests, a golden plate or rosette was attached, engraved to proclaim that the high priest was "Holy to the LORD."

Even though the high priest usually wore distinctive clothing, on the Day of Atonement, when he entered the most holy place, he wore only a tunic, sash, undergarments, and turban, all made of linen. Evidently, the special clothes were not appropriate when atoning for the nation's sins.

The high priest held a hereditary office originally occupied by the eldest direct descendant of Aaron's son Eleazar. By the time of Eli, the priesthood had evidently passed to the descendants of Ithamar. During the reign of David, both Zadok, a descendant of Eleazar, and Abiathar, a descendant of Ithamar through Eli, served as priests. After David's death, Solomon deposed Abiathar for supporting Adonijah's attempt to become king. From this time onward, the high priesthood remained in the hands of Zadok's descendants, until the rise of Antiochus Epiphanes, who sold the high priesthood to the highest bidder, no matter what his genealogical connections.

The death of a high priest was of national significance, as it marked the beginning of the tenure of a new high priest, who received his father's special clothing. It also gave anyone who had fled to one of the six cities of refuge for unintentionally killing someone the opportunity to return home (Num. 35:25–28). Later rabbis concluded that the high priest's death in some way atoned for those who committed manslaughter.

THE HIGH PRIEST AND POLITICAL LEADERS

From the period of the first temple a close link was established between the high priest and the king. Both were anointed to serve respectively as Israel's chief spiritual leader and political leader. Kings often exerted their authority over high priests. Thus, Solomon promoted Zadok and deposed Abiathar. Similarly, King Joash instructed Jehoiada to repair the temple. It was also possible for a high priest to oppose or endorse a ruler. Thus, Jehoiada both deposed Athaliah and crowned Joash as king (2 Kings 11). The chief priest Azariah drove Uzziah out of the temple when he attempted to burn incense on his own (2 Chron. 26:16–20). At the end of the kingdom period, when King Zedekiah was taken captive to Babylon, the high priest Seraiah, along with his chief associates, also were taken into exile, where they were executed (2 Kings 25:18–21).

After the exile, when Israel had no king, the high priests gained additional political significance. During the Hasmonean period, the offices of high priest and king were sometimes united in one person. Herod the Great, in Roman times, elevated and deposed high priests at will. After his death and his son's removal from office, high priests were appointed by the Roman governors and functioned as the Jews' main liaison with Roman officials.

THE PRIESTHOOD AND THE EARLY CHURCH

In the first century AD, the high priest was the chief social and religious leader among the Jews, presiding over the Sanhedrin, the Jewish council that tried cases concerning Jewish laws. The Greek word used in the NT for "high priest," *archiereus*, often appears in the plural, "chief priests," to include current or former high priests and members of the priestly aristocracy. Luke refers to Sceva, whose seven sons attempted to cast out demons in the way Paul did, as a high priest. Since no list of high priests contains Sceva's name, he may have been simply a member of a priestly family or personally used the term to boost his religious standing (Acts 19:13–14). After the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70, the office of high priest disappeared entirely.

The chief priests, in association with the Sanhedrin, scribes, and/or elders, often opposed Jesus' ministry. The final official rejection of Jesus came when the high priest Caiaphas proclaimed that one man should die so that the nation might not perish. By this proclamation, he unwittingly "prophesied that Jesus would die for the Jewish nation" and for other children of God, thus uniting them (John 11:49–52). Caiaphas later personally interrogated Jesus about his status as the Messiah and proclaimed him guilty of blasphemy (Mark 14:60–64).

After the resurrection, high priests joined the wider priestly opposition to the apostles. Thus, the high priest was present when the decision was made to silence Peter and John for proclaiming that the crippled beggar had been healed by the power of Jesus (Acts 4:1–20). He also took part in their subsequent arrest and questioning (5:17–28). The high priest questioned Stephen over charges that he blasphemed and spoke against the temple and Mosaic law (6:11–7:1). Paul, before his experience of the risen Christ, received letters of authority from the high priest to arrest Christians (9:1–2). Paul later stood trial before the high priest Ananias, who also brought charges against him to Felix (24:1), and then was charged before Festus by a wider group of chief priests (25:1–3).

THE PRIESTHOOD OF JESUS IN HEBREWS

Although other NT books imply that Jesus had a priestly ministry, the book of Hebrews alone develops the idea that Jesus not only has the right to serve as priest but also is the great high priest who replaces the OT priesthood. It is therefore incumbent upon all to follow Christ, as there is no other way to be forgiven of sin and come into fellowship with the Father. The book shows this in a number of ways, chiefly in chapters 5–10. As a descendant of Judah, Jesus did not qualify to serve as a priest under the Aaronic order. Hebrews therefore demonstrates that his service as a priest in the order of Melchizedek far surpasses the Aaronic priesthood (5:6, 10; 6:20; 7:17). Since Melchizedek is greater than Abraham, as seen by the patriarch bringing tithes to the priest, and since Levi, as a descendant of Abraham, in effect paid tithes through his ancestor, Jesus—as a member of a greater priesthood—is greater than the Aaronic priests (7:4–10). For Jesus to serve as high priest, he had to be "like his brothers in every way" (2:17). This required that he share in their humanity by taking on flesh and blood, learning to trust God completely in life, and dying (2:14). It also meant that he would be tempted in every way humans are so that he could sympathize with them (2:18). However, since he never succumbed to temptation, he could rescue people from their sin.

Although no one chooses to become a priest, Aaron's descendants inherited their role, whereas Jesus was designated as priest by God with an oath (Heb. 5:10; 7:21; cf. Ps. 110:4). That God did not swear that Aaron's line would always be priests implies that a change was possible. Since Jesus received his priesthood by an oath, his priesthood is greater than the Aaronic priesthood, becomes the guarantee of the better covenant spoken of in Jer. 31, and will never be forfeited.

The OT priests presented repeated offerings, and so their work could not definitively deal with the problem of sin. The sacrifices of the Aaronic priests needed to be repeated regularly, whereas the sacrifice of Jesus did not have to be repeated. Similarly, Aaronic priests needed to offer sacrifices for their own sins before they could aid others. Since Jesus never sinned, he had no such limitation. What the priests had to do for themselves daily (Heb. 7:27), and for the nation once a year, Christ did once for all (7:27; 9:26, 28; 10:10, 12, 14, 18).

The Levitical priesthood could continue only as new priests replaced those who retired or died, but Jesus' priesthood is eternal because of his eternal life. Melchizedek is used to illustrate how this can be. But while Melchizedek remains a priest forever simply because the Bible does not record his genealogy or his death, Jesus has a permanent priesthood because he lives forever and because of the oath quoted from Ps. 110:4: "The LORD has sworn: . . . 'You are a priest forever' " (Heb. 5:6; cf. 6:20; 7:3, 17; 21).

Not only is Jesus a greater priest, but also he presented a greater sacrifice at a greater, heavenly sanctuary. The Aaronic priests served only at a copy of this true heavenly tabernacle, which was erected by God himself (Heb. 8:2). Jesus presented not the blood of animals, which needed to be offered over and over, but rather the perfect sacrifice of himself, ensuring that no other sacrifice is needed. After becoming a sacrifice, he returned to the heavenly sanctuary, where he appears forever at the right hand of God as king and mediator. Due to Christ's work, the most holy place is no longer barred to all but the high priest once a year. Rather, the curtain has been opened so that all his people can boldly draw near to the Father. Similarly, Christ's priestly work ensures that those who follow him can be effectively forgiven, purified, sanctified, and perfected.

HIGHWAY A major public road upgraded through some kind of paving material and with drainage ditches on the sides. Highways provided international access for armies, merchants, caravans, and animals on the major trade routes of an empire (Num. 20:17; 21:22). The paving material often was made of pebbles packed down, but occasionally it was made of cut stone. The term "highway" often was used metaphorically to suggest a wide, easy path of life (Prov. 7:27; 15:19; Isa. 19:23; 40:3).

HILEN A village in the hill country of Judah designated, along with its pasturelands, as a city of refuge and allotted to descendants of Aaron (1 Chron. 6:58). In Josh. 15:51; 21:15 it is referred to by the name "Holon." The prophet Jeremiah also includes a town named "Holon" as part of his oracle against Moab (Jer. 48:21).

HILKIAH **(1)** The father of Eliakim the official of Hezekiah (2 Kings 18:18–37; Isa. 22:20; 36:3). **(2)** The son of Shallum (1 Chron. 6:13; Ezra 7:1–2), he was the high priest during Josiah's reign who found the law book (2 Kings 22:4–23:24; 2 Chron. 34:9–22). **(3)** A Levite, the son of Amzi (1 Chron. 6:45–46). **(4)** A gatekeeper, a son of Hosah (1 Chron. 26:11). **(5)** One of twelve men standing with Ezra as he read the law (Neh. 8:4). **(6)** A leader of the priests who returned from exile with Zerubbabel (Neh. 12:7). **(7)** A priest of Anathoth and the father of Jeremiah the prophet (Jer. 1:1). **(8)** The father of Gemariah, who delivered Jeremiah's letter to the Babylonian exiles (Jer. 29:1–3).

HILL COUNTRY The middle of three geographic regions in the land of Palestine, each of which extends from north to south. To the west is the coastal plain, which varies in width from one to twenty miles. Next to this is the hill country (often called by its Hebrew name, "Shephelah"). These hills, often referred to as mountains in the Bible, rarely reach three thousand feet and thus are small compared to mountains in other parts of the world. Finally, to the east, a narrow ridge of dry mountains edges the land of Palestine and gives way to the desert east of the Jordan River.

The hill country was the main territorial holding for the tribes prior to David's conquest of both the coastal plain, controlled by the Philistines, and the mountains, controlled by various Canaanite cities. The hills tend to run in ridges east to west, making travel north to south through them almost impossible. These hills also provided natural defenses for many of the cities, the most notable being Jerusalem.

HILLEL The traditional founder of rabbinic Judaism and an early contemporary of Jesus. He was born in Babylon, but he founded a school in Jerusalem. Rabbinic literature claims that Hillel served as president of the synagogue. His school has come to represent the liberal wing of rabbinic Judaism (in contrast to the more conservative school of Shammai). His most famous saying, "What is hateful to you, do not to your neighbor: that is the whole Torah, while the rest is commentary" (*b. Shabb.* 31a), has parallels with Jesus' summation of the law (Matt. 7:12).

HILL OF CORRUPTION *See* Corruption, Hill of.

HILL OF GOD *See* Gibeah of God.

HILL OF THE FORESKINS *See* Gibeath Haaraloth.

HILT The handle of a sword or other weapon. According to Judg. 3:22 NRSV (NIV: “handle”), when Ehud killed Eglon, he plunged the sword into Eglon’s body even past the hilt.

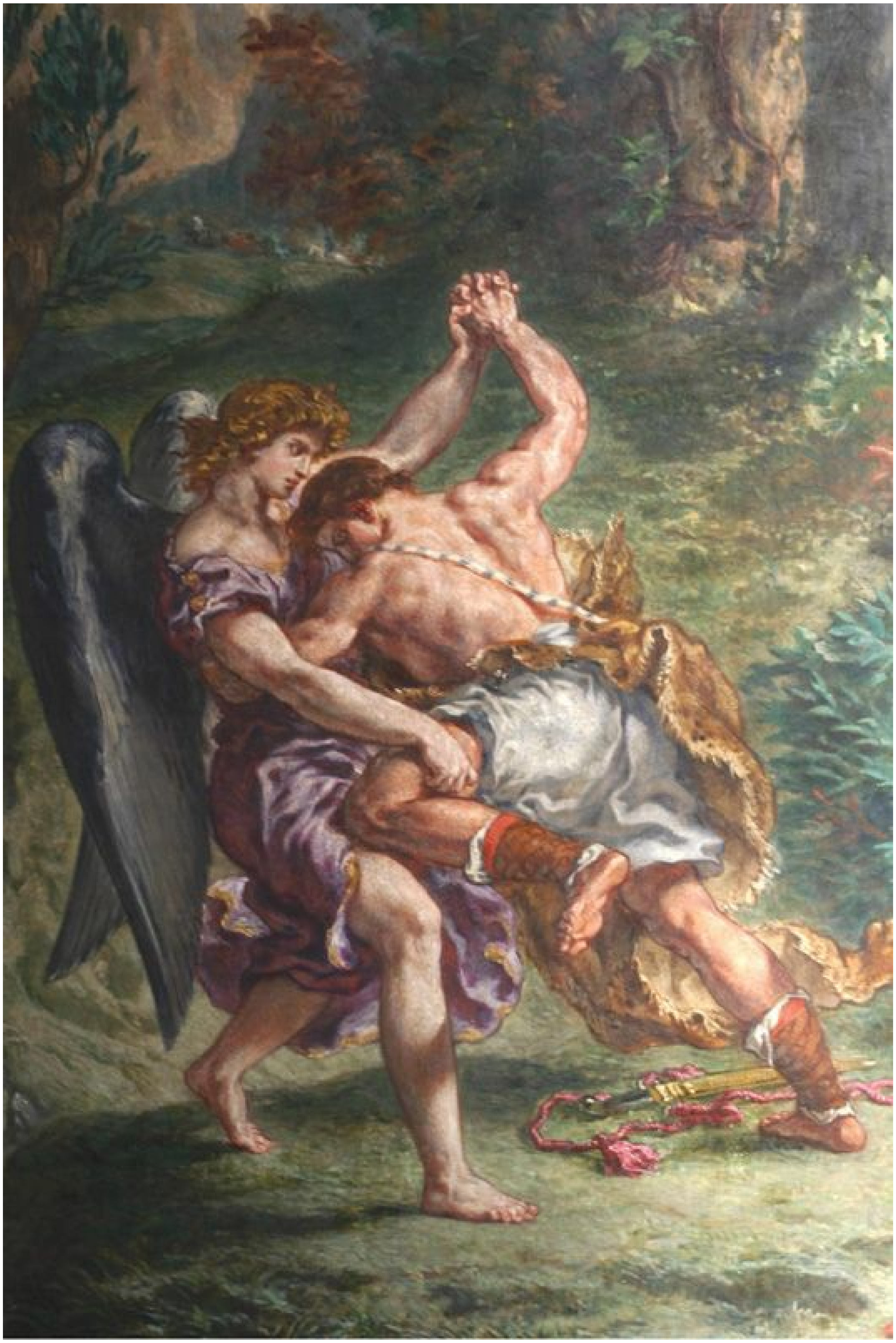
HIN A pot for measuring liquids whose capacity was equal to one-sixth of a bath. The measure itself was also called a “hin” (e.g., Exod. 29:40; 30:24). Estimates of its modern equivalency vary from about four to eight quarts. One-sixth of a hin was a day’s supply of drinking water.

HIND A female deer. This term is usually used poetically, primarily in the KJV and RSV (NIV: “doe” or “deer”). The hind (or doe) can indicate speed and stability (Gen. 49:21; 2 Sam. 22:34; Ps. 18:33; Hab. 3:19), love and gentleness (Prov. 5:19), or the mysterious workings of God (Job 39:1). *See also* Deer; Doe.

HINGE A pivot attached to a door, allowing it to swing and thus provide ingress and egress. The only biblical mention of Israelite doors with hinges is in connection with Solomon’s temple (1 Kings 7:50; NIV: “sockets”; cf. Ezek. 41:24). These hinges were made of gold and were used throughout the temple. Proverbs compares a lazy person in bed to the turning of a door on a hinge (26:14).

HINNOM, VALLEY OF The Hinnom (or Ben Hinnom) Valley circles Jerusalem on the south and west, a natural defense for the city. It was a boundary between the tribes of Judah and Benjamin (Josh. 15:8; 18:16). God designated it the “Valley of Slaughter” because the kings of Judah and the people of Jerusalem built the high places of Topheth and burned their sons in the fire as sacrifices to Baal (Jer. 7:31–32; 19:2–6; see also 2 Chron. 28:3; 33:6). During his reformation, Josiah desecrated Topheth in the Hinnom Valley (2 Kings 23:10). The “Valley of Hinnom” (Heb. *ge-hinnom*) became “Gehenna” (Gk. *geenna*, from Aramaic), a place notorious for burning refuse, a vivid illustration for Jesus’ references to everlasting torment (e.g., Matt. 10:28). *See also* Gehenna; Hell.

HIP The most famous reference to a hip in Scripture is in Gen. 32:25, 31–32, where Jacob wrestles with the angel of the Lord until the angel touches his hip (*yarekh,* “hip,” “thigh,” “side”) and knocks it out of joint. The narrator points out that the Israelites “do not eat the tendon attached to the socket of the hip, because the socket of Jacob’s hip was touched near the tendon” (Gen. 32:32). Judges 15:8 records that Samson struck the Philistines’ “hip and thigh” (KJV, NRSV), resulting in a great massacre. The Hebrew word translated “hip” (*shoq*) can mean “shoulder,” “leg,” or “hip.” The phrase connotes both the complete destruction of the enemy and the ruthlessness with which Samson slaughtered them.



Fresco of Jacob wrestling with the angel by Eugène Delacroix (Église Saint-Sulpice, Paris)

HIPPOPOTAMUS The hippopotamus has been suggested as the probable meaning for the Hebrew word *behemot* in Job 40:15. Elsewhere, the same word is the plural form of the word *behemah*, meaning “animals, cattle” (e.g., Job 12:7; 35:11). In 40:15 the term seems to refer to a particular animal. The precise meaning in that verse is uncertain beyond what can be discerned from context: it was large and apparently herbivorous. Although many modern translations leave the Hebrew untranslated (NIV, NRSV: “Behemoth”), their marginal notes often suggest that the word may refer to the hippopotamus, the buffalo, or the elephant.

HIRAH The Adullamite friend of Judah whom the latter was visiting when he met his Canaanite wife (Gen. 38:1–2, 12, 20–23).

HIRAM **(1)** The king of Tyre, contemporary with David and Solomon (tenth century BC). The name is an abbreviated form of "Ahiram." The Bible states that Hiram was on friendly terms with David (1 Kings 5:1), probably indicating a treaty relationship between their two kingdoms. Hiram provided both materials and laborers to aid in the building of David's Jerusalem palace (2 Sam. 5:11). Similarly, Hiram aided Solomon in the construction of the Jerusalem temple, providing "cedar and juniper logs" (1 Kings 5:8) and craftsmen. In return, Solomon paid Hiram wheat and oil on a yearly basis (5:11). Israelite buildings from this period show signs of Phoenician influence in their style and design. Most scholars believe that Solomon's temple was designed by Phoenician craftsmen, guided by Israelite models and concerns.

After the temple was completed, Solomon gave Hiram twenty Galilean villages in exchange for 120 talents of gold (1 Kings 9:10–14). However, Hiram was displeased by the transaction. Some speculate that Solomon was forced by debt to give these cities to Hiram in order to raise capital, though 2 Chron. 8:2 claims that Hiram gave these cities to Solomon, perhaps understanding Hiram's displeasure as implying their return.

Hiram and Solomon also pursued joint commercial maritime ventures. Hiram supplied veteran sailors for Solomon's newly constructed fleet (1 Kings 9:28), and their two fleets sailed together (1 Kings 10:22; 2 Chron. 8:18). These seafaring expeditions dealt in luxury items such as precious metals, ivory, and exotic animals (1 Kings 10:22).

Josephus claims that Hiram and Solomon exchanged riddles and wagered bets over their decipherment, though the reliability of this information is doubtful in light of the late date of Josephus's writing and the apologetic nature of his work. Early patristic sources claim that Solomon married one of Hiram's daughters, though they may have simply extrapolated this from the reference in 1 Kings 11:1 to Solomon having wives from Sidon.

(2) A Phoenician craftsman, son of an Israelite woman (1 Kings 7:13 NRSV [NIV: "Huram"]), sent by King Hiram of Tyre to do bronze work in Solomon's construction of the temple. *See also* Huram.

HIRELING A laborer who contracted himself out for temporary jobs ("hireling" is used in the KJV, whereas more-recent versions use "hired man/worker, laborer"). It could be as short-term as one day. In the OT, there are warnings against oppressing hirelings, since they were among the socially disadvantaged (Deut. 24:14–15; Mal. 3:5). Jesus told a parable about workers hired throughout the day, all of whom received the full day's wage, to teach God's grace-oriented approach to rewarding his servants (Matt. 20:1–16). Elsewhere, the hireling became a metaphor for uncaring "shepherds" motivated by self-interest (John 10:11–15).

HISS The Hebrew verb *sharaq*, sometimes translated as "to hiss," can also be translated as "to whistle" and has two distinct uses in Scripture. It can refer to summoning, as in when a shepherd summons sheep (Judg. 5:16), God summons his people (Isa. 5:26; Zech. 10:8), or God summons an enemy as a means of judgment against his people (Isa. 7:18). The word also and more commonly refers to an expression of astonishment or derision, most often upon God's judgment (Jer. 49:17; 50:13; Lam. 2:15; Ezek. 27:36; Mic. 6:16; Zeph. 2:15). In 1 Kings 9:8 God declares that the temple will be destroyed if his people disobey, and this word is used to anticipate the shock that people will feel. Jeremiah similarly predicted the shock of people who will witness the destruction of Jerusalem (Jer. 19:8).

HISTORY, HISTORIOGRAPHY The books of Genesis through Esther in the OT and Matthew through Acts in the NT often are categorized as history. However, in the ancient world the literary genre of history in the modern sense did not exist. Moreover, the English word "history" is ambiguous and can refer to either the events of the past or verbal accounts of these events. For the sake of clarity, this article refers to verbal accounts of the past as historiography and to the events themselves as history. Historiography is a genre wherein a nation or group attempts to render an account of its collective past. Biblical historiography was a creative attempt to depict and interpret events of the past, constrained by its sources (and inspired by the Holy Spirit), emphasizing Israel's and the church's relationship with God. The historian engaged in research, gathering information from oral or written sources, then recorded his findings in a unified narrative. This process set apart ancient historians from storytellers; however, ancient historiography was in fact closer to storytelling than modern history writing.

METHODS OF ANCIENT HISTORIOGRAPHY

Biblical writers used techniques similar to those of ancient Greek historians. Greek historiography was often organized thematically, using genealogies, speeches, or narrative formulas as structuring devices, instead of strictly following chronological order. Speeches were largely the creative work of the historian rather than being drawn from transcripts in sources. Also, both the overall content and particular details of the narrative were subject to the historian's interpretation of the events. This same historical method can be illustrated by the following biblical examples.

Second Kings 20:12–19 describes Hezekiah showing off the riches of Jerusalem to his Babylonian visitors. However, the preceding narrative describes the loss of the riches of Jerusalem to an invading Assyrian king (18:15–16). Also, in 2 Kings 20:6 Isaiah predicts that Jerusalem will be delivered from "the hand of the king of Assyria," but this deliverance has already been recorded in 2 Kings 19. This suggests, and extrabiblical evidence confirms, that the history of 2 Kings 20 actually took place before the history of 2 Kings 18–19.

In the books of Joshua through Kings, speeches are used as structuring devices, with main characters emphasizing the central theological points of the author at key points in his story (e.g., Josh. 1:11–15 [Joshua]; 1 Sam. 12 [Samuel]; 1 Kings 8:14–61 [Solomon]). All these speeches use distinctive vocabulary, suggesting that the same author composed them. Since the writer was not present at the occasion of these speeches (as they occurred long before his birth), he composed the speech (inventing much of the wording) according to what he thought appropriate to the given situation. The creative contributions of each historian can be clearly seen when a speech is recorded in two or more biblical books (compare the Beatitudes in Matt. 5:1–12 and Luke 6:20–26, or the prayer of Solomon in 1 Kings 8:22–53 and 2 Chron. 6:12–39). This is not to say that the speeches are historically misleading, but they were necessarily composed to present a narrative of the past. All historiography, ancient and modern, involves creative writing, selectivity, and interpretation of sources.

In comparison to its OT counterpart, NT historiography was written quite close to the events that it records, but it still shows great variation in descriptive details. For example, the resurrection narrative in Matt. 28:2 mentions one angel, Mark 16:5 refers to a young man, Luke 24:4 speaks of two men, and John 20:12 mentions two angels. Rather than indicating the fictional nature of the event, the differences are due to the interpretation that guided their writing (i.e., the person near Christ's tomb, appearing to be human to some, was interpreted as an angel by others). When dealing with OT narratives, which often chronicle events from the distant past, we must remember that its historiography is interpretative in nature and does not attempt to merely recount what happened as objectively as possible. For example, 2 Kings 15:37 records an attack against Judah by foreign kings; however, the author does not describe any reasons for the attack, simply saying, "In those days the Lord began to send Rezin king of Aram and Pekah son of Remaliah against Judah." While no doubt there were indeed political reasons for the attack, the author does not comment on these reasons but instead gives a theological interpretation to explain it. In fact, theological reasons for past events and their relevance for the present and the future characterize biblical historiography. The ultimate explanation for historical events is God and his providential mastery of history.

THE FUNCTION AND RELIABILITY OF BIBLICAL HISTORIOGRAPHY

Biblical historiography emphasizes continuity with the past by viewing the present as continuing the past's story and focusing on cause-and-effect relationships in the past to explain the present and bring out a theological message for its readers. For example, 2 Kings 17 describes the Assyrians destroying northern Israel and deporting its population. This is as much as a modern historian would derive from the event. However, in the Bible this event is significant because "all this took place because the Israelites had sinned against the Lord their God. . . . They worshiped other gods" (2 Kings 17:7). This interpretation is elaborated in the chapter, dominating vv. 7–23, while the narration of the event itself is succinctly described in vv. 3–6. The theological interpretation of the event was more important than the event itself.

This does not mean that biblical historiography is fictitious, as it is clearly based on actual events that took place in the past. Biblical historiography has been largely corroborated by extrabiblical material and fits well into an overall ancient Near Eastern historical context, though it does not agree perfectly with everything we know about ancient history. Since recognizing the genre (e.g., parable, poem) of any biblical passage is imperative for correct interpretation, knowledge of the differences between ancient and modern historiography is vital for understanding the historical books of the Bible. Scripture affirms that God spoke in a variety of ways (Heb. 1:1); one way was through the genre of historiography.

HITTITES The name "Hittite" derives from the name of the Hittite homeland: Hatti. The Bible refers to "children (daughters) of Heth" and "Hittite" or "Hittites."

Historical overview. Hittite precursors appeared in Anatolia (Turkey) during the third millennium. Of unknown origin, their language was Indo-European rather than Semitic like Hebrew. During the second millennium a Hittite kingdom emerged, with Hattusa (modern Bogazkale) as its capital. Hattusili I (c. 1650 BC) was the first Hittite king of historical record. He gained control of the trade routes and eliminated regional threats. He also established a Hittite law code, and under him Hittite literature flourished. His son, Mursili I, sacked Babylon, ending Hammurabi's dynasty (1595 BC).

Hittite influence greatly increased under Tadhaliya II (c. 1400 BC) and especially under Suppiluliuma I (c. 1350 BC). At its height, the Hittite Empire spanned from central Anatolia to northern Syria (including Ugarit and Amurru), controlling various vassal states. The Hittites skirmished briefly with Egypt over territory in northern Syria (Muwatalli II engaged Ramesses II at Qadesh in 1275 BC), and then followed a period of negotiated peace and increased contact between the two kingdoms. In contrast, dealings with Assyria, typically strained, eventually led to defeat and loss of Hittite territory (late thirteenth century).

Shortly thereafter, the Hittite Empire, weakened by uprisings and defections among its territories, succumbed to the upheavals of the period. In its wake rose numerous minor states (e.g., Karkamis and Hamath) that saw themselves as successors to the Hittite Empire and perpetuated Hittite culture. These are referred to collectively as the Neo-Hittite states; Karkamis was the last to fall to the Neo-Assyrians (717 BC).

Treaty of Qadesh, the peace treaty between the Hittite king Hattusili III and Ramesses II, 1269 BC

Hittites in the Bible. According to the Bible, the Hittites descended from Canaan (Gen. 10:15; 1 Chron. 1:13 [the NIV reads “Hittites” for the proper name “Heth”) and were destined to be subjugated—for example, by the Israelites (see Gen. 9:25–27). Genesis portrays the patriarchs in regular contact with Hittites, through which we learn of several Hittite individuals. Abraham purchased a cave and surrounding field from “Ephron the Hittite” (Gen. 23). Esau took Hittite wives (27:46); however, discrepancies exist concerning their names and ethnicities (cf. 26:34; 28:9; 36:2–3).

The OT consistently mentions the Hittites among those peoples whom the Israelites would dispossess upon entering the promised land (Gen. 15:18–21; Exod. 3:8). Yahweh vowed to drive them out before the Israelites (Exod. 23:28 [cf. v. 23]), while the Israelites were instructed to eradicate their presence from the land (Deut. 7:1–2; 20:17). The Israelites only partly succeeded, eventually settling among the other peoples (Judg. 3:5–6).

During this time, the Hittites are depicted as occupying the central hill country between the coastal plain to the west and the Dead Sea to the east (Num. 13:29; Josh. 9:1), though Josh. 1:4 refers to the entire region of Canaan and Transjordan as "the Hittite country." This perhaps recalls Hittite influence upon the region, revealing a generic or political (versus ethnic) use of the term.

Further references pertain to the monarchic period. David had several close Hittite associates: Ahimelek, of whom nothing else is known (1 Sam. 26:6), and Uriah, Bathsheba's husband and a member of David's bodyguard (2 Sam. 11:3; 23:39). Under Solomon's reign Hittites were conscripted for forced labor (1 Kings 9:20). Solomon also conducted trade between Egypt and Hittite states to the north (10:29), taking for himself Hittite wives (11:1). The final reference to extant Hittites comes from Joram's reign, in the mid-ninth century BC (2 Kings 7:6).

During the exile and afterward, the Hittites became a byword (Ezek. 16:3, 45), exemplifying practices from which pious Jews sought to distance themselves (Ezra 9:1).

Conclusions. Identification of the biblical Hittites with those of Anatolia remains problematic. Clearly, Israel had contact with later Neo-Hittite states during its monarchic period (see 2 Sam. 8:9–10; 1 Kings 10:29; 11:1). Nevertheless, archaeology does not support a Hittite presence in the Judean hill country at the time of the conquest. Thus, the biblical Hittites may have been an unrelated, unidentified people inhabiting Canaan; alternately, "Hittites" (and the like) may have conveyed rhetorically the idea of "otherness, inferiority" (already anticipated by Gen. 9–10; cf. Ezek. 16:3, 45; Ezra 9:1).

HIVITES A people descended from Ham, one of Noah's sons, through the Canaanites (Gen. 10:17). They were indigenous inhabitants of the promised land, usually referred to along with others (e.g., Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Jebusites) who were to be dispossessed by Israel (e.g., Exod. 3:8; 23:23; Deut. 7:1). They lived primarily near the Lebanese mountains (Judg. 3:3) and Mount Hermon (Josh. 11:3). Despite God's command to drive the Hivites out, they continued to inhabit these regions in the time of David (2 Sam. 24:7). Hivites also lived farther south near Shechem (Gen. 34:2) and Gibeon (Josh. 9:7; 11:19). A group of Hivites from Gibeon, having heard that Israel intended to destroy them, tricked Israel into entering into a covenant with them, securing their survival (Josh. 9). Hivites are also mentioned as being Israel's slaves during Solomon's reign (1 Kings 9:20–21).

HIZKI Son of Elpaal, a descendant of Benjamin (1 Chron. 8:17).

HIZKIAH A shortened form of the name of Hezekiah. **(1)** A forefather of the prophet Zephaniah (Zeph. 1:1 KJV [NIV: "Hezekiah"]). **(2)** A son of Neariah, in the genealogy of David, four generations after Zerubbabel in the postexilic period (1 Chron. 3:23). *See also* Hezekiah.

HIZKIJAH *See* Hezekiah.

HOARFROST The KJV translates the Hebrew word *kepor* as "hoarfrost" and "hoary frost," referring to its grayish white color (Exod. 16:14; Job 38:29; Ps. 147:16 [NIV: "frost"]).

HOBAB In Num. 10:29 and Judg. 4:11 Hobab is referred to as the *khoten* of Moses. The most natural reading of the Hebrew term *khoten* here is “father-in-law.” However, elsewhere Moses’ father-in-law is known as Jethro (Exod. 3:1) and perhaps Reuel (2:18). Some versions (e.g., Judg. 4:11 NIV) render *khoten* as “brother-in-law” on the grounds that it has the general meaning “in-law” (in Num. 10:29, the NIV still translates the term as “father-in-law,” but here it is understood to apply to Reuel, father of Hobab). It is likely that Moses’ father-in-law had more than one name. *See also* Jethro.

HOBAH A town referred to only once in Scripture. In Gen. 14, after Abram and Lot separated, Lot was taken captive, along with the kings of Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zeboyim, and Bela (Zoar), by a coalition of kings led by Kedorlaomer. When Abraham learned of the defeat, he assembled 318 trained servants in his house and pursued Kedorlaomer. Abraham attacked them, and Hobah was the location to which Abraham pursued them in battle. The exact location of the town is unknown, but it was north of Damascus (14:15).

HOBAIAH The leader of a priestly family whose descendants were among those who returned to Jerusalem led by Zerubbabel after the exile in Babylon (Neh. 7:63). However, upon a search of the ancestral registration, records of their priesthood could not be located, so they were excluded from priestly service and prohibited from eating from the holy things until their legitimacy as priests could be demonstrated (Ezra 2:61–63; Neh. 7:63–65). The name appears as “Habaiah” in Ezra 2:61. See also 1 Esd. 5:38.

HOD One of the sons of Zophah from the tribe of Asher (1 Chron. 7:37).

HODAIAH *See* Hodaviah.

HODAVIAH **(1)** The oldest of seven sons of Elioenai and a descendant of David through Zerubbabel (1 Chron. 3:24; KJV: “Hodaiah”). Attempts to identify him with Abiud (Matt. 1:13), Joda (Luke 3:26), Hodiah (Neh. 9:5), or Obadiah (Neh. 10:5) are uncertain. **(2)** The head of one of the families within the half-tribe of Manasseh dwelling on the east side of the Jordan (1 Chron. 5:24) who were carried into exile by Tiglath-pileser III. **(3)** A Benjamite who was the son of Hassenuah and the father of Meshullam. His grandson Sallu was among those who dwelled in Jerusalem after the return from exile in Babylon (1 Chron. 9:7). In the parallel list in Neh. 11:7 his name is listed as “Joed.” **(4)** The forefather of one of two families of Levites who returned from exile in Babylon with Zerubbabel (Ezra 2:40). His descendants are also referred to as “sons of Judah” (Ezra 3:9 KJV [see NIV mg.]; cf. Neh. 7:43). In a parallel list of returnees in 1 Esd. 5:26, his name is listed as “Sudias.” Some translations spell his name as “Hodevah” in Neh. 7:43 (KJV, ESV, NRSV, NASB).

HODESH A wife of Shaharaim of the tribe of Benjamin (1 Chron. 8:9). She was from the land of Moab (8:8), where she bore him seven sons.

HODEVAH The spelling in the KJV and other versions (ESV, NRSV, NASB) of the name of a Levite whose descendants returned with Zerubbabel from the exile (Neh. 7:43 [NIV: “Hodaviah”]). *See also* Hodaviah.

HODIAH **(1)** One of thirteen Levites who helped the people to understand Ezra's reading of the law, either by translating into Aramaic or by some other kind of exposition (Neh. 8:7). A man named Hodiah also participated in a ritual of public repentance and worship during Ezra's reforms (Neh. 9:5). In addition, two of the "brothers" of the Levites whose names were on the covenant document that was sealed following Ezra's reading of the law are also named "Hodiah" (Neh. 10:10, 13). It is difficult to determine how many distinct figures are present in these texts. **(2)** A non-Levite signatory of the covenant with God that was made following Ezra's public reading of the law (Neh. 10:18). **(3)** A figure listed in a Judahite genealogical list in 1 Chron. 4:19. The listing concerns the descendants of his wife, who was the sister of a man named Naham.

HODIJAH *See* Hodiah.

HOE A farming instrument with a flat blade and long handle, used to weed, loosen the earth, and turn soil for planting (Isa. 7:25).

HOGLAH One of five daughters of Zelophehad (Num. 26:33). She and her sisters appealed to Moses to grant them inheritance rights when their father died without any male heirs (27:1–11). Their request was granted, but later it was also ruled that they must marry within their own tribe (36:1–12).

HOHAM An Amorite king of Hebron (Josh. 10:3). Along with Piram king of Jarmuth, Japhia king of Lachish, and Debir king of Eglon, he was implored by Adoni-Zedek king of Jerusalem to join forces with him to attack the Gibeonites for having entered into a treaty with the Israelites. This coalition was defeated by the Israelites who went out to aid the Gibeonites in a battle of miracles. More of Israel's enemies were killed by hailstones sent by God than by the Israelites' swords, and it was on this battle that the sun stopped in the midst of heaven and did not set for almost a whole day (Josh. 10:6–15).

HOLD The hold of a ship contains its cargo and passengers beneath an upper deck. Jonah slept in a ship's hold during a storm (Jon. 1:5 NASB, NLT; NIV: "below deck"). Tarshish ships had large holds to contain their heavy cargoes (cf. 1 Kings 22:48; Ezek. 27:25).

HOLM TREE Also known as the holm oak or holly oak (*Quercus ilex*), a large evergreen oak native to the Mediterranean region. It takes its name from *holm*, an ancient name for holly. The term is used in some Bible versions in Isa. 44:14 (ASV, RSV, NRSV), though the identity of the tree named there is debated. Most other versions refer to it as the cypress (e.g., KJV, NIV, NASB, HCSB).

HOLON **(1)** One of eleven towns in the hill country allotted to the tribe of Judah under Joshua (Josh. 15:51). It was also one of thirteen towns given to the priests of Israel (Josh. 21:15; "Hilen" in 1 Chron. 6:58). It is commonly identified with Khirbet ʻAlin, approximately ten miles northwest of Hebron. **(2)** A town of uncertain location on the plateau of Moab (Jer. 48:21).

HOLY Holiness is an attribute of God and of all that is fit for association with him. God alone is intrinsically holy (Rev. 15:4). God the Father is holy (John 17:11), as is the Son (Acts 3:14), while "Holy" is the characteristic designation of God's Spirit (Ps. 51:11; Matt. 1:18). God's name is holy (Luke 1:49), as are his arm (Ps. 98:1), ways (Ps. 77:13), and words (Ps. 105:42).

With reference to God himself, holiness may indicate something like his uniqueness, and it is associated with attributes such as his glory (Isa. 6:3), righteousness (Isa. 5:16), and jealousy—that is, his proper concern for his reputation (Josh. 24:19).

God's dwelling place is in heaven (Ps. 20:6), and "holy" functions in some contexts as a virtual equivalent for heavenly (11:4). God's throne is holy (47:8), and the angels who surround it are "holy ones" (89:5; cf. Mark 8:38).

A corollary of God's holiness is that he must be treated as holy (Lev. 22:32)—that is, honored (Lev. 10:3), worshiped (Ps. 96:9), and feared (Isa. 8:13).

While "holy" is sometimes said to mean "set apart," this does not appear to be its core meaning, though it is an associated notion (Lev. 20:26; Heb. 7:26). Holiness, as applied to people and things, is a relational concept. They are (explicitly or implicitly) holy "to the LORD" (Exod. 28:36), never "from" something.

The symbolic representation of God's heavenly palace, the tabernacle (Exod. 40:9), and later the temple (1 Chron. 29:3), and everything associated with them, are holy and the means whereby God's people in the OT may symbolically be brought near to God. For God to share his presence with anything or anyone else, these too must be holy (Lev. 11:44–45; Heb. 12:14).

The OT system of worship involved the distinction between unclean and clean, and between common and holy, and the means of effecting a transition to a state of cleanness or holiness (Lev. 10:10). People, places, and items may be made holy by a process of consecration or sanctification, whether simply by God's purifying presence (Exod. 3:5) or by ritual acts (Exod. 19:10; 29:36).

Holiness may be an attribute of places marked by God's presence (Exod. 3:5; Ps. 43:3). Likewise, particular times, especially the Sabbath day (Exod. 20:8), are declared holy.

God's faithful people are described as holy (Exod. 19:6; 1 Pet. 2:9). In the OT, this is true of the whole people of God at one level, and of particular individuals at another. Thus, kings (Ps. 16:10), prophets (2 Kings 4:9), and in particular priests (Lev. 21:7) are declared to be holy. While the OT witnesses to some tension between the collective holiness of Israel and the particular holiness of its designated leaders (Num. 16:3), the latter were intended to act as models and facilitators of Israel's holiness.

The prophet Zechariah envisions a time when the distinctions between holy and common will be meaningless (Zech. 14:20–21). While vestiges of the symbolic language of holiness remain in the NT (e.g., the "holy city" in Matt. 27:53), after the death and resurrection of Christ the NT no longer operates with the symbolic holiness of the OT. Rather, this language is appropriated to explain what true holiness entails in the lives of God's people (Rom. 12:1; Eph. 2:21). All Christians are holy ("saints" [Gk. *hagioi*] means "holy ones" [e.g., Rom. 1:7]), including in some sense the members of a believer's family (1 Cor. 7:14). The holiness of God's people is both definitive, by virtue of the saving work of Christ (Heb. 13:12), and progressive, by eliciting, and empowering through his Holy Spirit, holy and righteous living (Rom. 6:19; 1 Thess. 4:7–8). Both divine initiative and human activity with regard to holiness may be seen in texts such as Lev. 20:8; Heb. 10:14. The objective of Christian discipline is that we might share God's holiness (Heb. 12:10).

HOLY CITY Jerusalem is the "holy city" (Neh. 11:1, 18; Isa. 48:2; 52:1; Dan. 9:24; Matt. 4:5; 27:53), the place where God's name dwells (Isa. 18:7). John's apocalyptic vision of the new creation includes "the holy city," the new Jerusalem (Rev. 21:2, 10).

HOLY GHOST *See* Holy Spirit.

HOLY OF HOLIES The main structure of the tabernacle and later the temple consisted of two rooms, the holy place and the holy of holies, the latter otherwise known as the "Most Holy Place" (Exod. 26:33–35; 1 Kings 6:19–21). The ark of the covenant was placed in this room, which was entered by the high priest once a year on the Day of Atonement (Lev. 16).

HOLY ONE OF ISRAEL A descriptive title emphasizing God's holy nature and his special relationship to his people, Israel. The title occurs thirty-two times in the OT in 2 Kings, Psalms, Isaiah, and Jeremiah. As a favorite designation in the book of Isaiah, the title occurs twelve times in chapters 1–39 and fourteen times in 40–66.

HOLY PLACE One of two major sections in Israel's tabernacle, the holy place housed several sacred objects, including the lampstand, the table of consecrated bread, and the altar of incense (Exod. 25:23–39; 30:1–10; Heb. 9:2–3). A special curtain in the holy place separated this chamber from the most holy place, which contained the ark of the covenant, thereby protecting the latter from defilement (Exod. 26:33).

HOLY SPIRIT In Christian theology, the Third Person of the Trinity. The usage derives from the NT, in which the divine Spirit is treated as an independent person who is instrumental in salvation and is worthy of the praise accorded to both the Father and the Son (John 14:16–23; Rom. 8:26–27; 1 Pet. 1:2).

OLD TESTAMENT

The scarcity of the phrase "Holy Spirit" in the OT (only in Ps. 51:11; Isa. 63:10–11) does not imply lack of interest or importance. While it should be recognized that in the OT the person of the Holy Spirit receives nothing like the systematic reflection found in the NT, when one includes correlative terms, such as "Spirit of God," "my Spirit," "wind," or "breath," it is apparent that OT writers attributed great significance to God's Spirit. Thus, the Spirit was at work in the beginning of creation (Gen. 1:2). Adam and Eve are uniquely given life by the breath of God (Gen. 2:7). The Spirit enables the building of the tabernacle (Exod. 31:3), gives voice to the message of the prophets (Num. 11:29; cf. 2 Pet. 1:21), empowers Israel's leaders (1 Sam. 16:13), and provides access to God's presence (Ps. 51:11). Yet in all this, the work of the Spirit in the OT is sporadic, occasional, and localized. Thus, the prophets long for a new age when God's people will more perfectly enjoy the Spirit's presence (Isa. 32:15; 44:3; 61:1; Joel 2:28).

NEW TESTAMENT

The Spirit in the ministry of Christ. The NT views the OT prophetic hope for the Spirit as fulfilled in and through Jesus Christ (Luke 4:18–21). The unique relationship between God's Holy Spirit and the person and work of Jesus explains the systemic reflection that the Holy Spirit receives in the NT. This is signaled at the very beginning of Jesus' life, when the Holy Spirit "comes upon" Mary, overshadowing her with "the power of the Most High" (1:35). Similarly, at the start of Jesus' public ministry, the Holy Spirit "descended on him" at baptism (3:22). This anointing by the Spirit initiates and empowers Jesus' public ministry, from his preaching, to his miraculous works, to his perfect obedience (Luke 4:14–18; John 3:34; Acts 10:38). Even his sacrificial death is accomplished by the power of the Holy Spirit (Heb. 9:14).

Significantly, just as the Holy Spirit empowered the life and death of Jesus, so too is the Spirit responsible for his resurrection and characteristic of his glorious reign. Death is not a defeat for Jesus: he is “vindicated by the Spirit” (1 Tim. 3:16), “appointed the Son of God in power by his resurrection from the dead” (Rom. 1:4; cf. 1 Pet. 3:18). Furthermore, at his resurrection, Jesus comes into a new phase of full and perfect possession of the eternal Spirit as the reward for his obedience. So complete is this union that Paul at one point claims that “the Lord is the Spirit” (2 Cor. 3:17).

The Spirit in the church and the believer. The church and its members are the immediate beneficiaries of Christ’s spiritual fullness. Since Jesus is now a “life-giving spirit” through his resurrection and ascension (1 Cor. 15:45), he is able to fulfill the promise of Spirit baptism (Luke 3:16). This baptism takes place in the outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost, which marks the birth of the NT church. The apostles, illuminated by the Holy Spirit, provide true and powerful testimony about Jesus (John 16:4–15), testimony that serves as the church’s foundation and principal tradition (Eph. 2:20). The work of the Spirit continues within the church in the postapostolic age, uniting its members in Christ for God’s holy purpose (Eph. 2:22).

This same outpouring of the Holy Spirit is the salvation of individual believers. Believers receive the Spirit by faith (Gal. 3:14). The Spirit in turn unites them to Christ and all his benefits (Gal. 3:2; Eph. 1:3), including his life (Heb. 4:15–16), suffering (Phil. 1:29; 1 Pet. 4:14), death (Rom. 6:3), resurrection (Rom. 6:5), justification (Rom. 4:25), and glorious reign in heaven (Phil. 3:20). These benefits, though undoubtedly perfected and consummated only at Christ’s return (Phil. 1:6), are characteristic of believers’ present experience, enjoyed now because the Spirit dwells within them as the “firstfruits” of the harvest to come (Rom. 8:23; cf. Gal. 2:19–20). This indwelling of the Spirit results in new birth and new creation (2 Cor. 5:17), a newness identified with the life that Christ received in his resurrection (Rom. 8:11).

For this reason, believers are urged to further the work of the Spirit in their lives until the bodily resurrection of all God’s people. They are to cultivate the “fruit of the Spirit” (Gal. 5:22), and they are correspondingly warned not to “grieve the Holy Spirit” (Eph. 4:30). Furthermore, since new life is initiated by the Spirit (John 3:6–8), Christians are to remain in that Spirit, not turning aside in reliance on vain and useless principles (Gal. 3:1–5). Conversely, they are to be “filled with the Spirit” (Eph. 5:18), putting off the old person and putting on the new (4:22). This filling grounds every aspect of the believer’s life, from obedience, to worship, to the hope of resurrection. The Spirit, in uniting believers to all the riches of Christ and his resurrection, is therefore central in the work of salvation. *See also* Spirit.

HOLY SPIRIT, SIN AGAINST THE A sin described by Jesus as unforgivable (Matt. 12:31–32; Mark 3:28–30; Luke 12:10). While in many ways mysterious, it is identified as blasphemy and involves the conscious and deliberate attribution of the work of God’s Spirit to the power of the devil.

HOLY WAR Also known as *kherem* warfare or Yahweh war. The term “holy war,” though never used in the Bible, characterizes well the wars that Israel fought at God’s command, particularly those within the promised land. God is present with Israel in war, and thus the battlefield becomes holy ground. God gives Israel instructions concerning the waging of war in Deut. 7, 20. From these passages, plus the historical accounts of Israel’s wars, we can describe holy war as follows.

Before the Battle

God tells Israel when to go to war. Israel’s leaders cannot engage in battle without first hearing from God. God reveals himself to Joshua, for instance, before the battle of Jericho to give him instructions (Josh. 5:13–15). David inquires of God through the priest Abiathar, who presumably uses oracular devices to discover God's will (1 Sam. 23:1–6). Joshua makes a serious error in not seeking God's will in the matter of the Gibeonites (Josh. 9:14).

Once the Israelites learn that God wants them to go to battle, they must spiritually prepare themselves. Since God makes his presence known on the battlefield, the troops must be in a state of ritual purity comparable to those who visit the sanctuary. Before the conquest, for instance, it is necessary for the fighting men to undergo circumcision and to observe the Passover (Josh. 5:2–12). Prebattle sacrifices are also required (1 Sam. 13).

DURING THE BATTLE

The ark of the covenant plays a central role in holy war, carried by priests and accompanying the army. The ark is a powerful symbol of God's presence and indicates to the army that God fights for them. The march into battle takes the form of a religious procession. The priests carrying the ark go first, while singers praise God (2 Chron. 20:20–21). The long march in the wilderness has the character of such a march into battle, since Moses begins the day's journey by shouting, "Rise up, LORD! May your enemies be scattered; may your foes flee before you" (Num. 10:35). Then the ark carried by priests leads the way.

Since God is present with the army, the number of troops and the quality of their weapons are unimportant. Indeed, on occasion when Israel has an ample supply of troops, God commands that the war leader reduce their number, as in the famous story of Gideon paring down his troops from thirty-two thousand to three hundred. The purpose of this reduction is to demonstrate to the people with certainty that they win the battle only because of God's strength. The inexperienced David, armed with a slingshot, expresses this sentiment to the mercenary giant Goliath before he kills him: "You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the LORD Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. . . . All those gathered here will know that it is not by sword or spear that the LORD saves; for the battle is the LORD's, and he will give all of you into our hands" (1 Sam. 17:45, 47). Although the Israelites must engage the enemy, they know for certain that it is God who provides the victory.

AFTER THE BATTLE

Since God wins the battle for Israel, the proper response is praise. The OT contains many songs that celebrate victory in warfare (Exod. 15; Judg. 5; Pss. 24; 98; 149).

The treatment of the plunder and prisoners of war depends on whether the battle takes place in the promised land. If the battle takes place outside the land, then, while the men are killed, the women and children are spared. If the battle takes place in the land, then *kherem* goes into effect. The Hebrew word *kherem* is difficult to translate (possibilities include "complete destruction," "things under the ban," "things devoted to the LORD"), but it is clear that it means that all the plunder goes to God (the sanctuary treasury) and that all the people (men, women, and children), and sometimes all the animals, are killed. The purpose of this is to keep the inhabitants of the land from influencing Israel to worship other gods. Also, God uses Israel as an instrument of his judgment against these sinful nations.

WARFARE AGAINST ISRAEL

While most divinely ordained warfare was directed toward Israel's enemies, God also used foreign nations to judge his sinful people. The initial defeat at Ai (Josh. 7), the capture of the ark by the Philistines at the time of Eli (1 Sam. 4), and the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple by the Babylonians (Lam. 2) are examples.

NEW TESTAMENT HOLY WAR

The prophets who ministered during the exilic and postexilic periods announced that God would appear again in the future. The people of Israel were living under the oppressive hand of Babylon and then Persia, but they were comforted by the idea that God would come and save them from their enemies (Dan. 7; Zech. 14; Mal. 4).

When the NT opens, John the Baptist proclaims that the time of judgment announced by these prophets has come (Matt. 3:7–12). After he baptizes Jesus, he is put in prison and hears reports of Jesus' ministry that disturb him. He wonders why Jesus is not bringing violent judgment against the enemies of God (Matt. 11:1–15). But Jesus has heightened and intensified the warfare so that it is directed against the "powers and principalities," and this battle is won with spiritual weapons (2 Cor. 10:3–6; Eph. 6:10–20). Indeed, the ultimate victory is achieved not by killing but by dying. Paul describes the crucifixion and ascension using warfare language in Eph. 4:7–10; Col. 2:13–15.

John, however, was not wrong. The book of Revelation is the fullest statement of Christ's return, which will signal the final war. In this war, all evil, both spiritual and human, will be brought to an end (Rev. 19:11–21).

HOLY WEEK Sometimes called "Passion Week," Holy Week is the week preceding Easter Sunday and commemorates events of Jesus' last week of ministry. It begins with Palm Sunday, remembering Jesus' entry to Jerusalem (John 12:13).

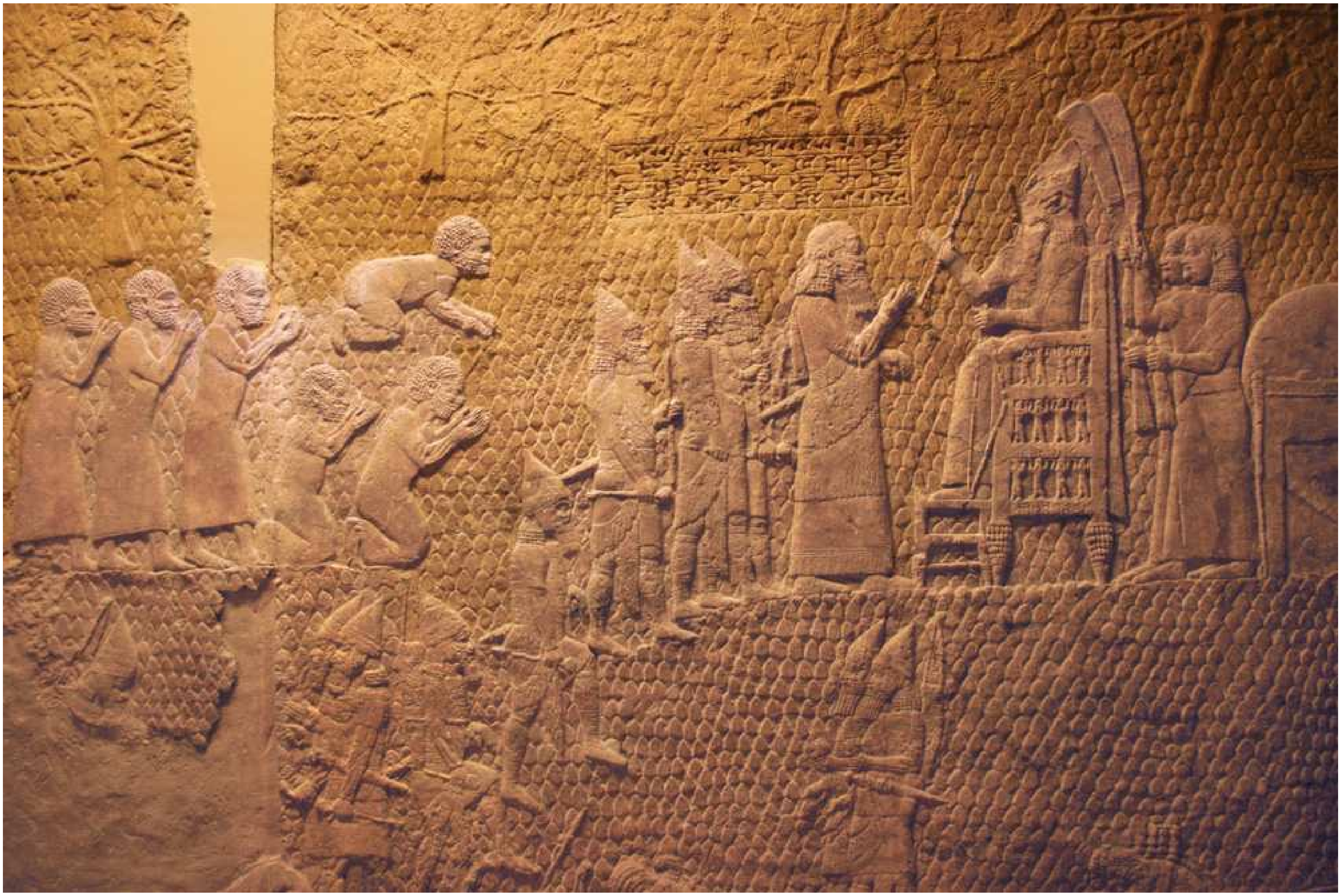
Maundy Thursday (from Lat. *mandatum* ["commandment"]) is so named because Jesus gave his disciples "a new commandment" (John 13:34): to love one another. Maundy Thursday services often include footwashing ceremonies (cf. John 13:4) and the Eucharist (cf. Matt. 26:26–29).

Good Friday is a remembrance of the day Jesus was crucified (John 19:18). Services on this day are somber. Often the music is voices only, without accompaniment. Crosses may be covered in black cloth, and the proceedings are characterized by a funereal tone.

Holy Saturday marks Jesus' time in the tomb. The mourning lasts until dusk, at which time the Vigil, the first service of Easter, may be celebrated.

Easter Sunday is the day of the resurrection (John 20:1–9), the most joyous service of the Christian church. Bells are rung, and "Alleluia!" is shouted. In the early church, Easter Sunday was the day when baptisms were performed.

HOMAGE A gesture of honor or reverence before a king, high official, or God. Subjects bow, kneel, or fall prostrate before their king (1 Kings 1:16, 31; 2 Chron. 24:17) or before God at the king's command (1 Chron. 29:20). Mordecai disobeys King Xerxes by refusing to kneel and honor his chief royal officer, Haman (Esther 3:2, 5). Job admits that a metaphorical "kiss of homage" to worldly wealth or heavenly objects would be a sin before God (Job 31:27). The Roman soldiers fall on their knees and pay mock homage to Jesus before they crucify him (Mark 15:19).



Prisoners bowing down and giving homage to Sennacherib (Nineveh, 700–762 BC).

HOMAM A son of Lotan and a grandson of Seir (Gen. 36:22). The NIV renders the name as "Homam," based on the parallel account in 1 Chron. 1:39, whereas the KJV follows the Hebrew and opts for "Hemam."

HOMELESSNESS The term "homeless," as used generally in Scripture, refers to the poor and destitute. Through the prophet Isaiah, God berates the nation of Israel for "practicing religion" without caring for the poor, including bringing "the homeless poor into your house" (Isa. 58:7 NRSV). Jesus conveys a picture of the final judgment, in which all human beings are judged based on their response to the poor and homeless: food for the hungry, water for the thirsty, clothes for the naked, relationship for the sick and imprisoned (Matt. 25:35–46). This is not an example of a works-based faith; rather, it is the manifestation of God's love in the life of a true believer (1 John 3:17–18). Homelessness is often the result of complex situations ranging from the systemic to the personal. Regardless of the cause, Christians are compelled to aid the homeless by the commandment to love both God and your neighbor (Matt. 22:37–39).

Some argue that Jesus Christ himself was homeless, based upon Jesus' saying, "Foxes have dens and birds have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head" (Matt. 8:20; Luke 9:58). Although "homeless" may have correctly characterized Jesus during his three years of public ministry in various cities about the land, the common aspects of poverty (severe material need, hopelessness) are not seen in the person of Jesus in the Gospel accounts. Paul, however, laments that he and the other apostles are homeless despite other believers' blessed material state (1 Cor. 4:11). *See also* Fatherless; Poor, Orphan, Widow.

HOMER A unit of volume for liquids such as wine or dry materials such as barley (Hos. 3:2) or quail (Num. 11:32). Generally, a homer equaled sixty gallons of liquid or 7.5 bushels of dry material, but it varied over time and locale. A homer was equivalent to ten baths (liquid) or ten ephahs (dry) in Ezekiel's time (Ezek. 45:11).

HOMOSEXUALITY Homosexuality is a sexual relationship between two members of the same sex. It is a controversial issue today, especially as it relates to marriage and to serving in the ministry. Several key biblical texts stand at the center of interpreting the Bible's stance and teachings on this subject.

THE BIBLICAL TEXTS

Genesis 19 (with Ezek. 16:49–50; Jude 7). The biblical narrative regarding the degradation and destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah indicates that their sin was grievous (Gen. 18:20; see also Gen. 13:13). When the two angelic visitors arrived, the men of the city, both young and old, asked to "know" (Heb. *yada'*) them. As an alternative, Lot offered his two virgin daughters, intended as sexual substitutes. While the Hebrew verb used here occurs frequently and characteristically simply means "to know," ten times in Genesis it has strong overtones of sexual union. This narrative is sometimes dismissed as a case of gang rape, whereby power over foreigners was demonstrated in sexual terms. Likewise, some suggest that because no father in contemporary Western culture would ever offer his daughters to maintain the honor of guests, what this passage says about homosexuality also reflects cultural remnants of a bygone age. Thus, the incident would have nothing to do with homosexuality as demonstrated in consensual, committed same-sex relationships. In light of these alternative interpretations, it is necessary to investigate further the implications of this event and its subsequent interpretation in Scripture.

There are two explicit commentaries on the Genesis narrative later in the biblical canon. The first is provided by Ezekiel, from whom we learn that Sodom and the surrounding cities were "arrogant, overfed and unconcerned; they did not help the poor and needy. They were haughty and they did detestable things before [God]" (Ezek. 16:49–50). The clause "they did detestable things" must be translated that way. The interpretation "it [i.e., the arrogance] was detestable" is unacceptable because the Hebrew verb is third-person feminine plural ("they did"), and the subject is Sodom and her sisters (the surrounding towns). Clearly, homosexual practice was not one singular sin there. It was one in the midst of a culture rife with things that were "detestable" in God's eyes. "Detestable" is used over a hundred times in the Hebrew Bible of things that run absolutely counter to the nature of God. It also appears in Lev. 18; 20, addressed further below. The second direct response to the incident is Jude's condemnation of the sexual license in Sodom and Gomorrah: the towns "gave themselves up to sexual immorality and perversion" (Jude 7).

In sum, Sodom and Gomorrah became the paradigm for comprehensively destructive evil (cf. Isa. 1:10; Jer. 23:14; Matt. 10:5–15; 11:20–24; Luke 10:1–15), representing societies entirely corrupt and hardened beyond repentance. This sobering characteristic is particularly evident in Jesus' references to the cities. Furthermore, what we cannot ignore is that the Genesis narrative of that pervasive evil centers on the perversion of sexuality, starting with men wanting men, followed by Lot's offering his daughters, and then Lot’s daughters engaging their father in sexual activity.

Judges 19. Tragically, this narrative thread is not isolated in Genesis. The same activity appears again in Judg. 19, where some of God’s people had adopted the ways of the debased Canaanite culture around them. In the narrative, a Levite stopped for the night in the town of Gibeah, a city of the tribe of Benjamin. Some men of the city demanded that his host give them access to him, and again a virgin daughter and the Levite’s concubine were offered in his place. Human sexuality and life itself were being abused in the most heinous ways; the narrative is a shocking testimony to the depths to which humankind can descend, as the Levite’s concubine was raped to death over a long night.

Leviticus 18:22; 20:13. The first of these passages forbids a man to “have sexual relations with a man as one does with a woman,” indicating that it is “detestable,” or an “abomination” (KJV; Heb. *to’ebah*). It is not limited to the violent homosexual activity that characterized the previous narratives; rather, it is a general and blanket prohibition. Leviticus 20:13 pronounces the death penalty for that act.

Because these are in the so-called Holiness Code (Lev. 17–26), significant parts of which deal with ritual matters, some interpretations view these statements as merely addressing outdated purity issues, not sin. Furthermore, because the death penalty is indicated, they are dismissed as no longer relevant for the church. Nevertheless, the great majority of the other prohibitions and infractions noted in these chapters address troubling sexual activities (“uncovering the nakedness [*’erwat*] of . . .”), including incest, adultery, and bestiality, all of which are still clearly unacceptable. Furthermore, Lev. 19 contains significant ethical instructions, many of which reiterate the Ten Commandments. Thus, these texts must not be dismissed too hastily. Outside Leviticus, *to’ebah* is used of idolatrous worship, sexually immoral acts, and ethical infractions. Activities that are “detestable” cannot be dismissed as simply referring to uncleanness. Finally, the wages of all sin is (not was) death (Rom. 6:23), and that lesson is soberly evident in Lev. 20.

Romans 1:24–32. Paul commences his comprehensive presentation of the saving work of Christ and the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit by declaring that humankind stands utterly condemned (Rom. 1–3). The order that God intended for all creation has been disrupted because the creatures made in his image neither worship nor obey him, exchanging “the truth about God for a lie” (1:25). Thus, God gave them over to sexual impurity that explicitly includes homosexual activity on the part of both genders (1:26–27). Furthermore, the list that follows condemns every reader in every time and place. In every respect, what is commensurate with the knowledge of God has been intentionally rejected. None of these is in any way restricted in its meaning by cultural assumptions.

It is exegetically indefensible to state that Paul here refers only to women and men who are by nature heterosexual but have chosen to engage in homosexual activity. Further, to claim that this has to do only with certain kinds of sexual offenses (child molestation or ritual pagan rites), or that Paul could not have known about loving, committed same-sex relationships, is to underestimate Paul’s grasp of his own culture. There is a significant body of Hellenistic literature that recognizes nurturing homosexual relationships and explores the possible reasons for homoerotic impulses; Paul most likely knew it well. More significantly, these limited interpretations misread the intent of Paul in these chapters and seriously trivialize the matters of sin and grace. The fundamental message toward which Paul moves and that is the source of hope for all humankind is that the terrible price of human sin has been paid in the sacrificial blood of Christ, so that God became both just and the one who justifies (Rom. 3:26).

First Corinthians 6:9–11 (1 Tim. 1:10). The 1 Corinthians passage states that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God and then lists categories of offenders: the sexually immoral, idolaters, adulterers, “those who are soft” (*malakoi*), homosexual offenders (*arsenokoitai*), thieves, the greedy, drunkards, slanderers, swindlers. The word *arsenokoitai* is made up of two Greek words that indicate “male” and “to lie with sexually.” Because these two words are used in the LXX of Lev. 18:22 (and 20:13), it is quite likely that Paul was specifically interpreting the Leviticus passages for his own audience, indicating that he saw them as still applicable. This clearly indicates that the behavior is reprehensible. The same term reappears in 1 Tim. 1:10 in a list of those who are ungodly and sinful. Again, however, what Paul goes on to say is most important in terms of his message of much needed grace: “And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God” (1 Cor. 6:11).

HERMENEUTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Instruction regarding homosexual practice transcends specific chronological periods and genres of text. It is not only in the narrative and warning parts of the Torah; Paul repeatedly addresses the issue, particularly as he describes fallen humankind (Rom. 1; 1 Cor. 6; 1 Tim. 1). He does not qualify his descriptions to include only certain kinds of homosexual activity; instead, they are comprehensive. Homosexual practice is without exception represented in the text as morally offensive in God’s sight.

It is often claimed that “Jesus never condemned homosexuality,” and therefore we should not do so. He also, however, never addressed abortion, incest, or other contemporary ills that are reprehensible. On the other hand, he repeatedly affirmed traditional marriage by his references to Gen. 1:27 (“male and female he created them”) and 2:24 (“a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife”) when asked about issues of marriage and divorce (Matt. 19:1–12).

It is essential to note the deep ethical foundation that must shape the lives of all believers. God’s people are “to act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God” (Mic. 6:8). This injunction refers to the redemptive community that enfolds sinners of all stripes. In fact, the truth of the Gospel is a message of hope; it has everything to do with transformation and new life.

HONESTY In Scripture, honesty usually is associated with upright business practices and speaking truthful words. Honesty frequently is linked with the use of weights and measures in business transactions. God calls for honesty in the buying and selling of products (Deut. 25:15; Job 31:6; Ezek. 45:10). Right conduct must characterize all business, labor, and work activities (cf. Eph. 4:28 NRSV).

Honesty is also used to refer to truthfulness of speech. Truthful, not false, witnessing characterizes God’s people (Prov. 12:17). The sage says that honest answers are pleasant; they are like a kiss on the lips (24:26). Although Jesus does not specifically use the word “honesty,” he instructs his disciples about honesty in making oaths. Let “yes” mean “yes”; nothing else is necessary (Matt. 5:33–37). Since God is honest and trustworthy, God’s people display the same quality (2 Cor. 1:15–22).

HONEY One of the things that make Israel a “good land” (Gen. 43:11; Deut. 8:7–10; Prov. 24:13), honey is a sweet aliment produced by bees or derived from flowers, and it has the unique quality of never spoiling (Ps. 19:10; Prov. 27:7; Ezek. 3:1; Rev. 10:9). The psalmist compares God’s word to the sweetness of honey (Ps. 119:103), and the sages liken the words of an adulteress to honey (Prov. 5:3). The biblical expression “land of milk and honey” refers to uncultivated land, which was ideal for the free growth of flowers and grazing (e.g., Exod. 3:8; Lev. 20:24; Num. 13:27). John the Baptist incorporated wild honey, along with locusts, into his diet, perhaps as a way of avoiding tithes to the temple, which were levied upon all cultivated food, but also to demonstrate God’s provision even in the wilderness (Matt. 3:4, 7).

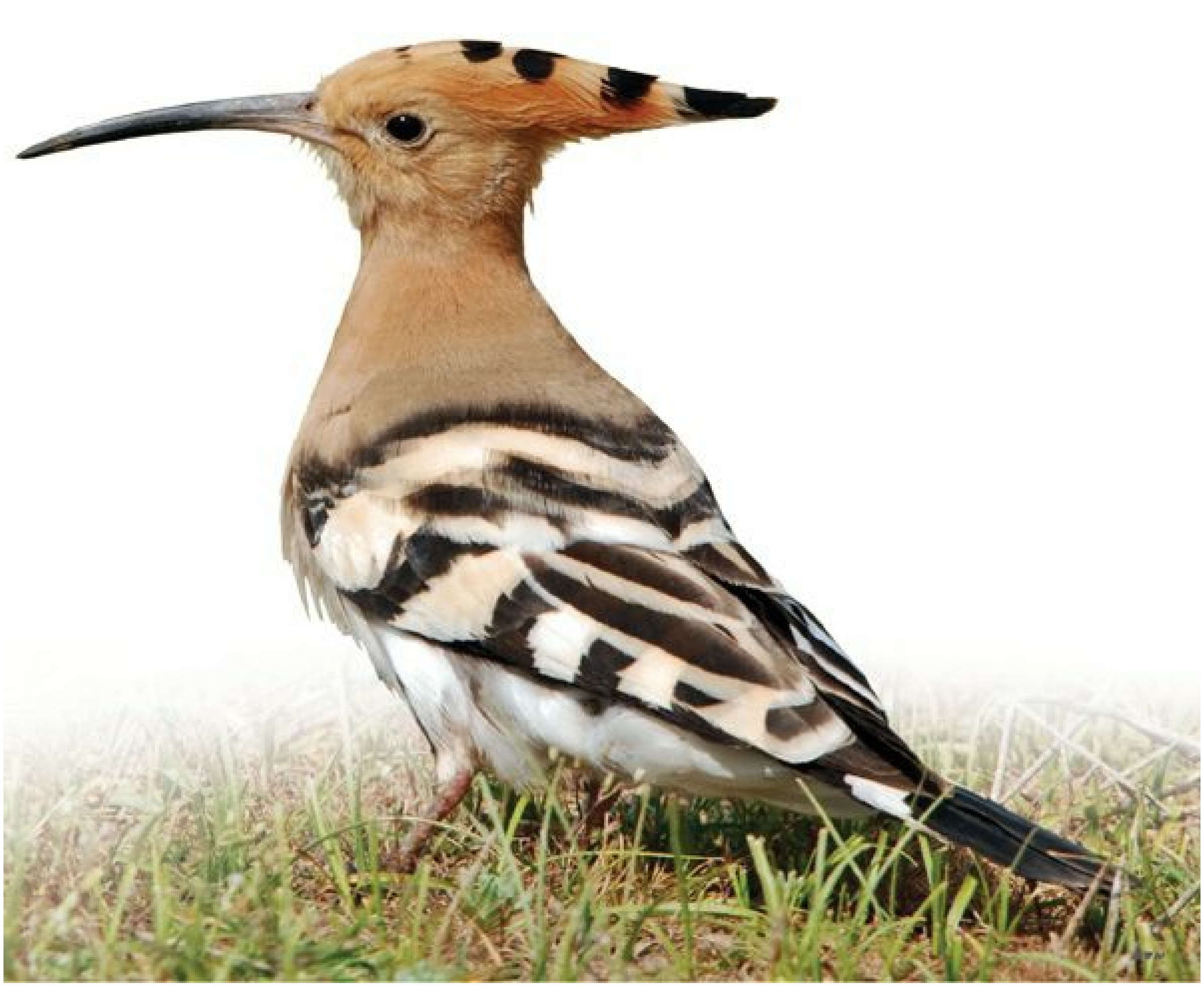
HONOR *See* Shame and Honor.

HOOD In Isa. 3:23 the KJV translates the Hebrew word *tsanip* as “hood,” referring to an item of women’s apparel. This item, which was worn on the head, is represented variously in modern versions: “tiara” (NIV), “turban” (NRSV, ESV, NASB), “head covering” (NET), or “head ornament” (NLT).

HOOF A split hoof, together with chewing the cud, is the distinguishing mark of clean (edible) animals in Lev. 11:2–8; Deut. 14:4–8.

HOOK A piece of metal or other material, curved or bent back at an angle, used for catching hold of or hanging things. It is used metaphorically of God restraining King Sennacherib of Assyria from coming against King Hezekiah of Judah (2 Kings 19:28; Isa. 37:29). There were fishing hooks (Isa. 19:8; Matt. 17:27 NRSV) and pruning hooks (Isa. 18:5 NRSV). Hooks of gold were used in the tabernacle to hang utensils (Exod. 26:32).

HOOPOE A bird common in the Middle East. The hoopoe (Heb. *dukipat*) is about the size of a pigeon; it is pinkish fawn with black-and-white striped wings and tail, and a long, black-tipped head crest. It was considered sacred in Egypt, but it has notoriously filthy nesting habits. The OT lists it as unclean (Lev. 11:19; Deut. 14:18).



HOPE

Scope and Uses of the Word “Hope”

At times simply indicating a wish (2 Cor. 11:1), in the Bible the word “hope” most often designates a disposition of soul, the grounds for one’s hope, or the outcome for which one hopes.

Those whom God has helped and delivered expect to see God’s power again when future needs arise, knowing that in God there are reasons for hope. Mere optimism assumes that bad circumstances will improve with the passing of time. In contrast, hope assumes that God is faithful and is convinced that he is able to bring about his good purpose (Isa. 44:1–8). So at its core, biblical hope is hope in God, rooted in God’s covenant faithfulness (Ps. 62:5–8; Jer. 14:8; 17:13; Rom. 4:18; 5:1–5). Hope trusts God in the present and lives even now on the strength of God’s future accomplishments (Gal. 5:5; Heb. 11:1).

Both of the main OT words for “hope” (Heb. roots *qwh* and *ykhl*) are at times translated “wait.” By definition, hope means that God’s promised outcome has not arrived, and that some time will pass before it does. But that time is filled with a sense of waiting on God, often with a deep ache of longing for God to act (see Pss. 25:16–21; 39:4–7; Isa. 40:28–31; Lam. 3:19–24).

The inner disposition of hope may be seriously threatened by injustice and other devastating life experiences, as reflected in Job 6:8–13; 14:19; 19:10. The refrain of Pss. 42:5–6, 11; 43:5 is a psalmist’s self-exhortation to hope amid oppressive and depressing circumstances: “Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God.” Words for “hope” function similarly in other psalms of lament (Pss. 9:18; 31:24; 71:5, 14; cf. Mic. 7:7).

The OT usually locates individual hope within the horizon and limits of this world. One hopes for outcomes that may be realized in one’s own lifetime; indeed, when life ends, hope ends (Prov. 11:7; 24:20; Eccles. 9:4; Isa. 38:18). Proverbs that mention hope regarding someone’s character development show an underlying concern that God’s purposes be vindicated in one’s life (e.g., Prov. 19:18; 26:12). When used in conjunction with Israel as a whole, hope looks to a more distant future and coming generations.

In the NT, hope is closely associated with Christ and his saving work. Christians now live by hope in Christ (Eph. 1:12; 1 Pet. 1:3; 3:15); indeed, he is “Christ Jesus our hope” (1 Tim. 1:1), and his future appearing is “the blessed hope” (Titus 2:13). Thus, hope refers to eschatological glory (2 Cor. 3:11–12; Eph. 1:18). It is “the hope of the resurrection” (Acts 23:6; cf. 24:15; 26:6–9), our transformation into Christ’s likeness (1 John 3:1–3). That expectation stimulates various hopes for God’s plans to be realized in one’s own or others’ lives (1 Cor. 9:10, 13; Phil. 2:19, 23; 2 Tim. 2:25; 2 John 12). So hope is named repeatedly as an essential Christian attribute (Rom. 12:12; 15:4, 13; 1 Cor. 13:13).

Hope as a Biblical Theme

With the God of hope as its covenant Lord, hope is a defining reality for Israel and a persistent theme in the historical books (e.g., 2 Sam. 23:1–7; 2 Kings 25:27–30). Psalmists find hope either in continuity with present structures (Ps. 37) or in drastic change (Pss. 33; 82), such as personal or corporate restoration.

Judgment dominates the message of the preexilic prophets, although expressions of hope are also found. But Judah's downfall in 587/586 BC marks a turning point in prophetic hope. While preexilic prophecy bases its indictment, appeal, and warning in the exodus and the covenant, Jeremiah and Ezekiel tend to redirect hope and expectation to a new work of salvation that God will accomplish through and after the judgment of exile (e.g., Jer. 31:31–34; Ezek. 11:16–21; cf. Isa. 43:18–19). In the wake of Judah's destruction, these prophets grasp a remarkable new vision of grace and promise. Restoration will be personal as well as national; forgiveness of sin will enable obedience to God's law, now to be found written on their hearts.

During the exile, collection of Israel's sacred texts enabled the shattered community to sustain identity and hope. Postexilic prophecy is often "text prophecy" that arises from reflection upon and reapplication of written prophecies, psalms, and other scriptural texts. For example, the book of Zechariah (especially chaps. 9–14) alludes to many earlier writings and also moves toward apocalyptic literature, contributing dramatic new imagery of God's conquest of evil to establish his cosmic reign and fulfill his covenant. Messianic hopes rose throughout this period, fueled by earlier prophecies (e.g., Isa. 9; 11; 65:17; Jer. 23:5; Mic. 5:2).

If the OT gives occasional hints of an afterlife, this hope becomes manifest in the NT (2 Tim. 1:10). Jesus promises the thief on the cross fellowship after death (Luke 23:43). For Paul, "to depart and be with Christ" is such a vivid hope that "to die is gain" (Phil. 1:21–24). Such texts imply that death ushers the believer into Christ's presence. Yet this intermediate state is not the whole picture. We are saved in hope of the redemption of our bodies (Rom. 8:23–25)—our resurrection from the dead and entry into a new glorified, bodily existence (1 Cor. 15; Phil. 3:20–21).

Christ is judge as well as savior (Matt. 16:27; 25:31–46; Acts 17:31; Rom. 2:16), and the NT anticipates final judgment of all persons and powers arrayed against God, including sin and death (1 Cor. 15:24–26; 2 Thess. 1:5–10). Christian hope involves nothing less than the return and full revelation of Jesus Christ, the resurrection of the dead, and the renewal of all creation (1 Thess. 4:13–18; Rev. 21–22)—the complete vindication of God's rule, secured already in Christ. Then God's redeemed people will see his face and live in his presence forever (Matt. 5:8; Jude 24; Rev. 22:4). A vision of this future enables us to press on with hope, stretching toward what is to come (Phil. 3:13–14).

HOPHNI One of the two sons of the priest Eli at Shiloh (1 Sam. 1:3). Hophni and Phinehas were corrupt priests: they abused worshipers by demanding more than their priestly share (2:12–17) and had sexual relationships with women serving at the sanctuary (2:22). After they rejected their father's rebuke (2:23–25), their judgment was announced in 1 Sam. 2:27–36. This was fulfilled when both died in battle (4:11).

HOPHRA Known as Apries in Greek historical texts, he was an Egyptian pharaoh of the Twenty-Sixth Dynasty (r. 589–570 BC). In 587 BC, during a period of Egyptian-Babylonian competition in Syria-Palestine, Hophra sent his army north and temporarily drove away the Babylonian army that was besieging Jerusalem (Jer. 37:5 [Hophra is the unnamed pharaoh]). He is named once in the Bible (Jer. 44:30), where Jeremiah predicts that Hophra would be vanquished by the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar, just like the rebellious Judahite king Zedekiah. Those Judeans who had fled from Nebuchadnezzar to Hophra's Egypt had misplaced their trust. Hophra later was assassinated.

HOR, MOUNT **(1)** The mountain where Aaron died and was buried (Num. 20:22–29; 33:37–39;

Deut. 32:50). In Deut. 10:6 it is called “Moserah” (meaning “chastisement”), probably because it was due to Aaron’s earlier sin that he died there (cf. Num. 20:24; Deut. 32:51).

Hor is always referred to as “Hor *the* mountain,” suggesting that it was a prominent mountain in the area. Josephus identified Mount Hor with Jebel Nebi Harun (“Mount of Aaron”), near Petra. However, this location is doubtful because, at 4,800 feet in height, it is too high for Aaron’s burial to take place in “the sight of the whole community” (Num. 20:27) and is located in the middle of Edomite territory rather than on the border of Edom as Num. 20:23 asserts. A more likely candidate is Jebel Madurah, near Kadesh (Deut. 10:6), though absolute certainty is not possible.

(2) A mountain marking the northern border of Israel (Num. 34:7–8), probably one of the northern summits of the Lebanese range near the Mediterranean coast (possibly Hermon).

HORAM The king of Gezer, a Canaanite city (Josh. 10:33). He attempted to rescue Lachish, another Canaanite city defeated by Joshua and Israel as they took over the promised land, but his army was completely destroyed, leaving no survivors.

HOREB An alternate name for the desert range and mountain called “Sinai” (Exod. 3:1; 17:6; 33:6; Deut. 1:2, 6, 19; 4:10, 15; 5:2; 9:8; 18:16; 29:1; 1 Kings 8:9; 19:8; 2 Chron. 5:10; Ps. 106:19; Mal. 4:4).

HOREM A town allotted to the tribe of Naphtali (Josh. 19:38). Its precise location within this tribal allotment is unknown.

HORESH A transliteration of the Hebrew term *khoreshah*, occurring in 1 Sam. 23:15–16, 18–19. While the KJV and the NKJV render it as a common noun, “wood/forest,” most modern versions treat it as a place name, “Horesh.” It was located in the wilderness of Ziph, southeast of Hebron. David hid from Saul in Horesh (1 Sam. 23:15), and Saul’s son Jonathan went there to make a covenant with David (23:16, 18). The people of Ziph reported to Saul that David was hiding in Horesh (23:19), and Saul pursued him there, setting up the story of David sparing Saul’s life to prove his loyalty to God’s anointed king (1 Sam. 24).

HOR HAGGIDGAD The name of the seventeenth location at which the Israelites encamped on their journey from Egypt to the promised land (Num. 33:32–33). Although the Hebrew word *khor* means “cave,” the LXX translates the phrase as “mountain of Gadgad.” This location is called “Gudgodah” in Deut. 10:7. The Samaritan Pentateuch reads “Hor Haggudodah.” It was the next destination following the death of Aaron, who died at Moserah. The exact location remains uncertain.

HORI **(1)** A son of Lotan, a Horite chief of the land Seir, the land which was later taken over by descendants of Esau (Gen. 36:22; 1 Chron. 1:39). **(2)** The father of Shaphat, a leader from the tribe of Simeon who was one of the twelve spies sent out to explore the land of Canaan (Num. 13:5).

HORITES The inhabitants of the Mount Seir region. The etymology of their name has often been related to the Hebrew term for “cave dweller,” but this is incorrect. “Horites” may be the biblical name for the Hurrians. The Hurrians were Semites. They were one of the people groups defeated by Kedorlaomer in the time of Abraham (Gen. 14:6). Egyptian sources and name etymology indicate that the Hurrians were in the area of Palestine by the fourteenth century BC. As indicated by the LXX, and no doubt due to changes in words moving from one language to another, the biblical designation “Hivite” most likely refers to the same people group (Gen. 34:2; 36:2).

Esau and his descendants, the Edomites, conquered the Mount Seir region and forcibly removed the majority of the Horite people in a manner that paralleled the conquest of the Canaanites by the Israelites (Deut. 2:12, 22). However, some early intermarriage apparently took place between Esau and the Horites (Gen. 36:2). Apparently, some of the Horites (Hivites) were living in the area of Canaan (Exod. 3:8, 17; 13:5; 33:2; 34:11; Deut. 20:17; Josh. 3:10; 9:1; 11:3; 12:8; 24:11). Genesis 10:17 lists the Horites (Hivites) as descendants of Canaan. Shechem, who raped Jacob and Leah’s daughter Dinah, is said to be a Horite (Hivite; Gen. 34:2).

HORMAH A location first mentioned in the book of Numbers, when the Israelites disobeyed God’s word and were defeated and beaten all the way to Hormah by the Canaanites and the Amalekites, as predicted (Num. 14:45; Deut. 1:44). In addition to being a specific location, “Hormah” (Heb. *kharemah*) can also have a generic meaning as “place of destruction [*kharemah*].” In Num. 21:1–3 the Israelites completely destroyed Canaanite cities, and the place or cluster of cities is called “Hormah” (21:3). It was evidently rebuilt and later conquered by Joshua, as the list indicates (Josh. 12:14). Hormah was allotted to Judah (Josh. 15:30) and then reassigned to Simeon (Josh. 19:4; 1 Chron. 4:30) as its tribal inheritance. Later, Judah and Simeon collaborated to defeat and destroy the Canaanite city Zephath, and so they renamed it “Hormah.” It is one of the cities to which David sent his share of booty taken from the Amalekites (1 Sam. 30:30). Its location has been variously conjectured as Tell esh-Sheriah, about twelve miles northwest of Beersheba; Tell el-Milh, about seven miles northeast of Beersheba; Tell Masos; Tell Ira.

HORN The Hebrew term for “horn” (*qeren*) refers to a bony protrusion on an animal’s head, like those belonging to the ram (Gen. 22:13), ox (Deut. 33:17), and goat (Dan. 8:5). More broadly the term indicates any hornlike projection, as in “ivory tusks” (*qarnot shen*, lit., “horns of tooth” [Ezek. 27:15]). It may also indicate an object fashioned from or resembling an animal’s horn—for example, a *shopar*, or “trumpet” made from a ram’s horn (*qeren hayyobel* [Josh. 6:5]); a receptacle for oil (1 Sam. 16:1, 13; 1 Kings 1:39); and, notably, the protrusions at the corners of an altar (Exod. 27:2; 30:2). In Israel’s worship, blood was dabbed on the horns of the altar to purify it (Lev. 8:15; 16:18) and to make atonement for sin (Lev. 4:7, 18, 25, 30, 34). This came to be regarded as a place of refuge (1 Kings 1:50, 51; 2:28).

An ivory horn used as a signal trumpet (second century)

In the OT, horns are emblematic of vitality and strength. David praises Yahweh as “the horn of my salvation”—that is, a mighty deliverer (2 Sam. 22:3 = Ps. 18:2). The appellation evokes Yahweh’s special commitment to uphold the king’s horn (see 1 Sam. 2:10; Pss. 89:24; 132:17). The king is similarly identified as the horn of his people (Pss. 89:17–18; 148:14), denoting both his role as protector and his duty to uphold justice. As instruments of defense and dominance among animals, horns especially symbolize martial prowess (Deut. 33:17; 1 Kings 22:11). This sense figures in pronouncements of judgment upon Israel (Lam. 2:3, 17) and hope for Israel’s restoration (Mic. 4:13).

In reference to human beings, *qeren* connotes demeanor. To bury one’s horn in the dust is to affect mourning and abasement (Job 16:15 [NIV: “brow”]). Conversely, to elevate one’s horn is to place confidence in one’s own strength in defiance of God (Ps. 75:4–5). Righteous persons look to Yahweh to strengthen and vindicate them (Ps. 92:10; cf. 75:10).

In Daniel’s visions, “horn” designates rulers (7:24), and kingdoms (8:22), which figure in the schematized portrayal of history. Among them, the “large horn” (8:8, 21) signifies Alexander the Great, while the four horns (8:22) represent the dissolution of his empire following his death. The “little/small horn” (7:8; 8:9–12) signifies Antiochus IV Epiphanes (see 8:23–25). In Zechariah’s vision (1:18–21), “horn” generally indicates nations that oppress Judah.

In the NT, the Greek word *keras* exhibits a semantic range similar to Hebrew *qeren*. Jesus is “a horn of salvation” for all Israel (Luke 1:69). Revelation 9:13 mentions “the four horns of the golden altar” that stands before God; elsewhere, “horn” symbolizes the power of the Lamb or of the red dragon (5:6; 12:3) or designates eschatological rulers (17:12).

HORNED SNAKE Also known as the desert horned viper, a venomous snake (*Cerastes cerastes*) found in North Africa, the Sinai Peninsula, Israel, and Arabia. Its name comes from its horny protrusions above each eye. A few versions render the Hebrew term *shepipon* as “horned snake” in Gen. 49:17 (NASB, REB), though most translate it as “viper.”

HORONAIM Isaiah and Jeremiah mention Horonaim, a town in southern Moab, in the context of divine judgment upon the Moabites for their sin of idolatry and pride (Isa. 15:5; Jer. 48:3, 5, 34). From north to south they will flee an invasion. The prophets’ description places Horonaim along a road heading from the Moabite plateau to the Arabah. Its exact location is unknown. If the NIV is correct in following the LXX reading of 2 Sam. 13:34 (the Hebrew text has “the road behind him”), the Horonaim mentioned probably refers to Beth Horon, eleven miles northwest of Jerusalem.

HORONITE Probably a designation for a citizen of Beth Horon, a town located about eleven miles northwest of Jerusalem. In the Bible it is used only for Sanballat, who, along with Tobiah, opposed the rebuilding of Jerusalem’s wall under the direction of Nehemiah (Neh. 2:10, 19; 13:28).

HORSE A large, four-legged mammal with a continuous hoof, domesticated by humans as early as the second millennium BC. Horses appear throughout the Bible as an asset among pastoral flocks used for transportation and as a beast of war used to pull chariots. Horses did not hold a central place in the life of the ancient Near East, as the ox dominated agricultural work, and the donkey was available to more people. One reason for this was that a crucial piece of technology, the stirrup, did not reach Israel's area until the late seventh century AD and was entirely unknown to the ancient Near East and to Greco-Roman society. Along with other uses of horses, armed cavalry was not an option, as it was easy to unseat any rider without a secure saddle. Horses were suited for pulling light loads quickly, however, which meant that drawing the chariot was its first natural use. Many cultures and civilizations used them in this fashion, including the Roman Empire in the time of the early church. The evidence indicates that the people of Israel did not appropriate their use until around the time of the monarchy.

Horses first appear in the Bible in Gen. 47:17 as a part of the livestock traded for grain under Joseph's supervision during a time of famine. Due to the military role of horses and the need to depend on God alone, the king of Israel was forbidden to hold great numbers of horses (Deut. 17:16), and the people were commanded not to obtain horses from the principal supplier of the time, Egypt, which happened despite the prohibition (2 Chron. 1:16). King David first introduced chariots to the armies of Israel when he kept one hundred chariot horses out of a large number he had captured from the kingdom of Zobah (2 Sam. 8:3–4). The use of chariots expanded under Solomon, and he is said to have owned as many as twelve thousand chariot horses (1 Kings 4:26). He also built specific chariot cities in order to solidify Israel's defenses (1 Kings 10:26). This move was deeply unfaithful, however, and was denounced by the prophets as an indulgence in pagan luxury and sinful self-reliance. Isaiah proclaimed, "Woe to those who go down to Egypt for help, who rely on horses, who trust in the multitude of their chariots and in the great strength of their horsemen, but do not . . . seek help from the LORD" (Isa. 31:1). The very real military advantages that came from chariot warfare gave God's people a reason, however false, to trust their own power rather than the provision of God.

A gate in Jerusalem was called the Horse Gate (Neh. 3:28; Jer. 31:40), and the royal palace near the city had a gate devoted to horses (2 Chron. 23:15).

Horses are often mentioned as a literary image meant to evoke speed, energy, and strength (Ps. 20:7). Jesus' own entry into Jerusalem was on a donkey rather than a horse, emphasizing the nonmilitary nature of his messiahship (Matt. 21:5). In Rev. 6:1–8 horses of different colors represent four judgments of God upon the earth.

HORSE GATE A gate of Jerusalem. The biblical text describes a gate located on the eastern wall of the city on the southeast side of the temple precinct (Neh. 3:28; Jer. 31:40) and a gate that gave entrance to the royal compound (2 Kings 11:16; 2 Chron. 23:15). Some think that there were two Horse Gates. However, it is possible that it is one gate, which was located in the eastern city wall that led into the royal compound where the stables would have been, just southeast of the temple precinct.

HORSEMAN The OT writers frequently mention horsemen in military contexts, often in connection with chariots. As the NIV text notes indicate (e.g., Exod. 14:9), the Hebrew word for "horseman" (*parash*) may also be translated "charioteer," but most likely the word simply referred to a warrior on horseback. See also Rev. 6:1–8.

Persian figurine of a horseman

HOSAH **(1)** A Levite and descendant of Merari who was designated the gatekeeper of the tent holding the ark of the covenant after David brought it to Jerusalem (1 Chron. 16:38). Hosah and his descendants were responsible for guarding the "West Gate and the Shalleketh Gate on the upper road" (1 Chron. 26:10–11, 16). **(2)** A coastal city on the northern boundary of Asher near Tyre mentioned in the allotment of tribal territories (Josh. 19:29). Hosah is identified by most scholars with Tell Rashidiyeh and is called Usu in Assyrian and Egyptian texts.

HOSANNA The cry of the crowds at Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem (Matt. 21:9, 15; Mark 11:9–10; John 12:13), meaning literally "Save, now" (Heb. *hoshi'ah na'*). The term comes from Ps. 118:25–26, which reads, "LORD, save us. . . . Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD." In using "hosanna," the people are identifying Jesus as the Messiah. The unusual use of the word as an exclamation of praise in the Gospels indicates that "hosanna" may have been used as a word of praise by early Christians, who then carried that new meaning back into the Gospel accounts.

HOSEA One of the earliest prophets to have his oracles collected in a book, he ministered for approximately forty years in Israel (c. 760–720 BC), beginning during the reign of Jeroboam II (c. 784–748 BC) and perhaps extending beyond the fall of Israel in 722 BC. He was the son of Beeri, but apart from his immediate family little is known about his life. He is never mentioned elsewhere in the Bible, and the biographical information given about him at the beginning of the book of Hosea (1:1–2:1; 3:1–5) is confusing.

God gave Hosea a bizarre command to marry a prostitute to symbolize God's relationship with his unfaithful people Israel. He obeyed and married Gomer, who then bore two sons, Jezreel ("God Sows") and Lo-Ammi ("Not My People"), as well as a daughter, Lo-Ruhamah ("Not Pitied"). Jezreel's name was meant to warn Israel that God would judge the royal house of Jeroboam II because of the blood spilled in the Jezreel Valley by his great-grandfather Jehu (2 Kings 9:36–37; 10:6–7, 11). The name "Lo-Ruhamah" signified that God would no longer show pity on Israel, and the name "Lo-Ammi" signified that God would no longer consider Israel his people. The importance of these names is seen as the themes of sowing (Hos. 2:23; 8:7; 10:12), God showing pity (2:1, 4, 23; 14:3), and Israel as the people of God (2:1, 23; 4:6, 8, 12; 11:7) reappear throughout the book of Hosea. The text makes it explicit that Hosea was the father of Jezreel, but it does not clarify the identity of the father(s) of Lo-Ruhamah and Lo-Ammi, suggesting that Gomer may have returned to her old profession after the birth of Jezreel. God also commands Hosea to bring back an unnamed woman and to love her, which presumably refers to Gomer after she had deserted her husband (3:1–5).

HOSEA, BOOK OF "Go marry a prostitute" are the first words that the prophet Hosea hears from God in the book of Hosea (1:2 NET). His tragic marriage with Gomer provides an analogy for the relationship of God with his people Israel. God loves, confronts, pleads, becomes angry, and seeks reconciliation in this book containing words of judgment as well as hope.

The book of Hosea is one of the twelve Minor Prophets, but among these books Hosea is preeminent. It is the longest and appears first canonically, and it was one of the first of all the prophetic books to be written down. The emotive poetry depicting God's heartbreak over the trauma of his broken relationship with his people is hardly matched anywhere else in Scripture.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The first verse sets the book into the reigns of Jeroboam II of Israel (784–748 BC) and Uzziah (769–733 BC), Jotham (758–743 BC), Ahaz (733–727 BC), and Hezekiah (727–698 BC) of Judah. It is difficult to pinpoint when it was during the reign of Jeroboam II that Hosea began his ministry or how far into the reign of Hezekiah he served. Scholars generally date Hosea's ministry between 760 and 720 BC.

During Jeroboam's reign, Israel expanded its borders (2 Kings 14:25, 28) due to the relative weakness of its two traditional northern enemies, Assyria and Aram. This expansion led to economic prosperity for the upper classes but oppression for the lower classes, which was condemned by the prophet Amos. Shortly after the death of Jeroboam, Tiglath-pileser III came to the throne of Assyria in 744 BC, and as Assyrian influence began to increase in Israel, political stability for the nation declined. The reigns of Israel's final rulers were characterized by chaos, as six kings reigned over Israel in less than one generation (2 Kings 15:8–31; 17:1–6). Jeroboam's son Zechariah was killed by Shallum, who was killed by Menahem, who was succeeded by his son Pekahiah, who was killed by Pekah, who was killed by Hoshea, who was exiled by Assyria.

Hosea's oracles generally target the northern kingdom, with over forty references to "Israel" scattered throughout the book (e.g., 1:4–6), but the tribe of Ephraim is also mentioned over thirty times (e.g., 4:17; 5:3, 5). As the most influential northern tribe, Ephraim is often used synonymously for Israel, but some of the references to Ephraim may be due to the fact that after Assyria conquered and exiled most of Israel in 733 BC, Ephraim was all that remained until its destruction in 722 BC.

OUTLINE

I. Historical Setting (1:1)

II. Hosea's Family (1:2–2:1)

III. God's Family (2:2–23)

IV. God Calls Hosea to Bring Gomer Back (3:1–5)

V. The First Set of Messages (4:1–11:11)

VI. The Second Set of Messages (11:12–14:9)

MESSAGE

The message of the book of Hosea is God's; his voice dominates the book, whether he is speaking to the prophet or to the entire nation. While markers of God's speech are concentrated in the first three chapters (1:2, 4, 6, 9; 2:1, 13, 16, 21; 3:1), clearly God is speaking in most of the remainder of the book (4:1; 11:11). Hosea's first-person perspective appears explicitly only as he narrates how God has told him to go and bring back his wife, Gomer (3:1–5). Hosea may be speaking as the nation is called to return to God (6:1–3; 14:1–3), or these calls may be coming from the people. God also uses quotes from the people to illustrate his points (8:2; 9:7; 10:3).

God's initial commission to Hosea to marry the prostitute Gomer serves as the frame on which to hang the content of the book. God's primary message is that the people of Israel have been unfaithful to the covenant that they had initially established at Sinai after he had delivered them from enslavement in Egypt. God had said that he would be their God, and Israel would be his people (Exod. 6:7), so they had made a covenant that the people promised to obey (24:1–8). Just as Hosea's heart has been broken by the unfaithfulness of his wife, God has been devastated by Israel's adulterous behavior. Gomer gives birth to three children: Jezreel ("God Sows"), Lo-Ruhamah ("Not Pitied"), and Lo-Ammi ("Not My People"). The name of each child has significance in the book: "Jezreel" because God is going to judge Jeroboam's house for the blood shed by his great-grandfather Jehu in the valley of Jezreel (see 2 Kings 9:36–37; 10:6–7, 11); "Not Pitied" because God will no longer show mercy to the nation; "Not My People" because he is no longer their God and they are no longer his people. The themes of sowing (Hos. 2:23; 8:7; 10:12), God showing pity (2:1, 4, 23; 14:3), and Israel as the people of God (2:1, 23; 4:6, 8, 12; 6:11; 11:7) reappear throughout the book.

The book cycles through patterns of accusation, punishment, and hope. God accuses his people of being unfaithful to their covenant. This unfaithfulness takes two primary forms: worship of foreign idols and reliance on foreign nations. Despite their commitment to follow God's laws, they have blatantly broken the first two commandments: have no other gods, and make no idols (Exod. 20:3–4). The first ruler of the northern kingdom of Israel, Jeroboam I, had constructed two calves of gold, one in Dan and one in Bethel (1 Kings 12:25–33), similar to the one made by Aaron in the wilderness (Exod. 32:4). Jeroboam I's golden calves have survived beyond the reign of Jeroboam II and contributed to Israelite apostasy during the period of the entire northern monarchy. The book of Hosea specifically condemns calf worship (8:5–6; 10:5), which even took the form of kissing the calves (13:2). Israel’s idolatry also involved consulting blocks of wood instead of God (4:12), joining themselves to idols (4:17), constructing idols of silver and gold (8:4), and sacrificing to idols (10:5).

Relief depicting the Assyrian king Tiglath-pileser III, during whose reign Hosea prophesied

Because God wants Israel to be exclusively committed to him, he has forbidden them from making treaties with other nations (Exod. 34:12, 15; Deut. 7:2; 23:6). The book of Hosea describes their disobedience to this command in their dealings with Assyria and Egypt. God accuses them of depending on Assyria (Hos. 5:13; 7:11; 8:9; 12:1) and declares that the calf they worship will be exiled to Assyria (10:6), and Assyria will become their king (11:5). God reminds Israel of the Egyptian deliverance in the past (2:15; 11:1; 12:13; 13:4), he condemns their reliance on Egypt in the present (7:11, 16; 12:1), and he proclaims that they will return to Egypt in the future (8:13; 9:3, 6; 11:5). The “return to Egypt” should be interpreted not geographically but figuratively, as a return to bondage and exile, which will be performed by Assyria first in 733 BC and finally in 722 BC.

Israel’s sins provoke God’s anger (5:10; 8:5; 13:11) and prompt him to declare that he will punish his people (1:4; 2:13; 4:9; 5:2, 9; 8:13; 9:7, 9; 10:10). The punishment sent by God specifically targets Israel's king, though it is difficult to be certain which one. Jehu's house is the subject of the first royal condemnation (1:4–5), which may refer to the assassination of Zechariah, Jeroboam II's son (2 Kings 15:8–10). The king is called to listen to the judgment because it pertains to him (Hos. 5:1). Some of Israel's kings have already fallen (7:7), which may refer to the period of monarchical instability after Jeroboam II. Eventually, Israel's king will be completely cut off (3:4; 10:3, 7, 15; 13:10), which happened in 722 BC, when Assyria destroyed the capital Samaria.

In the midst of accusation and punishment, the book also includes words of hope, specifically that Israel will return to its God, and their relationship will be restored. Three times the people are called to return to God: in the beginning (2:14–23), in the middle (6:1–3), and at the end of the book (14:1–3). God views his people not only as his wife but also as his children (11:1–4), and he promises that because of his compassion his anger will cease (11:8–9) and he will lead his children as they return to their homes (11:11). In a surprising twist, immediately after telling Hosea to give the three children names signifying judgment (1:4–9), God declares that Israel will be called the "children of the living God," and the children's names change to "Ammi" ("My People") and "Ruhamah" ("Pity") (1:10–2:1 NET). God also promises that the people of Israel will be as numerous as the sand of the seashore (1:10), recalling his promise to Abraham (Gen. 22:17).

Both parental and marital imagery from the book of Hosea appear elsewhere in Scripture. While in Hosea the line "out of Egypt I called my son" (11:1) refers to God bringing his "children" out of Egyptian bondage, Matthew shows how it also describes early events in Jesus' life as his family fled to Egypt (Matt. 2:15). Jeremiah graphically describes the sins of Judah as adultery and faithlessness (Jer. 3:1–25). Paul compares the relationship between a husband and a wife to that of Christ and the church (Eph. 5:23–24). The book of Revelation concludes by describing how the residents of the new Jerusalem will be adorned like a bride for her husband, and they will be his people and he will be their God (Rev. 21:2–9; 22:17).

HOSEN In Dan. 3:21 the KJV translates an Aramaic term of uncertain meaning, *petash*, as "hosen" (NIV: "trousers"). Given the context, the term clearly refers to an item of clothing. "Hosen" is an archaic word for "pants" (cf. German *Lederhosen*).

HOSHAIAH **(1)** The father of Jezaniah, one of the army officers who received counsel from Jeremiah as they contemplated fleeing to Egypt (Jer. 42:1). Jezanaiah is called "Azariah" in Jer. 43:2. **(2)** A man assigned to lead half of the leaders of Judah in the procession at the Ezra-Nehemiah covenant renewal ceremony (Neh. 12:32).

HOSHAMA A descendant of Jehoiachin, king of Judah, who in 597 BC was carried off into Babylonian exile (1 Chron. 3:18).

HOSHEA **(1)** The son of Nun, he was renamed "Joshua" by Moses (Num. 13:8, 16; cf. Deut. 32:44 KJV). *See* Joshua. **(2)** The son of Elah, he was the last king of the northern kingdom, Israel (733–724 BC). He attained the throne through assassinating Pekah (2 Kings 15:30). When Shalmaneser, the king of Assyria, discovered that Hoshea had stopped paying him tribute, he imprisoned Hoshea and laid siege to Samaria. The Assyrians eventually captured the city and sent the Israelites into exile (2 Kings 17:1–6). **(3)** The son of Azaziah, he was a leader of the tribe of Ephraim during the reign of David (1 Chron. 27:20). **(4)** One of the "leaders of the people" who sealed the covenant with God following Ezra's public reading of the law (Neh. 10:23).

HOSPITALITY The practice of receiving strangers in order to offer provision and protection was an important concept in many of the cultures throughout the time period of both Testaments.

Hospitality first appears in Abraham's care of the strangers who visit him in Gen. 18. The strangers in turn reveal God's imminent fulfillment of his promise to provide a child to Abraham and Sarah. Thus, they return the good favor and kindness that they have received, which is the expected pattern of mutual goodwill that characterizes hospitality.

The unusual hospitality of Rebekah in offering water for Abraham's servant's camels distinguishes her as the wife whom God had appointed for Isaac (Gen. 24:1–49).

Part of the sin of Sodom and Gomorrah is that the men violate hospitality norms by demanding that the visiting angels have sex with them, which is in deep contrast to Lot's attempt to welcome and protect the visitors (Gen. 19:1–9; see also Ezek. 16:49–50).

A conviction of the people of Israel is that God is their host in the promised land (Lev. 25:23). Jesus frequently is the beneficiary of the hospitality of others in the Gospels, and he sends out his disciples relying on it (Luke 9:1–4; 10:1–9). The messianic banquet is a theme of Jesus' teaching on the kingdom of God (Matt. 8:11; 22:1–14; Luke 14:16–24). Hospitality is also commanded to be an aspect of early Christian communities, and it is a spiritual gift (Rom. 12:8, 13; Heb. 13:2; 1 Pet. 4:9).

HOSTAGE A prisoner taken to be used as leverage for negotiation or to aid in control of the defeated populace after a conflict. Jehoash of Israel took hostages after he defeated King Amaziah of Judah (2 Kings 14:3–14; 2 Chron. 25:23–24).

HOST OF HEAVEN A KJV phrase used to describe the heavenly bodies or heavenly beings. The NIV prefers "starry host(s)," "multitudes of heaven," or "stars in the heavens/sky," but "host of the heavens" does occur in Dan. 8:10. The Hebrew phrase, *tseba' hashamayim*, means literally "army of the heavens." The connection between the celestial elements and an army comes in conjunction with God's role as the commander of the Israelite forces (Josh. 5:13–15; Judg. 5:23). There are times when the Bible portrays the celestial elements as part of God's military retinue, fighting on his behalf. The stars fight from heaven against Sisera (Judg. 5:20), and in the Israelites' battle against the Amorites, the sun and the moon are commanded to stand still (Josh. 10:12–13; cf. Hab. 3:11). Based on these passages, the phrase may have had some military background, but it is also understood in other ways.

Perhaps one of the more enigmatic uses of the phrase occurs in 1 Kings 22:19 (cf. 2 Chron. 18:18; NIV: "multitudes of heaven"), where it describes God's council. There are other biblical phrases used with more frequency to describe the heavenly council surrounding God. Other names for these beings include the "seraphim" of Isa. 6:2 and the "sons of God" in Job 1:6; 2:1; Pss. 29:1; 89:6. The connection between God's council and the celestial elements likely comes, as noted above, through the heavenly bodies' association with God in battle. Further solidifying this connection is Job 38:7, where the "sons of God" parallel the "morning stars." Exactly what these heavenly beings are is debated, and many interpreters suggest the answer lies in the polytheistic context of Israel's neighbors. Another possible explanation is to view these beings as the messengers or angels of God. The Bible portrays them as inferior beings (Deut. 3:24; 10:17; Jer. 10:6), and they function to serve and worship Yahweh (Pss. 29:1; 103:21; 148:2–3; Isa. 6:2). The angels who appear to the shepherds at Jesus' birth are described as the "heavenly host" (Luke 2:13).

The last and most frequent use of the phrase "host of heaven" is to describe a condemned object of Israelite worship. It is likely that from their association with God's council, these celestial elements gained an independent status and were worshiped apart from God. At times the “host of heaven” appears to refer to the stars alone; the NIV therefore translates it as “stars in the sky” (Deut. 17:3; Jer. 33:22; cf. Jer. 8:2) or “starry hosts” (2 Kings 23:5). At other times the phrase refers to the totality of the heavenly bodies (Deut. 4:19 [NIV: “heavenly array”]; cf. 2 Kings 21:3, 5). Based on the distribution of the phrase, and its occurrence primarily in documents narrating the Assyrian period (2 Kings 17:16; 21:3, 5; 23:4–5; Jer. 19:13; Zeph. 1:5), there is likely a direct correlation between the worship of the host of heaven and Israel’s Assyrian vassalage in the seventh century BC. The extent of Assyrian impact on Israelite religion is debated, but it is likely that astral worship—that is, worship of the starry hosts—flourished in this period due to the influence of the Assyrians, a culture entrenched in worship of the astral powers.

HOSTS, LORD OF *See* Names of God.

HOTHAM **(1)** One of the sons of Heber from the tribe of Asher (1 Chron. 7:32). **(2)** An Aroerite, the father of Shama and Jeliel, listed among David’s mighty men (1 Chron. 11:44).

HOTHAN *See* Hotham.

HOTHIR A temple musician, he served under the supervision of his father, Heman, King David’s seer (1 Chron. 25:4–5). He led the twenty-first division of temple musicians (1 Chron. 25:28).

HOUGH *See* Hamstring.

HOUR The precise and consistent division of time into hours, minutes, and seconds is a feature of modern life first made possible by the widespread use of mechanical clocks in the late Middle Ages. Biblical texts reflect an earlier situation in which timekeeping was primarily a matter of celestial observation. NT references to “hours” fall into two broad categories: first, timekeeping by means of numbered hours; and second, the use of the word “hour” in the sense of “moment,” a short, indefinite period of time (e.g., Matt. 8:13; John 16:2), as the hour was the basic unit of measurable time (see Rev. 9:15).

Jesus observed that the day was divided into twelve hours (John 11:9). Jesus was crucified at the third hour (9 a.m.); it was dark from the sixth hour (noon) until the ninth hour (3 p.m.), at which point Jesus died (Matt. 27:45–46; Mark 15:25, 33; Luke 23:44; John 19:14). In one parable, a landowner hired workers at the third, sixth, ninth, and eleventh hours (Matt. 20:3–12). The book of Acts also reports events occurring at the third, sixth, and ninth hours (Acts 2:15; 3:1; 10:3, 9). Such passages suggest that actual reckoning was often less precise even than the twelve-hour scheme permitted, and that the day was more roughly divided into four parts of three hours each. The Gospel of John provides the most precise time indications, mentioning the tenth hour (4 p.m. [John 1:39]) and the seventh hour (1 p.m. [John 4:52]). One text names an “hour of dinner” (Luke 14:17; see also 22:14), and another indicates that the ninth hour (3 p.m.) was an “hour of prayer” (Acts 3:1; see also 10:30).

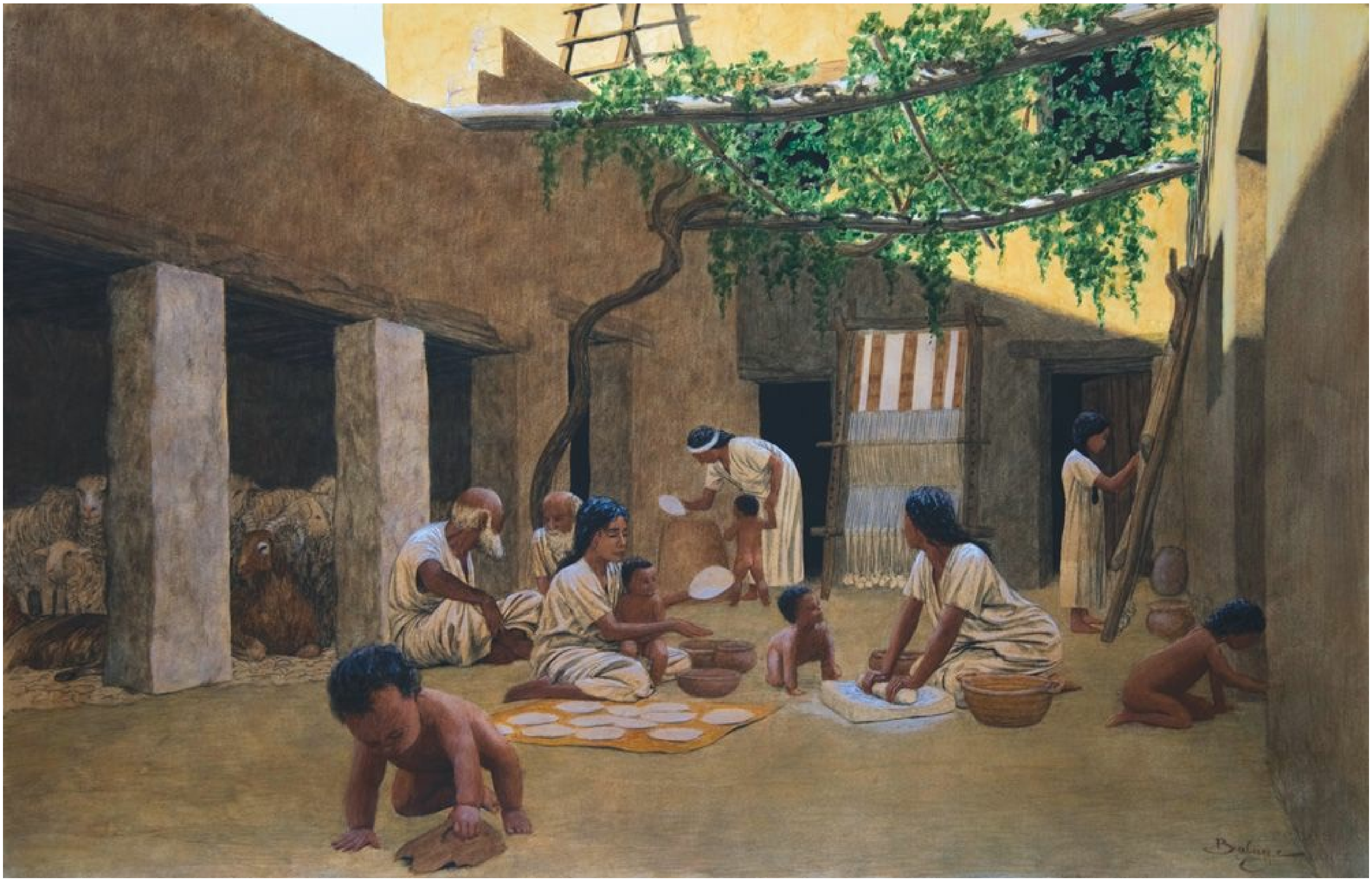
The night was divided into three or four “watches,” of which the NT mentions the second, third (Luke 12:38), and fourth (Matt. 14:25; Mark 6:48). The OT mentions nocturnal watches (Pss. 63:6; 90:4; 119:148; Lam. 2:19), including in military contexts (Exod. 14:24; Judg. 7:19; 1 Sam. 11:11), from which the term with the sense of standing guard is derived. The OT watches are not numbered, but are referred to as “middle” or “last.” The system of watches did not preclude the counting of hours during the night, as in Acts 23:23, which refers to the third hour of the night (9 p.m.).

In addition to the numbered hours of the day, the hour is also used to measure the passage of time, as in Acts 19:34, where a crowd riots for two hours (see also Matt. 26:40; Luke 22:59; Acts 5:7; Rev. 17:12). One text refers to a half-hour period (Rev. 8:1).

Numerous texts refer to hours of future trial (Matt. 10:19; Rev. 3:10), including an eschatological or "last hour" (e.g., Mark 13:32; 1 John 2:18). The suffering and death of Jesus is also referred to as his "hour" (e.g., Mark 14:35; 14:41; John 12:23, 27).

HOUSE In ancient Israel, as an agricultural community, the house was the center of family life. Apart from daily family activities, the basic functions of an Israelite house were for storage and stabling.

A typical house in Iron Age Palestine was basically rectangular in shape, constructed of sun-dried mud-bricks, and completely roofed. It consisted of either three or four rooms, although in some rare occasions it was a two-room house. The size of the house varied, depending on the wealth of the owner. Structurally, the most important and noticeable features were the pillars, generally made of stone. These monolithic pillars separated the rooms from the courtyard and supported the flat roof or ceiling. A three-room house usually consisted of a row of pillars in the center of the structure, while a four-room house consisted of two rows, dividing the two side rooms, with the courtyard in the middle.



Artist's conception of an Israelite four-room house

Walls provided enclosure for a family unit but could also serve as partitions between adjacent houses. They were constructed of mud-brick (cf. Exod. 5:7) and erected on a stone foundation. The exterior of the walls needed regular whitewashing to prevent erosion caused by winter rain (cf. Ezek. 13:10–18), and the interior walls were decorated with painted line ornaments (Jer. 22:14). Unlike modern windows, Israelite windows were essentially slits in the walls, without glass filling (Josh. 2:15; 2 Cor. 11:33). For security and climate control, they were small, but they were good enough for natural lighting and ventilation (cf. Hos. 13:3). Oil lamps were placed in the wall niches (2 Kings 4:10; Matt. 5:15).

The entrance to the house usually was in the center of the front wall. The door, which opened inward, was mounted with three wooden doorframes on two sides and on top of the wooden door (cf. Exod. 12:7, 22–23). The door was locked from the inside with a tumbler lock and a wooden bolt (Judg. 3:25; Neh. 3:3). From outside, it was accessed through a fist-sized keyhole (Song 5:4) with a large key (Isa. 22:22). A stone threshold (1 Kings 14:17; cf. 1 Sam. 5:4–5) was laid at the base of the door.

The ceiling of the ground floor was less than six feet high. The central room was used for work such as food processing, although cooking was also done outdoors. A hearth was a hole in the ground used to set fire for cooking or for warmth (Jer. 36:22). The side rooms were used for stables (1 Sam. 28:24). At the rear of the house was a broad room (cf. Ps. 128:3; Amos 6:10) used mainly for storage purposes. The floor of the courtyard was laid with beaten earth, while the rooms had dirt floors. The upper level, which served as a place for sleeping, dining, and leisure activities (1 Kings 17:19; 2 Kings 4:10; Mark 14:15; Acts 9:37), was accessed through a wooden ladder from inside the house or through a stone staircase from the outside.

A unique feature of Israelite houses was the roof. The flat, plastered roof served as the place for domestic activities (e.g., Josh. 2:6–8; 1 Sam. 9:25–26; 2 Sam. 11:2) and religious activities (Jer. 19:13; 32:29; Zeph. 1:5; Acts 10:9), especially during hot weather. It was not uncommon for grass to grow on it (Isa. 37:27). Since it was flat, waterproofing was a pressing problem. As such, constant compacting and resurfacing of the roof with a limestone roller was needed (cf. Eccles. 10:18). For safety, parapets were built around the roof (Deut. 22:8). Since the roof was elevated and public, activities there were noticeable by people outside; thus public announcement could be made from the roof (Matt. 10:27; Luke 12:3). Absalom had sexual intercourse with David’s concubines on a rooftop, which might have been an act of public declaration of his kingship (2 Sam. 16:22).

HOUSEHOLD *See* Family.

HOUSE OF THE ARCHIVES *See* House of the Rolls.

HOUSE OF THE FOREST OF LEBANON *See* Palace of the Forest of Lebanon.

HOUSE OF THE HEROES A building referring to some type of barracks, possibly housing David’s mighty warriors mentioned in 2 Sam. 23:8–39; 1 Chron. 11:10–41. Nehemiah mentions it in conjunction with the tombs of David, but the location is still unknown (Neh. 3:16).

HOUSE OF THE ROLLS In Ezra 6:1 the KJV translates the Hebrew phrase *bet siprayya’* as “house of the rolls,” referring to archives stored in the royal treasury of Babylon. Most modern versions render the phrase as “archives.” King Darius ordered the archives to be searched to determine whether Cyrus had in fact issued orders for the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem (Ezra 5:17). Similar archives were kept by most royal dynasties in the ancient Near East.

HOUSE OF THE WARRIORS *See* House of the Heroes.

HOWLING CREATURES The exact taxonomic identification of the howling creatures in Isa. 13:21 (NIV: “jackals”) remains elusive, and a look at the many translations demonstrates this. The Hebrew word *’ochim* has been translated as “shriekers,” “owls,” and “doleful creatures,” and yet others have understood it mythologically. Isaiah is using the image of these scavenging animals to paint a metaphorical picture in which desert creatures inhabit the empty houses of the ruined, deserted city of Babylon.

HOZAI In 2 Chron. 33:19 the Hebrew phrase *dibre khozay* is taken by some to refer to the “records of Hozai,” referring to the author of a history of King Manasseh that the author of Chronicles used as a source. However, most translations understand *khozay* not to be a proper name but rather to mean “seers” (as the LXX understood it), indicating anonymous prophets who wrote the history of Manasseh: “records of the seers” (NIV, NRSV).

HUB Cast metal wheel hubs are mentioned in the description of wheeled cult stands in 1 Kings 7:33. Cult stands matching this description were found in Crete, and cast wheels of this kind were found at Tel Miqne-Ekron.

HUBBAH A descendant of Asher through Shomer (1 Chron. 7:34). Some English versions (KJV, NASB, ESV) render his name “Jehubbah,” following the Kethib reading *yakhbah*. The LXX supports “Hubbah.”

HUKKOK, HUKOK A town in southwestern Naphtali near the border with Asher and Zebulun (Josh. 19:34). The modern site of Khirbet el-Jemeija fits well, situated some fifteen miles west of the Sea of Galilee but still in Naphtali, near the border with Asher not far from Zebulun. Some connect Hukkok to modern Yakuk, just three and a half miles northwest of the Sea of Galilee, but this appears to be too far east. Further complicating the matter, 1 Chron. 6:75 names Hukok as a Levitical city from the tribe of Asher instead, while the parallel of Josh. 21:31 has Helkath rather than Hukok.

HUL The second son of Aram, and a grandson of Shem (Gen. 10:23; 1 Chron. 1:17). The geographic location of his descendants is currently unknown.

HULDAH A faithful prophetess of God serving during the time of King Josiah. When Josiah discovers the book of Deuteronomy while cleaning out the temple, he sends his advisers to inquire of God about the judgments in the book. They go to Huldah, who is identified as a prophet. In typical prophetic fashion, she delivers the word of the Lord (2 Kings 22:14–20), underscoring judgment on the disobedient and unrepentant but blessing on those, like Josiah, who have a repentant heart.

HUMANITY

ORIGINS, COMPOSITION, AND CONSTITUTION

Origins. The Bible is not unique in offering an account of human origins. Interesting accounts are found in Sumerian (Enki and Ninmah, Hymn to E-engurra), Akkadian (Atrahasis Epic, *Enuma Elish*), and Egyptian texts (Pyramid Texts, Instruction of Merikare). These texts provide a helpful window into the biblical world and show the common concern to explain the origin and role of humanity in the world.

One distinct feature of ancient Near Eastern texts is that they generally speak of human origins in a collective sense. Specialists refer to this phenomenon as polygenesis. Such a collective creation better serves the purpose of the gods, who have made the human race as a labor force. In the Bible, however, the book of Genesis describes an original human pair who are the progenitors of the human race. This phenomenon is referred to as monogenesis. Humanity is not merely created to serve and do the work of the gods. Instead, it is a special creation of God, intended to bear his image.

Composition. The composition of humanity is described in Gen. 2:7: "The Lord God formed a man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being." Humanity is not distinct from animals in having the breath of life (1:30). Indeed, the description of the composition of humanity is also quite, well, human. Genesis describes humans as made from the dust. Dust is not fertile, nor is it pliable. It refers to the earth and that which is dead. The wordplay between "man" (*'adam*) and the "ground" (*'adamah*) appears to be a major focus of the text (2:7) and suggests that the major connection being established concerns the first humans as archetypes.

Constitution. Certain passages of Scripture have led interpreters to posit a trichotomous nature of humanity (i.e., mind, body, soul; cf. 2 Cor. 4:16; 5:1–9; 1 Thess. 5:23). Likewise, even though the Greek language can bifurcate the soul (*psychē*) and the body (*sōma*), a kind of dualism should not be inferred from this (cf. Matt. 6:25; 27:50; Luke 10:27; 2 Cor. 4:11). Either approach is foreign to the unified biblical mind-set. The only dualism in the anthropological perspective of the NT is in the nature of humanity in relation to Christ's new creative work.

Form and Function

Form: male and female. Just as God created man (*'ish*), he also created woman (*'ishah*) (Gen. 1:26–27). Although woman is initially created as a "suitable helper" (2:18), it should be noted that the underlying Hebrew term (*'ezer*) is used almost exclusively in reference to God elsewhere. This suggests that "suitable helper" does not indicate a difference of essence, value, or status.

The Bible describes woman as coming from the "side" of man, probably communicating something about their equality (Gen. 2:21–22). Thus, it should be understood that just as all humanity shares a connection to the ground, so also a man shares an intimate connection with a woman. Although the phrase "one flesh" often is taken as a euphemism, it probably is a remarkably descriptive statement of the archetypal nature of Adam and Eve (cf. 2:24).

Function: image of God. The distinction between humanity and the other animals created by God is that humans are created in God's image. The concept of the image of God, however, is not unique to the biblical text (Gen. 1:26–27; cf. Instruction of Merikare). Throughout the ancient Near East, kings were thought to actually be the image of a god. In the Christian understanding, only Christ is the image of God (2 Cor. 4:4), whereas humanity is created in the image of God. Although this may imply a kingly role with regard to humanity's function over the rest of creation, the main parallel should be seen in how images are meant to represent a god's presence.

HUMANITY IN PAULINE THOUGHT

Paul’s conception of humanity is thoroughly eschatological insomuch as his vision of Christ as the image of God is identified with Christ as “risen Lord.” Christ as the image of God is the final destiny of the humanity that is “in Christ” (1 Cor. 15:23–28; 44–49; Eph. 1:9–10). Because of the effects of sin, creation has been subjected to futility (Rom. 8:19–22), and humanity to death (Rom. 5:12–14; 1 Cor. 15:21–22). Yet Paul’s outburst of “new creation” (Gal. 6:15; cf. 2 Cor. 5:17) indicates his understanding of the cosmological, and therefore anthropological, effects of being united with Christ. Indeed, if God is making the “former things” into “new things” (2 Cor. 5:17; cf. Isa. 65:17–19), this new creative act certainly impacts humanity. That reality is already partially realized in the elimination of distinctions in this present “evil age” (Gal. 1:4), for in Christ “there is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one” (Gal. 3:28; cf. 1 Cor. 12:12–13; Gen. 17). Until the end, the Christian lives in the tension of already beginning to experience the act of new creation and not yet completely disinheriting the effects of sin (Rom. 8:18–30; 2 Cor. 12:5–10).

HUMANITY OF CHRIST *See* Christ and Christology; Incarnation; Jesus Christ.

HUMAN SACRIFICE The act of killing a human being as an offering to a deity in a religious ritual.

In the OT, human sacrifice is most closely associated with the worship of Molek, a Canaanite deity of Phoenician origin. Molek’s name in Scripture is derived from the Hebrew word for “king,” *melek*, but using the vowel pattern of *bosheth*, which means “shame.” Human sacrifice was not limited to Molek; it was also part of Chemosh (Moabite) and Baal (Canaanite) worship (2 Kings 3:27; Jer. 19:5), as well as rituals practiced before other regional gods. There is enough fluidity in names and details to suggest that these traditions were somewhat intertwined.

The practice of sacrifice to Molek is literally described as causing one’s son or daughter “to pass through the fire.” Such a thing was forbidden to Israel (Lev. 18:21; 20:2–5) and was called both a “detestable practice” and “detestable to the LORD” (Deut. 18:9–12). The shedding of innocent blood, a broader category of sin, was also prohibited (Deut. 19:10). Despite its gross offense, human sacrifice became a snare for Israel because it was so routine in Canaan, even though it was among the reasons given to them for driving the Canaanites out of the land (Ps. 106:34–39).

Indeed, like the Canaanites, the Israelites did sacrifice their children to idols. Solomon built high places for Chemosh and Molek (1 Kings 11:7). Ahaz sacrificed his son to Molek in Judah (2 Kings 16:3; 2 Chron. 28:1–4) according to the practices of the kings of Israel (2 Kings 17:17–18). So too did Manasseh (2 Kings 21:6; 2 Chron. 33:6), whose sins also more broadly included shedding innocent blood (2 Kings 21:6, 16; 24:4; 2 Chron. 33:6).

The Valley of Ben Hinnom in Jerusalem, located below the south wall of the city, extending from the base of Mount Zion eastward to the Kidron Valley, was a site for human sacrifices (Isa. 57:5). The specific place was called “Topheth,” either from a Hebrew word meaning “drum,” a reference to the priests of Molek banging instruments to drown out the screams of the child victims, or from an Aramaic loanword for “hearth,” communicating burning. In NT times, the same valley was known in Greek as Gehenna (*geenna*) and was used as a dump for burning refuse and a metaphor for hell.

After the fall of the northern kingdom, Josiah’s reforms included desecrating Topheth to stop the heinous idolatry (2 Kings 23:10). It did not last, however, as Jeremiah later prophesied on location that the Valley of Ben Hinnom would be renamed the “Valley of Slaughter” as a result of the despicable burning of children, and that the nation would be smashed for its great sins (Jer. 7:31–32;

19:1–14; 32:35). His prophecies were echoed by Ezekiel, whose passionate anger at Judah spilled over into shocking, attention-grabbing rhetoric as Jerusalem fell to the Babylonians (Ezek. 16:20–21; 20:26, 31; 23:37–39).

Elsewhere, the Bible alludes to human sacrifice before God. God commanded the offering of Isaac by Abraham as a test of Abraham's devotion and obedience; and once Abraham passed the test, God stopped the sacrifice. A ram served as the substitute (Gen. 22:1–18). One possible reason for the matter-of-fact tone of the story is that Abraham lived in a context where such demands were not unexpected. What made Abraham's God different was that he stopped the sacrifice.

A more difficult event is Jephthah's sacrifice of his daughter in keeping with a rash vow that he made to God before battling the Ammonites (Judg. 11:30–40). There is no easy explanation for his gruesome vow fulfillment, which, this time, God did not miraculously stop. However, Jephthah's actions are consistent with the book of Judges' presentation of the Israelites as progressively descending into Canaan-like depravity because they had forgotten both God and his covenant.

Other instances that have been cited as examples of human sacrifice are more consistent with divine justice and retribution than with expiation (1 Sam. 15:17–21, 32–33; 2 Sam. 21:1–14).

HUMAN SOUL *See* Soul.

HUMILIATION OF CHRIST *See* Kenosis.

HUMILITY In the OT, humility often refers to people of low social status, the disenfranchised, and those who suffer oppression and poverty (e.g., Prov. 22:22–23; Amos 2:7; Zech. 7:10). Such people often are referred to as the *'anawim* (e.g., Ps. 9:12, 18; Isa. 32:7; 61:1; Amos 2:7; 8:4). The Hebrew word *'anah* is frequently translated by the English words "oppress" and "afflict." The word denotes the sexual humiliation of women (Gen. 31:50; Ezek. 22:10–11), military oppression (Judg. 16:5–6, 19), and oppression that comes with slavery (Gen. 15:13; Exod. 1:12; Deut. 26:6). As a social status, humility is synonymous with those marginalized by society.

Scripture sometimes associates those socially marginalized with the ethical dimension of humility, thus making the social status equivalent to a subjective spiritual quality (Pss. 22:26; 37:11–17; 146:7–9; Zeph. 3:11–13). Social humiliation, however, does not necessarily lead to humility as a virtue. In a number of instances in the OT, the two remain distinct. In its subjective quality, humility involves submission to one in authority, usually to God (Exod. 10:3; Deut. 8:2–3, 16; Ps. 119:67, 71, 75). On some occasions humility is related to the act of repentance before God (e.g., Zeph. 2:1–3). When paired with "fear of the LORD," humility implies a person who lives in a posture of pious submission before God (Prov. 15:31–33; 22:4).

Such is the case with Moses, whom the writer of Numbers describes in the following way: "Now Moses was a very humble man, more humble than anyone else on the face of the earth" (Num. 12:3). Moses' humility in this situation is displayed in his intimate relationship with, and by his submissive attitude toward, the sovereign God (12:4–9).

In the NT, Christians take Christ as their model of humility (Matt. 11:29; Phil. 2:6–11). The NT writers also call on Christians to humble themselves before God (James 4:10; 1 Pet. 5:5–6) as well as others, including their enemies (Rom. 12:14–21; Phil. 2:3).

HUMOR God's interaction with humans all through history includes humor as a part of that story. Humor is a genuine expression of what it means to be human. It cannot be dismissed as simply trivial or mere entertainment. Humor pervades Scripture from beginning to end, but readers miss much of it due to a limited understanding of the language, context, and culture of the Bible.

Genesis records both Abraham and Sarah laughing at the unexpected news that Sarah at age ninety would give birth to a son (Gen. 17:15–17; 18:9–15; 21:1–7). Amos sarcastically tells northern Israel to come to the place of worship at Bethel and sin (Amos 4:4). The humor used to describe the lazy person in Prov. 26:13–16 cannot help but bring a chuckle. Jesus frequently uses hyperbole to communicate his message (Matt. 7:3–5). It is especially in reading Scripture out loud that one discovers its humor.

Humor is a Christian virtue when used with prudence. It helps put life and mistakes in perspective. Humor helps individuals endure tragedy. It reminds us of the fragile nature of life. When we laugh, we acknowledge our humanness and our imperfections. In a real sense, it is a preparation phase for faith. When we can laugh at ourselves, we are saying, “I am not God; I do not run the world.” In Christian life, humor puts humans in their place and celebrates the sovereignty and goodness of God.

HUMTAH A town near Hebron in the tribal allotment of Judah (Josh. 15:54).

HUNCHBACK The hunchback (Heb. *gibben*) was prohibited from offering burnt offerings as a priest (Lev. 21:20). The prohibition occurs within an extensive list of disfigurements that disqualified a person from sacrificing. Such descendants of Aaron could still eat the food granted to the priests (21:22).

HUNDRED, TOWER OF THE *See* Tower of the Hundred.

HUNDREDWEIGHT One twentieth of a ton (one hundred pounds). This unit, in Greek *talantiaios*, appears in Rev. 16:21 (RSV, REB; NIV: “a hundred pounds”). Various other units occur in multiples of one hundred (shekels and, less frequently, talents, bekas, cors, and baths [Ezra 7:22]); these are round numbers rather than exact “hundredweights.”

HUNGER Rarely is hunger mentioned in the Bible as the simple desire for the next regular meal (Mark 11:12; Acts 10:10; 1 Cor. 11:21, 34). Normally it is a hunger associated with physical weakness from the lack of food and often with long-term hardship such as famine (2 Kings 7:12; Ps. 107:5; Matt. 4:2; Mark 8:3; Luke 15:7; 2 Cor. 11:27). In the ancient world it took much harder work and a large portion of the workforce to produce enough food. And compared to the present, the whole enterprise was much more subject to fluctuating conditions of drought, blight, insects, and disease, in addition to the threat of warfare, whether from the raiding and destroying of crops (Judg. 6:3–4) or from siege (2 Kings 7:12). Hunger is not an inconvenient wait until the next full meal but rather a threat to health and life.

God cares for the hungry (Pss. 107:9; 146:7; Prov. 10:3; Isa. 49:10; Luke 1:53), and it is righteous to do likewise (Isa. 58:7, 10; Ezek. 18:7, 16; Matt. 25:35). Some provision was made for the hungry. While there was a small tax to provide food for certain disadvantaged parties (Levites, aliens, orphans, and widows [Deut. 14:27–29; 26:12–13]), other provision required that harvesters leave certain remains for others to glean (24:17–22). Hunger was not simply a matter of bad luck or victimhood, as it may result from laziness or lack of prudence (Prov. 19:15).

HUNT, HUNTER Hunting for food is a postdiluvian activity. In the original creation, humankind was allowed to eat only of plant life (Gen. 1:29); it was only with the re-creation of the earth that humans were explicitly permitted to eat animals: “Everything that lives and moves about will be food for you. Just as I gave you the green plants, I now give you everything” (9:3). Therefore, it may be concluded that hunting as a means of survival had no significance for prediluvian humanity.

Nimrod was “a mighty hunter before the LORD; that is why it is said, ‘Like Nimrod, a mighty hunter before the LORD’ ” (Gen. 10:9). However, for many ancient interpreters, the proverbial saying was viewed with suspicion and was interpreted negatively as opposition against God (Philo, *QG* 2.82; *L.A.B.* 4:7; 6:13; Josephus, *Ant.* 1.113–14; *Tg. Neof.* 10:9; *Frg. Tg.* 10:9; Augustine, *Civ.* 16.4; Jerome, *Qu. hebr. Gen.* 10.18). Another memorable hunter is Esau, “a skillful hunter, a man of the open country” (Gen. 25:27). Before Esau could receive a blessing, his father requested that he go hunt game for him; however, the old and blind Isaac was tricked into blessing the wrong son (27:1–40).

Royal lion-hunting scene on a relief from the Assyrian palace of Ashurbanipal (Nineveh, 645–635 BC)

In ancient times, hunting was not an activity limited to providing food or acquiring other resources such as materials for clothing. There is evidence of hunting as a royal sport. The Assyrian kings were famous hunters of lions, wild bulls, elephants, and other animals. By the seventh century BC, Assyrian kings hunted in special game reserves. For the Assyrians, the killing of wild beasts such as lions symbolized the duty of the king as a guardian of civilization. Royal hunting does not appear to have been a practice in Israel, although such a possibility may not be completely ruled out. The young David’s encounter with lion and bear is cited to some extent for self-exaltation purposes and even more so to portray him as a fearless shepherd worthy of shepherding Israel (1 Sam. 17:34–37).

Hunters used various methods to catch or kill their prey: weapons such as quiver, bow, spear, sling, and club (Gen. 27:3; cf. Isa. 7:24), pits and various snares and gins (Pss. 35:7; 91:3; 2 Sam. 23:20; Isa. 24:17; Jer. 48:43; Amos 3:5). Bird hunting was also a common practice, and snares often were used to make a catch (Pss. 91:3; 124:7; Prov. 1:17; 6:5; Eccles. 9:12; Amos 3:5).

HUPHAM The ancestor of a clan, the Huphamites, of the tribe of Benjamin, who are counted in the second census account in the wilderness (Num. 26:39). He may be the same person as Huppim, one of the sons of Benjamin (Gen. 46:21).

HUPHAMITE *See* Hupham.

HUPPAH One of the temple officials appointed to minister at the sanctuary from the family line of Eleazer the priest (1 Chron. 24:13).

HUPPIM One of Benjamin's ten sons (Gen. 46:21). He may also be called "Hupham" in Num. 26:39.

HUR **(1)** An important leader in the time of the exodus. While Joshua was fighting against the Amalekites in Rephidim, Aaron and Hur helped Moses keep his hands raised for the Israelites' victory (Exod. 17:10–13). While Moses was away at Mount Sinai, he put Aaron and Hur in charge (24:14). **(2)** A Judahite and the grandfather of Bezalel, who worked on the tabernacle with his divinely gifted craftsmanship (Exod. 31:2; 35:30; 38:22; 2 Chron. 1:5). He was a descendant of Caleb, whose wife was Ephrath, and he was the grandfather of Bethlehem (1 Chron. 2:19–20; 2:50; 4:1, 4). Josephus and Jewish tradition made him the husband of Miriam and identified him with the Hur of Exod. 17:10–13; 24:14. **(3)** One of the five kings of Midian killed along with Balaam as the Israelites applied "the LORD's vengeance" on the Midianites for having seduced them in the "Peor incident" (Num. 31:3, 16; cf. 25:16–18). These kings are recorded as the princes who allied with Sihon, an Amorite king (Josh. 13:21). **(4)** According to 1 Kings 4:8 (KJV), Hur was the father of one of Solomon's twelve district governors responsible for supplying provisions from the hill country of Ephraim for the king and the royal household. Since the Hebrew word *ben* can be translated "son of," the proper name "Ben-Hur" (NIV) can be used to replace "son of Hur." **(5)** The father of Rephaiah, who helped repair the wall of Jerusalem under the direction of Nehemiah and was ruler of a half-district of Jerusalem (Neh. 3:9). If in Neh. 3:9 Hur is understood to be the ancestor rather than the father of Rephaiah, then he could be the same person as in Exod. 31:2; 35:30; 38:22; 2 Chron. 1:5.

HURAI *See* Hiddai.

HURAM **(1)** A member of the tribe of Benjamin. He was a grandson of Benjamin son of Bilhan (1 Chron. 8:5). **(2)** The king of Tyre, more often called "Hiram," who made trade agreements with both David and Solomon for building materials (2 Chron. 2:3–16). **(3)** A Phoenician craftsman, son of an Israelite woman, sent by King Hiram of Tyre to do bronze work in Solomon's construction (2 Chron. 4:11–16). He is also called "Hiram" (1 Kings 7:13 NRSV) and "Huram-Abi" (2 Chron. 2:13; 4:16). *See also* Hiram.

HURAM-ABI *See* Huram.

HURI One of the Gadites in the genealogy in 1 Chron. 5:14. Huri is not mentioned in other lists of Gadites, and apparently he appeared in genealogical records in the days of Jotham and Jeroboam (5:17).

HURRIANS *See* Horites.

HUSBAND *See* Family; Marriage.

HUSBANDMAN The KJV uses "husbandman" to translate Hebrew and Greek words rendered in other versions as "farmer," "vinedresser," or "tenant." In an agricultural society, where crops are a stable source of income, husbandry is a common occupation. It also appears as a metaphor in Scripture. The religious leaders are identified as God-appointed tenants of his vineyard who turn against its owner, killing his son (Matt. 21:33–39). Jesus identifies himself as the vine, believers as its branches, and the Father as the vinedresser (John 15:1–7).

HUSHAH **(1)** The son of Ezer, and one of the descendants of Hur (1 Chron. 4:4). **(2)** An Israelite town, identified with modern Husan, west of Bethlehem. Two persons are specifically mentioned as Hushathites: Sibbekai (2 Sam. 21:18; 1 Chron. 11:29; 20:4; 27:11) and Mebunnai (2 Sam. 23:27). Sibbekai struck down a champion of the Philistines (2 Sam. 21:18; 1 Chron. 20:4), and it is likely that both names refer to the same person because both are registered among David's mighty men and occur in parallel passages.

HUSHAI A friend of David from the Arkite clan, located near the northern border of Benjamin near Ataroth (see Josh. 16:2). Hushai met David to join him as he fled from Jerusalem because of Absalom's rebellion. Having just prayed that the advice of Absalom's highly regarded counselor Ahithophel be thwarted, David persuaded Hushai to stay behind as a spy. He assigned Hushai to pretend loyalty to Absalom but to report to him through the priests Zadok and Abiathar (2 Sam. 15:30–37). Hushai successfully feigned loyalty to Absalom (16:16–18) and gained his trust. Ahithophel advised hot pursuit of David, anticipating that he and the people with him would be weary. But Absalom also consulted Hushai. Painting a picture of David as a trapped, fierce warrior, he persuaded Absalom to take the time to gather an overwhelming force, and then he reported this to the priests, who passed the word to David (17:7–16). Hushai's action saved David's life.

HUSHAM The successor to Jobab as king of Edom (Gen. 36:34; 1 Chron. 1:45–46) in the period before the Israelite monarchy (Gen. 36:31). Husham was from the land of the Temanites, and so apparently he was a non-Edomite.

HUSHATHITE *See* Hushah.

HUSHIM **(1)** A variant of "Shuham," the only descendant of Dan (Num. 26:42) listed in Gen. 46:23. Since the list in Numbers mentions a tribe, the Shuhamites, it may be that the form in Numbers is original and that "Hushim" in Gen. 46:23 is the result of metathesis, with the scribe inverting the order of the letters *het* and *shin*, possibly because of familiarity with the tribe in 1 Chron. 7:12. **(2)** Descendants of Aher from Benjamin (1 Chron. 7:12 [NIV: "Hushites the descendants of Aher"; NRSV: "Hushim the son of Aher"]). **(3)** The divorcée of Shaharaim from Benjamin (1 Chron. 8:8), who bore to him Abitub and Elpaal (1 Chron. 8:11).

HUSHITES *See* Hushim.

HUSK The outer membranous covering of some fruits, nuts, and grain. The KJV uses the word three times (Num. 6:4; 2 Kings 4:42; Luke 15:16), but most modern versions replace it with other renderings, including "skin [of grapes]" (Num. 6:4), "heads [of grain]" (2 Kings 4:42), and "[carob] pods” (Luke 15:16). There is debate concerning the meaning of the term *tsiqlon* in 2 Kings 4:42, which occurs only here in the OT. Some see it referring to the heads/ears of grain that the man is bringing to Elisha (NIV, NET, KJV), while others see it as the sack in which he carries the grain (RSV, NRSV, ESV).

HUT Some English versions use “hut” as a translation of *melunah*, one of two Hebrew words for a shelter, both used in Isa. 1:8 (see also 24:20). The other word, *sukkah*, occurring also in Job 27:18, is the one used for the “booths” of the Festival of Booths (Lev. 23:42–43).

HUZ *See* Uz.

HUZZAB The interpretation of “Huzzab” (Heb. *hutsab*) in Nah. 2:7 is one of the most difficult problems in that book, and translators and commentators have suggested many solutions. Many older translations read “Huzzab shall be led away captive” (KJV), following the traditional text and taking the word as a proper name referring to Nineveh’s queen (a person otherwise unknown). Some newer versions understand the word as a verb, “it is decreed” (NIV, NRSV [NASB: “it is fixed”]), though this interpretation involves linguistic speculation and the conjecture of the phrase “the city” to complete the verse. Context suggests that the word refers to a female cult statue stripped by the conquerors of Nineveh.

HYACINTH *See* Jacinth.

HYENA A hunter-scavenger doglike animal with front legs longer than back legs. The species found in Israel is the striped hyena, which has striped legs and underbelly, a speckled face, and a ridge of hair running along its spine. They have eerie calls and inhabit holes and ruined buildings, feeding on carrion, bones, and garbage, as well as hunting live prey. The prophets mention them in connection with God’s devastating judgment on Babylon and Edom (Isa. 13:22; 34:14; Jer. 50:39). Hyenas often are associated with jackals, but which Hebrew words refer to which animal is uncertain. Two of the words mean “scream” and “wail,” so the collective reference may simply be to “wailing and screaming animals.” In Jer. 12:9 the phrase *’ayit tsabua’* (lit., “speckled screamer”) uses one of these words, but it may refer to a bird of prey. In 1 Sam. 13:18 the Valley of Zeboim is literally the “Valley of Hyenas.”

HYKSOS The Semitic rulers of Lower Egypt during the second intermediate period (c. 1700–1550 BC). The Egyptians designated them “Hyksos,” which means “foreign rulers,” and viewed them as Asiatic in origin. Since Hyksos names were primarily Semitic and their material culture was very similar to Middle Bronze Age II remains in Canaan, they could be identified as West Semitic in general and southern Levantine or Canaanite in particular.

How the Hyksos came to enter and control Lower Egypt is still debated. They did not conquer in a single campaign under a single king, but neither was their infiltration entirely peaceful. Instead, in a complex process over a long period of time, Semitic groups immigrated into Egypt. As their numbers increased, so did the conflicts with the native Egyptians. Eventually, the Hyksos caused the weak Thirteenth Dynasty to collapse, and they ruled Lower Egypt in its place. A unified Egypt broke into two rival kingdoms, with a native Egyptian dynasty centered in Thebes and a Hyksos dynasty centered in Avaris, which later was known in the Bible as Zoan (Ps. 78:43) and now is known as Tell ed

Dab'a. Avaris was a huge city, covering one square mile.

The Hyksos represent the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Dynasties. The rival Seventeenth Dynasty in Thebes sought to drive the Hyksos out of Egypt. Pharaoh Seqenenre lost his life in battle with the Hyksos, but Kamose followed up the attacks and won some victories. Ahmose, the founder of the powerful Eighteenth Dynasty, successfully besieged Avaris and carried the war into Canaan, destroying several of its cities in 1550 BC. This marked the end of the Second Intermediate Period and ushered in the New Kingdom. It also marked the beginning of the Late Bronze Age in Canaan. Hatred toward the Hyksos lingered, as Thutmose III claimed that his campaigns into Canaan were retribution against the Hyksos. Egypt had experienced weak and even chaotic periods, but it had not faced foreign invasion before. This dealt a huge blow to the Egyptian psyche and may explain some of the Egyptian actions and fears depicted in Exod. 1.

Even though the Hyksos are not mentioned in the OT, their presence in Egypt may have influenced biblical events. Enough evidence has not been found to prove direct Hyksos involvement in biblical events, but some suggest that Joseph's rise to power is best explained if a Hyksos (Semitic) pharaoh ruled Egypt at that time. The rise of a pharaoh "to whom Joseph meant nothing" (Exod. 1:8) may be a reference to the rise of the Eighteenth Dynasty after its expulsion of the Hyksos. The Israelites had been settled and then enslaved in the areas of the Nile Delta once controlled by the Hyksos. The fear of the Israelites becoming too numerous and fighting against Egypt may have been based on the precedent set by the Hyksos (cf. 1:9–10).

HYMENAEUS A leader in the church of Ephesus who opposed Paul and his teaching. He was among those who rejected sound doctrine with "seared" consciences (1 Tim. 4:2) and in doing so "suffered shipwreck with regard to the faith" (1:19). Paul responded by excommunicating ("handed over to Satan") Hymenaeus and Alexander so that they "be taught not to blaspheme" (1:20). But Hymenaeus continued to destroy others' faith by teaching falsely that the resurrection had already occurred (2 Tim. 2:17–18). Paul charged Timothy to avoid such godless teaching and to gently instruct his opponents (2 Tim. 2:16, 25).

HYMN A song of worship and praise to God. The NIV only uses the word once in the OT, in Ps. 40:3, referring to a "hymn of praise" to God. The Hebrew word behind this phrase is *tehillah*, which is common in the OT and is elsewhere translated simply as "praise," especially in the psalms. Psalms were part of Israel's worship, and so such "hymns of praise" to God are more common than the English suggests.

The content of these hymns is not laid out for modern readers, but it involves things such as thanksgiving, gratitude, or generally giving God due recognition for who he is (e.g., Ps. 66:2) and what he has done (e.g., 106:2, 12).

In the NT, the word occurs only a handful of times in the NIV, and there is very little indication what these hymns were about. Here too, generally we can say that a hymn is a particular type of song of praise to God.

In Matt. 26:30; Mark 14:26, Jesus and the disciples sang a hymn at the conclusion of the Lord's Supper. Since this meal was patterned after the Passover, it is likely that one or more of the Hallel psalms (Pss. 111–118) were sung. ("Hallel" means "praise" in Hebrew and is related to *tehillah*). The Greek word behind this use in the Gospels, *hymneō*, is the origin of the English word "hymn." In Acts 16:25 Paul and Silas sang hymns at midnight while in prison, although we are told nothing about their content.

In 1 Cor. 14:26 Paul is instructing his readers about orderly worship. According to the NIV, one of the elements of worship includes hymns, although the Greek word here is *psalmos* (the word used to refer to the book of Psalms in Luke 20:42; 24:44; Acts 1:20; 13:30), which the KJV renders there as "psalm." There is certainly significant overlap between hymns and psalms, since both involve praising God, but evidently there is some distinction too, as can be seen in Eph. 5:19 and Col. 3:16, where Paul makes a distinction between "psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit." Perhaps these terms do not reflect clearly marked categories in Paul's mind. In Eph. 5:19 all three are directed to God "from [the] heart," and in Col. 3:16 they are sung with "gratitude," both of which reflect the use of psalms in the OT.

Biblical scholars also refer to other portions of the Bible as "hymns," even though the word is not used. The Song of Moses (Exod. 15:1–18) and the Song of Hannah (1 Sam. 2:1–10) are sometimes called "hymns" simply as a convenient designation (although Hannah's is more a prayer). The same goes for Mary's song, the Magnificat (Luke 1:46–55), which clearly is modeled after Hannah's song, and Zechariah's song, the Benedictus (Luke 1:68–79), which reflects OT prophetic poems. Elsewhere biblical scholars detect the possibility of fragments of preexisting "hymns" that were incorporated into the NT (e.g., Phil. 2:6–11). This suggests to some that there was some hymn-writing activity in the early church.

HYPOCRISY The practice of claiming standards or beliefs to which one's own behavior does not conform. Hypocrisy is attributed to those whose actions and words differ from the intention of their heart (Matt. 22:18; 23:28). It is a form of lying (1 Tim. 4:2; 1 Pet. 2:1) and can become a form of self-delusion (Matt. 7:5; 23:16–26; Luke 12:56; 13:15).

The OT expresses the sense with phrases like "double heart" and "flattering lips" (Ps. 12:2 KJV). Jeremiah describes those who have God "always on their lips but far from their hearts" (Jer. 12:2).

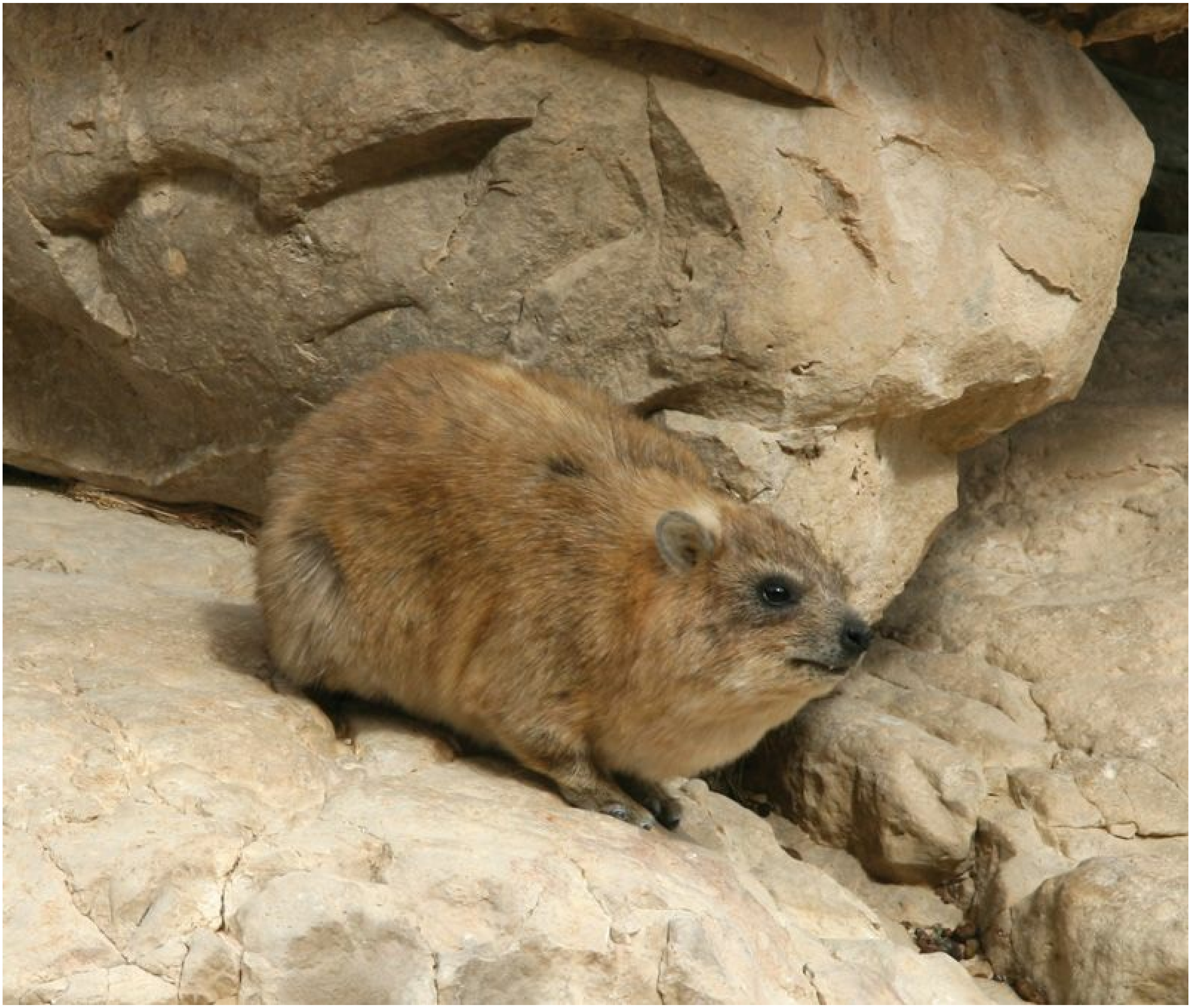
The NT word *hypokrinomai* has its origin in the theater, referring to a play actor (Luke 20:20). All parts, including female characters, were played by a few men, who signaled character transitions by switching masks. Jesus calls his opponents "hypocrites" (Matt. 6:2, 5, 16; 15:7; 23:13, 15, 23, 25, 27, 29; Mark 7:6; Luke 12:56; 13:15; cf. Ps. 26:4). Archaeologists have found a theater in Sepphoris, a large and partly Hellenized city within five miles of Jesus' hometown, Nazareth, but the theater may have been built after his ministry. Even if Jesus did not personally attend the local theater, the imagery would have long been a part of his social world.

Jesus criticizes the scribes and Pharisees because "they do not practice what they preach" (Matt. 23:3; cf. Mark 7:6). What they practice is for display (Matt. 6:2, 5, 16). Jesus describes the attempt of his opponents to catch him with crafty questions as hypocrisy (Matt. 22:18; Mark 12:15). Jesus is not necessarily calling all Pharisees hypocrites, and certainly not all Jews, but only those who are impeding his ministry. Paul, who was raised a Pharisee (Acts 23:6; Phil. 3:5), viewed himself not as a hypocrite but as ignorant (1 Tim. 1:13). Jesus criticizes Nicodemus not for hypocrisy but for ignorance about the deeper meaning of Scripture (John 3:1–15). The rabbis, who are descendants of the Pharisees, relate a tradition of concern about hypocrisy within the ranks of the group (e.g., *b. Sotah* 22b).

Paul accuses Peter of hypocrisy because he was willing to eat with non-Jewish Christians in Antioch but then pulled away when a more culturally conservative group arrived from James in Jerusalem (Gal. 2:13). Peter knew the truth but, from Paul's view, did not act consistently. In this case, the inconsistency would have created a precedent that Paul could not tolerate. The opposite of hypocrisy is love from a transparently pure heart and a willingness to admit fault (Rom. 12:9; 2 Cor.

6:6; 1 Pet. 1:22).

HYRAX A small animal (*Hyrax syriaca*) designated as unclean for the Israelites (Lev. 11:5; Deut. 14:7). The hyrax in some ways resembles and is about the size of a rabbit, hence it is also referred to as a rock badger or coney (“coney” is an archaic word for “rabbit”). Although the hyrax does not actually chew the cud, its constant chewing may have led to its identification as a cud-chewing animal. The hyrax is extremely agile in rocky areas and makes its home there (Ps. 104:18; Prov. 30:26).



Hyrax

HYSSOP The Hebrew word translated “hyssop,” *’ezob*, occurs ten times in the OT, five of them in Lev. 14. Although there is some question regarding the identity of the plant, it clearly is small, in contrast to the cedar of Lebanon (1 Kings 4:33). When branches of hyssop are bundled together, the leaf structure holds liquids. Hyssop was used to sprinkle the blood of the Passover lamb on the lintels and doorposts of the Israelite houses (Exod. 12:22). Its use in conjunction both with sprinkling blood on persons and houses affected by infectious skin diseases and mildew (Lev. 14) and with burning the red heifer (Num. 19:1–6) suggests that its aromatic properties were also significant in countering the stench of blood and burning flesh. Hyssop was used to sprinkle the purification water from the heifer on objects and individuals that had come in contact with a corpse (Num. 19:18). The impact of these ceremonial purification rites gave hyssop symbolic significance; it represented cleansing from sin (Ps. 51:7) and humility.

The English word "hyssop" comes from the Greek word *hyssōpos*, itself of Semitic origin. At the crucifixion, in response to Jesus' cry "I thirst," a sponge soaked in vinegar was lifted on branch of hyssop to Jesus (John 19:29). If the plant is of the small herb variety, lifting the sponge on a branch of hyssop seems unlikely. Some suggest that the Greek really is a similar word that means "javelin" (*hyssos*). Others maintain that John, who is the only evangelist to mention the hyssop, is more interested in the symbolic aspects of hyssop and the connection to Passover with the death of Jesus, the Passover Lamb. The combination of purity and humility may be why John included it in the crucifixion scene. The author of Hebrews enhanced the description of the covenant ratification ceremony (Exod. 24:1–8) by including the ritual elements of scarlet wool and hyssop from Num. 19 and Lev. 14 along with water and the blood of sacrificial animals (Heb. 9:19).

I

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I AM The divine name, YHWH, revealed to Moses (Exod. 3:14) is related to *hayah*, the Hebrew verb for “to be.” The LXX renders this name with the phrase “I am” (*egō eimi*), which later OT writings employ as a title for God (Isa. 43:25; 51:12; 52:6).

A significant feature in the Fourth Gospel is John’s record of seven predicated “I am” statements within Jesus’ teaching: “I am the bread of life” (6:35); “I am the light of the world” (8:12); “I am the gate for the sheep” (10:7); “I am the good shepherd” (10:11); “I am the resurrection and the life” (11:25); “I am the way and the truth and the life” (14:6); and “I am the true vine” (15:1). With each metaphor Jesus expresses a contrast between himself and another. For instance, Jesus’ claim to be the bread of life differentiates him from the manna that appeared in the wilderness (6:49), while his identification as the good shepherd stands in contrast to the hired hand who abandons the sheep in a time of trouble (10:12–13). In these instances “I am” is likely an intentional choice meant to echo the divine name and reveal Jesus’ relationship of unity with God the Father.

The meaning of additional unpredicated but emphatic “I am” declarations in Greek by Jesus is debated (Mark 6:50; 14:62; Luke 24:39; John 6:20; 8:24, 28, 58; 13:19; 18:5). In response to Jesus’ declaration of “I am,” the high priest accuses him of blasphemy (Mark 14:64), the Jews desire to stone him (John 8:59), and the officials who come to arrest him “[draw] back and [fall] to the ground” (John 18:6). These reactions suggest that at least some who heard Jesus utter these words interpreted them as his claim to equality with God (cf. John 5:18).

IBEX A species of wild goat with large, curved horns. It is included in the list of clean animals (Deut. 14:5). The adult stands about thirty-four inches at the shoulder, with the horns reaching up to fifty inches for the buck. It finds its home among the rocks on the mountain slopes. Its flexible hooves allow it to scale nearly vertical rock faces, a characteristic found in its Hebrew name, *dishon*, which means “climber.” In ancient times they were widespread, living from the Syrian mountains down to the Sudan.

Ibex

IBHAR A son of David born to an unnamed wife during the time he reigned from Jerusalem (2 Sam. 5:15; 1 Chron. 3:6; 14:5).

IBLEAM Ibleam is identified with Khirbet Bel‘ameh, located one mile south of Jenin (biblical Beth Haggan) and ten miles southeast of Megiddo. The site guarded one of the access routes through the Jezreel Valley. In the allotments of the book of Joshua, the half-tribe of Manasseh was given “Beth Shan, Ibleam and the people of Dor, Endor, Taanach and Megiddo, together with their surrounding settlements” (Josh. 17:11; cf. Judg. 1:27). However, “the Manassites were not able to occupy these towns, for the Canaanites were determined to live in that region” (Josh. 17:12; cf. Judg. 1:27). Ibleam may also have been allotted to the Levites (if “Bileam” is in fact a variant for “Ibleam” in 1 Chron. 6:70; cf. Josh. 21:25). The site does not appear to come under the control of Israel until the time of King David. In the ninth century BC the Judahite king Ahaziah was pursued and shot by Jehu “on the way up to Gur near Ibleam, but he escaped to Megiddo and died there” (2 Kings 9:27). Finally, it is possible that the eighth-century Israelite king Zechariah may have been assassinated at Ibleam (see 2 Kings 15:10 ESV, RSV).

IBNEIAH The son of Jeroham of the tribe of Benjamin, he was among the first to return to Judah after the Babylonian exile (1 Chron. 9:8).

IBNIJAH Great-grandfather of Meshullam of the tribe of Benjamin, who was among the first to return to Judah after the Babylonian exile (1 Chron. 9:8).

IBRI A Levitical leader descended from Merari who served during the time of David (1 Chron. 24:27).

IBSAM A son of Tola and a grandson of Issachar, he was leader of a family among the warriors of Tola in the time of David (1 Chron. 7:2).

IBZAN A “minor judge” from Bethlehem (Josh. 19:15) who had thirty sons and thirty daughters (Judg. 12:8–10; cf. 10:3–4; 12:13–14). His children married people from outside his clan. He led Israel for seven years and was buried in Bethlehem.

ICE In the subtropical climate of Israel, ice inspired both fear and wonder. When God hurls bits of ice from heaven (i.e., hail), the psalmist asks, “Who can withstand his icy blast?” (Ps. 147:17), and the Hebrew term *qerakh*, also translated as “cold” or “frost,” is associated with the discomfort of nighttime exposure (Gen. 31:40; Jer. 36:30). However, the term is also used to describe the sparkling beauty of the expanse above the living creatures in Ezekiel’s vision of God (Ezek. 1:22). Like other meteorological occurrences, such as rain (Jer. 14:22) and wind (Amos 4:13), ice is considered the work of God (Job 37:10; 38:29).

ICHABOD The son of Phinehas and the grandson of Eli the high priest. Phinehas died battling the Philistines, who also captured the ark of the covenant, the news of which caused the death of Eli. Upon hearing of the deaths of her father-in-law and husband and that the ark had been captured, Phinehas’s wife went into labor and gave birth to a boy. Saying, “The glory has departed from Israel, for the ark of God has been captured,” she named the boy “Ichabod,” which means “where is the glory?” or “no glory” (1 Sam. 4:19–22).

ICONIUM An important agricultural and trade route city (modern Konya) in the Roman province of Galatia. Although Iconium was a capital for the Lycaonian district (cf. Acts 14:6, 11), inscriptions indicate that the Phrygian language was also in use there. On his first missionary campaign, Paul experienced both evangelistic success and opposition at Iconium, forcing him on to Lystra (13:51–14:6). When Jews from Iconium and Pisidian Antioch rallied the Jews of Lystra against him (Acts 14:19; cf. 2 Tim. 3:11), Paul was attacked and stoned by an angry mob. He then went to Derbe, but he returned through Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, encouraging the believers (Acts 14:21–23). Paul visited Iconium again on his second missionary campaign (15:36–16:6) and perhaps on the third as well (18:23).

IDALAH One of twelve towns allotted to the tribe of Zebulun under Joshua (Josh. 19:15). Some have identified Idalah with Khirbet el-Chawarah, which is in the vicinity of Nazareth. The town of Bethlehem, mentioned immediately after Idalah, is not the Bethlehem where Jesus was born.

IDBASH A descendant of Judah, Idbash was one of three sons of Etam, according to the LXX reading of 1 Chron. 4:3, which most modern versions follow. The KJV, following the Hebrew text here, reads, “And these were of the father of Etam.”

IDDO The name translated as "Iddo" is spelled in several different ways in Hebrew. **(1)** A Manassite official in David's administration (1 Chron. 27:21). With a significant change in spelling, this may be the same person listed as the father of an official in the administration of Solomon (1 Kings 4:14). **(2)** A descendant of Levi through Gershon (1 Chron. 6:21; called Adaiah in 1 Chron. 6:41). **(3)** A priest or group of priests who returned to the land along with Zerubbabel (Neh. 12:4, 16). **(4)** A priestly leader living in exile at Kasiphia with whom Ezra had correspondence (Ezra 8:17). **(5)** The grandfather or ancestor of the prophet Zechariah (Ezra 5:1; 6:14; Zech. 1:1, 7). **(6)** The author of a chronicle or book of prophecies known to the author of Chronicles (2 Chron. 9:29 [as read in the Masoretic tradition]; 12:15; 13:22). This Iddo is described as a "seer" or a "prophet" and is cited in connection with the late tenth-century kings Solomon, Jeroboam, Rehoboam, and Abijah (Abijam). His literary work is described as "visions," "words," and as a "midrash" (a study or commentary). He may have collaborated with Shemaiah (2 Chron. 12:15).

IDLE A description for a manner of living deemed inappropriate for the people of God. Appearing six times in the OT and six times in the NT, this adjective is often used in connection with speech. In Isa. 58:13 "idle words" involve living to please oneself rather than God. In the book of Job, Zophar accuses Job of "idle talk" when he considers Job to be mocking God (Job 11:3). In Deut. 32:47 Moses assures Israel that the words he has declared to them are not idle words but are in fact their life. Paul denounces idle speech, including gossip (1 Tim. 5:13) and spiritual testimonies that glorify the speaker rather than God (Col. 2:18). The word is also used in Scripture to denounce laziness and failing to work to provide for one's physical needs (Prov. 31:27; Eccles. 10:18; 11:6; 1 Thess. 5:14; 2 Thess. 3:6–13).

IDOL, IDOLATRY An image or likeness of a deity, whether carved from wood, molded from metal, or even formed in one's mind. Although idols are not strictly equivalent to the gods they represent—even pagans recognized that idols are only the physical medium through which a spirit reveals itself—the Bible does not distinguish between worshiping idols, worshiping other gods, or worshiping Yahweh through images.

In contrast to other ancient religions, the Bible rejects worship of all images as incompatible with worship of God. This includes images of Yahweh, since he is transcendent and cannot be represented by anything in creation. As Moses reminded Israel, they saw no form at Sinai but only heard God's voice (Deut. 4:12). No form can adequately represent Yahweh, as he is incomparable. The Bible similarly forbids worshiping images of other deities because it elevates them to the status reserved for God alone. Thus, the second commandment prohibits making and worshiping idols in the image of anything found in heaven, on earth, or in the water (Exod. 20:4–5).

Figurine of the Canaanite god El

Idolatry is regularly likened to spiritual adultery or prostitution because it marks a breakdown of God’s covenant relationship with his people (Deut. 31:16; Ps. 106:36–39; Hos. 4:12–19). This corresponds to the fact that idol worship often included cultic prostitution and fertility rites. Prophets and psalmists alike ridiculed idols as things fashioned by human hands that were unable to see, hear, or otherwise help those who made them. Rather, these “gods” depended on humans for transportation and protection (Ps. 115:4–8; Isa. 40:19–20; 44:9–20). Idolaters were warned that they would become as worthless as the things they worshiped. While declaring that idols amount to nothing, both Testaments nevertheless consider them spiritually dangerous. This is because idols lead people away from properly worshiping Yahweh and expose them to demonic influences.

Despite its warnings against idolatry, the Bible records that Israel regularly failed to keep itself pure. Right after God's supreme revelation at Sinai, Aaron led the nation in making and worshiping a golden calf (Exod. 32). The book of Judges shows how society had become degraded to the point that a man, Micah, and a tribe, Dan, engaged in idol worship (Judg. 17–18). When the monarchy was divided after Solomon's rule, Jeroboam revived calf worship to preserve the loyalty of his people (1 Kings 12:25–33). Both historical and prophetic books cite idolatry as a major reason for the exile.

By NT times, idol worship was no longer a problem for Jews, but it remained an important issue for the growing church because many believers came from idolatrous backgrounds. Thus, the apostles included idolatry in lists of sins to be judged, warned their readers to flee from it, and addressed eating food sacrificed to idols. Indicating that idolatry went beyond worship of images, they linked it with the love of money (Matt. 6:24) and greed (Col. 3:5). The NT authors believed that their readers could turn from idols to worship the true and living God, praised them for doing so, and looked to the time when all idol worship would cease.

IDUMEA A transliteration of *Idoumaia*, the Greek name for Edom (e.g., Gen. 36:16 LXX; Mark 3:8), the land given by God to Esau (Gen. 32:3), whose descendants were called "Edomites." In NT times this was the homeland and critical power base of Herod the Great. After his death, Idumea was ruled by Archelaus and then Agrippa I. After Rome's destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70, Idumea was absorbed into the province of Judea and ceased to exist as such.

IEZER A son of Gilead, one of the clans of Manasseh (Num. 26:30). He is the ancestor of the Iezerites. The name is probably a variant of "Abiezer" (see Josh. 17:2). *See also* Abiezer.

IEZERITES *See* Iezer.

IGAEL *See* Igal.

IGAL **(1)** The son of Joseph from the tribe of Issachar who was one of the twelve spies (Num. 13:7). **(2)** One of David's thirty mighty men (2 Sam. 23:36) whose name is elsewhere written as "Joel" (a difference of only one letter in Hebrew; 1 Chron. 11:38). **(3)** A son of Shemaiah, a descendant of Zerubbabel (1 Chron. 3:22).

IGDALIAH The biological father or the prophetic mentor of Hanan, "the man of God," who lived in the temple during the time of Jeremiah (Jer. 35:4).

IGNORANCE At creation, God made human beings to depend on him to reveal his purposes, so that their response to life would always involve trust in, and loving obedience to, his counsel. The entrance of sin created a barrier between people and God. Fallen humanity, in its autonomy, seeks to understand the world apart from knowledge of God (1 Cor. 2:14).

In Scripture, ignorance frequently refers to one's inability to understand who God is or one's true identity and purpose (Eph. 4:18). In ignorance, humanity disregards God's revelation (Rom. 1:22–25). The darkened, idolatrous heart is the source of human blindness (Jer. 17:9; Ezek. 14:2–3). Satan holds people captive in blindness (2 Cor. 4:4). God revealed himself through prophetic messengers, but throughout the OT, God's people disregarded their message. Although God raised up judges to lead his people, they repeatedly reverted to idolatry: "In those days Israel had no king; everyone did as they saw fit" (Judg. 21:25).

Jesus is the true light, which gives light to every person (John 1:9). Yet people loved darkness and would not come into the light for fear that their deeds would be exposed (John 3:20). However, through the Word, the Spirit can transform the hearts of people such as Paul, who formerly opposed Christ and his church in ignorance and unbelief (1 Tim. 1:13).

Ignorance, however, does not always entail sin. Our finitude implies that our knowledge will always be limited. God has appointed teachers to facilitate our growth in understanding (Eph. 4:11–12).

IIM *See* Iyim.

IJEABARIM *See* Iye Abarim.

IJON A city in far northern Israel in the territory of Naphtali, often among the first cities attacked by invaders entering from the north. Ijon was located some nine miles north-northwest of Dan in a small, fertile plain now called "Merj Ayun" (preserving the ancient name), part of an area important for the trade running from Damascus west to the coast and southwest toward the Jezreel Valley and Egypt. Ben-Hadad, king of Aram, invaded northern Israel around 900 BC and conquered Ijon, Dan, and Israelite territory farther south (1 Kings 15:20; 2 Chron. 16:4). Approximately 150 years later, the Assyrian king Tiglath-pileser III also conquered Ijon and other parts of northern Israel (2 Kings 15:29) when Assyria began its conquest of the region.

IKKESH The father of Ira from Tekoa, one of David's military leaders known as the Thirty (2 Sam. 23:26; 1 Chron. 11:28), who commanded a unit of twenty-four thousand men (1 Chron. 27:9).

ILAI One of David's military leaders known as the Thirty (1 Chron. 11:29). From Ahoah, he is called "Zalmon" in 2 Sam. 23:28.

ILLUSTRATION *See* Imagery; Parables.

ILLYRICUM A Roman province northwest of Macedonia along the eastern coast of the Adriatic Sea. It was the westernmost of the Roman provinces established across the northern part of the Balkan Peninsula, encompassing present-day Albania and the former Yugoslavia. Paul mentions Illyricum as the outermost boundary of his missionary journeys and proclamation of the gospel at the time of his writing of the Epistle to the Romans (Rom. 15:19). It is unclear whether Paul had traveled northward into the Illyricum province or only up to its southern border with Macedonia. His visit to its borders or interior may be implied in Acts 20:2. Paul's associate Titus traveled to Dalmatia, the region of southern Illyricum (2 Tim. 4:10).

IMAGE, NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S A vision of a multimetaled statue seen by Nebuchadnezzar in a dream, the significance of which is interpreted by Daniel after the failure of the Babylonian wise men to do so (Dan. 2). The statue's head was made of gold, the chest and arms of silver, the belly and thighs of bronze, the legs of iron, and the feet a mixture of iron and baked clay (see 2:31–45). As the vision continues, a rock is cut out of the earth and then crushes the weak feet, causing the entire statue to crumble. Daniel interprets this dream as anticipating the succession of human kingdoms and the rock that destroys them as representing the kingdom of God, but he does not identify any of the kingdoms beyond the first, which he identifies as Nebuchadnezzar's (Babylon).

Some interpreters identify the following kingdoms as Media, Persia, and Greece, while others believe that they represent a combined Medo-Persian, Greek, and finally Roman kingdom. Another interpretation suggests that it is inappropriate to identify the parts of the statue with specific kingdoms, believing that the vision simply states that oppressive kingdoms will follow one another until the end, when God will intervene and bring evil human kingdoms to an end. In other words, the number "four" is not to be taken literally, but rather indicates a succession of kingdoms of undetermined number. This vision has similarities with the vision of four beasts arising out of a chaotic sea described in Dan. 7. In Dan. 3 Nebuchadnezzar sets up a mammoth golden image on the Plain of Dura. It is unclear whether this image is of a god (Marduk?) or of Nebuchadnezzar himself. If the latter, it may have been motivated by the vision in Dan. 2, since Nebuchadnezzar's Babylon was represented by a head of gold.

IMAGE OF GOD That humankind has been created in the image of God indicates its unique status above the animals because of a special similarity with God. This status authorizes humankind to rule the earth and requires respect toward people. The particulars of what the phrase "image of God" means have been understood in many ways.

The phrase is rather rare. It first appears in Gen. 1:26–27, and the same or similar phrases occur in five more verses (Gen. 5:1, 3; 9:6; 1 Cor. 11:7; James 3:9) that refer back to it. The NT also refers to Christ as the image of God and to believers becoming like the image of Christ.

UNDERSTANDING GENESIS 1:26–27

This makes Gen. 1:26–27 the starting point for understanding the phrase. Several factors come into play: the contrast with the creation of animals on the same day; the connection with humankind ruling the other creatures; other elements of the broader context; the meaning of the words "image" (*tselem*) and "likeness" (*demut*); the meaning of the preposition "in"; and the meaning and use of images in the ancient Near East.

In the immediately preceding context, animals are made "according to their kinds," whereas humans are made "in the image of God." The context directly following also makes a distinction between the two, granting humans rule, or dominion, over the animals. Being in the image of God certainly involves what makes humans unique in contrast to the rest of the animal kingdom.

The history of interpretation of the phrase "image of God" is long and voluminous. Just about anything from the broader context that seems important to the interpreter might be selected as the key meaning; or whatever philosophical system is dominant at the time when the interpreter writes might be tapped as the "obvious" explanation of what being in the image of God means; or perhaps the insights of a particular academic discipline or systematic theological system might be given preference. Thus, the meaning of being created in the image of God has been associated with many things, such as language, eternal soul, rationality, relationality, being male and female (often compared to the Trinity), physical appearance, dominion, and personhood. The wide variety is possible because the text of Scripture does not spell it out, and the options seem reasonable to their various proponents as explaining the uniqueness of humanity, something that clearly serves the context.

Although many of these insights may be reasonable and relevant, it can be problematic to select one as the key element. For example, to support the suggestion that being in the image of God means walking erect on two feet, one could point out that (1) humankind's "walking" is in the broader context, (2) human beings "walking" with God uniquely contrasts to the circumstances of other animals, and (3) standing erect on two feet is a dominance move in the animal kingdom. But this is unlikely to be convincing to anyone, for good reason. And the many options offered by interpreters often look equally out of place from another's perspective. For example, the text emphasizes that God created them "male and female," a unity with a difference. God is a trinity, a unity with a difference. Is this, then, the image of God? Someone might point out that the animals are also male and female, and that the text does not necessarily have the Trinity in view (there are other explanations for the plural "us" in Gen. 1:26, which many consider better explanations).

Studying the words "image" and "likeness" does not quickly clarify the issue. "Image" normally refers to a statue, typically of a god. And "likeness" normally refers to similar physical appearance. The true God is a spirit, lacking a particular physical form, and he forbids making a statue of himself. If the three-dimensional human physique is not the point, what remains of the terms "image" and "likeness" is simply some notion of similarity. It is this vagueness that has promoted diverse understandings.

The preposition "in" is also much discussed, for it might mean "in" or "as." Thus humanity is perhaps made in a like appearance to God, or in an unspecified similarity to God. Or humanity has been created as God's image on the earth. The first emphasizes what humanity is (being), the second what humanity is to do (function). Yet the two, being and function, certainly are related, so the difference between them may be overstated.

The surrounding cultures of the ancient Near East made images of their gods. They believed not that the statue actually was the god but rather that it invoked the presence of the god and represented the god to the people as a central location for interaction. The Babylonian word for "image" is similar to the Hebrew and also usually refers to a statue or artistic representation. It is sometimes used figuratively about a king being the image of a god. And in Egypt we find the idea that humanity is the image of gods. This conceptual backdrop aligns with an understanding that being in the image of God relates to the function of ruling.

Additionally, the phrase "and let them rule over" occurs in a sequence that can indicate purpose or result. Thus, the passage may be rendered, "Let us make man as our image, as our likeness, *so that* they may rule." That is, God set up human beings with a distinct nature for a distinct task, which he expressly includes when blessing them (Gen. 1:28). We might still infer from general revelation some of the details that are relevant to that uniqueness, but we should avoid elevating them in importance.

OTHER BIBLICAL PASSAGES

The passages that refer back to Gen. 1:26–27 emphasize honor and respect for human individuals. Humans are to dominate the earth, not one another. They should not kill one another; otherwise they become subject to the death penalty (Gen. 9:6), and they should not curse others but instead treat them with honor (James 3:9). But the motif has no real prominence other than being in the beginning of the Bible. After Gen. 9:6, the OT does not use the phrase "image of God." The concept of human rule appears (e.g., Ps. 8), but the expression "image of God" is more a subpoint under a larger topic than it is a heading for biblical teaching.

In the NT, Jesus is twice identified by the Greek equivalent to the Hebrew phrase "image of God" (2 Cor. 4:4; Col. 1:15). Especially in the context of Col. 1:15, the emphasis is on Christ's deity and so part of a different topic, despite the similar wording. The two verses about believers that refer to the likeness of God and the image of the Creator (Col. 3:10; Eph. 4:24) deal with moral behavior and the sanctification of the believer (cf. Rom. 8:29; 2 Cor. 3:18). Although they do not directly refer to Gen. 1, they do address the common metaphor that humankind, by sinning, marred its imaging of God. To be conformed to the image of Christ restores how humanity images God in the world.

IMAGERY Imagery pertains to the literary use of colorful figures of speech that can be visualized in the imagination. The biblical writers employ imagery frequently, for the images they use help to communicate God's message more powerfully. Imagery communicates with readers not only at the cognitive (knowledge) level but also at the emotional level. For example, the prophet Amos could have just said to Israel that "God is angry" with them. But such language is flat and bland. Instead, Amos paints a graphic picture with his words by stating, "The lion has roared!" (Amos 3:8). This is a figure of speech in which Amos compares God to a lion roaring over its prey. In a culture where people did encounter dangerous lions and where all people held respect for the power of lions, this imagery connected at both the knowledge level and the emotional level.

Since, in essence, images are figures of speech, they can be used in a variety of ways: as metaphors, similes, direct analogies, or anthropomorphisms. Like these other figures of speech, biblical images reflect both points of similarity and points of difference in the two items being compared in the image. In Amos 3:8 the prophet is telling his audience something about God by using language normally associated with lions. Both God and the lion are extremely dangerous, and both are about to pounce on their prey. However, Amos expects his readers to also keep in mind that God is quite different from a lion in many, many ways.

The Bible contains hundreds of colorful images. To celebrate God's wonderful love and care, David describes God with the image of a caring shepherd (Ps. 23). To communicate the joy of God's material blessings, David paints a picture of meadows and valleys shouting and singing in joy (Ps. 65:13). Jeremiah wants to convey God's disgust with Israel's idolatry, so he refers to Jerusalem as a prostitute (Jer. 3:1). To underscore the strong contrast between sin and forgiveness, Isaiah states, "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow" (Isa. 1:18).

Jesus uses imagery frequently in his teaching. For example, he compares the kingdom of heaven to a mustard seed, which starts small but slowly grows to become the largest of shrubs (Matt. 13:31–32). To illustrate the difficulty of a rich person entering the kingdom of heaven, Jesus paints a colorful and humorous image of a camel trying to get through the tiny eye of a needle (Matt. 19:24). He uses dozens of images to communicate different aspects of his personality and mission, comparing himself to a wide range of things: a gate, a vine, a light, a road, a shepherd, bread, and more. Paul uses imagery when he tells us to put on the armor of God (Eph. 6:10–18) and when he compares Jesus to a cornerstone (2:20). The book of Revelation is packed with vivid images, portraying, for example, Jesus as a lamb (Rev. 5:6) and Satan as a dragon (20:2).

The figure of a shepherd carrying his sheep, as seen in this example from the fourth century AD, was used to portray Christ in early Christian art.

IMAGERY, CHAMBERS OF *See* Chambers of Imagery.

IMAGE WORSHIP *See* Idol, Idolatry.

IMAGINATION Often used in a negative sense, the words translated “imagine” and “imagination” relate to the ability to think with the mind, to devise or construct a plan, or one’s own thoughts in contrast to God’s thoughts (Ezek. 13:2, 17). In the OT, imagination is often related to plans with evil intent (Gen. 8:21; Deut. 31:21; Jer. 3:17; 7:24 KJV). Occasionally it refers to using one’s imagination to remain focused on God’s plans (1 Chron. 28:9; 29:18; Isa. 26:3). The NT word is concerned with the product of reasoning and is used negatively (Matt. 9:4; 12:25; Col. 1:21), positively (2 Pet. 3:1), and neutrally (Heb. 4:12). When it derives from the human ability to reason, the end product seems to more consistently lead to negative outcomes (Gen. 6:5).

IMITATE To appropriate the thought or behavior of others. God warns Israel not to imitate “the detestable ways of the nations” (Deut. 18:9; cf. Exod. 23:24; Lev. 18:3). Israel’s desire for cultural assimilation, leading to idolatry, incurs divine judgment (2 Kings 17:15; Ezek. 20:32; 25:8). The NT carries forward this warning to Christians, who must embrace their citizenship in heaven (Phil. 3:20; cf. Rom. 12:1–2; James 4:4; 1 John 2:15; 5:5, 19).

Inversely, to imitate the humility of Christ, complete submission to the will of God, regardless of the cost, is a core virtue (Phil. 2:1–11; Titus 3:2; cf. Matt. 11:28–30). Paul invites others to imitate him as he imitates Christ (1 Cor. 11:1; 2 Thess. 3:7–9; 2 Tim. 3:10–12). By obeying Christ, a disciple imitates God (Eph. 5:1–2).

Imitation incarnates faith. To this end, Jesus spends time with his disciples, allowing them to observe his way for approximately three years before submitting to the painful conclusion of God’s will for his earthly ministry (Mark 3:14; 14:36). Jesus commands his disciples to imitate his washing of their feet, a task normally reserved for the lowest household slave (John 13:12–20), and to pick up their own crosses (Mark 8:34 pars.). “A student,” he reminds them, “is not above his teacher, but everyone who is fully trained will be like his teacher” (Luke 6:40).

IMLAH The father of the prophet Micaiah, who prophesied the defeat of King Ahab (1 Kings 22:8–9). The name is spelled “Imla” in some translations of 2 Chron. 18:7–8 (KJV, NASB).

IMMANUEL A transliteration of the Hebrew phrase *’immanu ’el*, which means “God is with us.” This name is a reminder of God’s presence, and although the name “Immanuel” appears in the Bible only a few times (Isa. 7:14; 8:8; Matt. 1:23; cf. Isa. 8:10), the theme of God’s presence is one of the most prevalent in Scripture.

In Isa. 7 the prophet Isaiah tells King Ahaz not to fear the two kings who threaten him, but to trust in God. In fact, Isaiah proclaims, God will give a sign to Ahaz. An unnamed “virgin” (Heb. *’almah*, which normally means “young, unmarried woman”) will conceive and give birth to a child, whose name will be “Immanuel” (Isa. 7:14). Interestingly, there is no mention of a father. Before this child grows old enough to know right from wrong, Isaiah continues, God will destroy both of the kings who threaten Ahaz (7:15–16). At this point, the sign of Immanuel appears to refer to a child born during the time of Ahaz as a sign to him of God’s power and ability to deliver.

Yet, this promised child seems to be rather unusual. In Isa. 8:8 God declares that Immanuel owns all the land of Judah, indicating that he is no mere unknown or obscure child. Furthermore, in 8:10 victory is declared for Judah because “God is with us [*’immanu ’el*].” The use of this phrase is a wordplay on the name “Immanuel,” suggesting that the sign of a child named “Immanuel” may point to something beyond just a child in Ahaz’s time.

In the LXX, the word used for the young, unmarried woman in Isa. 7:14, *parthenos*, explicitly meant “virgin.” Using this Greek word, Matthew declares that the virgin birth of Jesus Christ was a fulfillment of Isa. 7:14 (Matt. 1:23). Thus, it appears that Isa. 7:14 was fulfilled twice, or at least that the prophecy contained a dual aspect. It was fulfilled first in a minimal way during the reign of Ahaz and then ultimately by the virgin birth of Jesus.

Matthew, of course, is saying much more than that Jesus fulfills the prophecy of Isa. 7:14: Jesus embodies the presence of God. The presence of God is a major theological theme running throughout the Bible. Matthew opens his Gospel with the proclamation that Jesus fulfills Isaiah's prophecy of Immanuel, "God is with us" (1:23), and he closes with Jesus' statement "I am with you always" (28:20), a promise of Jesus Christ's empowering presence. The Gospel of John opens with the same theme, stating, "The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us" (1:14). Frequently in the NT, Jesus is connected to the powerful presence of God. At the climactic end of the biblical story the focus is once again on presence, as the "Lord God Almighty and the Lamb" once again dwell with God's people in the garden (Rev. 21–22), the ultimate example of "God is with us."

IMMATERIALITY The nonphysical or spiritual aspect of reality. God is an immaterial (nonphysical) spirit being (John 1:18; 4:24; Acts 17:24; 2 Cor. 3:17) who created other nonphysical beings (i.e., angels and demons) but made humans as creatures with both physical and nonphysical aspects (Matt. 10:28; Luke 12:4–5; 2 Cor. 5:1–10; Phil. 1:21–24). Jesus is the ultimate combination of immaterial and material (John 1:14; Col. 1:15–20).

IMMER **(1)** In 1 Chron. 24:14, Immer is listed as the head of the sixteenth priestly division at the time of David. Other priests are designated as descendants of Immer. **(2)** The father or ancestor of Pashhur, who put Jeremiah in prison (Jer. 20:1). **(3)** The ancestor of Maasai, who returned to Jerusalem after the exile (1 Chron. 9:12; Neh. 11:13). **(4)** The ancestor of a family of priests (conceivably to be identified with one of the above), numbering 1,052, who returned from Babylon to Judah with Zerubabbel right after Cyrus the Persian king issued a decree allowing the exiles to return (Ezra 2:37; Neh. 7:40). Two members of his family were guilty of intermarriage with foreigners during the time of Ezra (Ezra 10:20). **(5)** The father of Zadok, who worked on Nehemiah's wall and who may be a non-Levite (Neh. 3:29). **(6)** An unknown location in Babylon from which some exiles returned to Judah in 539 BC or soon after, some of whom are listed as unable to establish their genealogical connections to Israel (Ezra 2:59; Neh. 7:61).

IMMORALITY The NT tends to define immorality by listing specific sins rather than speaking of immorality in the abstract (Matt. 15:19; 1 Cor. 5:11; 6:9–10; Gal. 5:19–21; Rev. 21:8; 22:15). These lists include evil thoughts, murder, adultery, illicit sexual behavior, theft, false testimony, slander, greed, idolatry, drunkenness, swindling, male prostitution, homosexuality, impurity, debauchery, witchcraft, hatred, discord, jealousy, rage, selfishness, dissension and faction, envy, magic, and lying. In Galatians Paul further describes these actions as the "acts of the flesh" (5:19), in contrast with the "fruit of the Spirit" (5:22).

IMMORTALITY The quality of being not mortal, living forever. The OT cryptically mentions Enoch (Gen. 5:24) and Elijah (2 Kings 2:1–12) ascending into heaven without passing through death or Sheol. Otherwise, mortality is presented as part of the universal human condition, a result of Adam and Eve's disobedience (Gen. 2:17; 5:1–32).

Eventually, two solutions were embraced. Some Jews appropriated the Hellenistic concept of the immortal soul. But this is not clearly taught in the Bible, which furthermore claims that only God has the power to bestow immortality (e.g., Pss. 49; 73). The modern Western mind often views death as a sudden happening, the ceasing of brain functions, whereas other cultures regard dying as a process advancing from the moment of birth and continuing beyond the grave. In the creation story, God warns Adam that if he eats from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, he will die that very day (Gen. 2:17). But despite eating from the tree, Adam lives on physically for almost a millennium (Gen. 5:5), and so this sin-begotten death describes separation from God. Jesus will overcome this separation at the cross (Luke 23:43; cf. Matt. 10:28 par.). For those who trust this work—believe in his name—death is already overcome because they are reconciled with God. Life is no longer bound, as it were, to brain activity, but rather is unbound in the immortal being of God. By reconciling others to God, Jesus is able to promise eternal life (John 3:15, 36; 5:24). Indeed, John writes his Gospel to advance this promise (20:31).

Three NT assertions need to be taken into account in ascertaining biblical perspectives on immortality: (1) God is immortal (Rom. 1:23; 1 Tim. 1:17); (2) God alone is immortal (1 Tim. 6:16); (3) God grants immortality to those who seek him (Rom. 2:7; 1 Cor. 15:53–54; 2 Tim. 1:10). These assertions are important in distinguishing immortality from the idea of the continued existence of some part of the human makeup after the death of the body. The word “immortality” should be reserved to refer to the existence of body and soul together for eternity. Human beings, therefore, do not intrinsically possess immortality; it must be granted by God.

This distinction, however, does not in any way negate the abundant biblical evidence that the human soul or spirit continues in some form after the death of the body. In the OT, that continuation is usually conceived of as a vague, shadowy existence in a place called “Sheol.” In the NT, for the Christian, that continuation is envisioned as being in the presence of Christ (2 Cor. 5:8; Phil. 1:23). But immortality is the eternal life of body and soul together. Whatever view one takes of the eternal state of the wicked, their existence should not be regarded as one of immortality. Rather, it is the “second death” (Rev. 21:8).

IMMUTABILITY OF GOD The biblical writers assure us that God does not change. The psalmist contrasts the perishable cosmos with the Creator himself: “But you remain the same, and your years will never end” (Ps. 102:27). In Mal. 3:6, God says that Jacob’s sons will not be consumed, because “I the LORD do not change.” James has the same objective: to reassure his people that God will remain the source of good things, since God “does not change like shifting shadows” (James 1:17). This doctrine of God’s unchangeableness, or immutability, should comfort his people because it implies that he is ever willing and able to keep his promises. A changeable God might decide not to honor his commitments or become powerless to do so. In the first case, he loses his moral perfection; in the second, he ceases to be omnipotent.

God’s status as a perfect being makes this doctrine difficult to formulate, based on the worry that perfect things cannot change without becoming imperfect. Thus, Aristotle’s God, the “Unmoved Mover,” could do nothing but contemplate his own excellence, since all other topics would be lesser. Similarly, such a “god” could not even monitor the goings-on of human existence, since this activity would change the content of his own mind. Aristotle’s God is “self-actualized” in every imaginable sense. But while the Bible says that God does not change, it also tells us that he relates to human beings and their lives in all sorts of ways. He enjoys fellowship with Adam before the fall and gets angry when his people sin. God loves us, and he has worked in history to show us who he is and to redeem us. The incarnation of Christ, the Son, is the prime example of God’s apparent mutability or changeableness on some level, however one describes it. At the very least, he changes with respect to his temporal relationships every time a sinner repents: the latter was lost, and now is found.

The doctrine of the immutability of God must come to grips with passages like Gen. 6:5–7; Exod. 32:14; Jer. 18:7–10; 26:19; Amos 7:3; and Jon. 3:10, which suggest that God sometimes regrets past decisions, changes his mind, and reverses himself in response to human actions, whether positive or negative. Some Christians respond to these passages by asserting that God is semidependent on creation ("process theology") or mutable in his knowledge and purposes ("open theism"). A better solution is to distinguish between (1) God's essential nature and eternal purposes, which cannot change, and (2) his contingent relationships. God never retreats and never improvises, nor can he become "ungodlike." Nevertheless, he is a real person, fully able to experience anger, joy, love, and longing—not less because he is God, but rather far more so.

IMNA A descendant of Asher (1 Chron. 7:35) who was a warrior and the head of a family (7:40).

IMNAH **(1)** The first son of Asher and the ancestor of the Imnites (Gen. 46:17; Num. 26:44; 1 Chron. 7:30). **(2)** The Levite father of Kore, who was keeper of the East Gate of Jerusalem and appointed by Hezekiah and Azariah to manage freewill offerings to God (2 Chron. 31:14).

IMNITE *See* Imnah.

IMPEDIMENT IN SPEECH *See* Speech Impediment.

IMPERISHABLE, IMPERISHABILITY The property or state of not being subject to decay or deterioration, and thus heavenly. "Imperishability" (Gk. *aphtharsia*) and immortality are closely linked; note that the Greek adjective for "imperishable," *aphthartos*, can be translated "immortal" (e.g., Rom. 1:23). Often the Bible contrasts the imperishable with the perishable. Thus, Paul contrasts the perishable earthly body with the imperishable resurrection body (1 Cor. 15:42, 50–55) and an imperishable reward with a perishable reward (1 Cor. 9:25 NRSV, NET). Peter explains that the believer's new birth is "not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God" (1 Pet. 1:23).

IMPORTUNITY The KJV translation of the Greek noun *anaideia*, which occurs only once in the NT, in the parable of the friend at midnight (Luke 11:8). Debate on its interpretation—"importunity," "shameless audacity" (NIV), "persistence" (NRSV, NET)—arises from the word's etymology (lit., "shamelessness") and the parable's context. In the parable, the giver grants the request of the asker "because of his *anaideia*." But is it the asker's shameless gall or is it the giver's desire to avoid shame?

IMPOTENT To God belongs all power (Ps. 62:11), and in comparison all others are impotent (i.e., without power), including idols and gods made by human hands (Isa. 44:17; Jer. 10:5) and people who appear to be strong (Deut. 9:2–3; Ezek. 34:16). At the cross, Jesus destroyed Satan's power over death (Heb. 2:14) and "disarmed the powers and authorities" (Col. 2:15). Jesus died for us while we were powerless or "weak" (Gk. *asthenēs* [Rom. 5:6]), and believers are now empowered by his Spirit for life and ministry (2 Pet. 1:3).

IMPRECATION, IMPRECATORY PSALMS An imprecation is generally considered a type of curse that calls for harm on someone. The harm comes from divine intervention rather than deliberate human retribution. In a psalm, an imprecation is a type of petition, and psalms containing strong requests of imprecation are called “imprecatory prayers.” In the psalms, imprecations are not merely ill-spirited curses made for the convenience or profit of the speaker. The harm that the psalmists request is in line with the judicial penalties in the law (or possibly prophetic oracles of judgment that have been issued [cf. Ps. 137 with Isa. 13–14; Jer. 50–51; Hab. 2]). That is, the psalmists ask for punishment of guilty parties that fits the crime, often including the same level of atrocity committed by the wicked. The people who are objects of imprecations are the enemies of God, and making an imprecation both calls for God to act and leaves the specific action to God’s choosing.

IMPURITY *See* Clean, Cleanness; Common.

IMPUTE, IMPUTATION The word “impute” means “to think of, regard, reckon, or credit something to someone that comes from another.” The language comes from the business world, where records are kept indicating credits and debits to a person’s account. This nontheological sense of imputation is found in Philem. 18–19, where Paul tells Philemon that if his slave Onesimus, who apparently had stolen from his master before running away, owes Philemon anything, “Charge it to me.” But the dominant use of imputation in the Bible is with reference to sin and righteousness.

Although imputation is most clearly taught in the NT, it is present in the OT as well. A prime example is the Day of Atonement ritual, in which Aaron lays his hands on the scapegoat and confesses the sins of the people before releasing it into the wilderness (Lev. 16:20–22). The act of laying his hands on the scapegoat imputes the sins of the people onto the goat.

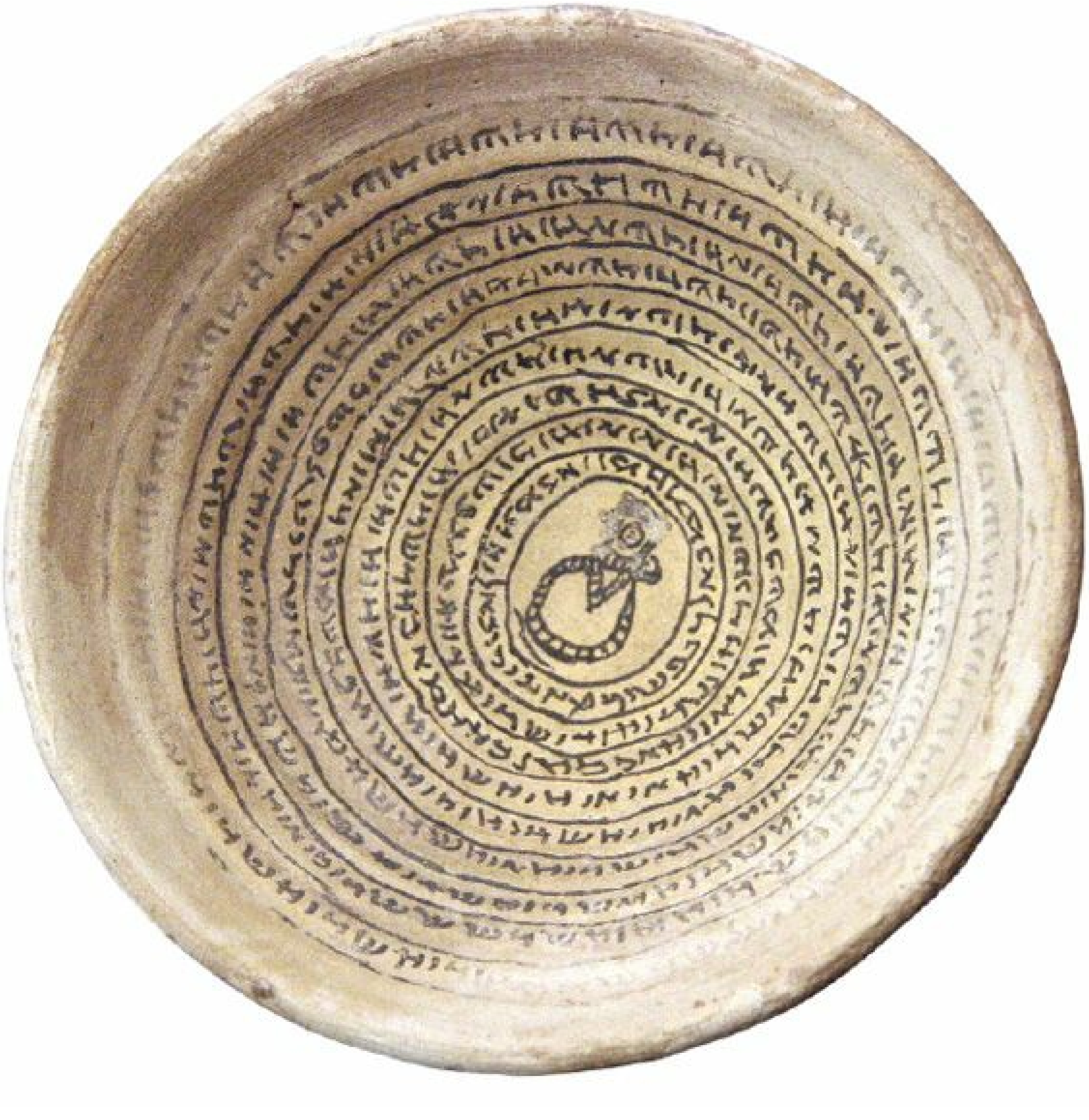
In the NT, the clearest passages teaching imputation are found in Paul’s writings. Drawing upon Gen. 15:6 and Ps. 32:1–2, he asserts that God imputes righteousness to the believer apart from works (Rom. 4:1–8). Because of Adam’s rebellion, sin and guilt were imputed to all humankind, while at the same time Christ’s obedience is imputed to all his people (5:12–21). Paul summarizes the same idea elsewhere as follows: “God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God” (2 Cor. 5:21). The believer’s sin is credited to Jesus, while Jesus’ righteousness is credited to the believer. In the account ledgers that determine a person’s standing in God’s court of law, God transfers to the believer the complete obedient righteousness of Jesus while at the same time transferring to Jesus the sinful rebellion of the believer. Imputation even extends beyond righteousness: Jesus “has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption” (1 Cor. 1:30).

Imputation makes it clear that salvation is entirely the work of God. It is only on the basis of Christ’s righteousness that the believer can be justified in God’s court of law. Far from being an abstract theological concept, it is the very basis upon which the believer relates to God.

IMRAH One of the sons of Zophah of the tribe of Asher (1 Chron. 7:36), he was a warrior and the head of a family (7:40).

IMRI **(1)** A descendant of Judah and the great-grandfather of Uthai, a man who settled in Jerusalem after the exile (1 Chron. 9:4). **(2)** The father of Zakkur, a man involved in the effort to rebuild the Jerusalem wall under the direction of Nehemiah (Neh. 3:2).

INCANTATIONS Recitations of particular syllables and phrases within a ritual context formed a crucial part of magical sensibilities in an ancient framework. Documents outlining the procedures and speech necessary to cast a spell are extremely common among the cultures surrounding Israel and, later, the church. Many kinds of magic, and by implication incantations, are condemned in Mosaic law (Exod. 22:18; Deut. 18:10–11). The magicians of Egypt could imitate some of Moses' miracles, but not all of them (e.g., Exod. 7:10–12, 20–22; 8:7). No doubt their "secret arts" involved incantations. It was a common belief in the ancient Near East that once the name of a deity was known, it could then be used in an incantation that would obligate the god or goddess to carry out the wishes of the magician. This is most likely the relevant context of the commandment not to misuse the divine name, or "take the name of the LORD thy God in vain" (Exod. 20:7 KJV). It is an insult to God to attempt to manipulate him by using his name in incantations in the way one would with a lesser deity.



An incantation bowl, with a magic spell written in Aramaic around the bowl's interior meant to protect the home from evil spirits

INCARNATION The term "incarnation" refers to something being "enfleshed" (Lat., *in carne*). It should not be confused with, or even related to, the similar term "reincarnation," nor does it parallel polytheistic myths about redeemer gods created by Hellenistic and gnostic cults. Rather, in the context of Christian teaching, "incarnation" expresses what happened when Jesus, who had been with God for all eternity, stepped onto the historical scene as a human being (John 1:14; Col. 1:19; Heb. 2:14; 1

John 1:1–2). The Greek NT uses *en sarki* ("in flesh") repeatedly as a reference to Jesus' human nature. Hymns such as 1 Tim. 3:16 show the confessional character of Christ's incarnation, giving it strong theological significance (cf. the similar confessional emphasis of Phil. 2:5–11). The defining power of such confessions comes to the fore strongly in 1 John 4:3 (cf. 2 John 7), where John deems those who reject genuine incarnation to be filled with the spirit of the antichrist. Paul understands Jesus' work on the cross in light of the incarnation (Col. 1:22; cf. 1 Pet. 4:1) and considers incarnation the reason Christ could accomplish what the law of Moses could not (Rom. 8:3; Eph. 2:15).

It follows that incarnation is central to Christian theology, an indispensable tenet that cannot be reduced to a parenthetical aside to the doctrine of the virgin birth. If anything, it is the other way around. More significant than the timing and specific circumstances surrounding Jesus' birth, which are detailed only as introductions to Matthew's and Luke's Gospels, the incarnation speaks to the theological importance of what God did by sending his Son. Put differently, the significance of the incarnation cannot be overstated; not only is Jesus God's perfect revelation of himself, but also the fact that he stepped into the field of matter, participating directly in the history of his own creation, has forever changed human thinking and the pursuit of knowledge.

Incarnation and Science

Athanasius, who safeguarded the incarnation of Christ by his claim that Jesus was not just born in the likeness of God but was also himself the very nature of God, saw that Christianity provided a new starting point for all human understanding of the world. This new starting point made the foundational dualism of classical rationalism impossible (sensible versus intelligible, material versus spiritual). The Christian claim of God's actual incarnation in Christ required a complete reconsideration of the relationship between God and the world. Ultimate reality was no longer unknowable; God had expressed himself fully in the person of Jesus Christ.

From this, the fourth-century Cappadocian fathers developed four foundational principles that enabled new approaches to scientific pursuits. (1) Since the cosmos is the creation of a rational God who has also made humans in his image, it follows that the cosmos in principle is comprehensible by the human mind. (2) Since God created the cosmos as a free act of his will, and it is not simply an emanation of God, the cosmos has relative autonomy. That is, not everything that happens is the direct will of God. (3) Since God created the heavens and the earth, it follows that the "heavenly bodies" are not (as Aristotle claimed) made of a substance different from the elements that comprise the earth (interestingly, Galileo was condemned by an Aristotelian church for claiming that the moon is made of the same substance as the earth). (4) Because of the incarnation, humans may use material means for the advancement of human salvation. This allowed the church not to follow the Hebrew tradition of rejecting Greek medicine.

Incarnation and Christian Faith

The biblical emphasis on incarnation moves faith from the realm of mythology to the realm of history. In contrast to mythological affirmations, where gods play out scenarios in "the heavenlies" that have fatalistic consequences for life on earth, incarnation grounds the Christian faith in factual, historical events. God is not "out there in the unknown," but rather chose to step into history and reveal himself in a personal manner. In mythology, talk about god turns into fatalistic assertions; in biblical faith, talk about God turns into expressions of relationship. The fullness of Christ's incarnation protects Christian faith from turning into aloof speculations on the eternal; rather, incarnation secures the connection to the real-life issues of the human situation. More than merely sending a vision to a "prophet," God came to show humans how to live, prioritize, act, react, and so on.

INCARNATION AND HISTORY

Since the incarnation anchors the Christian faith in historical reality, history itself becomes revelatory and significant for a full understanding of God. Christ came and walked among people "in time," and Christian believers want to know what that meant and means. Different from gnostic writings, for example, where God merely sends lofty, indefinite, timeless propositions for inner meditation (cf. *Gospel of Thomas*), biblical faith recognizes God's actions on the turf of human life and acts in response to these. Because God revealed himself on the field of human history, his actions can be tested and investigated. Because he chose to come at a certain time, in a certain place, Christians are interested in that time and place. God does not hide; he wills to reveal. Incarnation shields Christianity against gradually disappearing into the mix of pagan religions, where everyone can construct a god in his or her own image.

Furthermore, a proper emphasis on incarnation prevents the Christian faith from becoming indifferent to the present world. Incarnation teaches that God desires to engage his creation. He sent his Son into the world to reveal to all humans what life in God's kingdom looks like. God's eager participation in human life through the birth of Jesus, as announced to a group of humble shepherds near the town of Bethlehem, generates a charge for the faithful to be involved in the transformation of this world. The incarnation calls followers of Jesus to live lives that actively proclaim that God's love is participatory love (Heb. 2:18; 4:15).

INCARNATION AND GOD'S BEING

At the heart of the biblical teaching about incarnation stands a statement about the very being of Christ. The story of the overshadowing of Mary by the Holy Spirit, causing her to give birth to "the Son of the Most High," negates any notion that Jesus was merely an extraordinarily godly person, or prophet, whom God adopted. Rather, he was concurrently 100 percent God and 100 percent human—not "just" human, not "just" God, nor 50 percent of each.

The two natures of Christ present a rational difficulty for finite minds. In terms of function, one way to think about this may be to consider everything that Jesus said, did, and thought as an expression of who God is. Or one may assert that everything Jesus said, did, and thought was exactly what God would have said, done, and thought. The struggle of both language and comprehension at this point is to find ways of expressing how duality of form and function can concur with equality of being. Everything about Jesus is an exact expression of God, yet Jesus is not the Father.

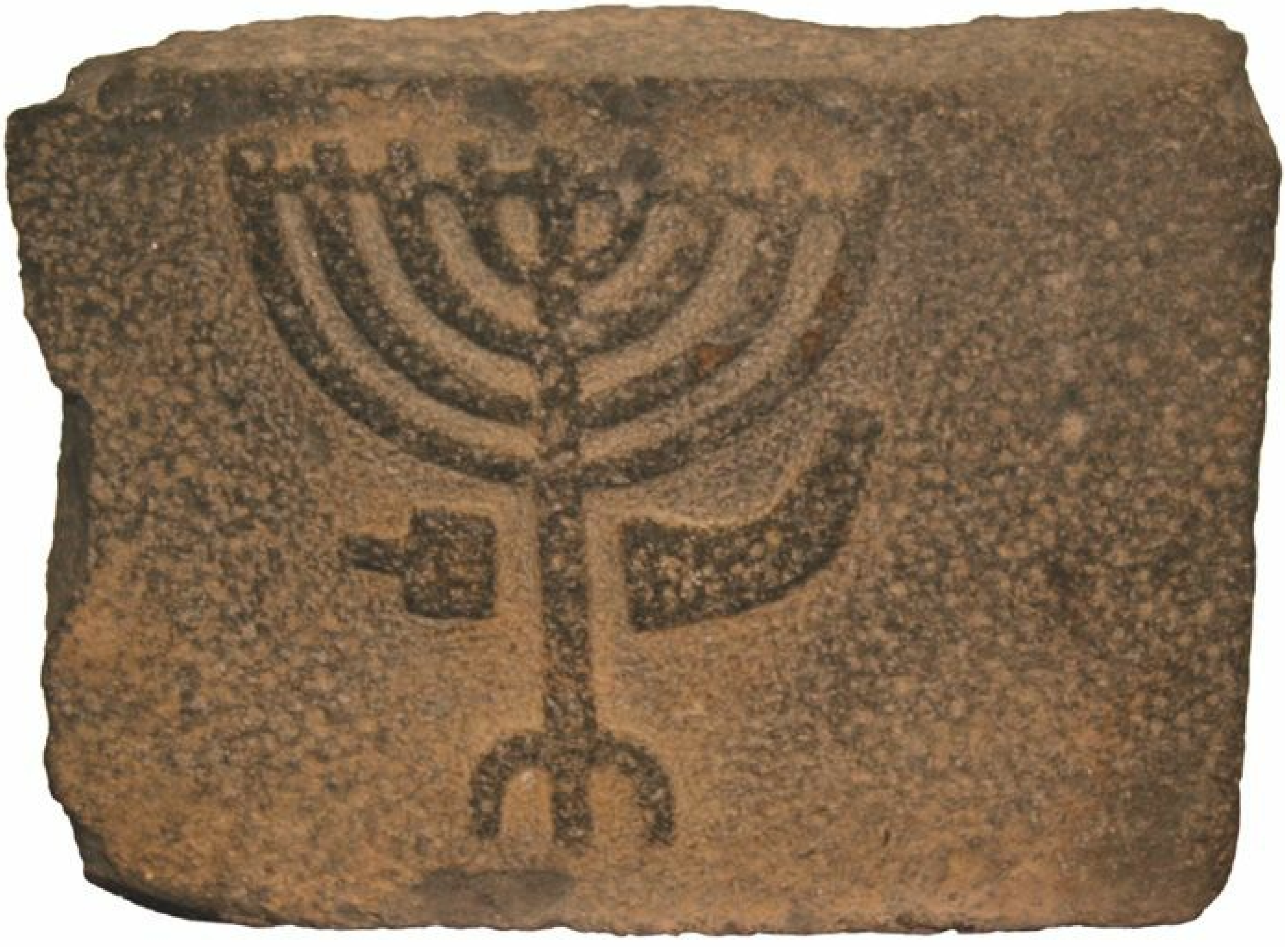
The struggle to understand the meaning and significance of the incarnation has changed over time. Opposite the early Christians, who knew Jesus as a human being and therefore struggled to comprehend his divinity, modern Christians struggle with the significance of Jesus' humanity. Since Jesus is the object of Christian worship and the content of hymns and praise choruses, his divinity receives most of the focus. This endangers the delicate balance, or tension, revealed in the biblical teaching on incarnation. Jesus must be 100 percent God to be the true Savior, not just someone who can point to a saving God. Concurrently he must be 100 percent human to be fully acquainted with human experience and misery.

INCARNATION AND THE BIRTH OF JESUS: PREEXISTENCE AND HISTORICAL EXISTENCE

The NT describes the process, or method, of the incarnation as virginal conception. God's Spirit overshadowed a young Jewish virgin, Mary, who then gave birth to Jesus. Although incarnation itself does not require such a method (God could have chosen a different method to bring Jesus to earth, as with the first Adam), Matthew's and Luke's accounts powerfully portray how God connected eternity to history.

Christ's eternal nature is attested throughout the NT and belongs indisputably to the very core of Christian theology and understanding. John's Gospel portrays this robustly through his delineation of Jesus' existence before his historical birth in Bethlehem (John 1:1–14). Given this, it proves difficult to imagine a more "natural" link between Christ's preexistence and his historical existence than we find in Matthew's and Luke's accounts. The virginal conception joins the preexistent (eternal) nature of Christ to his historical (temporal) existence in a way that preserves both natures as coexistent. Without the virginal conception, there must have been a point of adoption, a specific historical time, or situation, where Jesus became "Son of God." The problem with any adoption theory is that it ultimately makes Jesus 100 percent human and 0 percent God. Adoption does not change being. The Gospel accounts of incarnation elucidate Jesus' being. He is not just like God in what he does; he is 100 percent like God in who he is.

INCENSE A compound of aromatic spices closely related to the daily life of Israel. It became synonymous with "frankincense" at a later time. Aromatic spices were used in Israel for cosmetics (Prov. 7:17; Song 5:5) and for medical (Jer. 8:22; 46:11; 51:8) purposes but occupied a special place in Israelite worship when used as incense. Incense was professionally compounded (Exod. 30:34–35) and was offered on the golden altar by the high priest twice a day (Exod. 30:7–8; cf. Luke 1:8–11) and on the Day of Atonement (Lev. 16:12–13; cf. 10:1–2). As the incense burned, its sweet fragrance filled the sanctuary, forming an atmospheric curtain to protect the sanctuary and to characterize it as God's private domain (Isa. 6:4). Prayers offered with the smoke of the incense guaranteed acceptance by God (Deut. 33:10; cf. Gen. 8:21; Exod. 29:18; Ezek. 20:41). In Ps. 141:2, prayers are said to ascend to God like incense, providing a background to the book of Revelation, where incense represents the prayers of the saints (Rev. 5:8; 8:3–4).



A synagogue relief showing a menorah, a shofar, and an incense shovel (fourth–seventh centuries AD)

INCENSE ALTAR *See* Altar; Tabernacle, Tent of Meeting.

INCEST Incest can be defined as sexual intercourse or sexual contact between close relatives that is considered by society to be illegal, immoral, or socially taboo. The Bible has no term analogous to the English word “incest.” Instead, the OT uses numerous verbal idioms to denote defilement, such as “perversion” (Lev. 20:12) or “wickedness” (18:17; 20:14). What emerges is a catalog of forbidden pairings (Lev. 18:6–18; 20:11–12, 17, 19; Deut. 22:30; 27:20, 22–23; Ezek. 22:10–11), not unlike the ancient Hittite laws or the Code of Hammurabi.

The strongest prohibitions against incest are in Lev. 18; 20; Deut. 27. What Israelite society could not control, God oversaw. In Lev. 18:16–23 the entire unit moves gradually from incestuous unions to other illicit expressions. The consequences of incest are, according to OT legislation in Leviticus, the defilement of the land itself (18:24–30), death (20:11–12), childlessness (20:21), and banishment from the covenant community (20:17; cf. Matt. 18:15–18; 1 Cor. 5:2, 5, 13).

OT narratives, however, often describe the fallout from incestuous unions: father and daughters (Lot and his daughters [Gen. 19:30–35]), older brother and sister (Amnon and Tamar [2 Sam. 13:14–15]), son and father’s wives (Absalom and David’s concubines [Gen. 35:22; 2 Sam. 16:22]), father-in-law with daughter-in-law (Judah and Tamar [Gen. 38:15]). The sole NT reference is in 1 Cor. 5:1–5, a son engaging in sexual relations with his stepmother, which Paul calls *porneia* (KJV:

"fornication"; NIV: "sexual immorality"). This man's actions also violated Roman law (Gaius, *Inst.* 1.63).

In contemporary times, the most common type of incest is between father and daughter. Such sexual activity between an adult and a prepubescent or adolescent inflicts some of the most extreme trauma and long-term psychological damage. Modern notions of "consent," vis-à-vis adult and adolescent, do not avoid various forms of damage to the child. Sibling incest is most prevalent in families where one or both parents are largely absent or emotionally unavailable. Incest perpetrated by an adult against a child is called "intrafamilial child sexual abuse."

Nine characteristics of incestuous families have been identified: (1) shame, (2) abuse of power, (3) distorted communication, (4) social isolation, (5) denial, (6) lack of intimacy, (7) blurred boundaries, (8) dependency/emotional neediness, (9) and lack of forgiveness. According to the Mayo Clinic, approximately 95 percent of child sexual abuse cases are committed by 88 percent of child offenders who meet the diagnostic criteria for pedophilia.

Incest by a parent, the guardian figure in particular, may be the most profound illustration of malicious leadership. Incest comprises the vast majority of child sexual abuse (80 percent). Creation intended a conferred authority for a dependent's growth, but incestuous acts within a family epitomize the corruption of social order through control, perversion, and unpredictability.

Incest far exceeds Paul's injunction that fathers not "exasperate" their children (Eph. 6:4). A child victim of incest begins to wonder if the abusing father, mother, or older sibling is guardian or lover. Incest further counters the creation design because a child cannot give or receive as an equal. A son or a daughter represents the union of mother and father; as such, children are not sufficiently "other" to be an object of sexual love. Thus, incest destroys family ties because it disregards created boundaries.

The fundamental damage caused by incest stems from the child's developing capacities for trust, intimacy, agency, and sexuality. Many adult mental health problems are second-order effects, tied to the person's history of sexual abuse, incest or otherwise. In the United States alone, estimates point to about twenty million persons victimized by parental incest as children.

INCLUSIVENESS The incorporation or integration of multiple and diverse groups into one. God promised that all peoples would be blessed in Abraham and his descendants (Gen. 12:3; 22:18; cf. Gal. 3:8). Israel, as the recipient of God's blessing, was to be a light to the nations (Isa. 49:6), a kingdom of priests mediating God's presence to the surrounding peoples (Exod. 19:6; Ps. 67:1–2). The prophets anticipated a glorious day when the nations would flow into God's house and his word would go out from Jerusalem to the nations (Isa. 2:1–5). In Christ, Gentiles have been included in the "Israel of God" (Gal. 6:16), and Paul longed for the fullness (ESV: "full inclusion") of the Jewish people through faith (Rom. 11:12–17). Ultimately, people from every tribe, language, people, and nation will together worship Christ forever (Rev. 5:9).

Jesus embodied the inclusive nature of the kingdom of God in his practice of table fellowship with the socially marginalized or despised (Luke 15:2). His ministry included women, Samaritans, and Gentiles (Luke 8:2–3; John 4:40; 12:20). Christ commissioned his Jewish followers to make disciples of all nations (Matt. 28:19), in fulfillment of OT expectation (Luke 24:47). In the church, differences in ethnicity, gender, and socioeconomic status continue, but believers are called to a profound unity amid diversity because of the work of Christ (Gal. 3:26–28) and the gift of the Spirit (1 Cor. 12:11).

Gender inclusiveness is an important consideration for modern Bible translations. It concerns the question of whether to use language that is not gender specific instead of masculine language when the context calls for it (e.g., “people” rather than “men,” and “brothers and sisters” rather than “brothers”). Some versions (e.g., TNIV, NRSV, NET, NLT, REB) prefer gender-inclusive language, while others (e.g., NASB, ESV, NKJV) do not.

INCONTINENCY Paul twice refers to incontinency (KJV), or a lack of self-control (NIV), in lists of vices (1 Cor. 7:5; 2 Tim. 3:3). The opposite of incontinency, self-control, is a “fruit of the Spirit” (Gal. 5:23) and is commended in 2 Pet. 1:6 (cf. 2 Tim. 1:7).

INCORRUPTIBLE, INCORRUPTION *See* Imperishable, Imperishability.

INCREASE In the OT, increase at times refers to a harvest’s yield (Ps. 67:7) but more commonly to numerical growth. In Gen. 1 God’s creation blessing is expressed in the imperative “be fruitful and increase in number” (1:22, 28). Even after the fall in Genesis, God reiterated his intention to bless and increase Noah (9:1, 7), Abraham (17:2), Ishmael (17:20), Isaac (26:24), and Jacob (35:11). This blessing was fulfilled initially when Israel increased greatly in Egypt (47:27).

Moses stressed God’s intention to further increase his people if they would obey God (Deut. 6:3; 8:1), and he warned that disobedience would bring about ruin and destruction (28:63). According to Hosea, when Israel prospered, it increased in sin and idolatry (Hos. 4:7; 10:1). Yet God restated his intention to increase the remnant of his people following exile (Jer. 23:3; Ezek. 37:26).

The NT records prayer for increased faith (Luke 17:5) and love (1 Thess. 3:12) and stresses the increase of God’s grace (Rom. 5:20) and the advancement of the word of God (Acts 6:7; 12:24).

INDEPENDENCE OF GOD In the beginning, God created everything (Gen. 1). Thus, all things depend on him for their existence, but he does not (and cannot) depend on anything else. Theologians refer to this doctrine as God’s independence, self-existence, or aseity.

INDIA The northwestern region of the subcontinent of southern Asia. India marked the eastern boundary of Ahasuerus’s territory (Esther 1:1; 8:9), but it was connected to the biblical world primarily through trade. The Seleucids employed “Indian drivers” on elephants (1 Macc. 6:37). Nard, the fragrant oil that Mary pours over Jesus’ feet, is derived from a root that grows in the mountains of northern India (John 12:3; cf. Song 1:12; 4:13; Mark 14:3).

INFANT BAPTISM Infant baptism, or paedobaptism, is the practice of administering baptism to children before they are capable of requesting or even acknowledging it. According to paedobaptists, the child becomes a member of God’s family through this act of his or her parents. Around the age of twelve years, the child will be requested to confirm acceptance of the earlier baptism. Churches following this tradition do not refer to it as “infant baptism,” but rather consider it part of normal baptism.

Those churches affirming infant baptism find the practice in the NT. There are several reports of a household or other unspecified group being baptized (Acts 2:38; 16:15, 33; 18:8; 1 Cor. 1:16; cf. 1 Cor. 10:2). These groups presumably included children, who were then considered part of the church.

The apostle Paul seems to relate Christian baptism to Jewish circumcision (Col. 2:11–12), the entrance ritual to inclusion in the OT covenant (Gen. 17:10–14). Infant boys were circumcised on the eighth day after birth as a sign of the continuing relationship between God and Israel. Having one’s children (and any slaves in the household) circumcised was a demonstration of obedience by the head of the household; an adult who was not circumcised was disobedient (Gen. 17:14).

Baptizing infants functions in a similar way. The child’s parents announce their own association with the body of Christ and their desire that the child be considered a member as well. This baptism, as with adults, does not convey salvation but does convey a type of grace. Entering early adulthood, the child will be given a chance to make an affirmation of faith through confirmation. Although the child will have no memory of the baptism, he or she will grow from infancy aware of having been entered conditionally into the church through the act initiated by the parents. Thus, infant baptism is an act of faith by the parents that the child must claim later.

According to this perspective, a person baptized as an infant has no need for baptism later in life. He or she is already a member of the universal church; subsequent baptism would be of no effect, and the request for baptism likely would be refused by the church. *See also* Baptism.

INFANT SALVATION *See* Age of Accountability; Salvation.

INFINITE The quality of having no bounds or restraints. The theological and biblical concept of the infinite is of practical importance rather than being merely an abstract statement. “God is infinite” speaks of God’s omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence, not of a numerical conception of God’s size. Although the word “infinite” does not occur in the NIV, the concept of an infinite God is undisputed. Psalm 147:5 refers to God’s knowledge as having “no limit,” as does Heb. 4:13. Additionally, biblical writers sometimes exaggerate and describe large numbers or quantities as infinite for dramatic effect (e.g., “endless sins” [Job 22:5]).

INFIRMITY Referring to sickness or weakness, the word “infirmity” occurs most often in the KJV. The term appears far more frequently in the NT than in the OT. In the Gospels, the sense of physical sickness is arguably always in view (e.g., Matt. 8:17; Luke 5:15; 8:2; 13:11–12; John 5:5), but in the Epistles, where “infirmity” occurs rarely outside the KJV, the idea of weakness is most common (e.g., Rom. 6:19; 8:26; 2 Cor. 11:30; Heb. 4:15).

INFLAMMATION One of several physical ailments that would come upon the Israelites as a curse for disobedience to the covenant (Deut. 28:22 [Heb. *dalleqet*]). The KJV also uses the term in Lev. 13:28 to translate a different Hebrew word (*tsarebet*) that most modern versions render as “scar.”

INGATHERING, FEAST OF *See* Festivals.

INHERITANCE Inheritance is an important concept that the Bible uses in several ways.

Family. In the ancient world every culture had customs for the passing of wealth and possessions from one generation to the next. In ancient Israel special provisions were made for inheriting land upon the death of the father. The firstborn son received a double portion; the rest was divided equally among the remaining sons. If a man lacked sons, priority went to the following in order: daughters, brothers, father’s brothers, next of kin (Num. 27:1–11). The OT provides guidance for additional circumstances (Gen. 38:8–9; Num. 36:6; Lev. 25:23–24; Deut. 21:15–17; 25:5–10; Ruth 2:20; 3:9–13; 4:1–12), with an overriding concern for the stability of the family and the retention of the land within a tribe. Under Roman law during the NT period, an heir had legal standing even while the father was still alive; his status was based on birth or adoption rather than the father's death.

Old Testament. Even more prominent than family inheritance is the assertion that God gave the land of Canaan to Abraham and his descendants as an inheritance (Gen. 12:7; 15:18–21; 17:8; Num. 34:1–29; Deut. 12:10). This inheritance is God's gracious gift, not something that Israel earned by its righteousness (Deut. 9:4–7). Descriptions of the land ("flowing with milk and honey") and its fertility portray this gift as a new Eden, where God will dwell with his people (Exod. 3:8, 17; Lev. 20:24; Num. 16:13–14; Deut. 11:9–12). In some texts the language of inheritance moves beyond the land of Canaan to an international scope. In Ps. 2:8 the anointed king recounts God saying to him, "Ask me, and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession." This expansion of inheritance from the land of Canaan to the ends of the earth prepares the way for a similar expansion in the NT (see Rom. 4:13).

God's relationship with Israel is also described in terms of inheritance. On the one hand, Israel is described as God's inheritance (Deut. 32:9; 1 Sam. 10:1; 1 Kings 8:51–53); on the other hand, God is Israel's inheritance (Pss. 16:5; 73:26; Jer. 10:16; 51:19). This mutuality expresses the intimacy of God's relationship with Israel.

New Testament. Inheritance language is taken up in the NT and expanded in a variety of ways. First and foremost, Jesus Christ is the "heir of all things," the Son to whom the Father has given all authority in heaven and on earth (Matt. 28:18–20; Heb. 1:2–5). Through their union with Christ, believers share in Christ's inheritance (Rom. 8:17), having been qualified by the Father to share in that inheritance (Col. 1:12). What believers inherit is described in various ways: the earth (Matt. 5:5), eternal life (Luke 10:25), the kingdom (1 Cor. 6:9–10; James 2:5), salvation (Heb. 1:14), blessing (Heb. 12:17; 1 Pet. 3:9). This inheritance was enacted by the death of Christ and sealed by his blood (Heb. 9:15–28). Believers experience the benefits of this inheritance through the Spirit now (Eph. 1:14, 18), but its fullness is reserved in heaven and awaits the consummation (1 Pet. 1:4–6).

The connection between the believer's inheritance and the Spirit is especially prominent in Paul. In Gal. 4:1–7 Paul uses a combination of exodus and legal imagery to explain the gospel. Before Christ came, God's people were heirs under the care of guardians and trustees. But once Christ came and redeemed them from under the law, they received their full inheritance as adopted sons and daughters. Central to that inheritance is the gift of the Spirit, who cries out, "Abba, Father." It is this gift of the Spirit that definitively marks believers as sons and daughters rather than slaves. Because believers possess the Spirit as an inheritance in fulfillment of the promise to Abraham (Gal. 3:14; cf. Isa. 44:3–5), they have moved from bondage under the law to freedom in Christ (Gal. 5:1).

INIQUITY *See* Sin.

INJURY In modern versions, the English word "injury" translates several words denoting harm that can befall a person. The most notable occurrence of "injury" is in Exod. 21:22–23, where the law discusses the case in which "people are fighting and hit a pregnant woman and she gives birth prematurely but there is no serious injury." Here, "serious injury" translates the Hebrew word *'ason*, elsewhere "harm" (Gen. 42:4, 38; 44:29). Scholars debate exactly what harm is in view; related to this question is the meaning of the preceding phrase: literally, "her children go out," which the NIV renders as "she gives birth prematurely," the NRSV as "there is a miscarriage."

INK In ancient times ink was made of soot or a metallic compound mixed with oil or plant gum and applied to papyrus or parchment with a pen or brush. Although the Bible has only four references to ink (Jer. 36:18; 2 Cor. 3:3; 2 John 12; 3 John 13), it was used to write many documents mentioned in its pages and the Bible itself.

INKHORN In Ezek. 9:2–3, 11 the KJV translates the Hebrew word *qeset* as “inkhorn,” referring to a writing case or kit. It probably is a palette with grooves for pens and hollows for ink cakes or a pen case with inkwell for liquid ink.

INN The word “inn” appears twice in most English versions of the Bible (NASB, NRSV, NKJV, ESV, HCSB, NET): in the account of the birth of Jesus (Luke 2:7) and in the parable of the good Samaritan (10:34). The former is likely a mistranslation, since the Greek term (*katalyma*) probably refers not to a first-century hotel (Bethlehem was too small to have an inn), but either to a “caravansary” (a stopping place for caravans) or to a “guest room” in a private home (cf. Mark 14:14; Luke 22:11; so NIV). Because of the crowds associated with the census, Joseph and Mary were forced out of human accommodations and into an area reserved for animals; the baby Jesus was laid in a feeding trough (manger). The “inn” in the story of the good Samaritan (Luke 10:30–37) represents a different Greek term (*pandocheion*) and likely refers to a roadside inn. The Samaritan took the wounded man here for recuperation.

INNER BEING, INNER SELF The Petrine phrase “inner self” (lit., “hidden person of the heart” [1 Pet. 3:4]) is nearly identical with the Pauline phrase “inner being.” There are three references to this inner person in Paul’s writings. Two of these clearly refer to a Christian as opposed to a non-Christian (2 Cor. 4:16; Eph. 3:16); one is unclear (Rom. 7:22). Rather than import the meaning from the first two into Romans 7:22, we should seek the broader semantic meaning of the phrase. It is the immaterial aspects of humanity—mind, spirit—in distinction from the outward person, which wastes away (2 Cor. 4:16). In this inner sphere the Holy Spirit does his renewing and saving work (Eph. 3:16). Thus, we must distinguish between “inner person” and “new person” (Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10), which does seem to have a soteriological sense, because the former may still be corrupt, vain, and alienated from the life of God (Eph. 4:18).

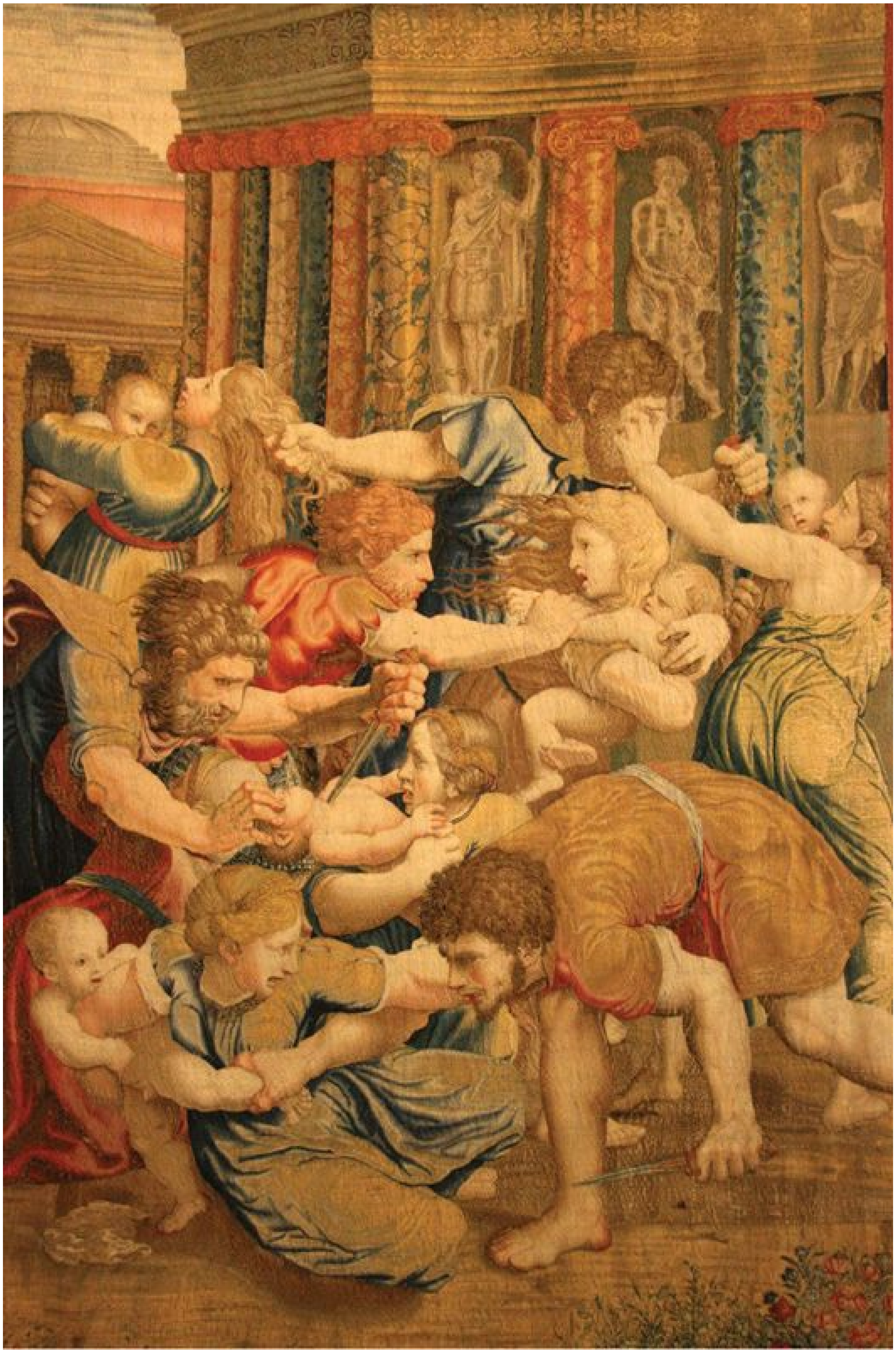
INNKEEPER One who owns, manages, or serves as host at an inn. The only direct reference to an innkeeper in the OT is in an Aramaic translation (Targum) of Josh. 2:1 that designates Rahab as such (cf. Josephus, *Ant.* 5.8, 30). The innkeeper (Gk. *pandocheus*) of Luke 10:35 was paid by the good Samaritan to care for the victim of robbers along the road from Jerusalem to Jericho. No innkeeper (only the “inn” or “guest room”) is mentioned in the nativity account of Luke 2:4–7.

INNOCENCE Freedom from sin, guilt, impurity, blame, guile, or harm. This broad semantic range includes several Hebrew and Greek words. In the OT, one root, *tsdq*, which suggests “righteousness,” is used in a forensic sense (e.g., Gen. 44:16; Job 9:15), and another, *nqh*, which means “free from, clean,” appears in cultic contexts (e.g., Pss. 19:13; 26:6). However, because God is the ultimate judge, these spheres often overlap (e.g., 1 Kings 8:32; Jer. 2:35). Other words suggest a lack of guile (2 Sam. 15:11) or of impurity (Prov. 16:2; 21:8). The common phrase “innocent blood” (e.g., Deut. 19:10; Ps. 106:38) indicates that a victim of murder is undeserving of this fate. God warns Israel not to shed innocent blood (Deut. 27:25; Jer. 22:3). Innocence and guilt are calculated in the ultimate sense before God, who is “the Judge of all the earth” (Gen. 18:25). This is why the psalmist desires to be forgiven or declared innocent of hidden faults and kept from committing willful sins (Ps. 19:12–13).

In the NT, references to innocence are relatively rare, yet the range of meanings spans the forensic (Matt. 27:19) to the cultic (Matt. 12:5, 7), including the connotations of a lack of guile (Matt. 10:16; Rom. 16:19) or of impurity (Acts 20:26). The phrase "innocent blood" reappears, now applied to Jesus (Matt. 27:4; cf. 27:24), and the joining of the forensic and the cultic meanings of innocence in God's judgment is explicitly stated (1 Cor. 4:4).

In Jesus' trial and death, his innocence is clearly shown even though he is condemned as guilty. Judas acknowledges that he has betrayed innocent blood (Matt. 27:4), Pilate announces that he finds no basis for a charge against Jesus (John 19:4), and a centurion declares that Jesus is "righteous" (NIV) or "innocent" (NASB) (Luke 23:47, translating *dikaios*). God now "justifies the wicked" by faith in Jesus (Rom. 4:5).

INNOCENTS, SLAUGHTER OF THE Matthew reports that in an attempt to kill the infant Jesus, Herod the Great ordered the slaughter of the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity who were two years old or younger, adding that the extent of the slaughter was calculated to correspond with the information Herod learned from the magi regarding the time of Jesus' birth (Matt. 2:16). Jesus escaped only because his parents fled to Egypt for the duration of Herod's life (he died in 4 BC). Matthew regards this event as the fulfillment of Jer. 31:15: "A voice is heard in Ramah, weeping and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children and refusing to be comforted, because they are no more" (Matt. 2:18). There is no external historical confirmation of the event, though scholars have noted that Josephus portrays Herod as a cruel ruler who would do anything to stay in power, even killing two of his own sons, Alexander and Aristobulus, when he perceived them as a threat (*J.W.* 1.550). Others have noted the similarity of the story to the birth of Moses and the order of Pharaoh to kill the Hebrew boys (Exod. 1:16). The event is commemorated on December 28 in the Western church calendar.



Tapestry portraying the slaughter of the innocents (Raphael’s school, Brussels, 1524–1531)

INQUIRE OF GOD To seek guidance from God. In the OT, this usually was done through an intermediary such as a prophet, priest, or seer (Exod. 18:15; Judg. 18:5; 1 Sam. 9:9; 22:15; 2 Kings 8:8; 22:18; Jer. 37:7). The priests could also inquire of God through the use of the ephod and the Urim and Thummim, which were God-ordained lots (Num. 27:21; 1 Sam. 23:9–13; 28:6). Warfare, health, and governance were primary concerns for inquiries to God but were by no means the only issues (1 Sam. 23:2; 2 Sam. 5:23; 2 Kings 3:11; 2 Chron. 18:4, 6–7). Of course, inquiring of God did not guarantee a favorable answer or any answer at all (Ezek. 20:3). Only certain avenues of inquiry were acceptable to God. For example, the Israelites were prohibited from consulting wizards, mediums, and necromancers (Deut. 18:10–11; 1 Sam. 28:3, 7). Naturally, the Israelites were forbidden to inquire of other deities, such as Baal-Zebub, and doing so had harmful consequences (2 Kings 1:2–6). Although people were dependent on God's self-revelation, God did not need to wait on them to inquire. He could communicate in dreams, visions, by sending a prophet or an angel, or more directly (Gen. 20:3; Exod. 3:2).

The avenues to inquiring of God changed with the advent of Jesus and the loss of the second temple. This change was foreshadowed in Jesus' conversation with the Samaritan woman in John 4. Previously, access to God involved seeking him at the proper place. With no temple, access to God was severely limited. As a result, in rabbinic Judaism, Torah study and interpretation became the primary means for inquiring of God. In the NT, when Christ's death tore in half the temple's curtain, and when the Spirit came, access to God became open to all who were believers (Matt. 27:51; Acts 1:5, 8; 2:33; Heb. 6:19–20). Thus, for the disciple of Jesus, to inquire of God is as simple as asking (John 11:22; James 1:5).

INSCRIPTION In archaeology, an inscription is any written document inscribed on stone, clay, papyrus, leather, or any other material. Since the beginning of the nineteenth century, tens of thousands of inscriptional remains from Egypt, Syria-Palestine, Mesopotamia, Anatolia, and Greece have been unearthed, and scripts of hieroglyphs, cuneiform, Canaanite, and other languages have been deciphered. These texts have helped to shed light on ancient civilization, and significantly, they reveal the development of ancient writing systems. For example, the Gezer Calendar (tenth century BC), which specifies agricultural seasons, was written in Paleo-Hebrew script and has enabled scholars to decipher the development of the Hebrew script and orthography.

INSECTS The Bible is full of teeming creatures and swarming things. These creatures, insects, often play significant roles in the stories and the events described in them. From the first chapter of the Bible to the very last book, these flying, creeping, hopping, and crawling things are prominent.

TERMS FOR INSECTS

Insects are described in the Bible with both general and specific terms. In the OT, there are three general terms for insects and twenty terms used to refer to specific types of insects. In the NT, two different types of insects are referenced: gnats and locusts.

The two most common general terms for insects are variously translated. Terms and phrases used to describe them include "living creatures" (Gen. 1:20), "creatures that move along the ground" (Gen. 1:24–26; 6:7, 20; 7:8, 14, 23; 8:17, 19; Lev. 5:2; Ezek. 38:20; Hos. 2:18), that which "moves" (Gen. 9:3), "swarming things" (Lev. 11:10), "flying insects" (Lev. 11:20–21, 23; Deut. 14:19), "creatures" (Lev. 11:43), "crawling things" (Lev. 22:5; Ezek. 8:10), "reptiles" (1 Kings 4:33), "teeming creatures" (Ps. 104:25), "small creatures" (Ps. 148:10), and "sea creatures" (Hab. 1:14). The other general term for insects is used with reference to swarms of insects, typically flies (Exod. 8:21–22, 24, 29; Pss. 78:45; 105:31). Specific insects named in Scripture are listed below.

Ants. Ants are used in Proverbs as an example of and encouragement toward wisdom. In 6:6 ants serve as an example for sluggards to reform their slothful ways. Also, in 30:25 ants serve as an example of creatures that, despite their diminutive size, are wise enough to make advance preparations for the long winter.

Bees. Bees are used both literally and figuratively in Scripture. Judges 14:8 refers to honeybees, the product of which becomes the object of Samson's riddle. The other three uses of bees in the OT are figurative of swarms of enemies against God's people (Deut. 1:44; Ps. 118:12; Isa. 7:18).

Fleas. Fleas are referenced in the OT only by David to indicate his insignificance in comparison with King Saul (1 Sam. 24:14; 26:20). The irony of the comparison becomes clear with David's later ascendancy.

Flies. The plague of flies follows that of gnats on Egypt (Exod. 8:20–31). Although the gnats are never said to have left Egypt, the flies are removed upon Moses' prayer. In Eccles. 10:1 the stench of dead flies is compared to the impact that folly can have on the wise. In Isa. 7:18 flies represent Egypt being summoned by God as his avenging agents on Judah's sin. In addition, one of the gods in Ekron was named "Baal-Zebub," which means "lord of the flies" (2 Kings 1:2–3, 6, 16). The reference to Satan in the NT using a similar name is likely an adaptation of the OT god of Ekron (Matt. 10:25; 12:24, 27; Mark 3:22; Luke 11:15, 18–19).

Gnats. Gnats are distinguished from flies in the OT, though the distinction is not always apparent. Gnats are employed by God in the third plague on Egypt (Exod. 8:16–19), while flies form the means of punishment in the fourth plague. The two are listed together in Ps. 105:31 and appear parallel, though the former may be a reference to a swarm. Gnats were also used by Jesus to illustrate the hypocrisy of the Pharisees and the scribes (Matt. 23:24).

Hornets. The Bible uses hornets in Scripture as an agent of God's destruction. The term occurs three times in the OT. In each occurrence these stinging insects refer to God's expulsion of the Canaanites from the land that God promised to his people. The first two times, Exod. 23:28 and Deut. 7:20, hornets are used in reference to a promise of what God will do; the third time, Josh. 24:12, they illustrate what God did.

Locusts. Of particular interest is the use of locusts in the Bible. The term or a similar nomenclature occurs close to fifty times in the NIV. Locusts demonstrate a number of characteristics in Scripture. First, they are under God's control (Exod. 10:13–19). As such, they have no king (Prov. 30:27). They serve God's purposes. Second, locusts often occur in very large numbers or swarms (Judg. 6:5; Jer. 46:23; Nah. 3:15). At times, their numbers can be so large as to cause darkness in the land (Exod. 10:15). Third, in large numbers these insects have been known to ravage homes, devour the land, devastate fields, and debark trees (Exod. 10:12–15; Deut. 28:38; 1 Kings 8:37; 2 Chron. 7:13; Pss. 78:46; 105:34; Isa. 33:4; Joel 1:4–7). Due to their fierceness, they were compared to horses (Rev. 9:7). Fourth, locusts hide at night (Nah. 3:17). Finally, certain types of locusts were used as food.

Moths. Moths are referred to seven times in the OT and four times in the NT. Job uses moths to illustrate the fragility of the unrighteous before God (4:19) and the impermanence of their labors (27:18). The other references to moths in Scripture present them as the consumers of the wealth (garments) and pride of humankind as a means of God's judgment (Job 13:28; Ps. 39:11; Isa. 50:9; 51:8; Hos. 5:12; Matt. 6:19–20; Luke 12:33; James 5:2).

FUNCTIONS OF INSECTS IN SCRIPTURE

As agents in God's judgment. Insects serve a variety of functions in Scripture. Most notably, insects serve as agents of judgment from God. The OT indicates how insects were used as judgment on both Israel and their enemies.

Moses warned of God's judgment for Israel's violation of the covenant. He advised Israel that as a consequence of their sin, they would expend much labor in the field but harvest little, because the locusts would consume them (Deut. 28:38).

Solomon, in his prayer of dedication at the temple, beseeched God regarding judgment that he might send in the form of grasshoppers to besiege the land. He asked that when the people of God repent and pray, God would hear and forgive (2 Chron. 6:26–30). God similarly responded by promising that when he "command[s] locusts to devour the land" as judgment for sin, and his people humble themselves and pray, he will heal and forgive (2 Chron. 7:13–14; cf. 1 Kings 8:37).

The psalmist reminded Israel of God's wonderful works in their past, one of which was his use of insects as a means of his judgment (Ps. 78:45–46; cf. 105:34).

Joel 1:4 and 2:25 describe God's judgment on Israel for their unfaithfulness in successive waves of intensity (cf. Deut. 28:38, 42; 2 Chron. 6:28; Amos 4:9–10; 7:1–3). The devastation led to crop failure, famine, destruction of vines and fig trees, and great mourning. The severity of the judgment is described as being unlike anything anyone in the community had ever experienced (Joel 1:2–3).

Locusts are the subject of one of the visions of the prophet Amos. In the vision, God showed him the destructive power of these insects as a means of judgment. Upon seeing the vision, the prophet interceded for the people, and God relented (Amos 7:1–3).

Insects were also used as judgments on Israel's enemies. In the plagues on Egypt, insects were the agents of the third, fourth, and eighth plagues. The third plague (Exod. 8:16–19) was gnats. Interestingly, this was the first of Moses' signs that the magicians of Pharaoh could not reproduce. Their response to the Egyptian king was that this must be the "finger of God." There is no record of the gnats ever leaving Egypt, unlike the other plagues.

The fourth plague was flies (Exod. 8:20–32). Here the Bible specifically indicates a distinction between the land of Goshen, where the Israelites dwelled, and the rest of the land of Egypt. The flies covered all of Egypt except Goshen. This plague led to Pharaoh's first offer of compromise. Once Moses prayed and the flies left Egypt, Pharaoh hardened his heart.

The eighth plague was in the form of locusts (Exod. 10:1–20). In response to this plague, Pharaoh's own officials complained to him, beseeching him to let Israel leave their country lest it be entirely destroyed. The threat of this plague led to Pharaoh's second offer of compromise. Once the locusts began to devastate the land of Egypt, Pharaoh confessed his sin before God, but as soon as the locusts were removed, his heart again became hardened. Thus, three of the ten plagues on Egypt were in the form of insects.

At the end of a series of "woe" passages, the prophet Isaiah proclaimed God's judgment against the enemies of his people because of their oppression. In the end, those who plundered will themselves be plundered, as if by a "swarm of locusts" (Isa. 33:1–4; cf. Jer. 51:14, 27).

Insects were also used as judgment on people who dwelled in the land of Israel prior to Israel's occupation. Both before and after the event took place, the Bible describes how God sent hornets to help drive out the occupants of the land of Canaan in preparation for Israel's arrival. This is described as part of God's judgment on these nations for their sins against him (Exod. 23:28; Deut. 7:20; Josh. 24:12).

As food. Insects also are mentioned in Scripture as food. Certain types of locusts are listed as clean and eligible for consumption. The NT describes the diet of John the Baptist, which consisted of locusts and wild honey—a diet entirely dependent on insects (Matt. 3:4; Mark 1:6). The OT also notes Samson enjoying the labor of bees as food (Judg. 14:8–9).

Used figuratively. Most often, insects are used figuratively in Scripture. They are used in the proverbs of Scripture to illustrate wisdom. The sages wrote about ants (Prov. 6:6; 30:25), locusts (Prov. 30:27), and even dead flies (Eccles. 10:1) both to extol wisdom and to encourage its development in humankind.

Another figurative use of insects is in the riddle about bees and honey posed by Samson to the Philistines (Judg. 14:12–18). As noted above, Samson ate honey (Judg. 14:8–9; cf. 1 Sam. 14:25–29, 43). Also, Scripture describes the promised land as a place of "milk and honey."

Insects also are used to symbolize pursuing enemies (Deut. 1:44; Ps. 118:12; Isa. 7:18), innumerable forces (Judg. 6:5; 7:12; Ps. 105:34; Jer. 46:23; Joel 2:25), insignificance (Num. 13:33; 1 Sam. 24:14; 26:20; Job 4:19; 27:18; Ps. 109:23; Eccles. 12:5; Isa. 40:22), vulnerability (Job 4:19), God's incomparable nature (Job 39:20), the brevity of life (Ps. 109:23), wisdom and organization (Prov. 30:27), and an invading army (Isa. 7:18; Jer. 51:14, 27), and they are employed in a taunt against Israel's enemies (Nah. 3:15–17), a lesson on hypocrisy (Matt. 23:24), and an image of eschatological judgment (Rev. 9:4–11).

Ants at work at the entrance to their nest (Symi Island, Greece)

Scriptural Truths about Insects

1. Insects are part of God's creation. In view of all the uses of insects in Scripture, several key truths emerge. First, insects are a part of the totality of God's creation. The very first chapter of the

Bible uses one of the general terms for insects as part of God's creative activity on the sixth day of creation (Gen. 1:24). After God reviewed the creation on that day, his assessment of it, including the insects, was that it was "good" (1:25).

2. Insects are under God's control. A second scriptural truth related to insects in the Bible is that they are under God's control. In Deut. 7:20 God promised to send hornets ahead of the children of Israel to prepare the promised land for their arrival. Also, in Joel 2:25, when God promised to repair the damage to the land caused by the locusts, he described them as "my great army that I sent." Thus, the picture emerges that what God has created, he alone reserves the authority to control.

3. Insects are cared for by God. A final truth regarding insects in Scripture is that God takes care of them. Just as Jesus explained God's care for the birds of the air (Matt. 7:26), the psalmist explained that all of God's creation, specifically insects, "look to you to give them their food at the proper time" (Ps. 104:25–27). The conclusion of the psalmist is appropriate for all of God's creation: "When you hide your face, they are terrified; when you take away their breath, they die and return to the dust. When you send your Spirit, they are created, and you renew the face of the ground" (104:29–30). Thus, in the end, God creates, God controls, and God cares—a lesson that all of God's creation shares.

INSPECTION GATE One of two gates on the eastern enclosure wall of the temple precinct. This gate was between the East Gate (Neh. 3:29) to the south and "the room above the corner" and the Sheep Gate to the north (Neh. 3:31).

INSPIRATION OF SCRIPTURE In biblical and systematic theology, "inspiration" is one of several descriptions of God's involvement in the production of Scripture. It is not an exhaustive description of the many ways in which divine revelation is mediated.

Taken as a description of "all Scripture" (as in 2 Tim. 3:16), inspiration must necessarily encompass such diverse modes of revelation as words audibly spoken or dictated by God and written down by humans (i.e., dictation: "the LORD said to Moses," "thus says the LORD"), words spoken by angels, texts in which a divine or angelic voice is entirely obscured by the voice and identity of the human author (e.g., the letters of Paul), and, in the vast majority of cases, texts that are essentially anonymous, invoking no human author or divine author in particular. Moreover, any catalog of divinely inspired texts must include not only direct quotations of God's speech but also occasional letters (the NT Epistles), prayers directed to God by humans (the Psalter), divine oracles given through prophets, the results of historical research (e.g., Luke 1:1–4; 1 Kings 14:19), and anthological texts that were collected and edited over a long period of time, often by unnamed individuals or groups of individuals.

Thus, the inspiration of Scripture must be regarded as a concept that is applied in the broadest possible way to the materials of Scripture. While the doctrine of inspiration constitutes a strong statement concerning the authority and divine authorship of Scripture, it must remain highly flexible with regard to the particular modes and literary products of divine revelation in Scripture.

GOD-BREATHED (*THEOPNEUSTOS*) IN 2 TIMOTHY 3:16

The idea of divine inspiration is stated most clearly in 2 Tim. 3:16–17: "All Scripture is God-breathed [*theopneustos*] and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work." Here, the fact of divine inspiration serves the apostle's interest in the authority and relevance of Scripture, especially as

Scripture undergirds Timothy's religious education (2 Tim. 3:14–15). This sole biblical use of the term *theopneustos* says little about how inspiration is accomplished, and the emphasis is entirely on the consequences of the fact. Because it is inspired, all Scripture is useful and authoritative for a variety of purposes.

In some older English translations, the key term, *theopneustos*, was translated as "inspired," following the ancient tradition of rendering the term in Latin as *divinitus inspirata*. Strictly speaking, "inspiration" is not a biblical term. In one classic Protestant evangelical exposition of the text and doctrine, B. B. Warfield noted that the Greek word denotes not so much a "breathing in" as a "breathing out" on God's part. Scripture is not simply a container into which God has breathed his word (so that Scripture merely "contains" God's word), nor is Scripture only "inspiring," in the sense that it works an effect on the reader (taking *theopneustos* in an active rather than a passive sense: "God-breathing" rather than "God-breathed"). Scripture is not the product of inspiration, as if produced by inspired authors but not itself inspired. Rather than all these things, it is most correct to say that Scripture is, in the strictly literal sense of the word, "expired"—breathed out by God himself. This view of the matter is reflected in, among other places, the NIV translation of *theopneustos* as "God-breathed."

The translation by the NIV—"all Scripture is God-breathed and is useful . . ."—takes *theopneustos* as a grammatical predicate. Others have suggested that *theopneustos* can be understood attributively: "all God-breathed Scripture is useful." This interpretation remains a minority position, especially among evangelical scholars, both on grammatical grounds and because it implies a distinction between inspired and noninspired Scriptures. There is little other evidence for such a notion in the NT.

The application of the notion of inspiration to the whole of the Christian canon (OT and NT) inevitably involves some extension of the original meaning of 2 Tim. 3:16. By no account were the NT writings either composed or collected prior to the writing of 2 Timothy, and the final shape of the Christian OT canon may also have been undecided at the time 2 Tim. 3:16 was written. In postbiblical Christian theology, however, what is said of "all Scripture" (*pāsa graphē*) in 2 Tim. 3:16 is applied to all Christian Scripture, regardless of what was directly in view when the verse was written. It is likely that by "all Scripture," the apostle meant nothing more than the Christian OT—that is, the books that lay before Timothy as he was educated in the faith from his infancy (2 Tim. 3:14–15). In systematic theology, the application of inspiration and other descriptors of "Scripture" to the NT writings owes much to a comment in 2 Pet. 3:16 that places the letters of Paul in the same class as "the other Scriptures" (*tas loipas graphas*).

WHY "INSPIRATION"?

The sheer diversity of the modes of revelation described in the Bible raises a question: Why is "inspiration" (or, as Warfield argued, "expiration" or "breathing out") a particularly appropriate description of God's involvement in the production of the scriptural text? At the root of *theopneustos*, Greek *pneuma* (as well as its Hebrew cognate, *ruakh*) denotes several related concepts ranging from "wind" or "breath" to "spirit," as in "the Holy Spirit." It is from this complex of meanings that the relevance of *theopneustos* is evident.

Physiologically, several of the speech organs are also organs of respiration, so that the spoken word can be thought of as a kind of breathing, as in Acts 9:1: "Saul was still breathing out [*empneuōn*] murderous threats against the Lord's disciples." To speak of Scripture as "God-breathed," then, is simply to identify it as God's spoken utterance or word, as in the many biblical texts that introduce a scriptural utterance as “the word of the LORD” or with the phrase “thus says the LORD.” To the extent that 2 Tim. 3:16 has in view the physiological dimension of “breathing,” it extends these explicit statements of divine speaking to the whole of Scripture. In one sense, *theopneustos* is an anthropomorphism: God does not speak as a human, with lungs, throat, and mouth. Scripture is not God-breathed as opposed to being written by humans; the figurative breathing or speaking of God does not circumvent other processes of textual production. Again, the idea of inspiration pertains more to the authority of Scripture as revelation than to the mode of the mediation of God’s word.

As with the concept of “inspiration” itself, to speak of Scripture as the “word of God” specifies its divine authority without exhaustively describing how that word is mediated to the human author who then commits it to writing. To speak of Scripture as the “breathing out” of God is to invoke the broader concept of God’s (anthropomorphic) breath, and thus to place scriptural production among the other phenomena that are so described. These include the divine creation of life (Gen. 2:7; Job 33:4; Ezek. 37:5) and the cosmos (Ps. 33:6), divine judgment and destruction (Job 4:9; Isa. 30:33; 2 Thess. 2:8), the impartation of divine wisdom (Job 32:8), the impartation of the Holy Spirit (John 20:22), and the continuing action of God in creation (Exod. 15:10; Job 37:10; Isa. 40:7). In contrast to the living God of Israel, the idols lack breath (*ruakh*) and are therefore false gods (Jer. 10:14).

Equally important as the anthropomorphic description of God’s role as exhalation or speaking is the fact that *pneuma* refers not only to bodily breathing but also to the spirit of God—that is, the Holy Spirit. The inspiration of scriptural revelation is the particular work of the Holy Spirit, as comes to light particularly in 2 Pet. 1:20–21: “You must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet’s own interpretation of things. For prophecy never had its origin in the human will, but prophets, though human, spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.” Unlike 2 Tim. 3:16, this verse gives a description of the mechanism by which God is involved in scriptural production: the Holy Spirit “carries along” humans speaking from God. Again, however, if this is to be taken as a description of the entirety of the Christian Bible, it must encompass a wide variety of literary phenomena.

As in 2 Tim. 3:16, the emphasis is on the authority and divine origin of Scripture rather than on the worldly history of the Bible. Like the adjective “God-breathed,” the Holy Spirit’s “carrying along” of the prophets is figurative and anthropomorphic, and the expression leaves many questions unanswered regarding the mode of revelation. Nevertheless, the specific mention of the role of the Holy Spirit as the divine agent of scriptural production sheds light on the term *theopneustos* in 2 Tim. 3:16. This is consistent with the citation formula in Acts 4:25, which quotes Ps. 2:1–2 by saying, “You [God] spoke by the Holy Spirit through the mouth of your servant, our father David.” This verse highlights several facets of the notion of the inspiration of Scripture: its character as divine speech, the agency of the Holy Spirit, and the concurrence of divine and human authorship.

INSTANT A moment of time (Job 7:19; Prov. 6:15; Isa. 29:5). The KJV also uses “instant” in its archaic sense of “insistent.” Luke 23:23 KJV, for example, reads, “And they were instant with loud voices, requiring that he might be crucified. And the voices of them and of the chief priests prevailed.” Similarly, in Rom. 12:12 KJV Paul encourages the Roman believers to be “instant in prayer.”

INSTRUCTION In the Hebrew Bible several different words can be translated as “instruction.” In Exod. 24:12 God informs Moses that the laws and commands given to him on the mountain are for

Israel’s instruction (*yarah*), instruction (*dabar*) given at the feet of God (Deut. 33:3). Indeed, Job 22:22 concedes that instruction (*torah*) proceeds from God’s mouth, while Nehemiah reminds God of his promises to the people of Israel when he refers to the instructions (*dabar*) given to Moses for repentance (Neh. 1:8). When the priests fail to give “true instruction,” they let the people go astray, inviting God’s wrath (Mal. 2:1–10). Similarly, failure to observe divine instruction (*musar*) elicits God’s condemnation (Ps. 50:17).

But the biblical book that bills itself as the instruction manual is Proverbs (part of the poetic section in the OT known as the Ketubim, the Writings), which is presented in the form of parental instruction (*musar*) to a child (1:8; 4:1; 13:1; 19:27), given in a royal setting (1:1) or a school. The book of Proverbs has been compared to similar Egyptian writings (The Instruction of Amenemope; The Maxims of Ptahhotep) and Sumerian wisdom as well as an Aramaic proverbial writing, *Ahiqar*.

The Maxims of Ptahhotep contain the advice of Ptahhotep, who is shown in this tomb painting.

While Proverbs, like its Egyptian and Mesopotamian counterparts, dispenses advice on how to successfully negotiate life, a distinct element of the biblical book is the setting of wisdom as inextricably bound to the “fear of the LORD” (1:7; 9:10). In Proverbs, instruction is also dispensed by the persona “Lady Wisdom” (chap. 8), whose advice, in contrast to that of the “loose” woman, leads to knowledge, wisdom, and life.

Jesus was known for his authoritative teaching of the law, which in the Synoptic Gospels is dominated by his use of parables for instruction (Matt. 7:29; Mark 1:22; Luke 4:32, 36). Accepting Jesus Christ entails discarding any false teaching and embracing the instruction (*logos*) of Jesus (1 Tim. 6:3–4; Heb. 6:2). Anyone who disregards this instruction is to be avoided and not socialized with (2 Thess. 3:14).

Instruction (*didachē*) in the Pauline writings is presumed to be a gift of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 14:6, 26) that is to be managed by the one so gifted for the benefit of the community of believers. It is to be shared in and out of season (2 Tim. 4:2). Such giftedness is also to be understood as entitling the instructor to support by the church (Gal. 6:6). Indeed, the Thessalonians are warned that failure to heed apostolic instruction (*logos*) is tantamount to disobeying God (1 Thess. 4:8; 2 Thess. 3:14). On the other hand, reminiscent of the Proverbs, parental instruction (*nouthesia*) should encourage rather than exasperate the child (Eph. 6:4). *See also* Education.

INSTRUMENT In the NIV, the term “instrument” is used in the OT strictly with reference to musical instruments of various kinds; in the NT, the term can mean someone or something used as a tool by God (Acts 9:15; 2 Tim. 2:21) or used for either wickedness or righteousness (Rom. 6:13). The KJV also uses the term “instrument” for a variety of implements and utensils, including weapons (Gen. 49:5), temple furnishings and utensils (Exod. 25:9; Num. 4:12), and farming implements (2 Sam. 24:22; 1 Kings 19:21).

INSULT Speech (2 Kings 19:16; Isa. 37:17) or gesture (2 Sam. 10:4) that shames, demeans, disrespects, abuses, offends, or slights someone. Insults in the biblical world were also part of propaganda and warfare; for example, Nabal hurled insults at David (1 Sam. 25:14; cf. Lam. 3:61–63). Divine wrath is implored for vengeance against those who insult God (2 Kings 19:22–23; Neh. 4:4; Ezek. 21:28; Zeph. 2:8), while responding in kind seems to be acceptable (Isa. 37:23), since, as the psalmist bemoans, insults directed at God include the psalmist too (Ps. 69:9). Romans 15:3 puts these sentiments in the mouth of Christ (cf. Ps. 22:7).

Jeremiah bewails insults directed at him for simply being a prophet (Jer. 20:8) and laments the desecration of the temple as an insult to God and his people (51:51). While prudence ignores insults and shows self-control (Prov. 12:16), correcting mockers invites insult (9:7; 22:10).

Jesus’ followers are to anticipate insults (Heb. 10:33) and even count them as blessings (Matt. 5:11; Luke 6:22) because they are partaking of what Jesus himself went through (Matt. 27:39; 27:44; Mark 15:29; 15:32; Luke 18:32; 23:39; 1 Pet. 4:14). But 1 Pet. 2:23; 3:9 discourage responding in kind when insulted. Paul, as part of his suffering (1 Thess. 2:2), even delighted in insults for Christ’s sake (2 Cor. 12:10). Discriminating against the poor is an insult to them (James 2:6), while insulting the Spirit of grace results in divine judgment (Heb. 10:29).

INSURRECTION A revolt against governmental authority. David leads an insurrection against Saul (1 Sam. 19–31; see 2 Sam. 18). Barabbas, the prisoner whom Pilate releases in response to the crowd seeking Jesus’ crucifixion, probably is a terrorist captured during another insurrection (Mark 15:7; Luke 23:19, 25). In Acts, the Pharisee Gamaliel mentions an insurrection led by Judas the Galilean against Rome (Acts 5:37), and a Roman army officer asks Paul, “Aren’t you the Egyptian who started a revolt and led four thousand terrorists out into the desert some time ago?” (21:38). Josephus describes several rebellions, which culminated in the first Jewish War (AD 66–70).

INTEGRITY A quality of completeness or uprightness; often it is expressed in terms of someone being “blameless.” However it does not, as the English word implies, suggest sinlessness. In biblical thought, integrity is grounded not in a list of character traits but rather in one’s relationship to God. Single-minded devotion to God is the environment in which integrity flourishes (1 Kings 9:4–5).

Scripture describes certain individuals as displaying integrity. Noah is “a righteous man, blameless among the people of his time, and he walked faithfully with God” (Gen. 6:9). The narrator describes Job as “blameless and upright,” someone who “feared God and shunned evil” (Job 1:1, 8). Jesus is identified as a “man of integrity” (NIV) or “truthful” (NASB) by some Pharisaic questioners (Matt. 22:16; Mark 12:14).

Paul repeatedly defends his own integrity to his churches when he is under attack by his opponents (2 Cor. 1:12; 1 Thess. 2:1–12) and encourages Titus to teach with integrity (Titus 2:7). He instructs both Timothy and Titus that church leaders must be “above reproach,” “sincere,” and “blameless”—that is, people of integrity (1 Tim. 3:2–10; Titus 1:6–8).

INTELLIGENT DESIGN The theory of Intelligent Design (ID) proposes that the intricacies of the universe, especially the diverse biological systems, are explained better by positing an intelligent agent or agents behind those features than by assuming undirected random processes such as natural selection.

A key element of ID theory is the notion of complexity. Proponents of ID point out that many natural systems are so complex that removing any part from them would render the whole inoperable. These advocates argue that systems like the flagella of *E. coli* and the blood-clotting mechanism in animal bodies are too essential for sustaining life to have been introduced incrementally by natural selection. Their *irreducible complexity* implies that there were no intermediate stages of these “machines,” and the logical inference is that they were designed and installed in their fully functional state by intelligent being(s).

To underscore the magnitude of such complexity, ID researchers coined the term *specified complexity*, noting that the biological systems are not merely complex in the sense that they comprise many components; rather, the components are interconnected in nonrandom, specific relations. The incomprehensively small chance of these complexities occurring at random (by some estimates, 1 in 10^{150} is a typical order of magnitude) practically eliminates natural selection as a valid explanation of the ubiquitous complexity in nature.

Advocates of ID present it as a scientific theory, whereas its critics dismiss it as religious pseudo-science. Both scientific and religious roots are integral for ID, and its practitioners do mention theological claims. The value of ID as a theory, however, should be judged by its explanatory power based on the scientific, and thus arguable and testable, claims it makes. More recent objections against ID tend to argue that its claims are not testable, and thus it does not qualify as a scientific theory.

INTERCESSION The act of advocating before the powerful on someone’s behalf (Gen. 23:8–9), especially turning to God in prayer to seek God’s favor for others in crisis (2 Sam. 12:16). While it is a prerogative of prophets (Gen. 20:7; Num. 12; Amos 7:1–6), priests (Ezra 6:9–10), and kings (1 Chron. 21:17; 2 Chron. 30:18; Jer. 26:19), intercession is a ministry that belongs to all the people of God (Acts 12:5; Eph. 6:18; 1 Tim. 2:1; James 5:16).

OLD TESTAMENT

Reflecting God’s own deliberative process (Gen. 1:26–27; 2:18), our creation in God’s image implies and makes possible our genuine conversation, participation, and even disputation with God. A biblical understanding of God's rule accommodates this divine-human dialogue and the intertwined roles of both parties. People request intercession for themselves (1 Kings 13:6; Acts 8:24), but Scripture highlights God's initiative.

In Gen. 18 God invites (even provokes) Abraham's intercession by confiding in Abraham, reviewing the divine promises, and disclosing the guilt and impending doom of Sodom and Gomorrah. On behalf of righteous persons who may live there, Abraham appeals boldly to God's own "justice" (*mishpat*) in distinguishing the innocent from the guilty, and he successfully negotiates God's pledge to spare the city if even ten righteous persons can be found there. Without disputing the allegations of wickedness, Abraham puts God's just response on the table as well.

Similarly, in Exod. 32 God informs Moses of the Israelites' sin with the golden calf and his own intention to destroy them and start over with Moses. In response, Moses intercedes, arguing that God's deliverance of Israel, and the likelihood of its being misconstrued by Egypt, should trump divine anger. Moses urges a different course of action: turn from anger, relent, and do not bring the announced disaster. The destruction of Israel would be inconsistent with God's own commitment to multiply the people of Israel and give them the land as their inheritance (cf. Num. 14:13–29). The issue for Moses is not only Israel's sin but also the rightness of God's response in faithfulness to his purposes.

In Job's intercession for his friends, God dictates the entire process, directing the friends to make offerings and assigning Job the task of interceding for them. God makes his own vindication the central issue: Eliphaz and friends have not said "the truth" (*nekonah*) of God, as Job had (Job 42:7–10).

These three narratives highlight God's initiative and make God's character the grounds for intercession. They also introduce the potential pain borne by the intercessor. For example, Moses dramatizes his passionate concern for God's cause by falling down before God and lying prostrate forty days and nights (Deut. 9:13–29). He so identifies his own destiny with Israel's as to offer himself as "atonement," saying, "Please forgive their sin—but if not, then blot me out of the book you have written" (Exod. 32:32). This anticipates later prophets' participation in the sorrow of God and the pain of the people's separation from God (Jer. 15; cf. Luke 13:34–35; 19:41–44).

NEW TESTAMENT

In the Gospels, Jesus heals by command, without explicit reference to intercession, and in this way remarkably transcends the OT prophets (1 Kings 17:19–21). Although he does ask his Father to forgive his crucifiers (Luke 23:34), the Gospels emphasize Jesus' intercession for his disciples, such as for Simon Peter to survive Satan's assaults on his faith (22:31–32). John 17 comprises an extended intercession of Jesus for his disciples—significantly, that the Father will protect them in a hostile world. Moreover, Christ promises to acknowledge faithful disciples before the Father (Matt. 10:32), an action formally close to intercession, and that Christ performs as mediator of the Father's kingdom and salvation.

Paul's prayer for his fellow Israelites to be saved is fueled by anguish over their unbelief (Rom. 9:1–3; 10:1–4). Mirroring this is "the pressure of concern" he feels for all the churches and for the welfare of their members (2 Cor. 11:28–29), hence the prominent role of prayer in Paul's ministry (see the thanksgivings that open his letters [e.g., Phil. 1:3–11]). Intercession per se, as prayer that others be spared or delivered from crisis, is seen in the churches' prayers for Paul's deliverance from prison and death (Phil. 1:19; 2 Thess. 3:2–3; cf. Rom. 15:31).

The NT extends the Gospel portrayals to reveal Christ as our heavenly intercessor, a role made possible by the cross and resurrection. In Rom. 8:34–39 Christ's death, resurrection, and reign "at the right hand of God" ground Paul's confidence that Christ's intercession assures victory over condemnation and all opposition. The work of Christ our high priest (Heb. 7:25) may be summed up as intercession, echoing Isa. 53:12. Accordingly, "Jesus Christ the Righteous One" not only advocates before the Father for the forgiveness of our sins but also is their atoning sacrifice (1 John 2:1–2). In these texts, Christ's heavenly intercession implements the saving purposes of God made real in the cross. Moreover, the work of Christ as prophet, priest, and king implies the central role of intercession, since intercession is a function of each of these offices.

Thus God's initiative in intercession is intensified in the NT: God's self-giving through Christ is the foundation of an ongoing heavenly intercession that in turn gives the church increased confidence to intercede boldly. Further, God's Spirit helps us in our weakness by interceding for us in accord with God's will, even if we experience that intercession as "wordless groans" (Rom. 8:26–28).

INTEREST The practice of loaning money with interest was common in the ancient Near East, but Israelites under the Mosaic covenant were prohibited from charging interest to their kinfolk. Lending with interest was permissible in commercial transactions with foreigners but was forbidden in all cases among Israelites, "on money or food or anything else that may earn interest" (Deut. 23:19–20). This ban on interest protected the poor from being exploited by creditors. Leviticus 25:36–37 stresses the moral responsibility of Israelites to fear God and help their poor kinfolk rather than take advantage of them by exacting interest or profit (cf. Exod. 22:25; Neh. 5:7).

The Prophets and the Writings reinforce this prohibition against taking interest from fellow Israelites. Ezekiel alludes several times to Lev. 25:36 by combining these same Hebrew words for "interest" (*neshek*) and "profit" (*tarbit*). He says that taking interest and profit is a detestable practice deserving of death (Ezek. 18:13), a sign that a person has forgotten God (22:12). Proverbs 28:8 illustrates the folly of amassing wealth by interest or profit, while Ps. 15:5 highlights the God-given security for those who do not lend with interest.

In Jesus' parable of the talents he references the common first-century practice of putting money on deposit with bankers to accumulate interest (Matt. 25:27; Luke 19:23), which offered a modest return with minimal financial risk. It appears that such business loans were not seen as violating the earlier biblical prohibitions.

INTERPRETATION *See* Biblical Hermeneutics.

INTERTESTAMENTAL PERIOD The name given to the historical period between the Old and New Testaments (fifth century BC–first century AD). It is also known as the Second Temple period. The first Jewish temple, completed by Solomon around 960 BC, was destroyed by the Babylonians in 587/586 BC. The second temple, completed by Zerubbabel in 516 BC (and expanded later by Herod the Great), was eventually destroyed by the Romans in AD 70. The intertestamental period is roughly, then, the period from the return of the Babylonian exile to the dawn of the Christian era.

The exile of the Israelites to Babylon marks a turning point in the history of redemption. Prior to this experience God's people were constantly tempted to worship other gods. During the exile the majority appear to have abandoned their faith. Only a small remnant ever returned to the promised land.

They rebuilt the city of Jerusalem. The Torah became their constitution, but the expectations of the biblical prophets were not fulfilled. When the temple was opened, there is no mention of a return of the visible presence of God. The rabbinic tradition would later observe that “after the later prophets, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi had died, the Holy Spirit departed from Israel” (*b. Yoma* 9b), implying that God had fallen silent. Nevertheless, the Hebrew canon closes offering the hope of forgiveness and restoration (cf. 2 Chron. 7:14).

During this period there were significant Jewish communities in Persia, Babylon, and Egypt. They formed assemblies, or “synagogues,” as centers of Jewish community and faith. The Jews in Egypt built a temple at Aswan, on the island of Elephantine. In their letters they claimed that this temple had existed before the days of Cambyses (late sixth century BC).

They were particularly challenged by the worship of idols, the threat of persecution, and the difficulties of observing the laws of separation, especially the food laws and the ban on mixed marriages. We have very little extracanonical Jewish literature of the Persian period. We do have a series of stories, difficult to date, that look back to the time of Jeremiah (Letter of Jeremiah) or Daniel (Susanna; Bel and the Dragon; Prayer of Azariah; Song of the Three Young Men). *See* Apocrypha, Old Testament.

GREEK RULE (333–63 BC)

After defeating the Persians at the Battle of Issus (333 BC), Alexander the Great swept through Palestine on his way to Egypt. His early death (323 BC) led to a series of wars between his four generals. Eventually, Seleucus controlled Babylon and ruled from Syria to India, while Ptolemy was declared Pharaoh (301 BC) and ruled Palestine from Egypt.

The Ptolemies developed a strongly Greek culture in Egypt. Alexandria became a world center of learning. Ptolemy II Philadelphus (r. 287–247 BC) sponsored the translation of the Torah into Greek. This coincided with the gradual translation of the rest of the Hebrew Scriptures (the Septuagint). Under the Ptolemies, the Jews colonized Galilee, bypassing Samaria and reclaiming the north for “Israel.”

The Jews in Egypt struggled to win equality and respect for their traditions. Some simply abandoned their Jewish distinctives. Others attempted to win respect through wise business enterprises. Some Jews entered the academy and attempted to explain Jewish traditions by using the categories and values of the Greek philosophers, minimizing the differences (*Letter of Aristeas*; *Sibylline Oracles*, book 3). Others argued for the priority and superiority of the Jewish tradition, claiming that Greek and Egyptian learning could be traced back to God’s revelation through Moses and the patriarchs. Any attempt to rigorously maintain the distinctives of the Jewish faith and observance of the law of Moses remained the agenda of a small minority (cf. 3 Maccabees; Additions to Esther).

Archaeological excavations on Elephantine Island, where a Jewish community resided during the intertestamental period

During the third century BC tensions between the Seleucids and the Ptolemies grew, and Jews in Palestine became involved in these intrigues. The high priest Simon II (219–196 BC) used to pay the provincial taxes to Ptolemy out of his own means.

Ben Sira (died 175 BC) ran a school in Jerusalem. He pointed his students to the wisdom of the Jewish Scriptures rather than Greek philosophy. Some time after 117 BC his grandson translated his work into Greek (the book of Sirach).

The family of Tobijah, who opposed Nehemiah, had become rich and powerful and married into the family of the high priest. When Simon's son Onias became high priest, he refused to pay Ptolemy's tax. So Joseph Tobiad, Onias's nephew, paid the tax and won the contract to collect the taxes of Judah. His youngest son, Hyrcanus, outbid his father and so started a family feud. Joseph worked for the Seleucids, while Hyrcanus remained loyal to Ptolemy.

After a series of wars the Seleucids defeated the Ptolemies (198 BC). A steady flow of Jews migrated to Egypt. Initially, Antiochus III (r. 221–187 BC) issued a decree granting certain privileges to the Jews and funded the repairs to Jerusalem necessitated by the wars. Following his defeat by the Romans (190 BC), his son Antiochus became a Roman hostage, and he was required to pay a huge tribute. He decided to loot the temple in Jerusalem. He died in Babylon while looting the temple of Bel. Seleucus IV (r. 187–175 BC) sent his son to Rome in exchange for his brother Antiochus and made another raid on the Jerusalem temple for funds. In 175 BC Antiochus overthrew his brother and took the throne as Antiochus IV Epiphanes ("God made visible").

Somewhere during this period works started to appear claiming to be the writings of Enoch and Noah. According to these works, Gentile nations were empowered by demons operating through idols. Gentile religion and culture arose from their deceptions. God had revealed to Enoch and Noah the secrets needed to counter these deceptions. This involved the adoption of a distinctive 364-day calendar. As this tradition developed, other works appeared that incorporated these ideas into a rereading of the Scriptures. Both the book of *Jubilees* (c. 168–150 BC), which cites the writings of Enoch and Noah as authentic, and the *Temple Scroll* claim to be a second revelation given to Moses on Mount Sinai—a revelation for the chosen righteous of the last days. Other books had been passed on to Abraham, Jacob, and eventually Levi. While Israel had failed to keep "the first law," this body of revelation claimed to enable the elect to rightly interpret the law, survive the coming judgment, and gain possession of the whole earth.

At about this time also we hear of the rise of the "pious ones" (Hasidim) indicating a widespread stirring of heart and a seeking after God (1 Macc. 2:42; 7:12–18). The additional stories contained in 1 Esdras may reflect some of the concerns of this time. The difficulty was to know the right way back among so many competing voices.

THE HASMONEANS (168–63 BC)

When Antiochus IV took the throne (175 BC), Jason, brother of the high priest Onias III, offered the king money to make himself high priest instead and to declare Jerusalem a Greek city. The king agreed, and when Onias III died, his son Onias IV fled to Egypt, where, inspired by the prophesy of Isa. 19:19, he built a temple at Leontopolis.

The Tobiads and most of the wealthier Jewish nobility, including many priests, were deeply committed to Greek culture, educating their sons in the Greek gymnasium, which involved nudity and homosexuality and making offerings to Zeus. This hugely offended Jews who were focused on returning Israel to God's favor.

Ezekiel had stated that only men descended from Zadok could officiate as priests (Ezek. 40:46). Menelaus offered the king more money and replaced Jason. From this point onward, the office of high priest would be up for sale. Menelaus was not descended from Zadok, and his appointment was widely recognized as corruption. He began selling temple vessels to raise money.

Meanwhile, Antiochus had embarked on two failed attempts to conquer Egypt (170 and 168 BC) and had raided the Jerusalem temple for funds. While he was away, Jason, believing that Antiochus had been killed, attacked Menelaus and tried to regain the high priesthood. Antiochus had been humiliated in front of his troops when Rome ordered him to leave Egypt, and he was in financial trouble. So when, upon his return, riots broke out in Jerusalem, he took excessive measures. After his departure the rioting resumed, and he determined to put an end to Judaism.

He desecrated the temple by sacrificing a pig to Zeus on the altar (cf. Dan. 9:27). The Scriptures were banned. Parents who circumcised a son were executed along with the boy. His cruelty and excesses are recorded in gruesome detail in 1–2 Maccabees (esp. 2 Macc. 7).

The king's officials began to force the citizens to offer sacrifice to Zeus. When they came to the village of Modein, a priest, Mattathias of the family of Hasmon, killed the king's officials and those who had obeyed them and fled with his five sons. A revolt ensued, and within three years the Seleucids were defeated. It took another twenty years before an independent Jewish state was established (October 20, 142 BC).

Following Mattathias's death, his son Judas (nicknamed "Maccabeus," meaning "the hammer") led the revolt. Jerusalem was recaptured and the temple cleansed (164 BC), an event still celebrated as the Feast of Hanukkah (Lights). When Antiochus was killed fighting the Persians, the Seleucids restored Jewish freedom and executed Menelaus. The new king, Demetrius, attempted to appoint Alcimus as high priest. Hostilities intensified, and Judas, who had concluded a treaty with Rome, was killed in battle (c. 160 BC). His brother Jonathan, not a Zadokite, took over and became high priest (152 BC). The Jewish historian Josephus's first mention of the Essenes, the Pharisees, and the Sadducees occurs during his reign.

The Sadducees were predominantly priests who, while advocating their own interpretations of the law, were increasingly more concerned with power and money. They rejected predestination in favor of human free will and denied the existence of angels and the resurrection.

The Pharisees based their interpretation of the law on the traditions of their forebears, which they claimed could be traced back to oral law given by God to Moses on Mount Sinai. They accepted predestination, angels, and bodily resurrection. Coming from the middle and lower classes, the Pharisees had popular support and were active in teaching the law in the synagogues.

Since the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, a scholarly consensus has grown that identifies the Qumran sect as being part of the group called the "Essenes" by Josephus, Philo, and Pliny. As such, their roots can be traced back to Jewish exiles in Damascus (CD-A 6:5) who adopted the teachings of the early Enoch literature and entered into what they called the "new covenant" to repent and rightly live by the law. Under the leadership of one called the "Teacher of Righteousness," they returned to Judea following the Hasmonean takeover of Jerusalem.

Initially, many, such as the author of the Animal Apocalypse (*1 En.* 90:9–19), saw the Hasmonean revolt as God's intervention. The appointment of Jonathan as high priest produced two strong reactions. The Sadducees and the Pharisees vied for the favor of the Hasmoneans, while the Essenes declared the Hasmonean high priesthood illegitimate and abandoned worship in the temple.

When Jonathan was murdered (142 BC), his brother Simon took over, and Jewish freedom from Seleucid control was finally established. In September of 140 BC the Jewish leadership decreed that Simon would have total control of Judaism, including the final say in all matters regarding the correct observance of the law (1 Macc. 14:25–47). Groups that followed any other interpretation of the law would face his sanctions. It is not clear how rigorously he used these powers.

Among the Essenes, the group that followed the Teacher of Righteousness suffered internal division, and the "Man of the Lie" led a significant number to turn back and "depart from the Way" (see 1QpHab 2:1–4; 5:6–12; 10:6–9; CD-B 20:10–15).

Simon's act of uniformity was designed to unite the Jewish faithful against those who had abandoned the faith and gone over to the Greeks, but the Jewish faithful were not united. The high priest had to choose sides. Those who dissented were bound to live in the political "wilderness."

In 134 BC the Seleucids invaded Judea, and Simon was murdered. The high priesthood passed to his son John Hyrcanus I (135–104 BC), who made peace with the Seleucids. He captured Samaria (129 BC), destroyed the Samaritan temple, and forced the Samaritans to adopt the Jewish lifestyle. He appears to have extended greater tolerance within Judaism, but he was opposed by the Pharisees.

It was during this period that the Essenes were able to establish their facility at Qumran. There scholars collected, copied, and composed books that would later become known as the Dead Sea Scrolls. This library contained all the books of the OT (with the probable exception of Esther). Works attributed to Enoch, Noah, Levi, and the patriarchs as well as *Jubilees* and the *Temple Scroll* constituted a second body of written revelation. There were works claiming to be inspired commentaries on the Scriptures, hymns possibly written by the Teacher of Righteousness, and rules governing communal lifestyle and worship. We also find copies of Sirach and Tobit. The *Testament of Moses* and *Psalms of Solomon*, though not found among the DSS, may well have originated in groups influenced by this tradition.

Qumran was the academic center for Essene scholarship and training. It also functioned as something of a Sanhedrin in exile. Essenes believed that the exile had not ended, and their way of keeping the law was the only way of salvation. They vehemently opposed the Pharisees and the Sadducees.

The Idumeans were the descendants of Esau, known in the OT as Edomites. Nabatean Arabs had moved into their territory southeast of Judea and driven them out. In 164 BC Judas Maccabeus had opposed their advance (1 Macc. 4:61). They now appealed for acceptance within the southern borders of Judea, and John Hyrcanus agreed on condition that they convert to Judaism.

When John's son Aristobulus I (104–103 BC) became high priest, he had himself declared king as well as high priest. He extended Hasmonean rule into Galilee.

Among Jewish works of this time, the book of Judith presents the plight of pious Israelites in the guise of a godly woman. Laced with humor and irony, it depicts the horror of Gentile power against the wisdom and beauty of a woman who manages to decapitate the enemy. The book of Baruch echoes much of Sirach, but it is difficult to date. The book of 1 Maccabees was written to defend the claims of the Hasmonean dynasty. It tells the story of events during the years 200–135 BC. Jason of Cyrene then wrote a history to refute Hasmonean claims while still celebrating the accomplishments of the family in freeing the Jews from Greek domination. Later his work would be abridged and appear as 2 Maccabees, focusing closely on the Maccabean wars (175–162 BC).

The Pharisees opposed the next king, Alexander Jannaeus, also known as King Jonathan (r. 103–76 BC). When he appeared drunk in the temple, the crowd pelted him with lemons, and he sent in his troops, resulting in a massacre (Josephus, *Ant.* 13.372–73). He crucified eight hundred Pharisees, slaughtering their families before their eyes. When he died, his wife, Alexandra Salome (r. 76–67 BC), supported the Pharisees and was more conciliatory toward the Samaritans. Her eldest son, Hyrcanus II, became high priest. The Sadducees backed her younger son, Aristobulus II, who rebelled and claimed both the throne and the high priesthood. At this point the struggle between Pharisees and Sadducees developed into open warfare.

ROMAN RULE (63 BC TO THE BIRTH OF JESUS)

After initial setbacks, Hyrcanus II obtained the support of Antipater, the governor of Idumea. Antipater was an ambitious man, well placed with the Romans. He called upon the Arabian king Aretas for help, and together they defeated Aristobulus II in 65 BC. When the Roman general Pompey defeated the last Seleucid king and made Syria a Roman province, Aristobulus and Hyrcanus went to him. Pompey sided with Hyrcanus, and the supporters of Aristobulus were finally routed from the temple (63 BC). Priests were slaughtered in the fighting. Aristobulus and his supporters went as prisoners to Rome. Thus ended the independent Jewish state established by the Maccabees in 142 BC. Pompey then ordered the cleansing of the temple and the reinstitution of the sacrifices and the priesthood. Hyrcanus II served as high priest until his death (40 BC).

The Roman Empire soon entered a period of civil war as the republic came to an end, with Julius Caesar defeating Pompey (48 BC). Just in time, Antipater and Hyrcanus switched sides and appealed to Caesar to forgive their initial alliance with Pompey, which he did. Antipater was appointed procurator of Judea, and Hyrcanus II was confirmed as high priest.

Bust of the Roman general Pompey, who brought Syria under Roman rule (seventeenth century AD)

Antipater appointed his son Herod as governor of Galilee, in which position he quickly had to deal with a bandit, Ezekiel, who terrorized the area. With the defeat of these criminals (46 BC), Herod won the favor of the Galilean people.

Overall administration of Palestine came under the rule of the governor of Syria, Sextus Caesar. In 46 BC Hyrcanus brought Herod to trial before the Sanhedrin in an attempt to limit his power to interfere with Jewish lifestyle and law, but the Syrian governor intervened, and the high priest had to back down. Herod then moved his administration to Damascus.

Back in Rome, having murdered Julius Caesar (44 BC), Cassius set up his headquarters in Damascus and promised to make Herod king of Judea in return for his support against Caesar's heir, Octavian. In 42 BC Mark Antony defeated Cassius. Meanwhile, Herod maintained law and order in Judea, for which the people were genuinely grateful, but he continued to struggle with the Sanhedrin, which made unsuccessful attempts to have him removed.

In 40 BC Persia took the opportunity presented by Rome's civil wars to invade Judea, entering into alliance with the last Hasmonean, Antigonus. Herod fled while Antigonus was taken to Persia. Herod returned to Palestine in 38 BC with Roman troops and quickly captured Galilee and Jerusalem. With the execution of Antigonus, the Hasmonean dynasty was finished. Herod then married Mariamne, the niece of Antigonus, hoping that this would give him some legitimacy as king of Judea and win him some popular support.

The Pharisees continued to reject him as a non-Jewish collaborator with the Romans. When the last male heir of the Hasmonean dynasty died (25 BC), Herod's mother-in-law, Alexandra, forced Herod to appoint her sixteen-year-old son, Aristobulus, as high priest. After the boy drowned in Herod's swimming pool, Alexandra had Herod called before Mark Antony for trial. He was exonerated.

When Octavian and Mark Antony went to war, Herod was caught in the middle. Herod's enemies, with Cleopatra's support, attacked but were driven back. With Antony's defeat and the death of Cleopatra, Herod went to Rhodes to reassure Octavian (Caesar Augustus) of his loyalty and was confirmed again as king of Judea. Upon his return, he accused his wife of adultery, and she was promptly executed, followed shortly by her mother.

Herod then went on a building spree of enormous proportions extending beyond the borders of Judea, attempting to impress both his subjects and Caesar. He built temples for Caesar and also started work on a massive renovation and rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem. As his wives and sons began to position themselves to inherit the throne, he became fearful of assassination and had many of his family executed.

Herod died in 4 BC. His execution of the infant boys of Bethlehem (Matt. 2:16–18) was one of the last acts of his reign, consistent with his increasingly desperate attempts to keep the throne.

IOB The name "Iob," which appears in the Hebrew text of Gen. 46:13, is corrected to "Jashub" in some versions (NIV, NRSV, NET), following the Samaritan Pentateuch, some LXX manuscripts, and the Hebrew text of parallel lists (Num. 26:24; 1 Chron. 7:1). *See also* Jashub.

IOTA *See* Dot.

IPHDEIAH One of the sons of Shashak of the tribe of Benjamin (1 Chron. 8:25).

IPHEDEIAH *See* Iphdeiah.

IPHTAH One of the towns allotted to Judah under Joshua (Josh. 15:43). Its exact location is uncertain, though it lay in the "western foothills" (the Shephelah) of Judah (15:33). A proposed identification is Tarqumiya, located about six miles northwest of Hebron.

IPHTAH EL A valley on the northern border of the tribe of Zebulun (Josh. 19:14, 27).

IR A descendant of the tribe of Benjamin and the forefather of the Shuppites and the Huppites (1 Chron. 7:12). *See also* Iri.

IRA **(1)** A Jairite and a priest during David's time (2 Sam. 20:26). Some consider this position to be civil rather than religious, a chief adviser or minister. Others view the role as one of personal priest to David, a kind of palace chaplain. **(2)** A Tekoite, one of David's mighty men and a member of an elite group of thirty warriors (2 Sam. 23:26; 1 Chron. 11:28). Ira the Tekoite also served as captain of a division of twenty-four thousand men who served as Israel's national defense forces for the sixth month of each year (1 Chron. 27:9). **(3)** An Ithrite, another of David's mighty men (2 Sam. 23:38; 1 Chron. 11:40).

IRAD The son of Enoch and the grandson of Cain (Gen. 4:18).

IRAM A descendant of Esau, he was a leader of an Edomite clan who gave his name to the territory he occupied (Gen. 36:43; 1 Chron. 1:54).

IRI The head of a family in the tribe of Benjamin, mentioned only in 1 Chron. 7:7, where he is identified among "mighty warriors" (ESV, NRSV, RSV). His name is spelled "Ir" in 1 Chron. 7:12.

IRIJAH The son of Shelemiah, he served as the captain of the guard under Zedekiah king of Judah (Jer. 37:13). After Jeremiah prophesied the Babylonian destruction of Jerusalem, he started to leave the city in order to receive his share of the property in Benjamin. However, Irijah saw Jeremiah at the Benjamin Gate and accused him of deserting the people and joining the Babylonians. Based on this faulty assumption, Irijah arrested Jeremiah and brought him before the officials, who subsequently beat the prophet and placed him in prison (37:13–15).

IR NAHASH A city of Judah (KJV, NRSV: "Irnahash") whose location is uncertain, though it has been identified variously with Deir Nahhas near Beit Gibrin, Khirbet Nahash south of the Dead Sea, or in the hill country between Bethlehem and Hebron. The term apparently is treated as a personal name in the genealogy of the sons of Caleb (1 Chron. 4:12), where Tehinnah is identified as the father of Ir Nahash. Most scholars, however, consider it to be a place name, since other names in the list identify individuals with the places they founded—for example, "Ephrathah the father of Bethlehem" (4:4 KJV). The LXX also interprets the term this way, translating the Hebrew as "city of Naas."

IRON **(1)** Sometimes transliterated "Yiron" (NASB, RSV, TEV, NET), "Iron" is the name of a town in the tribal inheritance of Naphtali (Josh. 19:38). It is likely to be identified with the modern city of Yaroun, on the border between Israel and Lebanon.

(2) A malleable metal derived from oxide ores that can be worked into wrought iron and steel. The earliest use of iron dates to the late fourth millennium BC. Old Kingdom Egyptian refers to iron as the "metal of heaven," probably because the earliest pieces of iron were derived from meteoric iron. Small quantities of smelted terrestrial iron have been found from the third millennium BC in Egypt, Mesopotamia, and Anatolia. Due to technological advancements and economic factors, iron gradually supplanted bronze as the main utilitarian metal in the Levant by the Iron Age (1200–586 BC).

Iron could be mined or found on the surface (Deut. 8:9), but it had to be heated and hammered to remove its impurities. Wrought iron was softer than hardened bronze, but through carburization, tempering, and quenching, iron became stronger and could hold an edge better than bronze. Since ancient furnaces could not get hot enough to liquefy iron, it could not be cast into molds.

The Bible makes several general references to the mining, smelting, and use of iron (Job 28:1; Isa. 44:12; Ezek. 22:20; Sir. 38:28). Genesis attributes the beginning of ironworking and other crafts to the legendary descendants of Cain (Gen. 4:22). The shift in dominance from bronze to iron in the late second millennium BC may have been due either to an international shortage of copper or a more localized shortage of the wood required for the fuel-intensive production of bronze. In Bible times, iron was forged (Isa. 44:12) rather than cast, as the high temperatures necessary to melt iron could not be achieved before the modern industrial age. Biblical references to iron furnaces pertain to smelting (Ezek. 22:20). While one passage describes the richness of the land of Canaan where, among other things, “rocks are iron” (Deut. 8:9), other passages associate ironworking with Egypt (Deut. 4:20; 1 Kings 8:51; Jer. 11:4) or Mesopotamia (Jer. 15:12). The Israelites perhaps lacked the skills to work in iron, as is suggested by the facts that ironworkers had to be brought into the country (2 Chron. 2:14) and at one point the Israelites were dependent on a Philistine monopoly on blacksmithing (1 Sam. 13:21).

Iron was used widely to make many different types of objects, including axes (Deut. 19:5; 2 Sam. 12:31; 2 Kings 6:5), tools for dressing stone (though this is prohibited for the making of altars [Deut. 27:5; Josh. 8:31]) and for engraving stone (Job 19:24; Jer. 17:1), yokes (Deut. 28:48; Jer. 28:13), shackles or chains (Pss. 105:18; 107:10; 149:8), pans (Ezek. 4:3), sharpening tools (Prov. 27:17; Eccles. 10:10), weapons (Num. 35:16; Job 20:24; Ps. 2:9), gate or door bolts (Deut. 33:25; Ps. 107:16), nails (1 Chron. 22:3), chariots (referring only to a part of the axle assembly rather than the entire vehicle [Josh. 17:16; Judg. 1:19]), otherwise unspecified vessels or implements (Josh. 6:19), and agricultural implements (1 Chron. 20:3; Amos 1:3 [archaeologists have also found plow points and other iron tools]). Amos 1:3 may also refer to the use of iron tools as instruments of torture in wartime. Among the uses of iron that may have been considered unusual for the time were for a bed frame (Deut. 3:11) and for horns (1 Kings 22:11).

Iron was valuable enough to be listed in lists of plunder and treasure, alongside gold and silver (Num. 31:22; Josh. 6:19; 1 Chron. 22:14). It was taken from Jericho and dedicated to God’s treasury (Josh. 6:24). David collected large quantities of iron to construct the temple; however, none of the stones for the temple or altar were cut with iron tools on-site (1 Kings 6:7). Iron was an internationally traded commodity (Ezek. 27:19). It was less valuable than gold, silver, and bronze (1 Chron. 29:7; Isa. 60:17; Dan. 2:33–35) but more valuable than lead and tin (Ezek. 22:20; 27:12).

Iron was a symbol of superlative strength (Job 40:18) and, in the moral realm, of stubbornness or rebelliousness (Isa. 48:4). The fiery smelting process represented testing, oppression, wrath, suffering, and drought (Lev. 26:19; Deut. 4:20; 1 Kings 8:51; Jer. 11:4; Ezek. 22:18–20). In contrast to untarnished gold, the corrosive oxidation of iron symbolized corruption (Jer. 6:28).

IRONSMITH Someone who works with iron, either in the smelting process or using tools to shape the metal. The term itself is not used in the KJV, NIV, or most other English versions, though the trade is referred to in various ways: “artisans,” “smiths,” “those who work with iron.” When preparing to build the temple, Solomon appealed to Hiram, king of Tyre, for “a man skilled to work in gold and silver, bronze and iron” (2 Chron. 2:7). King Joash and Jehoiada hired ironsmiths and other metalworkers, together with masons and carpenters, to restore the temple in Jerusalem (2 Chron. 24:12). Ironsmith was an important occupation during the biblical period because of the necessity for iron in both tools and weapons of warfare.

IRONY An instance when the intended meaning of an expression is the opposite of its ostensible meaning. Irony is often accompanied by sarcasm, as when Amos beckons Israel to go to their places of worship so that they may sin (Amos 4:4–5). Elijah sarcastically taunts the worshipers of Baal, “Shout louder! . . . Surely he [Baal] is a god! Perhaps he is deep in thought, or busy, or traveling. Maybe he is sleeping and must be awakened” (1 Kings 18:27–29). Job utilizes irony when he tells his friends, “Doubtless you are the only people who matter, and wisdom will die with you!” (Job 12:2), and he receives an ironic expression when he is told by God, “Surely you know, for you were already born!” (38:21). Paul writes to the Corinthians, “We are fools for Christ, but you are so wise in Christ! We are weak, but you are strong! You are honored, we are dishonored!” (1 Cor. 4:10). A double irony may be seen in the expression “King of the Jews,” used by Roman soldiers to ridicule Jesus (Matt. 27:29) even while its ostensible meaning applies (Matt. 27:11). In narrative, irony may be evident to the reader without it being evident to the characters. For example, Cain’s question to God, “Am I my brother’s keeper?” (Gen. 4:9) begs a negative response from Cain’s perspective. Yet in view of other biblical passages involving the responsibilities of kin and God’s expectations regarding the community of his people, the answer to Cain’s question is resoundingly affirmative.

In addition to single utterances, irony can also involve a set of circumstances that share a relationship with one another that is the opposite of what is expected. Thinking that King Xerxes intends to honor him, Haman unwittingly advises the king to honor Mordecai even though he intended to request permission to kill Mordecai (Esther 5:9–13). After Haman suffers the humiliation of honoring Mordecai in the manner he fashioned for himself, Haman is executed on the very device he has erected to execute Mordecai (7:9–10). In the story of Joseph, the violent reaction by Joseph’s brothers to his dreams serves to bring about the circumstances that the dreams foretold (Gen. 37:19; 42:9). The ministry of Jesus may be viewed as inherently ironic (Phil. 2:6–11), as well as many of his teachings—for example, the last will be first (Matt. 20:16) and the least is the greatest (Luke 9:46–48). Those who orchestrate Jesus’ execution do so in order to stop his ministry, yet in effect they fulfill his messianic goal (Matt. 20:25–28; 26:1–4).

IRPEEL A town in the tribal allotment given to Benjamin (Josh. 18:27).

IRRIGATION A set of techniques for artificially watering crops. Irrigation is the key to cultivating land in regions where direct rainfall is insufficient. While several of the ancient empires of the biblical world diverted water from large rivers (Nile, Tigris, Euphrates) to sustain large-scale intensive agriculture, the land of Israel was hilly, and thus irrigation was limited. Israelite agriculture relied on smaller irrigation works or direct rainfall, enhanced by other methods such as the terracing of hillsides.

In Canaanite religion, the dependence of the region on rainfall-based agriculture was reflected in the prominence of sky gods, such as Baal, who controlled the weather. In contrast, the civilizations of Mesopotamia and Egypt focused such attention on their great rivers (see Isa. 8:7, where the river represents the military power of Assyria against Judah). In Israelite religion, this power was attributed to the God of Israel (Deut. 11:11–12), so that he was a direct rival of Baal. For instance, Jeremiah rebukes the people for their failure to depend on Israel’s God, characterizing the proper attitude of the farmer: “Let us fear the LORD our God, who gives autumn and spring rains in season, who assures us of the regular weeks of harvest” (Jer. 5:24 [see also 1 Kings 17:1; 18:1; James 5:17–18]). Likewise, the prophet Isaiah promises, “The LORD will guide you always; he will satisfy your needs in a sun-scorched land and will strengthen your frame. You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail” (Isa. 58:11).

Consistent with this situation, Deuteronomy refers to irrigation as a way of contrasting Israelite and Egyptian agriculture: “The land you are entering to take over is not like the land of Egypt, from which you have come, where you planted your seed and irrigated it by foot as in a vegetable garden” (Deut. 11:10). Modern scholars see here a reference to a particular practice of irrigation in which workers controlled the flow of water through a field by manipulating a system of earthen channels and dams with their feet.

In addition to rainfall-based agriculture, groundwater coming from springs supported gardens and horticulture. Ecclesiastes 2:5–6 speaks of such royal gardens and waterworks: “I made gardens and parks and planted all kinds of fruit trees in them. I made reservoirs to water groves of flourishing trees” (cf. Isa. 58:11; Ezek. 47:12). Excavations in Jerusalem have confirmed the presence of irrigation works in the City of David, which probably diverted water into the Kidron Valley from the Gihon Spring.

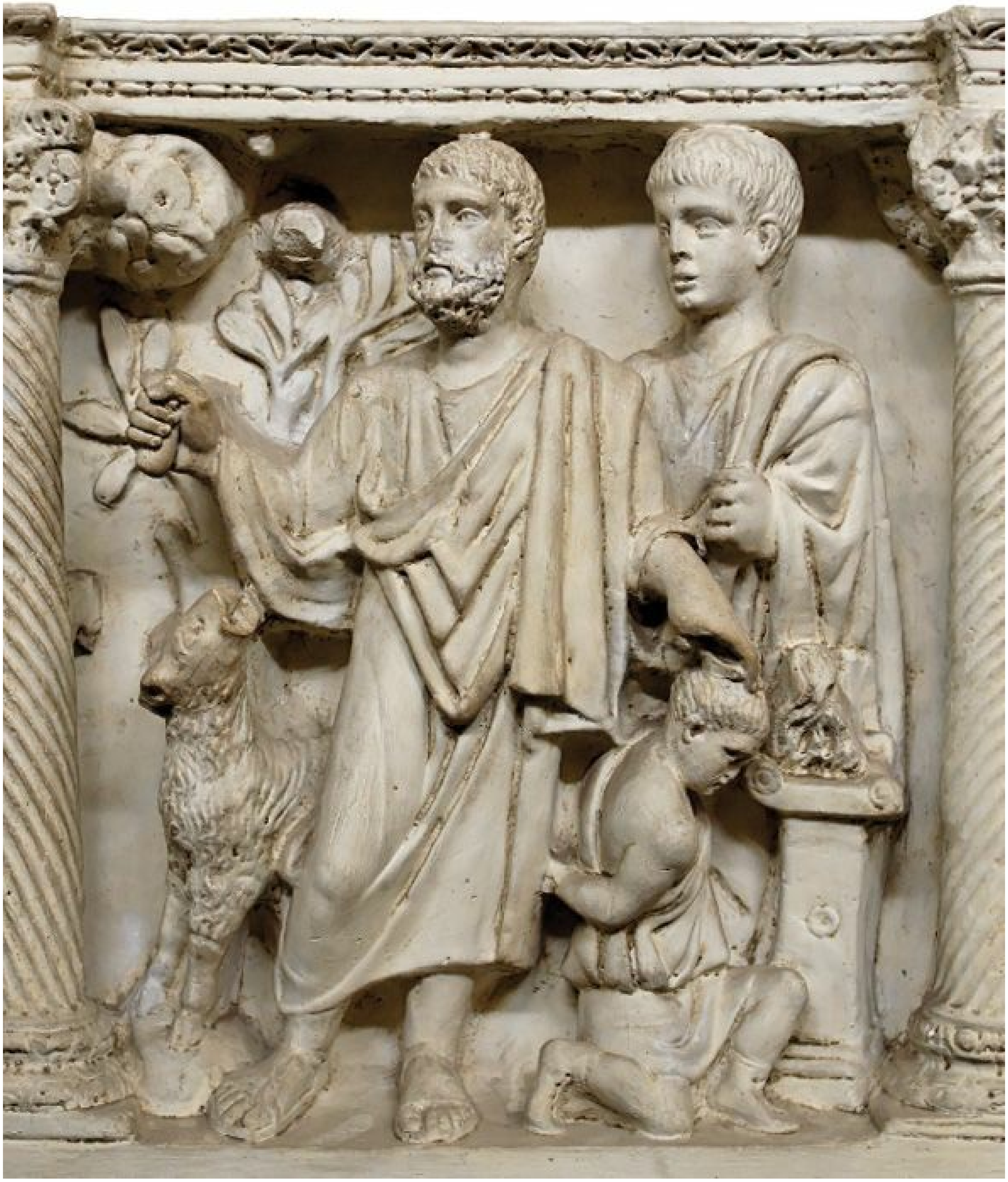
To summarize, crops in biblical Israel were sustained by a combination of rainfall agriculture with small-scale irrigation sustaining horticulture (i.e., the production of vegetables in gardens, but not the intensive cultivation of staples such as grains). Perhaps this particular combination is best illustrated in Gen. 2:5–6: “No shrub had yet appeared on the earth and no plant had yet sprung up, for the LORD God had not sent rain on the earth and there was no one to work the ground, but streams came up from the earth and watered the whole surface of the ground.” *See also* Cistern.

IR SHEMESH A city in the tribal territory of Dan that appears only in Josh. 19:41. The name “Ir Shemesh” (“city of the sun”) is an alternate for “Beth Shemesh” (“house of the sun”), located in the foothills approximately sixteen miles west of Jerusalem.

IRU A son of Caleb, son of Jephunneh (1 Chron. 4:15). Since he is named first (his brothers were Elah and Naam), he was likely the oldest. Some scholars believe that his name was actually “Ir,” and that the *u* is actually the first letter of the next word (meaning “and”).

ISAAC Along with Abraham and Jacob, Isaac is a central character in the narratives of Gen. 12–35. Isaac is the offspring of Abraham and Sarah, the fulfillment of a promise from God of an heir for Abraham (15:4). The promise of offspring is one component in a set (protection and land being some of the others), the provisions of a covenant between God and the patriarchs (12:1–3; 17:1–8; 26:2–5). The name “Isaac” is associated with the verb for “laugh” (21:3–7), referring to Sarah’s reaction upon hearing the promise of a child coming well beyond her childbearing years (18:9–15). Sarah’s incredulity, and Abraham’s sympathy to it, may be witnessed by their attempt to enact fulfillment to the promise through the insemination of Hagar, Sarah’s slave (16:1–4, 16).

In the narratives of Gen. 12–35 Isaac is the least prominent of the patriarchs. The main event of his life is encapsulated in the incident known as the Akedah, the “binding” (22:1–19). Abraham demonstrates his loyalty to God by complying with a command to offer Isaac as a sacrifice on Mount Moriah. After an initial inquiry about the absence of a sacrificial beast, Isaac (apparently) passively follows Abraham’s directions in compliance with God’s will. A divine emissary, however, halts Abraham’s actions just prior to the slaying of Isaac.



Sacrifice of Isaac from a cast of the sarcophagus of Junius Bassus (AD 359)

The procurement of Isaac’s wife, Rebekah, by Abraham’s servant is found in Gen. 24:1–67. Like Abraham, Isaac describes his wife as a sister in order to deflect danger to his person (26:6–11; cf. 12:10–16; 20:1–18). Rebekah bears two sons to Isaac, Esau and Jacob (25:21–26). Through the instigation and cooperation of Rebekah, Jacob tricks Isaac into conferring a blessing upon him, one originally intended for Esau (27:1–30).

ISAIAH An eighth-century BC prophet who prophesied during the period just before and after the fall of the northern kingdom of Israel to the Assyrians in 722 BC. Isaiah lived in Judah, specifically in

Jerusalem.

Isaiah began his prophetic work in the year that King Uzziah died, approximately 733 BC (Isa. 6:1). His ministry continued through the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah. The latter began his rule in 727 BC and ended in 698 BC, but since Isaiah was with him during the Assyrian incursion of 701 BC (see below), the prophet was active until late in his reign. He may have lived into the reign of Hezekiah's wicked son Manasseh. Tradition states that he died as a martyr, being sawn in half.

Isaiah was married to a prophetess and had at least two sons (Isa. 7:3; 8:3). His sons had names with symbolic import. The first was "Shear-Jashub," meaning "a remnant will return"; the second was "Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz," meaning "quick to the plunder, swift to the spoil."

Apart from such glimpses, readers do not learn as much about Isaiah the person as they do about Jeremiah or even Ezekiel. But his prophecies are clearly connected to the big events of his day. Many of his prophecies have the Syro-Ephraimite war as their background. The king of Syria, Rezin, and the king of Israel, Pekah, tried to enlist the help of the king of Judah, Ahaz, against the encroachment of the Assyrian king Tiglath-pileser III in the middle of the eighth century BC. Ahaz refused, and Isaiah supported that decision. However, Ahaz did not really trust God in this matter, for against the wishes of Isaiah he wrote to Tiglath-pileser asking for help against Rezin and Pekah, since they had decided to try to replace him with a more amenable person. As a result of his appeal, Tiglath-pileser took Syria, and his successors eventually took the northern kingdom in 722 BC. Ahaz and the kings of Judah who followed him were forced to become vassals.

In 701 BC the current Assyrian king, Sennacherib, moved militarily against Judah to incorporate it into his empire. Isaiah again was at the side of the Judean king, now Hezekiah, encouraging him to depend on God and not submit. In contrast to Ahaz, Hezekiah did not submit, and God delivered him from the Assyrians.

These events are the background and the situations into which Isaiah spoke, but his prophetic vision extended far beyond his lifetime. He saw not only the future defeat of Judah and Jerusalem at the hands of the Babylonians but also their restoration (see esp. Isa. 40–66). The NT cites Isaiah more frequently than any other OT book, finding the ultimate fulfillment of many of his oracles in the person and work of Jesus Christ.

ISAIAH, BOOK OF The first of the Major Prophets in the canon, the book of Isaiah is one of the longest books in the Bible. This, coupled with the NT's frequent use of Isaiah, has contributed to the book's great importance in Christian tradition. Isaiah contains some of the most memorable passages in Scripture, with its majestic poetry and evocative sermons making it a literary masterpiece. Nevertheless, it has also been characterized as a difficult book to comprehend and make sense of as a whole because the connections between different paragraphs and sections appear to be haphazard at times and are difficult to understand. However, some knowledge of the way the book was formed can aid in interpretation.

AUTHORSHIP

The authorship of Isaiah has been one of the most debated issues in biblical interpretation. Ancient tradition credited the eighth-century BC prophet Isaiah with the entire sixty-six chapters. However, an early Jewish tradition in the Talmud claims that "the men of Hezekiah" compiled Isaiah, showing their awareness that the book did not come entirely from Isaiah.

Literary evidence. Isaiah son of Amoz is referred to as author in three sections of the book (1:1; 2:1; 13:1) and is featured in both third-person (chaps. 7; 20; 36–39) and first-person (chaps. 6; 8) narratives. However, chapters 40–66 have no such headings and do not even mention Isaiah. While references to Isaiah as author in specific sections may suggest that he actually did write the whole book, they may also indicate that he did not write sections that are not ascribed to him. Similarly, historical narratives referring to the prophet in the third person may suggest that someone else wrote them, although the intimate information in them (e.g., 7:3) could point to Isaianic authorship.

Another possible indication of multiple authorship is the marked difference in literary style and vocabulary found in different sections of Isaiah. While such judgments are quite subjective, both sides of the authorship debate acknowledge these stylistic differences.

The great Isaiah scroll from Qumran

Historical settings. The debate regarding the authorship of Isaiah really centers on the diverse historical settings within different sections of the book. Chapters 1–39 clearly are set during the late eighth century BC, the period when Assyria is threatening Judah. Assyria is frequently mentioned (e.g., 7:17; 8:4; 10:12; 11:11; 19:23; 20:1; 27:13; 36:1), as are Judean kings (e.g., 1:1; 6:1; 7:1; 14:28; 36:1) and the prophet Isaiah himself (e.g., 1:1; 2:1; 13:1; 20:2; 37:5).

In contrast, the historical setting of chapters 40–55 is not eighth-century BC Judah. Israel is described as in captivity and Jerusalem is referred to as ruined and deserted (44:26, 28; 52:9); there is frequent allusion to the sufferings of the exile (42:22, 25; 43:28; 47:6; 51:17; 52:5); and the coming return from exile is described as close at hand (40:2; 46:13; 48:20). Furthermore, in chapters 40–55 Babylon is Israel’s enemy, even though in Isaiah’s day they were allies. Also, Cyrus the Great, the Persian king who conquered Babylon in 539 BC (ending the exile), is mentioned with no introduction or explanation (44:28; 45:1), even though he lived 150 years after Isaiah. In sum, chapters 40–55 appear to be addressed to Judeans in Babylonian exile.

Conversely, chapters 56–66 appear to come from yet another historical period. Unlike in chapters 40–55, where the temple was destroyed and out of operation, in chapters 56–66 the temple (66:6), along with sacrifices (56:7; 66:3), offerings (57:6; 65:3; 66:3), and Sabbaths (56:2; 58:13; 66:23), is referred to. Also, Jerusalem and its walls are standing (62:6), unlike in chapters 40–55, where it is predicted that Jerusalem will be rebuilt (44:26). This seems to indicate that it addresses those who have returned to Jerusalem after the exile.

This evidence suggests that the book of Isaiah was written by several authors from different time periods. Alternatively, these diverse historical settings could be explained by supposing that Isaiah spoke to audiences in the distant future through divine inspiration. While skeptical scholars holding antisupernatural worldviews have denied this possibility, those who believe in an almighty God believe that he can reveal the distant future to his prophets. However, the question is whether that is in fact the case with Isaiah. It is significant that in chapters 40–55 Babylonian oppression is not predicted as something to come in the future but rather is presupposed as the present conditions under which the writer is living—only the release from exile is predicted. Logically, it would seem that the author lived in the situation that he presupposes and before the situation that he predicts.

Arguments for the unity of Isaiah. Some scholars still hold to the unity of Isaiah on the following grounds: (1) no ancient manuscripts show that the book ever existed in another form; (2) differences in style and vocabulary can be explained by different subject matter (besides which, the title “Holy One of Israel” unites all sections of Isaiah, as it is used thirteen times in chapters 1–39, sixteen times in chapters 40–66, and only seven times in the rest of the Bible); (3) it seems unlikely that an author as great as the one who wrote chapters 40–55 should remain anonymous; and (4) although it is logical to assume that a prophet is contemporary with what he presupposes, once a prophet makes a prediction, that prediction can become a presupposition for another prediction. Therefore, Isaiah’s prediction of exile in 39:6–7 could become the basis or presupposition on which he continued to prophesy the end to the exile.

However, these arguments are not compelling. Although no manuscripts attest to earlier versions of the book, we possess so few manuscripts from before the time of Christ (and none dating to the time during which the three sections of Isaiah are thought to have been combined) that this is insignificant. Also, the differences in subject matter do not seem great enough to explain the very different style and language in the various sections. Regarding the unlikelihood that the writer of chapters 40–55 could remain anonymous, the fact is that many biblical books are indeed anonymous (e.g., Judges, 1–2 Kings, 1–2 Chronicles). However, most significant are the different historical settings of the major sections of Isaiah. If Isaiah was addressing an audience in the distant future, not only would it be a situation unparalleled in the biblical prophets, but also the message would have been largely unintelligible to Isaiah’s contemporaries (especially references to Cyrus). Moreover, the text does not claim to predict these situations but only presupposes them. However, the reality of prophetic inspiration is underscored, as a later author predicts not only the end of the exile but also a suffering messiah.

First, Second, and Third Isaiah. For convenience (and not to imply that each author was named “Isaiah”), the three major sections are often referred to as First Isaiah (chaps. 1–39), Second Isaiah (chaps. 40–55), and Third Isaiah (chaps. 56–66). In light of the purposeful connections between the different sections, it is probable that the book was the product of a “school” of Isaiah’s disciples (cf. 8:16) who collected and organized Isaiah’s words and added to them over a long period of time.

In the end, the involvement of multiple authors in the composition of Isaiah does not undermine its authority as Scripture. Its authority derives not from the namesake prophet but rather from God, who inspired its writing (2 Tim. 3:16).

PLAN OF THE BOOK

Isaiah has a literary structure similar to that of Ezekiel, Zephaniah, Joel, and the Greek translation of Jeremiah. The first section is concerned with judgment on Israel (chaps. 1–12), the second with judgment on foreign nations (chaps. 13–23), and the third records prophecies of hope and salvation (chaps. 24–27). This structure purposefully places hopeful oracles of comfort after the judgment oracles. Some view the entire book of Isaiah as following this pattern (chaps. 1–12, judgment on Israel; chaps. 13–35, judgment on other nations; chaps. 40–66, oracles of comfort). However, both of these schemes are somewhat forced, since each section is slightly mixed (there are oracles of salvation in chaps. 1–12, prophecies against Judah in chaps. 13–23, and judgment oracles in chaps. 56–66). However, in broad outline it is helpful to recognize this structure.

OUTLINE

I. Judgment on Judah (1–12)

II. Judgment on the Nations (13–27)

III. Warnings to Trust in the Lord (28–35)

IV. The Assyrian Crisis (36–39)

V. The Second Exodus (40–48)

VI. The Restoration of Jerusalem (49–55)

VII. The Earthly and New Jerusalem (56–66)

FIRST ISAIAH (ISA. 1–39)

Key historical events. This section of Isaiah comes from the period when the nation of Assyria was aggressively expanding its territory and terrorizing weaker nations, such as Israel and Judah. Two key historical events form the background for many oracles in chapters 1–39 and are the prominent focus there: the Syro-Ephraimite war of 734 BC and the 701 BC Assyrian invasion of Judah.

The Syro-Ephraimite war. The nations of Aram (Syria) and Israel (Ephraim) allied together against Assyria and tried to coerce Judah into joining them. They planned to replace King Ahaz with a king of their choice (7:6), which would end the Davidic dynasty. In the end, Ahaz rejected Isaiah’s advice to simply trust God (7:9) and instead appealed to the king of Assyria for aid. The Assyrians conquered Aram (732 BC) and Israel (722 BC) and assimilated them into the Assyrian empire. Judah survived but had to pay tribute to Assyria from that point onward.

The Assyrian invasion of Judah. The Assyrian king Sennacherib invaded Judah when Hezekiah, Ahaz’s son, reigned in Jerusalem. The invasion devastated Judah; however, when Jerusalem was threatened, Hezekiah, in contrast to his father, trusted God to save them, and the Assyrian army suffered massive losses and failed to take Jerusalem (37:36).

Structure and themes. The structure of chapters 1–39 is quite complex. However, the prophecies and historical narratives concerned with Isaiah’s day are roughly in chronological order (e.g., prophecies and events occurring during the reign of King Ahaz [6:1–8:22] precede those during Hezekiah’s reign [36:1–39:8]). The structure of these chapters alternates between threat and promise (e.g., chap. 1 = threat; 2:1–4 = promise of hope; 2:5–4:1 = threat; 4:2–6 = promise of hope). Analogously, the main themes of these chapters alternate between threat and promise.

Holiness. A major theme of Isaiah is God’s holiness, as evidenced in its favorite title for the Lord, “Holy One of Israel.” While the original idea underlying holiness was physical separation and did not have an ethical dimension (e.g., temple prostitutes in the ancient Near East were called “holy women”), a different concept of holiness emerges in chapter 6, the account of Isaiah’s call. Since 6:1–9:7 is the only part in the book with autobiographical narration, these chapters probably come from an original memoir of Isaiah himself. The memoir is surrounded by judgment oracles with a repeated element, “Yet for all this, his anger is not turned away, his hand is still upraised” (5:25; 9:12, 17, 21; 10:4), suggesting that the memoir as a whole was inserted between these oracles to explain God’s anger recorded in 1–12. God’s mandate to Israel was to “be holy, because I am holy” (Lev. 11:44–45), but Israel failed to follow this command. In the presence of the holy God, Isaiah realized his own sinfulness and the sinfulness of his people (6:5), connecting the concepts of holiness and righteousness.

The remnant. Already in the first chapter we see the emergence of two groups within Israel: the wicked, who will be punished, and a remnant, who will be redeemed (1:27–31). This focus on the remnant was one way in which Isaiah saw hope for Israel despite the coming judgment that he predicted. The remnant theme highlights the apparent tension between God as holy and God as redeemer: God’s holiness is upheld through the judgment on Israel, but God’s character as savior is witnessed through the remnant that is redeemed.

A coming messianic king. The section 6:1–9:7 dates from the time of the Syro-Ephraimite war, and it appears that Isaiah wrote it down (8:16) when Ahaz refused his counsel. The memoir emphasizes the rejection of the Davidic king Ahaz and predicts the birth of a royal son who would replace Ahaz and bring freedom from oppression (9:1–7). This dissatisfaction with the reigning Davidic king was the seedbed for messianic expectations and is the background for the messianic trilogy of 7:14–16; 9:2–7; 11:1–9. While some of these passages may have originally referred to Hezekiah, he falls short of these messianic expectations, leaving the community of faith awaiting another anointed one (messiah). Ominously, chapter 39 describes Hezekiah’s entertaining guests from Babylon, perhaps implying an alliance between the two nations. Hezekiah’s actions prompt Isaiah to predict the Babylonian exile (39:6–7), providing a fitting segue to chapters 40–66.

SECOND ISAIAH (ISA. 40–55)

A message to the exiles. Second Isaiah was written near the end of the exilic period for those who were deported by Nebuchadnezzar to Babylon. Although the exiles in Babylon were settled in communities (Ezek. 3:15) and allowed to build houses and farm the land (Jer. 29:5–7), they had no temple for worship, and many of the exiles probably saw the destruction of Jerusalem and their temple as the end of God’s action on their behalf. The gods of Babylon appeared to have won the victory. The exiles’ faith was flagging, and even those who did not abandon worship of Israel’s God simply clung to the past and expected nothing new from him.

Contrary to these expectations, Second Isaiah proclaims that God is doing something new for his people and bringing an end to the exile (40:1; 55:12). The role of Cyrus in this deliverance is highlighted, with explicit and implicit reference made to the Persian king (41:2–3, 25; 44:28; 45:1–4, 13–14). However, amid the oracles of comfort there is also a challenge to Israel, which is somehow resistant to the message. To break down this resistance, the prophecy has a sustained rhetoric against idol worship, with some quite hilarious sections ridiculing idol makers (44:9–20). Israel needed to realize that only Yahweh is God and to trust that he will redeem Israel for his purposes. Chapters 1–39 allude to the redemption of Israel (1:27; 35:9), and chapters 40–66 reveal more of how this redemption will take place: the work of "the servant."

The servant. Several poems featuring an anonymous "servant" (42:1–9; 49:1–12; 50:4–11; 52:13–53:12) are often referred to as the Servant Songs. As far back as the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:34), interpreters have struggled with how to identify "the servant." At times, Israel is explicitly identified as the servant (Isa. 41:8–9; 42:19 [2×]; 43:10), yet the servant clearly also has individual features, suggesting that a person was to fill the role. Some have suggested Cyrus because 42:1 says that the servant "will bring justice to the nations," and Cyrus is described as conquering nations (41:2, 25; 45:1). However, despite all the talk of Cyrus, the text never explicitly applies the term "servant" to him, which can hardly be by chance. Alternatively, the servant could be the prophet who speaks in these chapters (as the Ethiopian eunuch speculated), since he was destined for his mission before his birth (49:1) and equipped for a mission involving prophetic speech (49:2) and had received divinely revealed knowledge (50:4).

Yet the Servant Songs are also messianic and look forward to a future anointed one who will fulfill the role of the servant fully. In the NT, Jesus is presented as the new Israel (cf. Matt. 2:15 with Hos. 11:1) who truly fulfills the role of the servant (John 12:38, quoting Isa. 53:1; Matt. 8:17, quoting Isa. 53:4). However, Paul appears to hold to a collective interpretation of the songs, as he sees himself as the servant in some instances (Acts 13:47; Rom. 15:21; Gal. 1:15). Both the individual and the collective interpretations are legitimated in the NT, as both Jesus (individual) and the church (collective), which is Christ's body, fulfill the role of the servant.

THIRD ISAIAH (ISA. 56–66)

In 539 BC Cyrus allowed the exiles to return home to rebuild Jerusalem and its temple (Ezra 1:1–4). Despite many obstacles, the temple was finished in 515 BC. Even with this success, living in the land was challenging (see Malachi), with factions among the people, economic troubles, hypocritical worship (Isa. 58:1–14), and problems with corrupt leaders (56:9–57:13). It was for this postexilic community that Third Isaiah was written (probably before the reforms of Ezra and Nehemiah in 445 BC brought lasting change to the desperate situation).

Unlike in chapters 40–55, where Israel needs to be roused from its despair by the imminent actions of God, in chapters 56–66 the people are pleading with God to help them (59:11; 62:7). In chapter 59 the prophet declares that God's delay in helping his people is due not to his inability but rather to the sins of the people, which are described, confessed, and lamented.

In many ways, Third Isaiah unites the themes of First Isaiah and Second Isaiah. Second Isaiah emphasizes the inbreaking of a new age that contrasts with the old. The former things are remembered, but the new thing that God was doing—the return from exile—is stressed. However, in Third Isaiah the deliverance from Babylon is seen as merely a foretaste of God's promise, which is now identified as a new heaven and earth (chaps. 65–66). Third Isaiah looks forward to the new things that are still ahead.

First Isaiah predicts a Davidic messiah who would rule in righteousness (9:1–7; 11:1–9) and a faithful remnant that would respond in trust (10:20; 28:16). Second Isaiah does not continue with these themes, instead turning attention to the "servant" whose suffering and death would atone for Israel (53:4–5). However, Third Isaiah links First Isaiah's faithful remnant with obedient "servants" who take on the mission of the Suffering Servant in Second Isaiah. This interpretation sets the direction for the NT's identification of the royal messiah of chapters 1–39 as the servant of chapters 40–55 (Luke 24:26; Acts 8:32). Third Isaiah thus unites and reinterprets the book as a whole.

It is fitting that Jesus read the opening verses of Isa. 61 in the synagogue at the beginning of his ministry. Like Third Isaiah, he united prophecies of both the messianic Davidic ruler of First Isaiah and the Suffering Servant of Second Isaiah, taking on both roles himself. Third Isaiah ends with a glorious future pictured for the Jewish community as they function as priests in the world (61:6). Similarly, Christ's body, the church, now functions in these same roles in the world (cf. Acts 13:47; Rev. 5:10).

ISAIAH, MARTYRDOM AND ASCENSION OF This pseudepigraphical book is commonly dated between the second century BC and the fourth century AD. Chapters 1–5 probably were originally written in Hebrew (though there are no extant Hebrew manuscripts), then at an early period translated into Greek, and later into other languages (Ethiopic, Latin, Slavonic, Coptic). Currently the entire work exists only in Ethiopic.

The first section (chaps. 1–5) describes Isaiah's martyrdom. In Hezekiah's twenty-sixth year, Manasseh was to be instructed by Isaiah in righteousness. Instead, Isaiah prophesies that Manasseh would act wickedly, climaxing with Isaiah being sawn in half (cf. Heb. 11:37). This section contains a Christian addition sometimes referred to as the Testament of Hezekiah (3:13–4:22). The second section (chaps. 6–11), a Christian work, describes Isaiah's vision during the twentieth year of Hezekiah's reign. In it, the prophet passes through the seven heavens, where he sees the triune God—the Lord Christ, the Holy Spirit, and a glimpse of the glory of God the Father. He then hears God the Father commission the Lord Christ to go to earth, be born as a baby, live, die, be resurrected, and then ascend back up to the seventh heaven.

ISCAH *See* Iskah.

ISCARIOT An epithet or appellation for the disciple named "Judas" who betrayed Jesus (Matt. 10:4; Mark 3:19; Luke 6:16). A word of uncertain derivation, it may signify "man of Kerioth," a city in southern Judea (so the alternate textual readings at John 6:71; 12:4; 13:2, 26; 14:22: "from Kerioth"), the plural of "city," or an Aramaic adaptation of the Latin *sicarius*, "assassin" or "terrorist." The latter would place him with the Sicarii, a group of terrorists who murdered Roman sympathizers with curved swords (Acts 21:37–38; Josephus, *J.W.* 2.254; *Ant.* 20.186).

ISHBAH A descendant of Caleb and the father of Eshtemoa in the tribe of Judah. His mother was Bithiah, a daughter of Pharaoh (1 Chron. 4:17–18).

ISHBAK One of the six sons fathered by Abraham with Keturah (Gen. 25:2). He was among the sons whom Abraham sent away with gifts to the east so that Isaac would be the sole heir (Gen. 25:5–6; 1 Chron. 1:32).

ISHBI-BENOB A Philistine warrior who sought to take advantage of David's weariness at some time late in his reign and threatened to kill him. But David's mighty warrior Abishai struck first, killing Ishbi-Benob (2 Sam. 21:16–17). The form of his name is uncertain because of textual issues, but the weight of evidence marginally favors the traditional form. He is said to be "one of the descendants of Rapha," and he probably was a giant, as "Rapha" can be related to the Hebrew word for "giant" (cf. KJV: "the sons of the giant"; NRSV: "the descendants of the giants"), though some have suggested that he and the three others mentioned in 2 Sam. 21:15–22 were soldiers specially devoted to the god Rapha. He was a formidable adversary, being equipped with a bronze spear (most probably just the spearhead, since spears themselves were wood) weighing approximately seven pounds and an unnamed piece of new equipment, possibly a sword. After Abishai had killed the Philistine, David's soldiers insisted that David no longer go out with them to battle.

Bronze spearhead (Israel, 1000–586 BC), possibly resembling the spearhead carried by Ishbi-Benob

ISH-BOSHETH A son of Saul who became king at Mahanaim following his father's death, although Judah was loyal to David (2 Sam. 2:8–11). His original name was "Esh-Baal" (1 Chron. 8:33; 9:39), probably changed to avoid having "Baal" appear in his name (cf. Hos. 2:16–17 NRSV); "Ish-Bosheth" means "man of shame." Ish-Bosheth is perhaps to be identified with Saul's second son, Ishvi (1 Sam. 14:49), and he was absent from Mount Gilboa when Saul died (31:2). His power depended upon Saul's general Abner, who had placed him on the throne. He weakened his position when he accused Abner of having a sexual relationship with Saul's concubine Rizpah, leading Abner to defect to David (2 Sam. 3:7–11). Ish-Bosheth was murdered by two of his captains, Rechab and Baanah (2 Sam. 4:5–7), but the chronology of 2 Sam. 2:10–11 suggests that the kingdoms did not immediately unite under David.

ISHHOD A descendant of Manasseh, he was one of the three sons of Gilead's sister Hammoleketh (1 Chron. 7:18). His name means "man of majesty."

ISHI **(1)** A Judahite of the line of Jerahmeel (1 Chron. 2:31). **(2)** A man of Judah (1 Chron. 4:20). **(3)** A man of Simeon (1 Chron. 4:42). **(4)** A man of Manasseh (1 Chron. 5:24). **(5)** A symbolic name in Hos. 2:16 for Yahweh that is transliterated as "Ishi" in some English translations (KJV, ASV) but is spelled differently in Hebrew than the individuals' names listed above. This name means "my husband," and Hosea intends it to replace the name "Baali" as an epithet for Yahweh. Baali can also mean "my husband," but Hosea deems it inappropriate due to its association with the West Semitic deity Baal.

ISHIAH **(1)** A military leader from the tribe of Issachar during the reign of David (1 Chron. 7:3). **(2)** A soldier from the tribe of Benjamin who joined David at Ziklag while he was on the run from Saul (1 Chron. 12:6). **(3)** A Levite from the house of Rehabiah who cast lots in the presence of King David, Zadok, and Ahimelek (1 Chron. 24:21). **(4)** A Kohathite Levite from the family of Uzziel (1 Chron. 23:20; 24:25). **(5)** A descendant of Harim who had married a foreign wife during the Persian period but agreed to divorce her during the reforms of Ezra (Ezra 10:31). The NIV renders the name in Ezra 10:31 as Ishijah (NRSV: "Isshijah"). *See also* Ishijah.

ISHIJAH The NIV rendering in Ezra 10:31 of a Hebrew name elsewhere rendered as "Ishiah" (1 Chron. 7:3; 23:20; 24:21, 25). *See also* Ishiah.

ISHMA A descendant of Etam and a member of the tribe of Judah (1 Chron. 4:3).

ISHMAEL **(1)** The son of Abraham and Hagar (Gen. 16:11–16; 17:18–26; 21:8–21; 25:12–17; 28:9; 36:3; 1 Chron. 1:28–31), and the progenitor of the Ishmaelites. **(2)** A descendant of Saul (1 Chron. 8:38; 9:44). **(3)** Father of Zebadiah, overseer of the judges appointed by Jehoshaphat (2 Chron. 19:4–11). **(4)** Son of Nethaniah and chief officer of the royal house who assassinated Gedaliah, the Babylonian-appointed governor of Judah, and then fled to Egypt (2 Kings 25:23–26). **(5)** A military captain (2 Chron. 23:1). **(6)** A priest who agreed to divorce his foreign wife and provided an offering for his guilt (Ezra 10:18, 22).

ISHMAELITES The ethnic group said to be the descendants of Ishmael's sons from Gen. 25:12–16. They are mentioned a few times in the OT, including an appearance as the traders who take Joseph down to Egypt (Gen. 37:25–36; see also Gen. 39:1; Judg. 8:24; Ps. 83:6). In Gen. 37, these traders are also called Midianites, often understood as a subgroup of Ishmaelites. The Ishmaelites maintained a Bedouin lifestyle and were a considerable power in the northern Arabian Desert, with their rise to prominence beginning in the eighth century BC and finally fading in the third century BC. Both Jewish and Islamic traditions consider the Ishmaelites (and Ishmael) to be the origins of the Arab people.

ISHMAIAH **(1)** The leader of David's thirty mighty men who joined him at Ziklag (1 Chron. 12:4). He was from Gibeon, the city that tricked Israel into making a treaty with it during the conquest (Josh. 9). **(2)** The chief of Zebulun during the time of David (1 Chron. 27:19).

ISHMERAI One of the sons of Elpaal, he was the head of one of the Benjamite houses in the genealogy of Benjamin (1 Chron. 8:18). His name does not appear anywhere else in biblical or extrabiblical literature.

ISHOD *See* Ishhod.

ISHPAH One of the sons of Beriah son of Elpaal in the genealogy of Benjamin (1 Chron. 8:16). The name is also transliterated as "Ispah."

ISHPAN One of the sons of Shashak son of Beriah in the genealogy of Benjamin (1 Chron. 8:22).

ISHTAR A Mesopotamian goddess also known by the Sumerian name “Inanna.” She was a goddess of both love/sexual attraction and war and was associated with the evening star (Venus). Ishtar is prominent in Mesopotamian literature and appears in the Epic of Gilgamesh, but she is not mentioned directly in the Bible. It is likely, however, that Esther’s name is derived from this goddess, and it is at least possible that Ishtar is the Queen of Heaven in Jer. 7:18; 44:17–25.

ISHTOB The Hebrew for this name, *’ish tob*, occurs only in 2 Sam. 10:6, 8. The KJV takes “Ishtob” as a simple place name. Other translations (e.g., NIV, NRSV, ESV, ASV) take these two Hebrew words as referring to the “men of Tob.” In this case, *’ish* is taken as a collective singular meaning “men,” and *tob* is the place name also occurring in Judg. 11:3, 5. Either way, “Ishtob” or “Tob” refers to a region in the kingdom of Aram, located north to northwest of Israel. In 2 Sam. 10:6, 8 this is one of the parts of Aram from which the Ammonites hired troops to fight against David.

ISHUAH *See* Ishvah.

ISHUAI, ISHUI *See* Ishvi.

ISHVAH One of the five offspring of the patriarch Asher (Gen. 46:17; 1 Chron. 7:30; KJV: “Ishuah/Isuah”). In Num. 26:44–47, where the descendants of Ishvah’s three brothers are named, Ishvah is omitted. Either he did not have offspring, or the name “Ishvah” is a variant spelling of “Ishvi,” another of Asher’s sons.

ISHVI **(1)** A son of Asher, he immigrated to Egypt at the time of Jacob and Joseph (Gen. 46:17; 1 Chron. 7:30). He is named as the ancestor of a clan of the tribe of Asher at the time of the second census in the wilderness (Num. 26:44). **(2)** One of the sons of Saul and Ahinoam (1 Sam. 14:49).

ISHVITE *See* Ishvi.

ISKAH The daughter of Abraham’s brother Haran (Gen. 11:29). Some rabbinic commentators identify Sarai and Iskah, probably loosely based on the portrayal of Abraham and Sarai as half-siblings (Gen. 20:12).

ISLAND Usually, a land mass smaller than a continent and completely surrounded by water. But in the OT especially, references to unnamed islands may also indicate coastlands or represent groups of people or nations. Twice in Isaiah, islands are listed as a people group, along with specific nations, as recipients of God’s providence (11:11; 66:19). Residents of the Phoenician seaport of Tyre are referred to as “people of the island” (23:2, 6). Unnamed islands are included in God’s judgment, restoration, and deliverance of Israel (40:15; 41:1, 5; 42:4, 10, 12, 15; 49:1; 51:5; 59:18; 60:9).

Islands are personified as terrified recipients of God’s judgment against Tyre (Ezek. 26:18) and in the final judgment against Babylon (Rev. 16:20; cf. 6:14). Wild beasts of the desert and of the islands ransack lands desolated by God’s judgment (Isa. 13:22; 34:14; Jer. 50:39 KJV).

The specific Mediterranean islands named in the NT are predominantly associated with Paul’s missionary journeys in the book of Acts (but see 4:36; 11:19–20). Paul and Barnabas preach on Cyprus at the beginning of Paul’s first journey (13:4–13). The Aegean island of Samothrace is a stopping point in Paul’s second journey (16:11). He approaches Chios and Samos, off the coast of modern-day Turkey, on his third journey (20:15) and stops at Kos and Rhodes (21:1). Paul’s ship, taking him as a prisoner to Rome, encounters a storm off Crete (27:12–13), passes the small island of Cauda (27:16), and is wrecked on Malta (28:1–11). Finally, the apostle John experiences his apocalyptic vision on the Aegean island of Patmos (Rev. 1:9).

Patmos, the island to which John was exiled when he wrote the book of Revelation.

ISMACHIAH *See* Ismakiah.

ISMAIAH *See* Ishmaiah.

ISMAKIAH One of ten Levitical administrators responsible for managing the “contributions, tithes and dedicated gifts” brought to the temple during the reign of Hezekiah (2 Chron. 31:12–13). They served under the Levite brothers Konaniah and Shimei, who had been appointed by King Hezekiah and Azariah, the official in charge of the temple.

ISPAH *See* Ishpah.

ISRAEL The name “Israel” (Heb. *yisra’el*) means “God struggles” or “one who struggles with

God.” **(1)** Jacob’s appointed name after he “struggled with God” (Gen. 32:28; cf. 35:10). Jacob’s descendants are called “Israelites” or “children of Israel” (Josh. 3:17; 7:25; Judg. 8:27; Jer. 3:21) and the “house of Israel” (Exod. 16:31; 40:38). **(2)** After the exile, the designation “Israel” gained national significance. “Israel” is rarely a geographical designation (cf. 2 Kings 5:2; 2 Chron. 30:25; 34:7; Ezek. 27:17; 40:2), suggesting that the significance of the term is in the political and religious aspects (cf. Egyptian Merneptah Inscription). **(3)** After the death of Saul, ten tribes arrogated this name, as though they were the whole nation (2 Sam. 2:9–10, 17, 28; 3:10, 17; 19:40–43). **(4)** The designation of God’s true people (Ps. 73:1; Isa. 45:17; 49:3; John 1:47; Rom. 9:6; 11:26).

ISRAEL, LAND OF The land of Israel is strategically located on a land bridge between significant geopolitical powers. About the size of New Jersey, it is geographically diverse, ranging from fertile mountains in northern Galilee to the arid Negev steppe. It was indeed the “testing ground of faith” in which God planted his people.

THE “LAND BETWEEN”

The Mediterranean Sea to the west and the great Arabian Desert to the east confined the flow of military and commercial traffic to this land bridge. Throughout most of Israel’s history, Egypt and the succession of political entities in Mesopotamia were intent on expanding their empires; Israel was in between. To a lesser extent, this also involved invaders coming from or through Anatolia (modern Turkey).

The sea and the desert also affect the weather patterns as Israel is dependent on rainfall in the winter months and dew in the summer for its continued agricultural fertility. The promises regarding the “early and latter rains” (autumn and spring) indicate blessing (Deut. 11:14; Jer. 5:24; Joel 2:23). The prospects of drought and famine hover over the land. These vulnerabilities to enemy attack and potential lack of rainfall figure prominently in God’s challenge to faithful obedience (Deut. 11:10–17; 28:25).

GEOGRAPHICAL REGIONS

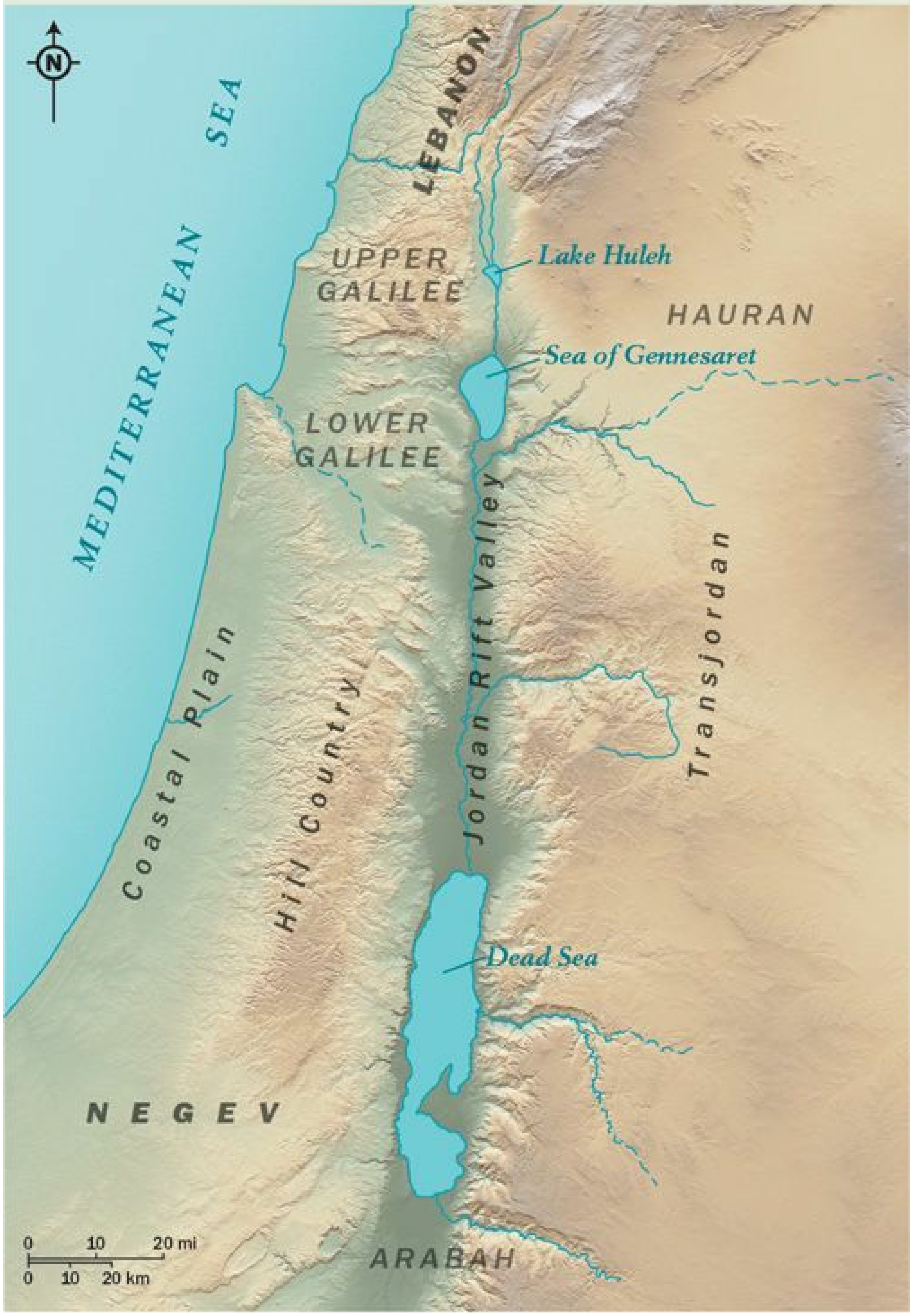
There are four north-south longitudinal zones that help to define the geography of Israel. From west to east, they are the coastal plain, the hill country, the Jordan Rift Valley, and Transjordan. South of these zones lies the Negev, a marginal region between Israel proper and Sinai.

Coastal plain. The coastal plain extends almost the entire length of Israel, with the exception of Mount Carmel’s promontory, jutting out into the Mediterranean Sea. Because of the straight coastline, there are no natural good harbors as there are farther north in Lebanon. This region characteristically was controlled by more cosmopolitan and generally hostile non-Israelites, the most notable being the Philistines in the south. As a result of these factors, the Israelites generally were not a seafaring people, and in fact they seemed to view the sea as a place of chaos and danger (e.g., Pss. 42:7; 74:13–14; Jon. 2:2–7).

Much of the coastal plain was swampy in antiquity due to calcified sandstone ridges along the coastline that prevented runoff from the hills from flowing unimpeded into the sea. In addition, sand dunes along the coast were obstacles to travel. Because this region was relatively flat and easily traversed along the eastern edge, the International Coastal Highway skirted the swamps and dunes and carried the major traffic through the land. Erosion from the hill country to the east brought excellent soil to the plain. Once the swamps were drained in the twentieth century, the plains became fertile farming areas.

The coastal plain has significant subdivisions. To the north of Mount Carmel, the Plain of Akko includes a crescent-shaped area around the city of Akko and extends to Rosh HaNikra, a promontory at the boundary with Lebanon. Immediately south of Mount Carmel is the small Plain of Dor, generally under the control of foreigners and not significant in the biblical text. The Crocodile River separates the Plain of Dor from the Sharon Plain. In the early first century AD, Herod the Great built Caesarea Maritima on the site of Strato's Tower along the coast of the Sharon Plain and constructed an immense artificial harbor (Josephus, *Ant.* 15.331–41). It was Herod's intent for Caesarea to serve as the entry point for Roman culture into what he considered to be the backwaters of Palestine. In God's plan, however, the process was reversed: Caesarea became a major Christian center, and the gospel went out through the entire Roman Empire.

The Yarqon River, with its source at Aphek, separates the Sharon and the Philistine plains. Because this created a bottleneck for the International Coastal Highway, whoever controlled Aphek had a military and commercial advantage. It is significant that the Philistines were at Aphek when the Israelites took the ark of the covenant to battle (1 Sam. 4). The Philistine Plain extends fifty miles south to Besor Wadi (dry riverbed) in the western Negev (see below). Its width ranges from about ten miles in the north to twenty-five miles in the south. The five significant Philistine cities were Gaza, Ashkelon, Ashdod, Gath, and Ekron.



ISRAEL'S GEOGRAPHICAL REGIONS

N
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
LEBANON
UPPER GALILEE
Lake Huleh
HAURAN
Sea of Gennesaret
LOWER GALILEE
Jordan Rift Valley
Transjordan
Coastal Plain
Hill Country
Dead Sea
NEGEV
ARABAH
0 10 20 mi
0 10 20 km

Hill country. A mountainous spine runs from the north to the south, with several aberrations due to seismic activity in the distant geologic past. The hill countries of Judah, Benjamin, Ephraim, and Manasseh are in the southern two-thirds of the country. Because the terrain is rugged, with steep V-shaped valleys, these regions are somewhat more isolated and protected, especially in Judah and Ephraim. Travel in the interior is along the north-south ridge, often called the “way of the patriarchs” because Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob journeyed this route, stopping at Shechem, Bethel, Salem (Jerusalem), Hebron, and finally Beersheba at the southern end of the mountain range. Agriculture in the hill country is excellent when there is sufficient rainfall. The hard limestone bedrock means that springs are bountiful and the eroded terra rossa soil is productive. The triad of crops that appears in the Bible includes grain (“bread”), new wine, and oil (Deut. 11:14; Joel 1:10), noted in the order in which they are harvested.

West of the Judean hill country are lower, rolling foothills known as the Shephelah. Cut through by five significant east-west valleys, this region was a buffer zone between the people living in the hill country and the Philistines or other foreign forces passing through on the International Coastal Highway. When Israel was particularly vulnerable, these valleys served as invasion routes into the heartland of Judah. The most famous of these, the Elah Valley, was the site of the face-off between David and the Philistine warrior Goliath (1 Sam. 17).

On the eastern side of the hill country, especially in the tribal areas of Judah and Benjamin, lies the wilderness. Because most of the precipitation falls on the western slopes of the mountain range, rainfall for the regions right around the Dead Sea (in the “rain shadow”) is less than four inches per year. Sparsely inhabited, the wilderness was occasionally a place of refuge, as when David was fleeing from Saul (1 Sam. 23–26). Generally, it was viewed as a place to pass through. When the Israelites conquered the land, they traversed the wilderness to get to the central Benjamin Plateau (Josh. 10:9–10). David fled through the wilderness when Absalom took over the kingdom (2 Sam. 15–16). When Jesus traveled from Jericho (below sea level) to Jerusalem, he climbed through the wilderness to an elevation of about twenty-five hundred feet above sea level. Shepherds grazed their flocks in this area during the winter wet months and then migrated farther north and west as the dry season advanced. Some chose to withdraw into the wilderness, most notably the Qumran community along the northwestern shore of the Dead Sea and the later monastic communities.

The major city in the rugged hill country of Ephraim was Shiloh, a well-protected location for the tabernacle and the ark of the covenant early in Israel’s history (Judg. 18:31; 1 Sam. 1–4). In fact, the decision to take the ark out to battle against the Philistines at Aphek was catastrophic. The tribal territory of Manasseh, north of Ephraim, was more open to foreign influence. The major cities were Shechem, lying between Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal, locations for the renewal of the covenant (Josh. 8:30–35; 24:1), and Samaria, eventually the capital of the northern kingdom. When Omri moved the capital west to Samaria (1 Kings 16:24), it was a bid for more connection with cosmopolitan coastal communities and particularly with the nation of Phoenicia to the northwest. Omri’s son Ahab married the Phoenician princess Jezebel, cementing the alliance and bringing Baal worship to Israel with even greater force.

Mount Carmel, to the northwest of Samaria, served as the effective boundary between Israel and the expanding power of the Phoenicians. It was the perfect stage for the confrontation between Elijah and the prophets of Baal and Asherah (1 Kings 18). Due to its elevation (over seventeen hundred feet at its highest point), it normally receives about thirty-two inches of rain per year. At Elijah’s word, however, the rain had ceased for more than three years (1 Kings 17:1; James 5:17), and the glory of Carmel had withered (cf. Isa. 33:9; Amos 1:2; Nah. 1:4). This was a direct challenge to the supposed powers of Baal, the god of storm and rain. The contest apparently took place near the heights of the promontory overlooking the Mediterranean Sea (1 Kings 18:42–43). There are, however, three sections in the entire twenty-four-mile range, each separated from the next by a chalk pass, providing access through the mountain range. At the southeastern end of Mount Carmel lies the Dothan Valley, location of one of the routes connecting the International Coastal Highway with the major Transjordanian highway (see Gen. 37; 2 Kings 6:8–23).

The Dothan Valley rests between Mount Carmel and Mount Gilboa to the east. These two mountains, along with the Jezreel and Harod Valleys on their northern flanks, create a natural barrier between the central hill country and Galilee. Because of the strategic importance of this region, the

Israelites fought early defensive battles against the forces of Jabin king of Hazor (Judg. 4) and against the Midianites camped in the Jezreel Valley (Judg. 7). Later, the Philistines swept through this valley, dividing the southern tribes from those in the north. Saul and his sons lost their lives on Mount Gilboa in this confrontation (1 Sam. 31). The night before the battle, Saul was so troubled by God's silence that he ventured behind enemy lines on Mount Moreh (directly north of Mount Gilboa) to the town of Endor and requested a medium to summon the prophet Samuel (1 Sam. 28). The city of Megiddo, situated on the edge of the Jezreel Valley at the base of Mount Carmel, guarded the most important pass through the mountain and was the site of numerous battles. It may be the basis for the name "Armageddon," "Har Megiddo" in Hebrew (Rev. 16).

North of the Jezreel and Harod Valleys, Galilee can be divided into lower and upper Galilee. The latter is called "upper" because it is both farther north and significantly higher in elevation. Upper Galilee is rugged and relatively isolated. As a result, few biblical events unfolded there. In fact, Galilee is seldom mentioned in the OT, with the exception of Isa. 9:1, the passage that Matthew quotes in speaking of the inauguration of Jesus' ministry in Galilee (Matt. 4:13–16).

The western part of lower Galilee has ridges that run east to west, providing natural conduits for the winds from the Mediterranean Sea as they sweep eastward. This contributes to sudden and strong storms on the Sea of Galilee. The town of Nazareth is nestled near the top of the southernmost ridge, overlooking the Jezreel Valley from the north. This would have afforded Jesus a panoramic view of a historical stage as he was growing up. Nearby was Gath Hepher, hometown of the prophet Jonah (2 Kings 14:25). As Jesus looked east, he would have seen Mount Tabor (Judg. 4–5) and Mount Moreh (Judg. 7; 1 Sam. 31). The "brow of the hill" at Nazareth (Luke 4:29) is a sharp precipice overlooking the Jezreel Valley. Although not mentioned in the Gospels, the Roman city of Sepphoris was only about three miles northwest of Nazareth, and it might have been the place where Joseph was employed as a builder. Eastern lower Galilee is characterized by beautiful rolling hills and valleys that slope down toward the Jordan Valley. Just west of the Sea of Galilee are the cliffs of Arbel, past which the International Coastal Highway made its way as it ran from the Jezreel Valley around Mount Tabor and down into the Jordan Rift Valley.

Jordan Rift Valley. The Jordan Rift Valley, ranging in width from about four to fourteen miles, is a remarkable geological cleft in the earth that extends well beyond the immediate area of Israel. The Arabah, the Dead Sea, the Sea of Galilee, and the Huleh Valley north of the Sea of Galilee lie in the Jordan Rift Valley. In modern times, the Arava (Arabah) refers to the wasteland between the Dead Sea and the Gulf of Eilat (Aqaba), but in the OT the term also included the barren desert north of and around the Dead Sea (Josh. 8:14; 11:2; 1 Sam. 23:24; 2 Sam. 2:29; 4:7). The Dead Sea was called the "Sea of the Arabah" in texts that indicate its role as a boundary marker (Deut. 3:17; 4:49; Josh. 12:3; 2 Kings 14:25).

In the Hebrew Bible, the Dead Sea is called the "Sea of Salt." The mineral content exceeds 30 percent, compared to normal sea salinity of 3–5 percent. These minerals include calcium, potassium, magnesium, and sodium chlorides. Nevertheless, some algae and bacteria do survive in the sea. Bitumen (asphalt) also seeps from the sea floor, especially when there is more seismic activity in the region. The salinity varies, depending on the level of the Dead Sea, which does fluctuate with variations in rainfall. The level is currently receding rapidly, at a rate of almost three feet per year. One reason for this is the increasing demand for water from the headwaters of the Jordan River. The north end of the sea, at about thirteen hundred feet below sea level, is the lowest place on earth, and the depth of the water at that point is more than one thousand feet.

The Jordan River Valley north of the Dead Sea is approximately sixty-five miles long, and the

Jordan River winds for over 120 miles. The name "Jordan" comes from the Hebrew word *yarad*, which means "to descend." The Sea of Galilee is 690 feet below sea level, so there is a significant drop between that point and the north end of the Dead Sea.

Key cities in the Jordan Valley include Jericho, just north of the Dead Sea, and Beth Shan, at the junction of the Harod and Jordan valleys. The first city to be conquered (Josh. 6), Jericho represented the vulnerable "underbelly" of Canaan and paved the way for the campaigns that swept first through the south and then the north (Josh. 9–11). Beth Shan was under Philistine control in the early Israelite period. Later, it became the one Decapolis city west of the Jordan River and was known as Scythopolis.

The Jordan Valley has three sections. The entire expanse is called the "Ghor," an Arabic name. The river valley itself is called the "Zhor," and it includes the "pride" or thickets of the Jordan, a dense tangle of lush underbrush in which lions could be found in the biblical period (Jer. 12:5; 49:19; 50:44; Zech. 11:3). In between the Ghor and the Zhor is the Qatarra, lifeless marl terraces. In antiquity, during flood stage the Jordan River could be a mile wide. The Israelites crossed the Jordan in the springtime, near Passover, when the river was at flood stage (Josh. 3:15; 5:10).

The Jordan River has its headwaters north of the Sea of Galilee at the base of Mount Hermon. It provides a constant source of freshwater coming into the seven-by-thirteen-mile body of water. In addition, there are salt springs in the northwestern corner. These contribute to the good fishing in that part of the sea. The Hebrew name is "Yam [Sea of] Kinnereth" (Num. 34:11; Josh. 12:3; 13:27). It was also known as the Sea of Tiberias (John 6:1; 21:1) and the Lake of Gennesaret (Luke 5:1). This last name comes from the fertile plain around the northwestern corner of the lake and the city of Gennesaret on that plain.

The ministry of Jesus unfolded around the Sea of Galilee after he moved his base of operations from Nazareth to Capernaum (Matt. 4:13), at the northern end of the sea. Nearby were the cities of Bethsaida and Chorazin, which, along with Capernaum, Jesus condemned for not believing even though he worked miracles in their midst (Matt. 11:20–24). The city of Capernaum profited from the industries of fishing and oil pressing. It was also a likely place for a tax collector, as it was close to the border between Herod Antipas's Galilee and Herod Philip's territories to the east. Across the lake, in non-Jewish territory, was the town of Gergesa, perhaps the site where Jesus sent the legion of demons into a herd of pigs (Mark 5:1–20 pars.).

Just north of the Sea of Galilee is an elevated sill, formed by a basalt flow across the Golan Heights and over this section of the Jordan Rift Valley. Hazor, a major site of some two hundred acres, sat astride the sill and dominated the northern region in the Late Bronze and Israelite periods. Hazor is mentioned in texts from both Mari in Mesopotamia and El Amarna in Egypt.

The Huleh Valley, north of the sill, is twenty miles in length and receives about twenty-four inches of rain per year, making it a marshland swamp in antiquity that was called "Lake Semechonitis." The International Coastal Highway made its way along the western edge of the valley, turned eastward past Mount Hermon, and continued to Damascus.

Transjordan. On the eastern side of the Jordan Rift Valley, at the very northern extent of Israel, Mount Hermon rises to nine thousand feet. Abundant precipitation percolating through the limestone results in prolific springs at its base. These are the headwaters of the Jordan River, the two most important of which are at Dan and Caesarea Philippi. With the abundance of water and lush surroundings, it is not surprising that Dan was a tempting location for the tribe of Dan to resettle, given their precarious position between the tribe of Judah and the Philistines to the west. The idols set up at that point (Judg. 18:30–31) established a precedent for Jeroboam's choice to position one of the golden calves there as an alternative to worship in distant Jerusalem (1 Kings 12:29–30). Another name for Caesarea Philippi is “Panias” (modern Arabic, “Banias”), in celebration of the god Pan. The rock face from which the spring poured forth is covered with niches for pagan gods; Herod the Great also built a temple to Augustus. In this context, Peter declared that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the “living” God (Matt. 16:16).

The Jordan Rift Valley and the Dead Sea, with Transjordanian mountains in the background

The region south of Mount Hermon was Bashan in the OT period. In the NT era it consisted of a number of small provinces. One of those was Gaulanitis, which is recognizable in the modern name “Golan.” With significant annual rainfall (about forty inches per year), the natural vegetation includes trees and rich pasture that supports large herds (cf. the “bulls of Bashan” in Ps. 22:12; Ezek. 39:18).

Separating the region of Bashan from Lower Gilead is the Yarmuk River Gorge, a significant natural boundary. There was an ongoing contest between the northern kingdom of Israel and Syria to the northeast to control the key site of Ramoth Gilead (1 Kings 22; 2 Kings 9). Cutting through the elevated Dome of Gilead is the Jabbok River, the site of Jacob’s wrestling match with God (Gen. 32).

The area to the east and south of the Dead Sea includes the plains of Moab (Mishor), extending north of the Arnon River Gorge; geopolitical Moab, between the Arnon and the Zered rivers; and Edom, reaching from the Zered down to the northern end of the Gulf of Eilat (Aqaba). To the east of the Mishor lay the kingdom of Ammon. According to Gen. 19, Moab and Ammon were descendants of Lot by his daughters. When they fled eastward from Sodom and Gomorrah, this was the general area they settled.

Transjordan was significant in the OT as the Israelites skirted Edom, conquered the cities of the

Amorites and the king of Bashan, and encountered Moab en route to the promised land (Num. 20–25). The tribes of Reuben and Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh requested the right to settle in Transjordan after the conquest of the land was completed (Num. 32). In the ensuing centuries these tribes suffered the ravages of war on the eastern front (Judg. 10:8; 1 Sam. 11:1; 2 Kings 15:29; 1 Chron. 5:23–26). In the intertestamental period most of northern and central Transjordan came under Hellenistic control. Decapolis cities were located in Bashan, Gilead, and as far south as Philadelphia, at the site of modern Amman.

Negev. To the south of the Judean hill country lies the Negev, whose name means both "dry" and "south." The biblical Negev is a smaller region shaped somewhat like a bowtie, with Beersheba at the center, Arad in the eastern basin, and Gerar controlling the western basin. The south end of the Philistine plain merges with the western Negev. In the patriarchal period there were tensions over water rights between the herdsmen of Abraham and Isaac and those of the Philistine king Abimelek (Gen. 21:22–34; 26:12–33). Although the region only receives eight to twelve inches of rainfall per year, this was sufficient to sustain small populations, especially if they conserved water. The soil of the Negev is loess, a windblown powder from which the water simply runs off unless catch basins are constructed.

The biblical Negev is bounded by the greater Negev to the south, where rugged limestone ridges predominate. An artificial line drawn from Gaza to Eilat, at the northern end of the Gulf of Eilat, defines the southwestern boundary of the greater Negev; the Jordan Rift Valley is the eastern boundary. The Negev was historically a corridor for spice trade coming from southwestern Arabia and India on the "ship of the desert" (the camel) to reach the Mediterranean markets. The Nabateans, Arab commercial nomads who knew the secrets of the desert, flourished in the spice trade from the fourth to the first centuries BC. Once the Romans co-opted the spice trade, the Nabateans built cities, developed water conservation techniques, and grew extensive vineyards.

THE TESTING GROUND OF FAITH

Because the land is marginal in terms of both sufficient rainfall and national security, God's covenant people faced the constant challenge of obedience. The temptations to worship the Canaanite gods for agricultural fertility and to form alliances with more-powerful neighbors instead of putting their trust in God were powerful. Often they succumbed and then experienced God's chastisement that they might return to him (Lev. 26). Even the land itself would experience pollution due to the sins of its inhabitants (Lev. 18:25). In sum, the land was much more than living space; it was an integral part of the Israelites' identity as God's covenant people. When it was flowing with "milk and honey," the people experienced the *shalom* of God.

ISRAEL, SPIRITUAL The concept of Israel is a complex one in the Bible. It consists of political, ethnic, and spiritual aspects. In distinction from Israel as a political state (the northern kingdom) or as an ethnic nation (sons of Israel, also known as Hebrews or Jews), Israel may also represent a group of people with whom God has established a special relationship. The nature of that relationship is that Yahweh will be their God, and they will be his people (e.g., Exod. 6:7; Lev. 26:12).

"Israel" as a word representing the people of God emerges because of God's dealings with humankind. It begins with God's choice of ethnic Israel. He chooses Israel as he delivers it from Egypt to Canaan. At first, his choice of Israel is a result of his relationship with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Israel) and the covenant that he made with them (see Exod. 3:6–10). At Sinai, God invites the nation of Israel to a covenant in which it will be a treasured possession, a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation (Exod. 19:5–6). The nation accepts but quickly breaks the covenant, and so God threatens to destroy the nation completely (Exod. 32). On the plains of Moab, immediately preceding the conquest of Canaan, Moses and the priests warn the nation that it has become the people of God and so must obey all that God has commanded (Deut. 27:9). Because of the special relationship that God establishes with ethnic Israel, the word "Israel" is extended to represent the people of God.

Since the Israelites were the people of Yahweh, he was to be their God. This aspect of God's relationship with ethnic Israel is clear from the start. In Exod. 6:7 Yahweh promises to make Israel his people and to be their God. At the end of a long list of blessings for Israel's obedience, Lev. 26:12 reads as follows: "I will walk among you and be your God, and you will be my people." As the people of Yahweh, they were expected to obey what he commanded (Deut. 27:9). However, Israel would not obey. The biblical portrait of Israel's history is marked by widespread disobedience, with few exceptions.

Against this background of disobedience, the prophets spoke about the future for the people of God. Hosea prophesies against Israel because the people have abandoned Yahweh as their God, who therefore calls them "not my people" (Hos. 1:9–10); but one day those who are called "not my people" will be God's people (Hos. 2:23). Jeremiah predicts a day in the future in which Israel will be Yahweh's people, and he will be their God (Jer. 24:7; 30:22; 31:1, 33). Ezekiel likewise speaks of such a day in the future (Ezek. 11:20; 14:11; 36:28; 37:23, 27). Even though Israel is often called "the people of God" in Jeremiah and Ezekiel, these passages show that there is some distinction made between all ethnic Israel and Israel as the people of God.

Paul picks up on the distinction between ethnic Israel and Israel as the people of God when he states that not all those who are ethnic Israel (descended from Israel) are Israel (Rom. 9:6). In other words, being a member of ethnic Israel does not guarantee that a person is a member of the people of God. Paul states instead that there is a remnant of ethnic Israel that belongs to the people of God, along with some from the Gentiles (9:23–29). As Paul elaborates further, the people of God are comprised of those who have attained the righteousness that comes from God through faith (9:30–10:13).

The precise relationship of ethnic Israel to spiritual Israel is a topic of much debate. The issue has far-reaching implications for the interpretation of prophecy, the future of ethnic Israel, and the relationship between the OT and the NT. Important passages to examine include Rom. 9:6; 11:1; Gal. 6:16; 1 Pet. 2:1–10. In these passages both ethnic Israel (Rom. 11:1) and the church are regarded as God's people (Gal. 6:16; 1 Pet. 2:1–10).

ISRAELITES The designation "Israelites" signifies the nation of Israel, which can be traced back to the children of Jacob (Gen. 46:8; cf. Exod. 1:9; Num. 1:45). To distinguish themselves from foreigners, Israelites called themselves *'ibrim*, "Hebrews" (Gen. 43:32; Exod. 10:3). During the period of the divided kingdom, the name "Israelites" was used to refer to the Ephraimites (2 Kings 17:6; 18:11); during the Second Temple period, it took on a religious orientation (Sir. 46:10; 47:2; Jdt. 4:11; 2 Macc. 1:25–26). In the NT, true Israelites are not necessarily those descended from Israel or Abraham but rather those who trust in Jesus Christ, who is the fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham (Rom. 9:4–8; Gal. 4:21–31; cf. Rev. 21:12). *See also* Israel, Spiritual.

ISSACHAR **(1)** The ninth son of Jacob, his fifth by Leah (Gen. 30:17–18). Issachar, whose name sounds like the Hebrew phrase "hired man," was so named because Leah "hired" her husband to impregnate her by giving to Rachel some mandrakes that Reuben (Leah's son) had gathered. The patriarch Issachar does not figure prominently in the patriarchal stories of Genesis. The blessing of Issachar in Gen. 49:14–15 reflects the history and folklore of the tribe that bore his name rather than any biblical story. **(2)** The seventh of Obed-Edom's eight sons, temple gatekeepers (1 Chron. 26:5).

ISSACHAR, TRIBE OF One of the twelve tribes of Israel, descended from the ninth son of Jacob, by Leah. The censuses in Num. 1:29; 26:23 indicate Issachar was the third or fourth largest tribe. The territory of Issachar lay southwest of the Sea of Galilee, including the Jezreel Valley (Josh. 19:17–23). In the period of the judges, soldiers of Issachar came to the aid of Deborah and Barak (Judg. 5:15), and the judge Abimelek was an Issacharite (Judg. 10:1). Baasha was also an Issacharite (1 Kings 15:27).

ISSHIAH *See* Ishiah.

ISSHIJAH *See* Ishijah; Ishiah.

ISSUE **(1)** A topic for discussion or concern (Exod. 22:11). **(2)** To publish, announce, or officially declare something, especially a decree of some sort (2 Sam. 14:8; Ezra 4:21). **(3)** In the KJV, offspring or progeny (Gen. 48:6; Isa. 22:24; Matt. 22:25). **(4)** In the KJV, a discharge, including normal menstrual discharge (Lev. 15:25–30), abnormal menstrual discharge (Lev. 15:25–30; Matt. 9:20), discharge as a result of disease (Lev. 15:2–15), or seminal discharge (Ezek. 23:20).

ISSUE OF BLOOD *See* Hemorrhage.

ISUI *See* Ishvi.

ITALIAN COHORT In the NT, *speira* (NRSV: "cohort"; NIV: "regiment") refers to a Roman military unit of six hundred soldiers, one-tenth of a legion. The Gentile centurion Cornelius was an officer of the Italian Cohort in Caesarea Maritima (Acts 10:1), the capital of Palestine under Roman rule. Cornelius commanded a smaller military unit called a "century," an eighty-man subset of the Italian Cohort. "Italy" (Gk. *Italia*) was then, as now, the name of the country of which Rome is the capital.

ITALY The peninsular region roughly corresponding to the modern southern European nation of the same name. Acts 18:2 recounts Paul's meeting of Aquila and Priscilla, who were forced to move from Italy to Corinth because of the emperor Claudius's edict expelling all Jews from Rome. Italy was Paul's destination as he sailed as a prisoner to the imperial courts of Rome after appealing to Caesar in his trial before Porcius Festus (Acts 25:11; 27:1, 6). On this journey, Paul landed in Puteoli and traveled by land through Italy, heading to Rome (Acts 28:12–16). Cornelius the centurion was an officer of the Italian Cohort of the Roman army (Acts 10:1). Hebrews 13:24 includes a greeting from Italian Christians.

ITCH A skin disease, closely related to scabies, characterized by an irritating sensation. Moses gave regulations regarding a variety of skin diseases (Lev. 13:1–14:32). Based on these guiding principles, the priest was able to declare whether a person was clean or unclean. The priest used the term "itch" (Heb. *neteq*) to differentiate a minor skin disease from leprosy, depending on how it developed (Lev. 13:30–37). Moses warned the Israelites that if they failed to live up to their covenant commitment with Yahweh, they would be inflicted with incurable diseases, one of which was itchy skin (Heb. *kheres* [Deut. 28:27]). This disease disqualified its victims from the priesthood (Lev. 21:20). Job suffered from an itching disease (Heb. *shekhin*) and used a potsherd to scratch himself (Job 2:7–8).

ITHAI *See* Ittai.

ITHAMAR The fourth son of Aaron and Elisheba (Exod. 6:23), he, along with his three brothers, was ordained to serve as a priest (Num. 3:2–4; 1 Chron. 24:1–2). Due to the death of Nadab and Abihu, which resulted from their offering an unauthorized sacrifice (Lev. 10:1–2; Num. 26:60–61), Eleazar and Ithamar were the only sons of Aaron left to serve as priests. According to Exod. 38:21, Ithamar directed the recording of the materials used for the tabernacle. He was also specifically placed over the work of the Gershonite and Merarite clans, both of which were appointed to serve in and carry the tent of meeting (Num. 4:28, 33; 7:8).

ITHIEL **(1)** A Benjamite forefather of Sallu, whose family settled in Jerusalem after the return from exile in Babylon (Neh. 11:7). He is not mentioned among Sallu's ancestors in the parallel passage in 1 Chron. 9. **(2)** Along with Ucal, he is mentioned as a recipient of the words of Agur (Prov. 30:1). Both his and his counterpart's names may have symbolic meaning in the proverb. The Hebrew is obscure, and the names are absent in the LXX and have been variously translated (e.g., NRSV: "I am weary, O God, I am weary, O God. How can I prevail?"). Some scholars translate them not as names but as part of a confession of weakness by Agur.

ITHLAH A town listed among the inheritance of the tribe of Dan after the conquest of Canaan under Joshua (Josh. 19:42). It is alternatively spelled "Jethlah." The exact location is unknown; however, its position in the list suggests that it was likely located in the southern portion of the territory of Dan, between Aijalon and Timnah.

ITHMAH The only Moabite mentioned among David's thirty mighty men (1 Chron. 11:46). He is among sixteen men uniquely mentioned by the Chronicler (1 Chron. 11:41–47; cf. 2 Sam. 23:24–39).

ITHNAN A town located in the southern portion of the territory allotted to the tribe of Judah (Josh. 15:23). The location of Ithnan is unknown, though its listing between Hazor and Ziph suggests the eastern Negev.

ITHRA *See* Jether.

ITHRAN **(1)** The third of Dishon's four sons and a grandson of Seir, he was a Horite chief in Edom (Gen. 36:26; 1 Chron. 1:41). The Horites were later displaced and destroyed by the descendants of Esau (Deut. 2:12). **(2)** The tenth of Zophah's eleven sons, he was among the brave warriors of Asher (1 Chron. 7:37). Here, "Ithran" may be a variant of "Jether." *See also* Jether.

ITHREAM The sixth son fathered by David while he was reigning from Hebron, born to Eglah, the sixth wife he married there (2 Sam. 3:5; 1 Chron. 3:3).

ITHRITE A family unit among the descendants of Caleb and within the clan of Kiriath Jearim

(1 Chron. 2:53). Two of David’s mighty men, Ira and Gareb, were Ithrites (2 Sam. 23:38; 1 Chron. 11:40). Associations with Jether or Jethro or the town Jatti are inconclusive, as are speculations of their non-Israelite origin.

ITTAHKAZIN *See* Eth Kazin.

ITTAI **(1)** A Gittite soldier and commander of six hundred men who joined with King David and his men as they were fleeing Jerusalem, which had been overtaken by Absalom. Despite his recent arrival and against David’s noble objections, Ittai remained faithful to David, earning him David’s confidence (2 Sam. 15:19–22). As David prepared for the battle that would claim Absalom’s life, he named Ittai as commander of a third of his forces, making him equal to Joab and Abishai (2 Sam. 23:29 [NIV: “Ithai”). He is not subsequently mentioned. **(2)** The son of Ribai, he was a Benjamite and one of David’s thirty mighty men (2 Sam. 23:29; “Ithai” in 1 Chron. 11:31).

ITUREA A predominantly Gentile territory north of Galilee at the base of Mount Hermon (present-day Syria). It is mentioned by name only once, as one of two territories ruled by Herod Philip, half brother of Herod Antipas (Luke 3:1). Philip built his headquarters in a region of Iturea that he named “Caesarea Philippi” after himself and the Roman emperor Augustus. Jesus and his disciples traveled northward from the Sea of Galilee and Bethsaida through the villages around Caesarea Philippi in Iturea (Matt. 16:13; Mark 8:27), where Peter confessed Jesus as the Christ. The origin of the name “Iturea” is uncertain. It may reflect earlier Arab inhabitants descended from Jetur, a son of Ishmael (Gen. 25:15; 1 Chron. 1:31; 5:19).

IVAH *See* Avva.

IVORY Ivory artifacts from the Chalcolithic, Late Bronze, and Iron Ages, as well as the Greco-Roman and Byzantine periods, have been found in the Levant. This material was African and Asian elephant tusk and hippopotamus tusk or teeth from Egypt. Herds of elephants are thought to have roamed Syria into the Iron Age. Ivory was also brought from other locales (2 Chron. 9:17, 21). Ivory objects were luxury items and symbols of wealth (1 Kings 22:39; Amos 3:15; 6:4) and were considered to be of great beauty (cf. Song 5:14; 7:4). Bone was also a medium for some fine objects, but more often for utilitarian items such as awls, pins, spindle whorls, and handles.

Chalcolithic finds from Beersheba (c. 3300 BC) include male and female figurines as large as 33 cm tall. Late Bronze Age (1550–1200 BC) plaques depicting feasts and military scenes were found at Megiddo. From the Iron Age, Samaria has yielded numerous ivory finds, including furniture, inlays, and sculptures of cherubs, and Sennacherib lists similar items among the spoils of his campaign in 701 BC. In later periods, fewer ivory artifacts are found (but note Rev. 18:12).

Incised ivory from a hippopotamus tooth (Megiddo, 1300–1200 BC)

IVVAH *See* Avva.

IYE ABARIM A place where the Israelites camped during the wilderness wanderings (Num. 21:11; 33:44). The name apparently is abbreviated as "Iyim" in Num. 33:45. The text locates it in "the desert that faces Moab toward the sunrise." Abarim is the mountain range from which Moses viewed the promised land (Num. 27:12; 33:47–48; Deut. 32:49). *See also* Abarim.

IYIM **(1)** A town allotted to Judah under Joshua (Josh. 15:29; several versions read "Iim"). Its precise location is unknown, but it was in the far south of Israel's territory, in the Negev region (see Josh. 15:21). **(2)** A variant of "Iye Abarim" (Num. 33:45; KJV: "Iim").

IZAL The NIV spelling (ESV, NRSV, NASB: "Uzal") for one of the places that traded with Tyre cited by Ezekiel in a lament over Tyre (Ezek. 27:19). It perhaps is associated with the district of Izalla, mentioned in Akkadian texts as having paid tribute in wine to Ashurnasirpal.

IZEHAR, IZEHARITE *See* Izhar.

IZHAR The second of the four sons of Kohath from the tribe of Levi (Exod. 6:18; Num. 3:19; 1 Chron. 6:2, 18; 23:12), he had three sons: Korah, Nepheg, and Zikri (Exod. 6:21). Korah, along with some Reubenites, rose against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness to challenge their status as leaders. As a result, Korah and his associates, along with their possessions, were swallowed alive by the earth (Num. 16:1–34). Heman, the temple musician and king David’s seer, was a descendant of Izhar (1 Chron. 6:33–38). *See also* Zohar.

IZHARITE *See* Izhar.

IZLIAH The sixth of the seven sons of Elpaal, he was one of the family heads of the Benjamites who lived in Jerusalem (1 Chron. 8:18). The KJV transliterates the name as Jezliah; most English versions have Izliah.

IZRAHIAH The son of Uzzi, he had four sons, all of whom were chiefs from the tribe of Issachar. Izrahiah’s family clan had the most fighting men in the tribe of Issachar and was noted for taking many wives and having many children, which probably made this clan a military powerhouse (1 Chron. 7:3–4).

IZRAHITE Name of the family clan or place of origin of Shamhuth, the commander of the fifth of David’s twelve military divisions (1 Chron. 27:8).

IZRI A son of Jeduthun and leader of the fourth division of temple musicians, who served under the supervision of Asaph, Jeduthun, and Heman (1 Chron. 25:11). *See also* Zeri.

IZZIAH A priest and descendant of Parosh who disobeyed the word of God and married a foreign wife (Ezra 10:25; KJV: “Jeziah”).

J

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J *See* Documentary Hypothesis.

JAAKAN The third son of Ezer, and a grandson of Seir (1 Chron. 1:42). The parallel genealogy in Gen. 36:27 lists him as “Akan,” which the NIV uses in both places. *See also* Akan; Bene Jaakan.

JAAKANITES *See* Beeroth Bene-jaakan; Bene Jaakan.

JAAKOBAH One of the tribal leaders of Simeon (1 Chron. 4:36).

JAALA An ancestor of a family that belonged to the “servants of Solomon” (Ezra 2:55–56; Neh. 7:57–58) and returned from Babylonian exile with Zerubbabel around 539 BC. Little is known about this group except that it likely performed menial functions at the temple, as it is grouped with the “temple servants” (*see* Nethinim). The name of the group suggests that it was formed during the period of Solomon, though it could have been so named because Solomon built the first temple.

JAALAM *See* Jalam.

JAANAI *See* Janai.

JAAR A place about ten miles west of Jerusalem (Ps. 132:6) whose name means “forest.” The description “fields of Jaar” refers to Kiriath Jearim (“Jearim” is the plural of “Jaar”), where the ark of the covenant, after its time with the Philistines, lay for twenty years before David brought it to Jerusalem (see 1 Sam. 6:21–7:2; 1 Chron. 13:6).

This modern town sits on the ancient site of Kiriath Jearim.

JAARE-OREGIM A transliteration of the Hebrew phrase *ya'are 'oregim*, which occurs in 2 Sam. 21:19 (NIV mg.). If it is a personal name, then he is the Bethlehemite father of Elhanan, who is said to have killed Goliath. If it is a scribal error, then the parallel passage in 1 Chron. 20:5 may be viewed as the corrected reading, stating that "Elhanan son of Jair killed Lahmi the brother of Goliath." Since both accounts agree that the shaft of Goliath's spear was "like a weaver's rod," it is probable that the scribe of Samuel mistakenly repeated the word *'oregim* ("weavers") from the end of the verse and connected it with the name "Jair."

JAARESHIAH An individual named in the genealogy of King Saul the Benjamite (1 Chron. 8:27). He was the fourth of Jeroham's six sons.

JAASAI, JAASAU *See* Jaasu.

JAASIEL **(1)** The son of Abner (the general who defected from Saul to David), Jaasiel was one of David's army officers who was in charge of a militia provided by the tribe of Benjamin (1 Chron. 27:21). **(2)** One of David's thirty mighty warriors (1 Chron. 11:47). It is possible that these two men are the same person.

JAASU One of the descendants of the priests listed in Ezra who were guilty of marrying a foreign wife (Ezra 10:37). The KJV has the name as "Jaasau," and the NKJV as "Jaasai." The variant spellings result from the MT text having different Kethib (what is written) and Qere (what is read) forms of the name.

JAAZANIAH **(1)** The son of the Maakathite and one of the army officers of Judah who pledged his support to Gedaliah, the Babylonian-appointed governor of Judah, after Jerusalem's defeat by Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonians. Jaazaniah apparently fled to Egypt after the assassination of Gedaliah because he feared retribution by the Babylonians (2 Kings 25:22–26; Jer. 40:7–14). **(2)** A clan leader of the Rekabites (Jer. 35:3). The Rekabites refused to drink wine and have vineyards, fields, or crops and lived in tents as a sign of their piety to their ancestors. The prophet Jeremiah uses them as an example of the kind of obedience that God desires of all the people of Judah (Jer. 35). **(3)** The son of Shaphan, he was one of the seventy elders of Israel who in Ezekiel's vision were guilty of offering incense to idols that had been placed in the Jerusalem temple (Ezek. 8:11). **(4)** The son of Azzur, he was one of the leaders whom Ezekiel prophesies against when they try to comfort the people and downplay their sin (Ezek. 11:1).

JAAZER Variant spelling of the place and regional name "Jazer" (Num. 21:32; 32:35 KJV).

JAAZIAH A Levite who was the son of Merari and the father of Beno, Shoham, Zakkur, and Ibri (1 Chron. 24:26–27).

JAAZIEL One of the Levitical musicians who was part of the celebration and procession when the ark of the covenant was brought into Jerusalem by David (1 Chron. 15:18).

JABAL The son of Lamech and Adah, and the brother of Jubal (also born to Adah) and Tubal-Cain (born to Lamech and Zillah). Jabel is identified as "the father of those who live in tents and raise livestock" (Gen. 4:20).

JABBOK A key tributary of the Jordan River, flowing about thirty-seven miles. The name "Jabbok" (Heb. *yabboq*) may come from the Hebrew word *baqaq*, describing the "gurgling" sound of the water. The Jabbok is the modern Wadi Zarqa, so named for its blue water. Located in the Transjordan, where ancient cities populate the region (e.g., Adam, Gerasa, Mahanaim, Penuel), it rises in springs near Amman and flows north, then turns northwest and then due west, finally emptying into the Jordan near Adam, about twenty miles north of the Dead Sea. Famously, Jacob wrestled with "a man" at the Jabbok (Gen. 32:22–27), memorialized by the narrator's wordplays: "Jabbok" (*yabboq*), "Jacob" (*ya'aqob*), and "he wrestled" (*ye'abeq*).

The Jabbok River

JABESH GILEAD The exact location of the town Jabesh Gilead is unknown, but biblical descriptions place it in the northwest Gilead region. It may have been located near the Wadi Yabis. Both Tell el-Maqlub and Tell Abu Kharaz have been suggested as possible sites. Jabesh Gilead played prominent, if tragic, roles in three biblical events. Judges 19–20 records how the gross immorality of some men from Benjamin resulted in the other Israelite tribes attacking and nearly destroying the tribe of Benjamin. Because the people of Jabesh Gilead failed to assemble with the Israelite tribes at Mizpah (Judg. 21:8), all of its people were killed except for four hundred virgins, who were given as wives to the surviving Benjamites. Years later, 1 Sam. 11 records Saul, a Benjamite, saving Jabesh Gilead from the Ammonites. When the people of Jabesh Gilead heard that the Philistines had hung the corpses of Saul and his sons on the wall of Beth Shan, their warriors traveled all night to retrieve them and give them an honorable burial at Jabesh (1 Sam. 31:11–12). David blessed them for their bravery and kindness to Saul (2 Sam. 2:4–6).

JABEZ **(1)** Called "more honorable than his brothers," Jabez was granted his request that God bless and protect him (1 Chron. 4:9–10). The incident was highlighted to show that God answers prayer. **(2)** In 1 Chron. 2:55 a town known as the residence of clans of the "scribes" (NIV; cf. LXX) or the "Sopherites" (NIV mg.; cf. NAB).

JABIN The name “Jabin” is most likely a royal dynastic name at the city of Hazor (similar to “Ramesses” in Egypt or “Henry” in England). The name appears as early as the seventeenth century BC in the Mari archives, where Hazor’s king is Yabni-Addu (meaning “[the god] Addu built/created”). In the Bible, Jabin appears to be the name of two different rulers. **(1)** The king of Hazor during Joshua’s “northern campaign.” He formed a coalition of Canaanite kings who battled the Israelites at the Waters of Merom (Josh. 11:1–5). God gave victory to the Israelites, Jabin was killed, and Hazor was burned (Josh. 11:6–14). **(2)** The “king of Canaan, who reigned in Hazor” during the war of Deborah (Judg. 4:2). He was defeated, and his commander, Sisera, was killed by Jael (Judg. 4:14–23).

JABNEEL **(1)** A town near the Mediterranean Sea marking the western end of the northern boundary of land allocated to Judah after the conquest of Canaan (Josh. 15:11). It probably is identical with Jabneh (2 Chron. 26:6), a Philistine city whose walls were destroyed by king Uzziah. Known as Jamnia in the Maccabean period, it became an important center of Judaism after AD 70. **(2)** A town marking the southern boundary of Naphtali (Josh. 19:33). The site may be Tel Yinam, near the Sea of Galilee.

JACAN, JACHAN *See* Jakan.

JACHIN, JACHINITE *See* Jakin.

JACINTH A gem that has a reddish, orange, or brown tint. It is listed as one of the twelve gems mounted on the high priest’s breastpiece, although its exact identification is uncertain (Exod. 28:19; 39:12). One of the twelve foundations of the “Holy City, Jerusalem,” described in Rev. 21:20 is decorated with jacinth.

JACKAL About the size of a large dog, the wolflike golden jackal (*Canis aureus*) is a scavenging predator native to Israel, still widely found there. Jackals are primarily but not exclusively carnivorous. They consume carrion, dig dens, are aggressive, and have a distinctive howl (Mic. 1:8). Jackals prowl in packs, favoring dry, barren terrain. They are strongly associated with ruins in the OT (Isa. 13:22; 34:13; Jer. 9:11). The NT does not specifically refer to jackals.

In the OT, the English translation “jackal” generally represents one of two Hebrew words: *tan* is consistently translated “jackal,” while *shu’al* is usually translated “fox” but can also mean “jackal.” Instances of the latter include Ps. 63:10; Lam. 5:18; Ezek. 13:4. Jackals and foxes can occupy the same general area, but foxes are loners and prefer a wooded habitat. Thus, it has been argued that the foxes of Judg. 15:4–5 are better understood to have been jackals.

JACKAL WELL Nehemiah “went out through the Valley Gate toward the Jackal Well and the Dung Gate” to inspect the ruined walls of Jerusalem (Neh. 2:13). The Hebrew phrase (*’en hattannin*) has been variously translated as “Dragon’s Well” (NASB), “Dragon’s Spring” (NRSV), “Serpent’s Well” (HCSB), and “Snake Fountain” (GW). The LXX renders it as “fountain of the figs.” Most scholars identify the location with En Rogel, outside the Dung Gate, where the Hinnom and Kidron Valleys meet.

JACOB **(1)** Renamed “Israel” by God (Gen. 32:28), he was the son of Isaac and Rebekah and was the father of twelve sons, whose descendants became the twelve tribes. Half the book of Genesis (25:19–49:33) narrates his story and that of his sons. The middle chapters of Genesis focus on his struggles with his brother, Esau, and with his uncle Laban, and the later chapters focus on his children Dinah, Judah, and particularly Joseph during his time in Egypt.

According to the Genesis narrative, Jacob's mother, Rebekah, was barren, but God heard Isaac's prayer, and she gave birth to twins, Esau the older and Jacob the younger (25:21–26). He was named "Jacob," which means "supplanter," because he gripped Esau's heel during their birth. Isaac favored Esau, but Jacob was, so to speak, a "mama's boy" (25:27–28). Jacob supplanted Esau twice, initially when Esau sold Jacob his birthright as firstborn son for some stew and later when Jacob pretended to be Esau, tricking his elderly father into giving him Esau's blessing (25:29–34; 27:1–29). After the second incident, Esau swore to kill his brother, so Jacob fled to Harran, where his uncle Laban lived (27:41–28:5).

En route to Harran, Jacob had a dream of a stairway to heaven, and God spoke to him, repeating the Abrahamic promise of land, blessing, many descendants, and divine presence (28:10–22). He named the place "Bethel" ("house of God") and made a vow to God. Upon his arrival in Harran, he fell in love with Laban's younger daughter, Rachel, and agreed to work seven years to marry her (29:9–30). When the wedding night came, Laban replaced Rachel with her older sister, Leah, and somehow Jacob did not notice until the next day. Jacob then agreed to work seven more years for both daughters.

The text records the births of Jacob's thirteen children (29:31–30:24). Since Jacob loved Rachel more than her sister, God blessed Leah with four sons (Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah), while Rachel remained barren. Following the precedent set by Sarah with Hagar, Rachel offered to Jacob her maidservant Bilhah, who gave birth to two more sons (Dan and Naphtali). Leah then offered her maidservant Zilpah, with whom Jacob fathered two more sons (Gad and Asher). Leah gave birth to two more sons (Issachar and Zebulun) and one daughter (Dinah). Finally, God opened Rachel's womb, and she gave birth to Jacob's last sons, Joseph and Benjamin, but she died when the latter was born (35:16–19).

Jacob ended up working for Laban a total of twenty years, during which God blessed both of them. God eventually told Jacob to return to the land of his ancestors, but Jacob did not tell Laban because he was worried that Laban would not allow Jacob to take his daughters to a distant land. Laban pursued Jacob, and eventually they made a covenant of peace (31:22–55).

After departing from Laban, Jacob received word that Esau was coming to meet him with four hundred men (32:1–6). Jacob was fearful and prayed for deliverance from his brother, reminding God of the promise to give him descendants as numerous as "the sand of the sea" (32:7–12). Jacob spent the night alone, and his prayers were answered in an unusual way in the form of a wrestler whom the text describes as both human and divine (32:22–32). The wrestler could not defeat Jacob, but he did put Jacob's hip out of joint. The wrestler asked Jacob his name, but he had the authority to change it to "Israel" ("wrestles with God"). Jacob named the site "Peniel" ("face of God") because he survived his face-to-face meeting with God. The next day, Jacob and Esau met not as foes but as friends, and Jacob told Esau that meeting him was like seeing the face of God (33:1–11).

The family crises that characterized Jacob's life continued in Canaan. His daughter Dinah was raped by the Canaanite Shechem, so her older brothers Simeon and Levi retaliated and killed all the males of his city (chap. 34). After Jacob's favorite son, Joseph, told his brothers about his two dreams in which their sheaves and stars bowed down to him, they sold him into slavery and told Jacob that a wild animal had killed Joseph, prompting Jacob to mourn for many days (chap. 37). Over twenty years later, during a famine in Canaan, Jacob learned that Egypt had grain, so he sent ten of his sons (but not Benjamin) there to purchase grain (42:1–5). When they arrived, the brothers did not recognize the official in charge of grain storage, Joseph, and bowed to him, fulfilling his dreams (42:6–9). When all eleven of the brothers later returned for more food, Joseph orchestrated a test to see if they would allow his younger brother, Benjamin, also to be enslaved, but when Judah sacrificially offered to be enslaved instead, Joseph broke down, revealed his identity, and wept (43:1–45:15).

Joseph told his brothers to bring Jacob and their families to Egypt because the famine would continue for five more years. Joseph rode his chariot out to the land of Goshen to be reunited with his father (46:28–34). In Egypt, Jacob blessed Pharaoh (47:7–10) and Joseph's two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh (chap. 48), and also uttered his final testament, involving blessings and curses on his twelve sons (49:1–28). He died in Egypt at the age of 147, but Joseph buried him in Canaan (47:28; 49:29–50:14).

Jacob is mentioned throughout the OT as a forefather to the nation of Israel (Exod. 2:24; 3:16; Deut. 1:8; 2 Kings 13:23) as well as in Psalms and prophetic literature as a synonym for the nation Israel (Pss. 22:23; 105:23; Isa. 41:8; Jer. 2:4). In the NT, he appears in the genealogies of Jesus (Matt. 1:2; Luke 3:34), alongside Abraham and Isaac (Matt. 8:11; Acts 3:13), and among the heroes of faith (Heb. 11:9, 20–21).

(2) The father of Joseph, who was the husband of Mary the mother of Jesus (Matt. 1:15–16).

JACOB'S WELL At this site Jesus asked a Samaritan woman for a drink (John 4:7). Tradition associates the well with Jacob's camp near Shechem (Gen. 33:18). Today it is often identified as Bir Ya'qub ("the well of Jacob"), near the site of ancient Shechem.

Well often identified as Jacob’s Well, preserved in the Greek Orthodox monastery in modern Nablus

JADA A son of Onam, he was a descendant of Jerahmeel, the firstborn son of Hezron (1 Chron. 2:28, 32).

JADAH A descendant of Saul, the son of Ahaz and father of Alemeth (1 Chron. 9:42), according to some Hebrew manuscripts and the LXX. The MT has “Jarah” (followed by NRSV, NET, KJV). In a parallel list he is named as “Jehoaddah” (1 Chron. 8:36 [KJV: “Jehoadah”]). *See also* Jarah; Jehoaddah.

JADAU *See* Jaddai.

JADDAI A member of the family of Nebo who had taken a foreign wife during the time of Ezra

(Ezra 10:43).

JADDUA **(1)** One of the “leaders of the people” who sealed the renewal of the covenant with God following Ezra’s public reading of the law (Neh. 10:21). **(2)** A high priest in the postexilic period (Neh. 12:11, 22). Jaddua is also known to Josephus (*Ant*. 11.306).

JADON A man from the town of Meronoth who assisted Nehemiah in rebuilding the wall of Jerusalem (Neh. 3:7).

JAEL A Kenite woman, the wife of Heber. The Kenites were allied with the Canaanites, whose king was Jabin and whose chief commander was Sisera. God raised up Deborah as a judge to initiate the overthrow of the Canaanites, who were oppressing his people. Barak, Israel’s chief military officer, should have received the glory, but because of his reluctance to take on the job alone, God promised the glory to a woman (Judg. 4:9). That woman turned out to be Jael, a non-Israelite woman, whose people had friendly relationships with the Canaanites. As Sisera fled after being defeated on the battlefield, he sought refuge in the tent of Jael, who lured him to sleep and then killed him with a tent peg (Judg. 4:17–22). In the victory song sung by Deborah and Barak, she is praised for this act (Judg. 5:24–27).

JAGUR A town that was part of the tribe of Judah’s traditional territorial allotment. It was located in the southern part of Judah, in the Negev (Josh. 15:21).

JAH In Ps. 68:4 the KJV renders the Hebrew word *yah* as “Jah,” a shortened form of the divine name “Yahweh.” It often is part of theophoric names (e.g., “Nehemiah” = “Yah comforts”) and is the direct object in the well-known praise word *hallelujah* (Heb. *halelu-yah*), meaning “praise the LORD.”

JAHATH **(1)** The son of Reaiah of the Zoharite clan from the tribe of Judah, he was the father of Ahumai and Lahad (1 Chron. 4:2). **(2)** The son of Gershon and a grandson of Levi, forefathers of Asaph the temple musician (1 Chron. 6:43). **(3)** A Levite, the firstborn son of Shimei from the Gershonite clan (1 Chron. 23:10–11). **(4)** A Levite, a son of Shelomoth from the Izharite clan (1 Chron. 24:22). **(5)** A Levite descended from Merari, he and Obadiah supervised the work of repairing and restoring the temple during King Josiah’s reforms (2 Chron. 34:12).

JAHAZ A town east of the Jordan where the Israelites defeated Sihon king of the Amorites and took over all his territories (Num. 21:23; Deut. 2:32). The Hebrew name appears as both *yahats* and *yahetsah* and is translated variously as “Jahaz,” “Jahazah,” and “Jahzah.” This town appears to have belonged to the Moabites before they were conquered by Sihon (Num. 21:23–26). It was part of the land allotted to the tribe of Reuben and was given to the Levitical family of Merari (Josh. 13:18; 1 Chron. 6:63). This town was later repossessed by the Moabites. It is referred to on the Moabite Stone (lines 18–21) as a place that an Israelite king had fortified and occupied while fighting against Mesha king of Moab. However, Mesha defeated Israel and took over this city for the Moabites. In prophecies against Moab, both Isaiah and Jeremiah refer to this Moabite town (Isa. 15:4; Jer. 48:34). Although the exact location remains uncertain, several modern locations have been suggested: Libb, Aleiyan, Khirbet el-Medeiyineh, and Khirbet Iskander.

JAHAZAH *See* Jahaz.

JAHAZIAH *See* Jahzeiah.

JAHAZIEL **(1)** One of the Benjamite warriors related to Saul who joined David at Ziklag and supported him against their own kinsmen (1 Chron. 12:4). **(2)** One of the two priests appointed to blow the trumpet regularly before the ark of the covenant (1 Chron. 16:6). **(3)** A Levite, the third son of Hebron from the Kohathite clan (1 Chron. 23:19; 24:23). **(4)** A Levite, the son of Zechariah, and a descendant of Asaph the temple musician from the Gershonite clan. He prophesied before the people of Judah and King Jehoshaphat an oracle of victory over the coalition of the Moabites and the Ammonites (2 Chron. 20:14–17, 20–23). **(5)** The father of Shekaniah, who was the leader of the family of Zattu when they returned with Ezra from exile (Ezra 8:5; 1 Esd. 8:32).

JAHDAI A Calebite, the father of six sons (1 Chron. 2:47).

JAHDIEL One of the seven mighty warriors and family clan leaders from the half-tribe of Manasseh in the Transjordan (1 Chron. 5:24). Their worship of local deities led to Yahweh sending the Assyrians against Manasseh and taking the tribe into exile.

JAHDO A Gadite, the son of Buz (1 Chron. 5:14).

JAHLEEL The third son of Zebulun and a grandson of Jacob (Gen. 46:14), he was the ancestor of the Jahleelite clan in the tribe of Zebulun (Num. 26:26).

JAHLEELITE *See* Jahleel.

JAHMAI A son of Tola, he was one of the family heads and mighty warriors of Tola’s family clan from the tribe of Issachar (1 Chron. 7:2).

JAHWEH *See* YHWH.

JAHZAH *See* Jahaz.

JAHZEEL The first son of Naphtali and a grandson of Jacob (Gen. 46:24 [“Jahziel”]), he was the ancestor of the Jahzeelite clan in the tribe of Naphtali (Num. 26:48).

JAHZEELITE *See* Jahzeel.

JAHZEIAH The son of Tikvah, he, along with a few others, apparently opposed Ezra’s call to divorce foreign wives (Ezra 10:15 [KJV: “Jahaziah”]). However, the text may also be understood as rendered in 1 Esd. 9:14, “Jonathan the son of Asahel and Jahzeiah the son of Tikvah undertook the matter on these terms, and Meshullam and Levi and Shabbethai served with them as judges,” thereby suggesting positive actions from Jahzeiah.

JAHZERAH The father of Adiel and grandfather to Maasai, one of the priests and family heads who returned from exile (1 Chron. 9:12).

JAHZIEL *See* Jahzeel.

JAILER *See* Prison, Prisoner.

JAIR **(1)** A descendant of Manasseh through Makir. He took control of the territory in Gilead that had been given by Moses to Makir. He called the towns, located in the region of Bashan, "Havvoth Jair," which means "villages of Jair" (Num. 32:41; Deut. 3:14; Josh. 13:30; 1 Kings 4:13; 1 Chron. 2:22). **(2)** A Gileadite who judged Israel for twenty-two years following Tola (Judg. 10:3–5). He had thirty sons, each of whom controlled his own city in Havvoth Jair. His Gileadite lineage and occupation of Havvoth Jair make his association with the Jair of Num. 32:41 likely. **(3)** A Benjamite and the father of Mordecai, the cousin of Esther (Esther 2:5). **(4)** The father of Elhanan, who killed Lahmi the brother of Goliath (1 Chron. 20:5). He is referred to as "Jaare-Oregim" in 2 Sam. 21:19 (NIV mg.). *See also* Jaare-Oregim.

JAIRITE A word denoting ethnic origins in 2 Sam. 20:26 describing Ira, David's priest. It either refers to the son of Manasseh (e.g., Num. 32:41) or is a scribal error for "Jattirite."

JAIRUS The father of a twelve-year-old girl whom Jesus raised from the dead (Matt. 9:18–26; Mark 5:21–43; Luke 8:40–56). All three Synoptic accounts of this story record that Jesus, on his way to Jairus's house, healed a woman who had suffered with a hemorrhage for twelve years. Only Mark and Luke name Jairus and identify him as a synagogue leader; Matthew, who shortens the story in several respects to include only the basic elements, merely calls him "a synagogue leader."

JAKAN A leader from the tribe of Gad (1 Chron. 5:13). *See also* Akan.

JAKEH The father of Agur, a contributor to the book of Proverbs (see 30:1).

JAKIM **(1)** A Benjamite in the ancestry of Saul (1 Chron. 8:19). **(2)** A Levite at the time of David who was assigned priestly duties by lot (1 Chron. 24:12).

JAKIN **(1)** A son of Simeon (Gen. 46:10; Exod. 6:15) and the ancestor of the Jakinite clan (Num. 26:12). **(2)** A priest who returned from the exile (1 Chron. 9:10; Neh. 11:10). **(3)** A priest in the line of Aaron (1 Chron. 24:17). **(4)** One of two pillars erected by Solomon and Hiram in the temple (1 Kings 7:21; 2 Chron. 3:17). Together with the other pillar, Boaz, the names form a prayer: "May he [the LORD] establish strength in him [Solomon]" ("Jakin" means "he establishes," and "Boaz" means "may strength be in him"). The pillars did not support anything; thus, they appear to be symbolic and to demonstrate that the temple belonged to Yahweh. *See also* Boaz.

JAKINITE *See* Jakin.

JALAM The second of three sons born to Esau by Oholibamah, one of his Canaanite wives (Gen. 36:5, 14; 1 Chron. 1:35). Jalam became the tribal chief of an Edomite clan (Gen. 36:18).

JALON A son of Ezrah (1 Chron. 4:17), he is one of many descendants of Judah whose genealogical record is given prominence in Chronicles to emphasize the importance of the Davidic line (1 Chron. 2:3–4:23).

JAMBRES *See* Jannes and Jambres.

JAMES The name “James” is a form of the name “Jacob” (Heb. *Ya’aqob*; Gk. *Iakōbos*), which was very popular in the first century. In the NT there are five individuals named “James.”

(1) James the son of Zebedee and the older brother of John. He was martyred by Herod Agrippa I in AD 40 (Mark 1:19; 3:17; Acts 12:2). Eusebius records a tradition from Clement of Alexandria that the individual who brought James before Herod was so moved by James’s testimony that he converted on the spot and was martyred along with James (*Hist. eccl.* 2.9).

ΙΑΚΩ
ΘΕΟΛΟΓΟΣ
ΠΕΤΡΟΣ
ΠΑΥΛΟΣ
ΑΝΔΡΕΑΣ

Ivory carving of five apostles (from left to right: James, John, Peter, Paul, and Andrew) from the Harbaville Triptych

(2) James the son of Alphaeus we know very little about other than that he is consistently listed among the disciples (Mark 3:18; Matt. 10:3; Luke 6:15; Acts 1:13).

(3) James “the younger” (Mark 15:40), whose mother, named “Mary,” appears in Mark 16:1 just as the “mother of James.” In church tradition, he is sometimes identified with James the son of Alphaeus.

(4) James the father of Judas (Luke 6:16; Acts 1:13) is mentioned only to distinguish this Judas from Judas Iscariot.

(5) James the brother of Jesus was an early leader of the Jerusalem church (Matt. 13:55; Mark 6:3; Acts 12:17; 15:13–31; 21:18; 1 Cor. 15:7; Gal. 1:19; 2:9, 12; Jude 1). A number of Jesus’ family members became prominent leaders in the early Christian movement in Palestine, James being the most prominent.

Although he was not one of the twelve disciples and likely did not accept Jesus as the Messiah until after the resurrection (cf. John 7:5; Acts 1:14), James quickly emerged as a key leader in the Jerusalem church, where he served until his death in AD 62. Because the Jerusalem church was the parent of all churches and thus granted a central authority by early Christians, James played an important role by giving leadership and direction to the movement. According to Paul’s account, Jesus singled James out following the resurrection (1 Cor. 15:7), and in Luke’s narrative James is described as the leader of the church (Acts 12:17; 15:13; 21:18)—a depiction confirmed by Paul’s description of James as one of the three “pillars” of the church in Jerusalem (Gal. 2:9). During Paul’s first visit to Jerusalem, James’s standing was such that Paul felt it necessary to name him along with Peter as having seen him there (Gal. 1:19).

From the influential position of leadership in the Jerusalem church, James wrote two letters that shaped the contours of early Christian life. According to Luke, after the pivotal meeting and decision regarding circumcision in Acts 15, James, along with the “apostles and elders” (Acts 15:23), wrote to the Gentile believers to inform them that they would not have to follow the practice of circumcision in order to become followers of Jesus Christ. During the negotiations James provided a key exegetical argument from the OT (Amos 9:11–12 and Jer. 12:15, recorded in Acts 15:16–17) advocating the inclusion of Gentiles in the church. In the Letter of James, he wrote from this position of central authority in Jerusalem to Jewish Christians throughout the Diaspora. Here James again demonstrates his exceptional abilities as an interpreter of the OT regarding Jewish legal (Lev. 19) and wisdom (Prov. 3:34) traditions through the lens of Christ in order to call his readers to wholehearted living.

Memories of James were preserved well into the second century because he was viewed as the model of a pious person. Eusebius cites Hegesippus, a second-century Jewish believer from Jerusalem, who recounts how James was so often found kneeling in prayer for the people that his knees grew hard like a camel’s, and that “because of his unsurpassable righteousness” he was called “the Just” (*Hist. eccl.* 2.23.4–7). The same passage records that because of his confession of Christ before the Jews, James was thrown from the parapet of the temple, stoned, and finally killed by a blow from a fuller’s club (*Hist. eccl.* 2.23.16–18). In addition to these traditions there is a substantial body of apocryphal Christian writings composed in the name of James by individuals during the second and third centuries. These, mainly gnostic, texts promote an almost legendary man of piety and ascetic lifestyle (e.g., *First Apocalypse of James*, *Second Apocalypse of James*, *Apocryphon of James*).

JAMES, LETTER OF The Letter of James has been hailed as possibly the earliest, most Jewish, and most practical of all NT letters. James 3:13 aptly communicates the book’s theme: “Who is wise and understanding among you? Let them show it by their good life, by deeds done in humility that comes from wisdom.” The terms “wise” and “wisdom” occur five times in the book (1:5; 3:13 [2×], 15, 17). Hence, the author instructed his readers on leading a life of faith that was characterized by a wisdom expressed through speech and actions (2:12).

LITERARY FEATURES

The author's employment of picturesque, concrete language has close affinities to OT wisdom literature and reflects Jesus' teaching in the Sermon on the Mount.

James	Matthew
1:2	5:10–12
1:4	5:48
1:5; 5:15	7:7–12
1:9	5:3
1:20	5:22
1:22	7:21
2:5	5:3
2:13	5:7; 6:14–15
2:14–16	7:21–23
3:12	7:16
3:17–18	5:9
4:4	6:24
4:10	5:3–4
4:11	7:1–2
5:2	6:19
5:10	5:12
5:12	5:33–37

Like the OT wisdom literature, the teaching in James has a strongly practical orientation. Although the book contains some lengthier paragraphs, much of it consists of sequential admonishments and ethical maxims that in some cases are only loosely related to one another. The sentences generally are short and direct. There are fifty-four verbs in the imperative. Connection between sentences is sometimes created through repeated words. Yet the overall topic of practical faith and wisdom links these exhortations together.

BACKGROUND AND OCCASION

After the death of Stephen, many disciples were scattered into the regions of Judea and Samaria (Acts 7:54–8:3). In Acts 11:19 the narrator notes, "Now those who had been scattered by the persecution that broke out when Stephen was killed traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus and Antioch, spreading the word only among Jews." James may have written this letter to instruct and comfort those scattered believers, as he addressed his letter to "the twelve tribes dispersed abroad" (1:1 NET). These Jewish Christians no longer had direct contact with the apostles in Jerusalem and needed to be instructed and admonished in their tribulations. Apparently, the rich were taking advantage of them (2:6; 5:1–6), and their trials had led to worldliness, rash words, and strained relationships (2:1; 4:1, 11; 5:9). In view of persecution, some may have been tempted to hide their faith (5:10–11). James exhorted them to demonstrate a lifestyle that would reflect their faith.

James’s View on Works and Salvation

Some readers of this letter have observed a seeming contradiction between James’s call for good works and Paul’s insistence on salvation by grace through faith apart from works (cf. James 2:14–26 with Eph. 2:8–10). The discussion is complicated by James’s argument that a faith without works cannot “save” and by his observation that Abraham was justified by what he did, not by faith alone (James 2:14, 20–24). Paul, by contrast, maintains that Abraham was justified exclusively by faith (Rom. 4:1–3).

Referring rhetorically to people who claim to have faith but have no deeds, James asks, “Can such faith save them?” (2:14). That is, can the kind of faith that results in no works be genuine? The expected answer is no. The kind of faith that produces no works cannot be genuine faith; rather, it is “dead” (2:17, 26) and “useless” (2:20). This kind of faith is “by itself,” meaning that it produces no lasting fruit (2:17). James’s point is that genuine faith will produce good works in the believer’s life. By way of contrast, a mere profession is not necessarily an indication of genuine faith. Even demons believe in God, but they are not saved; the kind of belief that they exhibit is merely an acknowledgment of God’s existence (2:19).

According to James, Abraham was justified not in the sense of first being declared righteous, but rather in the sense that his faith was demonstrated as genuine when he offered up Isaac (2:21). Paul, on the other hand, argues that salvation is obtained not through works but rather by faith alone. He quotes Gen. 15:6 to show that Abraham trusted God and was declared righteous several years before he offered up Isaac (Rom. 4:3).

According to Paul, Abraham was justified (declared righteous) before God when he believed God’s promise (Gen. 15:6), but for James, he was justified in the sense of giving observable proof of salvation through his obedience to God. Whereas Paul refers to the point and means of positional salvation, James refers to a subsequent event that confirmed that Abraham was justified.

	Paul (Rom. 4:1–3)	**James (2:14–26)**
faith	is personal trust in God	is a mere claim if there is no resulting fruit
	justifies one before God	
	is not proof of salvation	
works	precede salvation	follow conversion
	attempt to merit salvation	are evidence of salvation
	cannot justify before God	confirm one’s salvation

It is important to keep in mind that each author wrote with a different purpose. Paul wrote against Judaizers, who taught that a man had to be circumcised and keep the OT law to be saved. James was warning against a mere profession of faith that leads to self-deception (1:22). John Calvin correctly expressed the biblical teaching that faith alone saves, but that kind of faith does not remain alone; it produces good works (cf. Rom. 3:21–6:14; Eph. 2:8–10; Titus 2:11–14; 3:4–7).

Authorship

The author identifies himself as “James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ” (1:1). The NT mentions five persons having the name “James”: (1) James the son of Zebedee and the brother of John (Matt. 4:21); (2) James the son of Alphaeus (Matt. 10:3); (3) James “the younger” (Mark 15:40); (4) James the father of the apostle Judas (not Judas Iscariot; Luke 6:16); and (5) James the brother of Jesus (Matt. 13:55; Mark 6:3; Gal. 1:19).

James the brother of John was executed by Herod Agrippa I, who died in AD 44 (Acts 12:2). Since the Letter of James probably was written after this date, the brother of John could not have written it. Neither James the son of Alphaeus, James the younger, nor James the father of Judas was as prominent in the early church as the writer of this letter, who simply identified himself and assumed that his readers would know him (1:1). James the son of Alphaeus is mentioned for the last time in Acts 1:13, and nothing is known of James the father of Judas apart from the listing of his name in Luke 6:15; Acts 1:13. (It is uncertain whether James the younger should be identified with one of the other four or is a separate figure.) Thus, it is unlikely that any of them wrote the book. James the brother of Jesus is most likely the author of this letter.

JAMES THE BROTHER OF THE LORD

At the beginning of Jesus’ ministry, James, as well as his brothers Joses (Joseph), Judas, and Simon, did not believe that Jesus was the Messiah (Matt. 13:55; Mark 6:3; John 7:5). However, they came to believe in him after the resurrection (Acts 1:14; 1 Cor. 15:7). Paul called James, along with Peter and John, the “pillars” of the church (Gal. 2:9). James does not claim to be an apostle in this letter; however, he is identified as one in Gal. 1:19. But there the term “apostle” probably refers to a group of leading disciples outside the Twelve (cf. Acts 14:4, 14; 1 Cor. 15:7; Gal. 2:9). Since the author of this letter employed many imperatives, his readers clearly accepted his authority. James, the brother of Jesus, who also became a key leader of the church in Jerusalem, possessed such authority (Acts 12:17; 15:13, 19; 21:18; Gal. 1:18–19; 2:9).

DATE

Some scholars hold that the Letter of James was written around AD 62, while others argue that James wrote this letter sometime in AD 45–50. Those who favor the earlier dates point out that the Jewish character of this letter fits with this period when the church was mainly Jewish, based on the following criteria: (1) There is no mention of Gentile Christians in the letter. (2) The author does not refer to the teachings of the Judaizers. If the letter had been written at a later date, we would expect the author to address the issue of circumcision among Christians. (3) The mention of “teachers” (3:1) and “elders” (5:14) as the leaders in the church reflects the structure of the primitive church. (4) The word “meeting” in 2:2 is the same Greek word as for “synagogue.” It describes the gathering place of the early church. This implies a time when the congregation was still primarily Jewish (Acts 1–7).

OUTLINE

I. Introduction (1:1)

II. The Wise Christian Is Patient in Trials (1:2–18)

  A. How the Christian should face trials (1:2–12)

  B. The source of temptations (1:13–18)

III. The Wise Christian Is a Practical Doer of the Word (1:19–2:26)
   - A. Hearers and doers of the word (1:19–25)
   - B. True religion (1:26–27)
   - C. Prejudice in the church (2:1–13)
   - D. Faith that works (2:14–26)

IV. The Wise Christian Masters the Tongue (3:1–18)
   - A. The power of the tongue (3:1–12)
   - B. The wisdom from above (3:13–18)

V. The Wise Christian Seeks Peace in Relationships (4:1–17)
   - A. The cause of quarrels (4:1–3)
   - B. Warning against worldliness (4:4–10)
   - C. Warning against slander (4:11–12)
   - D. Warning against boasting and self-sufficiency (4:13–17)

VI. The Wise Christian Is Patient and Prays When Facing Difficulties (5:1–20)
   - A. Warning to the rich (5:1–6)
   - B. Exhortation to patience (5:7–12)
   - C. The power of prayer (5:13–18)
   - D. The benefit of correcting those in error (5:19–20)

JAMIN **(1)** The second son of Simeon (Gen. 46:10; Exod. 6:15; 1 Chron. 4:24) and a grandson of Jacob, he is also the ancestor of the Jaminite clan (Num. 26:12). **(2)** The second son of Ram and a grandson of Jerahmeel of Judah (1 Chron. 2:27). **(3)** One of the thirteen Levites who read and interpreted the law so that the people could understand after Ezra read it (Neh. 8:7–8). It is debated whether they simply explained the law or translated it from Hebrew into Aramaic. For example, in Neh. 8:8 the NIV text has these Levites "making it [the Book of the Law] clear," while the NIV margin has them "translating" it.

JAMINITE *See* Jamin.

JAMLECH A clan leader descended from Simeon (1 Chron. 4:34).

JANAI A Gadite living in Bashan who served under the command of the clan chief Joel (1 Chron. 5:12).

JANGLING, VAIN In 1 Tim. 1:6 the KJV renders the Greek word *mataiologia* as "vain jangling," which more-recent versions translate as "meaningless talk" (NIV, NRSV), "fruitless discussion" (NASB, HCSB), or "empty speculation" (NJB). Paul warns Timothy against those who have wandered away from the faith and turned aside to this sort of discourse.

JANIM A town in the hill country of Judah near Hebron. It is listed with nine other towns to form an administrative district within Judah following the conquest of Canaan (Josh. 15:53).

JANNA *See* Jannai.

JANNAI An otherwise unknown postexilic ancestor of Jesus mentioned only in Luke 3:24 as a grandson of Mattathias, son of Joseph, and father of Melki.

JANNES AND JAMBRES Jewish tradition identifies Jannes and Jambres as the magicians who opposed Moses in his early encounters with Pharaoh (Exod. 7:11–12, 22). The author of 2 Timothy mentions their names in connection with Moses as examples of false teachers who oppose the truth (3:8). Although this is the only verse in the Bible that mentions the two, parts of their story have been preserved in nonbiblical Christian and Jewish literature (e.g., the pseudepigraphal book of *Jannes and Jambres* [dated between the first and third centuries AD]). The name "Jannes" is found among the DSS (CD-A 5:17–19), and both names are found in a Targum (*Tg. Ps.-J.* to Exod. 1:15). It is notable that the name "Jannes" is of Hebrew origin, which adds an interesting twist to the Moses narrative.

JANOAH **(1)** A town marking part of the northern boundary of the hill country allocated to Ephraim after the conquest of Canaan (Josh. 16:6–7). The site has been identified as Khirbet Yanun, about seven miles southeast of Shechem. **(2)** A town in upper Galilee, listed together with Ijon, Abel Beth Maakah, Kedesh, and Hazor, conquered by Tiglath-pileser III of Assyria during his campaigns in 733–732 BC (2 Kings 15:29). These defeats signaled God's judgment on Israel. Based on its position in the biblical list of towns, the site may be just south of Kibbutz Kefar Giladi in the Hula Valley.

JANOHAH *See* Janoah.

JANUM *See* Janim.

JAPHETH One of the sons of Noah, listed last in most lists (Gen. 9:18; 10:1) but also listed as the older brother of Shem (Gen. 10:21; or younger [see NIV mg.]). The third son, Ham, is said to be the youngest (Gen. 9:24). Along with his wife, Japheth was one of eight persons saved on Noah's ark (1 Pet. 3:20). After Japheth acted nobly with his brother Shem by covering up his sleeping and naked father, Noah gave a blessing to Japheth, asking God to extend his territory and bless his offspring. His name means "widespread" or "God will enlarge." Japheth had seven sons, and it is suggested that his descendants settled in eastern Europe and northern Asia (Gen. 10:2–5).

JAPHIA **(1)** The king of Lachish during the conquest. He joined a coalition headed by Adoni-Zedek king of Jerusalem and three other Canaanite kings, which was defeated by Joshua during the famous battle where God caused the sun to stand still in the sky (Josh. 10:1–15). **(2)** A son of David born to an unnamed wife during the time he reigned from Jerusalem (2 Sam. 5:15; 1 Chron. 3:7; 14:6). **(3)** A border town of the tribe of Zebulun (Josh. 19:12). It can be identified as the modern site of Jaffa, a mile and a half southwest of Nazareth. Its earliest mention is in the fourteenth-century BC Amarna tablets.

JAPHLET A son of Heber of the tribe of Asher (1 Chron. 7:32). He had three sons: Pasak, Bimhal, and Ashvath (1 Chron. 7:33).

JAPHLETITES An unknown clan whose territory formed a section of the southern boundary of land given to Joseph's sons at the conquest (Josh. 16:3 [KJV: "Japhleti"]). This should not be confused with Japhlet, a descendant of Asher (1 Chron. 7:32–33).

JAPHO *See* Joppa.

JARAH A son of Ahaz of the tribe of Benjamin and a descendant of King Saul (1 Chron. 9:42). Some Hebrew manuscripts and the LXX have "Jadah" (followed by the NIV). In a parallel list he is named as "Jehoaddah" (1 Chron. 8:36 [KJV: "Jehoadah"]). *See also* Jadah; Jehoaddah.

JAREB A transliteration of the Hebrew word *yareb*, either the personal name of an unidentified Assyrian king (Hos. 5:13; 10:6 KJV) or, more probably, a royal title ascribed to the same king (NIV: "great king"). Hosea, prophesying to the northern kingdom in the second half of the eighth century BC, warns Israel to see Assyria not as an ally but rather as an enemy whom God will use to take it into exile on account of its persistent idolatry. The unidentified "great king" could be Tiglath-pileser III (also called "Pul" in 2 Kings 15:19) or one of his weaker predecessors.

JARED Grandson of Cainan (or Kenan), son of Mahalalel, and father of Enoch (Gen. 5:15–20; 1 Chron. 1:2), he is listed in the ancestry of Jesus (Luke 3:37).

JARESIAH *See* Jaareshiah.

JARHA An Egyptian servant in the household of Sheshan, who was descended from Jerahmeel in the tribe of Judah. Sheshan had daughters but no sons. Jarha married one of Sheshan's daughters and fathered Attai to continue the family line (1 Chron. 2:34–35).

JARIB **(1)** A son of Simeon (1 Chron. 4:24). In other lists of Simeon's descendants, he is named "Jakin" (Gen. 46:10; Exod. 6:15; Num. 26:12 [KJV: "Jachin"]). **(2)** One of the leaders of the exilic community summoned by Ezra and sent to Kasiphia to find Levites for service in the temple (Ezra 8:16). **(3)** One of the priests who disobeyed the word of God and married a foreign wife (Ezra 10:18).

JARMUTH **(1)** A city in the Judean foothills situated approximately sixteen miles west of Jerusalem. The Canaanite king of Jarmuth joined the ill-fated coalition against the invading Israelites (Josh. 10:3–23; 12:11), and Jarmuth was subsequently allotted to Judah (Josh. 15:35). Following the exile it was again populated by Judeans (Neh. 11:29). The modern site of Tel Yarmut, three miles south of Beth Shemesh, makes a logical candidate for Jarmuth. Impressive Early Bronze Age (3300–2200 BC) remains testify to an earlier, large Canaanite city, but the site was abandoned and resettled on a much smaller scale during the Late Bronze Age (1550–1200 BC) period, around the time of the conquest. **(2)** A Levitical town in Issachar (Josh. 21:29; cf. Remeth in Josh. 19:21 and Ramoth in 1 Chron. 6:73), possibly at the site of Belvoir, the later Crusader castle overlooking the Jordan Valley.

Tel Yarmut, the site of ancient Jarmuth

JAROAH A son of Gilead from the tribe of Gad (1 Chron. 5:14).

JASHAR, BOOK OF A written document, twice mentioned in the OT, recounting Joshua's appeal for the sun and the moon to stand still (Josh. 10:12–13) and David's lament over the deaths of Saul and Jonathan (2 Sam. 1:17–27). The book is mentioned as though well known.

"Jashar" means "straight" or "upright." It is often used to describe a person's character before God. The two references to the book, though dissimilar in style, are poetic in form. Hence, some have suggested that the book is a collection of songs recounting stories of "the just."

Some scholars find a possible third reference in 1 Kings 8:12–13, where the LXX refers to a "Book of the Song" (3 Kgdms. 8:53a LXX). However, this association depends on a transposition of two of the Hebrew letters and the phrase having been dropped from the MT while preserved only in the LXX.

JASHEN The ancestor of two of David's thirty mighty warriors (2 Sam. 23:32); elsewhere his name is given as "Hashem" the Gizonite (1 Chron. 11:34).

JASHER, BOOK OF *See* Jashar, Book of.

JASHOBEAM Also known as Josheb-Basshebeth (2 Sam. 23:8), he was chief of David's officers (1 Chron. 11:11 [so the Qere, followed by NIV, KJV, NKJV; the Kethib reads "the Thirty," followed by NASB; based on 2 Sam. 23:8, NLT, ESV, NRSV make him head of “the Three”]). Chronicles calls him a “Hakmonite” (“Tahkemonite” in 2 Sam. 23:8), suggesting that he was a descendant of Hakmoni and thus from a family closely associated with David (1 Chron. 27:32). The MT and some LXX manuscripts of 2 Sam. 23:8 could suggest that he was also known as Adino the Eznite (so NASB), but this probably is a textual corruption. He is noted for his success in battle, though Samuel and Chronicles differ over whether he killed eight hundred (2 Sam. 23:8) or three hundred (1 Chron. 11:11) at one time. Hebrew roots associated with the number three are so common in the list of David’s mighty warriors that it is more likely that Chronicles has unintentionally conformed its number to the rest of the list, though it is also likely that this number includes those slain under his command.

JASHUB **(1)** One of the four sons of Issachar (Gen. 46:13; Num. 26:24; 1 Chron. 7:1). The inclusion of the relatively unknown Jashub among Jacob’s extended family together with many other near-forgotten names indicates, among other things, the fulfilling of God’s promise of descendants to Abraham (Gen. 15:5). **(2)** One of the returned exiles who, as a result of the reforms introduced by Ezra, was listed as having taken a foreign wife (Ezra 10:29). **(3)** A partial name of one of Isaiah’s sons (Isa. 7:3). *See also* Shear-Jashub.

JASHUBI LEHEM A place ruled by the clan of Shelah (1 Chron. 4:22 [the TEV follows an emended text to read “settled in Bethlehem”]). The KJV understands it to be the name of one of Shelah’s sons, from the tribe of Judah.

JASHUBITE A clan of the tribe of Issachar descended from Jashub that was counted during the second census during the wilderness wandering (Num. 26:24).

JASIEL *See* Jaasiel.

JASON Earliest known from Greek myth as the name of the Argonauts’ leader (Apollonius Rhodius, *Argonautica*), the name “Jason” was also used by Hellenistic Jews as an alternative to “Jesus/Joshua” (Josephus, *Ant*. 12.239). In the Bible it refers to two persons. **(1)** A Thessalonian who was likely a Hellenistic Jew converted under Paul’s preaching. He hosted Paul and was consequently taken into custody and posted bond (Acts 17:1–9). **(2)** A Jewish Christian present with Paul in Corinth when he wrote Romans (Rom. 16:21). The association of Jason with Sosipater (Rom. 16:21) and of Sopater (= Sosipater) with Thessalonica (Acts 20:4) makes it likely that he is the same Jason as in Acts 17:1–9.

JASPER A precious stone, translucent in appearance (Rev. 21:11: “clear as crystal”). It is mentioned in several biblical contexts. In Exodus it is listed as one of the twelve stones (third stone in the fourth row) mounted on the high priest’s breastpiece, symbolizing the twelve tribes of Israel (Exod. 28:20; 39:13). Job mentions it as a gemstone of little worth compared to the excellence of divine wisdom (Job 28:18). The stone’s beauty illustrates the glory of the king of Tyre, whose wealth became a source of pride and eventual downfall (Ezek. 28:13). In Revelation jasper, along with other precious stones, is used to depict the glory of God (Rev. 4:3) and to describe the brilliant appearance of the walls and foundations of the new Jerusalem (21:11, 18–19).

JATHNIEL The fourth son of Meshelemiah, he was a priestly gatekeeper (1 Chron. 26:2).

JATTIR A Levitical town located in the southern hill country of Judah (Josh. 15:48; 21:14; 1 Chron. 6:57). David sent gifts to Jattir from the spoils of his victory over the Amalekite raiders who had looted Ziklag (1 Sam. 30:27). The site may be Khirbet ’Attir, thirteen miles southwest of Hebron.

JAVAN In the Table of Nations, a genealogy of the three sons of Noah that reflects later nations and languages, Javan is a son of Japheth and the father of Elishah, Tarshish, the Kittites, and the Rodanites (or Dodanites) (Gen. 10:2, 4; see also 1 Chron. 1:5, 7). Javan is considered the ancestor of the Greeks, a people who lived on the Ionian Peninsula and in western Asia Minor. The prophets use “Javan” to refer to the Greeks (Isa. 66:19; Ezek. 27:13, 19 NRSV).

JAW Human and animal jawbones are employed both figuratively and literally. At Ramath Lehi (“Jawbone Hill”), Samson uses a fresh donkey jawbone to slay a Philistine contingent and make them into “donkeys”/“heaps” (Judg. 15:15–17; see NIV footnote). Both fishhooks and bits are set in jaws (Job 41:2; Ezek. 29:4; 38:4; Isa. 30:28), and enemies are struck on the jaw (Ps. 3:7). Elihu sees Job’s distress as God’s wooing him from “the jaws of distress” (Job 36:16), and Agur speaks of jaws “set with knives” to devour the poor (Prov. 30:14).

JAZER An Amorite town whose exact location is disputed but lies toward the Ammonite border, east of the Jordan River and opposite Jericho. After receiving intelligence from spies, Moses took Jazer, together with its rich pasturelands, from the Amorites (Num. 21:32). The town was allotted to the tribe of Gad (Num. 32:1, 3, 35; Josh. 13:25) and given to Levites (Josh. 21:39; 1 Chron. 6:81). Jazer was included in the census of the fighting men of Israel (2 Sam. 24:5), and it provided a plentiful supply of capable men for David’s civil administration (1 Chron. 26:31). The town subsequently came under the control of Moab and is mentioned in oracles of judgment against that nation (Isa. 16:8–9; Jer. 48:32).

JAZIZ A Hagrite who was in charge of the flocks during David’s reign (1 Chron. 27:31).

JEALOUSY Jealousy has both positive and negative connotations in the Bible. Positively, jealousy is an attribute of God, who desires the exclusive worship of his people: “Do not worship any other god, for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God” (Exod. 34:14; cf. Exod. 20:5; Deut. 4:24; 1 Cor. 10:22). Chief among the acts that provoke God to jealousy is the worship of idols (Deut. 32:16; Ps. 78:58), to which God responds with anger and fury (Nah. 1:2; Zeph. 1:18). God’s jealousy for his people (Joel 2:18; Zech. 1:14) is conceptually akin to the love of a husband for his wife (2 Cor. 11:2). Moreover, the language of jealousy is closely related to pious “zeal” (Num. 25:11; 1 Kings 19:10). Negatively, jealousy is a human vice. Paul lists jealousy among the “acts of the flesh” (Gal. 5:19–20; cf. 1 Cor. 3:3; Rom. 13:13). Biblical antagonists are often depicted as the victims of jealousy, including Joseph (Gen. 37:11; Acts 7:9) and Paul (Acts 17:5).

JEALOUSY, GRAIN OFFERING FOR A component of the ritual for determining the marital unfaithfulness of a wife (Num. 5:15). *See also* Bitter Water.

JEALOUSY, IDOL OF During the Babylonian exile, Ezekiel saw a vision of an “idol that provokes [God] to jealousy” in the Jerusalem temple (Ezek. 8:3, 5), along with other idolatrous acts.

The vision explains Israel’s exile and the divine abandonment of the temple.

JEALOUSY, WATER OF *See* Bitter Water.

JEARIM A mountain forming part of the northern boundary of the territory allotted to the tribe of Judah at the time of the conquest (Josh. 15:10). In the same passage it is identified with Kesalon, or modern Kesla, ten miles west of Jerusalem.

JEATERAI *See* Jeatherai.

JEATHERAI A Gershonite listed among the postexilic Levites in the genealogies of Chronicles (1 Chron. 6:21 [KJV: “Jeaterai”]).

JEBERECHIAH *See* Jeberekiah.

JEBEREKIAH The father of Zechariah, who served as a witness to Isaiah’s act of naming his son (Isa. 8:2).

JEBUS The chief city of the Jebusites, descendants of Noah’s grandson Canaan. It was renamed “Jerusalem” after its occupation by Israel. The city was burned during the early conquest (Judg. 1:8), but the Jebusites reoccupied it (Judg. 19:10–11) until David recaptured it (1 Chron. 11:4–5).

JEBUSITES A people group who dwelled in the land of Canaan. They were descended from Canaan (Gen. 10:15–16). God wished to destroy them when Israel invaded (Exod. 23:23). They occupied the hills and Jerusalem, also called “Jebus,” in the central region of Canaan (Josh. 15:63; Judg. 1:21). Their king, Adoni-Zedek, organized a coalition of kings to attack Gibeon and Israel (Josh. 10). Though victorious, the Israelites were never able to drive out the Jebusites. They remained in control of Jerusalem until it was conquered by David’s men (2 Sam. 5:6–9). Araunah, a Jebusite, sold David his threshing floor so that David could build an altar there (2 Sam. 24:18). The Jebusites were made slave laborers by Solomon (1 Kings 9:20–21).

Jerusalem was well fortified even before its occupation by the Jebusites, as shown by the remains of these Middle Bronze walls in the City of David section of Jerusalem.

JECAMIAH *See* Jekamiah.

JECHILIAH, JECHOLIAH *See* Jekoliah.

JECHONIAH, JECHONIAS *See* Jeconiah.

JECOLIAH *See* Jekoliah.

JECONIAH This name, found in the genealogy in Matt. 1:11–12, is a variant of the name “Jehoiachin,” referring to one of the kings of Judah.

JEDAIAH **(1)** A clan leader and member of the tribe of Simeon (1 Chron. 4:37). **(2)** A priest and clan leader who was among the first people to resettle in Jerusalem after returning from the Babylonian captivity with Zerubbabel (1 Chron. 9:10; Ezra 2:36; Neh. 7:39; 12:7). **(3)** Another priest and clan leader among the first people to resettle in Jerusalem after returning with Zerubbabel (Neh. 12:6). **(4)** A descendant of Aaron, and one of the priests during the reign of David (1 Chron. 24:7). **(5)** A person who worked on a section of the wall under the direction of Nehemiah (Neh. 3:10).

(6) The son of Joiarib (Neh. 11:10). He may be the same person as in 1 Chron. 9:10; Ezra 2:36; Neh. 7:39; 12:7. **(7)** A priest working in the temple during the time of Zechariah (Zech. 6:9–15).

JEDIAEL **(1)** A son of Benjamin and a patriarch of the tribe (1 Chron. 7:6, 10–11). **(2)** One of David's thirty mighty warriors (1 Chron. 11:45). **(3)** One of the men of Manasseh (1 Chron. 12:20). This person may be the same as in 1 Chron. 11:45. **(4)** A Levitical gatekeeper of the ark of the covenant (1 Chron. 26:2).

JEDIDAH The daughter of Adaiah, wife of King Amon, and mother of King Josiah of Judah (2 Kings 22:1). She was from the town of Bozkath, which according to Josh. 15:39 is in the western foothills of Judah.

JEDIDIAH Through the prophet Nathan, God gave the name "Jedidiah" to Solomon (2 Sam. 12:25). This additional name, meaning "loved by the LORD," unquestionably established Solomon's favored status as one to succeed David as king and become an ancestor of Jesus. It may also have communicated God's comfort to Bathsheba following the death of her first son by David and confirmed forgiveness to David after his adultery and murder of Uriah.

JEDUTHUN A Levite musician stationed at the tent where the ark of the covenant was placed during David's reign (1 Chron. 16:38–41; 25:1–6). He also played instruments at the temple dedication (2 Chron. 5:12). His son Obed-Edom was one of the gatekeepers for the tent. He was an ancestor of Levites who helped Hezekiah purify the temple (2 Chron. 29:14), of Levites present during Josiah's rededication of the temple (where he is listed as David's seer [2 Chron. 35:15]), as well as of some of those who resettled in Judah after the exile (1 Chron. 9:16; Neh. 11:16). The superscriptions of Pss. 39; 62; 77 mention a Jeduthun who is the director of music, likely this same person.

JEEZER, JEEZERITES *See* Iezer.

JEGAR SAHADUTHA An Aramaic term meaning "(stone) heap of testimony." Jacob's father-in-law, Laban, chose "Jegar Sahadutha" as the name for the pile of stones erected as a memorial of the covenant between Laban and Jacob. The Hebrew-speaking Jacob used the equivalent Hebrew term *Galeed* instead (Gen. 31:44–53; see Gen. 31:47 NIV mg.).

JEHALELEEL, JEHALELEL *See* Jehallelel.

JEHALLELEL **(1)** A descendant of Judah (1 Chron. 4:16). **(2)** The Merarite ancestor of Kish who was one of the Levites who purified and consecrated the temple at the behest of King Hezekiah (2 Chron. 29:12).

JEHATH *See* Jahath.

JEHAZIEL *See* Jahaziel.

JEHDEIAH **(1)** One of the Levites appointed by lots to serve during the time of King David (1 Chron. 24:20). **(2)** A Meronothite who was in charge of caring for King David's donkeys

(1 Chron. 27:30).

JEHEZEKEL *See* Jehezkel.

JEHEZKEL One of the heads of a priestly clan that was chosen to be part of the ministry in the temple during the time of King David (1 Chron. 24:16).

JEHIAH A Levite commissioned to be a doorkeeper for the celebration of the ark of the covenant's entrance into the city of Jerusalem (1 Chron. 15:24).

JEHIEL **(1)** One of the lyre-playing Levites appointed to be part of the processional that brought the ark of the covenant into Jerusalem during David's reign (1 Chron. 15:18, 20; 16:5). **(2)** The son of Ladan (1 Chron. 23:8), he was a Gershonite Levite serving under King David who had custody of the temple treasury (1 Chron. 29:8) and founded a priestly family, the Jehieli (or Jehielites), who administered the temple treasuries (1 Chron. 26:21–22). **(3)** The son of Hakmoni, he was one of David's overseers, in charge of caring for the king's sons (1 Chron. 27:32). **(4)** One of King Jehoshaphat's sons and a younger brother of King Jehoram (2 Chron. 21:2). **(5)** A Levite during Hezekiah's reform assigned to work with the treasury. He is likely a descendant of the Jehiel in 1 Chron. 23:8 (2 Chron. 29:14 [ESV, NRSV: "Jehuel"]; 31:13). **(6)** A temple administrator during Josiah's reign who was wealthy enough to give large offerings to the priests for the celebration of Passover (2 Chron. 35:8). He may be the same person as in 2 Chron. 29:14; 31:13. **(7)** The father of Obadiah, who is listed among the exilic returnees (Ezra 8:9). **(8)** The father of Shekaniah, who was involved with Ezra in the purification of the Levites from foreign wives (Ezra 10:2). **(9)** Two priestly descendants who put away their foreign wives (Ezra 10:21, 26).

JEHIELI, JEHIELITES *See* Jehiel.

JEHIZKIAH Jehizkiah was among the leaders of Ephraim who told returning soldiers from Israel that they must not keep the plunder and slaves collected from defeated Judah. These leaders witnessed the release of the prisoners and were also responsible for making sure that those in need were taken care of before they were returned (2 Chron. 28:12).

JEHOADAH *See* Jehoaddah.

JEHOADDAH A descendant of King Saul and the Benjamites. His father was Ahaz, and his son was Alemeth (1 Chron. 8:36 [KJV: "Jehoadah"]). In a parallel list he is named as "Jadah" (1 Chron. 9:42 [KJV: "Jarah"]). *See also* Jadah; Jarah.

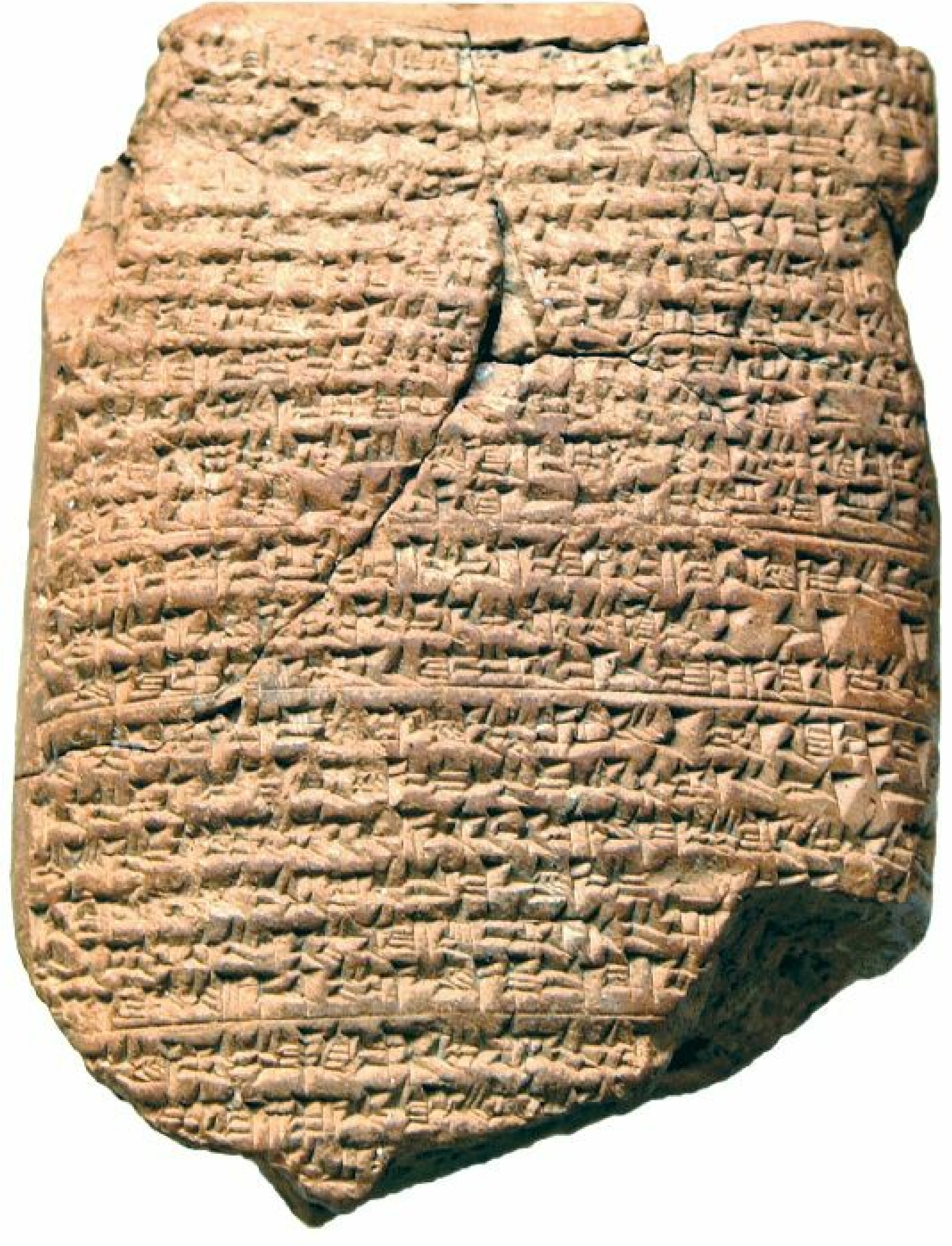
JEHOADDAN The mother of King Amaziah (2 Chron. 25:1; 2 Kings 14:2). Although the Bible does not record it, she must have been married to Joash, Amaziah's father. She was one of three queen mothers from Jerusalem mentioned in the Bible.

JEHOADDIN *See* Jehoaddan.

JEHOAHAZ **(1)** King of Israel (r. 814–800 BC), the son of King Jehu (2 Kings 10:35). He apparently did not worship Baal, but he did not completely eradicate idolatry from Israel during his reign (2 Kings 13:2). For much of his reign he was subject to the Aramean kings and had a pitifully small army (2 Kings 13:7). His deliverance from Aram did not substantially change his attitude toward God. **(2)** A son of King Josiah and Hamutal, he became king of Judah in 609 BC after Pharaoh Necho of Egypt killed Josiah at Meggido. Jehoahaz, who “did evil in the eyes of the LORD” (2 Kings 23:32), reigned for three months before Necho took him as prisoner to Egypt, where he died (2 Kings 23:29–35; 2 Chron. 36:1–4). He is also known as Shallum (1 Chron. 3:15).

JEHOASH Jehoahaz’s son and a king of Israel (2 Kings 13:10–25; 14:8–16; 2 Chron. 25:17–24 [KJV: “Joash”]). The Bible records him as a king unfaithful to God who followed the sins of Jeroboam. He had an encounter with the dying Elisha in which he failed to follow the prophet’s directions carefully and was granted only a partial victory over Hazael of Aram. He also went to war with King Amaziah of Judah and attacked Jerusalem, sacking the temple and destroying a large part of Jerusalem’s wall. The Chronicler attributes Amaziah’s defeat to his disobedience of God.

JEHOHANAN **(1)** The son (or grandson) of Eliashib who provided Ezra with a room during his fasting and prayer concerning Jewish intermarrying with foreigners (Ezra 10:6). The names “Eliashib” and “Jehohanan” are common enough that this person may simply be a private citizen. However, if he is the same person as the one in Neh. 12:22, then he is the grandson of the high priest Eliashib. This is significant for the chronology of Ezra-Nehemiah because it would suggest, based on certain Elephantine papyri, that Ezra, a contemporary of Jehohanan, is chronologically after Nehemiah the governor. It is also possible, however, that the room or chamber to which Ezra retired got its name after the historical event and was simply called this by the author of Ezra.



Cuneiform tablet recording Nebuchadnezzar's early years, 605–595 BC, which include the attack on Jerusalem in 597, when Jehoiachin and many Judeans were deported

(2) A Levite and grandson of Asaph, he was one of the temple gatekeepers appointed by David (1 Chron. 26:3). **(3)** One of Jehoshaphat's army leaders from Judah who was a "commander of units of 1,000." He commanded 280,000 men (2 Chron. 17:14–15). Based on the reference in v. 14 to "families," he may have been a tribal leader of Jehoshaphat's conscripted army rather than a career military person. **(4)** The father of Ishmael, who was one of the "commanders of units of a hundred" that supported the high priest Jehoiada in his removal of the queen Athaliah and the successful placing of Joash on the throne (2 Chron. 23:1). It is possible that this is the same person as in 2 Chron. 17:15.

(5) An Ephraimite leader who encouraged Israel's victorious army to release its Judahite prisoners of war because of the prophet Oded's warning that Israel had committed the same sins for which

Judah had just been punished (2 Chron. 28:12). **(6)** One of the descendants of Bebai named among the Israelites guilty of marrying a foreign wife during the time of Ezra (Ezra 10:28). **(7)** The son of Tobiah the Ammonite, who opposed Nehemiah in building the wall (Neh. 6:18). He was married to the Jewish daughter of Meshullam, who had helped Nehemiah build the wall. **(8)** One of the priestly heads of family during the time of Joiada. He was the head of Amariah's family (Neh. 12:13). **(9)** One of the priests who celebrated the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem (Neh. 12:42).

JEHOIACHIN The nineteenth of the twenty monarchs of Judah (r. 597 BC), he was a grandson of Josiah and an ancestor of Jesus (Matt. 1:11–12: "Jeconiah"). His brief reign is recorded in 2 Kings 24:8–17; 2 Chron. 36:8–10. He became ruler at age eighteen, and, like many other ruling members of his family (uncles Jehoahaz and Zedekiah, and father Jehoiakim), he "did evil in the eyes of the LORD" (2 Kings 24:9). He reigned only three months before being exiled to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar in 597 BC. During this deportation Nebuchadnezzar exiled many Judeans and looted the temple, fulfilling the prophecy of Isaiah to Hezekiah over a hundred years earlier (2 Kings 20:17–18). Jeremiah prophesied the end of Jehoiachin's reign and dynasty (Jer. 22:24–30 [MT: "Coniah"]). He was finally released from imprisonment in 562 BC by Awel-Marduk of Babylon (2 Kings 25:27–30; Jer. 52:31–34). Babylonian tablets record prison rations for him and his sons during his exile.

JEHOIADA **(1)** The high priest who organized the revolt that placed Joash, the last living male heir of the time in the line of David and the rightful king, on the throne (r. 836–798 BC). According to 2 Chron. 22:11, Jehoiada was married to Joash's aunt Jehosheba; thus Jehoiada was Joash's uncle. Jehosheba saved Joash during an attempt by Queen Athaliah, Joash's grandmother, to kill all other members of the royal family and secure her own claim to the throne. Jehoiada organized the coup d'état by using the temple guard, who killed Athaliah when she came to investigate the noise made by the guards and the people as Jehoiada crowned Joash king and charged him to follow the covenant (2 Kings 11; 2 Chron. 22–23).

It is possible that Jehoiada served as a coregent during the rest of his life. According to 2 Kings 12:2, Joash remained faithful to God all the years that Jehoiada was alive. Jehoiada also managed the temple restoration work under the order of Joash. In order to fund the temple restoration, he installed a collection box at the temple, collected the mandated tithe, and distributed this money to the workers. He was also involved in the purging of Baal worship from the kingdom.

(2) The father of Benaiah, who was the military leader of the Kerethites and Pelethites during the reign of David, the best of David's "Thirty," and the head of David's bodyguard (2 Sam. 8:18; 23:20–23). This Jehoiada may be the same person who joined David at Hebron (1 Chron. 12:27). If so, the Chronicler emphasizes his pedigree from the line of Aaron the priest (1 Chron. 27:5).

(3) The son of Benaiah, who was David's bodyguard commander (2 Sam. 23:20–23), he became David's counselor after Ahithophel committed suicide (1 Chron. 27:34). Some have suggested that this is the same Johoiada listed as the father of Benaiah in 2 Sam. 8:18; 23:20, and that the Chronicler mistakenly identifies him as the son of Benaiah.

(4) A priest during Jeremiah's time who was replaced by Zephaniah (Jer. 29:26).

JEHOIAKIM The second of King Josiah's sons to rule over Judah (r. 609–598 BC), his mother was Zebidah. He "did evil in the eyes of the LORD" (2 Kings 23:37), and his eleven-year reign is recorded in 2 Kings 23:34–24:6; 2 Chron. 36:4–8. He was twenty-five when Pharaoh Necho of Egypt deposed his brother Jehoahaz and made him king, changing his birth name, "Eliakim," to "Jehoiakim."

He initially gave tribute to Egypt, but he became a Babylonian vassal when Nebuchadnezzar defeated Necho in 605 BC. Jeremiah prophesied exile and death because of his greed and oppression of the poor (Jer. 22:13–19). Jehoiakim burned Jeremiah's scroll and attempted to arrest the prophet, but God thwarted him (Jer. 36:20–26). He did, however, kill the prophet Uriah (Jer. 26:20–23). Jehoiakim ignored Jeremiah's advice and rebelled against Babylon, so Nebuchadnezzar retaliated first by sending small military bands, then besieging Jerusalem and capturing Jehoiakim. He probably died in exile.

JEHOIARIB **(1)** One of the returning priests from the Babylonian exile and presumably one of the heads of a priestly family (1 Chron. 9:9–11). He is listed as part of the tribe of Benjamin. He may be the same person as Joiarib in Neh. 11:10; 12:6, 19, based on the genealogies given there. **(2)** The head of a division of priests during the time of David. He was a descendant of Eleazar, one of Aaron's four sons (1 Chron. 24:7).

JEHONADAB The son of Rekab, he joined with Jehu in the purge of Ahab's family during Jehu's coup d'état. He also helped Jehu kill all the priests of Baal in the temple of Baal in Samaria (2 Kings 10:15, 23). Although it is historically unverifiable, he apparently is the founder of the Rekabite community. They refused to drink wine with Jeremiah because they had vowed to follow the instructions of their ancestor Jehonadab to refrain from drinking wine, building houses, sowing seed, and planting vineyards (Jer. 35 [NRSV: "Jonadab"; here the name is spelled as both *yonadab* and *yehonadab* in Hebrew]). Jeremiah's oracle uses them as an example of faithfulness, while he condemns Judah for its unfaithfulness. *See also* Jonadab.

JEHONATHAN **(1)** One of the Levites commissioned by King Jehoshaphat to teach the "Book of the Law of the LORD" to the people of Judah (2 Chron. 17:8–9), which apparently was part of Jehoshaphat's reform and restoration of Yahweh worship in Judah (cf. 2 Chron. 19:4–11). **(2)** One of the heads of a priestly family during the high priesthood of Joiakim and the governorship of Nehemiah (Neh. 12:18). **(3)** An official in charge of the storehouses during the reign of David (1 Chron. 27:25 KJV [NIV, NRSV: "Jonathan"]).

JEHORAM **(1)** An alternate name for Joram, king of Israel, Ahab's son (r. 851–842 BC). **(2)** King of Judah (r. 846–843 BC), Jehoshaphat's son. It is likely that he served as coregent with his father early in his reign. He was married to Athaliah, daughter of Ahab and Jezebel. This marriage likely sealed a treaty with Israel established by his father. He was also noted for his apostasy and his inability to subjugate Edom. He was not given the traditional honorable burial reserved for kings (2 Kings 8:16–24; 2 Chron. 21:4–20). **(3)** One of two priests commissioned by King Jehoshaphat to teach "the Book of the Law of the LORD" throughout Judah (2 Chron. 17:8–9). *See also* Joram.

JEHOSHABEATH *See* Jehosheba.

JEHOSHAPHAT **(1)** The son of Ahilud, he was an official, a recorder, during the time of David and Solomon (2 Sam. 8:16; 20:24; 1 Kings 4:3). **(2)** The son of Paruah, he was an official in Issachar responsible for supplying Solomon's palace (1 Kings 4:17).

(3) The fourth king of Judah (r. 867–846 BC), coming to the throne on the death of his father, Asa (1 Kings 22:1–50; 2 Kings 3:1–27; 2 Chron. 17:1–21:1). He was a good king who loved God, but not a perfect king. He removed most, but not all, forms of false worship from the land of Judah. He entered into a formal treaty with King Ahab of Israel and sealed it with a marriage between his son Jehoram and Athaliah daughter of Ahab. From a religious point of view, this alliance was not healthy, because although Jehoshaphat remained faithful, his son came under the influence of the Baal worship favored by Ahab and his family. From a political point of view, Jehoshaphat was the junior partner of this relationship (vassal) and often had to lend his support to Ahab against his enemies, particularly the Arameans.

Even so, Jehoshaphat did many good things pleasing to God. He supported those who taught the law of God (2 Chron. 17:7–9), and he also promoted justice in the land when he created a system of judges after being challenged to do so by the prophet Jehu (2 Chron. 19). He also depended on God during war. When he fought a coalition from Ammon, Moab, and elsewhere, he preached to the army before the battle (2 Chron. 20). When he supported Ahab in his war against the Arameans, he was the one who insisted that a prophet of Yahweh be consulted (1 Kings 22).

(4) A valley symbolically mentioned in Joel 3:2, 12 (*see* Jehoshaphat, Valley of). **(5)** The son of Nimshi and the father of King Jehu of Israel (2 Kings 9:2, 14).

JEHOSHAPHAT, VALLEY OF A wide valley in which an assembly of all nations will take place (Joel 3:2, 12). It is to be equated with the Valley of Decision (Joel 3:14), the place where God decides the fate of the peoples of the world. The proper name “Jehoshaphat” means “Yahweh judges.” A geographical identification is impossible and beside the point, for the name of the valley is simply symbolic for the place of final divine judgment. King Jehoshaphat’s victory in 2 Chron. 20 may in part explain the expression. Also, in 2 Chron. 19 Jehoshaphat established a Judean judicial system.

JEHOSHEBA Daughter of Jehoram, king of Judah (r. 846–843 BC); sister of Ahaziah, king of Judah; and wife of Jehoiada the priest. Jehosheba saved the infant Joash from the massacre of Ahaziah’s sons by his mother, Athaliah. Jehosheba hid Joash for six years, until he was revealed by Jehoiada and crowned the rightful king of Judah (2 Kings 11:1–12). In the parallel account (2 Chron. 22:11) in the NRSV, her name is “Jehoshabeath.”

JEHOSHUA *See* Joshua.

JEHOVAH This is the only personal name of God in Israel’s faith. In Hebrew it consists of four consonants, *yhwh*, known as the Tetragrammaton (in English, “YHWH”). Its pronunciation is uncertain because the original Hebrew text used only consonants, but the early Greek transliterations (*iaoue* and *iabe*) suggest “Yahweh” as the closest to its original pronunciation. “YHWH” was considered too sacred to be pronounced, so “Adonai” (“my Lord”) was substituted in reading. In most instances *yhwh* is rendered in the English translations as “LORD” (small capital letters). The English form “Jehovah” developed by supplying the Hebrew vowels from “Adonai” to the four consonants *yhwh*. Its meaning is derived from the verb *hayah* (“to be”) and could be translated as “He who is” or “He who will be.” *See also* YHWH.

JEHOVAH JIREH In Gen. 22:1–19 Abraham obeys God and prepares to sacrifice his son Isaac, but an angel of the Lord intervenes and provides a ram as a substitute for Isaac. As a result, Abraham names the place “Jehovah Jireh” (Heb. *yhwh yir’eh*), meaning “Yahweh provides” (v. 14 [NIV: “The

LORD Will Provide”]).

JEHOVAH NISSI After Joshua and the Israelites defeated the Amalekites in Rephidim, Moses erected an altar and called it “Jehovah Nissi” (Heb. *yhwh nissi*), meaning “Yahweh is my banner” (Exod. 17:15 [NIV: “The LORD is my Banner”]). The suggestion is that the people should rally around God as an army gathers around its banner.

JEHOVAH SHALOM After Gideon was terrified at seeing an angel of the Lord, God said to him, “Peace! Do not be afraid” (Judg. 6:23). In response, Gideon built an altar in Ophrah and named it “Jehovah Shalom” (Heb. *yhwh shalom*), meaning “Yahweh is peace” (Judg. 6:24 [NIV: “The LORD Is Peace”]). It is equivalent to “Yahweh is well disposed.”

JEHOVAH SHAMMAH In Ezekiel’s vision of the new Jerusalem, restored and glorified, the city is called “Jehovah Shammah” (Heb. *yhwh shammah*) (Ezek. 48:35; cf. Rev. 21:3). It means “Yahweh is there” (NIV: “The LORD Is There”) and emphasizes the importance of God’s presence in the midst of his people when he returns to the forsaken temple.

JEHOVAH TSIDQENU According to Jeremiah, the “righteous Branch” of David will be known by the name “Jehovah Tsidqenu” (Heb. *yhwh tsidqenu*), meaning “Yahweh (is) our righteousness” (Jer. 23:6; 33:16 [NIV: “The LORD Our Righteous Savior”]). In his days “Judah will be saved and Israel/Jerusalem will live in safety.” This symbolic name of the messianic king contrasts with that of the last king of Judah, Zedekiah (“Yahweh is righteousness”), who was an unworthy bearer of that name.

JEHOZABAD **(1)** The son of Shomer (or “Shimrith,” the variant in 2 Chron. 24:26), he, with Jozabad son of Shimeath, murdered King Joash of Judah (2 Kings 12:21). **(2)** A Korahite gatekeeper, son of Obed-Edom (1 Chron. 26:4). **(3)** A Benjamite commander in King Jehoshaphat’s army (2 Chron. 17:18).

JEHOZADAK *See* Jozadak.

JEHU **(1)** King of Israel, son of Jehoshaphat (r. 842–814 BC). He carried out a bloody purge of the Omride dynasty, killing Joram, Ahaziah, Jezebel, and around seventy other individuals associated with Omri’s family and administration (2 Kings 9:1–10:27). Although he had great influence in ending Baal worship in Israel (2 Kings 10:28), his methods are identified in Scripture as being overzealous and therefore against the will of Yahweh (Hos. 1:4). He also failed to distance himself from the sins of his predecessors and retained the golden calves of Dan and Bethel (2 Kings 10:28–31). He is known from archaeology by the inclusion of his likeness on the Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser III, which ironically identifies him as “Jehu, son of Omri.”

(2) A prophet in the time of King Baasha of Israel, he foretold and then witnessed the demise of Baasha (1 Kings 16:1–12). He also apparently interacted with King Jehoshaphat of Judah and charged him with sin for his alliance with Ahab (2 Chron. 19:2–3). It is also reported that the prophet functioned as a sort of court recorder for the kingdom of Jehoshaphat, and that his work served as a source for the Chronicler (2 Chron. 20:34).

(3) An otherwise unknown Judean who was the son of Obed and the father of Azariah (1 Chron.

2:38). **(4)** A Simeonite, the son of Joshibiah, he was considered significant by the Chronicler as one of the leaders of a clan during the time of King Hezekiah of Judah (1 Chron. 4:35). **(5)** A Benjamite warrior from Anathoth who allied with David at Ziklag (1 Chron. 12:3). His actions were significant because they demonstrated that even within Saul's own tribe there were those who would align themselves with David.

JEHUBBAH *See* Hubbah.

JEHUCAL *See* Jehukal.

JEHUD A town that was part of the tribe of Dan's traditional territorial allotment (Josh. 19:45). Its precise modern-day location is uncertain.

JEHUDI One of King Jehoiakim's court officials, he heard Jeremiah's message through Jeremiah's scribe, Baruch. After hearing the oracle, he along with other officials decided that the king needed to hear the warnings. Thus, he secured a safe location for Jeremiah and then read the scroll to the king. After Jehudi had read the scroll, the king proceeded to burn it, section by section, and he refused to heed its warnings (Jer. 36:14, 21, 23).

JEHUDIJAH In 1 Chron. 4:18 the KJV mistranslates the Hebrew word *yehudiyah* as a proper name, "Jehudijah." The NIV translates this word as "his wife from the tribe of Judah," which distinguishes Mered's sons of Judean birth from those of Egyptian birth.

JEHUEL *See* Jehiel.

JEHUKAL The son of Shelemiah, he was an official in the administration of King Zedekiah (Jer. 37:1–3). Jehukal was commissioned to persuade Jeremiah to pray on behalf of Judah. Later, Jehukal was part of a group of officials who wanted to have Jeremiah put to death (38:1–4).

JEHUSH *See* Jeush.

JEIEL **(1)** A descendant of Reuben and a leader of his tribe, he was a relative of Beerah, who had been carried off to exile by Tiglath-pileser of Assyria (1 Chron. 5:6–7). **(2)** A Benjamite patriarch who lived in Gibeon, and the husband of Maakah (1 Chron. 9:35; 8:29). He was the father of Ner, grandfather of Kish, and thus great-grandfather of King Saul (1 Chron. 9:35–39). The MT of 1 Chron. 8:29 lacks "Jeiel," but it appears in some LXX manuscripts, and modern versions supply it there. The addition in those LXX texts may well be an assimilation to the parallel, 1 Chron. 9:35. **(3)** A son of Hotham the Aroerite, he is noted as one of the mighty warriors of David (1 Chron. 11:44).

(4) A Levite and gatekeeper for the tabernacle, he was appointed to play the lyre at the tabernacle; thus he played when the ark of God was brought back into the tent (1 Chron. 15:18, 21; 16:5). **(5)** A great-grandfather of Jahaziel, the prophet who prophesied the victory of Jehoshaphat (2 Chron. 20:14–17). He was from the tribe of Levi and perhaps is the same individual as in 1 Chron. 15:18, 21; 16:5. **(6)** A scribe who compiled the rolls of soldiers by division in the reign of King Uzziah (2 Chron. 26:11). **(7)** A descendant of Elizaphan, he offered cleansing sacrifices at the reopening and reparation of the temple under the direction of King Hezekiah (2 Chron. 29:13).

(8) An official of the Levites who willingly contributed to the sacrifice from the flocks at the reformation Passover undertaken by King Josiah (2 Chron. 35:9). **(9)** One of the last group of descendants from the family of Adonikam in Babylon, he returned to Judah with Ezra under King Artaxerxes (Ezra 8:13 KJV [NIV: "Jeuel"]). **(10)** One of the sons of Nebo who is noted as having taken a foreign wife (Ezra 10:43).

JEKABZEEL A town in the south of Judah that was reoccupied by the returned exiles (Neh. 11:25). In earlier times Kabzeel, as it was then known, was a prominent town in the Negev district of Judah (Josh. 15:21). It was the birthplace of Benaiah, son of Jehoiada, one of David's valiant fighting men (2 Sam. 23:20; 1 Chron. 11:22). Khirbet Gharreh, halfway between Beersheba and Arad, has been suggested as its likely location. *See also* Kabzeel.

JEKAMEAM A Levite of the Kohathite clan who served during the reign of David (1 Chron. 23:19; 24:23).

JEKAMIAH **(1)** One of the sons of King Jehoiachin (Jeconiah) of Judah, who was taken into Babylonian captivity (1 Chron. 3:18). **(2)** A descendant of Jerahmeel in the genealogy of Judah, he was the son of Shallum and the father of Elishama (1 Chron. 2:41).

JEKOLIAH The wife of King Amaziah of Judah and the mother of King Uzziah (also known as Azariah) of Judah. She was from Jerusalem (2 Kings 15:2; 2 Chron. 26:3).

JEKUTHIEL One of the three sons born to Mered by his Judean wife, and the father of Zanoah (1 Chron. 4:18).

JEMIMAH The first of three daughters born to Job after his ordeal had ended and God restored him (Job 42:14). The daughters were famed for their beauty, and Job granted them, as well as their brothers, an inheritance. The name "Jemimah" probably is related to an Arabic word meaning "dove" or "turtledove."

JEMUEL A son of Simeon and a grandson of Jacob (Gen. 46:10; Exod. 6:15). The variant name "Nemuel" is found in other family lists (Num. 26:12; 1 Chron. 4:24). *See also* Nemuel.

JEPHTHAE In Heb. 11:32 the KJV transliterates the Greek name *Iephthae* as "Jephthae." More-recent versions render it as "Jephthah." *See also* Jephthah.

JEPHTHAH The son of Gilead, he judged Israel for six years (Judg. 11:1–12:7). Like David, he was a military hero, surrounded by outlaws, and descended from a prostitute. After the people of Gilead convinced Jephthah to lead them in battle, he first attempted to establish a truce by reminding the king of Ammon that Israel took the Ammonites' land only after they had attacked Israel first. His message was ignored, so Jephthah vowed that if God gave him victory over Ammon, he would sacrifice whatever he first saw coming out from his house on his return home. After his victory, out to greet him first was his daughter, his only child. Since she allowed herself to be sacrificed as the only child of her father, parallels can be drawn between her, Isaac, and Jesus. Jephthah is mentioned alongside other heroic judges in Samuel's farewell address (1 Sam. 12:11) and in the book of Hebrews' hall of faith (Heb. 11:32).

JEPHUNNEH **(1)** The father of Caleb the spy, he is variously linked with Judah (Num. 13:6) and the Kenizzites, an Edomite tribe that apparently merged with Judah before the exodus (Num. 32:12; Josh. 14:6). **(2)** An Asherite, one of the sons of Jether (1 Chron. 7:38).

JERAH A descendant of Shem, he was one of the sons of Joktan (Gen. 10:26; 1 Chron. 1:20).

JERAHMEEL **(1)** A son of Hezron from the tribe of Judah (1 Chron. 2:9). Hezron and his son Ram, the brother of Jerahmeel, were in the direct ancestral line to King David. Jerahmeel's third brother was Caleb. Jerahmeel had six sons (1 Chron. 2:25–26). **(2)** The son of Kish, he was among the Levites who ministered in the temple (1 Chron. 24:29). **(3)** A son of King Jehoiakim of Judah, he was one of three men instructed to arrest Jeremiah and his scribe Baruch, but they could not do so because God had hidden them (Jer. 36:26).

JERAHMEELITES A clan that lived in the Negev and was part of the tribe of Judah (1 Sam. 30:29; cf. 1 Chron. 2:9, 25). When David was living with the Philistines to avoid Saul, he would go on raids, after which he would tell Achish, the Philistine king, that he had attacked the Jerahmeelites and others, when in fact he was attacking the Philistines and their allies (1 Sam. 27:8–12). *See also* Jerahmeel.

JERASH *See* Gerasa.

JERBOA The REB translates the Hebrew word *'akbar* as "jerboa," a desert-dwelling rodent pronounced unclean in Lev. 11:29 (NIV: "rat"; NRSV: "mouse").

JERED *See* Jared.

JEREMAI One of the descendants of Hashum who had taken a foreign wife during the time of Ezra (Ezra 10:33).

JEREMIAH **(1)** A leader of the half-tribe of Manasseh (1 Chron. 5:24). **(2, 3, 4)** Three warriors in David's army (1 Chron. 12:4, 10, 13).

(5) A major prophet who lived to see Judah exiled to Babylon. Jeremiah is one of the most colorful and transparent figures in the Bible. Not only does the book that bears his name describe his actions against the backdrop of the great events of his day, but also the prophet himself shares his emotions with depth and passion. He is known to many as the "weeping prophet" because of the grief he feels over the sin and judgment of his people. He could also be called the "angry prophet" because of his reaction to the harsh treatment he received at the hands of the people of Judah. He was also in turmoil in his relationship with God, upset that God made him the messenger of hard news to his compatriots (Jer. 20:1–18).

Jeremiah was a priest who grew up in the priestly town of Anathoth, about four miles northeast of Jerusalem. The superscription to the book does not tell us when he was born, but it does say that he began his prophetic ministry in the thirteenth year of Josiah (626 BC), and that it continued until the eleventh year of Zedekiah (586 BC), which we also know as the year that the Babylonians defeated the city of Jerusalem. We do have stories associated with Jeremiah after that time into the period of the exile (Jer. 40–44).

Jeremiah was commissioned as a prophet (Jer. 1:4–10) to bring a message of judgment and restoration to his people and also to the nations. By far most of his recorded oracles are judgment oracles, but at the heart of the book (chaps. 30–33) are important messages of salvation, the section often referred to as the Book of Consolation.

The year of his calling was a pivotal moment. In this year, Babylon, under its king Nabopolassar, initiated a revolt against Assyria, which had dominated it and much of the Near East for many years. In Judah the good king Josiah ruled, and Jeremiah surely supported his religious reforms. Josiah was killed in battle, however, in 609 BC, and he was replaced by kings who did not care about God or the message of the prophet. In particular, Jehoiakim (r. 609–597 BC) and Zedekiah (r. 597–586 BC) were opponents of Jeremiah and the object of many of his prophetic denunciations.

Though warned by the prophet of coming judgment, Judah and its leaders did not repent but continued to resist God. In 586 BC God allowed the Babylonian army to defeat Jerusalem. Nebuchadnezzar exiled many of its leading citizens and destroyed the temple, palace, and walls of the city. He had heard of Jeremiah and the prophet’s teaching that Judah should surrender to Babylon, so he treated him kindly. He allowed Jeremiah to choose whether to go to Babylon or to stay in Judah. Jeremiah chose the latter, supporting the provisional government under the leadership of the Babylonian-appointed Jewish governor Gedaliah, who later was assassinated by Jewish insurgents. A number of the remaining Jews grew frightened of the expected Babylonian reprisal. Against God’s word as mediated through Jeremiah, they fled to Egypt, forcibly taking Jeremiah with them. The Bible does not narrate Jeremiah’s death, but tradition says that he died in Egypt.

(6) The father of Hamutal, the mother of King Jehoahaz (r. 609 BC) and King Zedekiah (r. 597–586 BC) and the wife of King Josiah (r. 640–609 BC), from Libnah (2 Kings 23:31; 24:18). **(7)** A priest from the time of Zerubbabel (after 539 BC) (Neh. 12:1, 12). **(8)** A priest from the time of Nehemiah (after 445 BC) (Neh. 10:2; 12:34).

JEREMIAH, BOOK OF Jeremiah is the second of the Major Prophets, after Isaiah and before Ezekiel, an order determined by the chronology of the beginning of their prophetic work. Jeremiah and Ezekiel were basically contemporaries, but the latter began his ministry after Jeremiah. The book of Jeremiah is the longest of the prophets (21,835 words), compared to Ezekiel (18,730 words) and Isaiah (16,932 words). Readers ancient and modern are attracted to the book not only by its stirring message but also because Jeremiah is the most transparent of all the prophetic personalities, often referred to as the Weeping Prophet.

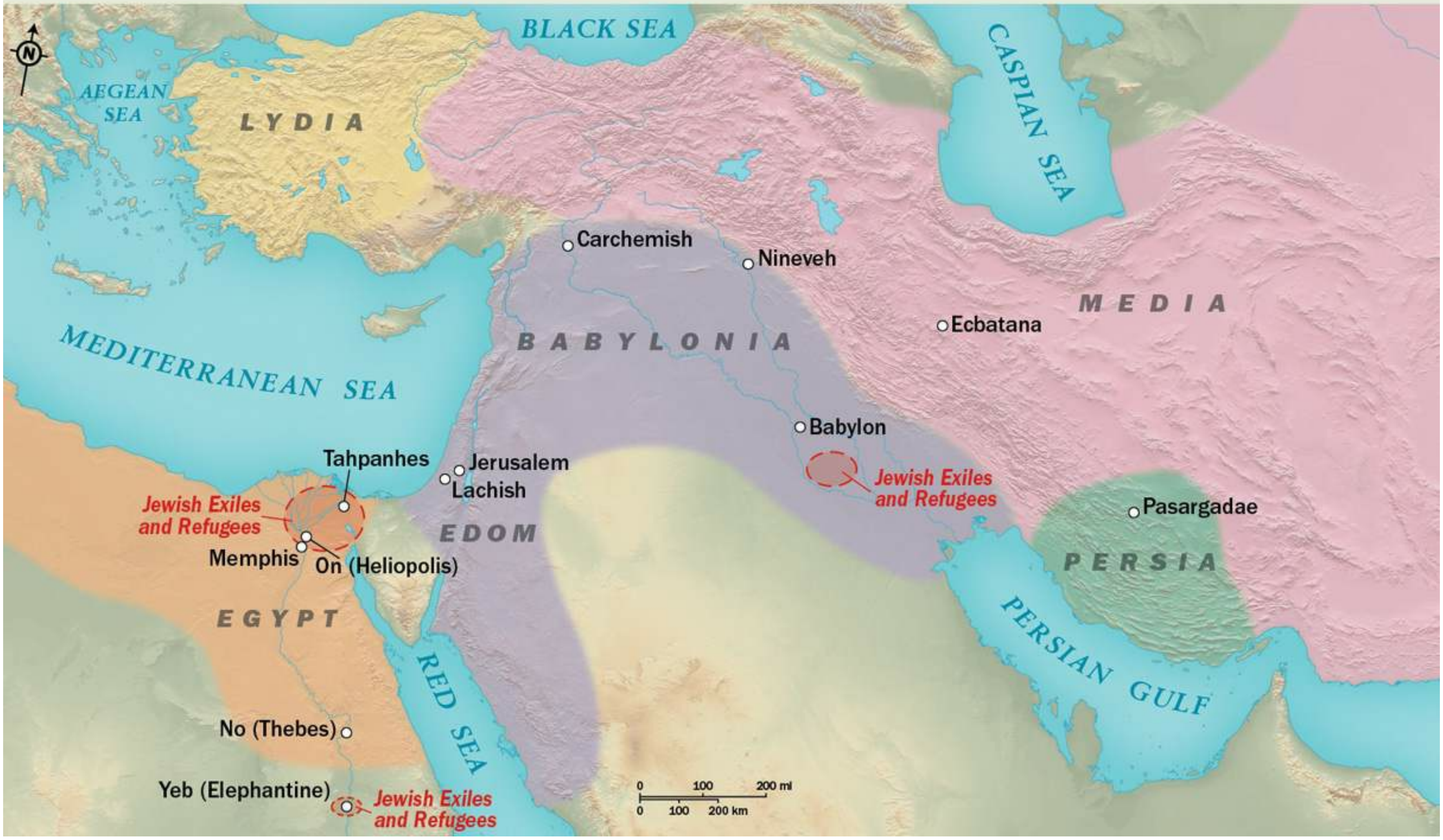
HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Authorship and date. The superscription of the book announces that it contains “the words of Jeremiah son of Hilkiah, one of the priests at Anathoth in the territory of Benjamin” (1:1). His prophetic ministry is then described as taking place between the thirteenth year of King Josiah and the eleventh year of King Zedekiah, equivalent to 626–586 BC, a period of great turbulence (see next section). Chapters 40–44 narrate events in the period immediately after the fall of Jerusalem.

On the one hand, there is no good reason to question the existence of the historical Jeremiah or the attribution to him of the prophecy that bears his name. On the other hand, the text indicates that the book was not written at one sitting but rather is the product of a process. Chapter 36 mentions that the prophet wrote down his sermons in 605 BC, and when King Jehoiakim burned the scroll, the narrator relates that Jeremiah again dictated them to Baruch, who wrote them all down, and Jeremiah added many more oracles (36:32). The book describes a close relationship between Jeremiah and his associate Baruch. It is possible that the stories about Jeremiah were written down and added by this close friend.

Ancient Near Eastern historical context. When Jeremiah started his prophetic work in 626 BC, the world was undergoing major political change. Assyria had been the dominant superpower for the preceding centuries. It had incorporated the northern kingdom of Israel into its vast empire in 722 BC, and Judah had been forced to pay tribute. In 626 BC, however, Babylon began its rebellion against Assyria. Nabopolassar, a Chaldean chieftain, now king of Babylon, threw off the yoke of Assyrian bondage, and over what was almost two decades he eradicated Assyria and inherited the empire.

THE EXTENT OF THE BABYLONIAN EMPIRE IN THE SIXTH CENTURY BC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CASPIAN SEA
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LYDIA
Carchemish
Nineveh
MEDIA
Ecbatana
BABYLONIA
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Babylon
Tahpanhes
Jerusalem
Lachish
Jewish Exiles and Refugees
Jewish Exiles and Refugees
Pasargadae
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In 626 BC Josiah was king of Judah. His father, Amon, and his grandfather Manasseh had been evil kings, promoting false worship. But Josiah served Yahweh, and soon before Jeremiah began his work, the king began to purify the religious institutions of Judah (2 Chron. 34:3b–7). Jeremiah's early ministry then occurred in an environment that would find support from the royal court. In 609 BC, however, Josiah tried to block Necho of Egypt from reinforcing the remnants of Assyria against Babylon and in the process lost his life. Although the Egyptians were unsuccessful in helping Assyria survive, they were able to exercise control over Judah and placed a pro-Egyptian king, Jehoiakim, on the throne. Even so, by 605 BC Egypt could not stop Babylon under their new king, Nebuchadnezzar, from demanding that Judah be their vassal (Dan. 1:1–3). Jehoiakim revolted against Babylon in 597 BC. By the time the avenging Babylonian army arrived, Jehoiakim was gone, replaced by his son Jehoiachin. The latter was promptly deported to Babylon and replaced by Zedekiah. The book of Jeremiah records that both Jehoiakim and Zedekiah were determined opponents of the prophet. In any case, Zedekiah too eventually rebelled against Babylon, and this time Nebuchadnezzar not only captured and exiled many leaders but also systematically destroyed the city. He then incorporated Judah into his empire as a province and appointed a Judean governor, Gedaliah. Jeremiah 40–44 describes how Jewish insurgents assassinated Gedaliah and killed off the Babylonian garrison troops. Many of the remaining Jewish people then fled to Egypt against God's will as announced by Jeremiah, who was forced to go with them.

These events provide the background to the prophetic oracles and the actions narrated in the book of Jeremiah. Some of Jeremiah's words and actions are specifically dated to these events, while others are not dated.

TEXT

Jeremiah is one of the few books of the OT that present a significant text-critical issue. The main Hebrew text (the MT) is clearly different from the Greek text. The latter is about one-eighth shorter than the former, lacking about 2,700 words. In addition, the order of the book is different. The oracles against the foreign nations are chapters 46–51 in the Hebrew but are found right after 25:13 in the Greek. The DSS attest to early Hebrew manuscripts that reflect the Greek tradition, and therefore we cannot attribute the difference to translation error or intentional rearrangement. A better solution is to remember that the book of Jeremiah as we know it in the Hebrew is the result of a long history of composition. The Greek text may reflect an earlier shorter version. The longer Hebrew text then represents the final authoritative edition of the book and is rightly used for modern translations.

LITERARY TYPES

The book as a whole is a compendium of prophetic oracles and stories about Jeremiah. The following distinct literary types are found in the book.

Poetical prophetic oracles of judgment and salvation. Chapters 2–25 are composed primarily of poetic oracles of judgment directed toward God's people. They are God's words to his people uttered by the prophet. Chapters 46–51 are also judgment oracles, but these are directed toward foreign nations such as Egypt and Babylon. Although salvation oracles are found in the first part of the book, chapters 30–31 form a striking collection of such oracles, the best known of which is the anticipation of the new covenant (31:31–34).

Poetical confessions/laments. Jeremiah's confessions are in the form of laments in which he complains about the burdens brought on by his prophetic task. These laments have many similarities with laments in the psalms, including elements such as an invocation, a declaration of innocence, an invocation against enemies, and divine response. While the laments have a certain ritual form, there is no good reason to deny that they authentically represent the emotions of the prophet. The confessions/laments are found in 11:18–23; 12:1–6; 15:15–21; 17:14–18; 18:19–23; 20:7–17.

Prose oracles. Jeremiah's oracles come in the form of prose as well as poetry. Similarities have been drawn between these oracles (a good example is 7:1–8:3) and the theology of the book of Deuteronomy. Some want to use this similarity to deny a connection with the historical Jeremiah, but there is no good reason to deny that Jeremiah could reflect the theology of this foundational book.

Prose biographical material. A significant part of the prose material may be described as biographical, in that it relates events in Jeremiah's life (chaps. 26–29; 34–45). These descriptions often carry a prophetic oracle. It is likely that these biographical descriptions were written by someone other than Jeremiah (Baruch?).

Prophetic sign-acts. Perhaps a special category of biographical material is the description of events and acts of Jeremiah's that carry prophetic significance. A good example is 13:1–11, which narrates Jeremiah's trip to the Euphrates River to bury his dirty underwear.

OUTLINE

I. Introduction and Jeremiah's Call (1:1–19)

II. The First Half of Jeremiah's Ministry (2:1–25:14)
  A. Sermons, oracles, and sign-acts (2:1–24:10)
  B. Summary (25:1–14)

III. The Second Half of Jeremiah's Ministry: Judgment and the Fall of Jerusalem (25:15–51:64)
  A. Judgment against the nations (25:15–38)
  B. Stories about Jeremiah and reports of oracles (26:1–29:32)
  C. The Book of Consolation: Salvation oracles (30:1–33:26)
  D. Stories about Jeremiah and oracles of judgment (34:1–38:28)
  E. Account of the exile (39:1–44:30)
  F. Oracle to Baruch (45:1–5)
  G. Oracles against foreign nations (46:1–51:64)

IV. Epilogue (52:1–34)

STRUCTURE

The book of Jeremiah does not have a clearly delineated structure. In this respect, Jeremiah is not unique among the prophets. Nonetheless, we may still make some general observations about the shape of the book and its large sections, even though we cannot always account for why one oracle follows another. When they are given chronological indicators, they are not arranged sequentially.

There are reasons to think that chapter 25 plays a pivotal role in the book, though it may be that this was more explicit in an earlier form of the book (when the oracles against the foreign nations followed immediately after it; cf. the Greek version). Even so, 25:1–14 summarizes the message of chapters 2–24, and then 25:15–38 announces judgment against the nations. Chapter 1, then, is an introduction to the book, with its account of the prophet's commissioning, and chapter 52 is an epilogue describing the fall of Jerusalem.

Within these two large sections we can recognize blocks of material. Chapter 1 introduces the prophet, recounts his call, and presents two undated oracles that serve to introduce important themes of the book.

Chapters 2–24 follow as a collection of sermons, poetic and prose oracles, and prophetic sign-acts that are undated. Indeed, it is often difficult to tell when one oracle ends and another begins. It is likely that these are the oracles that come from the first part of the prophet's ministry, that is, his first scroll, described in chapter 36.

After chapter 25 summarizes the first part of the book and turns attention to the judgment against the nations, a block of prose material follows consisting of stories about Jeremiah as well as reports of oracles (chaps. 26–29).

Chapters 30–33 are a collection of salvation oracles, a break from the heavy barrage of judgment in the book up to this point. Traditionally, these chapters are known as the Book of Consolation. Chapters 30–31 are poetic oracles, while chapters 32–33 are prose.

Chapters 34–38 return to prose stories about Jeremiah and oracles of judgment. This section culminates with the first account of the fall of Jerusalem.

The next section, chapters 39–44, gives the distressing account of the exile and the continuing failures on the part of those who stay in the land with Jeremiah. They end up in Egypt because of their lack of confidence in God's ability to take care of them. Chapter 45 is an oracle directed toward Baruch, Jeremiah's associate.

The book ends with a collection of oracles against foreign nations (chaps. 46–51), culminating with a lengthy prophetic statement directed toward Babylon. The book concludes with a second account of the fall of Jerusalem.

THEOLOGICAL MESSAGE

Jeremiah is a complex book with many themes. One of the central ideas, however, is covenant. The Bible often uses the idea of a covenant to describe the relationship between God and his people. A covenant is a divinely initiated and defined agreement. God makes promises and calls on his people to observe certain requirements. Research has found that the biblical covenants are close in form and concept to ancient Near Eastern treaties between the kings of superpowers and those of much less powerful nations (vassal treaties). The powerful, sovereign king announces the law to the vassal, and it is accompanied by curses and blessings. If the vassal obeys, then the king gives a reward, but if the vassal disobeys, then the king issues punishment.

There is a series of covenantal relationships between God and his people (Noah [Gen. 9]; Abraham [Gen. 12:1–3; 15; 17]; Moses [Exod. 19–24]; David [2 Sam. 7]), but most relevant for our understanding of Jeremiah is the covenant with Moses as reaffirmed in Deuteronomy. The Mosaic covenant emphasizes law (see Deut. 5–26) and has an extensive section of curses and blessings (Deut. 27–28).

Jeremiah and many of the other prophets may be styled "lawyers of the covenant." God sends them to his people when they disobey the law. Their job is to warn the people to change their lives and live in conformity with God's will or else the curses of the covenant will come into effect.

Jeremiah's oracles focus on warning the people that they are covenant breakers, particularly in the matter of worshipping false gods (Jer. 10–11). The hope is that the people will repent and thus avoid the most extreme punishment. But it is not only the judgment oracles that are related to the covenant; so too are the salvation oracles. In Jer. 31:31–34 the prophet announces that God will replace the old covenant with a new one, which will be more internal, more intense, and more intimate.

NEW TESTAMENT CONNECTIONS

Jeremiah anticipates the founding of a new and better covenant, and the NT witnesses to the fulfillment of this expectation. As he passed the cup to his disciples, Jesus said, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you" (Luke 22:20 [cf. 1 Cor. 11:24–25]). The cup, representing Christ's death, functions as the sign of the new covenant. The point is that the new covenant is founded on the death and resurrection of Christ.

The new covenant replaces the old. This is the argument of the book of Hebrews, which twice cites the relevant passage in Jeremiah to make the point (Heb. 8:8–12; 10:15–17; see also 2 Cor. 3).

According to the author of Hebrews, the old covenant failed not because of a defect in God or his instrument but because of the people (Heb. 8:8). They consistently broke that covenant by disobeying the law explicated in the covenant with Moses. As a result, as Jeremiah himself announced, the people would be expelled from the land (reversing the fulfillment of the Abrahamic covenant), bringing to conclusion the monarchy, which is a provision of the Davidic covenant.

JEREMIAS In Matt. 16:14 the KJV transliterates the Greek name *Ieremias* as "Jeremias." More-recent versions render the name as "Jeremiah." *See also* Jeremiah.

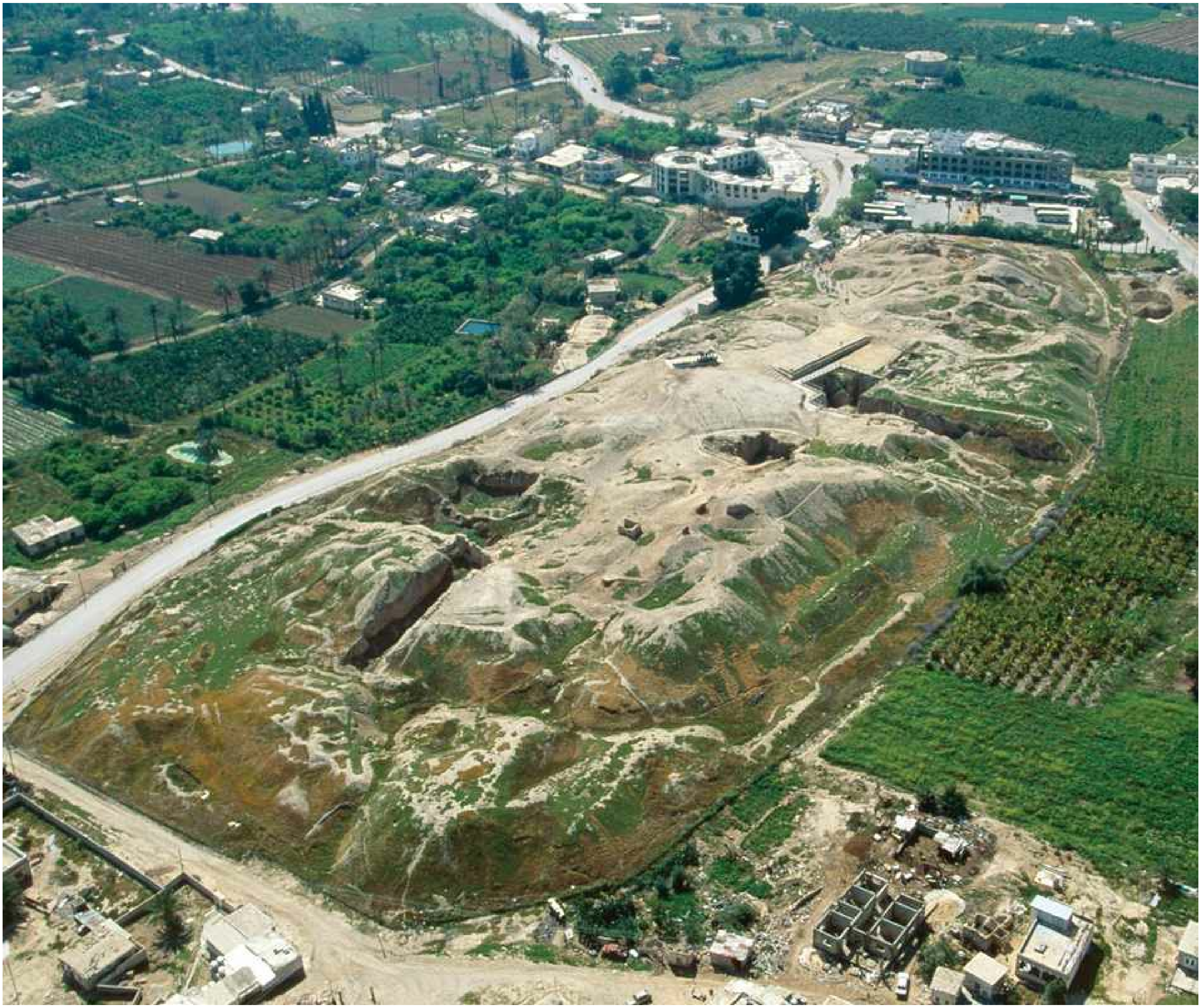
JEREMOTH **(1)** One of the sons of Beker and a grandson of Benjamin (1 Chron. 7:8). **(2)** A descendant of Elpaal (1 Chron. 8:14). **(3)** Three members of priestly families in the time of Ezra's leadership who were found guilty of intermarriage with a foreign wife. These individuals promised to divorce their wives and to offer a ram as a guilt offering for their sin (descendant of Elam [Ezra 10:26]; of Zattu [Ezra 10:27]; of Bani [Ezra 10:29]).

JEREMY In Matt. 2:17; 27:9 the KJV transliterates the Greek name *Ieremias* as "Jeremy." More-recent versions render the name as "Jeremiah." *See also* Jeremiah.

JERIAH A family leader of the Levitical clan of Kohath during David's reign (1 Chron. 23:19; 24:23). In 1 Chron. 26:31 the name is spelled "Jerijah" (NRSV, KJV, although some English versions, NIV among them, retain "Jeriah" there).

JERIBAI One of David's mighty warriors (1 Chron. 11:46, though here he is one of those not listed in the parallel passage, 2 Sam. 23:24–39).

JERICHO Jericho, "the city of palm trees" (Deut. 34:3; Judg. 3:13; 2 Chron. 28:15), is located about four miles west of the Jordan River and about ten miles north of the Dead Sea. It is located about 850 feet below sea level on a narrow plain across from one of the major Jordan River crossings. Its location was crucial to protect this important east-west route. Immediately behind the city the land rises quickly into a mountainous region known as the Judean Wilderness. Jericho is located in the present West Bank area and is populated by approximately twenty-five thousand Palestinians. The name "Jericho" appears to be derived from the Hebrew word for "moon" (*yareakh*) and may have been an early place of worship to the lunar deities, who were thought to control the agricultural seasons. There is a significant spring (Ein es-Sultan), flowing at over a thousand gallons an hour, at the base of Tell es-Sultan (Sultan's Hill). Another site known as Jericho (i.e., Herodian Jericho; Tulul Abu el-'Alayiq) is about two miles southeast, at the base of Wadi Qelt.



Tell es-Sultan, the site of Old Testament Jericho

Jericho is possibly the earliest continuously inhabited city in the world, with archaeological finds going back perhaps as early as 9000 BC. From the Pre-Pottery Neolithic A period (c. 8350–7370 BC), there was a significant settlement with a stone wall surrounding the site. A thirty-foot-high stone tower in one of the walls is the oldest structure found to date. Another significant occupation period was during the Middle Bronze Age (c. 1700–1550 BC), with a massive stone wall as part of a system of defenses. Archaeologists have uncovered over twenty-three successive levels of habitation on Tell es-Sultan, which rises to about seventy feet in height and covers an area of only about ten acres.

The archaeological history at Tell es-Sultan is extensive, beginning in 1868 with Charles Warren. Ernest Sellin and Carl Watzinger spent several seasons excavating the site in the years 1907–9 and 1911. John Garstang conducted an even more thorough excavation between 1930 and 1936. However, between 1952 and 1958, Kathleen Kenyon conducted the most extensive excavations, using modern techniques. Since then, limited excavations have been undertaken by Lorenzo Nigro and Nicolo

Marchetti in 1997. Bryant Wood visited the site later that year to verify the findings of Nigro and Marchetti.

The name "Jericho" occurs about sixty times in the Bible, but certainly the most important event occurs in the book of Joshua, when Jericho became the first Canaanite city conquered by Israel. Significant debate has occurred concerning the dating of this conquest, with some suggesting a date in the fifteenth-century BC, and others the thirteenth-century BC. The most intense debate centers on the destruction level of City IV at Jericho. In the 1930s John Garstang dated it to the Late Bronze Age I (c. 1400 BC). However, Kathleen Kenyon later redated this destruction level to the Middle Bronze Age (c. 1550 BC) and found no signs of habitation from around 1400 BC. In 1990 Bryant Wood reanalyzed some of Kenyon's evidence (e.g., potsherds, stratigraphic considerations, scarab evidence, and a radiocarbon dating) and once again dated it to 1400 BC. In 1995 Hendrik J. Bruins and Johannes van der Plicht used a more precise type of radiocarbon dating on six samples of charred cereal grains from the City IV destruction level that resulted in a date closer to 1550 BC, similar to Kenyon's date. Whether these walls are indeed the walls of the biblical account has even been debated. Bryant Wood found bichrome potsherds by the spring that are commonly dated to about 1400 BC, suggesting some inhabitation at that time.

JERIEL The third of the six sons of Tola, who was the first son of Issachar (1 Chron. 7:2).

JERIJAH *See* Jeriah.

JERIMOTH **(1)** One of the five sons of Bela and a grandson of Benjamin (1 Chron. 7:7). **(2)** A skilled Benjamite warrior who joined David's forces at Ziklag (1 Chron. 12:5). **(3)** One of the three sons of Mushi, a Levite from the Merarites (1 Chron. 23:23; 24:30). **(4)** A son of Heman set apart by David for the ministry of prophesying with instrumental accompaniment and to provide music ministry for the temple (1 Chron. 25:4; 25:22). **(5)** The son of Azriel, he was an officer appointed by David to administer the tribe of Naphtali (1 Chron. 27:19). **(6)** One of David's sons whose daughter Mahalath married Rehoboam (2 Chron. 11:18). **(7)** A supervisor of monetary offerings for the temple appointed by King Hezekiah (2 Chron. 31:13).

JERIOTH A wife of Caleb (1 Chron. 2:18). The text is unclear, however, and Jerioth could be a concubine wife of Caleb (NIV) or alternatively another name for Azubah. Some English Bibles (NEB, NJB) understand Jerioth to be the child of Caleb and Azubah.

JEROBOAM **(1)** The first ruler of the northern kingdom (r. 928–907 BC) (1 Kings 11:26–14:20). The son of Nebat, he was a hardworking royal servant, so Solomon gave him responsibility over the northern labor force. The prophet Ahijah declared to Jeroboam that to punish Solomon for apostasy, God would give him the ten northern tribes, leaving Solomon's son Rehoboam with only Judah and Benjamin. When Solomon sought to kill him, Jeroboam fled to Egypt. After Solomon's death, he returned and requested that Rehoboam reduce the workload for the Israelite laborers. Rehoboam, ignoring the advice of the elders and following the counsel of his peers, rudely refused the request of Jeroboam and the people. The ten northern tribes rebelled and made Jeroboam king, and he reigned for twenty-two years.

Jeroboam set up two golden calves, one in Bethel and one in Dan (for the wilderness parallel, see Exod. 32:4), to prevent the northerners from traveling to the temple in Jerusalem to worship. A man of God condemned the sanctuary at Bethel, prophesying that a future king named “Josiah” would destroy it. When he attempted to seize the prophet, Jeroboam’s hand was stricken, but after the king’s entreaty the prophet restored it. When Jeroboam’s son Abijah became ill, the prophet Ahijah delivered a judgment against his son, who soon died, and against his dynasty. After Jeroboam’s death, his son Nadab ruled for only two years before being killed by the usurper Baasha. Jeroboam’s sanctuaries are mentioned in the condemnation of fifteen other evil northern rulers; they survived the fall of Samaria in 722 BC, but eventually Josiah destroyed the Bethel sanctuary as prophesied (2 Kings 23:15).

(2) The thirteenth ruler of the northern kingdom (r. 784–748 BC; 2 Kings 14:23–29). He was the son of Jehoash and a great-grandson of Jehu. Despite doing “evil in the eyes of the LORD” (v. 24), he received a favorable prophecy from the prophet Jonah, restored the borders of the northern kingdom, and was one of the longest-reigning rulers of Israel or Judah (forty-one years). During his reign, Aramean and Assyrian domination over Israel subsided, which resulted in wealth and prosperity for the upper classes, but oppression and injustice of the marginalized. Amos condemned these practices and prophesied the end of Jeroboam’s house (Amos 7:8–11), which was fulfilled when his son Zechariah was killed by the usurper Shallum after reigning only six months.

JEROHAM **(1)** Grandfather of Samuel the prophet (1 Sam. 1:1). The genealogical record indicates that he was a Levite and a temple musician (1 Chron. 6:27, 34). **(2)** The head of a Benjamite family who settled in Jerusalem (1 Chron. 8:27). **(3)** A Benjamite descendant of Ibneiah, who resettled in Jerusalem after the exile (1 Chron. 9:8). He may be the same person as in 1 Chron. 8:27. **(4)** A descendant of Adaiah, a priest who resettled in Jerusalem after the exile (1 Chron. 9:12; Neh. 11:12). **(5)** The father of Joelah and Zebadiah, two men who joined David at Ziklag (1 Chron. 12:7). **(6)** The father of Azarel, who became David’s tribal administrator over Dan (1 Chron. 27:22). **(7)** The father of Azariah, who became the army commander of a hundred who conspired with Jehoiada to overthrow Athaliah (2 Chron. 23:1).

JERUB-BAAL Gideon’s nickname, meaning “let Baal fight [against him].” It was given to him by townspeople after he tore down Baal’s altar (Judg. 6:25–32). *See also* Gideon.

JERUB-BESHETH The second element in this name, meaning “shame” (Heb. *boshet*), was commonly substituted for the name of the Canaanite deity Baal. Thus, at 2 Sam. 11:21 the name “Jerub-Besheth” replaces “Jerub-Baal,” the nickname given to Gideon by townspeople in Judg. 6:32.

JERUEL A place of uncertain location in the Judean wilderness somewhere between Tekoa and En Gedi (2 Chron. 20:16). It was here that the prophet Jahaziel prophesied to Jehoshaphat that God would defeat an attacking army of Moabites, Ammonites, and Meunites.

JERUSALEM The central city and capital of ancient Israel. The original meaning of the name probably is “founded by [the Canaanite god] Salem.” The Amarna letters refer to a Beth-Shalem, and its first reference in the Bible is Salem (Gen. 14:18). Throughout its history, the city has also been referred to variously as Zion, Jebus, Mount Moriah, and the City of David.

The name “Jerusalem” occurs more than 650 times in the OT, particularly in the history of Israel, and in the NT more than 140 times. The OT prophets used the city as a symbol of God’s dealing with his people and his plan. Jerusalem is viewed collectively as God’s abode, his chosen place, and his sovereignty, while its destruction is also representative of God's judgment on apostasy among his people (e.g., Jer. 7:1–15; 26:18–19; Mic. 3:12). The rebuilding of the city represents the hope and grace of God (e.g., Isa. 40:1–2; 52:1, 7–8; 60–62; Jer. 30:18–19; 31:38–39; Ezek. 5:5; Hag. 2:6–8; Zech. 8:3–8). Like the writers of the OT, the NT authors spoke of Jerusalem in metaphorical and eschatological terms. Paul used Jerusalem to contrast the old and the new covenants (Gal. 4:24–26), and the writer of Hebrews used it as the place of the new covenant, sealed through the blood of Jesus (Heb. 12:22–24). In Revelation the concept of a new Jerusalem is related to the future kingdom of God (Rev. 3:12; 21:1–22:5).

Jerusalem is located in the Judean hill country, about 2,700 feet above sea level. It borders the Judean desert to the east. The city expanded and contracted in size over various hills and valleys. There are two major ridges (Eastern and Western Hills) separated by the Tyropoeon Valley. The Eastern Hill contains a saddle, the Ophel Hill, and north of this is the traditional site of Mount Moriah, where later the temple was constructed. The Eastern Hill was always occupied, since the only water source is the Gihon Spring, located in the Kidron Valley. Two other ridges were important for the city, as they were used for extramural suburbs, cemeteries, and quarries. To the east is the Mount of Olives, which is separated from the Eastern Hill by the Kidron Valley. To the west of the Western Hill is the Central Ridge Route, separated by the Hinnom Valley.

EARLY HISTORY THROUGH THE UNITED MONARCHY

The earliest occupation was near the Gihon Spring, where Chalcolithic pottery (c. 3500 BC) and structures dating to the Early Bronze Age (c. 3000–2800 BC) were found. The Bronze Age city is mentioned in the Ebla tablets, Execration texts, and the Amarna letters. Melchizedek, the king of Salem, received gifts from Abraham and blessed him (Gen. 14). Abraham was commanded to offer Isaac as a sacrifice on one of the mountains of Mount Moriah (Gen. 22:2), the location where Solomon later built the temple (2 Chron. 3:1). The Jebusite city of the Bronze Age extended over the lower part of the Eastern Hill for about twelve acres, with a population of about one thousand.

After Joshua made a treaty with the Gibeonites, the king of Jerusalem, Adoni-Zedek, formed a coalition of five kings to attack Gibeon. Joshua defeated this coalition and killed the kings (Josh. 10). The Canaanite inhabitants of Jerusalem are referred to as Amorites (Josh. 10:5) and as Jebusites (Judg. 1:21; 1 Chron. 11:4).

When David became king over both Israel and Judah, he made Jerusalem the political, spiritual, and administrative center of his kingdom. Jerusalem became synonymous with David and was called the "City of David." Transferring the ark to Jerusalem made it the new religious center for the Israelites. David conquered the Jebusite stronghold through the *tsinnor*, possibly a water tunnel (2 Sam. 5:6–8; 1 Chron. 11:4–7). He took up residence in the city and began an extensive building program, but his vision of Jerusalem as the religious center was not fully realized until his son Solomon became king and built the temple.

In this photo, the location of the ancient City of David is seen rising up to the right from the valley below.

Solomon greatly expanded the city by building fortifications, the temple, and the royal palace (1 Kings 7–9). This was the first initial expansion of the city as Solomon extended the city northward along the Eastern Hill, up the Ophel to the site of the present-day Temple Mount. This expanded the city to about thirty-two acres, with a population of around five thousand. During the united monarchy, Jerusalem became the center of Israelite administration and religion. All Israelites were to come to Jerusalem three times a year for religious festivals. Solomonic Jerusalem became the foundation for the imagery bestowed on the city by the psalms (e.g., Pss. 46; 48; 76; 84; 87; 122; 125; 132). Although major excavations were carried out in the 1980s in the City of David, little is known archaeologically about the city of that period.

FROM THE DIVIDED MONARCHY TO THE EXILE

During the divided monarchy, Jerusalem was attacked by foreign forces. Jerusalem was attacked by Shishak of Egypt at the end of the tenth century BC (1 Kings 14:25–26), by Syria and northern Israel during the ninth century BC (2 Kings 12:17; 15:37), and by Sennacherib of Assyria during the seventh century BC (2 Kings 18:13). Several Judean kings undertook building projects. Uzziah fortified Jerusalem by adding towers to the city walls (2 Chron. 26:9), and Jotham built the upper gate of the temple (2 Chron. 27:3).

Hezekiah greatly expanded Jerusalem. The city doubled in size during his reign as it extended to the Western Hill (Upper City). The city then encompassed about 125 acres, with a population of about twenty-five thousand. It had expanded due to the influx of immigrants from the north when the capital of Samaria fell to the Assyrians. Hezekiah reinforced the Millo, built and rebuilt walls, and erected towers as he extended the walls to encompass the Western Hill. In preparation for the siege by Sennacherib, he constructed an underground water system to bring water from the Gihon Spring to the Pool of Siloam inside the city (2 Kings 20:20; 2 Chron. 32:2–4, 30; Isa. 22:11). Manasseh refortified Jerusalem with the construction of a new outer wall (2 Chron. 33:14). Jerusalem was invaded when Jehoiakim rebelled and was finally destroyed by Babylon in 586 BC. Prophets during the divided monarchy spoke of the destruction of Jerusalem, but also of its exaltation in later times (e.g., Isa. 2:2–4; 24:23; Jer. 7:14; Mic. 3:12).

Archaeological excavations have revealed much about Jerusalem during the time of the later Judean kings. Several walls, towers, and fortifications attributed to Hezekiah have been excavated in the Jewish Quarter. Hezekiah's tunnel and the Siloam Inscription have been discovered, highlighting the preparations made by Hezekiah for the Assyrian siege. Several quarries and tombs have been found on the slopes of the Mount of Olives and the western slope (Ketef Hinnom) of the Hinnom Valley. In one of the Ketef Hinnom tombs, a silver amulet containing the earliest known biblical text (Num. 6:24–26) was found. Evidence of the Babylonian destruction was found in excavations of the Jewish Quarter and the City of David. A group of bullae (fired clay impressions) was found with the name of "Gemariah ben-Shaphan," probably the scribe mentioned in Jer. 36.

FROM PERSIAN TO ROMAN RULE

After the Persian conquest of Babylon (539 BC), Cyrus II allowed the Jews to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the temple. Judah became the Persian province Yehud, and Jerusalem was the administrative center. Nehemiah was appointed governor of Judea by Artaxerxes in 445 BC. Nehemiah undertook a hasty rebuilding project against the wishes of the local population (Neh. 2:19; 4:7). The rebuilt city was constricted to the area of the Eastern Hill, comprising some thirty acres, with a population of about forty-five hundred.

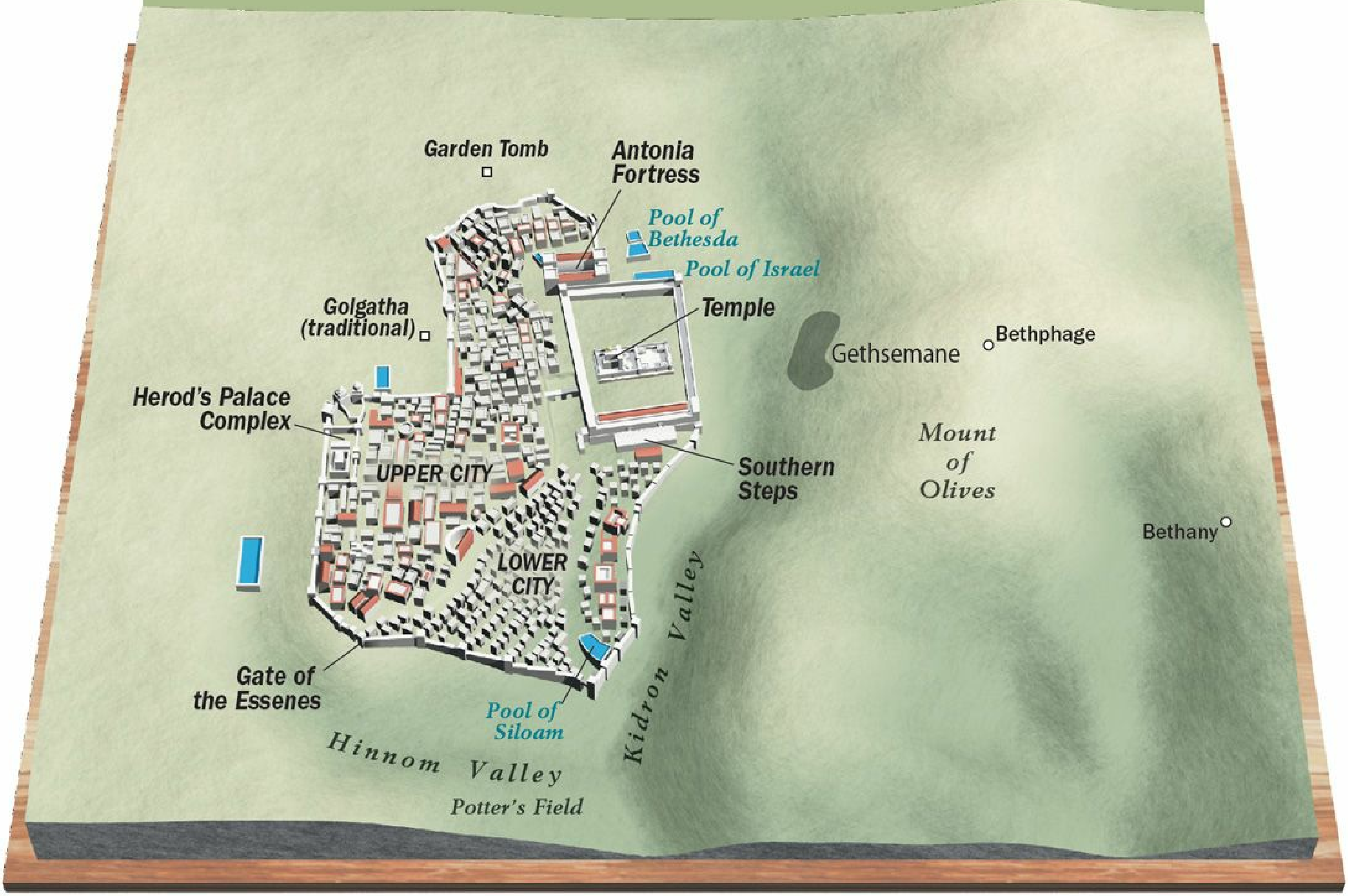
Alexander the Great captured Jerusalem in 332 BC. This victory marked the end of Persian rule. Following Alexander's death, his empire was divided between the Ptolemies of Egypt and the Seleucids of Syria. Ptolemy I captured Jerusalem in 320 BC, but the Jerusalem temple continued to be the center of local Jewish life and administration. The Seleucids defeated the Ptolemies and annexed Palestine around 201–198 BC. The city and the temple were repaired during their reign. During this period the Jews were struggling with the acceptance of Hellenistic culture. The high priest Jason favored Hellenization and transformed Jerusalem into a Hellenistic *polis* (a Greek city-state). Jerusalem became known as Antiochia, and the city expanded to the eastern slope of the Western Hill (Upper City). Jason built a gymnasium (1 Macc. 1:11–15; 2 Macc. 4:9–17). The Maccabeans revolted, and Antiochus IV destroyed the walls of Jerusalem, erected a fortress (the Akra), and desecrated the temple. Judas Maccabeus liberated Jerusalem in 164 BC, and the temple was purified and rededicated (1 Macc. 4:36–55). Hasmonean rule lasted from 142 to 63 BC. Hasmonean Jerusalem occupied the Western and Eastern Hills. The Upper City was joined to the Temple Mount by an arched bridge across the Tyropoeon Valley (Wilson's Arch). A fortress (the Baris) was built northwest of the temple. The Romans conquered Jerusalem in 63 BC under the rule of Pompey and ended Hasmonean rule.

THE TIME OF JESUS AND THE FIRST CENTURY AD

Jerusalem during the time of Jesus was largely the product of Herod the Great’s policies and building programs. Herod was a Roman vassal and brought Hellenistic culture to the city. He built an amphitheater and a theater. Jerusalem became a city divided between the wealthy of the Upper City and the poor in the Lower City. Herodian Jerusalem’s population was about forty thousand, and the city extended over 230 acres, not including suburbs on the Mount of Olives and west of the city. Herod’s main building activity was the complex on the Temple Mount. Herod built a massive podium over the northern summit of the Eastern Hill. This podium stood forty-five meters high above the bottom of the Kidron Valley. This formed a rectangular platform for the temple that measured 144,000 square meters. Most of the retaining walls are visible today, and the best-known section is the Western Wall. To the south of the Temple Mount complex was the Royal Stoa, and on the northwest corner was the Antonia Fortress.

Archaeological research has uncovered several components and features of NT Jerusalem. The temple rituals needed large amounts of water, and Herod built an elaborate water-delivery and storage system. Remains of both subterranean and surface aqueducts are found from the Bethlehem region to Jerusalem. Large water-storage pools are still visible today, such as the Serpent’s Pool in the Hinnom Valley, the Pool of the Towers of Amygdalon, the Sheep Pools, the Pool of Israel, as well as several other unnamed reservoirs and water-storage features. Several segments of the city fortification walls were found in various archaeological excavations, as well as remains of the Antonia Fortress and Herod’s Upper Palace with its three towers and adjacent Agora. Jewish Quarter excavations have revealed several palatial homes with various luxury goods, evidence of the wealth of the Upper City. These homes contained a courtyard surrounded by rooms and reception halls; several had private ritual baths. Excavations of the southern wall have revealed components of the Temple Mount complex, most notably the southern monumental stairway with the ritual-bath complex building and the two entrances that led up to the Temple Mount. Several tombs and cemeteries have also been excavated in the environs around the city.

JERUSALEM AT THE TIME OF JESUS


Garden Tomb
Antonia Fortress
Pool of Bethesda
Pool of Israel
Temple
Golgatha (traditional)
Gethsemane
Bethphage
Herod's Palace Complex
UPPER CITY
Southern Steps
Mount of Olives
Bethany
LOWER CITY
Kidron Valley
Gate of the Essenes
Pool of Siloam
Hinnom Valley
Potter's Field

Most of Jesus’ ministry was spent in Galilee. He would have come to Jerusalem at least three times each year to attend the major festivals. Of the Gospel writers, Luke most often referred to Jerusalem and the temple as he framed his account of the deeds and teachings of Jesus. Although the events of Passion Week took place in Jerusalem and its environs, the Gospels emphasize the events and teachings of Jesus, not the geography.

The early church started in Jerusalem with the events of Pentecost. Jerusalem was the origin and the center of the early church under the leadership of James. It seemed to serve as the center of the apostles’ authority, but the missionary zeal soon shifted the ministry and focus of the church to the eastern Mediterranean. Jerusalem was destroyed in AD 70 by the Romans under the direction of Titus. Jerusalem has been a central place for the Christian faith, whose followers acknowledge the city as the place of the death and resurrection of Jesus. Jerusalem played a major role throughout history and has always been a center of pilgrimage for Christians.

JERUSALEM, NEW *See* New Jerusalem.

JERUSALEM COUNCIL *See* Apostolic Council.

JERUSALEM TEMPLE Temples have always been the domain and house of the gods throughout the ancient Near East. As the abode of the God of Israel, the Jerusalem temple served the same purpose. The temple played an important role in the social, religious, and political life of ancient Israel. No archaeological remains of the actual temple building exist today; nevertheless, the temple has dominated biblical scholarship. The Jerusalem temple was originally built by Solomon in 953 BC and was destroyed by the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar in 586 BC. After the exile, the temple was rebuilt and then rededicated by Zerubbabel in 515 BC (Ezra). Herod the Great significantly expanded and changed the temple, but it was eventually destroyed by the Romans under the direction of Titus in AD 70.

The biblical text refers to the temple in several ways: temple, house of God/Yahweh, and sanctuary/shrine. These terms all refer to the dwelling or house of God and an area of sacredness. The sources for information on the temple are biblical texts, Josephus, and the Mishnah (tractate *Middot*). The most detailed accounts of the construction of the Solomonic temple are found in 1 Kings 6–8; 2 Chron. 2–4. In addition to these major sections, there are several references to building activities and repairs to the temple throughout the OT. Another major text is Ezek. 40, but it is debated whether this represents the actual temple or an ideal temple. There are several references in the NT that directly or indirectly refer to functions and specific components of the Temple Mount complex.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION

The location of the Temple Mount in Jerusalem has been undisputed. Current scholarly opinion locates the temple on the spot of the current Muslim shrine, the Dome of the Rock. Today the larger enclosed area is referred to as the *harem esh-sharif* (the noble sanctuary). Explorers in the nineteenth century did not attempt archaeological research of the temple itself, although various explorations focused on recording visible features and conducting soundings along the sides of the Temple Mount. Even after the unification of Jerusalem in 1967, with three major excavations in the city, no archaeological investigation of the temple was conducted. Due to the political and religious variables associated with the Muslim holy sites, there are no foreseeable archaeological investigations. A recent renovation of the Mosque of Omar, located on the southern end of the Temple Mount, removed truckloads of earth. Unfortunately, there was no archaeological supervision of the project and no archaeological excavations of the site were conducted.

In spite of the limited archaeological excavations, several popular accounts of alternate locations of the temple have been proposed. Most of these place the temple somewhere other than the Dome of the Rock, but none of these proposals has garnered scholarly support to rival the current location.

FIRST TEMPLE: TEMPLE OF SOLOMON

Throughout the ancient Near East, temples served as monumental edifices that provided divine legitimacy for the king or dynasty. While temples should be considered part of the religious sphere of society, their construction, maintenance, and associated activities are interlinked with the political sphere. The construction of the temple in Jerusalem is also linked to state formation by the Israelites. The Solomonic temple ushered in a new period of religious activity among the ancient Israelites. Previously, Israel had worshiped at various shrines and sanctuaries, and its central religious practice was associated with the tabernacle. With the establishment of the monarchy, dynastic kingship and centralized authority were created. Although the biblical text credits Solomon as the Israelite king who built the temple, the project was initiated under David. David united the Israelite tribes, captured Jerusalem and made it the capital of the kingdom, and built a royal palace. He made Jerusalem the political capital but also the religious center when he brought the holy ark, the visible symbol of Yahweh's presence, to Jerusalem (2 Sam. 5–6). David intended to build Yahweh a permanent dwelling (2 Sam. 7:2).

Location. The biblical text preserves multiple traditions and accounts of the location and acquisition of land for the temple. In the ancient world the city temple was commonly located on the acropolis (highest point) of the city. The temple is located on the highest point of a ridge where the OT city of Jerusalem is located (Jebusite city, later the City of David). There are two accounts of the purchase of the land: the threshing floors of Araunah (2 Sam. 24:18–25) and of Ornan (1 Chron. 21:15–30; 2 Chron. 3:1 [here the NIV supplies "Araunah," but see, e.g., the NET, NASB, ESV]). It is possible that Araunah and Ornan were kin, but most likely they are the same person, with Samuel and Chronicles using variant names. However, the two accounts disagree further on the amount paid for the land: fifty silver shekels (2 Sam. 24:24) and six hundred shekels of gold (1 Chron. 21:25). One theory explains this discrepancy as arising from two separate transactions. First, David purchased the threshing floor to build an altar to Yahweh, and he later purchased the whole mountain to build a temple. Later tradition associates the hill where David built an altar with the location where earlier Abraham built an altar to sacrifice Isaac (Mount Moriah).

Construction and dimensions. Solomon started to build during the fourth year of his reign (2 Chron. 3:1), and construction lasted for seven years. The plan of the temple was revealed to Solomon during a night in the sanctuary at Gibeon (2 Chron. 1:7–13). The king obtained building materials, specifically cedar from Lebanon (2 Chron. 2:3–10), and construction and design expertise from Phoenician artisans (1 Kings 7:13–14, 45). The Solomonic temple consisted of a tripartite plan similar to other temples in Syro-Palestine during this period. There are two accounts for the construction and dedication of the first temple (1 Kings 6–8; 2 Chron. 3–7). Both accounts offer similar descriptions but there are some differences in measurements. Most scholars account for these differences by viewing the dimensions in the book of Chronicles as reflecting the temple measurements after Hezekiah's repair and rebuilding projects.

The basic plan was a rectangle, 70 cubits long (120 ft. 7 in.) and 20 cubits wide (34 ft. 5 in.) on a straight axis facing east; the height was 30 cubits (51 ft. 7 in.). These measurements refer to the inside dimensions (1 cubit = 20.67 in.). The three distinct architectural units formed three distinct rooms where various functions were performed and also reflected levels of holiness. The three units were the *'ulam* ("porch" or "vestibule"), the *hekal* ("cella" or "nave"), and the *debir* (the innermost sanctuary, the most holy place). In the biblical accounts the whole building is called the "house [*bayit*] of the LORD," and the word "temple" is used for the *hekal*. There was a three-story structure built around the sides and back of the temple (see below).

The porch was 10 cubits (17 ft. 2 in.) by 20 cubits (34 ft. 5 in.). The account in Kings does not provide its height; the account in Chronicles gives the height as 120 cubits. In its description and measurements in the biblical text, the porch is considered separate from the temple (*bayit*, house). The porch contained two pillars of bronze: *yakin* ("he will establish") on the right side and *bo'az* ("in strength") on the left (*see* Boaz; Jakin). The pillars were bronze, 18 cubits (35 cubits in Chronicles) in height, with elaborate double capitals. The bottom capital was 5 cubits, round in shape, and surrounded by nets with pomegranates. Above this was another capital, 4 cubits high, shaped like a lily.

The *hekal* was 40 cubits long and 20 cubits wide and was the only part with windows (1 Kings 6:4). The *debir* was a cube, 20 cubits per side. The *debir* is also called the "holy of holies." The difference in height (10 cubits shorter than the *hekal*) is due to the rise in the bedrock. This measurement is confirmed today in the interior of the Dome of the Rock.

The walls of the house (*hekal* and *debir*) were built of whole stones dressed in the quarry, as “no hammer, chisel or any other iron tool was heard at the temple site while it was being built” (1 Kings 6:7). The roof was made of cedar wood (1 Kings 6:10), with crossbeams and intersecting boards. The stone walls were covered from ground to ceiling with boards of cedar wood, and the floor was made of cypress wood, covered with gold (1 Kings 6:30). The wood had carved engravings of cherubim, palm trees, and open flowers. The *hekal* and the *debir* were separated by a partition made of olive wood.

The three-story structure surrounding the temple was constructed of cedar wood. Each story was 5 cubits. The width of the first floor was 5 cubits, the middle 6 cubits, and the top 7 cubits. This structure was entered from the right side of the temple, and the floors were connected by openings with ladders. This structure formed chambers and storage for the activities of the priests.

In front of the temple was a courtyard surrounded by a wall. Inside the courtyard was a great bronze basin (known as “the Sea”). This basin rested on the backs of twelve bronze oxen. Ten smaller basins in groups of five were set on elaborate wheeled stands. A large altar also was located in this courtyard.

In the holy of holies stood two large cherubim of olive wood covered with gold. They were 10 cubits in height, with a wingspan of 10 cubits. These cherubim stood over the ark of the covenant. In the *hekal* were the golden altar, the golden table, and ten lampstands.

History. From Solomon to Zedekiah, the temple was used for political and religious power shifts. Kings of Israel raided the temple treasury to pay off invaders, closed the temple, or placed idols in the temple in periods of apostasy. During periods of reform they repaired and rebuilt the temple and its furnishings.

Under Rehoboam’s reign, Shishak king of Egypt ransacked the temple and removed all its treasures (1 Kings 14:25–28; 2 Chron. 12:9). Asa and his father, Abijah, added to the treasure of the temple with silver, gold, and other vessels (2 Chron. 15:18) but used these to pay Ben-Hadad of Syria to help him fight Baasha king of Israel (16:2–3). Asa’s son Jehoshaphat (2 Chron. 17) ruled during a time of prosperity and reform. It was under his rule that the court in front of the temple probably was enlarged (20:5). The sons of Athaliah broke into the temple and worshiped Baal. During the reign of Amaziah the temple was plundered by Jehoash king of Israel (2 Chron. 25). Uzziah ruled for a long period of prosperity (787–736 BC) but attempted to burn incense on the altar in the *hekal*, a ritual kept solely for the priests. A later king, Jotham, built the Upper Gate of the house of Yahweh (2 Kings 15:35; 2 Chron. 27:3). Jotham’s son Ahaz took the silver and gold from the temple and sent it as a present to the king of Assyria. He moved and changed various vessels of the temple and shut its doors (2 Chron. 28:24).

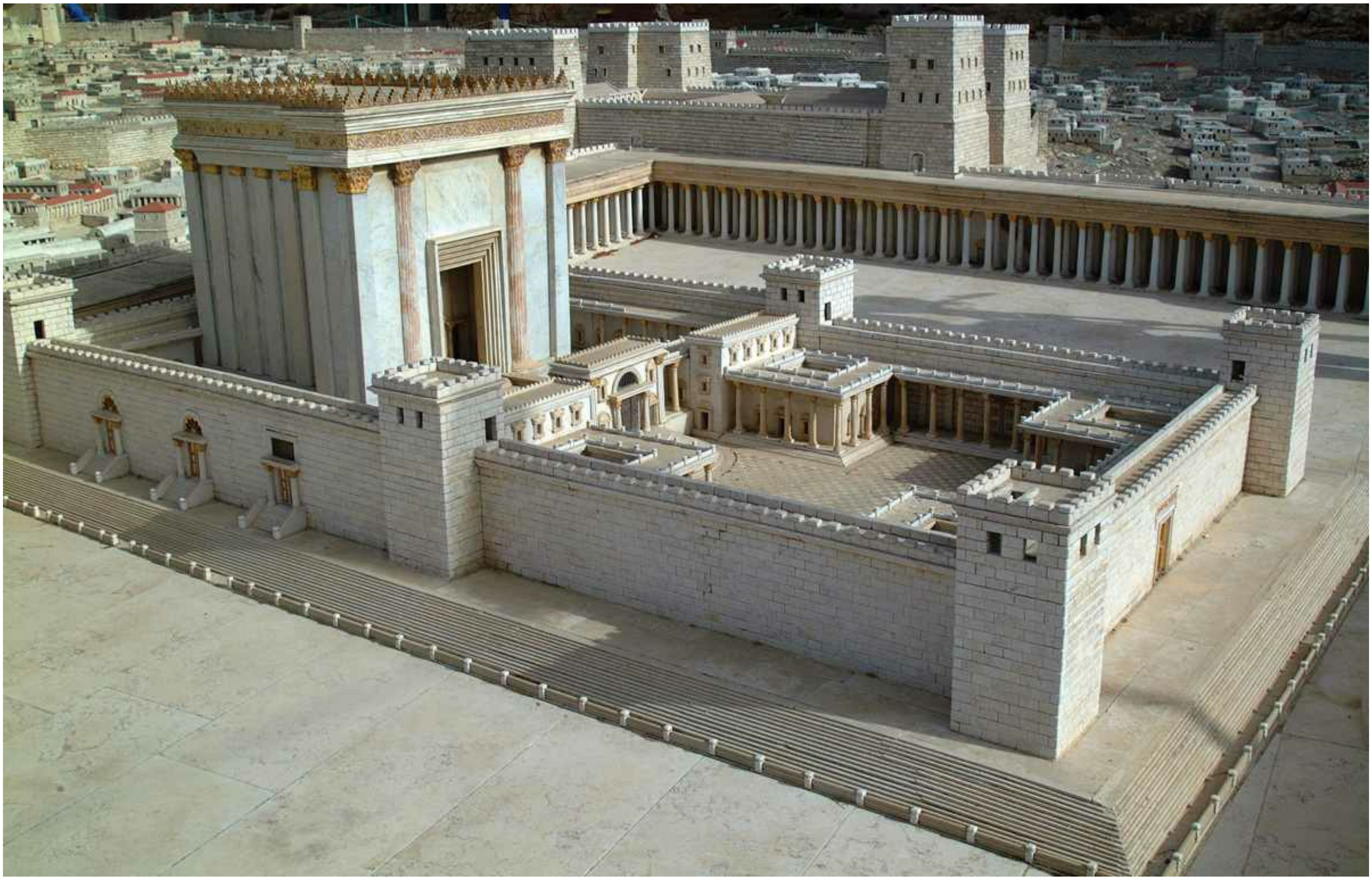
Hezekiah son of Ahaz ruled during a time of prosperity and revival. He reopened the temple doors (2 Chron. 29), cleaned out the temple, and created a 500-cubit-square mount around the temple. Hezekiah conducted many building projects in Jerusalem and reforms throughout the land. He also “stripped off the gold with which he had covered the doors and doorposts of the temple of the LORD” to pay a ransom to Sennacherib king of Assyria (2 Kings 18:16). Due to his building activities, most scholars attribute major changes to the temple to Hezekiah’s reign. The differences in the temple descriptions in Kings and Chronicles probably reflect two different periods of history concerning the temple (e.g., Kings represents the temple during the period of Solomon, while Chronicles represents the changes to the temple by Hezekiah). Manasseh, Hezekiah’s son, undid the work of his father by building altars in the temple.

The last resurgence of the temple in the life of the people of Israel was under Josiah. He instigated a reform throughout the land and a cleansing of the temple. Hilkiah the high priest found a copy of the "Book of the Law" (2 Kings 22:8). After a reading of the law in the public square, a collection was taken from the people to be given to workers for temple repair. The Babylonians took some of the temple treasure (2 Chron. 36:7) under the rule of Jehoiakim. The last two kings of Judah, Jehoiachin and Zedekiah, also lost temple treasure to Babylon, and eventually the temple was destroyed during the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 BC (2 Chron. 36).

SECOND TEMPLE: ZERUBBABEL AND THE TEMPLE OF HEROD THE GREAT

Zerubbabel's temple. Solomon's temple was rebuilt by the Jews who returned from exile under the decree of the Persian king Darius (Ezra 6:1–5). The temple was built under the direction of the governor Zerubbabel with the support of the prophets Haggai and Zechariah (Ezra 6:13–18) and was dedicated in 515 BC. This would have been a poorer temple due to the poverty of the inhabitants of Judah. During the Hasmonean period (152–37 BC) a platform and a fortress were constructed. Not much is known about the temple during this period. It would be greatly eclipsed by the work of Herod the Great.

Temple of Herod the Great. Herod invested heavily in building projects throughout his kingdom. He was keen on bringing Hellenistic culture to the Jews but also on upholding traditional Jewish religious practices, especially when it came to the temple. Just as the first temple mimicked the religious architecture of the ancient Near East, the second temple reflected the massive sacred architecture of the classical world. John 2:20 indicates that thus far it had taken forty-six years (beyond Herod's life) to build. Herod could not alter the dimensions of the temple, but he was able to make additions to the outside, alter its outer furnishings, and expand the compound and platform to match the grandeur of Greco-Roman temples. Today scholars refer to all these buildings and the temple as the Temple Mount complex.



Model of the Second Temple during the time of Herod the Great (first century AD)

Herod expanded the space of the Temple Mount by building a “box” around the mountain. This was a massive wall with varying height due to the topography. This wall is still visible today, especially the current religious site of the Western Wall. This construction allowed for a level platform with various buildings and plazas on the top. The leveling was done by filling in the gaps and building subterranean arches in low areas. One of these areas is located on the southeast corner (the underground arched supports are erroneously called “Solomon’s Stables” today). The whole area was surrounded by a colonnaded portico (Solomon’s Colonnade [John 10:23; Acts 3:11; 5:12]). On the northwest corner was the Antonia Fortress (Acts 21:35), and the southern end of the complex contained the Royal Stoa, a basilica-style building (four rows of forty columns) that housed the Sanhedrin and had other religious and political functions (Luke 22:66).

This complex became the religious and political center of the city of Jerusalem, and Herod built many auxiliary components. Several entrances and bridges from the Upper City were built. The public entered the complex from the south. A southern complex consisting of monumental stairs (210 feet wide) and entrance and exit gates (Double and Triple Gates) took pedestrians from the outside up through underground tunnels to the top of the temple compound. These stairs became an area for public forums. In addition, several shops (Mark 11:15–17) were built around the complex, as well as a large bathhouse for ritual cleansing. In order to facilitate the many sacrifices, Herod built a complex hydrologic system that brought water into the city. This was accomplished by various aqueducts and storage pools. The Temple Mount had many cisterns and a new pool on the northeast end of the

Temple Mount complex, the Pool of Israel. Although Herod could not alter the dimensions of the temple itself, he was able to enlarge the facade, added storage chambers and auxiliary buildings, build a second story above the temple, and construct several courtyards and various buildings associated with them. In keeping with the earlier tripartite level of holiness, these additional temple buildings and courtyards retained the same linear degree of holiness and exclusion.

Josephus called Herod's temple "a structure more noteworthy than any under the sun" (*Ant.* 15.412). Herod built a new monumental facade in front of the existing temple and added a second story. Herod's temple measured 100 cubits (172 ft.) in all three dimensions. It stood on top of a foundation that gave it added height. It had two stories, each one 45 cubits (77.5 ft.) in height. On the roof was a parapet, 3 cubits in height, which contained golden spikes, 1 cubit in height, to prevent birds from perching on the roof's edge. The temple was decorated with gold overlay. The opening between the *'ulam* ("porch") and the sanctuary was 20 cubits high and 10 cubits wide (34 ft. by 17 ft.). There were two sets of double folding doors. The sanctuary contained the golden menorah, the table of the bread of the Presence, and the altar of incense. Between the sanctuary and the holy of holies was a large tapestry (veil) (Matt. 27:51; Mark 15:38; Luke 23:45). The holy of holies had gold plating on its walls. Around the temple were thirty-eight cells built in three stories (*m. Mid.* 4:3–4). All of the cells were interconnected by openings between adjoining cells and by one in the ceiling to reach the cell above. To the north, between the outer wall of the temple and the cells, was an inner stairway with access to the top of the temple and the upper chamber (second story of the temple). The upper chamber allowed priests to service the holy of holies. They would be suspended in baskets, covered on three sides, through openings in the floor to clean the gold overlay in the holy of holies.

The temple courtyard was surrounded by various gates and buildings. These were specific entrances and buildings that the priests used for the various functions of the sacrifices and offerings (Mark 13:1–2). These included the Kindling Gate, Wood Chamber, Gate of the Firstlings, Golah Chamber, Water Gate, Chamber of the Hearth, Gate of Jeconiah, Rinsing Chamber, Gate of the Offering-Women, Salt-Parva Chamber, and Gate of the Flame-Singers. In front of the temple were two narrow courts: the court of the priests to the west and the court of the Israelites (men) to the east. Inside the temple court was the altar of burnt offering. During the Second Temple period it was a stationary, square-shaped altar constructed of unhewn stones. According to the Mishnah (*m. Mid.* 3:1), this altar was 32 cubits square at the base and about 10 cubits in height. A ramp 32 cubits long, also built of unhewn stones, led the priests up to the altar from the south. A laver, the great bronze basin known as "the Sea," stood west of the altar between the altar and the temple porch (*'ulam*) for the washing of hands and feet. North of the altar was the place of slaughtering.

The court of the women, 135 cubits square, was in front of the temple to the east. This court had four smaller courts, one at each corner. Women could enter the temple only as far as this court. It was surrounded by a colonnade. Inside these porches (porticoes) were thirteen collection boxes for money. This is where Jesus saw the poor widow donating two copper coins (Luke 21:1–3). The court had four large lampstands nearly half the height of the temple. The Mishnah states that each of the corner chambers was 40 cubits square and roofless. The central area was exposed to the sky, with a portico around each courtyard—typical of Mediterranean buildings. The chamber to the immediate right of the court's entrance (northeast) was the chamber of the woodshed, where priests examined logs for impurities (e.g., parasites). To the left (southeast) was the chamber of the Nazirites. To the northwest was the chamber of the lepers. A leper who had been healed brought an offering and then bathed in this chamber before coming to the priests for the performance of rituals. In the southwest corner was the chamber of the house of oil. Between the court of the women and the temple court was the Nicanor Gate. Fifteen semicircular steps led up to this gate. It was on these steps that the Levites sang the fifteen Psalms of Ascent (Pss. 120–134).

Surrounding the temple and the court of the women was a balustrade or railing that served as a boundary beyond which no Gentile could enter. Outside this boundary was the court of the Gentiles (see John 12:20–22; Acts 21:27–29). Archaeologists have found an inscription that forbids Gentiles, upon pain of death, to enter any farther. Herod's temple was destroyed in AD 70. The Temple Mount continued to be used and considered sacred, as Roman temples, Crusader churches, and Muslim shrines marked the sacredness of the location.

ROLE OF THE TEMPLE

The temple was the dwelling place of Yahweh. It was the domain of the religious leaders, priests, and Levites. It also represented the relationship/covenant between God and the nation of Israel. Various kings used the temple for their political maneuvering and attempts to shift the religious worship of the nation. The temple was the visible presence of God and embodied the political and religious aspirations of the people. The temple sat on top of a sacred mountain.

During turbulent political times the temple was central to God's protection and judgment. From the Babylonian and Roman periods, two texts spoke of a future temple. Ezekiel's vision saw a futuristic temple measuring 500 cubits square surrounded by a massive court measuring 3,000 cubits square (Ezek. 40:1–47:12). Among the DSS, the *Temple Scroll* also talks about a rebuilt temple. Today many Christians and Jews look to a future rebuilding of the temple.

JERUSHA The wife of King Uzziah of Judah (r. 769–733 BC) and the mother of King Jotham of Judah (r. 758–743 BC). In both 2 Kings 15:33 and 2 Chron. 27:1 she is identified as "Jerusha daughter of Zadok."

JERUSHAH *See* Jerusha.

JESAIAH *See* Jeshaiah.

JESARELAH One of the four sons of Asaph appointed by David with the responsibility of the music ministry for the temple (1 Chron. 25:14). The name is a variant of "Asarelah" (1 Chron. 25:2). *See also* Asarelah.

JESHAIAH The name "Jeshaiah" is a variant of "Isaiah." **(1)** A grandson of Zerubbabel, descended from David (1 Chron. 3:21). **(2)** A son of Jeduthun who received the eighth lot in the music ministry of the temple (1 Chron. 25:3, 15). **(3)** A Levite who helped administer gifts dedicated to the temple (1 Chron. 26:25). **(4)** An Elamite family head who returned with Ezra from Babylon to Israel (Ezra 8:7). **(5)** A Levite recruited by Ezra to serve in the temple (Ezra 8:19). **(6)** A Benjamite leader who settled in Jerusalem at the time of Nehemiah (Neh. 11:7).

JESHANAH A town on the border of Israel and Judah (2 Chron. 13:19). Along with Bethel and Ephron, Jeshanah was captured from Jeroboam I by Abijah king of Judah. *See also* Jeshanah Gate.

JESHANAH GATE A gate of Jerusalem restored by Nehemiah (Neh. 3:6; 12:39). It was located to the north of the Ephraim Gate and south of the Fish Gate (12:39). This could be the First Gate mentioned in Zech. 14:10.

JESHARELAH *See* Jesarelah.

JESHEBEAB A Levite at the time of David who was assigned priestly duties by lot (1 Chron. 24:13).

JESHER The first of Caleb's three sons with his wife Azubah (1 Chron. 2:18).

JESHIMON The Hebrew word *yeshimon* ("wasteland") is used in the OT to identify a barren region of land (Deut. 32:10; Pss. 68:7; 78:40; 106:14; 107:4; Isa. 43:19–20). It can also be translated as a proper noun referring to a specific location. Thus, Jeshimon is an area of the hill country of Judah in the Desert of Maon where David and his men hid from the jealous wrath of Saul (1 Sam. 23:19, 24; 26:1, 3). Occasionally it is unclear whether the word is a place name or a general description. For example, the NIV translates the word for the desert land east of the Jordan overlooked by Mount Pisgah and Mount Peor as "wasteland" (Num. 21:20; 23:28), whereas other versions retain the proper name "Jeshimon" (e.g., KJV, GW).

JESHISHAI A member of the tribe of Gad (1 Chron. 5:14).

JESHOHAIAH A descendant of Simeon (1 Chron. 4:36).

JESHUA There are difficulties in distinguishing the numerous individuals in the OT named "Jeshua" (*see also* Joshua), which is also a place name. **(1)** The head of a Levitical family given by lot the ninth priestly division of temple duties (1 Chron. 24:11). **(2)** A priest who, during the religious reforms of Hezekiah, helped distribute the freewill offerings for other priests (2 Chron. 31:15). **(3)** The son of Jozadak, the high priest during the time of Zerubbabel (Ezra 3:2; Neh. 12:26). In many Bible versions, he is referred to as "Jeshua" in Ezra and Nehemiah and "Joshua (son of Jehozadak)" in Haggai and Zechariah (see Hag. 1:1; Zech. 6:11). *See* Joshua. **(4)** A key family within the clan of Pahath-Moab, some of whose descendants were officially listed among the returned exiles (Ezra 2:6; Neh. 7:11). **(5)** A family of priests descended from Jedaiah (Ezra 2:36; Neh. 7:39). **(6)** A family of Levites descended from Hodaviah (Ezra 2:40; Neh. 7:43; possibly also Neh. 12:8). **(7)** The father of Jozabad, a Levite (Ezra 8:33). He is perhaps the same person as in 1 Chron. 24:11. **(8)** The father of Ezer, who ruled Mizpah and helped repair the walls of Jerusalem (Neh. 3:19). **(9)** A Levite, the son of Azaniah, who helped Ezra explain the law to the people who could not understand the Hebrew language of the Scriptures. He also took part in the signing of a covenant-renewal document (Neh. 8:7; 9:4–5; 10:9). **(10)** The son of Kadmiel and a leader of the Levites (Neh. 12:24). **(11)** A village in the south of Judah (Neh. 11:26), perhaps to be identified with Shema (Josh. 15:26) and Sheba (Josh. 19:2). The site is thought to be Tell es-Saweh, twelve miles east-northeast of Beersheba.

JESHURUN A poetic term meaning "the upright one" that appears in the Song of Moses (Deut. 32:15), the Blessing of Moses (Deut. 33:5, 26), and a prophecy of Isaiah of Babylon (Isa. 44:2). Used in parallel with "Jacob" and "Israel," it refers poetically to the people of Israel.

JESIAH *See* Ishiah.

JESIMIEL A descendant of Simeon (1 Chron. 4:36).

JESSE From Bethlehem, he was the father of David and a descendant of Ruth the Moabite (Ruth 4:17); 1 Sam. 22:3 implies that Jesse fled to Moab on one occasion. The Gospels recognize him as an ancestor of Jesus (Matt. 1:5–6; Luke 3:32). Prior to the anointing of David, Samuel was sent to Jesse (1 Sam. 16:1) to choose from among his eight sons (1 Sam. 17:12). Like the father of Samuel (1 Sam. 1:1), Jesse is called an "Ephrathite," a name associated with Bethlehem (1 Sam. 17:12; cf. Ruth 1:2; Mic. 5:2). Isaiah alludes to the Davidic dynasty as a "Root of Jesse" (Isa. 11:1, 10).

JESSHIAH *See* Ishiah.

JEST As a noun, the word "jest" means "a playful joke," as a verb, "to act or speak in a joking manner." Lot warned his sons-in-law to flee Sodom, but "he appeared to his sons-in-law to be jesting" (Gen. 19:14 NASB [NIV: "joking"]). Paul warns believers against "coarse jesting" (Eph. 5:4 NASB [NIV: "coarse joking"; NRSV: "vulgar talk"]).

JESUHITE *See* Ishvi.

JESUI, JESUITE *See* Ishvi.

JESURUN *See* Jeshurun.

JESUS The name "Jesus" comes from the Greek form of the name "Joshua." The same Greek word (*Iēsous*) is therefore used to refer to both Jesus and Joshua in the NT (see esp. Heb. 4). The name "Jesus" was common among Jews in the first century. Josephus mentions nineteen different men called "Jesus." Likewise, Luke tells of a Jewish sorcerer named "Bar-Jesus" (Acts 13:6), and Paul refers to a Jewish companion named "Jesus" (Col. 4:11). The best-known figure of this name is the predominant figure of the NT, Jesus Christ. *See also* Jesus, Son of Sirach; Jesus Christ; Justus.

JESUS, SON OF SIRACH The author of the book of Sirach (also known as Ecclesiasticus), who identifies himself as "Jesus son of Eleazar son of Sirach" (Sir. 50:27). He probably was an influential teacher of young men in Jerusalem and died shortly before the Maccabean crisis.

JESUS CHRIST The founder of what became known as the movement of Jesus followers or Christianity. For Christian believers, Jesus Christ embodies the personal and supernatural intervention of God in human history.

INTRODUCTION

Name. Early Christians combined the name "Jesus" with the title "Christ" (Acts 5:42; NIV: "Messiah"). The name "Jesus," from the Hebrew *Yehoshua* or *Yeshua*, was a common male name in first-century Judaism. The title "Christ" is from the Greek *christos*, a translation of the Hebrew *mashiakh* ("anointed one, messiah"). Christians eventually were named after Jesus' title (Acts 11:26). During the ministry of Jesus, Peter was the first disciple to recognize Jesus as the Messiah (Matt. 16:16; Mark 9:29; Luke 9:20).

Sources. From the viewpoint of Christianity, the life and ministry of Jesus constitute the turning point in human history. From a historical perspective, ample early source materials would be expected. Indeed, both Christian and non-Christian first-century and early second-century literary sources are extant, but they are few in number. In part, this low incidence is due to society's initial resistance to the Jesus followers' movement. The ancient Roman historian Tacitus called Christianity "a superstition," since its beliefs did not fit with the culture's prevailing worldview and thus were considered antisocial. Early literary sources therefore are either in-group documents or allusions in non-Christian sources.

The NT Gospels are the principal sources for the life and ministry of Jesus. They consist of Matthew, Mark, Luke (the Synoptic Gospels), and John. Most scholars adhere to the so-called Four Source Hypothesis. In this theory, Mark was written first and was used as a source by Matthew and Luke, who also used the sayings source Q (from German *Quelle*, meaning "source") as well as their own individual sources M (Matthew) and L (Luke). John used additional sources.

The early church tried to put together singular accounts, so-called Gospel harmonies, of the life of Jesus. The *Gospel of the Ebionites* represents one such attempt based on the Synoptic Gospels. Another harmony, the *Diatessaron*, based on all four Gospels, was produced around AD 170 by Tatian. Additional source materials concerning the life of Christ are provided in the NT in texts such as Acts, the Pauline Epistles, the General Epistles, and the Revelation of John. Paul wrote to the Galatians, "But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law" (Gal. 4:4). The first narrative about Jesus by the Christian community was a passion narrative, the account of his death and resurrection. The first extant references to this tradition are found in Paul's letters (1 Cor. 2:2; Gal. 3:1). The resurrection was recognized from the beginning as the cornerstone of the Christian faith (1 Cor. 15:13–14).

Among non-Christian sources, the earliest reference to Jesus is found in a letter written circa AD 112 by Pliny the Younger, the Roman governor of Bithynia-Pontus (*Ep.* 10.96). The Roman historian Tacitus mentions Christians and Jesus around AD 115 in his famous work about the history of Rome (*Ann.* 15.44). Another Roman historian, Suetonius, wrote around the same time concerning unrest among the Jews in Rome because of a certain "Chrestos" (*Claud.* 25.4). Some scholars conclude that "Chrestos" is a misspelling of "Christos," a reference to Jesus.

The Jewish author Josephus (first century AD) mentions Jesus in a story about the Jewish high priest Ananus and James the brother of Jesus (*Ant.* 20.200). A controversial reference to Jesus appears in a different part of the same work, where Josephus affirms that Jesus is the Messiah and that he rose from the dead (*Ant.* 18.63–64). The majority of scholars consider this passage to be authentic but heavily edited by later Christian copyists. Another Jewish source, the Talmud, also mentions Jesus in several places, but these references are very late and of little historical value.

Noncanonical Gospels that mention Jesus include, for example, the *Infancy Gospel of Thomas*, the *Gospel of Thomas*, the *Gospel of Peter*, the *Gospel of James*, the *Gospel of Judas Iscariot*, the *Gospel of the Hebrews*, the *Egerton Gospel*, and the *Gospel of Judas*. Although some of these may contain an occasional authentic saying or event, for the most part they are late and unreliable.

JESUS' LIFE

Birth and childhood. The Gospels of Matthew and Luke record Jesus' birth in Bethlehem during the reign of Herod the Great (Matt. 2:1; Luke 2:4, 11). Jesus was probably born between 6 and 4 BC, shortly before Herod's death (Matt. 2:19). Both Matthew and Luke record the miracle of a virginal conception made possible by the Holy Spirit (Matt. 1:18; Luke 1:35). Luke mentions a census under the Syrian governor Quirinius that was responsible for Jesus' birth taking place in Bethlehem (2:1–5).

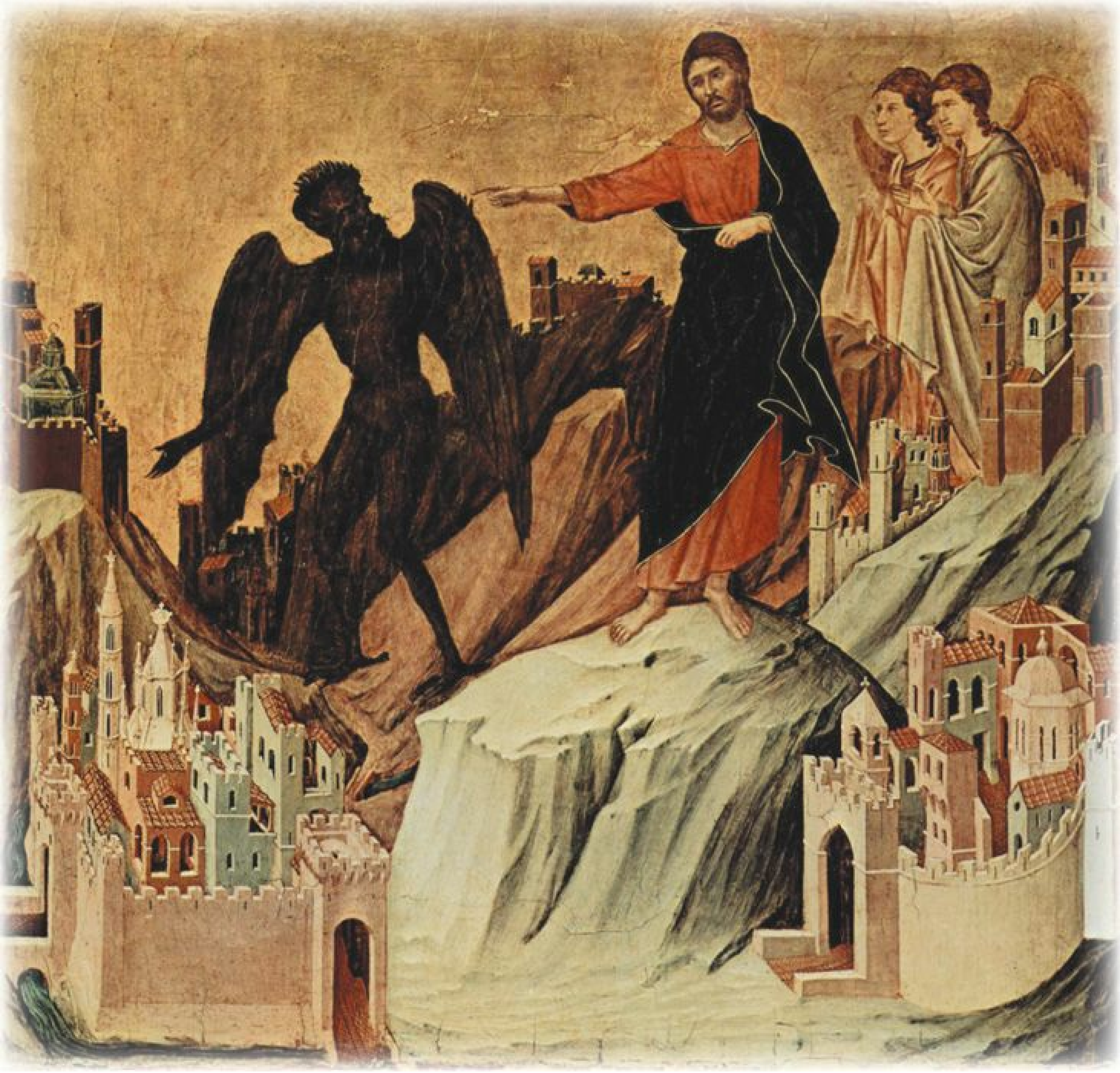
Both the census and the governorship at the time of the birth of Jesus have been questioned by scholars. Unfortunately, there is not enough extrabiblical evidence to either confirm or disprove these events, so their veracity must be determined on the basis of one's view regarding the general reliability of the Gospel tradition.

On the eighth day after his birth, Jesus was circumcised, in keeping with the Jewish law, at which time he officially was named "Jesus" (Luke 2:21). He spent his growing years in Nazareth, in the home of his parents, Joseph and Mary (2:40). Of the NT Gospels, the Gospel of Luke contains the only brief portrayal of Jesus' growth in strength, wisdom, and favor with God and people (2:40, 52). Luke also contains the only account of Jesus as a young boy (2:41–49).

Jesus was born in a lower socioeconomic setting. His parents offered a temple sacrifice appropriate for those who could not afford to sacrifice a sheep (Luke 2:22–24; cf. Lev. 12:8). Joseph, Jesus' earthly father, was a carpenter or an artisan in wood, stone, or metal (Matt. 13:55). From a geographical perspective, Nazareth was not a prominent place for settling, since it lacked fertile ground. Jesus' disciple Nathanael expressed an apparently common first-century sentiment concerning Nazareth: "Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?" (John 1:46).

Jesus was also born in a context of scandal. Questions of illegitimacy were surely raised, since his mother Mary was discovered to be pregnant before her marriage to Joseph. According to Matthew, only the intervention of an angel convinced Joseph not to break his betrothal (Matt. 1:18–24). Jesus' birth took place in Bethlehem, far from his parents' home in Nazareth. According to kinship hospitality customs, Joseph and Mary would have expected to stay with distant relatives in Bethlehem. It is likely that they were unwelcome because of Jesus' status as an illegitimate child; thus Mary had to give birth elsewhere and place the infant Jesus in a feeding trough (Luke 2:7). A similar response was seen years later in Nazareth when Jesus was identified as "Mary's son" (Mark 6:3) rather than through his paternal line, thereby shaming him as one who was born an illegitimate child. Jesus was likewise rejected at the end of his life as the crowds cried, "Crucify him!" (Matt. 27:22–23; Mark 15:13–14; Luke 23:21; John 19:6, 15). When Jesus was arrested, most of his followers fled (Matt. 26:56; Mark 14:50–52), and a core disciple, Peter, vehemently denied knowing him (Matt. 26:69–74; Mark 14:66–71; Luke 22:55–60; John 18:15–17, 25–27). His own siblings did not believe in him (John 7:5) and were evidently ashamed of his fate, since from the cross Jesus placed the care of his mother into the hands of "the disciple whom he loved" (19:26–27) rather than the next brother in line, as was customary.

Baptism, temptation, and start of ministry. After Jesus was baptized by the prophet John the Baptist (Luke 3:21–22), God affirmed his pleasure with him by referring to him as his Son, whom he loved (Matt. 3:17; Mark 1:11; Luke 3:22). Jesus' baptism did not launch him into fame and instant ministry success; instead, Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, where he was tempted for forty days (Matt. 4:1–11; Mark 1:12–13; Luke 4:1–13). Mark stresses that the temptations immediately followed the baptism. Matthew and Luke identify three specific temptations by the devil, though their order for the last two is reversed. Both Matthew and Luke agree that Jesus was tempted to turn stones into bread, expect divine intervention after jumping off the temple portico, and receive all the world's kingdoms for worshiping the devil. Jesus resisted all temptation, quoting Scripture in response.



Temptation of Christ on the Mountain by Duccio di Buoninsegna (AD 1308–1311)

Matthew and Mark record that Jesus began his ministry in Capernaum in Galilee, after the arrest of John the Baptist (Matt. 4:12–13; Mark 1:14). Luke says that Jesus started his ministry at about thirty years of age (3:23). This may be meant to indicate full maturity or perhaps correlate this age with the onset of the service of the Levites in the temple (cf. Num. 4:3). John narrates the beginning of Jesus' ministry by focusing on the calling of the disciples and the sign performed at a wedding at Cana (1:35–2:11).

Jesus' public ministry: chronology. Jesus' ministry started in Galilee, probably around AD 27/28, and ended with his death around AD 30 in Jerusalem. The temple had been forty-six years in construction (generally interpreted as the temple itself and the wider temple complex) when Jesus drove out the money changers (John 2:20). According to Josephus, the rebuilding and expansion of the second temple had started in 20/19 BC, during the eighteenth year of Herod's reign (*Ant*. 15.380).

The ministry of John the Baptist had commenced in the fifteenth year of Tiberius (Luke 3:1–2), who had become a coregent in AD 11/12. From these dates of the start of the temple building and the correlation of the reign of Tiberius to John the Baptist's ministry, the onset of Jesus' ministry can probably be dated to AD 27/28.

The Gospel of John mentions three Passovers and another unnamed feast in John 5:1. The length of Jesus' ministry thus extended over three or four Passovers, equaling about three or three and a half years. Passover, which took place on the fifteenth of Nisan, came on a Friday in AD 30 and 33. The year of Jesus' death was therefore probably AD 30.

Jesus' ministry years may be divided broadly into his Galilean and his Judean ministries. The Synoptic Gospels describe the ministry in Galilee from various angles but converge again as Jesus enters Judea.

Galilean ministry. The early stages of Jesus' ministry centered in and around Galilee. Jesus presented the good news and proclaimed that the kingdom of God was near. Matthew focuses on the fulfillment of prophecy (Matt. 4:13–17). Luke records Jesus' first teaching in his hometown, Nazareth, as paradigmatic (Luke 4:16–30); the text that Jesus quoted, Isa. 61:1–2, set the stage for his calling to serve and revealed a trajectory of rejection and suffering.

All Gospels record Jesus' gathering of disciples early in his Galilean ministry (Matt. 4:18–22; Mark 1:16–20; Luke 5:1–11; John 1:35–51). The formal call and commissioning of the Twelve who would become Jesus' closest followers is recorded in different parts of the Gospels (Matt. 10:1–4; Mark 3:13–19; Luke 6:12–16). A key event in the early ministry is the Sermon on the Mount/Plain (Matt. 5:1–7:29; Luke 6:20–49). John focuses on Jesus' signs and miracles, in particular in the early parts of his ministry, whereas the Synoptics focus on healings and exorcisms.

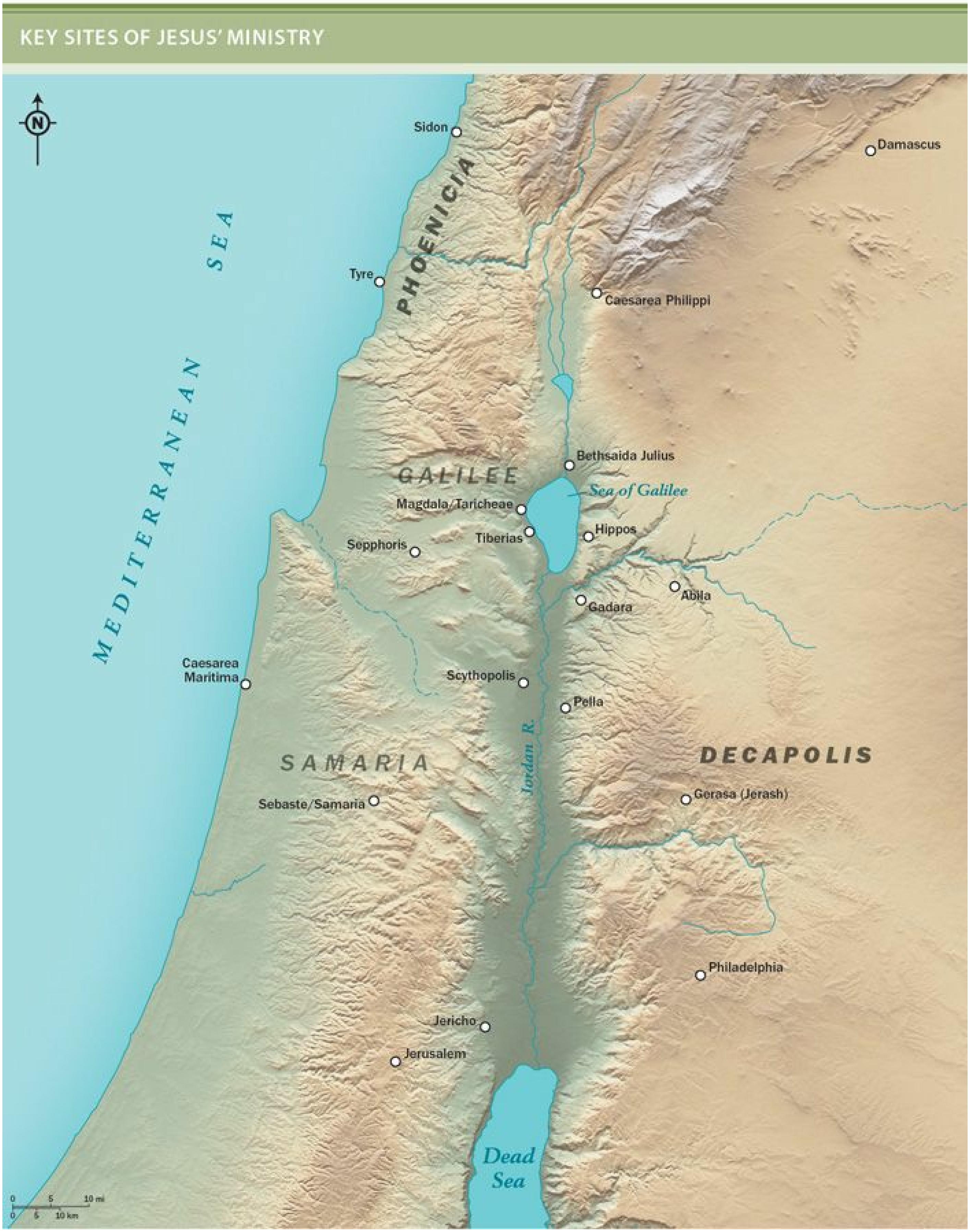
During Jesus' Galilean ministry, onlookers struggled with his identity. However, evil spirits knew him to be of supreme authority (Mark 3:11). Jesus was criticized by outsiders and by his own family (3:21). The scribes from Jerusalem identified him as a partner of Beelzebul (3:22). Amid these situations of social conflict, Jesus told parables that couched his ministry in the context of a growing kingdom of God. This kingdom would miraculously spring from humble beginnings (4:1–32).

The Synoptics present Jesus' early Galilean ministry as successful. No challenge or ministry need superseded Jesus' authority or ability: he calmed a storm (Mark 4:35–39), exorcized many demons (Mark 5:1–13), raised the dead (Mark 5:35–42), fed five thousand (Mark 6:30–44), and walked on water (Mark 6:48–49).

In the later part of his ministry in Galilee, Jesus often withdrew and traveled to the north and the east. The Gospel narratives are not written with a focus on chronology. However, only brief returns to Galilee appear to have taken place prior to Jesus' journey to Jerusalem. As people followed Jesus, faith was praised and fear resolved. Jerusalem's religious leaders traveled to Galilee, where they leveled accusations and charged Jesus' disciples with lacking ritual purity (Mark 7:1–5). Jesus shamed the Pharisees by pointing out their dishonorable treatment of parents (7:11–13). The Pharisees challenged his legitimacy by demanding a sign (8:11). Jesus refused them signs but agreed with Peter, who confessed, "You are the Messiah" (8:29). Jesus did provide the disciples a sign: his transfiguration (9:2–8).

Jesus withdrew from Galilee to Tyre and Sidon, where a Syrophoenician woman requested healing for her daughter. Jesus replied, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel" (Matt. 15:24). Galileans had long resented the Syrian provincial leadership partiality that allotted governmental funds in ways that made the Jews receive mere "crumbs." Consequently, when the woman replied, "Even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master's table," Jesus applauded her faith (Matt. 15:27–28).

Healing a deaf-mute man in the Decapolis provided another example of Jesus’ ministry in Gentile territory (Mark 7:31–37). Peter’s confession of Jesus as the Christ took place during Jesus’ travel to Caesarea Philippi, a well-known Gentile territory. The city was the ancient center of worship of the Hellenistic god Pan.


KEY SITES OF JESUS’ MINISTRY
N
Sidon
Damascus
PHOENICIA
Tyre
Caesarea Philippi
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
Bethsaida Julius
GALILEE
Sea of Galilee
Magdala/Taricheae
Tiberias
Hippos
Sepphoris
Abila
Gadara
Caesarea Maritima
Scythopolis
Pella
Jordan R.
SAMARIA
DECAPOLIS
Sebaste/Samaria
Gerasa (Jerash)
Philadelphia
Jericho
Jerusalem
Dead Sea
0 5 10 mi
0 5 10 km

Judean ministry. Luke records a geographic turning point in Jesus' ministry as he resolutely set out for Jerusalem, a direction that eventually led to his death (Luke 9:51). Luke divides the journey to Jerusalem into three phases (9:51–13:21; 13:22–17:10; 17:11–19:27). The opening verses of phase one emphasize a prophetic element of the journey. Jesus viewed his ministry in Jerusalem as his mission, and the demands on discipleship intensified as Jesus approached Jerusalem (Matt. 20:17–19, 26–28; Mark 10:38–39, 43–45; Luke 14:25–35). Luke presents the second phase of the journey toward Jerusalem with a focus on conversations regarding salvation and judgment (Luke 13:22–30). In the third and final phase of the journey, the advent of the kingdom and the final judgment are the main themes (17:20–37; 19:11–27).

Social conflicts with religious leaders increased throughout Jesus' ministry. These conflicts led to lively challenge-riposte interactions concerning the Pharisaic schools of Shammai and Hillel (Matt. 19:1–12; Mark 10:1–12). Likewise, socioeconomic feathers were ruffled as Jesus welcomed young children, who had little value in society (Matt. 19:13–15; Mark 10:13–16; Luke 18:15–17).

Passion Week, death, and resurrection. Each of the Gospels records Jesus' entry into Jerusalem with the crowds extending him a royal welcome (Matt. 21:4–9; Mark 11:7–10; Luke 19:35–38; John 12:12–15). Luke describes Jesus' ministry in Jerusalem as a time during which Jesus taught in the temple as Israel's Messiah (19:45–21:38).

In Jerusalem, Jesus cleansed the temple of profiteering (Mark 11:15–17). Mark describes the religious leaders as fearing Jesus because the whole crowd was amazed at his teaching, and so they "began looking for a way to kill him" (11:18). Dismayed, each segment of Jerusalem's temple leadership inquired about Jesus' authority (11:27–33). Jesus replied with cunning questions (12:16, 35–36), stories (12:1–12), denunciation (12:38–44), and a prediction of Jerusalem's own destruction (13:1–31). One of Jesus' own disciples, Judas Iscariot, provided the temple leaders the opportunity for Jesus' arrest (14:10–11).

At the Last Supper, Jesus instituted a new Passover, defining a new covenant grounded in his sufferings (Matt. 26:17–18, 26–29; Mark 14:16–25; Luke 22:14–20). He again warned the disciples of his betrayal and arrest (Matt. 26:21–25, 31; Mark 14:27–31; Luke 22:21–23; John 13:21–30), and later he prayed for the disciples (John 17:1–26) and prayed in agony and submissiveness in the garden of Gethsemane (Matt. 26:36–42; Mark 14:32–42; Luke 22:39–42). His arrest, trial, crucifixion, death, and resurrection followed (Matt. 26:46–28:15; Mark 14:43–16:8; Luke 22:47–24:9; John 18:1–20:18). Jesus finally commissioned his disciples to continue his mission by making disciples of all the nations (Matt. 28:18–20; Acts 1:8) and ascended to heaven with the promise that he will one day return (Luke 24:50–53; Acts 1:9–11).

THE IDENTITY OF JESUS CHRIST

Various aspects of Jesus' identity are stressed in the four NT Gospels, depending on their target audiences. In the Gospels the witnesses to Jesus' ministry are portrayed as constantly questioning and examining his identity (Matt. 11:2–5; 12:24; 26:63; 27:11; Mark 3:22; 8:11; 11:28; 14:61; Luke 7:18–20; 11:15; 22:67, 70; 23:39; John 7:20, 25–27; 18:37). Only beings of the spiritual realm are certain of his divinity (Mark 1:34; 3:11; Luke 4:41). At Jesus' baptism, God referred to him as his Son, whom he loved (Matt. 3:17; Mark 1:11; Luke 3:22). Likewise, when Jesus was transfigured in the presence of Peter, James, and John, a voice affirmed, "This is my Son, whom I love" (Matt. 17:5; Mark 9:7). At the moment of his death, the questioning of Jesus' identity culminated in a confession by a Roman centurion and other guards: "Surely he was the Son of God!" (Matt. 27:54; cf. Mark 15:39).

Miracle worker. In the first-century setting, folk healers and miracle workers were part of the fabric of society. Jesus, however, performed signs and miracles in order to demonstrate the authority of the kingdom of God over various realms: disease, illness, the spiritual world, nature, and even future events. Especially in the Gospel of John, Jesus' signs and miracles are used to show his authority and thus his identity.

No challenge superseded Jesus' authority. Among his ample miracles and signs, he changed water into wine (John 2:7–9), calmed a storm in the sea (Matt. 8:23–27; Mark 4:35–39; Luke 8:22–25), exorcized demons (Matt. 9:32–34; Mark 5:1–13; Luke 9:42–43), healed the sick (Mark 1:40–44), raised the dead (Matt. 9:23–25; Mark 5:35–42; Luke 7:1–16; 8:49–54; John 11:17, 38–44), performed miraculous feedings (Matt. 14:17–21; 15:34–38; Mark 6:30–44; 8:5–9; Luke 9:10–17; John 6:8–13), and walked on water (Matt. 14:25–26; Mark 6:48–49; John 6:19).

The Pharisees requested miracles as evidence of his authority (Mark 8:11–12). Jesus refused, claiming that a wicked and adulterous generation asks for a miraculous sign (Matt. 12:38–39; 16:1–4). The only sign that he would give was the sign of Jonah—his death and resurrection three days later—a personal sacrifice, taking upon himself the judgment of the world (Matt. 12:39–41).

Rabbi/teacher. Jesus' teaching style was similar to other first-century rabbis or Pharisees (Mark 9:5; 10:51; John 1:38; 3:2). What distinguished him was that he spoke with great personal authority (Matt. 5:22, 28, 32, 39, 44; Mark 1:22). Like other rabbis of his day, Jesus gathered disciples. He called these men to observe his lifestyle and to join him in his ministry of teaching, healing, and exorcism (Matt. 10:1–4; Mark 3:13–19; Luke 6:12–16).

Jesus used a variety of teaching methods. He frequently spoke in parables (Matt. 6:24; 13:24–52; 18:10–14, 23–35; 21:28–22:14; 24:32–36, 45–51; 25:14–30; Mark 4:1–34; 12:1–12; 13:28–34; Luke 8:4–18; 12:41–46; 13:18–21; 14:15–24; 15:1–16:15, 19–31; 18:1–14; 19:11–27; 20:9–19; 21:29–33), used figures of speech (John 10:9), hyperbole (Matt. 19:24; Mark 10:25; Luke 18:25), argumentation (Matt. 26:11), object lessons (Matt. 24:32), frequent repetition (Matt. 13:44–47; Luke 13:18–21), practical examples, and personal guidance.

Major themes in Jesus' teaching include the kingdom of God, the cost of discipleship, internal righteousness, the end of the age, his identity, his mission, and his approaching death. In his teachings, observance of Torah was given new context and meaning because God's kingdom had "come near" (Matt. 3:2). Jesus had come to fulfill the law (Matt. 5:17).

Jesus' teaching ministry often took place amid social conflict. These conflicts were couched in so-called challenge-riposte interactions in which the honor status of those involved was at stake. Jesus used these interactions as teachable moments. When questioned, Jesus gave replies that reveal omniscience or intimate knowledge of God's will, especially in the Gospel of John. In the Synoptic Gospels, Jesus' answers are both ethical and practical in nature. The Synoptics portray Jesus as challenged repeatedly with accusations of violating customs specified in the Jewish law. Jesus' answers to such accusations often echoed the essence of 1 Sam. 15:22, "To obey is better than sacrifice," phrased by Jesus as "I desire mercy, not sacrifice" (Matt. 9:13; 12:7). An overall "better than" ethic was common in Jesus' public teaching.

The Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5–7) contains a "better than" ethic in which internal obedience is better than mere outward obedience. For example, Jesus said that anger without cause is equal to murder (Matt. 5:21–22), that looking at a woman lustfully amounts to adultery (Matt. 5:28), and that instead of revenging wrongs one must reciprocate with love (Matt. 5:38–48). Jesus valued compassion above traditions and customs, even those contained within the OT law. He desired internal obedience above the letter of the law.

Jesus' teachings found their authority in the reality of God's imminent kingdom (Matt. 3:2; 10:7; Mark 1:15; Luke 10:9), necessitating repentance (Matt. 3:2), belief (Mark 1:15), dependence (Matt. 18:3–5; Mark 10:15), and loyalty to a new community—the family of Jesus followers (Mark 3:34; 10:29–30). Jesus urged, "Seek first [God's] kingdom and his righteousness" (Matt. 6:33). Preaching with such urgency was common among prophetic teachers of the intertestamental period. Jesus, however, had his own grounds for urgency. He held that God deeply valued all humans (Matt. 10:31) and would bring judgment swiftly (Matt. 25:31–46).

Examples of a "greater good" ethic in the Synoptics include the occasions when Jesus ate with sinners (Mark 2:16–17). Jesus used an aphorism in response to accusations about his associations with sinners, saying, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners" (Mark 2:17). He advocated harvesting and healing on the Sabbath (Mark 2:23–28; 3:1–6), and when he was accused of breaking the law, he pointed to an OT exception (1 Sam. 21:1–6) to declare compassion appropriate for the Sabbath. Jesus also applied the "greater good" ethic in the case of divorce, since women suffered the societal stigma of adultery and commonly became outcasts following divorce (Matt. 19:8–9; Mark 10:5–9).

Jesus' kingdom teachings were simultaneously spiritual, ethical, and eschatological in application. The teachings were aimed at internal transformation (Matt. 5:3–9; 18:3; Mark 10:15) and spurring on love (Matt. 5:44; 7:21). The Spirit of the Lord had called Jesus to bless the hurting ones as they aspired to a godly character. Jesus taught, "Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Matt. 5:48), and "Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful" (Luke 6:36). The "blessed" ones in Jesus' teachings are poor of spirit, peace driven, mournful, and hungry for righteousness, consumed with emulating godly character.

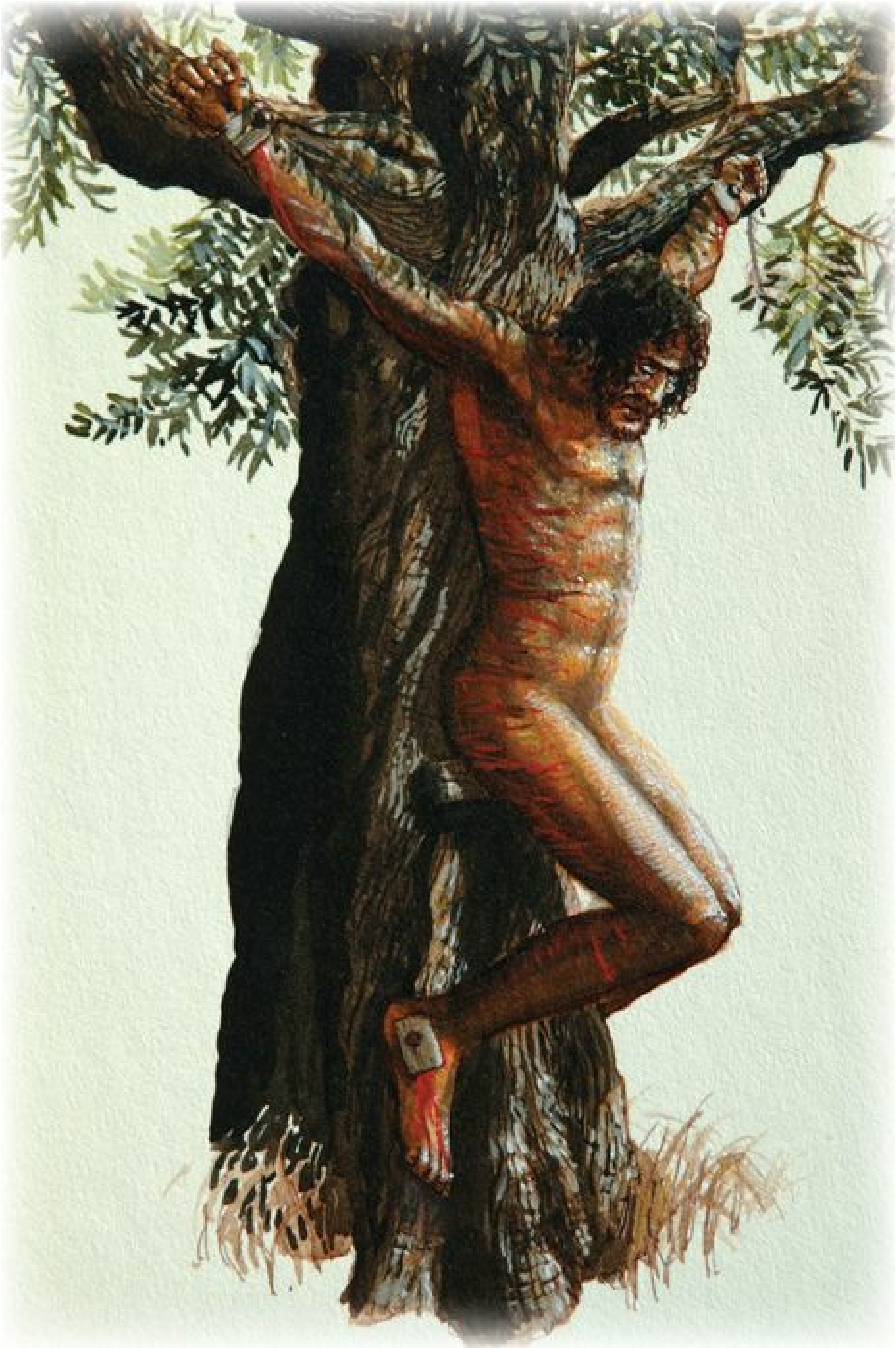
Some scholars believe that Jesus promoted an "interim ethic" for the kingdom, intended only for a short period prior to the end of time. However, he was explicit regarding the longevity of his teachings: "Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away" (Matt. 24:35; Luke 16:17).

Messiah. The concept of an anointed one, a messiah, who would restore the glories of David's kingdom and bring political stability was common in Jewish expectation. Both before and after the Babylonian captivity, many Jews longed for one who would bring peace and protection. Israel's prophets had spoken of a coming deliverer, one who would restore David's kingdom and reign in justice and righteousness (2 Sam. 7:11–16; Isa. 9:1–7; 11:1–16; Jer. 23:5–6; 33:15–16; Ezek. 37:25; Dan. 2:44; Mic. 5:2; Zech. 9:9). Isaiah's description of the servant (Isa. 53) whose suffering healed the nation provided a slightly different angle of expectation in terms of a deliverer.

Jesus' authority and popularity as a miracle worker called up messianic images in first-century Jewish minds. On several occasions hearers called him "Son of David," hoping for the Messiah (Matt. 12:23; 21:9). Simon Peter was the first follower who confessed Jesus as the Christ, the "Messiah" (Matt. 16:16; Mark 8:29). In line with Isaiah's model of the Suffering Servant, Jesus focused not on political ends but rather on spiritual regeneration through his own sacrificial death (Mark 10:45).

Eschatological prophet. Many scholars claim that Jesus is best understood as a Jewish apocalypticist, an eschatological prophet who expected God to intervene in history, destroy the wicked, and bring in the kingdom of God. Central in this understanding are Jesus' prophecies concerning the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem (Matt. 24:1–2, 15–22; Mark 13:1; Luke 21:5–24; John 2:19; Acts 6:14). In addition, it is noted that Jesus had twelve disciples, representative of the twelve tribes of Israel (Matt. 19:2–28; Luke 22:23–30). Certain of Jesus' parables, those with apocalyptic images of coming judgment, present Jesus as an eschatological prophet (Matt. 24:45–25:30; Luke 12:41–46; 19:11–27).

Suffering Son of God. Jesus' first recorded teaching in a synagogue in Nazareth was paradigmatic (Luke 4:16–21). He attributed the reading, Isa. 61:1–2, to his personal calling to serve, and in doing so he revealed a trajectory of suffering. The Gospel of Mark likewise aptly portrays Jesus as the suffering Son of God. Jesus' own teachings incorporated his upcoming suffering (Mark 8:31; 9:12–13, 31; 10:33–34). He summarized his mission by declaring, "The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many" (Mark 10:45). His earthly career ended with a trial in Jerusalem consisting of both Roman and Jewish components (Matt. 26:57–68; 27:1–31; Mark 14:53–65; 15:1–20; Luke 22:54–23:25; John 18:19–24; 18:28–19:16). He was insulted, scourged, mocked, and crucified.



A body crucified on a tree was considered cursed (Deut. 21:23).

Jesus' suffering culminated in his humiliating death by crucifixion (Matt. 27:33–50; Mark 15:22–37; Luke 23:33–46; John 19:16–30). Crucifixion was a death of unimaginable horror, bringing shame and humiliation to the victim and his family. Anyone hanging on a tree was considered cursed (Deut. 21:23; Gal. 3:13). Thus, especially in a Jewish society, anyone associated with a crucified person bore the shame of following one who was executed as a lowly slave and left as a cursed corpse. The apostle Paul referred to this shame of the cross when he stated, "I am not ashamed of the gospel" (Rom. 1:16).

Exalted Lord. Jesus had prophesied that he would rise again (Matt. 16:21; 17:9, 23; 20:19; 27:63; Mark 8:31; 9:9, 31; 10:34; Luke 9:22; 18:33; 24:7, 46). The testimony of the Synoptics is that the resurrection of Jesus Christ indeed occurred on the third day, Christ having died on Friday (Mark 15:42–45; Luke 23:52–54; John 19:30–33) and risen again on Sunday (Matt. 28:1–7; Mark 16:2–7; Luke 24:1–7; John 20:1–16). The resurrected Jesus was witnessed by the women (Matt. 28:8–9), the eleven disciples (Matt. 28:16–17; Luke 24:36–43), and travelers on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:31–32). According to Paul, he appeared to as many as five hundred others (1 Cor. 15:6). He appeared in bodily form, spoke, showed his scars, and ate (Luke 24:39–43; John 20:27; Acts 1:4). After forty postresurrection days, Jesus ascended into the heavenly realm (Acts 1:9).

As much as Jesus' death was the epitome of shame, his victory over death was his ultimate exaltation (Phil. 2:5–11). At Pentecost, Peter proclaimed that in the resurrection God fulfilled OT promises (Ps. 16:10) by raising his Son from the grave (Acts 2:30–31). Furthermore, Christ provided freedom from the law through his resurrection (Rom. 5:13–14), God's approval of his life and work (Phil. 2:8–9), and God's designation of him as Lord over all the earth, the living and the dead (Acts 17:30–31; Phil. 2:10; Heb. 1:3), and over all his enemies (Eph. 1:20–23).

Jesus' exaltation commenced the beginning of forgiveness and justification (Luke 24:46–47; Acts 13:30–39; Rom. 4:25) and his intercession for the people of God (Rom. 8:34). His ascension signaled the coming of the Holy Spirit as comforter and teacher (John 14:26; Acts 2:33) and was accompanied by the promise of his return in glory (Luke 24:51), at which time he will render judgment (Matt. 19:28; 24:31; Rev. 20:11–15) and establish his eternal kingdom (1 Cor. 15:24; 2 Tim. 4:1; Rev. 11:15; 22:5).

JESUS' PURPOSE AND COMMUNITY

In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus is the long-awaited Messiah, who preaches the good news of the kingdom, urging people to repent (4:17–23). Repentance and belief allow one to enter the kingdom. The call into the kingdom is a call into a new covenant, one made in Jesus' blood (26:28).

In the prologue to the Gospel of Mark, the narrator reveals the identity of Jesus (1:1). Jesus is presented as the one who brings good tidings of salvation (cf. Isa. 40:9; 52:7; 61:1). The centrality of the gospel, the good news (Mark 1:14–15), is evident.

Luke likewise presents the preaching of the good news as a main purpose of Jesus' ministry (4:43). The content of this good news is the kingdom of God (4:43; 8:1; 16:16). When the disciples of John the Baptist asked Jesus if he was the one who was to come (7:20), Jesus answered, "Go back and report to John what you have seen and heard: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor" (7:22). The kingdom of God, as presented in Luke, brings freedom for the prisoners, recovery of sight for the blind, and release for the oppressed (4:18). Jesus' healings and exorcisms announce the coming kingdom of God already present in the ministry of Jesus (4:40–44; 6:18–20; 8:1–2; 9:2; 10:8–9).

In the Gospel of John, Jesus testifies to the good news by way of signs throughout his ministry. These signs point to Jesus' glory, his identity, and the significance of his ministry. Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, who offers eternal and abundant life. This abundant life is lived out in community.

In the Gospel of John, the disciples of Jesus represent the community of God (17:21). The disciples did not belong to the world, but they continued to live in the world (17:14–16). Throughout his ministry, Jesus called his disciples to follow him. This was a call to loyalty (Matt. 10:32–40; 16:24–26; Mark 8:34–38; Luke 9:23–26), a call to the family of God (Matt. 12:48–50; Mark 3:33–35). Jesus' declaration "On this rock I will build my church" (Matt. 16:18) was preceded by the call to community. Jesus' presence as the head of the community was replaced by the promised Spirit (John 14:16–18).

Jesus' ministry continued in the community of Jesus' followers, God's family—the church. Entrance into the community was obtained by adopting the values of the kingdom, belief, and through the initiation rite of baptism (Matt. 10:37–39; 16:24–26; Mark 8:34–38; Luke 9:23–26, 57–62; John 1:12; 3:16; 10:27–29; Acts 2:38; 16:31–33; 17:30; Rom. 10:9).

THE QUESTS FOR THE HISTORICAL JESUS

The quest for the historical Jesus, or seeking who Jesus was from a historical perspective, is a modern phenomenon deemed necessary by scholars who claim that the NT Gospels were written long after Jesus' death and were heavily influenced by the post-Easter understanding of the church.

The beginning of this quest is often dated to 1770, when the lecture notes of Hermann Samuel Reimarus were published posthumously. Reimarus had launched an inquiry into the identity of Jesus that rejected as inauthentic all supernatural elements in the Gospels. He concluded that the disciples invented Jesus' miracles, prophecies, ritualistic religion, and resurrection. Reimarus's conclusions were not widely accepted, but they set off a flurry of rationalistic research into the historical Jesus that continued throughout the nineteenth century. This became known as the "first quest" for the historical Jesus.

In 1906 German theologian Albert Schweitzer published *The Quest of the Historical Jesus* (German title: *Von Reimarus zu Wrede: Eine Geschichte der Leben-Jesu-Forschung*), a scathing indictment of the first quest. Schweitzer's work showed that nineteenth-century researchers re-created Jesus in their own image, transforming the historical Jesus into a modern philanthropist preaching an inoffensive message of love and brotherhood. Schweitzer's conclusions marked the beginning of the end for this first quest. Schweitzer himself concluded that the historical Jesus was an eschatological prophet whose purposes failed during his last days in Jerusalem.

With the demise of the first quest, some NT scholars, such as Rudolf Bultmann, rejected any claim to being able to discover the historical Jesus. This trend continued until 1953, when some of Bultmann's former students launched what has come to be known as the "new quest" for the historical Jesus (1953–c. 1970). This quest created new interest in the historical Jesus but was still dominated by the view that the portrait of Jesus in the Gospels is largely a creation of the church in a post-Easter setting.

As the rebuilding years of the post–World War II era waned and scholars started to reap academic fruit from major archaeological finds such as the DSS, research on the historical Jesus moved on to what has been called the "third quest." This quest seeks especially to research and understand Jesus in his social and cultural setting.

JESUS SEMINAR A group comprised primarily of NT scholars that was founded in 1985 and whose stated goal has been to determine the actual words and deeds of Jesus. In the initial phase of their work, they concluded that only about 15 percent of the sayings attributed to Jesus in the NT were likely to have actually been spoken by him. The second phase of their work focused on the deeds of Jesus, seeking to determine which Gospel stories and details about Jesus are historical. As was the case with the words of Jesus, the group concluded that the vast majority of the events involving Jesus in the Gospels are likely not historical.

There have been many criticisms of the methodology and conclusions of the Jesus Seminar. First, some have alleged that the group assumes the Gospel accounts to be false until proved true, and this type of assumption is generally not made in other fields of historical inquiry. Second, while the group claims to have provided "the assured results of historical-critical scholarship," there is disagreement among its own members on a wide range of issues. How "assured" can one consider such conclusions to be? Third, the criteria used by the Jesus Seminar for determining the authenticity of Jesus' words and deeds have been understood by some as guaranteeing a Jesus with little connection to the earliest Christians. It would indeed seem odd to construct a historical figure so disconnected from those who were his first followers.

JETHER **(1)** The eldest son of Gideon, as a youth he fearfully disobeyed his father's command to kill two kings of Midian (Judg. 8:20). **(2)** The father of Amasa, a military commander under David who was killed by another military commander, Joab (2 Sam. 17:25 [here called "Ithra"; see NIV mg.]; 1 Kings 2:5, 32). **(3)** A son of Jada and a descendant of Jerahmeel who died childless (1 Chron. 2:32). **(4)** The first of Ezrah's four sons, from the tribe of Judah (1 Chron. 4:17). **(5)** A descendant in the tribe of Asher (1 Chron. 7:38). **(6)** In 1 Chron. 7:37 "Ithran" is sometimes understood to be another name for "Jether."

JETHETH A descendant of Esau, he was a leader of an Edomite clan who gave his name to the territory he occupied (Gen. 36:40; 1 Chron. 1:51).

JETHLAH *See* Ithlah.

JETHRO The father of Zipporah, the wife of Moses. He is thus best known as the father-in-law of Moses. Moses came into contact with Zipporah and her father as he fled from Egypt (Exod. 2:11–25). Jethro is identified from the start as a "priest of Midian" (Exod. 2:16). Midian was not a nation-state but rather an area occupied by nomadic shepherds. The area is in northern Arabia on the east side of Aqaba. Since Israel had no priests at this time, Jethro's status is somewhat unclear. Perhaps he was a pagan priest who converted to the true worship of Yahweh. In any case, Moses recognized Jethro as a fellow worshiper of the same true God. It was while Moses was with Jethro that God met him at the burning bush (Exod. 3:1). Jethro gave good advice to Moses when the latter felt overwhelmed by his leadership responsibilities. He explained to Moses how he could more efficiently deal with the organization of the people as they journeyed in the wilderness. One interpretation of Num. 10:29 understands "Hobab" as another name for Jethro, and in Exod. 2:18 his name may be "Reuel."

JETUR The tenth son of Ishmael (Gen. 25:15; 1 Chron. 1:31), he is the ancestor of an Arab tribe by the same name (1 Chron. 5:19).

JEUEL **(1)** A man of the Zerahite clan who returned from the exile (1 Chron. 9:6). **(2)** A descendant of Adonikam who returned with Ezra (Ezra 8:13; KJV: “Jeiel”).

JEUSH **(1)** The first of three sons born to Esau and Oholibamah (Gen. 36:5, 14, 18). **(2)** The first of seven sons of Bilhan in the tribe of Benjamin (1 Chron. 7:10). **(3)** A warrior, the second of three sons of Eshek in the tribe of Benjamin (1 Chron. 8:39). **(4)** The third of four sons of Shimei, a Levite (1 Chron. 23:10). **(5)** The first of three sons born to King Rehoboam of Judah and Mahalath (2 Chron. 11:19).

JEUZ A leader in the tribe of Benjamin, he was the fifth of seven sons born in Moab to Shaharaim and his wife Hodesh, after Shaharaim had divorced Hushim and Baara (1 Chron. 8:10).

JEWELS, JEWELRY Precious stones appear in visions and theophanies in the Bible. Examples include Ezek. 1:16; 10:1; Rev. 4:3. These precious stones, also used in jewelry, were well known to people in the ancient Near East and in the first-century Mediterranean basin.

Jewelry known in antiquity is broadly divided into two groups: everyday jewelry and fine jewelry. Everyday jewelry, found commonly among the people, was made of materials such as bronze, iron, and bone. Fine jewelry, on the other hand, consisted of objects crafted from gold or silver and included costly and precious stones. Jewelry was worn both by men and women as part of clothing. The ancients also conserved wealth with investments in jewels or used jewels as indicators of socioeconomic placing in society.

Most gold jewelry had sheet metal as its foundation. This sheet metal was shaped and/or decorated. One form of decoration, filigree, involved soldering wiring in a pattern on a background. A later form of decoration known as granulation used tiny grains of gold as a substitute for wires. An additional method of decorating jewelry was inlaying with colored stones, glass, or other precious items. Engraving was likewise used for decoration.

JEWELRY IN ANTIQUITY

Jewelry has been discovered in Babylon dating back as far as 2700 BC. Examples of jewelry from this era were found in cemeteries in the city of Ur. Examples of ancient jewelry were likewise found in cemeteries on the island of Crete, dating back to 2400 BC. Other specimens of jewelry come from the Mycenaean world around 1100 BC. Jewelry dating after 800 BC was of high quality. During this period places such as Knossos on Crete and cities such as Corinth and Athens produced beautiful gold work.

By the seventh century BC, the finest jewelry was found on the Greek islands and in Asia Minor. Jewelry in Ephesus was offered to the goddess Diana, yet was also made for personal adornment. By 600 BC, jewelry became very scarce in Greece. This scarcity lasted for the next 150 years. Archaeologists postulate that supplies of gold were cut off by the Persians. After the Persians were defeated during the Classical period, some of the finest gold work was produced. Captured Persian treasures and exploitation of Macedonian mines made gold and precious stones and metals highly accessible to the Greeks. Consequently, jewelry was readily available during the Hellenistic period. The Greeks incorporated a variety of stones in their jewelry: carnelian, chalcedony, amethyst, and garnet, as well as small pearls. Materials and inspiration for the Greeks for certain types of jewelry came from newly conquered territories. In the early Roman Empire jewelry resembled that seen during the Hellenistic period. In general, during the Greek and the Roman periods, jewelry was gold-plated and decorated with costly stones.

Certain writers in antiquity documented well-known or costly jewelry and precious stones. One Roman historian described the value of pearls as the “topmost rank among all things of price.” Correspondingly, he wrote about two pearls owned by Cleopatra, queen of Egypt, known as the largest in history. The Egyptian Book of the Dead, dating to around 1500 BC, makes mention of amulets in the shape of hearts, considered jewelry by some experts. These amulets were made of carnelian, lapis lazuli, and green feldspar.

Jewelry in the biblical world was known by different terms. An ornamental circlet worn singly or as multiples on one’s arms or legs was known as a “bangle.” This term, however, does not occur in the Bible. The abundant presence of bangles as artifacts in archaeological digs is an indicator of their significance in everyday life in the biblical world. Bangles were stiff ornaments of relatively heavy weight. Materials varied: bronze, iron, silver, gold, and so forth. Bangles were of three types: bracelets, anklets, and armlets. They were either solid, complete circles or circlets with two distinct ends. These ends had specific designs, often artistically crafted in the shape of animal heads, such as those of serpents.

Rings likewise were prevalent in the biblical world. Rings were worn in the ears, nose, and around fingers and toes. Nose rings were popular during the Iron Age (1200–586 BC). In addition, rings were worn on neck cords. Rings not only were worn as articles of adornment but also were used as signets. Brooches or pins mostly were worn on clothing and were made of wood, bronze, iron, silver, or gold.

Amulets were common as religious jewelry. Worn as divine protection from harm, amulets varied from simple to ornate. Egyptian amulets often incorporated snake imagery or representations of Egyptian gods. Ancient Near Eastern amulets often were smaller than an inch wide. Greek amulets were colorful and crafted from stones. Christian amulets in the shape of the crucified Christ have also been found.

Although not often worn individually, beads were the most prevalent jewelry item in the ancient Near East. Beads were strung in bracelets, rings, circlets, and so forth.

Gold rings with precious stones (Beth Shemesh, thirteenth century BC)

JEWELRY IN THE BIBLE

Many different items of jewelry are found in the Bible, including earrings (Gen. 35:4; Exod. 35:22; Judg. 8:24–26; Job 42:11), bracelets (Gen. 24:22, 30, 47; Num. 31:50), necklaces (Gen. 41:42; Ezek. 16:11; Dan. 5:29), nose rings (Gen. 24:22, 30, 47; Isa. 3:21; Ezek. 16:12), rings (Gen. 38:18, 25; 41:42; Exod. 28:11, 21, 36; 35:22; 39:14, 30; Num. 31:50; 1 Kings 21:8; Esther 3:10, 12; 8:2, 8, 10; Job 38:14; Isa. 3:21; Jer. 22:24; Hos. 2:13; Luke 15:22; James 2:2), headbands (Exod. 13:16; Deut. 6:8; 11:18), armlets (Num. 31:50; 2 Sam. 1:10; Isa. 3:20), pendants (Judg. 8:21, 26; Isa. 3:18), and anklets (Isa. 3:20).

Various articles of jewelry in the Bible carried significance beyond mere aesthetics. Early in Genesis, bracelets were used to signify the desire for covenantal marriage. When Abraham’s servant discovered Rebekah, a potential bride for Isaac, he gave her a nose ring and placed bracelets on her arms to signify that God had chosen her (Gen. 24:22, 47). The bracelets and nose ring weighed over ten shekels. By placing the jewelry on Rebekah’s arm, the servant indicated that a marriage contract was sought. The high value of the jewelry signifies the high bridal price paid for Rebekah.

Early in the OT, jewelry was used in temple worship. The law designated that the high priest’s breastpiece and ephod contain precious stones along with setting stones. The stones signified the majesty and holiness of God as his people worshiped in his holy temple (Exod. 25:7; 35:9).

Lovers flattered one another by comparing physical features to articles of fine jewelry (Song 5:14) and admiring their fine jewelry (4:9). God’s people appear as a jeweled necklace when God gathers them (Isa. 49:18) and are as highly esteemed as a bride adorned with jewels (61:10).

Biblical authors also challenged people’s desire for jewelry with admonitions to seek godly attributes and gifts of God above jewels and jewelry. Wisdom was to be desired above jewels (Prov. 3:15; 8:11), knowledgeable speech above gold and jewels (20:15), and a godly spouse far above jewels (31:10).

Similar to the habits of most ancient cultures, Israelite kings and other notable leaders wore jewelry of special significance. Like other kings of antiquity, Saul wore armlets and a crown (2 Sam. 1:10), which were intended to signify royalty and competence in military affairs. Such jewelry typically carried insignias that denoted features of national and royal identity. The victorious warrior in Rev. 19 wears many diadems (crowns) in order to signify his unmatched power (19:12). He has more than one crown, and even more than seven diadems, which is the number of diadems that the dragon has (12:3).

At times, jewelry carried negative connotations, especially when acquired within polytheistic trends of society or else designed as an object of worship. Even Jacob was found burying his jewelry that accompanied his foreign idols (Gen. 35:4). Such instances lend credence to theories that even early Hebrew faith wrangled with polytheism and was infused with its many golden artifacts. Gideon made an ephod from the sparkling plunder (rings and pendants) of the Midianites (Judg. 8:21). This ephod became an object of worship for the Israelites and greatly offended God.

Kings had signet rings that contained their own personalized engravings. The engravings were made by stonecutters who carefully worked the small semiprecious stones atop the rings. Throughout the OT, rings were used to make impressions on official documents (Exod. 28:11; 1 Kings 21:8; Esther 8:8). Prophets used signet rings to seal prophecies that were of grave importance for the nation (Isa. 8:16; Jer. 32:10). Unique rings were designed by notable families in order to signify the honor of the patriarch. Of special interest is the usage of the ring in Jesus’ parable of the prodigal son. The ring was placed on the returning son’s finger to show the radical grace of the father, who was willing to join his honor to his son’s shame (Luke 15:22) as the son was brought back into the household.

In certain NT writings, women are admonished not to adorn themselves with external jewelry (1 Tim. 2:9; 1 Pet. 3:3), as this was a sign of materialism and immodesty. In Rev. 21, jewels appear in John’s depiction of the new Jerusalem: it is a city of majestic beauty adorned with precious jewels, gates of pearls, and streets of gold (21:18–21).

JEWESS An archaic term for a Jewish woman. Modern Bible translations tend to prefer either “Jewish” (NIV) or “Jewish woman” (NRSV).

JEWISH PARTIES During the time of Jesus and in the couple of centuries prior, Judaism was not a monolithic entity but was comprised of different groups with varying religious concerns and political interests. This multifaceted nature of Judaism has caused scholars to question whether it would be better to speak of Judaisms rather than Judaism. Was Judaism cut from a whole cloth, or was it a box of fabric scraps? Perhaps it is best to speak of Judaism as a single entity, but one comprised of various factions with diverse beliefs and interests. This conclusion is justified because the diverse sentiments and interests were responses to the same religious and political issues, such as Torah, the temple, and foreign occupiers.

Five of the important parties in ancient Judaism were the Pharisees, the Sadducees, the Essenes, the Zealots, and the Herodians. The first three seem to have first emerged in reaction to the rise of the Hasmonean priest-kings in the mid-second and first centuries BC, and the other two in response to the occupation of Palestine by the Romans and their establishment of the Herods as the rulers of Israel.

PHARISEES

According to Josephus. The best source of information on the Pharisees, apart from the Gospels themselves, is the Jewish historian Josephus, who discusses the beliefs of various Jewish factions. In consideration of his Roman audience, he depicts these groups as Jewish philosophical schools. In his *Antiquities*, Josephus indicates a rough outline of the beliefs of the Pharisees and their political position in relation to the Sadducees and the general populace.

Josephus gives the following points in summation of the Pharisees' beliefs. (1) The Pharisees believed some things are the result of fate, whereas other things are the result of human choice. (2) The Pharisees believed that the soul survives death in a place of either reward or punishment, and in the resurrection of the body. (3) Besides believing in the authority of Scripture, the Pharisees also had an authoritative body of oral tradition.

The Pharisees and the Sadducees had a difficult relationship, due not only to different religious beliefs but also to conflicting political aspirations. Josephus suggests that Jewish leaders gave patronage to one group or the other, or suppressed one group or the other, sometimes violently. In regard to the general populace, the Pharisees had a much better relationship with them than did the Sadducees, to the point that when Sadducees were magistrates, they had to rule according to the beliefs of the Pharisees or else the people would not listen to them.

In the New Testament. In the Synoptic Gospels, the Pharisees were one of the groups that opposed Jesus. It seems that the Pharisees most strongly opposed Jesus on issues related to their received tradition, which they considered to be as binding as the OT law. Two such legal issues were ceremonial washings before meals and working on the Sabbath. All three Synoptic Gospels narrate the Pharisees questioning Jesus concerning his and his disciples' failure to follow the tradition of the elders by eating with "unclean," that is, "unwashed," hands (Matt. 15:1–2; Mark 7:1–5; Luke 11:39–41). Concerning breaking the Sabbath, the Pharisees confronted Jesus on various occasions, such as when Jesus healed on the Sabbath (Matt. 12:9–14; Mark 3:1–5; Luke 6:6–11) and when his disciples picked grain while walking through a field (Matt. 12:1–8; Mark 2:23–28; Luke 6:1–5).

In response to accusations concerning breaking the traditions of the elders, Jesus affirmed the priority of mercy in the face of human need that supersedes laws concerning the Sabbath by saying that the Sabbath was made for humans, not humans for the Sabbath (Mark 2:27), or that the Son of Man (Jesus) was Lord of the Sabbath (Matt. 12:8; Mark 2:28; Luke 6:5). He also said that God desires mercy, not sacrifice (Matt. 12:7).

Jesus' critique of the Pharisees concentrated on their neglecting mercy toward fellow humans for the sake of their tradition. This is especially clear in Matthew, where Jesus' critique of the Pharisees includes indictments against them for concentrating on the fine points of the law but neglecting justice and mercy (12:7; 23:23).

In the Gospel of John, the Pharisees are again usually depicted as adversaries of Jesus and also in league with other Jewish authorities in plotting to arrest and kill Jesus (7:32; 11:47–57). One passage suggests that they were divided concerning Jesus (9:16). One Pharisee, Nicodemus, came to Jesus by night (John 3), defended Jesus before his peers (7:50), and brought spices to prepare Jesus' body for burial after his death (19:39).

The Pharisees were not always antagonistic toward Jesus. From time to time, they were on the same side of an issue, such as Jesus' confrontation with the Sadducees over the resurrection (Luke 20:27–40). Nicodemus, mentioned above, was quite sympathetic toward Jesus. The apostle Paul identifies himself as a Pharisee in regard to keeping the law in Phil. 3:5; Acts 26:5, and in a confrontation with Jerusalem authorities in Acts 23:6. Also, some early Christians were said to be

Pharisees (Acts 15:5).

Relationship with rabbinic Judaism. An issue concerning the Pharisees is their relationship with later rabbinic Judaism. There are basically two viewpoints on this matter, and both involve the destruction of the Jerusalem temple in AD 70. One position maintains that when the dust settled from the destruction of the temple, only the Pharisees remained standing, and rabbinic Judaism is their heir. Another view holds that after AD 70 sectarian Judaism disappeared, and rabbinic Judaism emerged from a coalescence of various Jewish groups. Although one cannot be certain, it seems that the former view may be closer to the truth, since in the Mishnah, Sadducean legal opinion is contrasted with Pharisaic, and the Pharisaic is invariably considered correct.

SADDUCEES

The Sadducees were an elite group of Jews connected with the priesthood. “Sadducee” probably means “Son of Zadok,” a descendant of the high priest Zadok from the time of David. Some members of the Qumran community used the term “Son of Zadok” as a self-designation as well, suggesting some common ancestry, if not direct identification, of the Sadducees and some members of the Qumran community.

Along with the Pharisees, the Sadducees were a religious-political group that sought the support of the ruling powers. It is in the context of the patron-retainer relationship that we first hear of the Sadducees. Josephus relates how the Hasmonean ruler John Hyrcanus switched from being the patron of the Pharisees to that of the Sadducees. When the Pharisee Eliezer suggested that Hyrcanus step down from the high priesthood due to his uncertain lineage, Hyrcanus became very angry and wanted Eliezer to be executed. The rest of the Pharisees suggested that he merely be bound and whipped, since they had a tradition of passing light sentences. A Sadducee suggested that they passed such a light sentence because they agreed with Eliezer that Hyrcanus was unsuitable to be high priest. Hyrcanus then cast his support behind the Sadducees and abolished the laws that the Pharisees had given to the populace.

Josephus gives the following general description of the Sadducees’ beliefs and relationship with the general populace. (1) The Sadducees rejected fate; things are the result of human action alone. Along with this, God stands aloof from humans concerning good and evil actions. Good and evil are the result of human action. (2) The Sadducees believed that the soul dies along with the body. (3) They accepted only the written law and had no oral tradition. Some take this last point to mean that they accepted only the Pentateuch as Scripture, but this goes beyond what Josephus says about them.

Josephus goes on to write that Sadducees were as contentious in their disputes with fellow Sadducees as with people outside the group, and they did not hold their elders in esteem. They had influence over the elite, but no say with the populace at large.

The Sadducees are mentioned in the Synoptic Gospels, but not in John, although the “chief priests” who plotted against Jesus with the Pharisees (e.g., John 11:46) probably were Sadducees. All three Synoptic Gospels relate the narrative in which the Sadducees posed the hypothetical question concerning whose wife a woman would be in the resurrection if she outlived seven husbands. Jesus answered that they understood neither the Scriptures nor the power of God, and that God was the God of the living and not the dead (Matt. 22:23–33; Mark 12:18–27; Luke 20:27–40).

The book of Acts confirms that the Sadducees were closely connected to the priesthood (Acts 4:1; 5:17), and that they disputed with the Pharisees over the resurrection (Acts 23:6–8).

ESSENES

The Essenes are the third “philosophical school” mentioned by Josephus. Most scholars consider the Qumran sectarians who produced the DSS to be Essenes. This has created a number of circular arguments, since the DSS are then used to confirm the nature of Essene beliefs. That being said, there is good evidence that the Qumran sectarians were at least in part Essene. The Essenes are not mentioned in the NT or in rabbinic literature, but they do appear in the writings of Josephus, Philo of Alexandria, and Pliny the Elder.

Josephus delineates the beliefs of the Essenes as follows. (1) They ascribed every happening to God. (2) They believed in the immortality of the soul.

Josephus writes at great length concerning the Essenes’ way of life. They lived an ascetic lifestyle, avoided pleasure, and devoted themselves to prayer. They shared all things in common and lived in harmony with one another. Some Essenes avoided marriage, whereas others regarded marriage and procreation as too central to human life to avoid. Certain Essenes could predict the future and interpret dreams. Concerning sacrifices, Josephus mentions that although they sent offerings to the temple, they had their own, superior sacrifices.

Philo writes that the Essenes were much admired due to their holy lives, living peaceably with one another and holding to the truth. Contrary to Josephus, Philo says that the Essenes did not sacrifice, but through study they kept their minds pure and holy.

The Essenes, as Josephus and Philo describe them, seem similar to the Qumran sectarians. The Qumran sectarians believed that God determines the fate of people (1QS 3:13–4:26). Although the sectarians believed in the immortality of the soul as well as divine reward and punishment, this does not seem to be emphasized in their writings.

The common dining and meeting area at Qumran. The Qumran sectarians were likely Essenes.

ZEALOTS

Scholars tend to use “Zealots” as a general term to refer to three different groups mentioned by Josephus: brigands, Sicarii, and Zealots. The three groups have different political ideologies and emerged at different times in the first century. They can all be described as revolutionaries.

The brigands were motivated not by religious or political ideology but by survival. Displaced from the traditional economic structure of Palestine—the agricultural village—by the Romans, the brigands stole from Jew and Roman alike. They hated the Romans because the Romans had driven them into poverty through taxation and transformation of the economy from subsistence-based agriculture to cash crops that could be sold more readily. (Money could be shipped to Rome more easily than crops.)

The other two groups, the Sicarii and the Zealots, fought the Romans and Jewish collaborators for political and religious reasons. They emerged at different times during the first century, and they should not be lumped together, for their methodologies and goals were somewhat different.

Josephus writes about what he calls the “fourth philosophy,” which he considers an alien element introduced into the religion and politics of Israel, begun in AD 6 by Judas the Galilean and Zadok the Pharisee. Their slogan was “No king but God,” and they engaged in a short-lived rebellion. It seems unclear whether the fourth philosophy should be a category that includes the brigands, the Sicarii, and the Zealots, or whether it is a group unto itself. Whatever the case, Josephus makes clear that this fourth philosophy is an anomaly in the history of Israel.

The Sicarii were a group of assassins who emerged in the AD 40s–50s. They specialized in mixing into Jerusalem crowds and murdering Jews who were friendly with the Romans, mainly the wealthy. The high priest Jonathan was one of their victims. At the start of the first Roman war, they commanded Jewish troops but were driven out by fellow Jews. They spent the rest of the war at Masada, conducting inconsequential exploits. They killed themselves in AD 73–74 rather than be captured by the Romans. Josephus writes that the leader of the Sicarii at the beginning of the first Roman war was Menahem, the son or grandson of Judas of Galilee. It has been speculated that Judas Iscariot's surname may be derived from Sicarii, but the etymology is uncertain.

The Zealots emerged at the start of the first Roman war (AD 66–70). Josephus mentions them mainly in connection with the Roman war and seldom in other sections of his writings. They consisted mainly of people displaced by Roman activity in Galilee. They targeted the aristocracy that collaborated with Rome, the Romans themselves, and other revolutionary groups. One of Jesus' disciples was called "Simon the Zealot" (Luke 6:15; Acts 1:13), but this is likely a reference to his zealous faith.

The first Roman war erupted when the Roman procurator Florus looted the temple. When nothing was done concerning this, the lower priests, the captain of the temple guard, Eleazar, and other revolutionary leaders decided to terminate the temple sacrifice made on the emperor's behalf. This essentially started the Roman war and gave rise to the Zealots.

HERODIANS

The Herodians are mentioned three times in the Gospels. They are reported to have plotted, along with the Pharisees, to kill Jesus after he healed a man with a withered hand (Mark 3:6). They are also described, along with the Pharisees, as trying to trap Jesus concerning the lawfulness of paying taxes to Caesar (Matt. 22:16; Mark 12:13).

The Herodians were aristocrats who supported the Herodian dynasty and the Romans, whose support made that dynasty possible. There seems to be some overlap between the Herodians and the Sadducees; Mark 8:15 has Jesus warning his disciples concerning the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod (some ancient witnesses read "Herodians"), whereas the parallel in Matt. 16:6, 11 has Jesus warning his disciples concerning the Pharisees and the Sadducees. Their religious beliefs may have been similar to those of the Sadducees. Too little information about them exists to permit drawing strong conclusions. One can safely say, however, that the Herodians were pro-Roman aristocrats who joined forces with the anti-Roman Pharisees in opposing Jesus.

JEWS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT In the NT, "Jews" (*Ioudaioi*) is an ethnic and religious term to describe the people of Judah. In Jesus' day, Jews were distinguished from Samaritans (John 4:9, 22). Gradually the term began to be used more in a religious than in an ethnic sense, and it has come to represent the descendants from Abraham as a whole and religious converts who regard the Mosaic law and customs as the inalienable religious foundation for faith and practices (Mark 7:3; John 2:6).

THE GOSPELS

In the Synoptic Gospels the term "Jews" is used largely in the phrase "the king of the Jews" with reference to Jesus (Matt. 2:2; 27:11, 29; Mark 15:2, 9, 12, 18; Luke 23:3, 37). Born as the king of the Jews, Jesus claimed to have come to fulfill the law of Moses instead of abolishing it (Matt. 5:17). He emphasized the importance of practicing the law in obedience (Matt. 7:24–27), and he rebuked the Pharisees and the scribes for teaching the law without carrying it out (Matt. 23). They opposed him, not only because they rejected his claim to be the Messiah, but also because they viewed his teaching and practices as destabilizing their religious status quo (Matt. 12:1–8; John 5:10; 11:48).

The Jews are represented in the Gospels by both the upper class (e.g., Pharisees, Sadducees, scribes, chief priests) and the lower classes (the crowds). Usually the religious upper class would not accept Jesus' teaching and challenged him by asking questions or denying his authority (Matt. 15:1; 16:1). The crowds generally accepted Jesus' teaching and experienced his power to heal and other benefits. The Synoptic account of the opposition by the upper class is contrasted with the widespread opposition to Jesus by the "Jews" in general in John's Gospel. But Matthew and Luke also highlight Jesus' lament of the unrepentant Jewish cities (Matt. 11:20–24; Luke 10:12–15), indicating that resistance to Jesus' teaching was a common phenomenon among the Jews.

Jesus responded to the unbelieving Jews with strong rebuke and condemnation (Matt. 12:30–32; 21:33–46). When Jesus healed a servant of a Roman centurion and marveled at the amazing faith of this Gentile (8:5–13), Jesus predicted that "the subjects of the kingdom will be thrown outside, into the darkness" because of unbelief, whereas the Gentiles will come to eat with Abraham in the kingdom of heaven (8:11–12). In spite of the unbelief of the Jews, the privilege to hear the gospel was given to them first. Jesus sent out the twelve disciples, instructing them that they should not go anywhere among the Gentiles or enter the towns of the Samaritans, but instead go "to the lost sheep of Israel" (Matt. 10:6 [cf. Rom. 1:16]).

The term "Jews" occurs only four times in the Synoptics outside the phrase "king of the Jews," but seventy-one times in the Gospel of John. John uses the term especially as a technical one for those Jews who were hostile to Jesus and his followers. Whereas the Synoptics focus on the Jewish leaders' rejection of Jesus' messianic actions, John focuses on their rejection of his teaching that he is the Son of God in unique relationship with the Father. Jesus in John is not only the "one and only" (*monogenēs*) of God (1:18), but also the fulfiller of what the temple signifies and all the Jewish tradition and customs represent. John thus describes the Jewish opposition to Jesus as much more widespread and intense than that in the Synoptics, presenting the Jews as opposing Jesus' teaching because of their loyalty to Jewish tradition (5:15–18; 6:41; 7:1–2, 13; 8:31–57; 9:22; 10:31–33; 19:7–12, 38; 20:19).

ACTS AND THE PAULINE LETTERS

In the book of Acts the term "Jews" (eighty-one occurrences) is used especially with reference to the Jewish people who oppose Paul's law-free gospel (9:23; 13:45, 50; 14:2, 4; 17:5; 18:12, 14; 20:3; 21:11; 22:30; 23:12; 24:9).

In his letters, Paul refers to "Jews" primarily in an ethnic and religious sense without connoting that they have theological antagonism against the gospel. The Jews are thus contrasted with the Gentiles in that they are "the people of Israel": "Theirs is the adoption to sonship; theirs the divine glory, the covenants, the receiving of the law, the temple worship and the promises" (Rom. 9:4). While Paul acknowledges the continuity of Jewish identity through their lineage from Abraham, he distinguishes true Jews from false Jews in terms of Jesus' accomplishment of redemption. Paul says, "A person is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is circumcision of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the written code" (2:29). This distinction of true Jews from false Jews resonates with his distinction of true Israel from false Israel (9:6). The redefinition of the group of spiritual Israelites is the result of Jesus' death and resurrection according to the OT prophecies. Those who believe in

Jesus are reckoned as “children of Abraham” according to the gospel announced in Gen. 12:3 (Gal. 3:7–8).

Paul’s presentation of spiritual Jews is foreseen in Jesus’ statement that the Jews who do not believe in him are not Abraham’s children but rather the children of the devil (John 8:30–44). In 1 John the children of God are defined in terms of love rather than ethnic lineage (3:10). According to the book of Revelation, those “who say they are Jews” are not, but are a “synagogue of Satan” (2:9; 3:9). These passages show that salvation is obtained through faith in Jesus rather than through the ethnic lineage of Abraham and observances of the Mosaic law (Rom. 3:20–28).

These polemics against the Jews and Jewish law do not necessarily make the NT teachings anti-Semitic or anti-Judaic. What the NT polemicizes is neither the Jewish nation nor Judaism but rather the unbelief of the Jews who rejected Jesus, inasmuch as Jesus is the Messiah, who has come in flesh and fulfilled the prophecies of the OT.

JEZANIAH A variant form of the name “Jaazaniah,” meaning “Yahweh heard,” which appears in the Hebrew text of Jer. 40:8 for “the son of the Maakathite,” which was corrected by the translators of the NIV to “Jaazaniah” based on 2 Kings 25:23. The name also occurs in the Hebrew text of Jer. 42:1 for “the son of Hoshaiah” and appears as “Jezaniah” in the NIV; the translators of the NRSV render it “Azariah” based on the LXX and the Hebrew text of Jer. 43:2.

JEZEBEL The foreign-born wife of Ahab, a ninth-century BC king of Israel. Jezebel was the daughter of King Ethbaal of Sidon. She was a devout worshiper of the god Baal, whose religion she promoted in Israel after marrying Ahab. Many people were persuaded to add the worship of Baal to the worship of Yahweh, the true God of Israel. God raised up two prophets during this time, Elijah and Elisha, who resisted the encroachment of her false religion. Jezebel also pushed her too-willing husband to act like a despot rather than a servant of God toward his own people. First Kings 21 recounts that a landowner, Naboth, refused to sell his field to King Ahab. The refusal angered Ahab, but an Israelite king could not dispossess one of his subjects. Jezebel came from a different royal house, however, and she instructed Ahab how to unjustly acquire the field. Although they succeeded in falsely convicting Naboth of cursing God and the king and, after his execution, took his land, God sent Elijah to pronounce a curse against Ahab’s family, including Jezebel (“Dogs will devour Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel” [1 Kings 21:23]). Jezebel outlived her husband, but God’s judgment overtook her when a usurper, Jehu, killed her royal son and then pursued her. She was thrown out of a window, and dogs picked at her body (2 Kings 9:30–37).

Jezebel was evil and a worshiper of false gods. In the NT she became an exemplar of wickedness. Revelation 2:20 associates a woman prophet in Thyatira with Jezebel because she was leading the people astray by her teaching.

JEZER The third of Naphtali’s four sons (Gen. 46:24; 1 Chron. 7:13) and the ancestor of the Jezerite clan (Num. 26:49).

JEZERITE *See* Jezer.

JEZIAH *See* Izziah.

JEZIEL One of Saul’s kinsmen from the tribe of Benjamin who joined David when he was staying at Ziklag. He was a member of a company of ambidextrous warriors armed with bow and slingshot (1 Chron. 12:3).

JEZLIAH *See* Izliah.

JEZOAR *See* Zohar.

JEZRAHIAH Jezrahiah led the choirs in joyful singing in the dedication ceremony for the rebuilt wall in Jerusalem under Nehemiah (Neh. 12:42). Referring to a different individual from the tribe of Issachar, this Hebrew name is transliterated elsewhere as “Izrahiah” (1 Chron. 7:3).

JEZREEL **(1)** A fertile valley extending west from the northern city of Jezreel and possibly also east to the Jordan. This is the location of Gideon’s attack on the Midianites (Judg. 6:33). **(2)** A city in Issachar’s territory about eighteen miles southwest of the Sea of Galilee (Josh. 19:18), which can be identified with modern Zerin/Yizra’al. This city, and probably the entire valley, was a part of the kingdom of Ish-Bosheth (2 Sam. 2:9). King Ahab had a palace in this city, and from that point on it appears to have been a political center of Israel. **(3)** An unidentified city in the territory of Judah (Josh. 15:56). It is uncertain whether David’s wife Ahinoam came from this city or the city in Issachar (1 Sam. 25:43). **(4)** The first of Etam’s three sons, a descendant of Judah (1 Chron. 4:3). **(5)** One of Hosea’s sons. The name initially points symbolically to the judgment on Jehu’s dynasty for his massacre in Jezreel (Hos. 1:4–5). In Hos. 2:22–23 this name is reinterpreted as a picture of restoration, playing both on the natural fertility of the Jezreel Valley and the meaning of “Jezreel,” “God sows.”

Jezreel Valley

JEZREELITE Someone who comes from Jezreel. Naboth (1 Kings 21:1) and Ahinoam (1 Sam. 25:43) are two Jezreelites.

JIBSAM *See* Ibsam.

JIDLAPH A son of Nahor, Abraham's brother, with his wife Milkah (Gen. 22:22).

JIMNA, JIMNAH *See* Imnah.

JIMNITE *See* Imnah.

JIPHTAEL *See* Iphtah El.

JIPHTAH *See* Iphtah.

JIPHTHAHEL, JIPHTHAH-EL *See* Iphtah El.

JISHUI *See* Ishvi.

JITHRA *See* Jether.

JITHRAN *See* Ithran.

JIZLIAH *See* Izliah.

JIZRI *See* Izri; Zeri.

JOAB A nephew of King David through his sister Zeruiah (1 Chron. 2:16–17). His brothers were Abishai and Asahel, and his cousin was Amasa, all of whom were important military commanders. Joab himself was the most famous military leader of them all. He became the leader of David's army after he was the first to take up David's challenge to defeat the Jebusite city of Jerusalem (1 Chron. 11:4–9).

Joab won many impressive battles for David (2 Sam. 2:12–32; 10:1–19). He often served the interests of David, even trying to persuade David not to take a census that he knew would provoke God's anger (2 Sam. 24:1–9; 1 Chron. 21:1–6). On some occasions he gave David bad advice, for instance, counseling him to take Absalom back into the court (2 Sam. 14:1–33). However, he sometimes acted in his own interests, and not those of his king, country, or God. He killed Abner, the commander of the northern army, in revenge (2 Sam. 3:22–39) and even murdered his own cousin Amasa (2 Sam. 20:7–13).

Joab met his end when he supported Adonijah's attempt to succeed David. When David's choice, Solomon, became king, he sent Benaiah to kill Adonijah. When news of Adonijah's death reached Joab, he fled to the tabernacle and took hold of the horns of the altar (1 Kings 1:50). Solomon ordered Benaiah to kill Joab, and he did so in the tabernacle because Joab refused to come out (1 Kings 2:29–31, 34).

JOAH **(1)** The son of Asaph, he was a recorder during the siege of Jerusalem (2 Kings 18:18, 26, 37; Isa. 36:3, 11, 22). **(2)** A Gershonite Levite, son of Zimmah (1 Chron. 6:21), who with his son Eden was charged by Hezekiah to consecrate the temple (2 Chron. 29:12). **(3)** A Korahite Levite, son of Obed-Edom, and gatekeeper during the time of David (1 Chron. 26:4). **(4)** The son of Joahaz the recorder, he was sent by Josiah to repair the temple (2 Chron. 34:8).

JOAHAZ The recorder for King Josiah. Joah, his son, helped repair the temple (2 Chron. 34:8).

JOANAN An otherwise unknown postexilic ancestor of Jesus mentioned only in Luke 3:27 as grandson of Zerubbabel, son of Rhesa, and father of Joda.

JOANNA The wife of Chuza, the manager of Herod Antipas's household. Joanna was cured by Jesus of either illness or demon possession, and she was among the women who traveled with Jesus during his ministry and provided support for him (Luke 8:1–3). Joanna likely witnessed Jesus' crucifixion (23:49) and observed the location of Jesus' tomb (23:55). Upon returning to anoint Jesus' body, Joanna received the message of his resurrection and went with the women to tell the other disciples (24:9–11).

JOANNAS *See* Joanan.

JOASH **(1)** Ahaziah's son and a king of Judah (2 Kings 11–12; 2 Chron. 22:10–24:27). He is described as the only surviving descendant of Ahaziah (and the line of David) after Athaliah's (Jehoram's wife and Joash's grandmother) purge of the royal line. The priest Jehoiada protected Joash in the temple until he was seven years old, at which time Jehoiada was able to organize a rebellion against Athaliah and place Joash on the throne. Joash is given a favorable description largely due to his allegiance to the temple (as evidenced by his renovation of the temple) and the priesthood. According to the Chronicler, Joash strayed away from God after Jehoiada's death. By the time of the end of his reign, Joash was so politically weak that he was assassinated by some of his own servants.

(2) A variation of "Jehoash" (Jehoahaz's son and a king of Israel) in 2 Chron. 25:17–24 (KJV, ESV, NRSV). (*See* Jehoash.) **(3)** An Abiezrite who lived at Ophrah and was the father of Gideon. He refused to hand over Gideon to an angry crowd after Gideon desecrated Baal's altar (Judg. 6:11–31). **(4)** Along with Amon, this individual was entrusted with custody of the prophet Micaiah, whom King Ahab ordered into prison. He may be Ahab's son who is not mentioned elsewhere, or he may be the later son of Jehoahaz (1 Kings 22:26).

(5) A descendant of Shelah who ruled in Moab and Jashubi Lehem (1 Chron. 4:22). **(6)** The second of nine sons of Beker, descendant of the tribe of Benjamin (1 Chron. 7:8). **(7)** A son of Shemaah, he was one of the Benjamite warriors who supported David when he was banished from Saul's court (1 Chron. 12:3). **(8)** One of David's officials, he oversaw the supplies of olive oil (1 Chron. 27:28).

JOATHAM *See* Jotham.

JOB Job is the main character of the book that bears his name. In 1:1 the reader learns that he is from Uz, most likely a site outside the promised land in the Transjordan region, known during most of the OT period as Edom. Job's wealth is described in terms of the number of sheep and cattle that he owns, likely placing him in the period of time during or before the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Job is described as a "blameless and upright" man who "feared God and shunned evil" (1:1). In other words, he is the paragon of a wise person whose character is described in the book of Proverbs. Because of his virtue, he has expected to continue to receive the rewards that had led to his large, happy family and wealth. However, the book tells the story of his great suffering and loss brought on not because of anything he has done, but rather by the sovereign decision of God. Job has three friends who assail him and dialogue with him after he laments his sorry fate (chaps. 3–31). They are convinced that his suffering is a result of sin; Job, on the other hand, believes that God has made a mistake. The three friends urge him to repent and be restored, while Job himself demands an audience with God in order to set him straight (31:35–37). God finally appears to Job, but rather than Job setting God straight, God puts Job in his place. God never tells Job why he has suffered; he simply asserts his own great wisdom and power. Job then rightly repents, not of any sins that have caused his suffering, but of his growing irritation with God (40:3–5; 42:1–6). God responds by commending Job and restoring his good fortune.

Job is rarely mentioned outside the book that bears his name. He, along with Noah and Daniel, are cited as examples of righteousness, though even their presence would not have saved the city of Jerusalem from God's judgment for its sins (Ezek. 14:14, 20). The Letter of James cites Job as an example of perseverance (James 5:11 [not "patience," as in many older translations]).

JOB, BOOK OF The question of undeserved suffering has plagued humanity for as long as we have written records, as is demonstrated by several ancient Mesopotamian literary compositions going back to Sumerian times. Today too we wonder why bad things happen to good people. The book of Job raises this issue in the person of Job, a pious and blameless man who suffers unspeakable tragedies. However, the question of why Job suffers leads to an even more important question: Where can wisdom be found?

STRUCTURE, GENRE, AND MESSAGE

The structure of the book helps the reader understand its genre and message:

I. Prose Prologue: A Conversation in Heaven and Job's Testing (1:1–2:13)

II. Poetic Debate: Who Is Wise? (3:1–42:6)
  A. Job's lament (3:1–26)
  B. The debate between Job and his three friends (4:1–31:40)
  C. Elihu's claim to wisdom (32:1–37:24)
  D. Yahweh's speech and Job's repentance (38:1–42:6)

III. Prose Epilogue: Resolutions in Blessing (42:7–17)

The genre of the book is a debate, the topic being the nature and source of wisdom. The various parts of the book contribute to this debate.

I. Prose prologue: a conversation in heaven and Job's testing (1:1–2:13). The first two chapters introduce most of the main characters and the plot complication. First on the scene is Job himself. He is introduced as the perfect wise man: "This man was blameless and upright; he feared God and shunned evil" (1:1). This assessment is repeated by the next two major characters, none other than God himself (1:8) and even Job's opponent, "Satan" (1:9–10). The latter, though, believes that Job is motivated by the fact that he receives rewards for his obedience. Take away Job's family, prosperity, and eventually his health, Satan argues, and Job will crumble and grumble.

We know who God is, but who is this Satan? It is unlikely that Satan is the devil. After all, what would the devil be doing in heaven, and why would God listen to him? Also, the Hebrew prefixes the definite article to "Satan" (*hassatan*), so a literal translation is "the Satan." The Hebrew verb *satan* means "to accuse," and that is how we are to understand the term in question here; he is "the accuser." Indeed, the book of Job has the form of a certain type of debate or disputation, a courtroom scene, and the Satan is an angel who takes the place of the prosecuting attorney.

The Satan persuades God to first take away family and wealth from Job. Even so, Job maintains his innocence and does not complain against God. Unsatisfied, the Satan goes further and persuades God to take away Job's health. Still, however, Job persists in his proper attitude toward God.

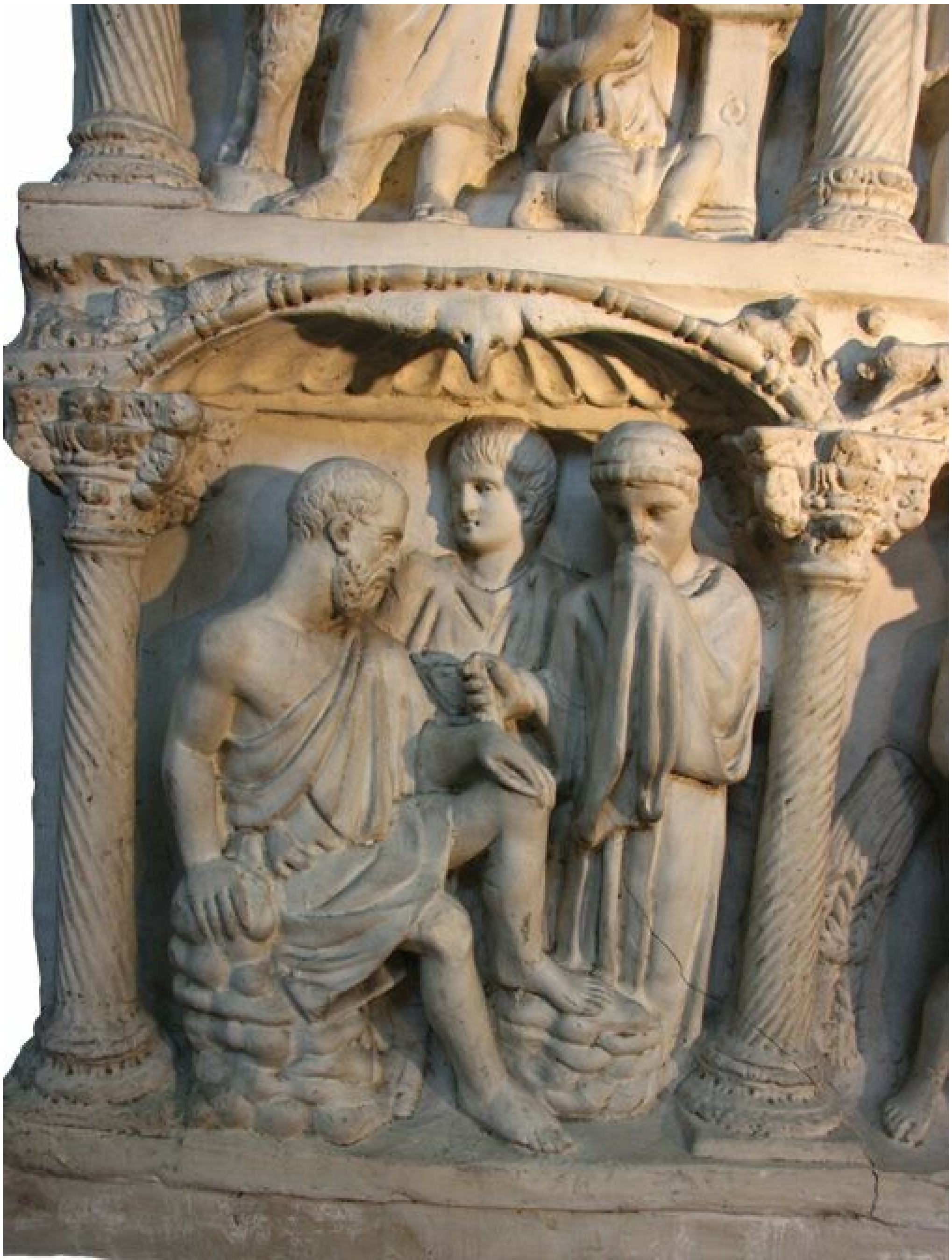
At the end of the prologue, Job—though he is suffering—is in a good place. He is still innocent and has not complained. We also hear of Job's three friends, who move in to offer sympathy and comfort. They sit there with him for seven days without a word.

II. Poetic debate: who is wise? (3:1–42:6). The body of the book is a debate among Job and his friends, composed as poetry.

A. Job's lament (3:1–26). Job is the first to speak, and what he says unsettles his friends. His suffering has reached the point where he wants to die. While his speech is properly understood as a lament, it contrasts with the laments of the psalms (e.g., Ps. 69). The latter are directed toward God; Job speaks about God but not to him. The laments of the psalms typically end with a note of optimism (Ps. 88 is an exception); Job's does not.

B. The debate between Job and his three friends (4:1–31:40). Job's lament triggers the debate. After Job complains about God, the three friends feel obligated to speak in defense of God's integrity. The debate has three cycles, with each of the three friends speaking in turn, each followed by a response from Job. The third cycle breaks down with a speech by Eliphaz (chap. 22) and a short one by Bildad (chap. 25), but no speech by Zophar. The friends have run out of steam.

After all, each of the three repeats the same basic argument: if you sin, then you suffer; therefore, if you suffer, then you must have sinned. Since Job was suffering, he must be a sinner. To escape his suffering, he needs to repent (4:7–11; 11:13–20). Job, however, knows that he has not sinned. But this creates a theological problem for him, since he too believes in the same theology of retribution held by the three friends. Thus, in his mind, God is unjust (9:21–24). Accordingly, his solution is to find God and present his case before him (notice the legal language again [23:2–7]).



Suffering Job, from the cast of the sarcophagus of Junius Bassus (AD 359)

Although the subject of their debate is Job’s suffering, the heart of it concerns wisdom. Who is wise? Who has the correct insight into Job’s suffering? Both Job and the friends set themselves up as sources of wisdom and ridicule the wisdom of the other (11:12; 12:1–3, 12; 13:12; 15:1–13). The question “Who is wise?” dominates the book.

The interactive debate between Job and his friends ends without resolution to this question. The friends have repeated their arguments many times but have not convinced Job, so they grow silent. In chapter 28 Job suddenly changes tone in a way that has puzzled interpreters for a long time. Rather than complaining or asserting his own wisdom, Job beautifully proclaims God as the sole source of wisdom, anticipating the conclusion. However, this attitude does not hold beyond the chapter, since in chapters 30–31 Job returns to bitter complaint and protests of his innocence. To the end of this section, he maintains his innocence and a sense of God’s injustice. He wants an audience with God to set him straight (31:35–37). Job will soon learn that he should be careful about what he wishes for.

C. Elihu's claim to wisdom (32:1–37:24). Here a new character surprisingly emerges from the background. Elihu has observed the debate silently, but now he feels compelled to speak. He is young and thus has deferred to the wisdom of the elderly, but he has been sorely disappointed. Now he realizes that wisdom is not always a matter of age, but comes from "the spirit in a person" (32:8). The reader expects a new argument from this brash young man, but instead Job is treated to another blast of the retribution theology of the three friends: Job suffers because he is a sinner (34:11, 25–27, 37).

Elihu represents another type of person who claims wisdom. Rather than age, he believes the spirit in a person gives wisdom. However, he comes up with the same old descriptions and solutions. This viewpoint is critiqued by silence; he is ignored. No one responds to his unpersuasive opinion.

D. Yahweh's speech and Job's repentance (38:1–42:6). When we left Job at the end of chapter 31, he had expressed his wish for an audience with God. Now he gets his wish. God appears in a whirlwind, an indication of his displeasure, and challenges Job's purported wisdom: "Who is this that obscures my plans with words without knowledge?" (38:2). God then bombards Job with a series of questions that he cannot possibly answer, since he is not God. God also describes how he is the one who distributes and withholds power and wisdom to his creatures.

He never addresses the reasons for Job's suffering or the question of suffering in general. That is not the main purpose of the book. He asserts his wisdom, thus answering the question of the book: "Who is wise?" Only God is wise. What is the proper response to God's wisdom and power? Repentance and submission, and thus Job responds two times (40:3–5; 42:1–6).

III. Prose epilogue: resolutions in blessing (42:7–17). The epilogue raises a number of interesting questions for the interpreter. After Job repents, God restores his health and prosperity beyond what he had enjoyed at the beginning of the book. Does this not concede to the argument of the three friends and Elihu? All along they have been urging him to repent and be restored. However, such an interpretation misses a key point. Job has not repented of any sin that had led to his suffering in the first place. No, he has passed that test. However, as time wore on, he had grown impatient with God. He never takes the counsel of his wife to "curse God and die" (2:9), but he does question God's justice without ever breaking relationship.

A second issue concerns God's statement that Job has "spoken the truth about me" (42:8). Did God not just spend two chapters criticizing him? The best way to understand this comment is to understand it as God's affirmation not of every word that Job has spoken about him, but rather of how Job has responded to God in the end. After all, he had never abandoned God, even in his darkest hour.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The book of Job is anonymous, and there is no statement in the book concerning date of writing. The setting of the story of Job is early. Job's hometown of Uz is outside the promised land, leading to the conclusion that Job himself was not an Israelite. This fact, along with the way his wealth is described, suggests a time before God narrowed the covenant in relationship to Abraham and his descendants. However, the date of the story does not tell us when it was written, and indications within the book are mixed, some pointing to an early date and some to a late date. The dating of the book makes no difference to its interpretation.

ANCIENT NEAR EASTERN BACKGROUND

The ancient Near East produced a number of compositions that explore the issue of undeserved suffering. These texts come from Sumer, Egypt, Ugarit, and Babylonia, but the two that are most similar to Job come from Babylonia.

The first, *Ludlul bel nemeqi* ("I will praise the Lord of wisdom"), is often referred to as the Babylonian Job. The main character of the story, Subshi-meshre-shakkan, is a sufferer who complains about his situation because he has been blameless in his devotion to god and king. He feels that he does not deserve the suffering that has come upon him. The form of the book is a monologue, and the focus is on his restoration by Marduk. He never really questions the gods about his problems. The best guess concerning the time of its composition is the middle of the second millennium BC.

The second text is the Babylonian Theodicy, likely written about 1000 BC. Formally, this composition is closer to Job in that it is a dialogue between a sufferer and a friend who represents the orthodox piety of Babylon. The sufferer questions the justice of the gods. The friend cautions him against blasphemy, but in the end he comes around to the view that the gods have made humanity perverse.

The existence of these and other texts related to Job does not necessarily mean that Job was directly influenced by them. Although the Babylonian Theodicy's dialogue form may have suggested a literary vehicle to the author, the fact that all peoples in all times and places struggle with undeserved suffering is explanation enough for the similarities.

CONTEMPORARY SIGNIFICANCE

Even today, unthinking people may attribute the suffering and poverty of others to their sin. Indeed, those who suffer may blame themselves and their actions for their bad circumstances. True, the Bible teaches that sin has consequences, some of which offenders suffer in this life. But the Bible is also consistent in its message that sometimes bad things happen to good people and good things happen to bad people. The book of Job reminds us that not all suffering is the result of sin.

The book's response to suffering is not to give a logical answer to the question of why people suffer, but rather to simply assert the power and wisdom of God over against it. We may not know why we suffer, but we do know that God is in charge and knows what he is doing. The NT gives God's ultimate answer to pain in life: Jesus Christ, God himself, who suffered and died for the sins of his people. Jesus both compares and contrasts with Job, since Jesus' suffering was voluntary and undertaken on behalf of other people. It is not surprising that the early church adopted the practice of reading the book of Job during Easter Week.

JOBAB **(1)** A son of Joktan in the line of Shem (Gen. 10:29; 1 Chron. 1:23). **(2)** The son of Zerah, he was a king of Edom, successor to Bela (Gen. 36:33–34; 1 Chron. 1:44–45). **(3)** A king of Madon who joined forces with other Canaanite kings to fight the Israelites led by Joshua and was subsequently defeated (Josh. 11:1). **(4)** A leader in the tribe of Benjamin, he was the first of seven sons born in Moab to Shaharaim and his wife Hodesh, after Shaharaim had divorced Hushim and Baara (1 Chron. 8:9). **(5)** The last of the seven sons of Elpaal of the tribe of Benjamin (1 Chron. 8:18).

JOCHEBED The wife of Amram and the mother of Moses, Aaron, and Miriam (Exod. 6:20; Num. 26:59). She is not mentioned by name in the narrative in Exod. 2, where she puts the infant Moses in a basket and floats him down the Nile. By God's providence and the actions of Miriam, Moses' sister, Jochebed becomes the paid nursemaid for her son after he is rescued by Pharaoh's daughter.

Jochebed and her husband are listed as examples of faith in Heb. 11:23.

JODA An otherwise unknown postexilic ancestor of Jesus mentioned only in Luke 3:26 as a son of Joanan and father of Josek.

JOED An ancestor of Sallu, a man who lived in Jerusalem during the time of Ezra and Nehemiah (Neh. 11:7).

JOEL **(1)** The prophet Samuel's firstborn son, who, with his brother, Abijah, was appointed as a judge by their father but perverted justice and accepted bribes, thus prompting the Israelites to ask Samuel for a king (1 Sam. 8:1–5; 1 Chron. 6:28, 33). **(2)** A Simeonite clan leader (1 Chron. 4:35). **(3)** A Reubenite (1 Chron. 5:4, 8), though there is some question as to whether the Joel of v. 8 is the same as that of v. 4. **(4)** A chief of the tribe of Gad (1 Chron. 5:12). **(5)** One of Samuel's Levite ancestors (1 Chron. 6:36). **(6)** A chief of the tribe of Issachar (1 Chron. 7:3). **(7)** One of David's mighty warriors (1 Chron. 11:38). **(8)** A Levite and Gershonite who was part of the company appointed by David to bring the ark of the covenant up to Jerusalem (1 Chron. 15:7, 11, 17). **(9)** A Levite and Gershonite appointed for temple service who, with his brother Zetham, is put in charge of the temple treasuries (1 Chron. 23:8; 26:22). He may be the same Joel as in 1 Chron. 15:7, 11, 17. **(10)** A chief over half the tribe of Manasseh (1 Chron. 27:20). **(11)** A Levite involved in the purification of the temple during Hezekiah's reign (2 Chron. 29:12). **(12)** One of the men in postexilic Judah who had married foreign wives and, at Ezra's prompting, pledged to put them away (Ezra 10:43). **(13)** A Benjamite overseer during the days of Nehemiah (Neh. 11:9). **(14)** The prophet Joel, son of Pethuel (Joel 1:1).

JOEL, BOOK OF Joel is the second of the twelve Minor Prophets. The book is best known for its frightening depiction of God's judgment in the form of a locust plague and the stirring description of that future day when God will pour his Spirit out on all people (2:28–32).

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Joel is notoriously difficult to date. Most prophets have superscriptions that associate their prophecy with the reigns of specific kings, but Joel only provides the name of his father, Pethuel. While the name "Joel" occurs elsewhere in Scripture, none of these can be clearly identified with the prophet. Internal indications do not help much either. The locust plague described in the first chapter was almost certainly a contemporary event, but locust plagues happened on a number of occasions, and we have no other reference to this particular plague. From passages such as 1:9, 13–16; 2:15–17, which describe the temple and its rituals, we can rule out times in which the temple did not exist (before the mid-ninth century BC and 586–515 BC), but even this consideration does not enable us to be much more precise. The names of enemies provide no help (Phoenicia, Philistia, Egypt, etc.) because these may simply be a listing of traditional enemies (though it is interesting that neither Assyria nor Babylon is mentioned). Since the Minor Prophets have a roughly chronological arrangement, it may be that whoever organized this part of the canon thought that the book was from a relatively early date (like Amos and Hosea, from the eighth century BC). Fortunately, the message of the book is not diminished by our inability to date it specifically.

Joel describes God’s judgment as a plague of locusts.

LITERARY CONSIDERATIONS AND OUTLINE

Joel is a collection of prophetic oracles. Like most prophetic books, the book has both judgment and salvation oracles, although there are more salvation oracles than usual. Another viewpoint argues that the book is not so much a collection of oracles as it is a temple liturgy. Since a liturgy is repeated time and again, this is yet another reason why it is so difficult to date the book.

The first chapter describes an actual locust plague that Joel understands to be a judgment on the people of God. The second chapter also speaks of a locust plague, but this time the locusts are a metaphor for future devastation by a human army. On this basis, Joel calls for the people’s repentance and also places before the people a picture of God’s future salvation, which includes judgment on the other nations.

The structure of Joel is as follows:

I. A Locust Plague on the Land (1:1–20)

II. A Future Locust Plague (2:1–11)

III. The People’s Repentance (2:12–17)

IV. Oracles of Salvation (2:18–3:21)

THEOLOGICAL MESSAGE

Joel uses a recent locust plague to paint a picture of the devastation of a coming day of judgment, referred to here and elsewhere in the prophets as the “day of the LORD” (2:1; see also Amos 5:18–20). This vivid and horrifying teaching on judgment is intended not simply to frighten readers but to encourage their repentance. As frightening as Joel’s language about judgment seems, his language of future salvation is encouraging to an even greater degree.

NEW TESTAMENT CONNECTIONS

Contemporary readers need to hear Joel’s warnings about judgment and his call to repentance and also receive the encouragement of his picture of salvation. Most notable in terms of the latter, and best known, is God’s promise in Joel to pour out his Spirit on all people—not just the old, but also the young, and not just men, but also women (2:28–32). Much earlier, Moses himself said, “I wish that all the LORD’s people were prophets and that the LORD would put his Spirit on them!” (Num. 11:29). Joel anticipated such a day, and the day of Pentecost witnessed the initial fulfillment of this salvation oracle (Acts 2:14–21).

JOELAH The son of Jeroham and brother of Zebadiah, from Gedor. He was one of the ambidextrous soldiers from the tribe of Benjamin (Saul’s tribe) who joined David at Ziklag during the period when he was banished from Saul’s presence (1 Chron. 12:7).

JOEZER A Korahite who joined David during his time as a fugitive from Saul (1 Chron. 12:6).

JOGBEHAH A town in Gilead allocated by Moses to the tribe of Gad and subsequently fortified (Num. 32:35). It is also mentioned in connection with Gideon’s successful pursuit of the Midianites (Judg. 8:11). The site is possibly Jubeihat, about six miles northwest of Amman.

JOGLI The father of Bukki, a Danite leader chosen by Moses to help divide the land (Num. 34:22).

JOHA **(1)** A Benjamite and son of Beriah (1 Chron. 8:16). **(2)** One of David’s elite soldiers, a man from Tiz (1 Chron. 11:45).

JOHANAN **(1)** An army officer who survived the conquest of Judah by King Nebuchadnezzar (2 Kings 25:23). In Jeremiah he plays a significant role among the remnant of Jews who were not carried off into exile. Loyal to Gedaliah, who was appointed by the Babylonians as administrator of Judah in 587 BC (Jer. 40:8), Johanan unsuccessfully warned him of an assassination plot by Ishmael (Jer. 40:13–16; 41:1–3). Having saved a group of Jews from further treachery by Ishmael, Johanan subsequently became their leader (Jer. 41:11–18). He and the rescued Jews, however, refused to obey the word of God that came through Jeremiah to remain in the land and instead went down into Egypt, forcibly taking Jeremiah with them (Jer. 42:1–43:7).

(2) The firstborn son of King Josiah, he perhaps died prematurely, since he did not succeed his father (1 Chron. 3:15). **(3)** The fifth son of Elioenai, listed as a descendant of David (1 Chron. 3:24). **(4)** A priest who served in Solomon’s temple (1 Chron. 6:9–10). **(5)** One of several Benjamite soldiers who joined David at Ziklag after he went there to escape Saul. These soldiers were noted for their loyalty to David (coming from the same tribe as Saul) and ambidextrous use of weaponry (1 Chron. 12:4). **(6)** The eighth of eleven Gadite army commanders who were loyal to David when he was banished by Saul (1 Chron. 12:12). These soldiers were distinguished by their superior fighting qualities and remarkable feats of bravery and strength (1 Chron. 12:8, 14–15). **(7)** One of the Jewish family heads who returned from exile with Ezra, he brought with him 110 people (Ezra 8:12). **(8)** A postexilic high priest descended from Eliashib mentioned in connection with the official registration of priests (Neh. 12:22–23).

JOHN A common name in first-century Judaism. The Greek name *Iōannēs* comes from the Hebrew name "Yohanan." **(1)** The father of Mattathias and grandfather of Judas Maccabeus (1 Macc. 2:1), he was a priest in the line of Joarib. He is possibly the Jehoiarib mentioned in 1 Chron. 9:10; 24:7. **(2)** The Baptist or Baptizer, he was the son of the priest Zechariah and Elizabeth. (*See* John the Baptist.) **(3)** The son of Zebedee, he was an apostle originally belonging to the inner circle of the twelve main disciples of Jesus. (*See* John the Apostle.) **(4)** The father of Peter the apostle (John 1:42; 21:15–17). The Gospel of Matthew identifies Peter's father as Jonah, a variant of "John" (16:17). **(5)** A relative of the high priest Annas (Acts 4:6). **(6)** John Mark, a cousin of Barnabas (Col. 4:10) and the son of Mary (Acts 12:12). (*See* Mark, John.) **(7)** The elder. Both 2 John and 3 John claim authorship by "the elder" (2 John 1; 3 John 1). Traditionally, all three Johannine Letters, the Gospel of John, and sometimes the Revelation of John have been attributed to John the apostle. However, modern scholarship often attributes 2 John and 3 John, and sometimes 1 John, to "the elder"—John the elder. **(8)** The seer, the author of the book of Revelation (see 1:1, 4, 9; 22:8). Some scholars ascribe the authorship of Revelation to John the apostle, in line with the view of the church father Irenaeus. Other scholars ascribe the writing of Revelation to a certain John the elder. The book of Revelation does not further identify the author. However, the author is among the prophets, a seer, and his name is "John"—hence, John the seer.

JOHN, FIRST LETTER OF First John is a letter written to reassure Christians of the security of their salvation in Christ. The letter contrasts the truth of the original gospel taught by the author with the heretical doctrines of traveling teachers who sought to instill doubt and fear in the churches. The incarnation takes center stage as the climactic confession of Christianity (1 John 4:2–3). Christian love flows out of God's ultimate example of love in the atoning death of Christ.

Genre

First John is commonly referred to as a letter, but it bears none of the traditional marks of a Greco-Roman letter. The author does not introduce himself, the recipients are not named, there is no opening greeting or wish for health, and there are no closing salutations. Some have suggested that 1 John is a universal tract, but the content is too specific and polemical. First John is probably a circular letter intended for general distribution among the churches associated with the author.

Main Themes

First John repeats many of the same themes as the Gospel of John. The historical reality of the incarnation of Christ is a central theme in 1 John (1:1–3). The incarnation is rooted in history and cannot be divorced from that foundational fact. Christ's "atoning sacrifice" is another foundational fact of Christian belief; however, it is not simply that Christ died a sacrificial death, but that he did so "for our sins" (2:2; 4:10). The author explains the meaning of the atonement to help build the salvation confidence of the struggling Christians. In a number of places the author places special stress on the forgiveness of sins that comes through Jesus' blood. His death "purifies us from all sin" (1:7). He came to take away sin and to destroy the work of the devil (3:5, 8).

Love is another resounding theme. Christians are to love one another in concrete ways, reflecting the sacrificial love of Christ (2:16–18). Love is rooted in God and ultimately demonstrated at the cross (4:9). We will never find what love means if we start from the human end. We must start from the cross, where we see the love of God (4:10). The author reminds his readers that they have the Holy Spirit and have no need for further instruction by the false teachers (2:20–21, 26–27). The Spirit of God is the Spirit of truth, who bears witness that Jesus is Christ in the flesh (4:2, 6). Competing spirits should be tested and rejected as "antichrist" if they fail to confess Christ (4:3).

First John is full of family imagery. The author repeatedly addresses his readers as "children," "brothers," and "beloved." Being "born of God" is the hallmark of those who are "children of God" (2:23; 3:1–3, 9–10). Children of God love one another and do what is right (3:10–11). Eternal life is a present possession that believers can be assured of (5:13). Although the false teachers sow seeds of doubt, the author seeks to uproot them. Salvation is not for those who are spiritually enlightened but for all whose faith is in the blood of Christ.

LITERARY FEATURES

One of the author's favorite literary features is the repetition of key words. The word "love" appears over fifty times in 1 John. Love is the bedrock of the Christian faith. The verb "to know" appears approximately forty times in 1 John. The author reassures his readers of their salvation by repeating what they already "know." They "know" God and should not fear the false teachers' so-called knowledge. The verb "to remain" appears twenty-four times. God, God's word, Christ, truth, life, love, and the Holy Spirit all remain in believers. They, in turn, should remain in God, Christ, and the light. In contrast, unbelievers remain in death (3:14). First John also has strong dualistic contrasts: light/dark, love/hate, truth/falsehood (1–2; 4:6). The dualism of 1 John is similar to that found in the DSS, but its Christian character gives it a unique christocentric emphasis.

AUTHORSHIP

First John and the Gospel of John share common vocabulary, writing style, and many interlocking themes that point to a common author. The opening verses of 1 John show a close affinity with the beginning of the Gospel (John 1:1; 1 John 1:1). Also, the purpose statements of both the Gospel and 1 John concern faith in Christ and receiving eternal life (John 20:31; 1 John 5:13). Some scholars believe the apostle John is the author, but this is impossible to prove from the text itself, since the author never mentions his name. Church fathers such as Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, and Tertullian attributed 1 John to the apostle. An alternative theory is that the three letters were written by another John, known as John "the elder" (2 John 1; 3 John 1). The church historian Eusebius thought that this elder John rather than the apostle John was the author of the Johannine Letters. John the elder is thought to have lived in Ephesus at about the same time as John the apostle. Yet there is no indisputable proof that this person existed or that he wrote anything to churches in the area. Nevertheless, there is nothing in 1 John that hinges on the exact identity of the author. He seems to be well advanced in years and regards the church members as his "children" (2:1, 18, 28; 3:7, 18; 4:4; 5:21) and "friends" (3:2, 21; 4:1, 7, 11). He has a close relationship with them and shows a genuine pastoral concern for their well-being. He claims to be an eyewitness of Jesus, the Word of life (1:1–3).

AUDIENCE, LIFE SETTING, AND DATE

Audience and date. The audience is a group of churches in fellowship with the author's church. This group of churches is often referred to as the Johannine Community, a community represented by the Johannine literature of the NT (Gospel of John, 1–3 John, Revelation). Whether this community functioned formally as such is unclear, but there seems to be a close-knit network of churches associated with the author. Tradition places these churches in and around Ephesus at the end of the first century. Since John's Gospel was written sometime in the years AD 85–95, 1 John was written probably not long afterward to churches in and around Ephesus.

Archaeological remains of the ancient city of Ephesus. The churches in and around Ephesus were the audience of 1 John.

Life setting. The exact life setting behind 1 John is uncertain, but the churches apparently were endangered by itinerant false teachers intent on distorting the gospel preached by the author. Their teachings may have stemmed from a misinterpretation of John's Gospel, but this is difficult to prove. They were in fellowship with the author at one time but broke away and charted their own deceptive direction (1 John 2:18–19, 26). The audience had already heard the message of the gospel, including its command to love, and this had already impacted their lives (2:8). They already knew the truth of the gospel (2:21), but the false teachers began to sow seeds of doubt. This explains the purpose statement of 1 John: "I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life" (5:13). The author's purpose was not to correct the heretics, for the letter was not written to them, but to show his readers that the false teachers' claims were indeed false.

The identity of the false teachers is unknown, but their teachings reflected seeds of gnosticism and docetism and may have included some Jewish influences. The more-advanced forms of gnosticism and docetism that threatened the church in the second century were not yet fully developed by the time of John, but similar ideas were already beginning to infiltrate the church. Gnostics taught a radical division between flesh and spirit. Flesh and matter were bad, but spirit was good. Because of this false premise, they may have misinterpreted Jesus' words in John's Gospel: "Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit" (John 3:6). A gnostic or a docetic who was "born from above" (see John 3:3 NIV mg.) was resurrected and became "otherworldly" and truly "spiritual." Flesh was discarded as worthless and evil. Although this was only one aspect of the false teaching, it was enough to threaten the very core of the gospel of Christ in the flesh as well as a bodily resurrection. For the false teachers, Jesus only seemed to have a genuine body of flesh and to suffer and die (docetism), since flesh was evil by nature (gnosticism). This notion threatened the very heart of the Christian gospel.

Among the debated issues were the identity of Christ, the significance of his atoning death, the nature of salvation, and the shape of Christian discipleship. The heretics claimed to be without sin (1 John 1:8–2:2), continued to sin (3:6, 8, 10), disobeyed God's commands (1:6–7; 2:4–6; 5:2–3), did not love their brothers and sisters in Christ yet claimed to love God (2:7–11; 3:10–18, 23; 4:7–11, 20–21), and loved the world (2:15–17; 4:4–6; 5:19). They erred regarding the nature and work of Christ. They denied that Jesus was the Christ and, by doing so, denied God as well (2:22; 5:1). By denying Jesus, they did not remain in God (4:15; 5:5, 10, 13). They rejected the historical fact that Christ came in the flesh (4:3). They also rejected the atonement of Christ (2:2; 3:5; 4:10; 5:6). Those who threatened the church may have valued the heavenly and spiritual realm and despised physical matter in such a way that it led them to place all their emphasis on the heavenly Christ rather than the human Jesus, and on their own "spiritual" status as the children of God rather than their day-to-day actions. They were committed to a fundamentally different understanding of the Christian faith.

The heretics were not content to keep their ideas to themselves, so they circulated among the churches in order to spread their beliefs. They sought to win people over to their understanding of things (2:26; 4:1–3). This led to confusion among the believers who remained faithful to the gospel as it was proclaimed at the beginning, the gospel that had come from eyewitnesses such as the author. As a result, these Christians doubted their salvation, doubted that they really knew God and Christ, and doubted that they were experiencing eternal life. Clearly, the author viewed the teachings and practices of the false teachers as a threat to the proper understanding of truth and to the well-being of his readers.

OUTLINE

I. Prologue: The Incarnate Word of Life (1:1–4)

II. Walking in the Light (1:5–2:2)

III. Keeping His Commands (2:3–11)

IV. Do Not Love the World (2:12–17)

V. A Warning against Antichrists (2:18–27)

VI. The Hope of God’s Children (2:28–3:3)

VII. Born of God (3:4–10)

VIII. Love One Another (3:11–18)

IX. Assurance and Obedience (3:19–24)

X. The Spirits of Truth and Falsehood (4:1–6)

XI. The Priority of God’s Love (4:7–12)

XII. Christian Love (4:13–5:4)

XIII. The True Faith Confirmed (5:5–12)

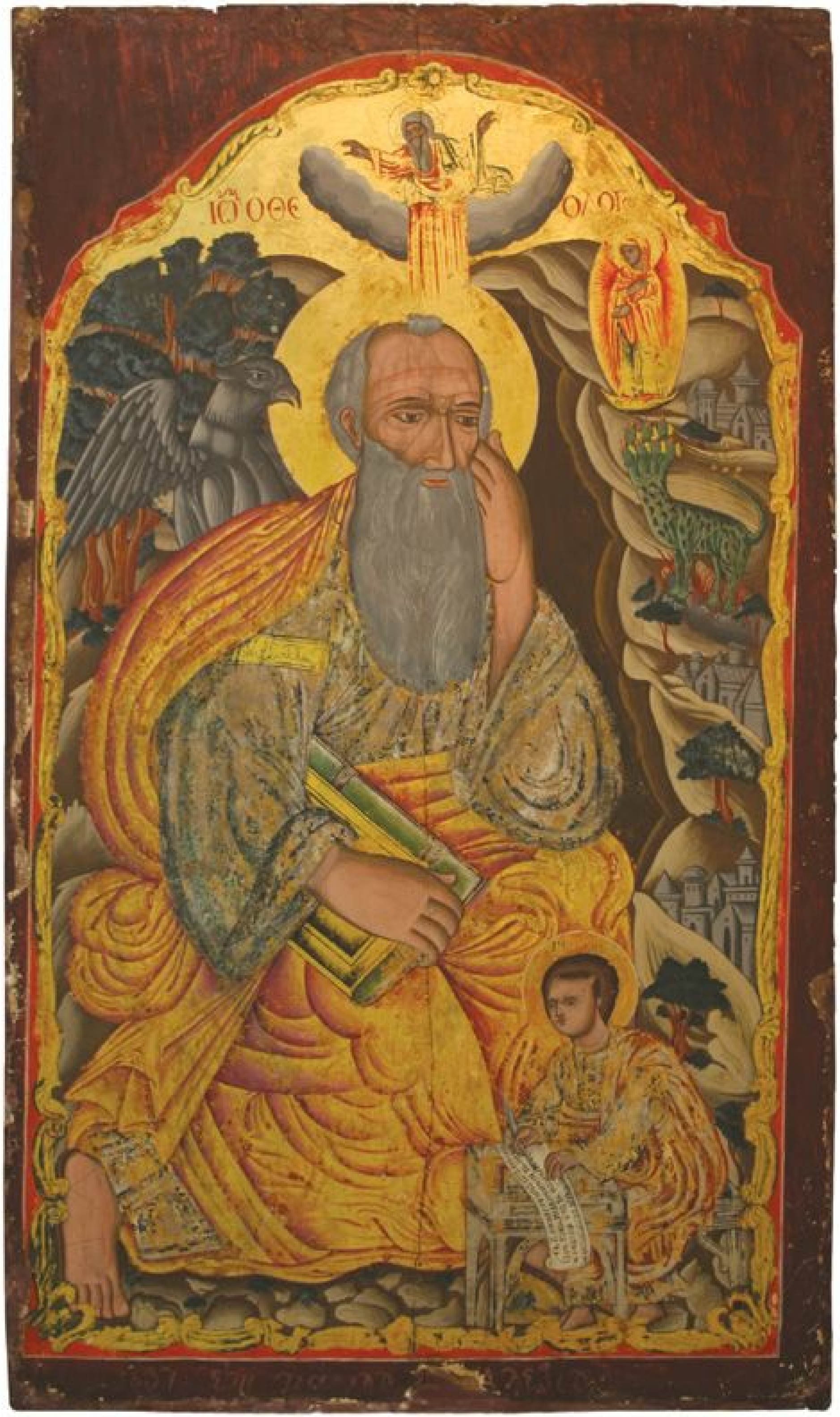
XIV. Concluding Remarks (5:13–21)

JOHN, GOSPEL OF Traditionally appearing after Matthew, Mark, and Luke in the NT canon, the Gospel of John is also referred to as the Fourth Gospel. Because of its many unique features, John is often discussed in distinction from the other three Gospels, which are grouped together as the Synoptic Gospels.

AUTHORSHIP

Technically, the Gospel of John is anonymous. The author, however, identifies himself with the Beloved Disciple (21:24). In light of the nearly unanimous testimony of the early church that the Fourth Gospel was penned by the apostle John, the son of Zebedee, and that no formidable argument has been set forth against this position, the majority of conservative scholars agree that the Beloved Disciple is John the apostle.

Evidence for apostolic authorship is multifaceted. First, the external evidence weighs heavily in favor of the traditional view that John the apostle penned this Gospel. There is some evidence that title pages with an accompanying ascription identifying the author date back very close to the time of the origin of the Gospels themselves. Such ascriptions may have been necessitated as a means of distinguishing the Gospels from one another. With regard to the Fourth Gospel, the earliest manuscripts uniformly ascribe it to the apostle John.



Icon of Saint John the Evangelist (nineteenth century AD)

The evidence from the early church fathers also supports the traditional viewpoint. Ignatius appears to have been familiar with the language of the Fourth Gospel. Also, the *Shepherd of Hermas* alludes to it. Justin appears to be the first orthodox writer to quote John (*1 Apol.* 61.4–5, quoting from John 3:3–5). Irenaeus is the first to overtly assert Johannine authorship: “John the disciple of the Lord, who leaned back on his breast, published the Gospel while he was resident at Ephesus in Asia” (*Haer.* 3.1.1). This position finds further support in Tertullian and Clement of Alexandria (c. AD

200). The Muratorian Canon (AD 180–200) tells us that John was urged by his disciples, and that Andrew had a dream that John should write. Eusebius's silence on the questions of the authenticity, authorship, and canonicity of John speaks loudly, since it was his objective to address the doubtful cases. In all, there is unquestioned acceptance by the end of the second century that the Fourth Gospel was written by John the apostle.

Second, the internal evidence corresponds with the identification of John the son of Zebedee as the author in that he appears to meet all the requirements for authorship. John was one of the Twelve and, along with Peter and James, a member of the inner circle of Jesus' disciples. This close association with Peter makes John the best candidate for the Beloved Disciple. Also, the call narrative of 1:35–51, when compared with Mark 1:16–20, supports the identification of the unnamed disciple with John. Several personal allusions in the Fourth Gospel are best accounted for if the author is John the apostle. For example, in 1:14; 19:35 the author suggests that he has personally witnessed Jesus. The author provides details that suggest this Gospel was written by an eyewitness, and some of these details serve no purpose except to affirm that an eyewitness saw or experienced them. These include a proclivity for specifying the time or day of an event (1:19–28, 29, 35, 39, 43; 2:1; 4:6, 52; 18:28; 19:14; 20:19); the number of water jars (six) at Cana (2:6); the distance (twenty-five or thirty stadia) that the disciples rowed (6:19); the number of fish (153) caught (21:11); and the distance of the boat from land at the postresurrection appearance of Jesus (21:8, 11).

Furthermore, the author of the Fourth Gospel is aware of Jewish customs and history as well as the geography of first-century Palestine. This too accords with our knowledge of John the apostle. For example, he is aware of customs regarding cleansing (2:6), laws concerning the Sabbath (5:10), and the Feast of Tabernacles (7:37). The writer of the Fourth Gospel is also familiar with history (the number of years spent rebuilding the temple [2:20]), Jewish politics (the attitude toward Samaritans [4:9]), Jewish authorities (Annas and Caiaphas [18:13]), and the geography of Palestine (the pool at Bethesda with five porticoes [5:2], the Pool of Siloam [9:7], Sychar [4:5], the two Bethanys [1:28; 11:1, 18; 12:1], Ephraim [11:54]).

The question remains as to why the apostle John would have written anonymously and used such a cryptic means of identifying himself as "the beloved disciple" (21:20; NIV: "the disciple whom Jesus loved"). It is conceivable that John's readers knew his name, and that in keeping with the Semitic custom of anonymity, John used this alternative designation. Why, though, in an effort to humbly remain anonymous, would someone choose a designation that seemingly connotes superiority?

In response, some have suggested that John may have used the title with a sense of wonder about how Jesus loved him. The stress would then be one of amazement: John, instead of mentioning his own name, draws attention to what he owes Jesus. This title is also combined with other, more modest titles: "another disciple" (18:15); "the other disciple" (20:2); "the man who saw it" (19:35). Finally, others have noted that the designation "the beloved disciple" may simply have been a title by which John was known throughout the churches of Asia.

Furthermore, if the apostle John is not the author of the Fourth Gospel, then we must account for his absence from the narrative. The failure to mention James and John (aside from the somewhat passing reference to the "sons of Zebedee" [21:2]) is striking. According to the Synoptic Gospels, these brothers are two of the most prominent disciples in the ministry of Jesus. If John's readers were familiar with James and John and their general role in the life of Jesus, then by not naming himself, John could keep his own role subordinate in the narrative. John, as an eyewitness, needed to mention himself, for doing so would help to establish the historical credibility of this Gospel. This designation allowed him to write a biography of Christ and not mention himself by name.

TIME AND PLACE OF WRITING

Though the conclusion is ultimately uncertain, it is widely believed that John penned the Fourth Gospel from Ephesus somewhat late in the first century (c. AD 85–95). It appears from 21:19, 23 that a measure of time has gone by, and that Peter has already died. It has been argued that the Gospel of John was written before the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem in AD 70 (on the basis of references suggesting that the temple is still standing [cf. 5:2]), but this argument from silence does not necessarily establish the point that it attempts to prove. Supporting a date late in the first century is the external evidence. The early church fathers claimed that John was written last, at the urging of his disciples, and that he wrote from Ephesus.

The suggestion that John was written sometime well into the second century has been rejected by nearly all scholars. The discovery of a very early manuscript, P^{52} (dated around AD 125), confirms that the Fourth Gospel was written and circulating early in the second century. Copies of the Bodmer Papyri P^{66} and P^{75} further establish that the Gospel of John was circulating in Egypt as early as AD 140.

OUTLINE

I. Prologue (1:1–18)

II. Preparation for Jesus’ Ministry (1:19–51)

III. Jesus’ Public Ministry: Signs and Teaching (2:1–12:50)

IV. The Last Supper and Farewell Discourse (13:1–17:26)

V. The Passion and Resurrection Narratives (18:1–21:25)

PURPOSE AND MESSAGE

The Gospel of John states its purpose in 20:31: “But these [signs] are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.” The Greek text of this verse is relatively ambiguous (something that was noticed from a very early date and has resulted in some discrepancy among the earliest manuscripts). It raises the question of whether John wrote so that his readers might come to believe or that they should continue in their belief. A number of leading scholars have concluded that John was intentionally ambiguous and that he wrote with both purposes in mind.

The Gospel of John clearly focuses on the person, work, and identity of Jesus Christ. John intends to clarify and affirm exactly who the Messiah/Christ/Son of God really was and why he came. For John, the answer is evident: Jesus Christ is the physical manifestation of God, and he came to be crucified.

The thesis statement of the Fourth Gospel appears at the close of the opening prologue: “the one and only Son, who is himself God” has “made him [the Father] known” (1:18). John demonstrates this by affirming that what God is, the Word is (1:1); what the Father does, the Son does (5:19); the Son and the Father are one (10:30); the Son speaks what the Father has told him (8:28; 12:49; 14:10); and the Son is in the Father, and the Father is in the Son (14:10–11). The climactic statement, then, is Jesus’ proclamation: “Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father” (14:9).

Several proposals have set forth various secondary intentions for the Gospel of John. Many of these have some measure of legitimacy, though it is difficult to establish any of them as forthright in the mind of John. For example, it has been suggested that the Fourth Gospel was written to combat a growing form of gnosticism. Although this Gospel has traces of evidence that support this contention, and there is even some external evidence in its favor, it is difficult to establish that this was an explicit intention of John. Gnosticism as a developed system did not arise until the second century. Others have argued that this Gospel was written as an anti-Jewish polemic. A close reading, however, suggests that this was not one of John’s purposes. Perhaps the most plausible secondary proposition is that John’s Gospel was written to complement the Synoptic Gospels.

JOHN AND THE SYNOPTICS

The relationship between John and the Synoptics is essential for our understanding of the Fourth Gospel. That John is independent from the Synoptics is evident in that the Fourth Gospel has a detailed knowledge of events beyond those recorded in the Synoptics. John knows of lengthy discourses after miracles (e.g., 6:26–58), a wedding in Cana (2:1–11), conversations with Nicodemus (3:1–21) and a Samaritan woman (4:7–37), repeated confrontations with the Jews (e.g., 8:12–59), the raising of Lazarus from death (11:1–44), and more. Nothing in chapters 3–5 is paralleled in the Synoptics; and of the material in chapters 1–5, only the ministry of John the Baptist and the cleansing of the temple are found in the Synoptics. Compared to the Synoptics, John has a distinct vocabulary (e.g., truth, witness, abide, love, believe, light, life).

Also in contrast to the Synoptics, John focuses on Jesus’ ministry in Jerusalem, has Jesus beginning his ministry before the arrest of John the Baptist (3:22–24 [cf. Mark 1:14]), shows Jesus’ ministry being of longer duration than in the Synoptics, records no parables of Jesus and no transfiguration, and scarcely mentions the kingdom of God (3:3, 5; 18:36). Furthermore, John’s theology and explicit identification of Jesus with God are unique among the Gospels.

Despite the differences, however, the Gospel of John reflects significant parallels with the Synoptic accounts. John is aware of the Synoptic traditions regarding the Spirit’s anointing (1:32–33), John the Baptist (1:19–34; 3:22–36), the feeding of the five thousand (6:1–13), and Jesus’ walking on water (6:15–21). Furthermore, the Fourth Gospel seemingly intends to explain features that are obscure in the Synoptics. For example, why did the disciples follow Jesus when he came to them and said, “Follow me”? John explains that many of them were disciples of John the Baptist, and that they had met Jesus earlier (1:19–51). That Jesus had an extensive ministry in Judea explains why the Jerusalem authorities were so angry with Jesus and were plotting to kill him when he came into Jerusalem for the Passover. The central charge that Jesus taught against the temple (cf. Mark 14:58; 15:29) is also explained by John.

In all, it appears that John and his readers were aware of the Synoptics. John may even have been written to complement them and to explain aspects of the Synoptic accounts that were obscure. Thus, the parenthetical insertions in 3:24 and 11:2 may have been intended for readers who were familiar with the Gospel of Mark. Most significantly, John complements the Synoptics by presenting the significance of the person of Jesus beyond what is found in the Synoptics.

JESUS IN THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

The most significant feature of John is its high Christology. John intends to specify precisely the person and identity of Christ. The equating of Jesus with God undergirds the entire Fourth Gospel. In no other Gospel is Jesus so clearly identified as God. The Gospel begins with the affirmation that the

Word was in the beginning with God, and “the Word was God” (1:1). Later, Thomas confesses Jesus as “my Lord and my God” (20:28).

John, however, identifies Jesus with a wide variety of titles and designations. He is the Word (1:1, 14), the one and only God (1:18), the one and only Son (3:16, 18), the Son of God (1:34, 49; 11:27; 20:31), the Son of Man (3:13–14; 5:19–27), the teacher from God (3:2), the prophet (4:19; 6:14; 7:40; 9:17), the Messiah (1:41; 4:29; 11:27; 20:31), the King of Israel (1:49; 6:15; 12:13), the King of the Jews (19:19), the Holy One of God (6:69), the Lamb of God (1:29, 36), the coming one (11:27; 12:13), the sent one of God (3:16–17, 34; 5:30; 7:16–18; 10:36), the I Am (see below), Paraclete (14:16), rabbi (20:16), Lord (6:68; 20:18; 21:7), and Lord and God (20:28).

Perhaps the most significant title applied to Jesus is the identification of him with the divine name for God: “I Am” (Gk. *egō eimi* [cf. Exod. 3:14]). John employs this designation for Jesus to buttress his claims that he can work, speak, and act in the Father’s role. On seven occasions, the “I am” is followed by a predicate: bread of life (6:35); light of the world (8:12); gate (10:9); good shepherd (10:11, 14); resurrection and the life (11:25); the way, the truth, and the life (14:6); true vine (15:1, 5).

John also employs the phrase “I am” in an absolute construction (i.e., without a predicate) in parallel to use in the LXX as a title for God. On some of these occasions, John uses the absolute construction as a common means of identification (18:5–8). Most intriguing, however, is John’s employment of this designation in the extended dialogue with the Jewish authorities (8:24, 28, 58). In 8:24, 28 the sense seems incomplete, and the form is more a title. This becomes explicit only when compared with the final and most significant use of this title in 8:58. On this occasion, Jesus’ intent is not missed, and the Jews respond with the desire to stone him for blasphemy (8:59).

THE OLD TESTAMENT IN THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

The Gospel of John has only fourteen direct references to the OT, fewer than any of the Synoptics. Nonetheless, one of the key features of John’s portrait of Jesus is Jesus’ fulfillment of the OT not just as the Messiah but also in terms of the institutions, symbols, and festivals of Judaism. In Jesus “the old has gone, the new is here” (2 Cor. 5:17). Thus, in John’s Gospel the old purifications are replaced with the new wine (2:1–11), the old temple with the new temple (2:12–25), the old birth with the new birth (3:1–21), the old water with the living water (4:7–15), and worship in Jerusalem and Gerizim with worship “in the Spirit and in truth” (4:20–24). Often Jesus’ activities are dated in relation to a feast. Throughout chapters 5–10, John affirms that Jesus has fulfilled and replaced the Jewish festivals—Sabbath: related to work (5:1–47); Feast of Passover: bread (6:1–71); Feast of Tabernacles: water and light (7:1–9:41); Feast of Dedication: temple (10:22–39).

Also, John builds upon a typological emphasis of Jesus. He is the true temple (2:21), the antitype of the bronze serpent (3:14), the true manna (6:32–35), the true water-giving rock (7:37), and the new Torah (13:34). Thus, the entire Gospel is framed around Jesus’ visits to Jerusalem, where John presents Jesus as the fulfillment of Israel’s hope and central to the life of the nation. Furthermore, this Gospel is replete with references to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Moses. Despite the relative lack of OT citations, the message of the OT is interwoven into the substructure of the Fourth Gospel.

SYMBOLS AND THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

Closely related to understanding the Gospel of John and the OT is the manner in which John utilizes symbols to convey his message. For example, water often signifies life, cleansing, refreshment, renewal, the newness that Jesus ushers in, and ultimately the life-giving Spirit. Thus, Nicodemus must be reborn in water and the Spirit (3:5). Jesus turns water into wine (2:8) and promises living water to the woman at the well (4:10).

John also sees in Jesus' miracles a greater significance than appears from the physical phenomena. Thus, he uses the designation "signs" (see, e.g., 2:11) to reference the miracles of Jesus. By means of this designation, John focuses on the significance of the miracle and not merely the power of Jesus. John informs us that the signs of Jesus are christological; they signify who he is, not merely what he does. For example, from Jesus' multiplying of the bread we learn that he is the giver of eternal life and the source of our sustenance (6:26–27).

IRONY AND MISUNDERSTANDING IN JOHN

Another key to understanding the Gospel of John is found in its use of irony and misunderstanding. Irony is a literary technique evidenced in John in instances in which opponents of Jesus make statements about him that are derogatory, sarcastic, and so forth and yet are more true or meaningful than they suppose. John presents such statements but leaves them unanswered, supposing that his audience will see the deeper truth. For example, many of the Jews missed the very Messiah they were looking for (1:11, 45; 5:39–40); they claim to know where Jesus is from (7:27), and yet they refuse to accept the truth that he is from God (7:28). The most famous use of irony appears in Pilate's famed "Here is the man!" (19:5).

Misunderstandings are occasions when Jesus makes a remark that is ambiguous or metaphorical and his partner in conversation responds by taking the remark literally, thus showing that the spiritual meaning has eluded that person. John then explains to his readers the true meaning. John uses this technique to bring his readers to a greater knowledge of who Jesus is: God in flesh. Examples of misunderstandings are found in 2:19–21; 3:3–5; 4:10–15, 31–34; 6:32–35, 51–53; 7:33–36; 8:21–22, 31–35, 56–58; 11:11–15, 23–25; 12:32–34; 13:36–38; 14:4–6, 7–9; 16:16–19.

ANTI-SEMITISM IN JOHN?

The contention that John displays an anti-Semitic agenda in which the burden for the crucifixion of Jesus is placed on the Jewish people results from a misreading of the Fourth Gospel. A thorough reading of John confirms that the designation "Jews" often reflects the generic term "Israelites." The term "Jew" is used in a neutral sense in 4:22 (salvation is from the Jews); 8:31; 11:45; 12:11 (many Jews believed); and 2:13; 5:1; 6:4 (feast of the Jews). When the designation "Jew" appears in a negative sense in John, it refers particularly to the Jewish leaders and authorities (7:13; 9:22; 19:38; 20:19). Consequently, John's use of the term is not based on an inherent degradation of the people, but instead reflects the historical reality of Jesus' confrontation with Jewish authorities.

That John does not place all the blame on the Jews in an effort to exonerate the Romans is also evident from the fact that Pilate is portrayed as one who disregards justice. He has an innocent man beaten and crucified ("I find no basis for a charge against him" [19:6]). John does not record this cry from the Jewish people: "His blood be on us and on our children" (Matt. 27:25 ESV, NRSV). Consequently, the charge of anti-Semitism in the Gospel of John is unfounded.

JOHN, LETTERS OF A collection of three short letters, 1–3 John, most likely written by the same author and traditionally identified with the author of the Gospel of John. The letters probably were written after John's Gospel, to deal with problems that had arisen in certain churches. They provide evidence of a Christian community consisting of a network of congregations that sprang from the same source and belonged more or less loosely together. These letters deal with a range of issues, including love, fellowship, the incarnation and atonement of Christ, hospitality, the Holy Spirit, and warnings against false teaching. First John and 2 John were written to address the same issues, whereas 3 John, although likely written at about the same time and by the same author, was written to deal with a different, although not completely unrelated, problem.

The letters provide valuable insights into the doctrinal issues facing the early church as well as the daily life of the various churches. They stem from the author's concern to reassure Christians of their salvation in Christ (1 John 5:13) and to warn them of the folly of false teaching (1 John 2:26). The letters place heavy emphasis on Christian ethics. They show a concern for "walking in the light" (1 John 1:7), "walking in the truth" (2 John 4; 3 John 3–4), "work[ing] together for the truth" (3 John 8), doing what is "good" (3 John 11), and offering hospitality (3 John 8). The author's primary concern is that the churches abide in "that which was from the beginning" (1 John 1:1). The letters demonstrate how the Christian confession that Christ has come in the flesh expresses itself in the doctrine and daily life of the church. *See also* John, First Letter of; John, Second Letter of; John, Third Letter of.

JOHN, REVELATION OF *See* Revelation, Book of.

JOHN, SECOND LETTER OF Second John is a follow-up letter to 1 John, sent to one of the churches involved to warn it about the heretics who were trying to deceive people. The elder exhorts the church to have nothing to do with the false teachers and to continue to walk in the truth and to follow God's command to love one another (vv. 4–6).

GENRE, LITERARY FEATURES, AND AUTHORSHIP

Unlike 1 John, 2 John bears the marks of a traditional Greco-Roman letter. It identifies both author and audience (v. 1), conveys an introductory Christian greeting (v. 3) similar to Paul's letters, and has a concluding greeting (v. 13). Second John is the shortest NT writing.

Second John shares many literary features with 1 John. The elder deals with the same historical situation as that reflected in 1 John. He warns his readers of those who "do not acknowledge Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh," who have "gone out into the world" (v. 7) and do not continue in the teachings of Christ (v. 9). He brands these false teachers as "antichrists" (v. 7). He reiterates the great love command, which the church has heard from the beginning (vv. 5–6). The elder has joy because he finds Christians "walking in the truth" (v. 4). Finally, he encourages his readers that they in fact "know the truth" (v. 1) despite the deceivers' efforts to confuse them.

The author identifies himself simply as "the elder" (v. 1). This has led some scholars to suggest that "John the elder" rather than "John the apostle" was the author. But, again, there is no indisputable proof that there ever was a John the elder separate and apart from John the apostle, much less that he wrote anything. John the apostle was probably also an elder like Peter (1 Pet. 5:1). Nevertheless, he refers to himself as "the elder" because his audience already knows his identity.

AUDIENCE, LIFE SETTING, AND DATE

The audience is "the chosen lady [NIV: "lady chosen by God"] and her children," probably a metaphor for a local church (v. 1 NASB). The elder's primary purpose in writing was to warn his readers about the deceivers and of the dire consequences of welcoming them and accepting their teaching: the readers would lose the reward for which they worked, and they would be participating in the deceivers' wicked work (vv. 8, 11). Second John was written probably around the same time as 1 John (AD 85–95).

MAIN THEMES

Second John continues the main themes of 1 John: love, obeying God's commands, walking in the truth, and Christians as "children." One additional theme is hospitality. The readers are warned not to let these deceivers teach in their house church (vv. 10–11). Fellowship and hospitality are extended only to those who acknowledge that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh.

OUTLINE

I. Greetings (vv. 1–3)

II. Commendation (vv. 4–6)

III. Exhortation and Warning (vv. 7–11)

IV. Conclusion (vv. 12–13)

JOHN, THIRD LETTER OF Third John is a second follow-up letter to 1 John, sent to Gaius to commend him for extending hospitality to traveling preachers of good standing. Third John also commends the actions of Demetrius while condemning those of Diotrephes.

GENRE, LITERARY FEATURES, AND AUTHORSHIP

Like 2 John, 3 John bears the marks of a Greco-Roman letter, identifying both author and audience (v. 1) and having an opening prayer for good health (v. 2) and concluding greetings (v. 13).

Third John shares many literary features with 2 John: "walking in the truth" (v. 4), "love in the truth" (v. 1). Their concluding statements are virtually identical (2 John 12; 3 John 13–14).

The author identifies himself as "the elder" (v. 1). The striking similarities of language, content, and style between 2 John and 3 John indicate that the same person wrote both letters (as well as 1 John).

AUDIENCE, LIFE SETTING, AND DATE

Third John is addressed to Gaius, a dear friend of the elder (vv. 1–2, 5, 11). He is known to be faithful to the truth (v. 3) and faithful in providing hospitality (vv. 5–7).

The life setting again deals with traveling preachers. These preachers moved between the churches to which the elder and Gaius belonged. They went out "for the sake of the Name" (v. 7), were in good standing, and were welcomed by Gaius (v. 5). But Diotrephes, an opponent of the elder, refused to welcome them and excommunicated those who welcomed them (vv. 9–10). It is possible that Diotrephes took warnings similar to those in 2 John 11 too far by excommunicating even preachers of good standing. The elder criticizes not Diotrephes' doctrine, but rather his contentious behavior. Demetrius probably was a traveling preacher and was commended by the elder (v. 12). Third John may well have been a letter of commendation for Demetrius carried by Demetrius himself.

Third John was written probably around the same time as 1–2 John (AD 85–95).

MAIN THEMES

Like 2 John, 3 John centers on the themes of love, obeying God’s commands, walking in the truth, and Christians as “children,” but it deals in more detail with the matter of hospitality (vv. 6–10).

OUTLINE

I. Greetings (v. 1)

II. Commendation of Gaius (vv. 2–8)

III. Condemnation of Diotrephes (vv. 9–10)

IV. Exhortation to Gaius (v. 11)

V. Commendation of Demetrius (v. 12)

VI. Conclusion (vv. 13–15)

JOHN MARK *See* Mark, John.

JOHN THE APOSTLE John, along with his brother James, was a son of Zebedee and a fisherman, and a disciple of Jesus. He was first called to be a disciple when Jesus passed along the shore of Galilee (Matt. 4:21; Mark 1:19–20; Luke 5:10). The fishing boat belonging to John’s family contained hired men, indicating that he left behind a profitable fishing trade (Mark 1:20). Jesus surnamed John and his brother James “Boanerges,” meaning “sons of thunder” (Mark 3:17), likely a reflection of their boisterous temperament.

John’s passionate temperament may be reflected in the Gospels in his attempt to confront potential opposition (Mark 9:38–41; Luke 9:49–50) and his desire to bring heavenly fire down upon those who rejected Jesus (Luke 9:54). James and John requested seats of honor in Jesus’ kingdom (Mark 10:37–40). Matthew clarified this event by naming James and John’s mother as the one voicing the request, something befitting the cultural setting (Matt. 20:20–22). As part of Jesus’ inner group of disciples, along with James and Peter, John was allowed to witness Jesus’ actions on certain critical occasions: raising a child from the dead (Mark 5:37–43), his transfiguration (Matt. 17:1–2; Mark 9:2; Luke 9:28–30), and his agony in the garden of Gethsemane (Matt. 26:36–38; Mark 14:32–34; Luke 22:39–40).

In its account of Jesus’ passion, the Gospel of John highlights the actions of an unnamed disciple “whom Jesus loved.” John is the likeliest candidate. This disciple leaned on Jesus at the final supper (John 13:23), was given care of Jesus’ mother (19:26), arrived first at the empty tomb (20:2–4), first recognized the resurrected Jesus (21:7), was prophesied to live a long life (21:23), and was an eyewitness of events in the Gospel (21:24).

John was among the disciples who stayed in Jerusalem in the upper room prior to Pentecost (Acts 1:13–14). John next was seen after Pentecost with Peter in accounts of the healing of a crippled beggar (3:1–11) and the two of them being arrested for proclaiming the gospel (4:1–23).

John is said to have authored the Fourth Gospel (John 21:20–24). The Gospel of John was written with a purpose stated explicitly by its author: “That you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name” (20:31). This “believing” encapsulates several key convictions that the author sought to convey. First, Jesus is one with God as preexistent and operative in creation (1:1–4, 10, 18). Second, Jesus is the messianic Savior to God's chosen people (1:41; 11:27) and all humankind (4:42). In the Johannine Gospel, salvation is conceived in God's love (3:16), formalized by the sacrifice of his Son (1:29; 3:16), and received by those holding orthodox belief in Jesus' divine identity (8:24) and origin (12:44; 17:21). Finally, believing includes the conviction that Jesus is one with God, expressed through sonship (1:19–2:11). In the Johannine Gospel, sonship is conveyed literarily and buttresses the certainty that Jesus is sufficient to provide eternal life. Messianic realities mingled with sonship distinguish Jesus as the ultimate revelation of God, thus complementing, while subordinating, previous Jewish religious convictions. In addition to the Gospel of John, tradition attributes the Johannine Letters and, in some cases, the Revelation of John to the apostle John.

John the apostle is understood in his older days to have been a member of a community with disciples of his own, commonly known as the Johannine Community. Within this community the teachings of John about Jesus were preserved and written down. In addition, his correspondence was preserved—1 John, 2 John, and 3 John.

JOHN THE BAPTIST A Jewish prophet at the time of Jesus, he was the son of priestly parents (Zechariah and Elizabeth), executed by Herod Antipas, and identified as "John" (a common Jewish name), often with the title "the Baptist" or "the Baptizer," the latter possibly being the older title.

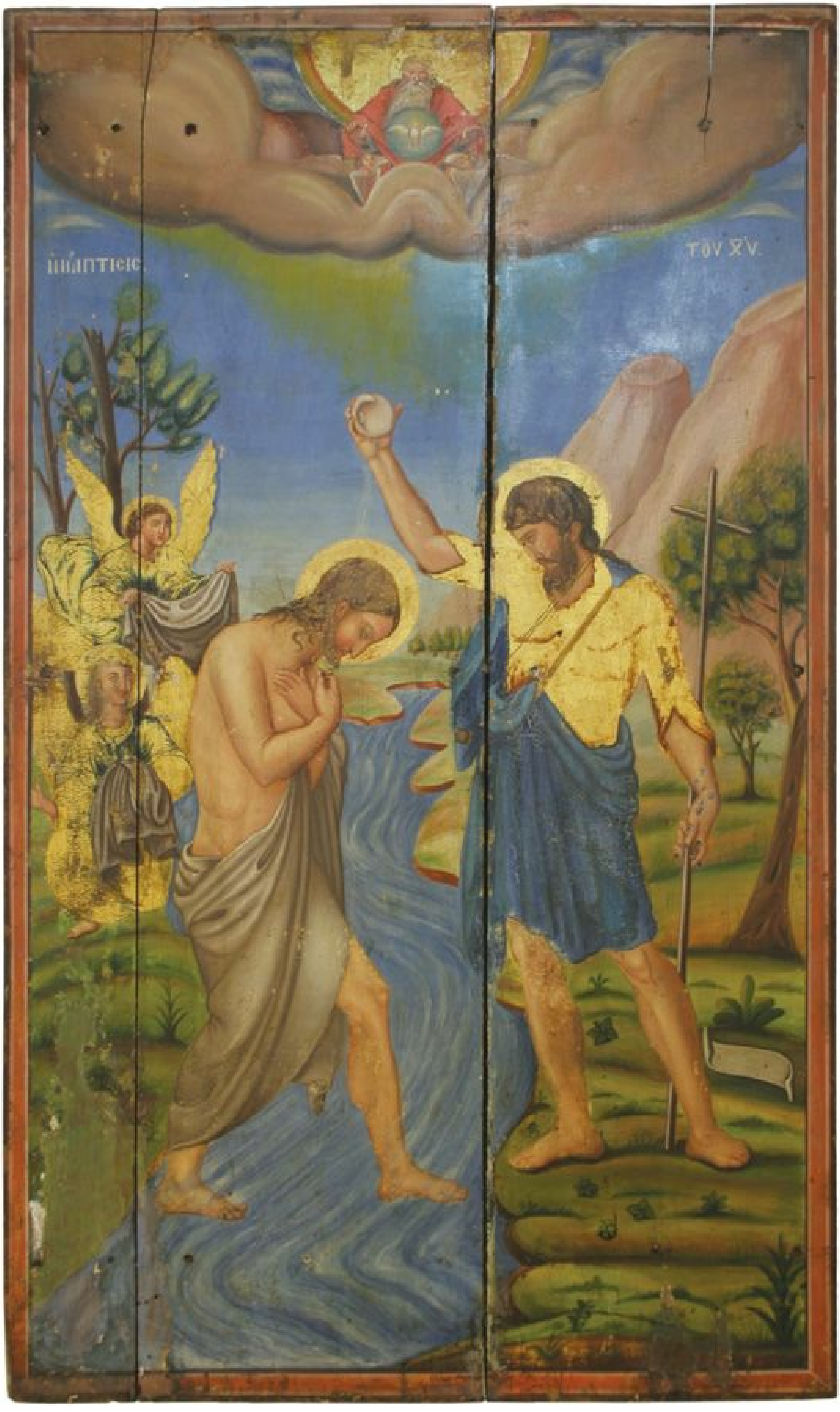
Our primary sources on John the Baptist are the canonical Gospels, Josephus (*Ant.* 18.116–19), and Acts. Both Jewish and Christian sources note John's message of the kingdom, call to baptism, and popularity. Josephus and the Gospels can speak of him without introduction. In the Gospels, only Jesus is a more prominent character. It is possible that the typical peasant was more familiar with John than with Jesus, at least until after Pentecost.

The Gospels, particularly Luke, parallel the stories of John and Jesus. Both had an annunciation, a miraculous birth accompanied by praise, and a martyr's death. Both gathered disciples, announced the kingdom, denounced the Jewish leadership, and practiced baptism. It is easy to see how some on the periphery confused the characters (Mark 8:28).

MINISTRY

Dressed in a prophet's garment of camel's hair (Matt. 3:4; cf. 2 Kings 1:8; Zech. 13:4), the Baptist is noted for emerging from the wilderness and preaching near the Jordan. He called all listeners to repent to prepare Israel for the coming covenant of the Spirit. He and his message were well known, disconcerting Jerusalem's powerful elite (Mark 11:32) and enthralling the masses (Matt. 3:5–6).

John the Baptist unwaveringly maintained that he was sent to introduce the Son (or Chosen One) of God, who would baptize with the Holy Spirit (John 1:33–34; cf. Matt. 3:11–12 pars.). This one was not named, but the Baptist was told how he would know him: "The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is the one" (John 1:33). Thus, the Baptist could claim, "I myself did not know him" (John 1:31), more likely meaning that the Baptist did not know Jesus was the one until the Spirit descended on him (1:32). It is less likely that John meant that he had not met his cousin previously (Luke 1:39–45). Jesus accepts (and validates) the Baptist's proclamation both at the beginning of his ministry (Mark 1:9) and again later (Luke 16:16; John 5:35; 10:41).



Icon of Jesus’ baptism by John the Baptist (nineteenth century AD)

After his imprisonment, the Baptist seems less certain of his earlier identification of Jesus as the coming one (Matt. 11:2–3). It should also be noted that John had not disbanded his disciples. After his death, some continued to preach his baptism of repentance as far away as in Ephesus (Acts 18:24–26; 19:1–7). Similarly, Jesus' last description of the Baptist is ambiguous. It is guarded but still complimentary (John 5:32–36; 10:41) and even lofty: "Among those born of women there has not arisen anyone greater than John the Baptist"; however, Jesus' next statement could be interpreted to mean that the Baptist was not yet part of the coming kingdom: "Yet whoever is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he" (Matt. 11:11). Like everyone else, John was confused by Jesus' preaching ministry. Jesus was not acting like the Messiah they were expecting (Luke 7:18–20). The Gospels offer no final verdict on the Baptist.

MESSAGE

Like Isaiah, the Baptist's message of restoration of the kingdom meant comfort and hope for those preparing for its arrival (Isa. 40; Mark 1:2–6) and judgment for those unprepared (Isa. 41; Matt. 3:7–10; Luke 3:7–9). The return of the kingdom was by a new covenant, marked by the Spirit (Mark 1:2–8). Cleansing with water is connected to replacing the old covenant (etched in stone) with the new (imbedded in hearts with the Spirit) by the prophets (Ezek. 36:24–28; Jer. 31), by the Baptist (John 1:31–33), by Jesus (John 3:5), and by early Christians (2 Cor. 3; Heb. 9–10). Preparing (Matt. 3:3) meant repenting and living in piety and justice as a member of the kingdom (Luke 3:10–14). This commitment of renewed faithfulness was marked by one's own (ethical) cleansing, symbolized in baptism. While ritual lustrations were somewhat common for initiation or membership in a group, John the Baptist called all who would devote themselves to God to repent, confess their sins, and be baptized (Mark 1:4–5).

The Synoptic Gospels portray Jesus and John as allies in announcing the kingdom. It has been argued that the Fourth Gospel has an anti-Baptist polemic. Because of historical elements (in Ephesus?), it may be more accurate to say that the Fourth Gospel strives to clarify the Baptist's place in salvation history. He is subordinate to Jesus by divine design (John 1–5) and by deed (John 10:41). He was the Elijah who was to come before the Christ (Matt. 11:14).

JOIADA **(1)** The son of Paseah, he repaired the Jeshanah (or Old) Gate in the walls of Jerusalem under the direction of Nehemiah (Neh. 3:6 [KJV: "Jehoiada"]). **(2)** A postexilic high priest and son of Eliashib (Neh. 12:10, 11, 22). An unnamed son of Joiada married the daughter of Sanballat (a notorious opponent to rebuilding Jerusalem), which was a flagrant breach of the law against mixed marriage. He was subsequently banished by Nehemiah (13:28). *See also* Jehoiada.

JOIAKIM A high priest in Jerusalem during the postexilic period. According to the book of Nehemiah, which records his family genealogy, he was the son of Joshua and the father of Eliashib (12:10, 12, 26).

JOIARIB **(1)** One of nine Jewish men, distinguished for their learning, sent by Ezra to Iddo to procure Levites for service in the temple (Ezra 8:16). **(2)** A descendant of the tribe of Judah who volunteered to settle in Jerusalem after the return from the Babylonian exile (Neh. 11:5). **(3)** A priest who settled in Jerusalem after the exile (Neh. 11:10; 12:6, 19). *See also* Jehoiarib.

JOKDEAM A town given by lot to the tribe of Judah at the conquest of Canaan (Josh. 15:56). The town is further identified by two literary markers: located geographically in the south central hill country of Judah, and grouped within an administrative district of ten towns headed by Maon (15:55).

Its precise location is uncertain, but as far as is known, the other nine towns in the group are a few miles south of Hebron.

JOKIM A descendant of Shelah, one of Judah's sons (1 Chron. 4:22).

JOKNEAM The city that guarded the westernmost of the three passes of the Via Maris, which cut through Mount Carmel ("Jokneam in Carmel" [Josh. 12:22]), situated where the pass opened onto the Jezreel Valley. A modern city and large military base continue to attest to the location's importance. Excavations of the archaeological site have yielded twenty-seven levels, representing nearly 4,500 years of habitation at the site, starting as early as 3000 BC. After the Israelite conquest, Jokneam was allotted to the Merarite clans of the Levites (Josh. 21:34; 1 Chron. 6:77) within the tribal region of Zebulun (Josh. 19:10–11), though the site may have remained under Canaanite control. The excavated remains include a destruction attributed to the conquests of King David, followed by poor settlements and then two strongly fortified cities dating to the tenth through eighth centuries BC, during the divided kingdom.

JOKSHAN The second of Abraham's six sons with Keturah (Gen. 25:1–2), he was the ancestor of the Sabeans (descendants of Sheba) and the Dedanites (descendants of Dedan) (Gen. 25:3), who later lived in the city Raamah (Gen. 10:7).

JOKTAN A great-great-grandson of Noah's son Shem, he was the son of Eber, the brother of Peleg, and the father of thirteen children (Gen. 10:25–30).

JOKTHEEL **(1)** A town in the western foothills (the Shephelah) of Judah given by lot at the conquest of Canaan (Josh. 15:38). **(2)** A town taken from the Edomites by King Amaziah, originally named "Sela" but renamed "Joktheel" after its capture (2 Kings 14:7).

JONA A transliteration of *Iōna*, a Greek form of the Hebrew name "Jonah," used in Matt. 16:17 for the father of Simon Peter, whom Jesus refers to as *Bariōna* (lit., "Bar-Jona," or "son of Jona"). Some Greek manuscripts have *Iōna* at John 1:42 (KJV: "Simon the son of Jona").

JONADAB **(1)** The son of Shimeah, David's brother. He devised the scheme that helped his cousin Amnon seduce and rape Tamar, Amnon's half sister (2 Sam. 13:3–5). Later he advised David of Amnon's death (2 Sam. 13:32–35). Here his name is spelled as both *yonadab* and *yehonadab* in Hebrew. **(2)** The son of Rekab, he instructed his descendants to become nomadic and not to engage in agriculture or drink wine (Jer. 35 [here spelled as both *yonadab* and *yehonadab* in Hebrew; NIV: "Jehonadab"]). Apparently, he is Jehonadab in 2 Kings 10, where he aids Jehu in the bloody purge of Ahab's family and the extermination of Baal worshipers in Samaria. *See also* Jehonadab.

JONAH **(1)** The son of Amittai, he is most famous for being swallowed by a big fish (Jonah 1:1, 17). The book of Jonah is unique among the Minor Prophets because it is a narrative about Jonah the person rather than a collection of prophecies. Some scholars have speculated that the book of Nahum is actually his collection of prophecies. Outside of that book, almost nothing is known about him. Jesus famously alludes to Jonah being in the belly of the fish, speaking of it as a sign of his own death (Matt. 12:39–41; 16:4). **(2)** The father of Simon Peter (Matt. 16:17).

A sarcophagus from the late Roman period (c. AD 300) depicting scenes from the life of Jonah. The fish is beside the ship, about to swallow Jonah.

JONAH, BOOK OF The book of Jonah is best known for its "large fish," commonly and mistakenly called a "whale." Jonah is the fifth book among the twelve Minor Prophets. The other eleven books are collections of prophetic oracles, but Jonah is a story about a prophet. In this, it is more like the accounts of Elijah and Elisha in the book of Kings than it is like a regular prophetic book. Jonah tells the story of a gracious God, a reluctant and resentful prophet (who represents God's hard-hearted people Israel), and repentant sinners.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The book of Jonah does not name an author, and so we cannot be certain of the date when it was written. We can, however, date the main character of the book, Jonah, to the reign of Jeroboam II (r. 786–746 BC) because of 2 Kings 14:25, where this prophet anticipates the expansion of the northern kingdom.

During this period, Assyria was relatively weak, allowing the northern kingdom to expand. Although we are not sure precisely which Assyrian king is featured in the book, we can be certain that the setting of the book precedes the rapid rise of the energetic Tiglath-pileser III, who began his reign in 744 BC.

LITERARY CONSIDERATIONS

Jonah is not a typical prophetic book. It is an account of a prophet, not a collection of prophetic oracles. The debate over Jonah concerns whether it is a historical account or a parable.

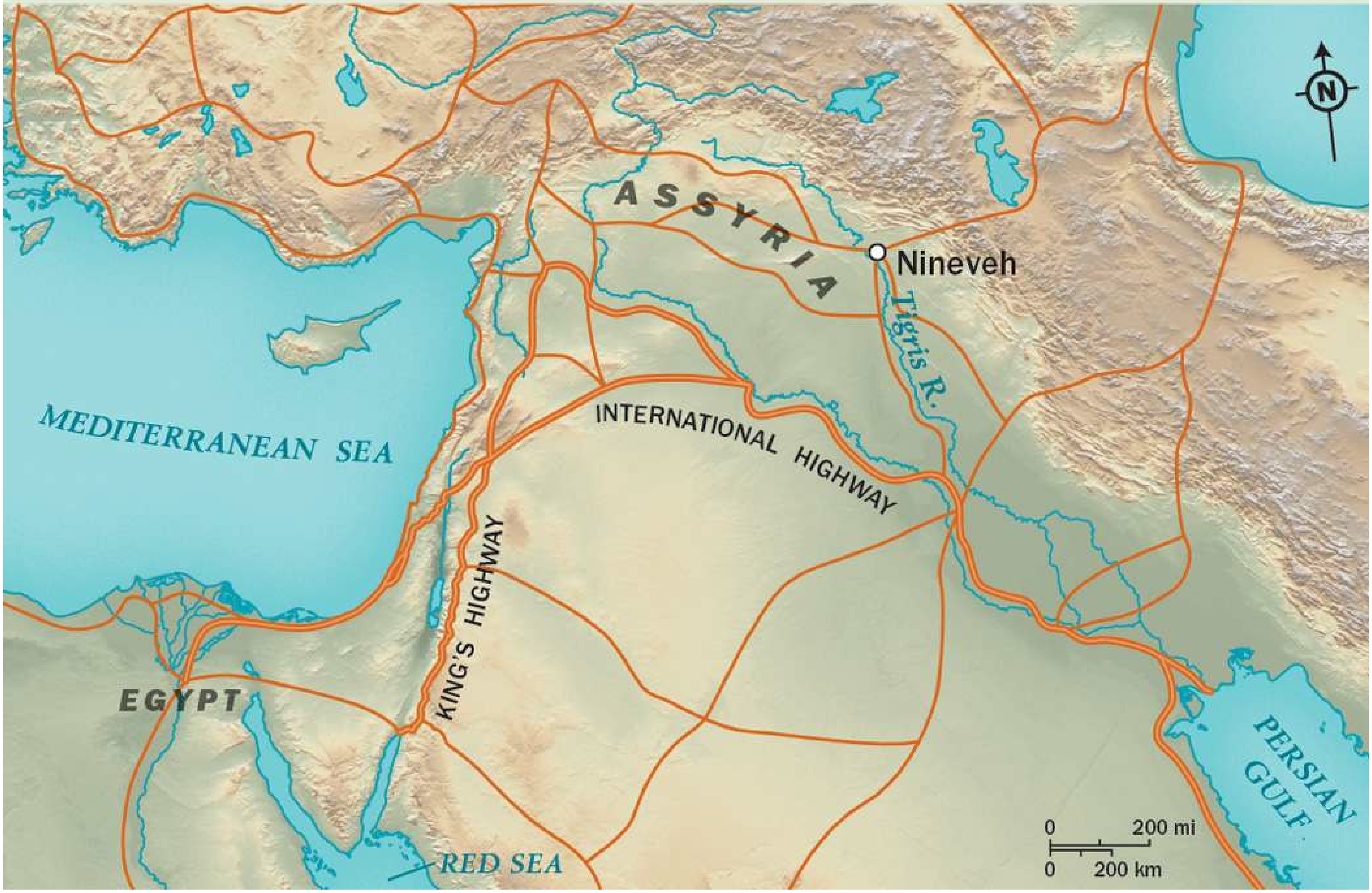
In favor of the former, 2 Kings 14:25 names Jonah as a prophet during the reign of Jeroboam II. In addition, the style of the book of Jonah is not different from what we find in the so-called historical books of the OT. A third argument appeals to Jesus' reference to Jonah and Nineveh in Matt. 12:39–40; Luke 11:29–30.

Some doubt the historical nature of Jonah because of the extraordinary (they would say unbelievable) account of the prophet's three-day stay in the belly of the large fish. Others are also skeptical about the report of Nineveh's repentance, which is not recorded in Assyrian historical documents (cf. Jon. 3:6–9).

In response to the first objection, it can be said that God can do anything, even sustain a person's life in the belly of a fish. One need not appeal to fictional reports of modern-day whalers who survive such ordeals. God controls all his creatures, and if he so desired, Jonah could have been swallowed and come out healthy. In response to the second objection, we must admit that we know precious little about Assyria in the first half of the eighth century BC. What we do know is that central Assyrian authority was weak. Indeed, we should entertain the possibility that the "king of Nineveh" (Jon. 3:6) was a strong local leader and not the king of a vast empire, therefore making it unsurprising that we have no other record of the Ninevites' repentance.

Even so, besides the reference to Jonah and Nineveh, the world of the book is presented in an intentionally vague way. For instance, the Assyrian king is not named. Further, the book is a literary tour de force. It is highly stylized. Indeed, the argument might be made that it is told in a way that would particularly appeal to children. Note, for example, how everything is "big"—the city of Nineveh, the wind and storm, the fish. The message of the story is a moral, theological lesson and is not tied to a specific redemptive history.

THE CITY OF NINEVEH


N
ASSYRIA
Nineveh
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MEDITERRANEAN SEA
INTERNATIONAL HIGHWAY
KING'S HIGHWAY
EGYPT
RED SEA
PERSIAN GULF
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OUTLINE

I. Act I: Jonah Flees from Nineveh (1:1–2:10)
  A. Jonah aboard the ship (1:1–16)
  B. Jonah aboard the fish (1:17–2:10)

II. Act II: Jonah Goes to Nineveh (3:1–4:11)
  A. Jonah preaches to Nineveh (3:1–10)
  B. Jonah preaches to God (4:1–11)

STRUCTURE

The book may be divided into two major acts with two scenes each. God commissions the prophet twice, once in 1:1–2 and a second time in 3:1–2. These passages introduce the two acts. In the first act, the first scene is aboard the ship, and the second is in the belly of the big fish. The second act is also divided into two episodes. In the first, Jonah preaches and Nineveh repents; in the second, the setting is now east of Nineveh, where Jonah is in a dispute with God over judgment and salvation.

THEOLOGICAL MESSAGE

One of the interesting features of Jonah is the way it contrasts Gentiles and Jonah, who apparently functions as a representation of Israel. While Jonah resists the will of God, the Gentiles appear spiritually sensitive. While Jonah sleeps during the divinely sent storm, the pagan sailors anxiously determine the divine purpose behind their trouble. While Jonah refuses and then reluctantly announces the destruction of Nineveh, the king of Nineveh leads his people (and even the animals!) in a ritual of repentance.

In this way, the book rebukes Jonah (and Israel) for its lack of spiritual sensitivity and concern. The book also illustrates God's grace toward the nations. After all, Israel's election was to be a conduit of blessing to the nations (Gen. 12:1–3; cf. Isa. 42:6; 49:6). Although Assyria was a horrible oppressor, God's grace is shown to such people.

In a word, the book of Jonah teaches that God is not just the God of Israel. He is the God of Israel, the God of Nineveh, and the God of the whole universe.

NEW TESTAMENT CONNECTIONS

In its concern for Gentiles, the book of Jonah anticipates the NT message that God is the God of all people and not just Israel (John 1:6–14). Jesus compared his ministry to that of Jonah (Matt. 12:38–45; Luke 11:24–32). When asked for a miraculous sign, he said that he would be three days and three nights in the earth, just as Jonah spent three days in the belly of the big fish. The three days and nights refer to his crucifixion and his resurrection. He is "greater than Jonah" (Matt. 12:41). Jonah was a reluctant prophet who involuntarily spent the time in the fish's belly, while Jesus voluntarily gave up his life to save many people.

JONAM, JONAN The son of Eliakim and the father of Joseph, he is an otherwise unknown ancestor of Jesus mentioned only in Luke 3:30 (with the noted spelling variation in different manuscripts) as a descendant of David through Nathan.

JONAS *See* Jona; Jonah.

JONATHAN **(1)** A priest who served the idolatrous shrine at Dan. According to the best textual traditions, he was a descendant of Moses, though the MT changes "Moses" to "Manasseh" out of embarrassment at the association (Judg. 18:30).

(2) The oldest son of Saul, the first king of Israel. As such, he would have been heir to the throne, but his father's actions compromised the dynasty (1 Sam. 13:13–14). Jonathan's great integrity throws into contrast his father's meanness, particularly in regard to David. Jonathan's military skill and bravery were notable. He led his father's army in victory against the Philistine garrison at Geba (1 Sam. 13:1–7). Even though he was a loyal son, his paranoid father treated him poorly and even suspected him of collaborating with his enemy David (1 Sam. 20:30–33).

Although David and Jonathan were fast friends, they did not conspire against Saul, so Jonathan helped David escape his father's murderous plans. Indeed, Jonathan expressed his deep love for David by handing over to him his robe, tunic, sword, bow, and belt, a gift that may even have indicated his belief that David, not he, should be the next king (1 Sam. 18:4). Even so, Jonathan stayed with his father until the end. Jonathan died at his father's side as they fought the Philistines at Mount Gilboa (1 Sam. 31:1–3). David deeply mourned the loss of his dear friend, whose love was "more wonderful than that of women" (2 Sam. 1:26).

(3) The son of Abiathar, who was high priest at the time of David. Jonathan functioned as a spy for David during the rebellion of Absalom (2 Sam. 15:27, 36; 17:17, 20). He and his father sided with the Adonijah faction, so when Solomon became king, they were disenfranchised from the high priesthood in favor of Zadok (1 Kings 1:42–45).

(4) A nephew of David who killed an unnamed but fearsome Philistine warrior (2 Sam. 21:21; 1 Chron. 20:7). **(5)** One of David's thirty mighty warriors (2 Sam. 23:32; 1 Chron. 11:34). **(6)** From the tribe of Judah, he was a descendant of Jerahmeel (1 Chron. 2:32–33). **(7)** The son of Uzziah, he was an official during David's reign in charge of "storehouses in the outlying districts, in the towns, the villages and the watchtowers" (1 Chron. 27:25 [KJV: "Jehonathan"]). **(8)** David's uncle, known as "a counselor, a man of insight and a scribe" (1 Chron. 27:32). **(9)** The father of Ebed, a family head who came to Jerusalem with Ezra (Ezra 8:6).

(10) The son of Asahel, he was one of four men who opposed Ezra's mandate for men to separate from their foreign wives (Ezra 10:15). **(11)** A (high?) priest in the period after the exile (Neh. 12:11). **(12)** The head of a priestly family in the period after the exile (Neh. 12:14). **(13)** The father of Zechariah, a musician when the wall of Jerusalem was dedicated during the time of Nehemiah (Neh. 12:35). **(14)** A secretary during the administration of Zedekiah in whose home Jeremiah was imprisoned (Jer. 37:15, 20). **(15)** A son of Kareah who, with Johanan his brother, swore allegiance to Gedaliah, the governor of Judah appointed by Babylon and supported by Jeremiah (Jer. 40:8).

JONATH-ELEM-RECHOKIM *See* Dove on Distant Oaks.

JOPPA A seaport along the Mediterranean coast just south of the modern city of Tel Aviv that served the Israelites and others during the periods covered by both Testaments. As with most of the ports located along the Mediterranean south of Mount Carmel, Joppa (or Jaffa) offered only a relatively small place to harbor boats. The anchorage was formed by a series of large rocks that create a breakwater at the foot of a promontory that juts out into the Mediterranean. Despite its small size, the harbor at Joppa was the most important port in the region until Herod the Great completed Caesarea Maritima, around 10 BC, approximately thirty miles farther north.

Joppa's importance is reflected in ancient historical sources, including the Bible. Egyptian and Assyrian texts describe the city's conquest in the fifteenth and eighth centuries BC respectively. Joppa was located within the tribal allotment of Dan (Josh. 19:46) but probably did not come under Israelite control at least until the conquests of David. David's son Solomon used Joppa to import materials from Phoenicia for the temple (2 Chron. 2:16); Jonah (1:3) boarded a ship at Joppa apparently heading to the western Mediterranean; the returnees from exile imported building materials through Joppa to rebuild the temple (Ezra 3:7)—all indicating the port's continued importance from the time of the united monarchy through the postexilic periods. The Greeks colonized Joppa in the intertestamental period, and the Hasmoneans recaptured the port for the Jews in the second century BC.

The NT contains several references to Joppa (all in Acts), even after Caesarea had been completed and began to serve as the region's primary port. The early Christian community was present in Joppa, as indicated by the stories of Peter raising Tabitha from the dead (Acts 9:36–43) and of Peter's vision at the home of Simon the tanner in Joppa that led him to preach to Cornelius the centurion at Caesarea (Acts 10:1–11:18).

Joppa was destroyed during the revolt against Rome in the first century AD, but it continued as a port city under various governments, including Roman, Arab, Crusader, French, Turkish, and British.

The British built a railway between Joppa and Jerusalem in 1892, the first in Palestine, to serve the tourists and pilgrims traveling to the Holy Land via Joppa.

Archaeological excavations at Joppa have yielded at least seven occupational levels, dating from the seventeenth century BC to the first century AD. Opportunities to excavate are limited by continued habitation at the site. Today Joppa forms a sort of historic, artistic suburb of Tel Aviv, and the port continues to service small boats.

JORAH The head of a clan that was part of the early return to Judah from Babylonian captivity sometime after 539 but before 520 BC (Ezra 2:18).

JORAI A leader from the tribe of Gad (1 Chron. 5:13).

JORAM **(1)** King of Israel (r. 851–842 BC), Ahab and Jezebel's son (2 Kings 3:1–3). His reign was troubled by the rebellion of Moab and Syria, two of his father's vassal states. He was killed, along with Ahaziah king of Judah (r. 843–842 BC), in Jehu's purge of the Omride dynasty (2 Kings 9:14–29). **(2)** The son of Tou (or Toi), king of Hamath during David's reign in Jerusalem (2 Sam. 8:9–12). In the parallel account, 1 Chron. 18:9–10, he is called "Hadoram" (*see also* Hadoram). **(3)** One of the Levites in charge of the temple treasury (1 Chron. 26:25).

JORDAN RIVER The Jordan River flows over one hundred miles and is the most important source of water for both Israel and Jordan today, as it was in biblical times. Scholars are divided over what the name means: some suggest it comes from the Hebrew root *yrd* ("to go down") or from a combination of "Jor" (meaning "river") and "Dan" the tribe; or perhaps it simply means "river." Initially it was the dividing line between western Israel (Cisjordan) and the area of the eastern tribes (Transjordan).

The Jordan River begins at the base of Mount Hermon and descends about 2,380 feet to the Dead Sea. While the distance from the Sea of Galilee to the Dead Sea is a little over seventy miles, the meandering path of the river measures longer than that distance. It has four different sources: the Hasbani and the Iyon (from Lebanon), and the Banias and the Dan (from the base of Mount Hermon). These merge and flow through the Great Rift Valley to empty into the Dead Sea. Initially the river is fast moving and falls to about seven hundred feet above sea level in twenty-five miles into the marshy area known as the Hulah Basin. After exiting the Hulah Basin, it drops to just under sea level in the Sea of Galilee in about eight miles. It then exits the Sea of Galilee and drops about six hundred feet as it meanders gradually through the Jordan Valley to empty into the Dead Sea about 150 feet below sea level. The depth of the Dead Sea reaches to about 1,378 feet below sea level, which makes it the deepest hypersaline lake in the world. Because this lake has no outlet, it has become a major source of salt and other minerals that remain after the water evaporates. The Dead Sea is the second saltiest lake in the world, with about 31 percent salt as well as high levels of potash, bromine, and magnesium.

Much wildlife can be found in and along the river. Of the thirty species of fish, sixteen are unique to it. Similarly, of the forty-five species of birds, twenty-three are found only here. The Jordan River has two major tributaries, the Yarmuk River and the Jabbok River, flowing from the Jordan highlands. For the last several years the water level of the Jordan has continued to decline for two reasons: lack of rainfall and human consumption (70 to 90 percent of its water is used by humans). Water rights have become a major source of contention between Lebanon, Syria, Israel, and the

Palestinians. In 2007 the Jordan River was placed on a list of the one hundred most endangered rivers by an environmentalist group, the Friends of the Earth.

The Jordan River is referred to 197 times in the Bible, but few passages describe it. Genesis 13:10 mentions that the Jordan Valley was well watered and luxuriant. Most of the time it is mentioned as a crossing point (e.g., Gen. 32:10; Josh. 3:15–17; 2 Kings 2:8, 14) or as a demarcation or boundary between areas (e.g., Num. 34:15; Josh. 13:7; Judg. 7:24). Jephthah killed many Ephraimites at a major ford of the Jordan opposite Jericho (see Judg. 12:5–6). Elijah told Naaman to go wash in the Jordan River and he would be cleansed (2 Kings 5:14). In the NT, Jesus and others were baptized by John in the Jordan River (Matt. 3:13).

The present-day Jordan River

JORIM An otherwise unknown ancestor of Jesus mentioned only in Luke 3:29 as the son of Matthat and the father of Eliezer.

JORKEAM The son of Raham, a descendant of Caleb (1 Chron. 2:44 [KJV: "Jorkoam"]). The text can also be understood as "Jorkeam founded by Raham," in which case it is the name of a town of Judah, possibly a variant of "Jokdeam" (Josh. 15:56).

JORKOAM *See* Jorkeam.

JOSABAD *See* Jozabad.

JOSAPHAT *See* Jehoshaphat.

JOSE *See* Joshua.

JOSECH *See* Josek.

JOSEDECH *See* Jozadak.

JOSEK An otherwise unknown postexilic ancestor of Jesus mentioned only in Luke 3:26 as the son of Joda and the father of Semein.

JOSEPH **(1)** The eleventh son of Judah and the first by Jacob's beloved wife, Rachel (Gen. 30:24; 35:24). The name comes from a Hebrew verb meaning "to add," and the significance of his name is explained in Gen. 30:24: "May the LORD add to me another son." His story begins in Gen. 37 and continues to Gen. 50, the end of the book.

Joseph was Jacob's favorite, and so Jacob "made an ornate robe for him" (37:3), although the precise meaning of the Hebrew is unclear. While shepherding with his brothers, Joseph had a dream indicating that he would one day rise to prominence over them. This was too much for his brothers to bear, and so they decided, after some deliberation, to throw him into a cistern and, rather than kill him, sell him to passing Ishmaelite/Midianite merchants (37:25–28).

Upon arriving in Egypt, Joseph was sold to Potiphar, an official of Pharaoh, and then thrown in jail after Potiphar's wife falsely accused him of making sexual advances (chap. 39). While in jail, he accurately interpreted the dreams of Pharaoh's cupbearer and baker (chap. 40). Two years later, he was called upon to interpret Pharaoh's dreams (chap. 41). Joseph's ability to interpret dreams plus his administrative skills saved Egypt from famine, which resulted in his elevation to being "in charge of the whole land of Egypt" (41:41).

It was the famine that brought Joseph's family to Egypt to find food, which eventually led to their warm reunion, though not without some testing on Joseph's part (chaps. 42–45). After Joseph made himself known to his brothers, they reconciled and sent for the elderly Jacob, who was awaiting news in Canaan. Thus, Jacob and his twelve sons lived in Egypt, and their descendants were eventually enslaved by a king "to whom Joseph meant nothing" (Exod. 1:8).

Joseph died in Egypt and was embalmed (Gen. 50:20–26). The exodus generation took his bones out of Egypt (Exod. 13:19), and he was later buried in Shechem (Josh. 24:32).

Although Joseph was a son of Jacob, his descendants did not become one of the twelve tribes of Israel. Instead, Jacob blessed Joseph's two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, and he blessed the younger Ephraim over the older Manasseh just as Jacob himself had been blessed over his older brother Esau. The OT still refers occasionally to the house or tribe of Joseph as a general designation for Israel (e.g., Pss. 80:1; 81:5).

(2) The husband of Mary, mentioned only by name in Jesus' birth stories in Matthew and Luke. According to Matt. 1:16, Joseph is a descendant of David, which establishes Jesus' royal bloodline. Luke's genealogy (3:23–38) downplays Jesus' relationship to Joseph. In Matthew, Joseph is a recipient of several divine communications by means of dreams, announcing Mary's conception (1:18–25) and commanding the flight to Egypt (2:13) and the return to Nazareth (2:19–23). In Luke, Joseph takes Mary to Bethlehem to give birth (2:4–7), presents Jesus in the temple for consecration (2:21–24), and brings Mary and Jesus to Jerusalem for the Passover feast when Jesus is twelve (2:41–52).

(3) The second brother to Jesus, after James (Matt. 13:55; Mark 6:3). In some manuscripts, the name appears as "Joses" (so KJV). **(4)** The son of one of the women who witnessed the crucifixion, Mary the mother of James the younger and Joseph (Matt. 27:56; Mark 15:40; cf. 15:47; KJV: "Joses"). John 19:25 may refer to this same woman as Mary the wife of Clopas and the sister of Mary the mother of Jesus. If this is the case (the Greek is ambiguous), then this Joseph could be a cousin to Jesus.

(5) A Jew from Arimathea, a secret follower of Jesus and member of the Sanhedrin who did not agree to put Jesus to death (Luke 23:50–51; John 19:38). He asked Pilate for Jesus' body, wrapped it in linen, and placed it in his own tomb (Matt. 27:57–60). **(6)** Also known as Barsabbas or Justus, he was one of the two men proposed to take Judas Iscariot's place among the disciples (Acts 1:23). **(7)** Also known as Barnabas, he was a Levite from Cyprus who sold his field and brought the money to the apostles (Acts 4:36).

JOSEPHUS Flavius Josephus was a Jewish historian in the late first century AD (AD 37–c. 100). His writings remain some of the most important extant sources for studying ancient Judea around the time of Jesus. Although scholars question the accuracy of much of his writings, they constitute an invaluable resource. His four extant writings are *Jewish War*, *Jewish Antiquities*, *The Life* (his autobiography), and *Against Apion*.

In keeping with fairly standard rhetorical conventions for self-presentation, Josephus makes many grand claims for himself. Regardless, it seems clear that he came from an aristocratic family, received a good education, and knew a great deal about contemporary Jewish intellectual and sectarian culture. He also had some role among the leadership of the Jewish revolt against Rome toward the end of the first century AD. He was captured by Vespasian's troops, at which point he prophesied the ascent of Vespasian to the emperorship. When Vespasian did become emperor, and later his son Titus, they became patrons of Josephus. Josephus's prophecy served their, and the rest of the Flavian family's, ideological claims to legitimacy. They constructed their legitimacy around their claim to the authority and prestige of the East and its ancient cultures.

Josephus wrote all four of his extant works while under the patronage of the Flavians in Rome. In these writings he represents the Jewish people and Judaism as most commendable to educated Gentiles. He particularly casts Judaism within contemporary intellectual-philosophical sensitivities as the premier path to moral advancement and the happy life.

Josephus mentions Jesus in *Ant.* 18.3.3. Later Christian scribes transmitting this writing embellished the passage. It therefore is unknown precisely what Josephus wrote about Jesus. Josephus also recounts the execution of James the brother of Jesus in *Ant.* 20.9.1.

JOSES **(1)** A variation of the name "Joseph" in Mark 6:3 and Matt. 13:55, referring to the second brother to Jesus, after James. **(2)** A variation of the name "Joseph" in Mark 15:40 and Matt. 27:56 (cf. Mark 15:47), referring to the son of Mary, mother of James and Joseph, who witnessed the crucifixion. *See also* Joseph.

JOSHAH A leader of a clan in the tribe of Simeon during the time of Hezekiah (1 Chron. 4:34).

JOSHAPHAT **(1)** The Mithnite, he was one of David's thirty mighty warriors (1 Chron. 11:43). **(2)** One of the priests who blew trumpets in the celebration of the ark of the covenant coming into Jerusalem (1 Chron. 15:24).

JOSHAVIAH One of the two sons of Elnaam, he was one of David's thirty mighty warriors (1 Chron. 11:46).

JOSHBEKASHAH One of the sons of Heman, David's seer. Heman had fourteen sons and three daughters because of God's promises. Joshbekashah was one of the men commissioned by David for ministry as a prophet (1 Chron. 25:1–8).

JOSHEB-BASSHEBETH *See* Jashobeam.

JOSHIBIAH The father of Jehu and the son of Seraiah of the tribe of Simeon (1 Chron. 4:35).

JOSHUA **(1)** The son of Nun and the servant of Moses. Joshua appears thirty-three times in Exodus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, and Judges. He is the principal human character of the OT book that bears his name.

As a military commander, Joshua fought against the Amalekites (Exod. 17:8–13). He became an assistant to Moses and accompanied him up and then down the mountain of God (24:13; 32:17). Joshua also kept watch over the tent of meeting (33:11).

Moses sent Joshua, Caleb, and ten others as spies to explore the land of Canaan (Num. 13). At this point, Moses also changed his name from "Hoshea" to "Joshua" (13:8, 16). Because Joshua and Caleb trusted that God would help Israel conquer Canaan, God vowed that only these two of that rebellious generation would enter the promised land (14:30). God also commanded Moses to commission Joshua as his successor. So in the presence of all Israel Moses laid his hands upon Joshua and set him apart for the task (27:15–23).

God commanded Moses to strengthen and encourage Joshua (Deut. 1:38; 3:28). Later, Moses charged Joshua with the specific task of bringing the people into the promised land (31:7, 23). Since Moses had laid his hands upon him, and he was filled with the spirit of wisdom, the children of Israel agreed to obey Joshua (34:9).

Joshua's character as a leader is demonstrated throughout the book that bears his name. Among other things, Joshua served as a brilliant military leader (Josh. 1–12), an administrator (Josh. 13–21), and a religious leader (Josh. 24). He led the Israelites across the Jordan and presided at the allotment of land. In all of this, Joshua was "strong and courageous" (1:6), just as God and the people encouraged him to be (1:6–7, 9, 18). At the end of his life he was called, like Moses, "the servant of the LORD" (24:29). The people served God throughout the lifetime of Joshua (Judg. 2:7).

(2) The owner of the field in Beth Shemesh where the ark stopped after it returned from the Philistines (1 Sam. 6:14).

(3) The governor of Jerusalem during Josiah's reign (2 Kings 23:8).

(4) A high priest and one of the leaders of Israel who survived the Babylonian captivity and was permitted by an edict of Cyrus to return to Jerusalem (Ezra 2:2; Neh. 7:7). He was a contemporary of Haggai and Zechariah. In many Bible versions, he is referred to as "Jeshua son of Jozadak" in Ezra and Nehemiah (e.g., Ezra 3:2; Neh. 12:26) and "Joshua son of Jehozadak" in Haggai and Zechariah (e.g., Hag. 1:1; Zech. 6:11) (the NIV standardizes his name to "Joshua son of Jozadak" throughout).

Together with Zerubbabel, Joshua helped to restore worship for the returned exiles (Ezra 3:2) and with the sometimes hazardous work of rebuilding the temple (Ezra 3:8–9; 4:3; 5:2). The high priests descended from him are listed in Neh. 12:10, but other descendants are named as guilty of intermarriage with foreign wives (Ezra 10:18). In the book of Zechariah he is the subject of two visions where he serves as a representative of Israel (Zech. 3:1–10) and as a type of Christ (6:9–15).

(5) An ancestor of Jesus in Luke's genealogy (Luke 3:29).

JOSHUA, BOOK OF Deuteronomy ends with the death of Moses and the people of Israel still on the plains of Moab, to the east of the promised land. Although that book completes the Torah, it anticipates the future, and that future begins with the book of Joshua. Joshua tells the story of the conquest and settlement of the land.

DATE AND AUTHOR

Joshua is an anonymous book. The Talmud represents early tradition when it says that Joshua wrote this book, but this is improbable, at least regarding the final form of the book. The phrase "to this day," repeated in the book (e.g., 4:9; 5:9; 6:25), indicates that time separates the events and the book's final composition. Some scholars detect a final editing of the material during the period of Judah's exile in Babylon (586–539 BC), where the people of God are evaluated according to the laws of Deuteronomy. However, since the book is silent about its authorship, much of this is guesswork.

GENRE

The book is a theological history of the conquest and settlement. It intends to tell later generations how God brought Israel into possession of the land by his powerful hand in fulfillment of the Abrahamic covenant (cf. Gen. 12:1–3). Joshua celebrates this victory, so the selection of stories and the book's emphasis involve the victories and achievements of the period. Although Joshua does not hide the fact that Israel did not conquer the entire land at this time, it will be left to the first chapters of Judges to underline the fact that many Canaanites remained in the land even after Joshua's death.

Battle scene from a Hittite orthostat (an upright stone; Tell Halaf, ninth century BC). The book of Joshua describes the battles that took place as the Israelites conquered the promised land.

OUTLINE AND MESSAGE

The book of Joshua can be divided into two parts:

I. God, the Divine Warrior, Conquers the Land (1:1–12:24)
    A. Preparations for war (1:1–5:15)
    B. The battle of Jericho (6:1–27)
    C. The battle of Ai (7:1–8:29)

- D. Covenant renewal at Shechem (8:30–35)
- E. The Gibeonite deception (9:1–27)
- F. The defeat of the southern coalition (10:1–43)
- G. The defeat of the northern coalition (11:1–23)
- H. Summary description of the conquest (12:1–24)

II. God Distributes the Land among the Tribes of Israel (13:1–24:33)

- A. The distribution of land (13:1–21:45)
- B. The Transjordan tribes return home (22:1–34)
- C. Joshua's final words and covenant renewal (23:1–24:33)

In the Torah, God revealed himself as a warrior who rescues his people from their enemies (Exod. 15:3). He even gave them laws governing future wars (Deut. 7; 20). Today, these wars are often referred to as "holy wars" or "Yahweh wars," indicating that Israel understood that its victories were due not to its own strength and wisdom, but rather to God's presence with it. Certainly Israel participated in these battles, but it followed God's instructions. When Israel obeyed, it won (Jericho), but when it disobeyed, it lost (Ai).

The book of Joshua narrates that at God's command, the Israelites, under Joshua's leadership, entered the promised land at its midpoint from the east, just north of the Dead Sea. After undergoing a period of spiritual preparation (1:1–5:12), they defeated the powerful city of Jericho and, after a devastating setback, the small town of Ai. After falling for a ruse, they entered into a treaty relationship with the Gibeonites. This completed their conquest of the middle territory, thus cutting the Canaanite city-states in half.

Then the kings of the independent city-states of the southern portion of the land gathered together and attacked the Gibeonites, now in treaty relationship with Israel. Joshua responded by attacking the armies of the south now outside their walled cities. God the warrior gave them the victory, making his presence known through lethal hailstones and by stopping the sun and the moon in their tracks. Consequently, the kings of the north assembled together, and again God fought for Israel to complete the conquest of the land. Throughout the narrative of the conquest, the emphasis continues to be on God the warrior, the one true power behind Israel's military victories.

Few modern readers venture into the second part of the book (chaps. 13–24), filled as it is with lists of cities and descriptions of tribal boundaries. Nonetheless, this material has great theological significance. As Israel took possession of the land, the ancient promises to Abraham were beginning to come to realization. God's promises were being fulfilled. Through the casting of lots, the individual tribes received their specific inheritance. As their boundaries were rehearsed and the cities in the territories lovingly named, the Abrahamic promises were becoming concrete. We are to imagine great joy and celebration among those who saw the fulfillment of the promises.

The book of Joshua ends with yet another great covenant reaffirmation (chap. 24). With the impending death of their great leader Joshua in sight, the tribes renewed their commitment to follow Yahweh into the new era.

CONTINUING SIGNIFICANCE

In many ways, the book of Joshua appears foreign, even embarrassing to the modern Christian. The description of God as a warrior and Israel as engaging in holy war against the Canaanites seems too close to divinely sanctioned genocide to be compared to the gospel of peace.

But the NT understands that God's people are still at war, indeed a much more dangerous war. It is a war against the spiritual powers and authority, against evil itself. As such, God has given his people more-powerful weapons, spiritual weapons such as faith, love, and the word of God (Eph. 6:10–20). Christians can enter this battle because Jesus Christ has already assured the final outcome by his victory, described in military terms in Col. 2:13–15, on the cross. Indeed, Christians are told to look to the future for the fulfillment of this victory. Revelation and other NT apocalyptic passages describe the end of time as a great final battle, with Jesus Christ leading the army against all spiritual and human enemies (Rev. 19:11–21).

The book of Joshua is harsh, but it is a reminder that the God of the Bible will not let evil win the day. God will judge those who oppress and mistreat others.

JOSIAH The king of Judah (r. 640–609 BC). Although his father (Amon) and grandfather (Manasseh) were evil and worshiped false gods, Josiah "did what was right in the eyes of the LORD and followed completely the ways of his father David, not turning aside to the right or to the left" (2 Kings 22:2). Indeed, according to 2 Kings 21:24–23:30; 2 Chron. 33:25–35:27, no one among the kings of Judah, not even Hezekiah, surpassed Josiah in terms of his piety.

Josiah's name first appears centuries before he was born. First Kings 13:2 records the words of an unnamed prophet who announced that Josiah would destroy the golden calf shrine that Jeroboam I dedicated. This altar was built in the second half of the tenth century BC. The fulfillment of this prophecy is recorded in 2 Kings 23:15–18.

The prophets Jeremiah (Jer. 1:1–4; 22:13–23; 25:3; 36:2) and Zephaniah (Zeph. 1:1) ministered during Josiah's reign and likely supported his religious reforms. The high point of his religious reform took place in his eighteenth year, when he ordered the purification of the temple. Up to that time, the temple had housed idolatrous objects. During the repair, the priest Hilkiah discovered the Book of the Law. The reaction to this book suggests that it was Deuteronomy or a part thereof, which presumably had been suppressed by the previous wicked administrations.

Although he was a good king, Josiah had a sad conclusion to his life. He was killed in 609 BC when he attempted to block the march of Pharaoh Necho up the coast as the latter tried to bolster the Assyrian forces at Carchemish.

JOSIAS The KJV rendering of the name "Josiah" (Gk. *Iōsias*) in the Matthean genealogy of Jesus (Matt. 1:10–11).

JOSIBIAH *See* Joshibiah.

JOSIPHIAH The father of Shelomith, a man from the family of Bani who returned to Judah with Ezra (Ezra 8:10).

JOT *See* Dot.

JOTBAH The hometown of Meshullemeth, daughter of Haruz (2 Kings 21:19). She became the wife of King Manasseh of Judah, and her son Amon succeeded to the throne on his father's death. Widely different opinions have been expressed for Jotbah's location. Some have identified it with Khirbet

Jifat in lower Galilee, in which case Manasseh may have married to strengthen his political ties with the northern kingdom of Israel.

JOTBATHAH An Israelite campsite between Hor Haggidgad and Abronah, documented to help trace the journey of the wilderness generation from Egypt to the promised land (Num. 33:33–34). A further reference suggests that it had a plentiful supply of water, which is appropriate to its name, which means "pleasantness" (Deut. 10:7). A suggested location is Tabeh on the western shore of the Gulf of Aqaba.

JOTHAM **(1)** The youngest son of Gideon (Jerub-Baal). After Gideon's death, Abimelek, who was his son through his concubine from Shechem, sought to gain control of Israel by executing Gideon's seventy other sons and Abimelek's rival heirs. Jotham alone escaped, by hiding. Even as the Shechemites were pronouncing Abimelek king, Jotham emerged atop Mount Gerizim and delivered a message of warning and judgment to the people of Shechem in the form of a parable of trees and a thornbush. His message, though unheeded, was vindicated three years later as God brought judgment on the people of Shechem (Judg. 9:5–57). **(2)** Son of King Azariah (Uzziah) and his successor to the throne of Judah. He reigned sixteen years and did "right in the eyes of the LORD" (2 Kings 15:34). It was during Jotham's reign that Tiglath-pileser III (r. 744–727 BC), king of Babylon, rose to prominence. **(3)** The second of Jahdai's six sons, a Judahite of the clan of Caleb the son of Hezron (1 Chron. 2:47).

JOY Joy is not a prevalent theme in most of the Bible. In fact, the word "joy" is completely missing from many books of the OT and appears only sporadically in many others. The lack of prevalence of this word is understandable, since most of the Bible deals with a world in which the humans are outside the garden of Eden.

Old Testament. The most enthusiastic and concentrated expressions of joy in the OT are found in the context of worship when the people of God find joy in his presence, usually when the community is gathered for various feasts. Thus, words that connote joy are concentrated in Deuteronomy, Chronicles, Ezra-Nehemiah, Isaiah, and especially the Psalter.

As one might expect, people are found rejoicing in the simple joys of life: when meeting a close relative (Exod. 4:14), when their enemies are defeated (1 Sam. 18:6; 2 Chron. 20:27), when a child is born (Jer. 20:15), at the sound of music (Ps. 45:8), and when they hear a good word (Prov. 12:25). Jonah is "exceedingly glad" (ESV; NIV: "very happy") because a plant grew as a shade over his head (Jon. 4:6). The teacher of Ecclesiastes urges his students to rejoice in their youth (Eccles. 11:9), and he considers it a good thing to be joyful (3:12; 8:15). Wine may gladden the heart of humans (Ps. 104:15) and life in general (Eccles. 10:19). More important, men are encouraged both to bring joy to their young wives (Deut. 24:5 [NIV: "happiness"]) and to rejoice in the wife of their youth (Prov. 5:18). For the psalmist, the "teachings" of God are a reason for joy (Pss. 19:8; 119:111).

It is by far more common, however, to find joy and delight in the presence of God, especially when the community is gathered to celebrate various feasts. The psalmist understands quite well that more than wine or a young wife, it is God who brings joy to his servants (Ps. 86:4). Thus, the earliest calls to rejoice are always in the presence of God (Lev. 23:40; Deut. 12:7, 12, 18; 14:26; 16:11; 26:11). Psalm 16:11 is a good example: "You make known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand."

For the prophet Habakkuk, even if the crops fail and there is nothing left to eat, he finds reason for joy in God, the only one who can bring salvation: “Yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will be joyful in God my Savior” (Hab. 3:18). This verse is important because it shows that the people of God must be able to rejoice apart from material blessings, and also because it unites two central reasons for joy in the OT: God and his salvation (Pss. 9:14; 21:1; Isa. 25:9; 61:10). The prophet Zechariah looks forward to a time of great joy when a righteous king will bring salvation to Zion (Zech. 9:9). Finally, real and complete joy can exist only when and where God reigns (1 Chron. 16:31; Ps. 97:1).

New Testament. The time of joy and salvation anticipated by the prophets begins to find fulfillment in the NT. The Gospels interpret the prophecy in Zech. 9:9 as referring to Jesus (Mark 11:9–10; Luke 19:37–38), and there is a strong note of joy already at Jesus’ birth (Matt. 2:10; Luke 1:47; 2:10). Jesus’ life (Luke 10:17; John 3:29) and resurrection also evoke intense joy (Matt. 28:8; Luke 24:52). In the Gospel of John, joy becomes the result of a deep fellowship between Jesus and the church (John 16:22; see also 1 John 1:3–4), and in Acts it marks the life of the early church (Acts 2:46; 8:8; 13:52; 15:3).

Paul uses joy in at least three ways. First, progress in faith of the children of God, particularly those whom Paul has led to Christ, is a great cause for joy (1 Thess. 2:19–20; cf. Phil. 2:2). Second, Paul stresses the paradox that joy may be the outcome of suffering and even sorrow for Christ’s sake (2 Cor. 6:10; Col. 1:24; cf. 1 Pet. 4:13). Thus, Paul’s letter to the Philippians, even though written under circumstances of great suffering, is also the most joyous of all his letters (Phil. 2:2; 3:1; 4:4). Third, joy is a gift of the Holy Spirit (Gal. 5:22), and true believers should be careful in their daily walk with the Lord to avoid “interrupting” this gift.

The last word on joy is appropriately found in the book of Revelation: “Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready” (19:7).

JOZABAD **(1)** A royal official who, with Jehozabad, assassinated King Joash of Judah (2 Kings 12:21). (*See also* Jozacar, Jozachar.) **(2)** From Gederah, he was one of the Benjamite soldiers who joined David at Ziklag (1 Chron. 12:4). **(3)** Two warriors of Manasseh described as leaders of units of a thousand soldiers (1 Chron. 12:20). They defended David against bands of raiders. **(4)** A Levite appointed by King Hezekiah who helped keep tally of the offerings given for the work of the temple (2 Chron. 31:13). **(5)** A leading Levite who donated offerings to King Josiah for the Passover celebration (2 Chron. 35:9). **(6)** A descendant of Pashhur guilty of intermarriage (Ezra 10:22). **(7)** The son of Jeshua, he was a Levite who helped make an inventory of the freewill offerings brought by Ezra from Babylon for the temple (Ezra 8:33). **(8)** A Levite guilty of intermarriage (Ezra 10:23). **(9)** One of the thirteen Levites who helped interpret and teach while Ezra read from the Book of the Law of God to the returned exiles (Neh. 8:7). **(10)** A prominent Levite who helped supervise the rebuilding of the temple after the exile (Neh. 11:16). He may be the same individual as in Neh. 8:7.

JOZACAR, JOZACHAR The name appearing in some Hebrew manuscripts of 2 Kings 12:21, whereas other manuscripts (followed by the NIV) read “Jozabad.” This variant is a result of scribal error (copying a similar but incorrect letter) in one direction or the other.

JOZADAK A priest deported to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar (1 Chron. 6:14–15; Hag. 1:1, 12, 14; 2:2, 4; Zech. 6:11). His father, the high priest Seraiah, was executed by Nebuchadnezzar following the fall of Jerusalem (2 Kings 25:18–21). Nevertheless, Jozadak’s son Joshua (sometimes called

"Jeshua") returned from the Babylonian captivity, became high priest, and played a significant role in the rebuilding of the temple (Ezra 3:2, 8; 5:2; 10:18; Neh. 12:26; Zech. 6:11). Jozadak is also called "Jehozadak" (e.g., Hag. 1:1; Zech. 6:11 ESV, NASB) and in some versions "Josedech" (KJV).

JUBAL One of two sons born to Lamech by his wife Adah (Gen. 4:21). He is referred to as "father of all who play stringed instruments and pipes," which probably designates him both as the instruments' inventor and as the founder of the musical arts.

A musician playing a stringed instrument, on the Standard of Ur (Mesopotamia, 2600 BC). Jubal is considered the inventor of such instruments (Gen. 4:21).

JUBILEE *See* Year of Jubilee.

JUCAL *See* Jehukal.

JUDA *See* Judah.

JUDAEA *See* Judea, Judean.

JUDAH (1) The fourth son of Jacob (Gen. 35:23). The meaning of his name is debated, but his mother, Leah, links it to “praise” (29:35). He persuaded his brothers to sell Joseph instead of killing him (37:26–27). He also guaranteed the safety of Benjamin when the brothers returned to Egypt to purchase food (43:1–10). In spite of his despicable behavior with his daughter-in-law Tamar (Gen. 38), his father’s blessing included the promise of kingship (49:10). **(2)** A Levite and the ancestor of a family that worked on the postexilic temple (Ezra 3:9; cf. 2:40 KJV, ESV, NASB; NIV: “Hodaviah”). **(3)** A Levite among those who married a foreign woman (Ezra 10:23). **(4)** The son of Hassenuah, he was in charge of the second district in postexilic Jerusalem (Neh. 11:9). **(5)** A Levite who had returned from the exile with Zerubbabel and was in charge of the songs of thanksgiving (Neh. 12:8). **(6)** An official of Judah who participated in the dedication of the walls of Jerusalem (Neh. 12:34). **(7)** A musician and priest who participated in the dedication of the walls of Jerusalem (Neh. 12:36). **(8)** An ancestor of Jesus (Luke 3:30). *See also* Judah, Kingdom of; Judah, Tribe of.

JUDAH, KINGDOM OF Also known as the southern kingdom, the kingdom of Judah began when the northern tribes of Israel seceded from David’s kingdom due to the continuation of Solomon’s economic policies by his son Rehoboam. It is perhaps even more accurate to date the beginning of the kingdom to David’s rise to the throne after the death of Saul, but prior to David’s consolidation of all the Israelite tribes into the kingdom when he captured the Jebusite city of Jerusalem. The main historical sources for the kingdom of Judah are 1–2 Samuel, 1–2 Kings, and 1–2 Chronicles.

The Bible offers two different descriptions of Judah. The first is the theological story of Judah, with its Davidic line of kings, who are judged on the basis of their faithfulness to God. The second is the political and economic history of Judah, which describes a small, isolated city-state with little political influence and an economy largely dependent on the whims of its neighbors.

In the tenth and ninth centuries BC, Judah was marked by its ongoing conflicts with Israel to its north. In the eighth century BC, Israel’s Omride dynasty exerted considerable influence on Judah, to the extent that around 845 BC Athaliah, daughter of Israel’s King Ahab, became the disputed queen of Judah. With the rise of the Assyrian Empire in the late eighth century BC, Israel was destroyed (resulting in a large influx of refugees from the north), and Judah became little more than a vassal state of Assyria,with large tributes due the Assyrians. Soon afterward, King Hezekiah revolted against the Assyrians. This brought major repercussions against Judah, including the destruction of the Lachish fortress and the decimation of most of the population outside Jerusalem, but the kingdom was still left intact (by keeping a king on the throne).

As the Assyrian Empire succumbed to the rising power of the Babylonians, Josiah was able, for a short time, to initiate a reformation in Judah, extending his political power and the boundaries of Judah over much of the land of the former kingdom of Israel. For reasons that are not clear, Josiah attempted to stop an advancing Egyptian army from joining the Assyrians in a bid to defeat the Babylonians, and as a result the Egyptians gained control of the kingdom of Judah. The Egyptians appointed Jehoiakim king, and he remained faithful to Egypt despite Egypt’s defeat by the Babylonians. Jehoiakim revolted against the Babylonians, believing that the Egyptians would come to his rescue. The Babylonians came, but the Egyptians did not, and as a result the Babylonians destroyed the city of Jerusalem in 586 BC.

The destruction of Jerusalem effectively ended the kingdom of Judah, which became a province of Babylon. After the Persians defeated the Babylonians, Judah became the Persian province of Yehud and remained so for another two hundred years.

JUDAH, TRIBE OF Descendants of Judah, the fourth son of Jacob. The tribe of Judah had special prominence throughout the OT and was often a political and military leader among the tribes. Joshua 15 describes the geographic territory of the tribe as the land between the Dead Sea and the Mediterranean Sea, with a northern border roughly a straight line from the northernmost point of the Dead Sea directly west to the Mediterranean Sea. The southern border similarly was roughly a straight line from the southernmost point of the Dead Sea west to the Mediterranean Sea. In 2 Kings 23:8, Judah is described as encompassing the area from Geba (about eight miles north of Jerusalem) to Beersheba (about forty miles south of Jerusalem). As a premonarchical tribe, Judah never realized its borders but rather occupied the hill country in the eastern part of the described area. The Philistines controlled the coastal plains areas and hampered Judah's expansion. They were not subdued until the time of David.

The independent political nature of the tribe is highlighted in the fact that the Song of Deborah (Judg. 5) lists Benjamin (the tribe directly north of Judah) as the southernmost point in Israel. Furthermore, Saul never consolidated his authority over the tribe of Judah during his reign. Contributing to this independent nature was the hilly geography of the area, which naturally isolated it from the rest of Israel. The tribe of Judah has a relatively short history because even before the time of David's consolidation of the tribes, the distinction between the tribe of Judah and the area that would later become the kingdom of Judah was beginning to be blurred. This was further exacerbated with the revolt of Absalom, which further divided the kingdom ideologically between the northern tribes and Judah. Finally, with the death of Solomon, the tribe's distinction was essentially lost, as the new kingdom of Judah—which encompassed the tribal areas of Judah along with much of Benjamin, Simeon, parts of the old Jebusite kingdom (including Jerusalem), and some of the Philistine kingdom—was formed.

JUDAISM The ethnic practices of Judeans ("Jews") in relation to their God. The extant writings of ancient Jewish intellectuals often focus these practices around the covenant that God established with Israel and the law that it must keep, which defines Israel as God's people. *See also* Jewish Parties.

JUDAIZERS The term "Judaizer" does not appear in most Bible translations. It arises from the Greek verb *Ioudaizō*, meaning "to live as a Jew" (Gal. 2:14; cf. Esther 8:17 LXX; Josephus, *J.W.* 2.463). Judaizers continued to observe the Jewish practices of circumcision, the food laws, the Sabbath, and the other feasts and festivals alongside their new faith in Jesus as the Messiah. In particular, they believed that salvation was for the Jews, and that anyone who wanted to experience salvation needed to become aligned with all the OT Jewish practices. Many of these people lived in the early years of the church age, when the relationship between OT practices and the newly emerging NT church age was less clear. Paul, more than anyone else, saw the dangers in this movement and rightly condemned even Peter himself when he saw that Peter and others "were not acting in line with the truth of the gospel"; Paul "said to Peter in front of them all, 'You are a Jew, yet you live like a Gentile and not like a Jew. How is it, then, that you force Gentiles to follow Jewish customs?' " (Gal. 2:14). Judaizers suffered a significant defeat at the council of Jerusalem, when James and the Jerusalem church ruled that Gentiles did not have to be circumcised in order to be saved (Acts 15).

JUDAS The name "Judas" (Gk. *Ioudas*) is the Greek equivalent for the Hebrew name "Judah" (*Yehudah*). **(1)** One of Jesus' brothers (Matt. 13:55; Mark 6:3), also known as Jude, author of the letter that bears his name (Jude 1). **(2)** One of the apostles identified as "Judas son of James" (Luke 6:16; Acts 1:13) and "Judas (not Judas Iscariot)" (John 14:22), probably the same person as

Thaddaeus (Matt. 10:3; Mark 3:18). **(3)** A defunct revolutionary identified as "Judas the Galilean" (Acts 5:37), probably the same person as Judas the Galilean from Gamala in Gaulanitis, who led a revolt against Roman taxes in AD 6 (Josephus, *Ant*. 18.4; 20.102; *J.W.* 2.118, 433–34; 7.253). **(4)** A resident of Damascus, known simply as "Judas," who had a house on Straight Street where the blinded Saul stayed (Acts 9:11). **(5)** A leading Jerusalem believer and prophet, "Judas called Barsabbas" (i.e., "son of the Sabbath" or "son of Sabbas"; possibly a relative of "Joseph called Barsabbas" in Acts 1:23). Along with Silas, he was sent with Paul and Barnabas to add verbal testimony to the letter to the Gentile Christians from the apostles and elders after the Jerusalem council (Acts 15:22, 27, 32). **(6)** One of the twelve disciples chosen by Jesus, he betrayed Jesus. *See* Judas Iscariot.

JUDAS ISCARIOT One of the twelve disciples chosen by Jesus (Matt. 10:4). He is identified beforehand as the one who would betray Jesus (Mark 3:19) and is noted as having a devil (John 6:66–71). John further attributes his betrayal of Jesus to Satan (John 13:2, 27), and Luke asserts that before the betrayal Satan entered into Judas (Luke 22:3).

Much has been written about his motive for betraying Jesus, but a simple look at the biblical text reveals Judas's interest in gain. John notes that as the group's treasurer, Judas regularly stole from the money box. His apparent concern for the poor at the anointing of Jesus was in fact self-serving (John 12:1–8). It was for gain that Judas betrayed Jesus to the chief priests. After agreeing to thirty pieces of silver, Judas sought an occasion to betray Jesus, especially when there was no crowd (Matt. 26:14–16; Luke 22:3–5).

At the table on the night before the crucifixion, Jesus predicted his betrayal. After the disciples questioned who the betrayer might be, Jesus pronounced a woe on the betrayer and noted it would have been better if that one had not been born. Jesus identified Judas as the betrayer, though only Judas understood (Matt. 26:21–25; Mark 14:17–21). John makes it clear that none of the other disciples understood the real reason why Judas was leaving the upper room (John 13:28–30).

Since Judas knew that Jesus would later be in the garden of Gethsemane, he led the soldiers and religious leaders there (Luke 22:48). Jesus noted the irony of Judas using a kiss, a sign of friendship, to betray him (Mark 14:43–52).

Subsequently, Judas regretted the betrayal and proclaimed Jesus' innocence to the chief priests. The religious leaders had no concern for his regrets. After casting the money to the floor, Judas left. The leaders thought it unlawful to keep the money, so they bought a field for the burial of strangers. Because the people knew that blood money bought the "potter's field," that field was thereafter called the "Field of Blood." Matthew notes this as fulfillment of prophecy (Matt. 27:9–10). As for Judas, he hanged himself; falling headlong, his body burst open and his intestines gushed out (Matt. 27:3–10; Acts 1:18).

Peter notes that Judas's punishment, death, and abandonment of office were predicted by David in the psalms (Acts 1:15–20). Speaking euphemistically, Peter remarks that Judas went to his own place, no doubt a reference to hell (1:25).

JUDAS MACCABEUS According to the deuterocanonical books 1–2 Maccabees, Judas Maccabeus was the leader of the Jewish revolt against Antiochus IV (Epiphanes), the Seleucid king of Syria, who viciously invaded Jerusalem after his expulsion from Egypt. In his attempt to crush Judaism, Antiochus desecrated the temple by sacrificing to Zeus in it.

Judas, a son of the Hasmonean priest Mattathias, was called "Maccabeus," meaning "hammer," probably due to his prowess in battle. The name later came to describe his compatriots and family. Against all odds, Judas prevailed over Antiochus in 164 BC and then led the cleansing and rededication of the temple on 25 Kislev, celebrated as Hanukkah.

JUDE Jude, whose name is another form of "Judah" or "Judas" (Heb. *Yehuda*; Gk. *Ioudas*), identifies himself as "a servant of Jesus Christ and a brother of James" (Jude 1). Because the author does not elaborate on the identity of this James, many conclude that a well-known individual named "James" must be in mind, one whom the readers would be able to identify easily. Certainly this is James the brother of Jesus and leader of the Jerusalem church (James 1:1; Acts 15:13; Gal. 2:9). This would make Jude the brother of Jesus, named among Jesus' other siblings in Matt. 13:55; Mark 6:3. The brothers of Jesus were never referred to as "apostles" in the early church, which makes sense in light of the fact that Jude both appeals to his authority as a "servant" of Jesus rather than as an "apostle" and implies that he is not among the apostles whose teaching he cites in Jude 17. The NT does not record any more details regarding Jude's life other than what we can infer from the fact that Jesus' brothers did not accept him as the Messiah during his lifetime (John 7:5), and that only after the resurrection did they become followers (Acts 1:14). According to Hegesippus, quoted in Eusebius (*Hist. eccl.* 3.19.1–20.6), two grandsons of Jude were brought before the Roman emperor Domitian and were asked if they were descendants of David. But after finding that they were common farmers who posed no threat to Rome, he released them "as beneath his notice."

JUDE, LETTER OF The Letter of Jude is a model of the Christian approach to those who come preaching another gospel.

OUTLINE

I. Greetings (vv. 1–2)

II. Occasion (vv. 3–4)

III. How to Identify False Teachers (vv. 5–19)

IV. Save Some (vv. 20–23)

V. Glory to the One Who Keeps Us until That Day (vv. 24–25)

AUTHORSHIP

The author identifies himself as "Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ and a brother of James" (v. 1). He was the brother of Jesus and the younger son of Mary and Joseph. Only James the brother of Jesus (Matt. 13:55; Mark 6:3; John 7:5; Acts 1:14) could be unambiguously identified by his first name alone. Both James and Jude call themselves "servants" of Christ (cf. James 1:1), not apostles (cf. Rom. 1:1; Titus 1:1). After leading the church in Jerusalem for over thirty years (cf. Acts 15), James was murdered in AD 62. Paul states that Peter and the brothers of Jesus traveled as missionaries together and were known to the church in Corinth (1 Cor. 9:5). This would most likely include Jude and his family. Acts implies that James never left Jerusalem.

In the third through the fifth centuries AD, some interpreters saw some difficulty in Jude's citation of *1 Enoch*, but the letter was eventually accepted as authentic.

DESTINATION AND PURPOSE

There is no indication of a destination. Our only clue is its association with 2 Peter. If 2 Pet. 3:1 refers to 1 Peter, then Jude's letter may well have been written to the same Jewish Christians living in cities in northern Asia Minor (modern-day Turkey).

Jude says that he started to write a general letter of encouragement but had to write this letter instead due to the urgent situation created by the infiltration of false teachers into these communities. These false teachers denied Jesus Christ and turned God's grace into an excuse to exceed God's boundaries (v. 4). This would be a particularly powerful charge against false teachers who professed a higher law but whose personal lives were scandalous.

Jude identified these false teachers with a long list of deviant individuals from the past, establishing a pattern by which the reader could rightly evaluate them. This was directed to warn believers rather than persuade unbelievers. As such, it appears harsh. However, Jude's passion was to see the believers stand firm, to strengthen the undecided, and to evangelize the false teachers (vv. 22–23). The overall goal was the salvation of all.

OPPONENTS

Amid considerable speculation about the identity of Jude's opponents, there have been few firm conclusions. The main characteristic of these false teachers is their immoral lifestyle and their tendency to turn the free grace of God into an excuse for licentiousness (v. 4). Some have suggested that they were gnostics, since some gnostic groups viewed the physical world as spiritually irrelevant and used this belief as an excuse for immorality and debauchery. But gnosticism as a developed system is not known to exist prior to the second century, and the characteristics that Jude describes were common to other groups as well. Although it is possible that these false teachers were "proto-gnostics" of one sort or another, this proposal must be viewed as tentative, and care should be taken not to (mis)interpret the letter on the basis of such a hypothesis.

MAIN THEMES

Jude clearly asserts the sovereignty of God as a basis for Christian assurance, since it is God who keeps the believer (vv. 1, 24). He speaks in absolute terms of the believer's blamelessness in Christ on judgment day (v. 24). By contrast, those who adhere to another gospel are deviants who violate God's created order. The Christian response is to hold firm to the gospel and reject false teaching vigorously. Jude's defense of the faith is exemplary. He has extensive knowledge of his opponents' literature, myths, and teachings and is able to use this against them. Like Peter, he points his readers back to the eyewitness testimony of the apostles (vv. 3, 17), who predicted such challenges as an ongoing issue for Christians until Jesus returns. He urges believers to work together to maintain right doctrine, behavior, and an attitude of love (vv. 20–21) and to apply the grace of the gospel even to their opponents in hope of their salvation (vv. 22–23). Jude's final words (vv. 24–25) constitute one of the most beautiful and reassuring doxologies of the Bible.

JUDEA, JUDEAN The Hellenized and Latinized version of the name "Judah." The term was used most commonly in the NT as a reference to the Roman province that comprised much of the same territory as the ancient tribe of Judah. A Judean was a person with origins in Judea. This province originated as the result of the Roman conquest of the area after the Maccabean revolt. During Jesus' lifetime, Judea was ruled by the Herodian kings placed in power by the Romans.

JUDGE The Hebrew term *shopet*, often translated “judge,” refers to officials granted various forms of authority over the people. In many instances it is judicial authority employed to arbitrate in legal disputes (e.g., Exod. 2:14; Deut. 17:9, 12; Isa. 3:2). However, the Hebrew word, together with corresponding words in related ancient languages such as Ugaritic and Akkadian, is less restrictive than the English and legitimately refers to those whose function expands beyond the dispensation of justice to those with more full-fledged roles as governors or rulers over the people (e.g., Amos 2:3; Mic. 4:14; and in particular throughout the book of Judges).

In the OT, as the ultimate judge (Gen. 18:25; Isa. 33:22; James 4:12) God delegated the administration of justice to the appointed leader of the people of Israel—initially Moses (Exod. 18:13–16); then, during the monarchy, the ruling king (e.g., 1 Kings 3:16–28); and later, Ezra. However, the task of adjudicating every matter was too onerous for a single leader, and thus a judicial hierarchy was established to alleviate the burden of the ruler (Exod. 18:21–23; cf. Num. 11:16–17; Deut. 1:12–17; 16:18–20; Ezra 7:25). Surprisingly, the rulers (or “judges”) who governed Israel during the period recounted in the book of Judges are almost never shown as passing judgment in disputes (the one exception is Judg. 4:4). Rather, they are generally depicted as overcoming foreign threats (Judg. 2:16).

Although civil courts were available for resolving disputes in NT times, Paul encourages believers to avoid making recourse to them in favor of resolving disputes within the church with the assistance of a member of the church recognized as having sufficient wisdom to adjudicate (1 Cor. 6:1–8).

JUDGES, BOOK OF The book of Joshua celebrates the Israelites’ conquest of the land of Canaan while they were under the leadership of Joshua and the assignment of territory to the various tribes of Israel. The emphasis is on the fulfillment of the Abrahamic covenant and its promise of the land. Joshua ends with a ceremony of reaffirmation of Israel’s commitment to God (Josh. 24). Judges, on the other hand, begins with the acknowledgment that much land still remains to be taken from the Canaanites. As the book continues, the reader recognizes that the next generations did not persevere in their commitment to follow God. Consequently, the period of the judges is well known as a time of great moral, spiritual, and political confusion and failure. Even so, it was also a time when God showed his continuing love toward his people.

AUTHOR AND DATE

The book of Judges is anonymous. Perhaps the accounts of the judges were handed down in oral or written form from the original time period, but indications in the book point to an edition of the book during the early monarchy, perhaps even during David’s reign. The reference to “the captivity of the land” in Judg. 18:30–31 probably should be taken as evidence of a final editing of the book during the exilic period (586–539 BC).

GENRE AND OUTLINE

The book of Judges is theological history. It recounts what actually took place in the past, with an eye to teaching its readers certain lessons about their God and their relationship with him.

The book has the following structure:

I. Prologue: The Incomplete Conquest (1:1–2:5)

II. Cycle of Judges (2:6–16:31)

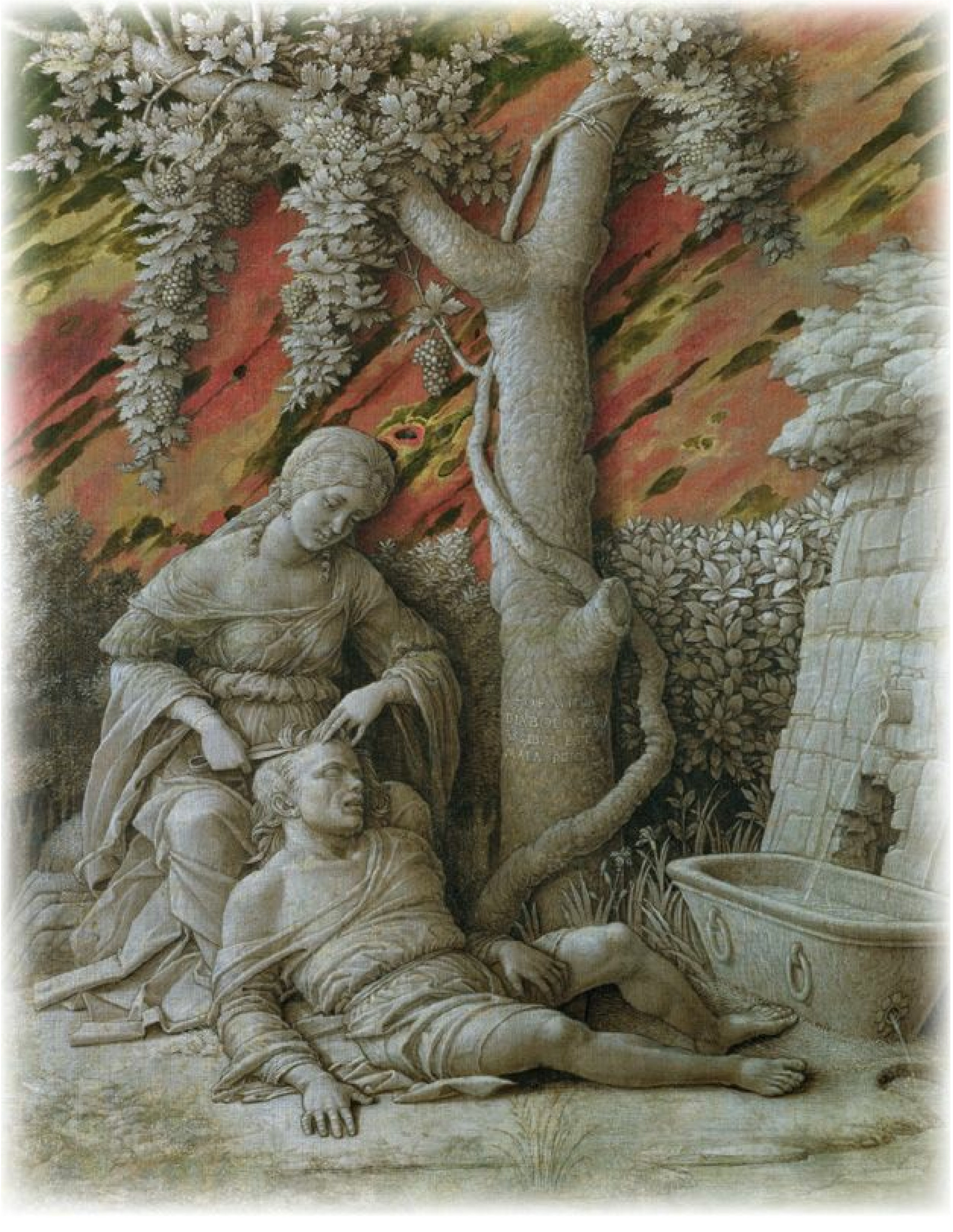
III. Appendix: Two Additional Stories of Israel's Failure (17:1–21:25)

THEOLOGICAL MESSAGE

Judges covers the period between the death of Joshua and the rise of the monarchy in Israel. It was a turbulent period, as the people did not seem to have any center in God. The bulk of the book narrates the stories of judges, mostly military leaders, whom God sent to Israel on those occasions when they turned to him for help (Othniel, Ehud, Shamgar, Deborah, Gideon, Jephthah, and Samson). The book also includes brief mentions of judges who are not associated with violent actions against the enemy (Tola, Jair, Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon [10:1–5; 12:8–15]), as well as the story of an abortive attempt to establish kingship during this time (Abimelek [chap. 9]).

Indeed, the stories of the judges who were deliverers tend to follow a relatively set pattern. They begin with the sin of the people, which leads to their oppression by a foreign power. The suffering of the people shocks them into realizing that they need God, and they turn to him for help. In such instances, God responds by giving the people a judge, really a military leader, who then delivers them from the power of their oppressors. However, after a period of peace, the people sin again, and another oppressor takes control.

The period of the judges was a time of great political fragmentation. The careful reader will note that these judges were not operating throughout Israel, but were more or less local leaders. Furthermore, these leaders were not always paragons of virtue. This is especially true as the book moves from admirable leaders such as Deborah toward the end of the period, when the judge Samson does nothing for God's glory or his people, but rather God uses the actions of his own evil heart to deliver Israel from their enemy the Philistines.



Samson and Delilah by Andrea Mantegna (1495). The story of Samson and Delilah appears in Judges 16:1–22.

The two stories in the appendix of the book of Judges simply add emphasis to the dark picture painted in the body of the book. These are two accounts of family sins that expand into national tragedies. Individuals from the tribe of Levi, the priestly tribe dedicated to special service to God, play a particularly negative role in the appendix.

This phrase "in those days Israel had no king" (17:6; 18:1; 19:1; 21:25) is repeated throughout the appendix of the book and alerts the reader to one of the major themes of the book. Who will be the human leader of the people of God? The imperfect judges and the fragmentary condition of the tribes as well as their sad spiritual state cause the reader to yearn for something better: the rise of divinely appointed kingship in Israel. The books of Samuel and Kings, which follow, narrate the promise and ultimate failure of kingship, which itself will lead to the expectation of something even more, the Messiah.

CONTINUING SIGNIFICANCE

The book of Judges is written not just to record past events but also to serve as a story that warns later generations of God's people. As the people sin, they find their lives becoming more and more difficult. When they repent, God is quick to send them aid. Such stories encourage a life of obedience and repentance, although, as other books point out (Job and Ecclesiastes), obedience does not guarantee a trouble-free life.

The particular sin of the Israelites at this time was their adherence to the beliefs and practices of those whom they were to displace, the Canaanites. The temptation to be like those who are outside the community of faith is still powerful, and Judges can remind even modern believers to resist the urge to conform to a culture hostile to faith.

JUDGING The Bible makes strong distinctions between righteous and sinful judging. God commands his people to exercise fair and impartial judgment, especially to society's poor and helpless (e.g., Exod. 23:1–9; Prov. 31:9; Isa. 1:17), punishing the perversions of favoritism and bribery (Deut. 16:19; Amos 5:12). The NT warns against partiality (James 2:1–9) and judging by outward appearances (John 7:24). Jesus denounces selfish and hypocritical judgment: "Do not judge, or you too will be judged" (Matt. 7:1 [cf. Luke 6:37]). This kind of judging presumes moral superiority over others (Rom. 2:1–5) and reveals an unrepentant heart, blind to its own sinfulness. It criticizes others over spiritually disputable matters ("specks" [see Matt. 7:3–5]), whereas Christian love defers such judgments to God (Rom. 14:1–18). Believers still must confront sin in the church (Matt. 18:15–17; Heb. 3:12–13; James 5:19–20) and the world (2 Cor. 10:5), but they must do so in a humble, gentle spirit (Gal. 6:1) that repents of its own sin before addressing another's (Matt. 7:5).

JUDGMENT

Old Testament. Of several Hebrew words for "judgment," two are important here.

The word *shepet* is used of God, who brings the judgments upon the Egyptians in the plagues (Exod. 6:6; 7:4; 12:12). Ezekiel prophesies God's judgment on Israel and other nations (e.g., Ezek. 5:10; 16:41; 25:11). The word is also applied to human beings, as the Syrians execute judgment on Israel (2 Chron. 24:24).

The most frequent noun is *mishpat*. Abraham is noted for *mishpat*, "judgment/justice" (Gen. 18:19). God by attribute is just (Gen. 18:25); he shows justice toward the orphan and the widow (Deut. 10:18) and brings judgment on behalf of the oppressed (Ps. 25:9). At the waters of Marah, God makes a judgment, an ordinance for the people (Exod. 15:25). Similarly, the *mishpatim,* "judgments/ordinances," become law for life in Israel (Exod. 21:1). In making judicial judgments, the Israelites are to be impartial (Lev. 19:15), and they are to use good judgment and justice in trade (Lev. 19:35; Prov. 16:11). Israel will be judged for rejecting God's judgments (Ezek. 5:7–8) and worshiping false gods (Jer. 1:16). Those accused of crime will come to judgment/trial (Num. 35:12). The children of Israel come to their judges for judgment (Judg. 4:5). God will bring each person to a time of judgment regarding how his or her life is spent (Eccles. 11:9).

New Testament. One key word in the NT is *krisis*. It has a range of meaning similar to *mishpat*. In the NT, judgment is rendered for thoughts and words as well as deeds (Matt. 5:21–22; 12:36). Future, eschatological judgment is a key theme for Jesus (Matt. 10:15; 11:22, 24; 12:42), Paul (2 Thess. 1:5), and other NT writers (Heb. 9:27; 10:27; 2 Pet. 2:9; 3:7; 1 John 4:17; Jude 15; Rev. 14:7). Jesus himself will be the judge (John 5:22). The only way to avoid condemnation is by having eternal life in the Messiah (John 5:24).

Another key word in the NT is *krima*. It may refer to condemnation (Matt. 7:2; Rom. 3:8) or to judgment, again including the eschatological judgment (Acts 24:25). *Krima* is the word most frequently used by Paul. He also often presents judgment as already realized (e.g., Rom. 2:2–3; 5:16). In the later epistles judgment may be realized as well (2 Pet. 2:3; Jude 4). James points out that not many should presume to be teachers, because they will be judged more strictly (James 3:1).

JUDGMENT, HALL OF *See* Justice, Hall of.

JUDGMENT, LAST *See* Judgment Day.

JUDGMENT DAY

JUDGMENT DAY IN THE BIBLE

The book of Revelation concludes with a harrowing vision of final judgment. On that day, when the God of all creation sits on his great white throne and holds court, the dead will rise and answer for their deeds, whether good or bad (20:11–13). The record of each person's conduct appears in books, one of which is the Book of Life (20:12–13). Anyone whose name does not appear in the Book of Life is thrown into the lake of fire (20:15).

The apostle Paul refers to this same event in Acts 17:30–31. All human beings will face their scheduled day in court, as God certified by raising Christ from the dead. It will be a day of wrath, among other things, when God's righteous anger against sin is fully displayed (Rom. 2:5). In the presence of this God, Isaiah proclaimed himself to be ruined because of his sinfulness before the one who is called "Holy, holy, holy" (Isa. 6:1–5). We therefore confess with the author of Hebrews, who says, "It is [and will be] a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Heb. 10:31).

Many other texts of Scripture forecast the same event: judgment day is coming, and nothing can stop it. They also describe this day in equally frightening terms, anticipating fire, darkness, and weeping for some, but everlasting joy and peace for others. Even Christians will be judged on this day, notwithstanding the promise of everlasting life for everyone who believes (e.g., John 3:16; 5:24; Rom. 3:21–24; 8:1–2; 2 Cor. 5:21). In Rom. 14:10–12 Paul says, "For we will all stand before God's judgment seat," at which time, "each of us will give an account of ourselves to God." Similarly, in 2 Cor. 5:10 Paul warns, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one of us may receive what is due us for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad."

JUSTIFICATION AND JUDGMENT

In these texts, an apparent tension exists between the promise of justification, upon which all Christian hope stands, and the certainty of final judgment, including the judgment of believers. It will not do simply to downplay the one or the other, as if the biblical writers had not really intended one or both of them. These texts say what they say, the good news no less plainly than the bad. Yet, closer inspection shows that the tension is merely apparent.

We must first recognize that Scripture treats piety as the evidence of regeneration and saving faith. Jesus says that a “good tree,” which is a genuine disciple, bears good fruit (Matt. 7:17). That is, the observable righteousness of such a disciple will surpass the hypocritical casuistry of the scribes and Pharisees (Matt. 5:20). On judgment day, therefore, no actual conflict will or ever could arise between the general tendency of the believer’s conduct and his or her position in Christ. Over a lifetime, the believer’s habitual behavior will have differed fundamentally, though never satisfactorily, from that of a lost person. As for unrepentant sinners, they will be sentenced to eternal damnation because of their lawlessness (Rom. 3:9–19). Their conduct demonstrates that they have rejected the gospel and are deserving of wrath (Heb. 2:3). This linkage between justification and right conduct accounts for James’s polemical statement: “You see that a person is considered righteous by what they do and not by faith alone” (James 2:24). Abraham’s positional righteousness, secured by faith in what God would do on his behalf, became publicly evident through his obedience (James 2:21–22).

We should also note the different purpose that God has in judging his church. One aspect of it certainly is to grasp the enormity of our sins, so that we might properly acknowledge the depth of his mercy on that day. But also this judgment will occur in order to mete out the differing rewards that Scripture anticipates for the people of God. The definitive text in this regard is 1 Cor. 3:1–17, which connects the believer’s rewards and losses to the quality of his or her behavior within the body of Christ. Some are building on Christ, the sure foundation, using the available materials, and they receive their proper reward. Others build selfishly on themselves, with the result that they are saved, “though only as one escaping through the flames” (1 Cor. 3:15). In both cases, however, the question seems to be one of greater and lesser reward, as opposed to salvation or damnation. Even in hell itself, various degrees of suffering come into play. According to Jesus, one can receive a heavy or light “beating” for disobedience, based on one’s prior knowledge of the master’s will (Luke 12:47–48). Judgment day, therefore, should not frighten Christians. Jesus really did suffer the full measure of God’s wrath against our sin. But this day reminds us that we are accountable for what we do as his disciples, and it motivates the evangelism that we are commanded to practice.

JUDGMENT SEAT A platform (Gk. *bēma*) from which civil officials held session to hear legal cases and render judgments (Acts 18:12; 25:6, 10, 17). Jesus was brought before the judgment seat of Pilate (Matt. 27:19; John 19:13), and Paul before that of Gallio (Acts 18:12). The NT claims that all people will stand for judgment before God (Matt. 16:27; 25:31–46; Rev. 20:11–15). Paul asserts that Christians too will give an account for how they lived and will have their works tested (Rom. 14:10; 2 Cor. 5:10). In Rom 14:10 some Greek manuscripts, probably influenced by 2 Cor. 5:10, read “judgment seat of Christ” (followed by the KJV) rather than “judgment seat of God.”

The remains of the judgment seat (*bēma*) from ancient Corinth

JUDGMENTS OF GOD *See* Divine Retribution; Eschatology; Judgment Day.

JUDITH **(1)** The daughter of Beeri the Hittite, one of the Canaanite wives of Esau who caused trouble for Isaac and Rebekah (Gen. 26:34). **(2)** The Jewish heroine of the book of the OT Apocrypha by the same name. The story tells how she enticed and killed Holofernes, an Assyrian general who besieged her hometown of Bethulia, saving her people.

JUG A vessel made from earthenware or animal skins, used to store and carry grain, water, and other substances. Notable examples of jugs in Scripture include King Saul's water jug, which was stolen by David (1 Sam. 26:11–16), and the widow at Zarephath's oil jug, which upon God's word through Elijah did not run out of oil (1 Kings 17:12–16).

JULIA A Roman Christian to whom Paul sent greetings (Rom. 16:15). She possibly was the wife or sister of Philologus. She may have been associated with the imperial family, as many women from the Julian family were named "Julia"—for example, Caesar Augustus's wife and daughter.

JULIUS A Roman centurion of the Imperial Regiment who was responsible for conveying Paul and other prisoners from Caesarea to Rome (Acts 27:1). Julius played a small but providential role in showing kindness to Paul, arranging for a ship, ignoring Paul's advice not to sail in dangerous conditions, and saving Paul's life by preventing the other soldiers from killing the prisoners when they shipwrecked (Acts 27:3, 6, 11, 42–44).

JUNIA, JUNIAS Paul mentions Junia (along with Andronicus) as “prominent among the apostles” (Rom. 16:7 NRSV). Among contemporary evangelicals, debate surrounds both her name and Paul’s description of her. Some argue that the name is properly “Junias” and thus masculine, or that Paul terms this person as “well known among the apostles.” However, it is likely that the name is “Junia,” a feminine name.

JUNIPER The term translated “juniper” in the KJV (NIV: “broom bush”) refers to a shady, flowering shrub, under which Elijah rested when he fled from Jezebel (1 Kings 19:4–5 KJV). The wood was used for making charcoal fuel (Ps. 120:4; Job 30:4 NIV mg.). The NIV frequently translates “juniper” for the term that appears as “fir” in the KJV (e.g., 1 Kings 5:8; Ps. 104:17; Ezek. 27:5). *See also* Broom Bush, Broom Tree; Fir Tree; Plants.

JUPITER In Roman mythology, Jupiter is the patron deity of the Roman state and the head of the Roman pantheon of gods. Jupiter is the sky god and wielder of thunderbolts. The name “Jupiter” is derived from *deus pater*, meaning “father god.” The *deus* is etymologically equivalent to “Zeus,” and Jupiter is the mythological equivalent of Zeus in the Greek pantheon of gods. Jupiter does not appear in the Bible, but because of the influence of the Latin Vulgate, the ASV uses “Jupiter” in place of “Zeus” in 2 Macc. 6:2; Acts 14:12–13.

JUSHAB-HESED A son of Zerubbabel, a leader of those who returned to Judah at the end of the exile (1 Chron. 3:20).

JUSTICE The concept of justice pervades the Bible, especially, though not exclusively, the OT. The key biblical terms that convey this concept include *mishpat*, *tsedeq*/*tsedaqah*, *yashar* in the OT and the *dik*- word group in the NT (whose noun and verb forms are translated respectively as “righteous” and “justify” or their respective cognates). The biblical concept of justice is an embodiment of two contemporary concepts: righteousness and justice. The former designates compliance with the divine norm, while the latter emphasizes conformity to a societal standard of what is right and equitable. Focusing exclusively on the latter hinders the correct understanding of justice in the biblical sense. Additionally, the biblical understanding of this concept is encumbered by the use of differing English terms to translate the same Hebrew or Greek terms.

MISHPAT AND *TSEDAQAH*

Mishpat inherently encompasses the idea of judicial activism consisting in the provision of standard criteria (legislation, instructions, directives) for conduct and adjudication, and/or the actual arbitration between parties with the goal of ascertaining culpability or otherwise and administering the requisite sanctions or acquittal. *Tsedaqah*, on the other hand, emphasizes the established norm of just order for right conduct both in the larger society and for individuals. Whereas *mishpat* emphasizes the action that seeks to establish or enforce right patterns of behavior for the common good, *tsedaqah* stresses the practice (or lack thereof) of such a norm in society, or between individuals, or an individual’s compliance with such a norm.

When used in combination as a hendiadys (or word pair), these two terms signify an inherent requirement for conformity to an established norm (whether in the religious sphere or in civil society) or the requirement of loyalty or right conduct between individuals. To the person who stands to benefit from this norm, it approximates a right (i.e., a claim). Conversely, implicit duty is placed upon the person who ensures the conformity to such an established norm. This fact is better appreciated when we reckon with the covenantal nature of requirements for justice in the ancient world, in which both parties have both claim and responsibility. Broadly speaking, this concept also implies good governance, which accrues order to life and common benefits to all members of the community.

This idea is exemplified even in passages that do not use this precise phraseology (*mishpat utsedaqah*). Judah's widowed daughter-in-law, Tamar, had an inherent right to be provided with a (kinsman-redeemer) husband to raise up progeny for her deceased husband, while Judah had the incumbent duty of giving her in levirate marriage to his surviving son. When Judah failed to execute his duty, Tamar entrapped him into an incestuous relationship, from which she conceived. When condemned to die for adultery in a clannish court setting, Tamar revealed the identity of her unborn child's father, to which Judah responded by saying, "She is more righteous than I, since I wouldn't give her to my son Shelah" (Gen. 38:26). That is, she acted more in conformity to the norm than he did. In another instance, Yahweh, while challenging the Judeans concerning their loyalty to him in a covenant lawsuit setting, asks, "A son honors his father, and a slave his master. If I am a father, where is the honor due me? If I am a master, where is the respect due me?" (Mal. 1:6). It is Yahweh's right as father and master to receive honor and respect, while it is their duty to give him both.

GOD AS THE SOURCE AND MODEL OF JUSTICE

To be just, then, implies conformity to that which is right—*yashar* (the standard or norm). In Scripture, this standard is the revealed divine will and character. Compliance to it is often expressed in biblical narrative as doing what is "right [or good] in the LORD's sight" (Deut. 6:18; 12:28; 1 Kings 14:8; 22:43), while its antithesis is doing what is "evil in the eyes of the LORD" (Judg. 2:11; 1 Kings 11:6; 14:22) or doing what some human figure(s) "saw fit" (Deut. 12:8; Judg. 17:6; 21:25).

Therefore, the source of justice is God himself. It flows from his essential character as one who is both just and righteous, whose actions are flawless, perfect, upright, and just (Deut. 32:4; 1 Sam. 12:7; 2 Sam. 22:31; Job 37:23; Ps. 89:14). God is the righteous lawgiver, hence the one who establishes the norm for right conduct (Deut. 4:4–8; Ps. 19:7–9). He requires justice of all his creatures (cf. Gen. 9:5–6; Exod. 21:12, 28–29). God also judges righteously (Gen. 18:25; 1 Kings 8:32; Ps. 9:4, 9; Jer. 9:24) and defends and vindicates the weak and oppressed (Deut. 10:18; Ps. 103:6). The responsibility of maintaining justice in the human community, however, he delegates to its leaders, such as civil magistrates or political officials, and requires them to execute this responsibility with integrity, equity, and impartiality (Deut. 1:16–17; 16:18–20; Ps. 82:2–4; Prov. 31:8–9; John 7:24; 1 Pet. 2:13–14). God's requirement of justice in the human community is not limited to its leaders only; it is incumbent upon everyone therein (Ps. 15:1–5; Mic. 6:8; Zech. 7:9; 8:17; Matt. 23:23).

The Egyptians also looked to a divine source of justice. Here an Egyptian king offers up Maat, the goddess of truth and justice.

Executing justice requires doing all that is essential to bring about the divine order implicit in creation and explicit in revealed truth, to produce harmony in all relationships in which humankind is involved (divine-human, human-human, and human-nature). This has the twofold result of restraining evil and advancing the benefits of just living within the human society. Thus, the fruits of justice are to be seen in all spheres of human life, such as spirituality (2 Cor. 5:17–21), morality and ethics (Phil.

4:8; Col. 3:5–9; Titus 2:11–13), social justice (Exod. 22:21–24; Isa. 56:1; Amos 2:6–7; Ezek. 22:7–29; James 2:1–9), and economic justice (Amos 5:11; 8:4–6; James 5:1–6), as well as in the environment (Deut. 20:19–20; Pss. 96:9–13; 104:1–31; Eccles. 2:5–6; Rom. 8:19–22).

Additionally, the outworking of justice produces (re)distribution and retribution. Distribution means that those blessed materially share of their blessings with those in need (Deut. 15:1–15; Ps. 112:5–9; Prov. 28:27; Isa. 58:1–11; 2 Cor. 8–9). Retribution relates to the vindication and deliverance of the oppressed and judgment on the wicked (1 Sam. 2:7–10; Job 36:5–10; Ps. 72:4; Luke 4:17–20). This is both attested in biblical Israel's experience (Isa. 1:17–20; 5:1–9; Jer. 5:26–29; Mic. 2:1–3) and is being anticipated at the final judgment (Isa. 66:24; Dan. 12:1–3; Matt. 25:31–46; 2 Thess. 1:5–10). The vindicated obtain God's love and grace, while the judged receive his justice. Justice and love, therefore, are the two sides of God's holiness.

JUSTICE, HALL OF The building in Solomon's palace where he heard complaints and rendered judicial decisions (1 Kings 7:7 [NET, NASB, HCSB: "Hall of Judgment"]). The Hall of Justice was covered with cedar from floor to ceiling. In the KJV, the *praitōrion* of the Roman governor in John 18:28 is rendered as "hall of judgment" (NIV: "palace"; NRSV: "headquarters").

JUSTICE OF GOD Judgment performed with righteousness, leading to deliverance for the oppressed (Ps. 72:1–4; Isa. 30:18; Rom. 3:25). A part of God's character, justice is to be administered by kings (1 Kings 10:9) and exhibited by God's people (Amos 5:15). Since actions accompany God's justice, when God's actions are questioned, so too is his justice (Job 27:2; 34:5, 12). God's justice is comparable to human justice (Luke 18:1–8), the main difference being the relationship that God's justice has to love (11:42). *See also* Justice.

JUSTIFICATION Justification is an important topic because of its relationship to Christian salvation and sanctification. The word "justification" occurs only five times in the Bible (NIV), but related words comprise significant themes in both Testaments. Part of the difficulty in the exposition of "justification" is English terminology. English has two word groups that express the same conceptual range for single word groups in Hebrew and Greek. So in addition to words related to justification, such as "justly," "just," and the very important verb "to justify," no discussion can avoid the terms "righteous" and "righteousness." Care must also be exercised in allowing the biblical texts to determine word meaning, since both "justice" and "righteousness" terminology can have contemporary connotations foreign to the biblical texts.

Justification is often related to a legal setting in both Jewish and Greco-Roman contexts, with its judge, defendant, evidence, criteria for evaluating the evidence, verdicts, and the implications of verdicts. This is a good word picture for justification and is used in the Bible itself. As long as the legal picture is extended to everyday affairs, moral and ethical concerns, and different criteria for evidence evaluation, it is a fine starting point for understanding the doctrine of justification.

COMMON AND EXTRAORDINARY JUSTIFICATION

The salvific importance of justification has greatly shaped the exposition that follows. Justification has been somewhat awkwardly divided into *common* and *extraordinary* justification, with the latter bearing a significant relationship to the doctrine of salvation. The former is discussed only briefly in OT and NT paragraphs. In common justification, a person's works or deeds are judged according to a standard of righteousness. Righteous deeds are judged and given the verdict "righteous." Unrighteous deeds are judged and given the verdict "unrighteous." Extraordinary justification occurs when an unrighteous person or deed is judged and given the verdict "righteous" by some supernatural intervention.

Common justification in the OT may be described in various contexts: (1) in comparative or relative righteousness between humans (e.g., Gen. 38:26; Ezek. 16:51–52); (2) in specific or concrete situations with God as judge (e.g., 2 Chron. 6:23: "Judge between your servants, condemning the guilty and bringing down on their heads what they have done, and vindicating the innocent by treating them in accordance with their innocence"; (3) in specific or concrete situations with a human as judge (e.g., Deut. 25:1: "When people have a dispute, they are to take it to court and the judges will decide the case, acquitting the innocent and condemning the guilty"); (4) in giving justice (e.g., 2 Sam. 15:4; cf. Ps. 82:3); (5) in proving correct or right (e.g., Ps. 51:4; Isa. 43:9).

Extraordinary justification is much rarer in the OT. A possible example is Dan. 8:14, where in a vision the sanctuary is desecrated and after a time "will be reconsecrated" or, in other terms, "will be justified holy." It seems quite unusual that the unholy "is justified" as holy. In Isa. 45:25 we find the promise that "in the LORD all the offspring of Israel shall be justified" (ESV). Another verse declares that Yahweh's "righteous servant will justify many, and he will bear their iniquities" (Isa. 53:11). The need for extraordinary justification and the deficiency of ordinary justification is clear in Ps. 143:1–2: "LORD, hear my prayer, listen to my cry for mercy; in your faithfulness and righteousness come to my relief. Do not bring your servant into judgment, for no one living is righteous before you" (cf. Job 4:17; 25:4). The last phrase might be translated "no person will be justified before you" and is cited by the apostle Paul in Gal. 2:16 (cf. Rom. 3:20).

In the NT, there are fewer references to common justification than in the OT and a much greater development of extraordinary justification, predominantly in the Pauline letters (for similar concepts in different terms, see, e.g., "kingdom of God" in the Synoptic Gospels or "eternal life" in the Gospel of John). Common justification in the NT may be described in various contexts: (1) in a specific situation with a human or God as judge and a person's behavior as the object of judgment (e.g., Luke 16:15; 1 Cor. 4:3–4; perhaps Luke 10:29; 18:9–14); (2) when "wisdom is proved right," meaning vindicated by the results (Matt. 11:19; Luke 7:35); (3) in the release from demands no longer binding (Rom. 6:7; cf. 1 Cor. 6:1); (4) in being proved morally right in fullness (1 Tim. 3:16; cf. Rom. 3:4).

PAUL AND JUSTIFICATION

Extraordinary justification in the NT is characteristic of the apostle Paul. Luke's report of Paul's synagogue sermon in Pisidian Antioch concludes with a brief overview of extraordinary justification (Acts 13:38–39). Paul proclaims that forgiveness of sins is available through Jesus. Every person trusting in Jesus is being justified "from all things from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses" (NKJV). The forgiveness of sins leads to the verdict "innocent" even though sinners apart from Christ are guilty before God of their unrighteous deeds.

In Gal. 2:16 the verb "justify" is used three times: (1) "a person is not justified by observing the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ"; (2) "we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law"; (3) "by the works of the law no one will be justified." The statements may be paraphrased in the active voice (expressing the implied subject) as in the following: (1) God is justifying a person not by works of Mosaic law, but by trust in Jesus Christ; (2) God justified us by trust in Christ, not by works of Mosaic law; (3) God will justify no person by works of Mosaic law. In Gal. 2:16, God is the subject, the agent who justifies (cf. 3:8; Rom. 3:26, 30; 4:5; 8:30, 33). The basis of justification is faith in Christ, not works of the Mosaic law. The meaning of the verb “justify” may be discerned from the context. This justification is related to the gospel (e.g., Gal. 2:14) and to receiving the Spirit (Gal. 3:2, 14), and the verdict of “righteous” for the person trusting in Jesus (Gal. 2:21; cf. 3:6, 11; 5:5; 1 Cor. 1:30; 2 Cor. 5:21).

Justification and righteousness are important themes in Paul’s letter to the Romans. At the beginning of the letter, Paul declares that he is not ashamed of the gospel because it is the power of God that brings salvation to all who believe. In the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith (Rom. 1:16–17). Paul argues in Rom. 1:18–3:20, a section abounding with righteousness language, that all humanity, Gentile and Jew, is under the power of sin (3:10), that no one is righteous (e.g., 3:10–18). All are subject to condemnation (i.e., the declaration of “guilty” and “unrighteous” [cf. 5:16]) rather than justification (i.e., the declaration of “innocent” and “righteous”). No human will be justified before God by works of the law; the law provides knowledge of sin (3:20).

The state resulting from this unrighteousness and sin is God’s wrath (e.g., Rom. 1:18). It is into this situation, this sad state of affairs where all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God, that the righteousness of God, God’s saving activity long anticipated in the OT, is revealed in the person and work of Jesus Christ (3:21; 10:3). This righteousness is from God (3:22), a righteousness not related to human fulfillment of Mosaic law or righteousness of one’s own (Rom. 3:21; 9:31–32; 10:4; Phil. 3:6, 9; cf. Eph. 2:8–9). This righteousness comes from God by trust in Christ (Rom. 3:22; 5:1; 9:30; 10:10; Phil. 3:9). By trust in Christ, God justifies each human in his freely given grace, whereby the human is redeemed from unrighteousness and sin (Rom. 3:24).

The death of Jesus is the sacrifice of atonement by which forgiveness of sins is accomplished and made effectual in the human when one trusts in Jesus’ sacrifice (Rom. 3:25). This sacrifice demonstrates God’s righteousness (3:26) because he justly judges human sin in Jesus. The one who had no sin of his own became sin for us (2 Cor. 5:21; cf. Rom. 5:6, 8; 1 Cor. 15:3). In merciful forbearance, God passes over sins previously committed, delaying the execution of his justice, that he might justify the ungodly person who trusts in Jesus’ person and work (Rom. 3:26; cf. 4:5). This justification is of a different nature than ordinary righteousness on the human level or of the kind that can be obtained by observing the Mosaic law. In this extraordinary justification, God reckons a human innocent of sin and righteous by trust and apart from works of Mosaic law (3:28). Both Jew and Gentile are reckoned righteous under the same condition: trust in Jesus (3:29–30).

Although the revelation of the person and work of Jesus the Messiah was relatively new at the time Paul wrote his letter to the Romans, Paul emphasizes in Rom. 4 that this idea of justification by trust and not by works goes back to the forefather of the Jews, Abraham. Quoting Gen. 15:6, Paul demonstrates from Scripture that trust, not works, was the basis of extraordinary justification: Abraham believes God, and it is credited to him as righteousness. God justifies Abraham (i.e., God credits righteousness to Abraham) on the basis of Abraham’s trust in God. Paul also cites most of Ps. 32:1–2, from a Davidic psalm, to further demonstrate the consistency of justification by faith with previous revelation. In this quotation the crediting of righteousness apart from works is related to the forgiveness of transgression, where the verdict of the guilty becomes “innocent.” “He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification” (Rom. 4:25). Extraordinary justification of unrighteous sinners leads to the twofold verdict: innocent and righteous.

Titus 3:3–6 expresses the same doctrine of extraordinary justification. Humanity is under sin when Jesus appears. God saves in his mercy through Jesus, not on the basis of righteous human works. This saving activity is equivalent to being justified by Jesus’ grace (3:7).

JAMES AND JUSTIFICATION

There are three references to justification in James 2:14–26, which appear at first glance to contradict extraordinary justification as presented by Paul. In support of the claim that faith without deeds is useless (James 2:20), two questions are asked: Was not Abraham considered righteous for what he did, and was not Rahab the prostitute considered righteous for what she did (i.e., justified by works) (2:21, 25)? James 2:24 rephrases this as a proposition: a person is justified by what he or she does, not by faith alone. The context of 2:14–26 demonstrates that although the terms "faith," "works," and "justification" are the same as Paul's, they have different meanings for James. Faith appears in this passage as mere knowledge (2:19), without any implications for living (2:14–18). For Paul, faith is a radical commitment of trust that submits one's entire life under the lordship of Christ, something much different from the mere belief portrayed as faith by James. Deeds or works in the James passage are the concrete manifestations of what one believes (2:18). Works in the Pauline justification passages are set in opposition to trust in the person and work of the Lord Jesus. Outside of the justification context, Paul is an advocate of works properly related to faith, righteousness, and holiness (e.g., Eph. 2:10; 1 Thess. 1:3; cf. Rom. 1:5; 6:1–23; 8:4; 12:1–2). Justification is also different. Pauline justification most commonly relates to the extraordinary justification of declaring unrighteous sinners "innocent" and "righteous" based on trust in Christ. Justification in James has greater ties to common justification, focusing on the righteousness of a specific act at a specific time.

OTHER VIEWS ON JUSTIFICATION

Shortly after the age of the apostles, the doctrine of justification was deemphasized in many circles of church life in favor of a more moralistic system. One group has repeatedly argued for centuries that justification infuses righteousness into the believer, and then the believer must do good works to complete justification. This conception fails to differentiate between sanctification and justification and also misrepresents justification. In justification God declares the believer innocent and righteous, forgiving sin by means of Christ's sacrifice and imputing Christ's righteousness to the believer. This is not "legal fiction," since justification has past, present, and future aspects (Rom. 3:30; 8:30–34; Gal. 2:16; 5:5). Believers have been, are being, and will be justified by faith in Christ Jesus. Recently, some have claimed that justification is related exclusively to the inclusion of Gentiles into the people of God without "works of the law," racial and national identity markers (e.g., circumcision or food laws). Among the weaknesses of this view, the key one is that both Jew and Gentile are in need of extraordinary justification (Rom. 3:9, 19–20, 23–26, 30; 9:30–10:13; Gal. 2:15–3:14).

JUSTUS **(1)** Joseph, called "Barsabbas," also known by the name "Justus." He, along with Matthias, was considered to take the place among the apostles vacated by Judas Iscariot (Acts 1:23). **(2)** Titius (in some manuscripts "Titus") Justus, a "worshiper of God" in Corinth with whom Paul lodged in his home near the synagogue (Acts 18:7). **(3)** Jesus Justus, a Jewish Christian coworker with Paul who sent greetings to Colossae (Col. 4:11).

JUTTAH A town in the hill country near Hebron given by lot to the tribe of Judah at the conquest of Canaan (Josh. 15:55). It was reserved for Levites, the descendants of Aaron (Josh. 21:16; 1 Chron. 6:59).

JUVENILE DELINQUENCY This modern term refers to a problem found also in Scripture: youth who break the law and may be considered incorrigible. In biblical times, persons were considered minors as long as they lived under the roof of their parents, and therefore they were subject to certain responsibilities and restrictions. A disobedient child remained the responsibility of the parents and was required to abide by their rules and disciplines or face serious penalty. Contrary to most modern Western law, youths who broke the law were subject to the same penalties as adults. However, if they broke the law in relation to their parents, particularly showing contempt to parents, they were subject to more-severe penalties (Exod. 21:15, 17; Lev. 20:9; Deut. 27:16; Prov. 20:20). The most serious case of juvenile delinquency in the Bible occurs in Deut. 21:18–21, which lays out the lethal consequences for a youth being incorrigible, completely rejecting parental direction and discipline.

Egyptian ostracon containing “A Letter to a Wayward Son” (1145 BC)

K

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KAB *See* Cab.

KABBON One of the towns allotted to the tribe of Judah. It lay in the Shephelah, near Eglon, but its precise location is unknown (Josh. 15:40).

KABUL **(1)** A town belonging to the tribe of Asher near Mount Carmel between Israel and Tyre (Josh. 19:27). The name of this site has been retained to this day in the city of Kabul, nine miles south of Akko. **(2)** Territory given by Solomon to Hiram, king of Tyre, in exchange for building materials for the temple (1 Kings 9:10–14). Unpleased with the land, Hiram returned it to Solomon, calling it *kabul*, which is a pun on the Hebrew word meaning “nothing.” This area is a region of cities in the Galilee.

KABZEEL A city located near the Negev, in the southern portion of Judah near the border of Edom (Josh. 15:21). It was the home of Benaiah son of Jehoiada, a commander under David and Solomon (2 Sam. 23:20; 1 Chron. 11:22). After the captivity in Babylon, exiles returned to it, and it was called Jekabzeel (Neh. 11:25). It possibly is associated with modern Khirbet Gharreh, approximately thirteen miles northeast of Beersheba.

KADESH, KADESH BARNEA “Kadesh” means “holy” or “sacred.” This city was located between the Wilderness of Paran and the Wilderness of Zin in the northeast of Sinai (Num. 20:1; 33:36). It is first mentioned by the name “En Mishpat” (“spring of judgment”)—within the context of the war of four kings (Amraphel of Shinar, Arioch of Ellasar, Kedorlaomer of Elam, and Tidal of Goyim) against five kings (Bera of Sodom, Birsha of Gomorrah, Shinab of Admah, Shemeber of Zeboyim, and the king of Zoar)—as the area where Kedorlaomer and his allies defeated the Amalekites. Abraham joined in this conflict to rescue Lot from being taken captive (Gen. 14:1–16).

Hagar, the Egyptian servant of Sarai, fled to a spring in the wilderness between Kadesh and Bered after she was found to have conceived a child by Abram. It was here that she received the promise of Ishmael’s birth (Gen. 16:11–14).

Moses sent the twelve spies out from Kadesh to survey the promised land of Canaan. The negative report of ten of those spies caused the people to hesitate to take the land (Num. 13:26). For this lack of faith, the Israelites were required to wander in the wilderness for forty years, spending thirty-eight of those years at Kadesh (Deut. 2:14). It was here that Moses’ sister Miriam died and was buried (Num. 20:1).

The region around Kadesh Barnea

At Kadesh the Israelites complained about their lack of water (Num. 20:2–5). Moses was instructed by God to take his staff and to tell the rock to yield water (20:6–8). But instead, Moses struck the rock with his staff twice. The water flowed out abundantly, but Moses was punished for his disobedience by not being allowed to bring the Israelites into the land (20:11–12).

The Israelites were encamped at Kadesh when the king of Edom denied them passage through his land (Num. 20:14–21). The site eventually became the southern border of the territory allotted to the tribe of Judah (Josh. 15:1–3).

KADESH MERIBAH *See* Meribah Kadesh.

KADMIEL A Levite of the line of Hodaviah who, with his family, returned with Zerubbabel from the captivity in Babylon (Ezra 2:40; Neh. 7:43). He (and/or his sons) helped supervise the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem (Ezra 3:9), took part with Ezra the priest in the public confession of sin and reaffirmation of the covenant after returning from exile (Neh. 9:4–5), signed the renewed covenant document (10:9), and led the people in thanksgiving and praise (12:8, 24).

KADMONITES A clan, whose name means "easterners," that occupied an area somewhere east of Canaan and west of the Euphrates. God promised to give to Abram's offspring the land of the Kadmonites (Gen. 15:19). They may have been included in the peoples who were collectively called "the eastern peoples." Other people referred to as "the eastern peoples" or "peoples of the east" include the inhabitants of the land where Jacob searched for his wife (Gen. 29:1), those who rose up with the Midianites against Gideon (Judg. 6:3, 33), the wise men whose wisdom was surpassed by Solomon (1 Kings 4:30–31), and Job (Job 1:3).

KAIN **(1)** The clan mentioned in the final oracle of Balaam (Num. 24:22 NRSV [NIV: "Kenites"]). The spelling in Hebrew is identical to the name of Adam and Eve's son Cain. Many scholars consider Cain to be the ancestor of the Kenites. (*See also* Kenites.) **(2)** A city that was part of the inheritance of the tribe of the people of Judah (Josh. 15:57). It was situated southeast of Hebron.

KAIWAN The name for the Babylonian deity that Amos called a "star-god" (Amos 5:26 NRSV). The Akkadian term refers to the planet Saturn. The Hebrew of the MT, *kiyyun* ("Kiyyun" [NASB, ESV, NET]), appears to reflect the intentional scribal replacement of the original vocalization with vowels of the Hebrew word for "abomination." Some versions translate the word as "pedestal" (NIV [but see footnote], NEB), linking it to the Hebrew root *kun*, meaning "to be firm, steady, secure, durable."

KALKOL One of the wise "sons of Mahol" (possibly a musical title), Kalkol is named along with his brothers Heman and Darda as an individual whom Solomon exceeded in wisdom (1 Kings 4:31). Kalkol and his brothers are named in 1 Chron. 2:6 as descendants of Judah through Zerah.

KALLAI The head of a priestly family who returned from exile at the time of the high priest Joiakim (Neh. 12:20).

KALNEH, KALNO Kalneh is mentioned twice in the Bible (Gen. 10:10; Amos 6:2) and often is linked with the mention of Kalno in Isa. 10:9. In Gen. 10:10 Kalneh is identified along with Babylon, Erech (Uruk), and Akkad as one of the four cities of Nimrod's Mesopotamian empire. In Isa. 10:9; Amos 6:2 Kalneh/Kalno is associated with locations in Syria and thus has been identified with Kullani (as it is known in Assyrian sources), the capital of the Hittite state of Pattin. The biblical references allude to the conquest of Kullani in 739 BC by Tiglath-pileser III.

KAMON A city in Gilead (exact location unknown), where Jair, a judge of Israel for twenty-two years, died and was buried (Judg. 10:5).

KANAH **(1)** A ravine running south of Shechem toward the Mediterranean Sea, forming a boundary between the allotments of Ephraim (south of the brook) and Manasseh (Josh. 16:8; 17:9). **(2)** A city on the northern boundary of Asher (Josh. 19:28).

KANDAKE This term, rendered “Candace” in most English versions, is not a proper name but rather a title (Gk. *Kandakē*, similar to “Pharaoh” or “Caesar”) borne by a series of Ethiopian queens. The Kandake under whom the Ethiopian eunuch was treasurer (Acts 8:27) was probably Amantitare, who ruled in AD 25–41 in Meroe, located on the Nile in Upper Nubia.

KANNEH A city in northern Mesopotamia. Kanneh traded woven materials with the city of Tyre (Ezek. 27:23). It is usually identified with Kannu in Assyrian texts, a city known for trafficking horses and slaves.

KAREAH The father of Johanan, a military commander in Judah at the beginning of the exile, and of Jonathan (2 Kings 25:23; Jer. 40:8, 13, 15–16; 41:11, 13–14, 16; 42:1, 8; 43:2, 4–5).

KARKA A city on the southern border of the tribal territory allotted to Judah, located northwest of Kadesh Barnea (Josh. 15:3).

KARKAS One of the seven personal attendants of the Persian king Xerxes (Ahasuerus), whom he commanded to bring Queen Vashti to his banquet (Esther 1:10). Working with the harem, he was a eunuch.

KARKOR A site east of the Jordan River in the region of Gilead during the period of the judges. The Midianite kings Zebah and Zalmunna were encamped at Karkor after losing 120,000 of their soldiers in battle with the Israelites. Gideon led his army of three hundred Israelites in a successful surprise attack against the surviving fifteen thousand troops while they were off guard at Karkor (Judg. 8:10–11).

KARMI **(1)** Son of Reuben (Gen. 46:9; Exod. 6:14; 1 Chron. 5:3) and ancestor of the Carmites (Num. 26:6). **(2)** A descendant of Judah, son of Zimri (MT: “Zabdi”), and the father of Achan (Josh. 7:1, 18; 1 Chron. 4:1).

KARMITES The clan descended from Karmi son of Reuben (Num. 26:5–6).

KARNAIM A city in Gilead near, or possibly also known as, Ashteroth Karnaim or Ashtaroth. It was inhabited by the Rephaim and subdued by Kedorlaomer king of Elam in the time of Abraham (Gen. 14:5). Amos makes a wordplay with the name of the city, which means “double-horned” and thus symbolizes strength. The Israelites boast of defeating a city whose name is synonymous with military might (Amos 6:13).

KARSHENA One of seven top-level officials under King Xerxes (Ahasuerus), who advised him to put away Queen Vashti because of her refusal to obey the king's command to appear before the banquet (Esther 1:14).

KARTAH A Levitical city in the tribal territory of Zebulun allotted to the Merarites and their families (Josh. 21:34). The location is unknown.

KARTAN A Levitical city in the tribal territory of Naphtali allotted to the Gershonites (Josh. 21:32). It is called "Kiriathaim" in 1 Chron. 6:76. Scholars are divided over its location, placing it either on the west side of the Sea of Galilee or in the mountains of northern Galilee.

KASIPHIA As Ezra gathered a contingent of exiles to return to Jerusalem, he discovered that the group did not include Levites (Ezra 8:17). He sent a delegation to "Iddo, the leader in Kasiphia," where some Levites apparently lived. Mentioned only in this single verse, Kasiphia was an otherwise unknown location in northern Mesopotamia. The word resembles Hebrew *kesep* ("silver"), prompting "place of the treasury" in 1 Esdras 8:45.

KASLUHITES According to Gen. 10:13–14 (NRSV: "Casluhim"), a group of people descended from Noah's son Ham through Mizraim ("Egypt"). They may have originated in Lower Egypt, moved to Crete, and then finally settled on the coast of Palestine (thus ancestors of the Philistines).

KATTAH *See* Kattath.

KATTATH A city on the border of Zebulun (Josh. 19:15). It probably is the same city as Kitron, where the Zebulunites did not dispossess the Canaanites but put them into forced labor (Judg. 1:30).

KEBAR The Babylonian river or canal where Ezekiel received visions (Ezek. 1:1; 3:15; 10:15; 43:3). It probably is the branch of the Euphrates River that ran southeast from Babylon through the Nippur region before rejoining the Euphrates near ancient Uruk.

KEDAR This name means "mighty" or "dark, black." **(1)** The second son of Ishmael and a grandson of Abraham (Gen. 25:13; 1 Chron. 1:29). **(2)** The nomadic tribe that took its name from this ancestor. These people lived in black tents (Ps. 120:5; Song 1:5) and possessed large flocks of sheep and goats, as well as camels (Isa. 60:7; Jer. 49:28–29). Their flocks were traded with countries as far away as Tyre (Ezek. 27:21). The Kedarites were known for their skillful archers (Isa. 21:17) and were ruled by princes (Ezek. 27:21). The importance of the Kedarites is reflected by Isaiah's comment about the "splendor of Kedar" in his prophecy about their downfall (Isa. 21:16–17). Jeremiah contrasted the area of the Kedar, in the eastern Arabian Desert, with Cyprus, in the Mediterranean, as representatives for the extreme east and west (Jer. 2:10).

KEDEMAH This name means "eastward" or "easterner." He was the twelfth son of Ishmael and a grandson of Abraham (Gen. 25:15; 1 Chron. 1:31). His descendants comprised the Arabian clan that he headed. The tribe is usually considered to be among the Kadmonites.

KEDEMOTH Moses sent messengers from the wilderness of Kedemoth to Sihon king of Heshbon to ask for safe passage for the Israelites through the land, but Sihon denied the request (Deut. 2:26).

Kedemoth was one of the cities allotted to the tribe of Reuben (Josh. 13:18). This city and its pasturelands were given to the Merarite family of Levites (Josh. 21:37; 1 Chron. 6:79). The city has been identified with Umm er-Rasas, Khirbet er-Remeil, Qasr ez-Za'feran, or Aleiyan.

KEDESH **(1)** A city in the extreme south of the tribal territory of Judah, near Edom (Josh. 15:23). Some identify it as Kadesh Barnea. **(2)** "Kedesh in Galilee" is distinguished from others with the same name by its location in Galilee (Josh. 20:7; 21:32; 1 Chron. 6:76). It was a royal city west of the Jordan River whose king was defeated by Joshua (Josh. 12:22). The city was part of the tribal territory allocated to Naphtali (Josh. 19:37), given for the use of the Levites (Josh. 21:32), and appointed as a city of refuge (Josh. 20:7). The city fell to Tiglath-pileser III of Assyria when he invaded Israel; its inhabitants were taken into exile (2 Kings 15:29). **(3)** "Kedesh in Naphtali" was another town allotted in the tribal territory of Naphtali (Josh. 19:32, 37). It was the home of Barak (Judg. 4:6) and the site where Deborah and Barak gathered their forces against Sisera (Judg. 4:6–10). Some identify this city as the same one as Kedesh in Galilee, but the location of Kedesh in Galilee is too far from Mount Tabor. **(4)** A town in the territory of Issachar given to the Gershonite Levites (1 Chron. 6:72).

KEDORLAOMER A king of Elam during the time of Abram. He and three other kings subdued five kings rebelling against Kedorlaomer's rule, routing them in the Valley of Siddim, a tar-filled lowland at the south end of the Dead Sea. When Abram heard that his nephew Lot had been captured in battle, he set out with his men and pursued Kedorlaomer, ultimately recovering Lot and the spoils that Kedorlaomer's forces had taken (Gen. 14:1–16).

KEHELATHAH The seventh camp of Moses and the people of Israel after they left the wilderness of Sinai (Num. 33:22–23). The name means "assembly."

KEILAH **(1)** A descendant of Caleb (1 Chron. 4:19). **(2)** A city in the lowland of the tribal territory allotted to the tribe of Judah (Josh. 15:44). David defended this city against the Philistines' attack during the threshing season (1 Sam. 23:1–6). However, when God told him that the inhabitants would surrender him to Saul, he fled the city and went to the strongholds in the Desert of Ziph (23:4–13). After the exile, the city was rebuilt. Hashabiah, a ruler of the district of Keilah, helped to repair the walls of Jerusalem (Neh. 3:17–18). The city is identified with Khirbet Qila, eight miles northwest of Hebron.

KELAIAH *See* Kelita.

KELAL A descendant of Pahath-Moab, this Israelite sent away his foreign wife during postexilic reforms (Ezra 10:30).

KELITA One of the thirteen Levites who helped the people to understand Ezra's reading of the law, either by translating into Aramaic or by some other kind of exposition (Neh. 8:7). Kelita also signed the covenant with God following Ezra's reading of the law (Neh. 10:10), and he had taken a foreign wife, whom he divorced at Ezra's prompting (Ezra 10:23 [here also identified by another name, "Kelaiah"]).

KELUB **(1)** The brother of Shuhah and the father of Mehir, a member of the tribe of Judah (1 Chron.

4:11). **(2)** The father of Ezri, an overseer of workers in the cultivated fields of King David (1 Chron. 27:26).

KELUHI A descendant of Bani who sent away his foreign wife during postexilic reforms (Ezra 10:35).

KEMUEL **(1)** A son of Nahor, who was Abraham’s brother, and Milkah, he was the father of Aram and the ancestor of the Arameans (Gen. 22:21). **(2)** The son of Shiphtan, he was an Ephraimite leader who assisted in the allocation of the land of Canaan to each tribe (Num. 34:24). **(3)** The father of Hashabiah, the chief officer of the Levites during the time of King David (1 Chron. 27:17).

KENAANAH **(1)** The father of Zedekiah, a false prophet during King Ahab’s reign (1 Kings 22:11, 24; 2 Chron. 18:10, 23). **(2)** A son of Bilhan, he was one of the “fighting men” in the tribe of Benjamin (1 Chron. 7:10).

KENAN A great-grandson of Adam, a son of Enosh, and the father of Mahalalel (Gen. 5:9–14; 1 Chron. 1:2). In Luke 3:37 he appears in Jesus’ genealogy as “Kainam” (KJV, NRSV: “Cainan”), which the NIV and some other versions render with the OT form of the name, “Kenan.” *See also* Cainan.

KENANI A Levite in the days of Nehemiah who joined in leading Israel in the reading of the Book of the Law, public confession, and praise (Neh. 9:4).

KENANIAH **(1)** A chief of the Levites during the reign of King David and the leader of the singers and musicians who participated in bringing the ark of the covenant from the house of Obed-Edom to Jerusalem (1 Chron. 15:22, 27). **(2)** A Levite of the Izharites appointed with his sons to the duties outside the temple as officers and judges (1 Chron. 26:29).

KENATH A city on the extreme northeast border of the Israelite territory (eastern Gilead). Nobah took it from the Amorites and gave it his name (Num. 32:42). The city was known as Kenath at a later time when it passed into the hands of Aram and Geshur (1 Chron. 2:23). Kenath was the easternmost of the ten cities of the Decapolis. It usually is identified with modern Qanawat.

Roman ruins at ancient Kenath

KENAZ **(1)** A son of Eliphaz and grandson of Esau. He was the chieftain of a clan of the Edomites in the hill country of Seir (Gen. 36:11, 15, 42; 1 Chron. 1:36, 53). He usually is understood to be the ancestor of the Kenizzites, a clan of nomadic people who inhabited Hebron, Debir, and part of the Negev. **(2)** The father of Othniel, the first judge mentioned in Israel's history (Josh. 15:17; Judg. 1:13; 3:9); also the father of Seraiah (1 Chron. 4:13). **(3)** A son of Elah and grandson of Caleb (1 Chron. 4:15). *See also* Kenizzites.

KENEZITES *See* Kenizzites.

KENITES A clan whose name likely is related to an Aramaic word meaning "smith," they were a nomadic group probably skilled as blacksmiths. The land of the Kenites was included in the covenantal promise of God to Abraham (Gen. 15:19). Moses' father-in-law was a Kenite and a priest of Midian (Judg. 1:16, Exod. 3:1), suggesting some kind of relationship between the two. The Kenites played a role as allies of Israel from the Mosaic period through the time of the judges and into the monarchy. The non-Israelite Balaam prophesied the downfall and captivity of the Kenites (Num.

24:21–22). Jael, the woman who killed Sisera by driving a tent peg into his temple, was the wife of a Kenite who had separated from the Kenites (Judg. 4:11, 17).

The Kenites lived with the Amalekites during the time of Saul, but because the Kenites had shown mercy to the Israelites during the exodus, Saul allowed them to depart before he attacked and defeated the Amalekites (1 Sam. 15:6). The Kenites are also mentioned during the time when David was living among the Philistines (1 Sam. 27:10; 30:29). The Kenites were included in the genealogy of David, as part of the tribe of Judah (1 Chron. 2:55). The widespread geographical area of the Kenites' habitations and the individual Kenites who separated and were associated with various peoples support the suggestion that these people were itinerant smiths who maintained their separate identity and were not completely absorbed by other peoples.

KENIZZITES A clan whose name probably deriving from Kenaz, a descendant of Esau who was an Edomite chieftain (Gen. 36:11, 15, 42), they were one of the ten peoples whose territory God promised to deliver to the descendants of Abraham (Gen. 15:19). The Kenizzites lived in the Negev, the southern desert area that was part of the territory of Judah after the conquest. They may have been related to the Kenites, who were skilled in metalworking (1 Chron. 4:13–14). Caleb was the son of Jephunneh, a Kenizzite, which apparently indicates marriage with a woman from the tribe of Judah (Num. 32:12; Josh. 14:6, 14; 15:3).

KENOSIS A transliteration of a Greek word, *kenōsis*, meaning "emptying." "Kenosis" has come to characterize a hymnlike unit in Paul's letter to the Philippians (2:5–11), in which the apostle says Christ Jesus "emptied himself" (v. 7 NASB, NET, NRSV). Some have interpreted this to mean that Jesus surrendered certain or all of his divine attributes at the incarnation (cf. John 1:14). Others claim that these attributes continued in a "potential" reality. But it is probably best to look at the immediate context for the significance.

Paul presumes that the self-emptying of Christ is to some degree a communicable practice: we are to meditate on how to empty ourselves like Christ (Phil. 2:5). There were two extreme positions of status in the Roman world: Caesar, who was worshiped as a god, and the slave, who could be crucified at the whim of the master. Jesus, while being much greater than the former, willingly took on the status of the latter, humbling himself to the point of dying on a cross (Phil. 2:8). He put God's interest—our salvation—before his own. Paul's readers would have made an immediate comparison with the current emperor, Nero, who gladly embraced his own deification and lived only for the gratification of his own pleasure. But the desire to become like God goes back to the garden of Eden (Gen. 3:5). According to Jewish and Christian tradition, this vaulting ambition led to Satan's fall. However, the Son did not become something else but rather emptied himself of the form or appearance of God. In other words, people did not know that Jesus was God by looking at him (cf. Isa. 53:2). But Peter, James, and John were allowed to see the glorified nature of the Son at the transfiguration (Matt. 17:1–9 pars.; see also John 1:14; 2 Pet. 1:16–21).

Paul's hymnic reflection ends with the Father placing Jesus over all authority, at the right hand of his throne in heaven (Phil. 2:9–11; see also Eph. 1:20–21). Although people important by worldly standards ignored Jesus during his ministry, dismissing him as a Jewish peasant in a dusty corner of the Roman Empire, the apostle maintains that one day they will bow before Jesus' glory. The kenosis is intended to exhort Christians to imitate the humility of Christ, putting the needs of others before themselves, so that they might also participate in his glory (see Eph. 2:1–20).

KEPHAR AMMONI A town allocated to the tribe of Benjamin (Josh. 18:24). Some suggest Khirbet Kefr ‘Ana, about three miles north of Bethel, as the site for Kephar Ammoni, but the location is disputed.

KEPHIRAH One of the four Gibeonite cities that had deceived Joshua into making a covenant of peace with them during the days of the conquest (Josh. 9:17). It became part of the territory allocated to Benjamin (18:26). After the exile, some of its inhabitants returned with Zerubbabel to reinhabit the city (Ezra 2:25; Neh. 7:29). It was located at Khirbet Kefireh, west of Gibeon.

KEPHIRIM The NET and NIV (mg.) name this as a city on the plain of Ono where Sanballat and Geshem told Nehemiah to meet them (Neh. 6:2). Other English versions translate the Hebrew *kepirim* in this verse as “one of the villages.”

KERAN A descendant of Seir, a Horite, he was the fourth son of the clan chieftain Dishon (Gen. 36:26; 1 Chron. 1:41).

KERCHIEFS In Ezek. 13:18, 21 the KJV translates the plural of the Hebrew word *mispakhah* as “kerchiefs,” translated as “veils” in most modern versions. The Lord prophesies through Ezekiel against certain false prophetesses among Israel’s exiles who practiced divination and sorcery by tying bands of cloth to people’s wrists and placing veils on their heads. These “kerchiefs” or “veils” are described as snares by which they entrap people. Ezekiel predicts that God will tear off their veils and free his people from their power (Ezek. 13:21).

KERE-KETHIB *See* Qere and Kethib.

KEREN-HAPPUCH The youngest of three daughters born to Job after his trials had ceased and his life was restored (Job 42:14).

KERETHITES Although their name indicates they may have originated from Crete, they were a Philistine group (Ezek. 25:16; Zeph. 2:5) whose territory apparently was south of the main Philistine region, with an identifiable area within the Negev (1 Sam. 30:14). A group of them served as troops under David (2 Sam. 8:18; 20:7, 23) and were notable for their loyalty to him during Absalom’s rebellion (2 Sam. 15:18–23).

KERIOTH A fortified city in Moab (Jer. 48:24, 41; Amos 2:2). It is listed on the Moabite Stone as a city with a sacred shrine for Chemosh. Kerioth may be synonymous with Ar, the ancient capital of Moab.

KERIOTH HEZRON One or perhaps two cities in southern Judah (Josh. 15:25). Some scholars identify Kerioth and Hezron as distinct cities. Nevertheless, this Kerioth should not be confused with Kerioth of Moab. If a separate locale, Hezron may refer to the city of Hazor, a city near Kadesh Barnea (Josh. 15:3).

KERITH A brook or wadi east of the Jordan River where the prophet Elijah found refuge from King Ahab and Jezebel after he prophesied a drought. At this brook he was provided with water, and ravens came to provide food (1 Kings 17:3–7). After Kerith dried up, Elijah went to Zarephath and stayed with a widow there. Possible locations proposed for Kerith include the Wadi Qelt above Jericho and the Wadi Yabis, but there is no consensus.

KEROS One of the ancestors of the temple servants (Nethinim) who returned to Jerusalem after the Babylonian captivity under the leadership of Zerubbabel in 539 BC or soon after (Ezra 2:44; Neh. 7:47). The fact that many of the names in the list are foreign has led to the belief that they were originally prisoners of war who were pressed into service to perform menial tasks as they assisted the Levites. The name is also found on an ostracon from Arad.

KERUB An unknown location in Babylon from which some exiles returned to Judah in 539 BC or soon after, some of whom are listed as having been unable to establish their genealogical connections to Israel (Ezra 2:59; Neh. 7:61).

KERYGMA The English transliteration of the Greek word meaning "preaching, proclamation, message," "kerygma" was coined as a scholarly term by C. H. Dodd, a professor of NT at Cambridge University, in 1964. In a lecture series titled "The Apostolic Preaching and Its Developments," Dodd observed that four of Peter's proclamations of the gospel message (Acts 2:14–36, 38–39; 3:12–26; 4:8–15) follow an identifiable pattern. They present basic facts as interpreted through the eternal perspective of the first-century church: (1) The age of prophetic fulfillment has dawned. (2) This has occurred through the ministry, death, and resurrection of Jesus. (3) Jesus is exalted at the right hand of God as the messianic head of Israel. (4) The Holy Spirit in the church is the sign of Christ's present power and glory. (5) The messianic age will soon be consummated in the return of Christ. (6) Therefore, hearers are to repent to receive forgiveness, the Holy Spirit, and salvation.

Dodd further developed his ideas by examining the Gospels and finding that they conform to the essential kerygma pattern as well (Mark particularly clearly so), as do the gospel summaries appearing in the writings of Paul and John. Each contains an essential core of information: the prophetic announcement of Jesus, especially through the ministry of John the Baptist, the trial and crucifixion of Jesus, his burial, his resurrection from the dead, and the affirmation of these events through the testimony of eyewitnesses. Examples of kerygma are found in Acts 5:30–32; 10:34–43; 13:16–41; 17:1–4; 26:12–29; 1 Cor. 15:1–11.

Noticeably absent from all these passages, however, is any mention of the ethical teaching of the NT. Dodd was emphatic that kerygma be distinguished from teaching, by which he meant the doctrinal, ethical, and apologetic aspects of Christianity. These he understood as appropriate to the life and thought of those already established in the faith but different from the evangelistic proclamation of kerygma, the purpose of which is to call unbelievers to salvation in Christ. Put another way, kerygma is primary, while teaching is secondary; the latter is effective only when presented to those who have already repented and believed.

Since Dodd, "kerygma" has been applied to the OT as well, where it refers to the specific saving acts of God, structured similarly to the NT speech of Stephen (Acts 7:2–53). Examples include Pss. 78; 105; 106; 135; 136.

KESALON A city located on the northern shoulder of Mount Jearim that marked part of the boundary of Judah's tribal territory (Josh. 15:10). It is associated with modern Kesla, about ten miles west of Jerusalem.

KESED *See* Kindness.

KESIL A city within the southern portion of the allotment of Judah (Josh. 15:30) but inhabited by at least some of the sons of Simeon, whose territory was in the midst of Judah's (1 Chron. 4:30). In comparable lists the name is given as "Bethul" (Josh. 19:4) or "Bethuel" (1 Chron. 4:30). In context it is placed between Eltolad and Hormah, indicating a location east of Beersheba.

KESITAH A unit of value or measurement ("to divide up, measure"), equivalent unknown, which the NIV renders as "piece of silver." Jacob bought land from the Shechemites for one hundred kesitahs (Gen. 33:19; Josh. 24:32; see NIV mg.). Job received a kesitah from each of his friends and family after his restoration (Job 42:11; see NIV mg.).

KESULLOTH A town on the border of the territory of Issachar, west of Mount Tabor (Josh. 19:18). Zebulun occupied the hills to the northwest. It is identified with modern Iksal, four miles south of Nazareth. The name is a variant of "Kisloth Tabor" (Josh. 19:12).

KETHIB *See* Qere and Kethib.

KETTLE A vessel used for boiling food, not only in the home but also in the sanctuary (1 Sam. 2:14; 2 Chron. 35:13; Mic. 3:3). Such vessels were made of either ceramic or hammered metal.

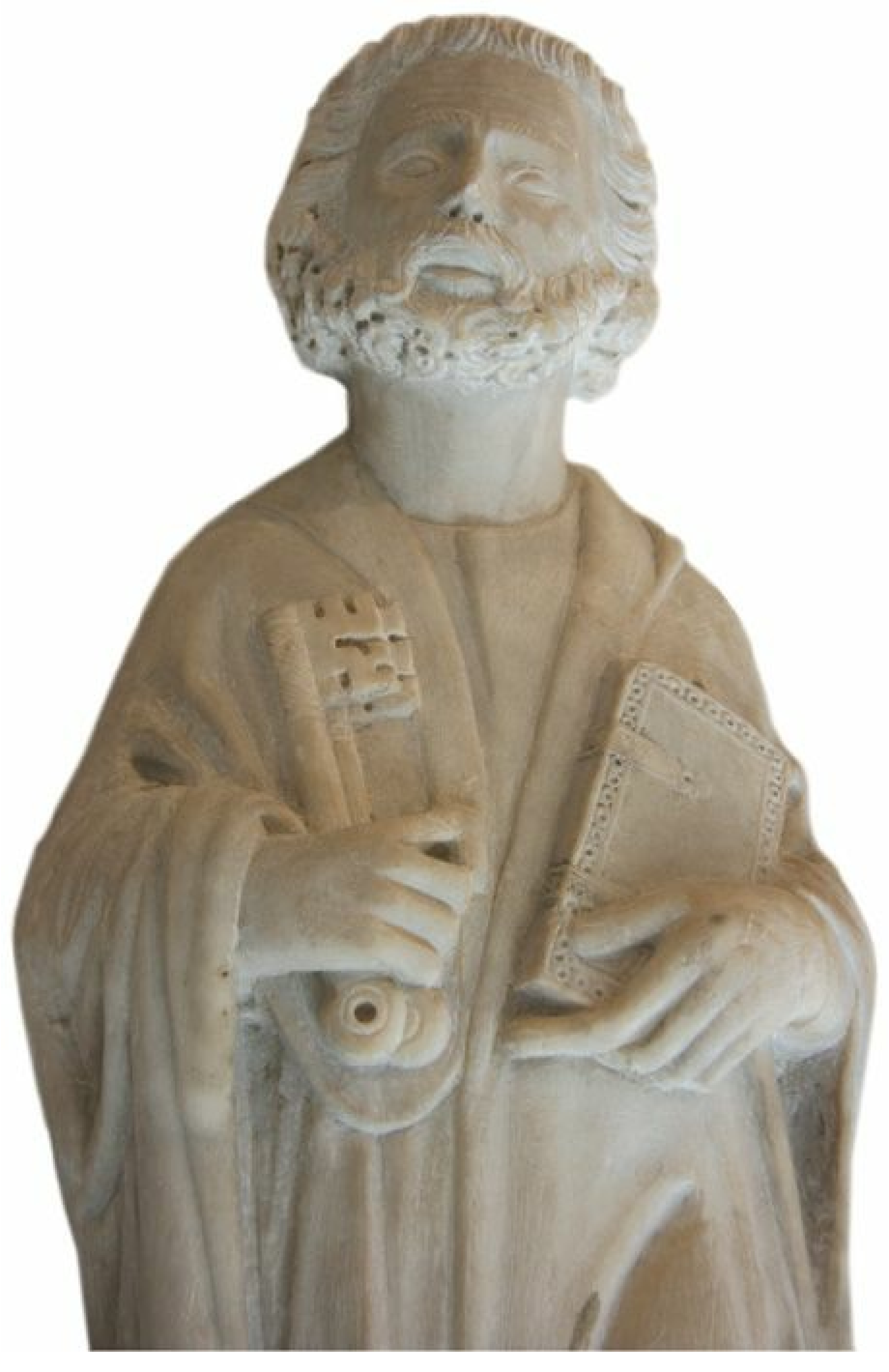
KETURAH Abraham's second wife, apparently taken after Sarah's death (Gen. 25:1; called "Abraham's concubine" in 1 Chron. 1:32). She was the mother of six sons of Abraham (including Midian), but they were not regarded with the same favor as Isaac. Abraham gave them gifts and sent them away to the east country (Gen. 25:6).

KEVEH *See* Cilicia; Kue.

KEYS Keys often symbolize power and authority in the Bible. As such, they are usually associated with kingly rule. Isaiah predicts that God will grant Eliakim "the key to the house of David," whose power to open and shut belongs to Israel's king (Isa. 22:20–25). In Rev. 3:7 Jesus applies this prophecy to himself: he has supreme authority to open or shut God's kingdom. However, he also bestows the keys of the kingdom of heaven on Peter when he confesses Jesus as the Messiah, the living God's Son (Matt. 16:16–19; cf. 18:18). Thus, Jesus gives the church an earthly power to "bind and loose" that is analogous to his rule in heaven. *See also* Keys of the Kingdom.

KEYS OF THE KINGDOM The keys of the kingdom picture the power and authority entrusted to Simon Peter by Jesus immediately after Peter's confession of faith (Matt. 16:16). Jesus responded, "I tell you that you are Peter [*petros*], and on this rock [*petra*] I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it" (Matt. 16:18). It is at this point that Jesus tells Peter, "I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven" (16:19). Roman Catholics have understood these keys, along with this symbolism of loosing and binding, to refer to a special authority in the forgiveness of sins and in the practices of penance and absolution given to the apostle Peter, and by extension to the institution of the papacy as his spiritual heir. Protestants have often understood this power as involving the apostles in general, or perhaps even the entire church (see 18:18).

The symbolism of keys is normally used in the Bible to refer to a means of entry. Jesus is addressing Peter in particular in Matt. 16:19, not the apostles as a whole, since the "you" is singular in the Greek text. Perhaps the best way to understand this phrase is to interpret it in its original context of something that Peter was to do in the initial establishment of the NT church. Significantly, Peter is given an unparalleled initiatory role in the spread of the gospel. Peter is the one who takes on leadership in the upper room prayer meeting in Acts 1 and also in the process of finding another apostle to replace Judas Iscariot. Peter is the spokesman for the apostles on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2) as well as in the subsequent events involving the Jerusalem church (Acts 3–5). Peter (along with John) goes down to Samaria to examine the new believers in Samaria and to be the human channel through which they would receive the Spirit (Acts 8:14–17). Peter is the one who is entrusted by God with reaching out to Cornelius, the first Gentile convert (Acts 10–11). At every step along the way, Peter is the one whom God used to open the door to new groups of people in the spread of the gospel.



Marble carving of Saint Peter (Tuscany, fourteenth century AD). Many depictions of Peter have him holding keys.

KEZIAH The second of three daughters born to Job after his trials had ended and his fortunes had been restored (Job 42:14).

KEZIB A town in southern Canaan where Shua's daughter gave birth to Shelah, the third son of Judah (Gen. 38:5). Kezib is probably the same as Akzib.

KEZIZ, VALLEY OF *See* Emek Keziz.

KHESED *See* Kindness.

KIBROTH HATTAAVAH The first encampment of the Israelites after leaving the wilderness of Sinai (Num. 33:16). Here many Israelites were buried after dying from a plague sent as they consumed quail provided by God in answer to their complaints about having nothing but manna to eat (11:31–35). The name means "graves of craving" or "graves of greediness."

KIBZAIM A Levitical city in the territory allocated to the tribe of Ephraim. It was also designated as one of the cities of refuge (Josh. 21:22). Some scholars identify it as the city Jokmeam, which is mentioned in a parallel account (1 Chron. 6:68). The location is uncertain.

KID A young goat. The desirable meat (Gen. 27:9; Luke 15:29) was used for special meals (Judg. 6:19) and sacrifices (Num. 15:11).

KIDNAPPING This crime is mentioned at least twice in the OT (Exod. 21:16; Deut. 24:7) and once in the NT (1 Tim. 1:10 [NIV "slave traders"]). It is possible, however, that the crime is also envisioned, or perhaps even the primary concern, in the eighth commandment (Exod. 20:15; Deut. 5:19). The word translated "steal" there is the same as that translated "kidnap" in Exod. 21:16; Deut. 24:7. Giving credence to this suggestion is the fact that all seven preceding commandments involve capital crimes. Stealing material possessions would not be a capital crime, but stealing persons would.

KIDNEY "Kidneys" is the literal translation of the Hebrew term *kelayot* (always plural). The literal sense is most commonly found in reference to part of the body of a sacrificial animal (e.g., Exod. 29:13, 22; Lev. 3:4, 10, 15; 4:9; 7:4; 8:16, 25; 9:10, 19; Isa. 34:6). The kidneys typically were to be burned, along with fat, and were recognized as the finest part of the animal. The Greek term for "kidney," *nephros*, appears only once in the NT, Rev. 2:23, where its usage conforms to OT usage. Because the kidneys are located deep in the body, reference to injuries involving the kidneys emphasizes their severity (e.g., Job 16:13; Lam. 3:13). When used of humans, "kidney" most commonly refers to the mind, in parallel with *leb* ("heart"), which better corresponds to modern notions of "mind" and even "conscience" (see Pss. 7:9; 26:2; Jer. 11:20; 17:10; 20:12). In a number of passages the kidneys are identified among the organs that God examines in order to judge or test a person (Ps. 7:9; Jer. 11:20; 17:10).

KIDON The threshing floor where Uzzah fell dead after touching the ark of the covenant (1 Chron. 13:9). “Nakon” is used in the parallel passage (2 Sam. 6:6).

KIDRON VALLEY The name means “muddy, mirky, shadowy.” This deep ravine (and the brook running through it during heavy rains) is located between Jerusalem to the west and the Mount of Olives to the east. The spring of Gihon is found on the western slope of the valley. David crossed the brook as he fled Jerusalem to escape the rebellion of his son Absalom (2 Sam. 15:23). Solomon warned Shimei not to cross the brook or he would die (1 Kings 2:37). Reformer kings destroyed idols here (Asa [1 Kings 15:13]; Hezekiah [2 Chron. 29:16; 30:14]; Josiah [2 Kings 23:4–6]). Jesus crossed the Kidron Valley after the Last Supper on his way to the garden of Gethsemane (Matt. 26:36; John 18:1).

The Kidron Valley east of Jerusalem

KILEAB The second of David’s six sons born in Hebron. He was the firstborn of David and Abigail, the widow of Nabal of Carmel (2 Sam. 3:3 [the LXX calls him “Dalouia”]). He is called “Daniel” in another list of David’s sons (1 Chron. 3:1). He is not mentioned among the sons who argued over David’s successor.

KILION An Ephrathite from Bethlehem and one of two sons of Elimelek and Naomi. Kilion and his brother, Mahlon, married Moabite women, Ruth and Orpah, during the time when they were sojourning in Moab due to a famine. Kilion and Mahlon died in Moab (Ruth 1:1–5).

KILMAD The name means “trading center” or “marketplace.” Kilmad was a place or region that traded with Tyre (Ezek. 27:23). Some scholars believe that scribes inadvertently copied the Hebrew name incorrectly, and that it should be emended to refer to the city of Kullimeri (in northern Mesopotamia) or emended to read “all of Media.”

KILN An enclosure for firing pottery, burning lime, or drying. Three Hebrew words are used that are translated “oven,” “furnace,” or “kiln,” and there is some overlap in their usage. For example, the same Hebrew term is used to refer to a bread oven and a pottery kiln.

KIMHAM A son of Barzillai the Gileadite. Following David’s defeat of Absalom, Barzillai met David as he was crossing the Jordan. David wanted to reward Barzillai for providing him with food and equipment by inviting him to come and live in Jerusalem. Barzillai declined on the grounds of age, but he requested that David take his son Kimham instead (2 Sam. 19:31–40; KJV: “Chimham”). David agreed and took Kimham so that he might reward Barzillai’s loyalty through him.

KINAH A city near the boundary of Edom in the southern part of the territory allocated to the tribe of Judah (Josh. 15:22). It possibly was a settlement of the Kenites. It probably is to be located along the Wadi el-Qeini, south of Hebron.

KINDNESS The word “kindness” is used to translate the Hebrew term *khesed* (Gen. 40:14) and the Greek words *chrēstotēs* (Col. 3:12) and *philanthrōpia* (Acts 28:2). Because of the richness of its meaning, *khesed* is difficult to capture in English. The word is translated in a variety of ways, including “kindness,” “loving-kindness,” “loyalty,” “steadfast love,” “mercy,” “commitment.” God embodies kindness (Exod. 34:6; Ps. 103:8; Hos. 2:19). Humans are also called on to reflect this quality of kindness in their relationships with others (1 Sam. 20:8; Mic. 6:8; Zech. 7:9).

In the NT, God is described as displaying kindness toward humans (Rom. 11:22; Titus 3:4; 1 Pet. 2:3), even the selfish and ungrateful (Luke 6:36). God pours out kindness on humans in order to lead them to repentance (Rom. 2:4). Christians are to demonstrate kindness even when others are unkind and vengeful (Prov. 25:21–22; Matt. 5:43–48; Rom. 12:17–21).

One discovers what practicing kindness looks like by observing the words associated with it in Scripture. Kindness involves putting away anger, bitterness, and slander; being tenderhearted and forgiving; and imitating God (Eph. 4:31–5:2); it finds company with compassion, humility, meekness, and patience (Col. 3:12); it is associated with patience, holiness of spirit, and genuine love (2 Cor. 6:6).

KINDRED As an adjective, “kindred” describes being related to somebody by blood, and figuratively, having a close relationship with something or someone; as a plural noun, it refers to one’s relatives. The term is used in some Bible translations to express family relationships of various kinds (KJV 28×; NRSV 153×; RSV 17×; NASB 4×). The term is not used in most contemporary language versions, either because it is considered archaic or too rare in common speech (e.g., NIV, NLT, TEV, CEV, GW).

KING, CHRIST AS The NT begins with the claim that Jesus is the “son” or descendant of King David, presupposing the significance of the biblical narrative about the kings of Israel for understanding the gospel (Matt. 1:1, 6; see also Rom. 1:3; 2 Tim. 2:8). The epithet also creates an almost immediate conflict with Herod the Great (Matt. 2:1–2), who was given the title "King of the Jews" by the Roman senate in 40 BC, although he was not a Jew. Herod unsuccessfully attempts to kill the infant king, but Jesus finally is executed by the Roman prefect Pontius Pilate as "King of the Jews" (Matt. 27:37 pars.).

GRECO-ROMAN AND JEWISH BACKGROUNDS

The conflict between the king and the child somewhat parallels a more extensive Greco-Roman motif. Virgil, in his *Fourth Bucolic*, offers a vision of a golden age to attend the birth of a child king. (Christians in the Middle Ages interpreted his poem as a prophecy of Christ's birth.) The threat upon Jesus' life also resembles Herodotus's account of Cyrus: King Astyages has a dream vision that the magi interpret to be a prophecy that the child of his daughter will eventually rule in his place. He commands Harpagus, his most faithful servant, to take the male child, "adorned for its death," and kill him. Overcome with emotion, Harpagus pawns the child off to a cowherd, Mitradates, who is instructed to lay the child "in the most desolate part of the mountains." When Mitradates's wife sees the beauty of the child, she pleads for his life and devises a plan to switch her stillborn child with Cyrus. They then raise Cyrus under a pseudonym as their own (Herodotus, *Hist.* 1.107–30). Interestingly, the prophet Isaiah refers to Cyrus as the Lord's "messiah" or "anointed" (Isa. 45:1), a uniquely positive role for a non-Israelite king. By God's power, Cyrus will free the exiles (Isa. 45:13).

In the OT, God promises David, the king of Israel, an eternal reign for his "offspring" (2 Sam. 7:12–16). After the fall of the Davidic monarchy, the prophets reiterate the promise in visions of God's future salvation (Isa. 55:3; Hos. 3:5; Amos 9:11; Mic. 4:8; 5:1–5 [cited in Matt. 2:5–6]; Zech. 3:8). By the first century, "son of David" had become a popular messianic title, signifying a warrior who would free the Jews from Roman oppression and establish an everlasting kingdom. Although not viewed as a supernatural being, the Davidic messiah, some claimed, would be without sin, ruling with perfect wisdom, justice, mercy, and power—different from his predecessors. He would restore the ancient tribal divisions and regather the Diaspora, Jews living outside Judea and Galilee. The nations (non-Jews) would pay him homage (see *Psalms of Solomon*).

JESUS' KINGSHIP

The popular Jewish emphasis on a violent overthrow of Rome probably explains why in the Gospels Jesus himself does not emphasize his kingship in his ministry, except for the explicit fulfillment of Zechariah's prophecy of a humble king riding into Jerusalem on a donkey (Matt. 21:1–9 pars.; cf. Zech. 9:9; see also Isa. 62:11). However, following his resurrection and final instructions to his disciples, Jesus ascends to the right hand of the Father (Luke 24:50–51; Acts 1:6–11; 2:33–36), a coronation ceremony foretold in the psalms (Pss. 2; 110). He presently reigns from heaven (Rev. 1:5; cf. Matt. 28:18), but he will return to make his authority explicit on earth, which includes the dispensing of justice (2 Thess. 1:5–12). His rule is present, however, in the lives of those who obey him and wherever the Holy Spirit is manifested. Through his ministry, the God of Israel comes near so as to once again exercise sovereign power on behalf of God's people. For Christians, Jesus alone is Lord and Savior (Phil. 3:20). Paul presents Jesus as the "Savior of all people" (1 Tim. 4:10). This title was given to the Roman emperors. (The preamble to a decree by the council of the province of Asia describes Augustus as "the father who gives us happy life; the savior of all mankind.")

The Western church has largely maintained a distinction between two spheres of authority: political and ecclesiastical. Hosius, bishop of Cordova (AD 296–357), wrote to Emperor Constantius, "For into your hands God has put the kingdom; the affairs of his Church he has committed to us. . . . We are not permitted to exercise an earthly rule; and you, Sire, are not authorized to burn incense." Paul affirms the continuing role of government despite the overarching lordship of Jesus Christ, who preferred to speak of the kingdom of God, a restored theocracy that incorporates yet transcends the Davidic covenant (Rom. 13:1–7; cf. John 18:36). But this process does begin a delegitimizing of all contrary claims to authority and will lead to their complete withdrawal. For this reason, the kingdom of God cannot be separated from the political, economic, and religious conflicts taking place in Roman Palestine in the first century and wherever similar conflicts occur today.

KING, KINGDOM A kingdom signifies the reality and extent of a king's dominion or rule (Gen. 10:10; 20:9; Num. 32:33; 2 Kings 20:13; Esther 1:22). Some kingdoms were relatively small; others were concerted attempts to gain the whole world. For example, there were approximately fifty million people under the Pax Romana ("Roman peace"—the consolidated empire) during Augustus's reign. Demographers estimate that the global population in the first century was about 250 million. Therefore, approximately one-fifth of the world's population was under the authority of a single king (Caesar). The Roman Empire (kingdom) reached its greatest extent under Trajan (r. AD 98–117), about two million square miles.

Authority and power. A kingdom presupposes monarchy, rule by an individual, human authority. (The Bible has little to say about democracy; that form of government was developed by the Greeks, but a primarily empire mentality dominated the context of the biblical world.) Although kings only have as much authority as their armies and the general populace allow, they nevertheless exercise an almost absolute power, which invites either profound humility or hubris. Royal arrogance, unfortunately, is the primary motif characterizing kings in the Bible (e.g., Dan. 3). Gaius Octavius (later Gaius Julius Caesar Octavianus), the grandnephew of Julius Caesar, ruled as emperor from 31 BC to AD 14. The Roman senate declared him "Augustus" (Lat. *Augusta*) on January 13, 27 BC. "Augustus" then became a title held by all reigning emperors except Vitellius. The title means "revered or august one," connoting superhuman qualities. Egyptian, Greek, and Roman kings were routinely venerated as gods. By way of analogy, even the Bible presents God as a king (Pss. 5:2; 10:16; 44:4).

Statue of Augustus (c. 20 BC), a Roman ruler who was revered as godlike

A kingdom may be visualized as a series of concentric circles, beginning with the throne, which is the seat of a king's rule and judgment, then the court and "retainer class" of bureaucrats and aides (e.g., scribes, tax collectors), and then radiating out to the subjects, animals, and landholdings (see Deut. 17:18; Esther 1:14; Matt. 2:3). The king typically entered into a partnership with the upper classes: he provided peace and protection, and they in turn offered loyalty and a portion of their wealth. Latifundism, the dividing up of agricultural property into large estates, enabled kings to reward political supporters and punish their enemies (Matt. 14:1–12 pars.). The powerless and marginalized often found themselves outside this comfortable agreement, without property. When they threatened to change the political order, they were violently crushed (see Matt. 11:7–12).

Royalty and religion. Kingdom and religion were intertwined, so that the king was often high priest or had direct influence over the priesthood. Solomon made Zadok, a longtime loyal supporter of his father, David, high priest. His descendants dominated the office until the Seleucid crisis (1 Kings 2:26–27, 35; 4:4). Herod the Great and Pontius Pilate selected high priests from aristocratic families in Jerusalem. The primary capital of a kingdom was the ownership of land and revenues from taxation. Kings also took censuses of the people for taxation purposes. They were also generally free to tax anything in or passing through their realm. Herod Antipas taxed fishermen for using the Sea of Galilee (see Matt. 9:9–12 pars.).

God originally intended Israel to be governed as a theocracy, ruled by the one, true, living God (but see Gen. 17:6; Deut. 17:14–20). Israel was to be a "kingdom of priests" (Exod. 19:6), but the people demanded a king (1 Sam. 8:1–22). However, even when God granted their request, God remained King over the king and even retained ownership of the land (Lev. 25:23, 42, 55). The Israelite king was nothing more than God's viceroy, with delegated authority. With few exceptions, most of the kings of Israel and Judah were corrupted by authority and wealth and forgot God (1 Sam. 13:13–14; 15:28; Matt. 14:6–11). But God made a covenant with David, so that one of his descendants would become a coregent in a restored theocracy, the kingdom of God (2 Sam. 7:1–29; Pss. 89:3; 132:11). In contrast to David's more immediate descendants, this coming king would return to Jerusalem humble and mounted on a donkey (Zech. 9:9; cf. Isa. 62:11). The Gospels present Jesus Christ as this king (Matt. 21:1–9 pars.). Those who are likewise humble will inherit the land with him (Matt. 5:5).

KINGDOM OF GOD The kingdom of God is a major theme in the Bible. While the theme is most fully developed in the NT, its origin is the OT, where the emphasis falls on God's kingship. God is king of Israel (Exod. 15:18; Num. 23:21; Deut. 33:5; Isa. 43:15) and of all the earth (2 Kings 19:15; Pss. 29:10; 99:1–4; Isa. 6:5; Jer. 46:18). Juxtaposed to the concept of God's present reign as king are references to a day when God will become king over his people (Isa. 24:23; 33:22; 52:7; Zeph. 3:15; Zech. 14:9). This emphasis on God's kingship continues throughout Judaism and takes on special significance in Jewish apocalypticism and its anticipation of the kingdom of God in the age to come, which abandoned any hope for present history. Only at the end of the age will the kingdom of God come. This idea of God's kingdom is further developed throughout the NT.

THE SYNOPTIC GOSPELS

In the Synoptic Gospels the phrase "the kingdom of God" occurs over one hundred times in Mark, Luke, and Matthew (where "kingdom of heaven" is a synonym for "kingdom of God"). Three views have been defended regarding whether and to what extent the kingdom of God was present in Jesus' ministry. In other words, how are we to interpret the phrase "kingdom of God" in the Synoptics? The three views are consistent eschatology, realized eschatology, and inaugurated eschatology.

Consistent eschatology. Albert Schweitzer, a biblical scholar from the late nineteenth century, first popularized consistent eschatology. Here, "consistent" means consistent with the apocalyptic Judaism of Jesus' day, which interpreted the kingdom of God as something coming in the future. Judaism at the time of Christ divided history into two periods: this age of sin, when sin rules, and the age to come, when the Messiah is expected to bring the kingdom of God to earth. Schweitzer concluded that an apocalyptic understanding of the kingdom was foundational not only for Christ's teaching, but also to understanding his life. Thus, Schweitzer maintained that Jesus believed that it was his vocation to become the coming Son of Man. Initially, Jesus revealed this messianic secret only to Peter, James, and John. Later, Peter told it to the rest of the Twelve. Judas told the secret to the high priest, who used it as the grounds for Jesus' execution (Mark 14:61–64; cf. Dan. 7:13).

According to Schweitzer, when Jesus sent out the Twelve on a mission to proclaim the coming kingdom of God, he did not expect them to return. The Twelve were the “men of violence” (cf. Matt. 11:12) who would provoke the messianic tribulation that would herald the kingdom. Whereas some earlier scholars believed that one could only wait passively for the kingdom, Schweitzer believed that the mission of Jesus was designed to provoke its coming. When this did not happen, Jesus determined to give his own life as a ransom for many (Mark 10:45) and so cause the kingdom to come.

According to Schweitzer, Jesus took matters into his own hands by precipitating his death, hoping that this would be the catalyst for God to make the wheel of history turn to its climax—the arrival of the kingdom of God. But, said Schweitzer, Jesus was wrong again, and he died in despair. So for Schweitzer, Jesus never witnessed the dawning of the age to come; it lay in the distant future, separated from this present age.

On the positive side, Schweitzer called attention to the fact that the message of Jesus is rooted in first-century apocalyptic Judaism and its concept of the kingdom of God. This connection is still foundational to a proper understanding of biblical prophecy and the Gospels today. On the negative side, Schweitzer’s selective use of evidence and rejection of the historicity of much of the Gospel tradition resulted in a skewed perspective on the present dimensions of Jesus’ eschatology.

Realized eschatology. In contrast to futurist eschatology, where the kingdom of God awaits a final consummation at the end of history, realized eschatology views the kingdom of God as already realized in the person and mission of Jesus. The futurist aspects of Jesus’ teaching are reduced to a minimum, and his apocalyptic language is viewed as symbolic of theological truths.

The person most responsible for advocating this position is British scholar C. H. Dodd. In his 1935 book *Parables of the Kingdom*, he focused on Jesus’ teachings that announced the arrival of the kingdom with his coming. For instance, in Luke 11:20 Jesus says, “But if I drive out demons by the finger of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you” (cf. Luke 17:21; Matt. 13). Eschatology becomes a matter of the present experience rather than any kind of future event. The kingdom has fully come in the messianic ministry of Jesus.

Most interpreters have criticized Dodd’s realized eschatology for ignoring Jesus’ teachings that point to a future consummation of the kingdom (e.g., Matt. 24–25; Mark 13). When all of Jesus’ teachings are considered, futurist eschatology balances realized eschatology. To be sure, the kingdom arrived with Jesus, but Jesus himself taught that history still awaits a final completion. The kingdom of God is both “already” and “not yet,” which leads us to the third view of the relationship of the kingdom of God to the ministry of Jesus Christ.

Inaugurated eschatology. The third view, inaugurated eschatology, is commonly connected with the twentieth-century Swiss theologian Oscar Cullmann. Like others before him, Cullmann understood that the Jewish notion of the two ages formed an important background for understanding the message of Jesus. According to Judaism, history is divided into two periods: this age of sin and the age to come (i.e., the kingdom of God). For Jews the advent of the Messiah would effect the shift from the former to the latter. In other words, Judaism viewed the two ages as consecutive. According to Cullmann, Jesus Christ announced that the end of time, the kingdom of God, had arrived within history (see Mark 1:15 pars.; esp. Luke 4:43; 6:20; 7:28; 8:1, 10; 9:2, 11, 27, 60, 62; 10:9, 11; 11:20; 13:18, 20; 16:16; 17:20–21; 18:16–17, 24–25, 29; Acts 28:31). Yet other passages suggest that although the age to come had already dawned, it was not yet complete. It awaited the second coming for its full realization (Luke 13:28–29; 14:15; 19:11; 21:31; 22:16, 18; 23:51; Acts 1:6). Hence the adjective “inaugurated” characterizes this eschatology. Such a view is pervasive in the NT (see, e.g., Acts

2:17–21; 3:18, 24; 1 Cor. 15:24; 1 Tim. 4:1; 2 Tim. 3:1; Heb. 1:2; 1 John 2:18). So for inaugurated eschatology, the two ages are simultaneous: the age to come exists in the midst of this present age. Christians therefore live in between the two ages until the parousia (second coming of Christ).

We may break down the data in the Synoptic Gospels regarding the "already/not yet" aspects concerning the kingdom of God in this manner: Mark, probably the first Gospel written, records Jesus' programmatic statement in 1:15: "The time has come. . . . The kingdom of God has come near." Mark, along with Luke and Matthew, then goes on to demonstrate that Jesus' miracles, teachings, death, and resurrection inaugurated the kingdom of God. Yet it is also clear from Matthew, Mark, and Luke that the final manifestation of the kingdom has not yet happened. We may draw on Luke as representative of all three Synoptics. Luke's Gospel indicates that the kingdom was present for Jesus (Luke 7:28; 8:10; 10:9–11; 11:20; 16:16; 17:20–21), but it also awaited the second coming for its completion (6:20–26; 11:2; 12:49–50, 51–53; 13:24–30; 21:25–29; 22:15–18, 30). The same dual aspect of the kingdom pertains to Luke's second volume, Acts. The kingdom was present in Jesus' ministry and now through his disciples (Acts 1:3; 8:12; 19:8; 20:25; 28:23–31), but it will not be completed until Christ comes again (1:6; 14:22).

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

John's Gospel has only three references to the kingdom of God. Nicodemus was told by Jesus that he needed to be born again to enter the kingdom of God (3:3–5). Yet Jesus' kingdom is not worldly in nature, but spiritual (18:36). Although the Gospel of John contains both the present ("already") aspect and the future ("not yet") aspect, the focus is clearly on the present. This is why many scholars label the Fourth Gospel the "Gospel of Realized Eschatology." This emphasis on the "already" can be seen in John in the following ways: (1) Eternal life, or entrance into the kingdom of God, can be a present possession (3:5–6, 36; 6:47, 51, 58; 8:51; 10:28; 11:24–26). (2) The eschatological promise of sonship is granted to the believer in Jesus now (1:12–13; 3:3–8; 4:14). (3) The general resurrection has already begun (5:25). (4) The Spirit, the gift of the end time, currently indwells believers (7:37–39; 14:15–31; 15:26–27; 16:5–16; 20:22–23). (5) Final judgment is determined by one's present response to Jesus (3:19; 5:22–24, 27, 30–38; 9:38; 12:31–33). (6) The spirit of antichrist has already entered the world scene to oppose Christ (6:70; 13:2, 27). (7) Jesus' death on the cross seems to absorb some elements of the messianic woes or aspects of tribulation. In other words, Jesus' passion was where the end-time holy war was waged, and his death and resurrection began the end of the forces of evil (15:18–16:11).

On the other hand, the Gospel of John also includes some typical future ("not yet") aspects of eschatology. For example, the future resurrection is still expected (5:26–30). Likewise, the future second coming of Christ is alluded to (14:1–4; 21:22). Admittedly, however, the "already" aspect of the kingdom of God seems to overshadow the "not yet" perspective in the Fourth Gospel.

PAULINE LITERATURE

The phrase "kingdom of God" and/or "kingdom of Christ" occurs twelve times in Paul's writings.

Text	Kingdom Description	Verb Tense
Rom. 14:17	kingdom of God	present
1 Cor. 4:20	kingdom of God	present
1 Cor. 6:9–10	kingdom of God (2x)	future

1 Cor. 15:24	kingdom of Christ/God	present/future
1 Cor. 15:50	kingdom of God	future
Gal. 5:21	kingdom of God	future
Eph. 5:5	kingdom of Christ/God	future
Col. 1:13	kingdom of the Son	present
Col. 4:11	kingdom of God	present
1 Thess. 2:12	his [God's] kingdom	future
2 Thess. 1:5	kingdom of God	future

Three observations emerge from the chart: (1) The kingdom of Christ/God is both present and future, already here and not yet complete. This is consistent with the Gospels and Acts. (2) Christ and God are, in at least two instances, interchanged, suggesting equality of status between them (cf. Eph. 5:5; Rev. 11:15; 12:10). (3) In 1 Cor. 15:24 we find the most precise description of the exact relationship between the kingdoms of Christ and God: the interim messianic kingdom begun at the resurrection of Christ will one day give way to the eternal kingdom of God. Such a temporary kingdom is attested to in apocalyptic Judaism and may underlie Rev. 20:1–6. For Paul, then, the order of history would be as follows:

This age → temporary → messianic kingdom the age to come (kingdom of God)

Christians therefore live in between the two ages, in the messianic kingdom.

Hebrews and the General Epistles

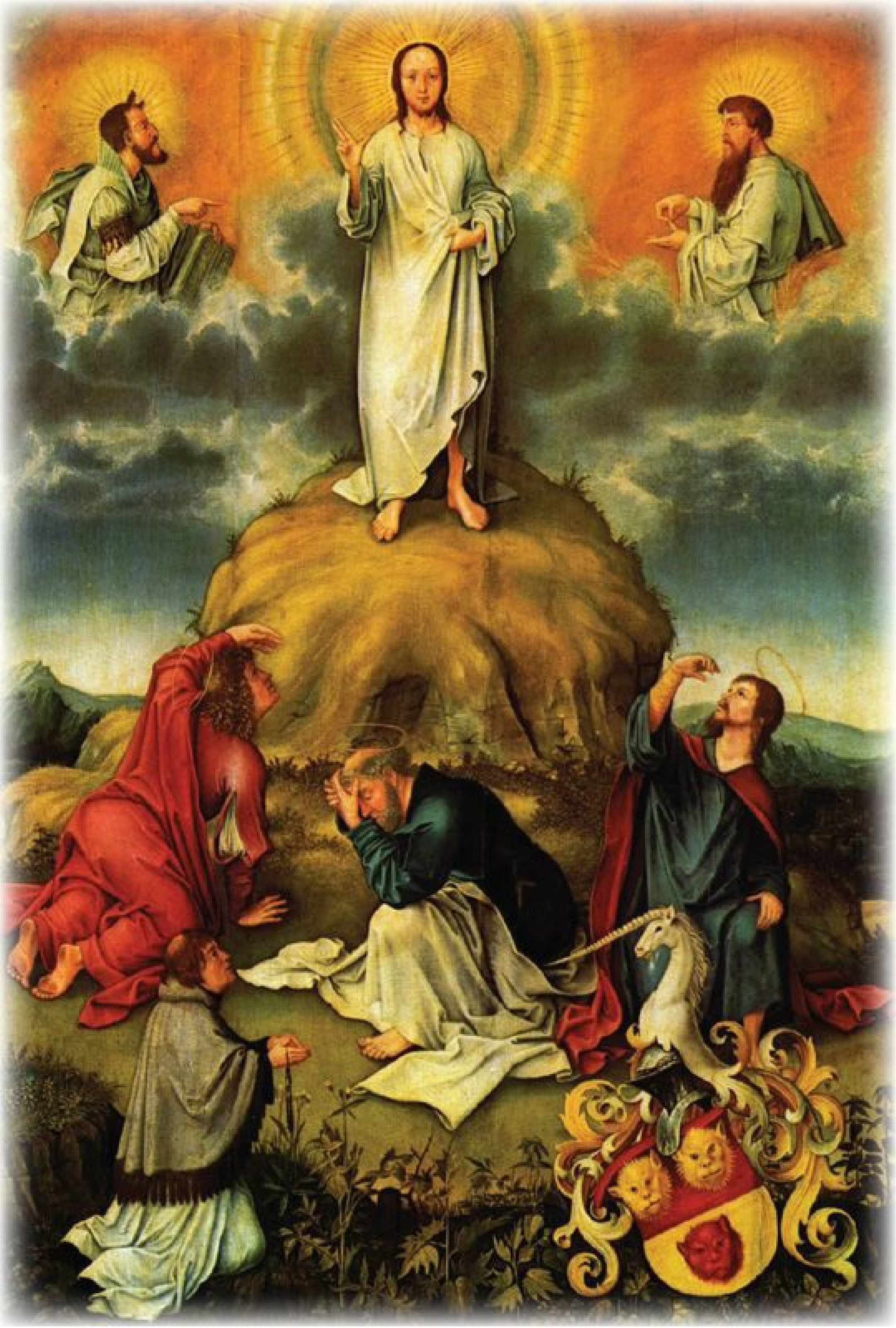
Hebrews and the General Epistles continue the theme of the "already/not yet" aspects of the kingdom.

Hebrews. The following ideas associated in Second Temple Judaism with the arrival of God's kingdom are seen by the author of Hebrews to have been fulfilled at the first coming of Christ: (1) the appearance of the Messiah of the last days indicates the dawning of the kingdom of God (1:2; 9:9–10); (2) the great tribulation/messianic woes that were expected to occur in connection with the advent of the Messiah are now here (2:5–18; cf. 5:8–9; 7:27–28; 10:12; 12:2); (3) the outpouring of the Holy Spirit has happened (6:4–5); (4) the manifestation of the eschatological high priest at the end of history has taken place in Jesus (7:26–28), who has also established the new covenant of the last days (8:6–13). Compare the preceding statements in Hebrews with that author's explicit mention of the presence of the kingdom of God in 12:18–28. And yet the kingdom of God is not yet fully here. The church continues to suffer the messianic woes, as is evidenced in the intermingling of Jesus' suffering of the great tribulation with the present afflictions of the Christian (2:5–18; 3:7–4:6; 5:7–6:12; 10:19–39; 12:1–2; 13:11–16). Furthermore, the exhortations to persevere in the faith that punctuate the book of Hebrews (2:1–4; 3:7–4:13; 5:11–6:12; 10:19–39; 12:14–29) are a familiar theme in Jewish and Christian apocalyptic literature.

The General Epistles. The main message of James is that the last days are here (1:2; 5:3) and with it the messianic woes (1:2–12; 5:1–12). Therefore, believers will need to faithfully endure the great tribulation until the second coming of Christ. But there are two indications that James also teaches that the kingdom of God has dawned in the midst of the great tribulation. First, Christians experience even now the eschatological quality of joy (James 1:2–3; cf. Joel 2:21–27). Second, Christians also share in the end-time gift of wisdom (James 1:5–8).

First Peter is similar to James with regard to its inaugurated eschatology. Thus, the church suffers the messianic woes/great tribulation (1 Pet. 1:6, 11; 3:13–17; 4:12–19; 5:1–9). Nevertheless, the age to come/kingdom of God has broken into the midst of this age, as evidenced by the eschatological joy and God’s protective power that it brings (1:5–6).

Second Peter does seem to stress the “not yet” aspect of the kingdom of God. Thus, the kingdom of God still waits to be entered (1:11), is hindered by end-time apostasy (2 Pet. 2), and has been postponed (3:1–10). Yet the “already” aspect of the kingdom is not entirely absent. This is evidenced by the fact that the transfiguration of Christ on the mountain was a display of the coming power and glory of the age to come, a glory revealed to the disciples on the mountain and now communicated to all believers (1:16–19).



The Transfiguration of Christ by Meister des Universitäts-Altars (sixteenth century AD). The transfiguration was a display of the power and glory still to come in the kingdom of God.

Jude is devoted to alerting Christians to the reality that they are in the midst of the end-time holy war (vv. 3, 20–23), as can be seen by their struggle with the false teaching of end-time apostasy (vv. 5–19). Nevertheless, because believers possess the eschatological gift of the Holy Spirit, they will prevail to fully enter the kingdom of God (v. 20).

The Letters of John attest to the overlapping of the two ages—that is, inaugurated eschatology.

Thus, on the one hand, the spirit of antichrist is here (1 John 2:18; 2 John 7), along with the false teaching that it breeds (1 John 2:20–29; cf. 2–3 John); but on the other hand, the Johannine community has the end-time anointing of the Holy Spirit, which preserves believers from evil and deception (1 John 2:20–21; 3:1–10). Moreover, Christians presently have eternal life through Christ, one of the blessings of the kingdom of God (1 John 5:11–13).

REVELATION

The "already/not yet" aspects of the kingdom of God are manifested in Revelation in the following way: the kingdom of God has already dawned in heaven, but it has not yet appeared on earth. Regarding the former, it is clear from 1:9; 5:1–14; 12:1–6 that Jesus' death and resurrection inaugurated the advent of the kingdom of God in heaven. Thus, Jesus obediently underwent the messianic woes on the cross and was then raised to heavenly glory, triumphant over the great tribulation. There in heaven, Christ reigns as the invisible Lord over all (including Caesar). But that the kingdom of God has not yet descended to earth is clear in Revelation from two present realities. First, even though Jesus has endured the great tribulation/messianic woes, his followers continue to face many trials (chaps. 6–18). There is no deliverance for them from such affliction until the return of Christ in glory (chap. 19). The only possible exception to this is the divine protection of the 144,000 (chaps. 7; 14). Second, the kingdom of God has not appeared on earth; that event awaits the parousia (chap. 20 [assuming that the premillennial interpretation of that chapter is the most viable reading]). In all of this, it seems that the messianic woes/great tribulation are the divine means for purging the earth in preparation for the future arrival of the temporal, messianic kingdom (chap. 20). After Christ's one-thousand-year reign on earth, this temporal messianic kingdom will give way to the eternal kingdom of God and its new earth and new heaven (chaps. 21–22). It must be acknowledged, however, that interpretations of chapters 20–22 greatly vary, depending on whether one takes a premillennial, amillennial, or postmillennial perspective.

CONCLUSION

The preceding data thus seem to confirm that the most apt description of the relationship between the two ages and the kingdom of God that informs the NT is inaugurated eschatology: with the first coming of Christ, the kingdom of God/the age to come dawned, but it will not be until the second coming of Christ that the age to come/kingdom of God will be complete. The church therefore lives in between the times. That is to say, the age to come has broken into this present age, and it is only through the eye of faith that one can now perceive the presence of the kingdom of God.

KINGS, BOOKS OF These books originally formed a single book and were first divided into separate books in the LXX. The book of Kings recounts the history of Israel from the time of Solomon (c. 970 BC) to the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 BC. Kings continues the narrative of 2 Samuel, with 1 Kings 1:1–2:11 concluding the story of David. The book has many references back to David (see the promises to David in 2 Sam. 7:1–17; 1 Kings 8:14–26), and prophecy spoken in earlier books reaches its fulfillment only in Kings (e.g., prophecy against Jericho [Josh. 6:26; 1 Kings 16:34] and against the house of Eli [1 Sam. 2:27–36; 3:11–14; 1 Kings 2:27]), showing that it is actually part of a larger historical work beginning in Joshua and ending in 2 Kings.

AUTHORSHIP AND DATE

The book of Kings is anonymous. From the text itself, however, we can deduce a probable situation for its composition. The end of Kings tells the story of the destruction of Jerusalem (c. 586 BC) and the beginning of the Babylonian exile, with the last event narrated (the freeing of Jehoiachin to eat with the Babylonian king) dating to around 560 BC. Therefore, Kings as we know it could not have been composed prior to these events. It is unlikely that the book was written after the exile; otherwise, the author would have referred to the return to Jerusalem. This puts the date of the composition of Kings to the period when Judah was in Babylonian exile and probably between 560 and 539 BC.

However, parts of the book clearly were written before the exile. The author of Kings drew on a variety of sources, three of which are explicitly referred to in the text (though none survive today): "the book of the annals of Solomon" (1 Kings 11:41), "the book of the annals of the kings of Israel" (1 Kings 14:19), and "the book of the annals of the kings of Judah" (1 Kings 14:29). These explicit references to sources direct the reader to information not given in Kings, leaving open the possibility that even more sources were used. The book of Chronicles suggests that prophets who were active in the reigns of the various kings of Judah and Israel were sources for the author of Kings (e.g., 2 Chron. 9:29 lists the prophets Nathan, Ahijah, and Iddo as sources for the history of Solomon). So the Bible itself tells us that multiple sources were used to compose Kings, and that some of these sources stem from God's prophets. It is no wonder that in Jewish tradition the section of the Bible in which Kings is set has been called the "Former Prophets."

Some scholars believe that a first edition of Kings was written before the exile and may have come out during King Josiah's reign (c. 609 BC). Josiah is an important figure in the story: his birth is prophesied (1 Kings 13:2) three hundred years in advance, and he restores true worship, living up to the ideal set by David (2 Kings 22:2; 23:25). Josiah's religious reforms may have originally been the climax to this first edition of Kings, which hoped that Josiah would fulfill the Davidic promises and was written to support Josiah's reforms. After the exile, this preexilic book was updated in light of the apostasy of the later kings of Judah in order to explain that the destruction of Jerusalem resulted from the sins of these kings (e.g., 2 Kings 24:3). This second edition of Kings is what came to be the canonical book of Kings as we know it.

GENRE

The genre of Kings is clearly that of historiography (history writing), as it presents an account of Israel's past. Kings is an extraordinary literary achievement. Prior to its composition, there was nothing that can properly be called "history writing" in the ancient world. Since the writing of Samuel–Kings predates Greek historiography, many scholars view them as the first history ever written.

When treating Kings as history, we must remember that it is not history as we would write it today. The author had chiefly theological reasons for his selection of material, and at times he refers to divine causation to the exclusion of any human factors. For example, 2 Kings 15:37 says that God sent the kings of Aram and Israel against Judah, but it does not comment on the political reasons for the attack (such reasons surely would have existed). Conversely, modern historiography would focus solely on the human reasons for an event and exclude any possible divine causation. In this way, Kings does not live up to the standard of history writing as practiced today, though as ancient history writing it is an exemplar.

The history contained within Kings has been corroborated by extrabiblical material in many ways and fits well into an overall ancient Near Eastern historical context. For example, the names of many of the kings referred to in the book have also been found in ancient Assyrian sources. Kings, however, does not agree perfectly with what we otherwise know about the history of the ancient Near East, and some adjustment is necessary to make it fit with other evidence. However, if the partial nature of archaeological evidence and the acknowledgment of the selectivity of the author of Kings are taken into account, radical distrust of its history is not justified, as it proves itself quite trustworthy.

STYLE

Kings is brilliantly written and contains some of the most memorable stories in the Bible. Although it is a historical writing, Kings, like any good novel, contains both round (e.g., Ahab) and flat (e.g., Omri) characters. Its plot is compelling as it tells the history of the kingship in Israel from its apex under Solomon in all his glory down to the loss of the kingdom, already foreshadowed in 1 Kings 9:6–9. It begins as a story about one nation under God, but it becomes the tragic story of two nations that continually turn away from their God only to finally be judged by him.

THE PLAN OF THE BOOK

Kings gives an account of each of the kings of Israel and Judah, noting when he began to reign, his age at accession, the length of his reign, the name of his mother, and an evaluation of his reign. The evaluation of each king is concerned not with economics or military success; rather, the kings are judged either to have "done evil in the LORD's sight" or to have "done what was right in the LORD's sight," depending on their faithfulness to God and the purity of the nation's worship. The gauge for judging the kings is the law of Deuteronomy. According to Deuteronomy, God should be worshiped only in the "place the LORD will choose" (Deut. 12:26; see also vv. 5, 11, 14, 18), making worship at other sanctuaries illegitimate. Proper worship of God is without the use of aids such as images (e.g., "calves" [1 Kings 12:28–30] or "snakes" [2 Kings 18:4]) or poles, stone pillars, etc.). Deuteronomy heavily influenced Kings and is quoted several times (e.g., 1 Kings 11:2; 2 Kings 14:6). In fact, the law book found during Josiah's reign (2 Kings 22:8) appears to be a form of the book of Deuteronomy (as evidenced by the character of the reforms). Due to this influence, the books of Deuteronomy through 2 Kings are widely referred to as the Deuteronomistic History.

THEMES

Wholehearted reliance on God. Kings is primarily concerned with proper worship and faithfulness to God. David set the standard of having a heart "fully devoted to the LORD" (1 Kings 15:3) and is the measuring stick by which all the southern kings are judged. Thus, Solomon is contrasted with David when Solomon falls away from God (1 Kings 11:4), and when Hezekiah trusts in God, he is compared with David (2 Kings 18:3). In northern Israel Jeroboam and Ahab are the models of the degenerate king. Jeroboam is known for setting up golden calves (1 Kings 12:28) in northern Israel to be used in the worship of Yahweh, and Ahab is infamous for his promotion of Baal worship in Israel (1 Kings 16:30–33). In Kings, when kings of Israel are assessed, they are often said to partake in Jeroboam's sins (2 Kings 10:31) or judged for doing "as Ahab king of Israel had done" (2 Kings 21:3; see also 8:18, 27; 21:3). This apostasy culminates in the destruction of the northern kingdom by Assyria in 722 BC (2 Kings 17).

Exclusive commitment to Yahweh meant that the worship of other gods was the worst sin of the Israelite kings, and their fortunes were connected to their policies regarding the worship of Yahweh. Throughout its story, Kings contrasts the themes of apostasy and religious reform. Beginning with

Jeroboam, most of the kings are apostates and fail to worship properly. Four Judean Kings (Asa, Jehoshaphat, Amaziah, and Azariah) undertake some religious reforms, but they fall short of the ideal. Near the end of the story, two Judean kings fulfill the ideal: Hezekiah and Josiah. Yet following their reforms the next king turns to even greater apostasy, bringing God's judgment on the nation.

The fulfillment of the prophetic word. Prophets are prominent in the story of Kings, with both famous (Isaiah, Elijah, Elisha) and anonymous prophets (e.g., 1 Kings 13) playing important roles as bearers of the prophetic word of God. Many short-term prophecies are fulfilled in the story of Kings (e.g., 1 Kings 13:11–32), where the reader can perceive a pattern of prophecy and fulfillment that helps to structure the story of Kings. The way a prophecy is fulfilled is often surprising (see the prophecy of 1 Kings 20:42 and its fulfillment in 1 Kings 22:34–35). The prediction of Josiah's birth and reform centuries in advance ties together the beginning of Kings with one of the most significant events near the end of the book. This shows how historical events are at the mercy of the Lord of history and his prophetic word.

NEW TESTAMENT CONNECTIONS

Throughout Kings the southern kingdom of Judah has Davidic kings on the throne right up until the exile (compared to the northern kingdom of Israel, which changed dynasties ten times). However, the destruction of Jerusalem appears to end the Davidic dynasty. Will the promises to David ever come true? The concluding paragraph at the end of Kings, which describes Jehoiachin, the last king from David's line, being freed from prison and allowed to eat with the Babylonian king, is messianic and holds out hope that the promises to David will be fulfilled. Jehoiachin represents the hope for the future deliverance of Israel and of the world. In 2 Kings 25:28 it is told how the new king of Babylon "spoke kindly to [Jehoiachin] and gave him a seat of honor higher than those of the other kings who were with him in Babylon." Here, the Hebrew word for "seat of honor" is literally the word for "throne." Thus, Kings ends with a son of David on the throne! The promises to David are still intact. The line of Judah survives, and a tiny shoot has begun to sprout from the stump of David, which will culminate in the Messiah himself. The promise that a son of David would rule is never again fulfilled, except in Jesus Christ, who is now at the right hand of the throne of God and will return one day.

OUTLINE

I. The United Monarchy: The Reign of Solomon (1 Kings 1:1–11:25)

II. The Division of the Kingdom (1 Kings 11:26–14:31)

III. The Divided Kingdoms of Israel and Judah (1 Kings 15:1–16:22)

IV. The Dynasty of Omri and the Baal Cult in Israel and Judah (1 Kings 16:23–2 Kings 12)

V. The Divided Kingdoms of Israel and Judah (2 Kings 13–16)

VI. The Fall of Israel (2 Kings 17)

VII. The Kingdom of Judah Alone (2 Kings 18–23)

VIII. The Fall of Judah (2 Kings 24–25)

KING'S GARDEN This garden, near "the gate between the two walls" of Jerusalem (2 Kings 25:4) and the Pool of Siloam (Neh. 3:15), was used by King Zedekiah and his army to escape from the Babylonian forces (2 Kings 25:4; Jer. 39:4; 52:7).

KING'S HIGHWAY This major ancient Near Eastern trade route began in Heliopolis, Egypt, and cut across the Sinai Peninsula to Aqaba (on the shores of the Red Sea). It then headed straight north to Damascus (on the Transjordan side), ending at Resafa on the upper Euphrates River. It was crucial to the trade of Edom, Moab, Ammon, and Syria. Some of the more important cities along this trade route were Heliopolis (Egypt), Clysma (modern Suez), Eilat, Aqaba, Medeba (modern Madaba), Rabbah/Philadelphia (modern Amman), Gerasa, Bozrah, Damascus, and Tadmor. It is mentioned three times in the Bible (Num. 20:17, 19; 21:22), generally referring to the major route through Moab and Ammon.

Remains of the ancient King's Highway in Jordan

KING'S POOL A location in Jerusalem mentioned by Nehemiah (Neh. 2:14), it may be the same as the pool of Shelah, also known as Siloam (3:15).

KING'S TREASURE HOUSE *See* House of the Rolls.

KING'S VALE, KING'S VALLEY *See* Shaveh.

KINNERETH The name of two places, possibly from the Hebrew word for "harp" due to the shape of the lake bearing its name or the shape of the hill on which the city sat. **(1)** A large lake in northern Israel. It was the eastern border of Canaan and part of the western boundary of the tribal territory of Gad. Kinnereth (Deut. 3:17; Josh. 11:2; cf. NIV mg. for Num. 34:11; Josh. 12:3; 13:27) was also known as the Sea of Gennesaret (Mark 6:53; Luke 5:1), the Sea of Tiberius (John 6:1; 21:1), and the Sea of Galilee (Matt. 15:29; Mark 1:16). **(2)** A fortified city, and the region around it, allotted to the tribe of Naphtali (Josh. 19:35). Ben-Hadad of Syria conquered the region after King Asa of Judah paid him a large amount of silver and gold to break his treaty with King Baasha of Israel (1 Kings 15:20).

KINSMAN In the OT, a relative within an association of families that together comprise a clan (e.g., Lev. 25:48–49). Sometimes translated as "fellow Israelite" or "relative" (Lev. 25:25, 35, 47–48, but not 25:14–15), a kinsman is more literally a "brother" who has certain responsibilities for aiding another of his kin in times of hardship, especially when a portion of the clan's land is involved (see Josh. 13:24–31). The greatest responsibility falls to the closest of kin, the *go'el*, the "kinsman-redeemer" (Ruth 4:1–8 [NIV 1984]; cf. Job 19:25; NIV: "guardian-redeemer").

When hard economic times force a kinsman to sell some property (or rather lease it [cf. Lev. 25:15–16]), the kinsman-redeemer is to redeem what has been sold, thus keeping the land with the clan (25:25). The poorer kinsman may then work for the kinsman-redeemer in order to pay off the debt, though the relationship of both individuals is to remain that of brothers and not become that of a master and a slave (25:39–46). If a poor man sells himself to an alien's clan, a kinsman should purchase him so that he can work within his own clan (25:47–49). The kinsman-redeemer also has the duty of avenging the blood of a murdered kinsman (Num. 35:21).

The role of a kinsman-redeemer in Israelite society is displayed in the book of Ruth. Boaz, a kinsman of Naomi and her widowed daughter-in-law Ruth, meets with the kinsman-redeemer to discuss the acquisition of the land of Ruth's deceased husband, Naomi's son Mahlon. Although the kinsman-redeemer at first agrees to redeem the land (Ruth 4:1–4), he changes his mind when Boaz points out that along with the land would come Ruth and the responsibility to maintain the name of Mahlon (Ruth 4:5–6; cf. Deut. 25:5–10). As next in line, Boaz acquires the land, Ruth, and the responsibility to maintain Mahlon's name on the property (Ruth 4:7–10).

God, who owns all the land (Lev. 25:23–24) and who views all of Israel as his clan (Ps. 74:2), accepts the role of redeemer (*go'el*) (e.g., Ps. 19:14; Isa. 41:14; 43:14).

KINSMAN-REDEEMER *See* Kinsman.

KIOS *See* Chios.

KIR This Hebrew place name means "wall." **(1)** A fortified stronghold of Moab situated on a strategic hilltop against which Isaiah prophesied (Isa. 15:1). The modern name, "Kerak," is found in the Targumim. Its location is about eleven miles east of the Dead Sea and eighteen miles south of the Arnon River. Some scholars believe that this is the same city as Kir Hareseth (2 Kings 3:25). **(2)** The Hebrew name for a Mesopotamian city, Der (the Akkadian word meaning "wall"), which is situated east of the Tigris River, on the border between Sumer and Elam (Persia). This is the location of modern al-Badrah in Iraq. Kir and Elam are portrayed together in military array against Judah in Isaiah's oracle concerning Jerusalem (Isa. 22:6). It is the place from which the Arameans migrated to Syria. This migration, along with emigration of the Philistines from Caphtor, is likened to the

Israelites' exodus from Egypt—all declared as being accomplished by Yahweh (Amos 9:7). The descendants of those first immigrants were exiled back to Kir when King Tiglath-pileser III of Assyria conquered Damascus during the reign of King Ahaz of Judah (2 Kings 16:9; Amos 1:5). *See also* Kir Hareseth.

KIR HARASETH, KIR HARES *See* Kir Hareseth.

KIR HARESETH This Hebrew place name means "city of pottery." It appears in various forms in the Hebrew text: Kir Heres (Jer. 48:31, 36), Kir Hares (Isa. 16:11), Kir Hareseth (Isa. 16:7), and Kir Haraseth (2 Kings 3:25). All of these forms refer to the same city, Kir Hareseth. Some scholars also identify Kir in Moab (Isa. 15:1) with this city. This was a major fortified stronghold of Moab, possibly the capital. It was mentioned by the prophets Isaiah (Isa. 16:7, 11) and Jeremiah (Jer. 48:31) in their words of judgment for Moab. The city is associated with modern Kerak, located about fifty miles southeast of Jerusalem and eleven miles east of the Dead Sea. It is situated on a strategic hill surrounded by steep valleys. King Jehoram of Israel, King Jehoshaphat of Judah, and the king of Edom joined forces to combat King Mesha of Moab, who had rebelled against the king of Israel (2 Kings 3:5). They were successful in overthrowing the Moabite cities and finally had cornered Mesha in Kir Hareseth. Mesha tried to break through the besiegers with seven hundred swordsmen, but he failed. Finally, he offered up his oldest son, his heir, as a burnt offering on the wall of the city. Because of this, a great wrath came against Israel, and they withdrew from pursuing Mesha and returned to their own land (2 Kings 3:4–27). Later, the Babylonian destruction of Kir Hareseth was prophesied as punishment from the hand of God (Isa. 15:1; 16:7, 11; Jer. 48:31, 36).

KIR-HARESH, KIR HERES *See* Kir Hareseth.

KIRIATHAIM **(1)** A Levitical city in the tribal territory of Naphtali (1 Chron. 6:76). It was one of the cities of refuge. In the parallel list of cities (Josh. 21:32) it is identified as Kartan. The site is unknown. **(2)** A city in the territory of Reuben, east of the Jordan River (Josh. 13:19), that the Reubenites had taken from the Amorites (Num. 32:37) and settled before crossing the Jordan to participate in the conquest of the land. During the exile, control of the city was retaken by King Mesha of Moab (Jer. 48:1, 23; Ezek. 25:9). It is possibly also identified as Shaveh Kiriathaim, named in the account of Kedorlaomer's invasion (Gen. 14:5).

KIRIATH ARBA *See* Hebron.

KIRIATHARIM A city to which inhabitants returned after the exile (Ezra 2:25 [NIV: "Kiriath Jearim"]). The usual form of the name is "Kiriath Jearim," which occurs in the parallel account of Neh. 7:29. *See also* Kiriath Jearim.

KIRIATH BAAL Meaning "city of Baal," this is an alternate name for the Gibeonite city Kiriath Jearim (Josh. 15:60; 18:14). *See also* Kiriath Jearim.

KIRIATH HUZOTH A Moabite city to which Balaam went with Balak king of Moab, who sacrificed oxen and sheep to entice Baal to curse the Israelites (Num. 22:39).

KIRIATH JEARIM This city, whose name means "city of forests," is also known as Kiriatharim

(Ezra 2:25 [NIV: “Kiriath Jearim”]), Baalah (Josh. 15:9), Baalah in Judah (2 Sam. 6:2), and Kiriath Baal (Josh. 15:60; 18:14). It is one of the cities of the Gibeonites, who tricked Joshua into a treaty for peace (Josh. 9:17). This city was part of the inheritance allotted to the tribe of Judah (15:9).

The tribe of Dan encamped at Kiriath Jearim when it went out to seek its inheritance (Judg. 18:12). After being returned by the Philistines, the ark of the covenant remained here for twenty years until David moved it to Jerusalem (1 Sam. 6:21–7:2). When David first attempted to relocate the ark from Kiriath Jearim to Jerusalem, Uzzah was struck dead because he touched the ark as it was moved improperly (2 Sam. 6:1–8). The faithful prophet Uriah, a contemporary of Jeremiah, was from Kiriath Jearim (Jer. 26:20). Exiles from Kiriath Jearim returned from the Babylonian captivity with Zerubbabel (Neh. 7:29). The Romans built an outpost over the ruins and garrisoned the Tenth Legion here.

KIRIATH SANNAH A town in the hill country among those inherited by the tribe of Judah. This place name may be an alternate name or inadvertent scribal error (i.e., dittography with the preceding city in the list, Dannah) for Keriath Sepher, also known as Debir (Josh. 15:49).

KIRIATH SEPHER An alternate name for the ancient city Debir (Josh. 15:15–16; Judg. 1:11–12). Another form (possibly due to scribal error), “Kiriath Sannah,” refers to the same city (Josh. 15:49).

KIRIOTH *See* Kerioth.

KIRJATH *See* Kiriath Jearim.

KIRJATHARBA *See* Hebron.

KIRJATHARIM *See* Kiriatharim.

KIRJATHBAAL *See* Kiriath Baal.

KIRJATHHUZOTH *See* Kiriath Huzoth.

KIRJATHJEARIM *See* Kiriath Jearim.

KIRJATHSANNAH *See* Kiriath Sannah.

KIRJATHSEPHER *See* Kiriath Sepher.

KIR OF MOAB *See* Kir; Kir Hareseth.

KISH **(1)** A Benjamite from Gibeah, the son of Abiel and the father of Saul (1 Sam. 9:1–2). According to 1 Chron. 8:33; 9:39, however, Ner was the father of Kish. Some suggest that Kish was the son of Ner and a grandson of Abiel. **(2)** A son (or descendant) of Jeiel and Maakah (1 Chron. 8:30; 9:36), possibly equated with the Kish of 1 Sam. 9:1–2. **(3)** A Levite of the family of Merari (1 Chron. 23:21). **(4)** A Levite of the Merarite family who assisted in the cleansing of the temple during Hezekiah’s reforms (2 Chron. 29:12). **(5)** A Benjamite ancestor of Mordecai (Esther 2:5), likely the same person as the Kish of 1 Sam. 9:1–2.

KISHI A Levite, a descendant of Merari (1 Chron. 6:44). The name is an alternate form of “Kushaiah.” He was the father of Ethan, a Levitical singer under Heman (1 Chron. 15:17). *See also* Kushaiah.

KISHION A city in the territory of the tribe of Issachar (Josh. 19:20) allotted to the Gershonites, one of the clans of the Levites (Josh. 21:28). In a parallel list of Levitical cities, it is called “Kedesh” (1 Chron. 6:72). The area is southwest of the Sea of Galilee and west of the Jordan River, but its exact location is unknown.

KISHON A river, whose name means “bending” or “curving,” that is fed by several wadis that meet four miles northeast of Megiddo and extends for twenty-three miles. Kishon was the scene of the defeat of Sisera by the armies of Deborah and Barak (Judg. 4:7, 13; 5:19, 21). Later it was the site of Elijah’s execution of the prophets of Baal after the contest on Mount Carmel (1 Kings 18:40).

The Kishon River

KISLEV The ninth month in the postexilic Jewish calendar (Neh. 1:1; Zech. 7:1). Kislev normally occurs in the months of November–December in the Gregorian calendar. The name of the month apparently derives from the Babylonian *Kislimu*.

KISLON A Benjamite, the father of the tribal chief Elidad, who was one of the leaders appointed to divide the land for inheritance (Num. 34:21).

KISLOTH TABOR *See* Kesulloth.

KISON *See* Kishon.

KISS While kissing is sometimes a sign of an erotic relationship, especially in Song of Songs (1:2; 8:1), in the Bible kissing generally is a sign of respect or friendship. Paul viewed kissing as an important sign of love between believers, instructing them to greet each other with a “holy kiss” (Rom. 16:16; 1 Cor. 16:20). Peter also instructs readers to greet each other with “a kiss of love” (1 Pet. 5:14). Kissing in these contexts was very similar to the contemporary practice of shaking hands.

In the OT kissing was often used as a sign of blessing, as when Laban kissed his grandchildren (Gen. 31:28, 55), and Jacob on his deathbed kissed his sons (Gen. 48:10). Luke 7:36–50 records the act of a sinful woman anointing Jesus’ feet with perfume and kissing his feet in a sign of humble devotion to him. Kissing could also be a sign of homage to an idol (Hos. 13:2).

Probably the most famous kiss in the Bible is Judas’s kiss of Jesus to identify him to those who intended to arrest him (Matt. 26:49; Mark 14:44; Luke 22:47–48). Thus, the phrase “Judas kiss” has become a term indicating betrayal.

KITCHEN A place for the preparation of food. The term appears only once in most English Bible versions, Ezek. 46:24, where it refers to sacred rooms in the temple where the priests cooked guilt offerings and sin offerings and baked grain offerings. By cooking and eating the sacrifices there, the priests were protected from contact with those who had not been consecrated (46:19–20; cf. 44:19). While many versions translate the Hebrew (*beth hambashelim*) as “kitchens” (NIV, RSV, NRSV, NLT, HCSB), the NASB has “boiling places,” and the KJV has “places of them that boil.” There is no specific mention of kitchens in private homes in the biblical text.

KITE A medium-sized bird of prey in the hawk family (*Accipitridae*; see Isa. 34:15 [NIV: “falcon”; NRSV: “buzzard”]). Three Hebrew terms refer to various species. Kites may take small prey, but usually they are scavengers, feeding on carrion. All species are considered unclean (Lev. 11:14; Deut. 14:13).

KITHLISH *See* Kitlish.

KITLISH A town in the tribal allotment of Judah near Lachish (Josh. 15:40). Situated in the southwest Shephelah (i.e., the lowland area), its precise location is unknown.

KITRON A city in the tribal territory allotted to Zebulun (Judg. 1:30). The Israelites did not drive out the inhabitants, so the Canaanites lived among them but were subject to forced labor. It probably is the same city as Kattath.

KITTIM *See* Kittites.

KITTITES According to Gen. 10:4; 1 Chron. 1:7, the Kittites were the descendants of Javan, along with Elishah, Tarshish, and the Rodanites. Most translations read “Kittim,” and some treat it as the name of an individual (e.g., ESV, NASB, NKJV). Elishah is identified with the island of Cyprus, Tarshish with the coast of Spain, and the Rodanites may refer to the island of Rhodes. The Kittites are associated with the port of Kition (modern Larnaca) in Cyprus. Kition was a Phoenician port during the reign of Solomon. Biblical references speak of the coastlands (Jer. 2:10; Ezek. 27:6) as well as the land of Kittim (Isa. 23:1, 12 [NIV: “land of Cyprus”]). They were sea peoples vying for trade in the Mediterranean during the second millennium BC. Balaam (Num. 24:24) saw them as a military threat. During the first millennium BC the designation came to refer generally to the Greeks. The Qumran scholars who wrote 1QpHab and 1QM identified the “Kittim” of Dan. 11:30 (NIV mg.) with the Romans, recalling their defeat of the Greeks.

KIYYUN *See* Kaiwan.

KNAPSACK A bag worn on the back to carry supplies or other personal belongings (also called a “beggar’s bag”). Upon sending out his disciples, Jesus instructed them to not take a “bag” with them (Matt. 10:10 [NASB mg.: “knapsack”]).

KNEAD, KNEADING BOWL Flour and water were kneaded in a shallow bowl or trough to form dough. Kneading was a woman’s work (Jer. 7:18), as in the stories of Sarah (Gen. 18:6), the medium at Endor (1 Sam. 28:24), and Tamar (2 Sam. 13:8). Two of these women (Sarah and Tamar) were of high social status, yet they still performed this quotidian chore. In all three cases, bread was baked as part of a hospitality ritual, explaining why powerful women performed the task.

Figurine of a woman kneading bread (Medma, Greece, 490 BC)

KNEEL To assume a position in which the body is supported by one or both knees. Being on one’s knees connotes worship or reverence, submission, and respect. In the OT it is a common posture for prayer (1 Kings 8:54; Dan. 6:10) and worship before God (1 Kings 19:18; Ps. 95:6). People also knelt before kings, rulers, and authorities (1 Kings 1:31; Esther 3:2). The faithful were described as “all whose knees have not bowed down to Baal” (1 Kings 19:18). In the time of Christ, people knelt before him for healing (Matt. 17:14). Jesus and his disciples knelt in prayer (Luke 22:41; Acts 7:60; 9:40). Because of Jesus’ self-humiliation, obedience, and death, God has exalted him above all, so that every knee should bow at his name (Phil. 2:10; cf. Isa. 45:23).

KNIFE A sharp-edged cutting tool made of flint, bronze, copper, or iron. A number of Hebrew words refer to this implement, which typically was used for killing an animal and preparing it for food (Gen. 22:6, 10; Judg. 19:29). Abraham raised a knife when preparing to slay his son Isaac, but God stayed his hand (Gen. 22:9–14). Knives were used for the ceremonial killing of sacrificial animals. Joshua used flint knives in reinstituting the practice of circumcision (Josh. 5:2–3). Knives at the time of Joshua were not commonly made of flint, so this may reflect the antiquity of the practice. There is some overlap in biblical references to swords and knives. Knives may have been used by the prophets of Baal to cut themselves to gain their god's attention (1 Kings 18:28); such practices were prohibited in Levitical law (Lev. 19:28). In most English translations, knives are not mentioned in the NT (MSG uses "knife" occasionally in reference to circumcision; e.g., Rom. 2:28–29).

KNOB, KNOP *See* Bud.

KNOWLEDGE The Bible regularly states that people know some things but not others. In English versions of the Bible, "knowledge" is usually a translation of the Hebrew noun *da'at* or the Greek noun *gnōsis*. Similarly, "know" is usually a translation of the Hebrew verb *yada'* or the Greek verb *ginōskō*. Within each language, the noun and the verb share related forms.

God offers everyone knowledge to guide how one should live, but if spurned, the offer may be withdrawn (Prov. 1:28; Matt. 7:7–8; John 7:17; Phil. 3:15). Some people love simplistic thinking more than knowledge (Prov. 1:22), but fools who spurn knowledge in order to follow their own ways are warned that their complacency "will destroy them" (1:29–32). People are similarly warned not to value their own wisdom too highly (Prov. 3:7).

The Bible indicates that a basic knowledge of God is possible simply from observing the world. Genesis 1 states that God created light, land, stars, plants, animals, and people. The existence of the Creator provides an explanation for the existence of each and every thing, and for the world as a whole. Paul accordingly wrote that God's eternal power and divine nature "have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made" (Rom. 1:19–21).

Beyond this, a more substantial knowledge of God is possible because God has sometimes spoken or acted in history. God communicates using the limited forms that people can hear or perceive. The assembled people of Israel hear God speak at Mount Sinai from the midst of fire when he gives the Ten Commandments (Deut. 5:4–27). God likewise speaks to Moses from a burning bush (Exod. 3). God speaks in a particular place and speaks using the words of a language. This does not deny God's transcendence. It instead affirms it by showing that God is unlike idols made by humans, idols that "cannot speak" or act (Ps. 115:5).

In the Bible, God normally speaks to people indirectly through prophets. Ancient people did not believe every prophet's testimony, so God gives Moses miracles to substantiate his claims (Exod. 4:1–9, 27–31). God likewise comes to Mount Sinai so that the people of Israel would trust Moses forever (19:9). Because the nation hears God speak, failure to believe Moses is considered unjustifiable. Eventually, the entire law and covenant are known through Moses. The written record of these events and the law, as validated by historic community practice, are considered sufficient basis for each later generation to believe Moses' law. After Moses' death, God speaks through other prophets. There are no grounds to reject their testimony, for they do not deny the law and commandments that God has given through Moses, make false predictions (Deut. 13:1–5; 18:20–22), or contradict each other.

In the NT, Jesus, like Moses, is a prophet (Matt. 21:11; John 7:40; 12:40), authenticated by miracles. He observes the law (Matt. 5:17; John 8:46), unlike his opponents (John 5:45–47). In turn, Jesus sends out disciples with his message and says, "Whoever rejects you rejects me; but whoever rejects me rejects him who sent me" (Luke 10:16). Consequently, the Bible gives knowledge of God largely through Moses and the prophets, and in the NT through the prophet Jesus, God's Son, and the disciples whom he sends out with his message. Those who receive God's Spirit will understand them more deeply (1 Cor. 2:9–16).

KOA A people included in the list of nations that God would bring against the Israelites (Ezek. 23:23). They probably lived east of the Tigris River. Some identify the Koa with the Guti, who are mentioned in Assyrian inscriptions.

KOHATH One of Levi's three sons (Gen. 46:11; Exod. 6:16). His descendants, the Kohathites, were Levites who worked within the tabernacle. They had very specific duties, including one of their primary tasks, which was to hand carry the most important furnishings of the tabernacle (Num. 4).

KOHATHITES Descendants of the Levite Kohath (Num. 26:58–59). During the wilderness journey, they were responsible for transporting the tabernacle and its contents and also for its maintenance (Num. 3–4). Chronicles reports that some of the Kohathites participated in the purification of the temple under Hezekiah (2 Chron. 20:19) and led musical services at the sanctuary during the monarchic period (1 Chron. 6:33; 2 Chron. 20:19; 34:12). But there are no biblical psalms ascribed to this group as there are for their relatives the Korahites. Like the Korahites, they were bakers of the sacred bread during the postexilic period (1 Chron. 9:32).

KOHELETH *See* Qoheleth.

KOLAIAH **(1)** A Benjamite whose descendants lived in Jerusalem after the return from exile (Neh. 11:7). **(2)** The father of the false prophet Ahab (Jer. 29:21).

KOL-HOZEH **(1)** The father of Shallun, leader of the district of Mizpah who repaired the Fountain Gate in Jerusalem (Neh. 3:15). **(2)** The father of Baruch and an ancestor of Maaseiah, a man from Judah who settled in postexilic Jerusalem (Neh. 11:5). It is possible that these two are the same person.

KONANIAH **(1)** A Levite whom Hezekiah placed in charge over the abundant contributions, tithes, and dedicated gifts given by the people of Israel and Judah (2 Chron. 31:12). Konaniah served with his brother Shimei, who was next in rank. **(2)** A Levite leader who, along with others, provided various sacrificial animals for the Passover offering during the reign of Josiah (2 Chron. 35:9).

KOR *See* Cor.

KORAH **(1)** The third of three sons born to Esau and his Canaanite wife, Oholibamah (Gen. 36:5, 14, 18; 1 Chron. 1:35), he was chief of a clan of the Edomites. **(2)** A son of Eliphaz and a grandson of Esau (Gen. 36:16, but not in the parallel list in 1 Chron. 1:36), he was chief of a clan of the Edomites. Some suggest this is the same person as in Gen. 36:5, 14, 18; 1 Chron. 1:35. **(3)** The first of Hebron's four sons, he was a descendant of Caleb (1 Chron. 2:43).

(4) A Levite, the son of Izhar, of the family of Kohath (Exod. 6:21; Num. 16:1). Numbers 16 tells how Korah, along with the Reubenites Dathan, Abiram, and On, led a rebellion of 250 Israelite chiefs against Moses and Aaron. They challenged the validity of the Aaronic priesthood and claimed that the entire congregation was holy and fit to perform the priestly functions. They also questioned the authority of Moses over all the tribes because he was not from the tribe of Reuben, the firstborn of Israel. In response, Moses said that Yahweh himself would show who is holy and who could approach him. Moses instructed Korah that on the next day each of the 250 leaders should take a censer and put fire and incense on the censer and bring it before Yahweh; Aaron was to do the same. Moses called for Dathan and Abiram to do likewise, but they would not come up, refusing to acknowledge his authority to call them up.

On the next day Korah assembled the entire congregation at the entrance of the tent of meeting. Yahweh directed Moses and Aaron to separate themselves from the congregation so that he might destroy the people due to his anger against them, but Moses interceded. Moses was then directed by Yahweh to have the congregation move away from the dwellings of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. Moses went to Dathan and Abiram, and they came out and stood at the entrance of their tents along with their households. Then the ground opened up and swallowed Korah, Dathan, Abiram, and all that belonged to them (their households and their goods). The sons of Korah, however, did not die (see Num. 26:11). Fire came down from Yahweh and consumed the 250 men with the censers. The censers were taken by Eleazar, the son of Aaron, and hammered into plates to cover the altar as a sign to the Israelites that only the descendants of Aaron should draw near to burn incense before Yahweh. *See also* Korahites.

KORAHITES The descendants of the Levite Korah, grandson of Kohath (Exod. 6:24; Num. 16:1; 26:11, 58), not the Edomite Korah (Gen. 36:5, 16). They were a guild of temple singers during the monarchic period, residing certainly in the southern kingdom but also possibly in the northern kingdom. They appear in the superscriptions of Pss. 42–49; 84–85; 87–88, which focus on the themes of Zion, rescue from trials and estrangement from God, and God’s faithfulness as a refuge for his people. In postexilic times they were gatekeepers at the temple and bakers of the sacred bread (1 Chron. 9:19, 31).

KORATHITES *See* Korahites.

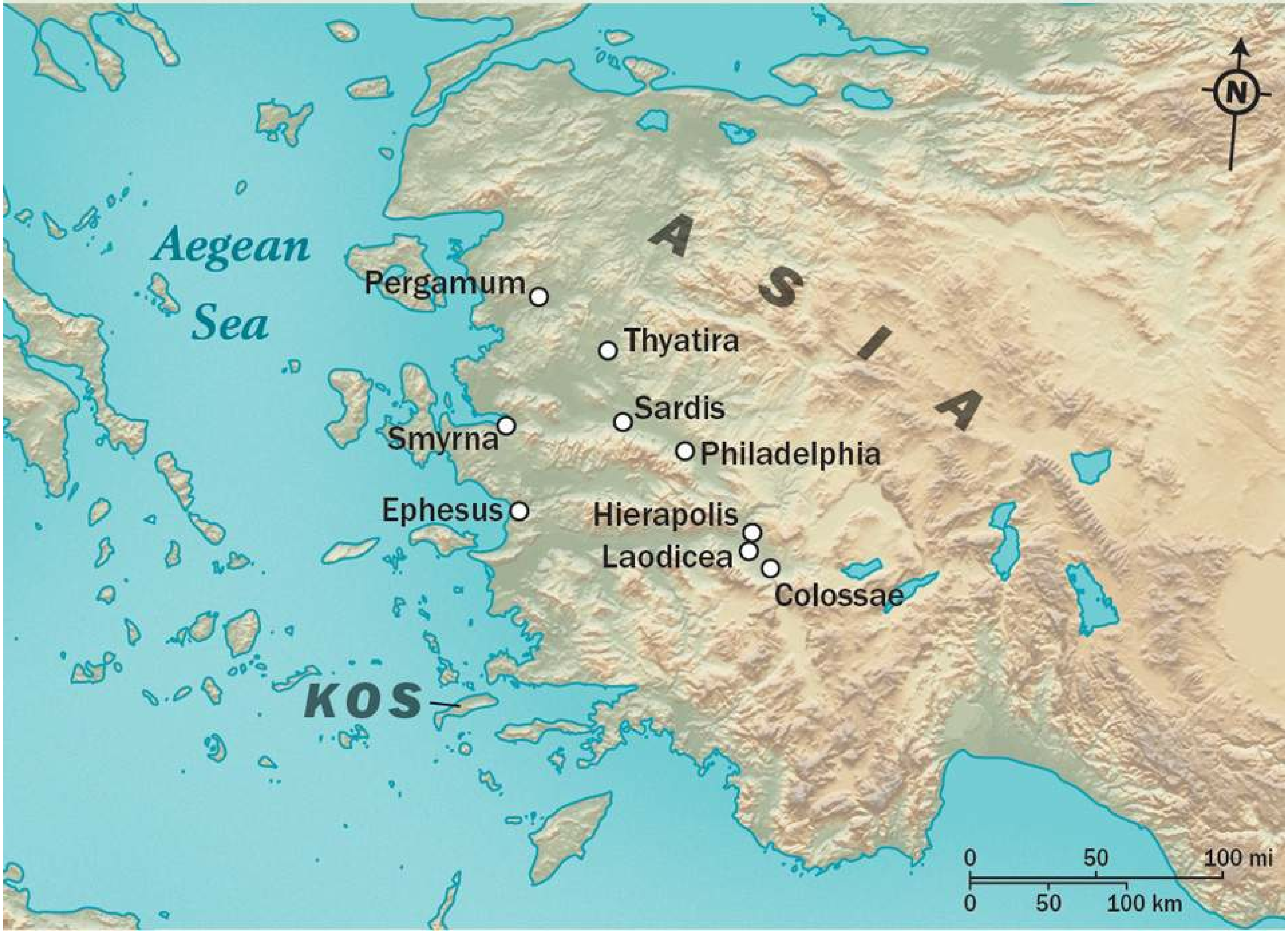
KORAZIN *See* Chorazin.

KORE **(1)** A Levite, the son of Ebiasaph, a member of the family of Korah. He was the father of the temple gatekeepers Shallum and Meshelemiah (1 Chron. 9:19; 26:1). **(2)** A Levite, the son of Imnah, who was the keeper of the East Gate of Jerusalem. Hezekiah appointed him to oversee the freewill offerings and to apportion the contributions (2 Chron. 31:14).

KORHITES *See* Korahites.

KOS The third largest of the Dodecanese Islands in the southeastern Aegean Sea, just off the coast of modern-day Turkey. Kos (Cos) reached its golden age during the first half of the third century BC and became part of the eastern province of the Roman Empire during the first century AD. It was famous for its medical center, founded by Hippocrates (c. 460–370 BC), and for the Asclepion, a cultic center of the healing god. It was also an important Jewish center (1 Macc. 15:23). Paul, after his third missionary journey, spent a night there before sailing to Rhodes (Acts 21:1).

THE ISLAND OF KOS


Aegean
Sea
ASIA
Pergamum
Thyatira
Sardis
Smyrna
Philadelphia
Ephesus
Hierapolis
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KOZ A member of the tribe of Judah, he was a son of Helah and the father of Anub and Hazzobebah (1 Chron. 4:8). The KJV, but not more-recent translations, renders the name “Hakkoz” as “Koz” (Ezra 2:61; Neh. 3:4, 21; 7:63; but not at 1 Chron. 24:10). The translators apparently understood the initial *ha* in the Hebrew *haqqots* to indicate the definite article and not as part of the personal name.

KOZBI Daughter of a Midianite tribal chief, Zur (Num. 25:15). Kozbi was executed by Phinehas after an Israelite man, Zimri, brought her into his tent in front of Moses and the whole assembly of Israel. After following them into the tent, Phinehas stabbed Zimri and Kozbi with a spear. Their deaths brought an end to a plague in Israel (Num. 25:8–9).

KOZEBA A city in Judah (1 Chron. 4:22).

KUB *See* Libya.

KUE A city from which King Solomon acquired horses (1 Kings 10:28; 2 Chron. 1:16). This city is believed by many to be an ancient name for Cilicia, a city in Asia Minor located in the southeast of modern Turkey. If so, it would be located between the Taurus and Amanus mountain ranges and the Mediterranean Sea, on a vital trade route between Syria and Asia Minor. During the time of Solomon the area would have been inhabited by the neo-Hittites. Scholars are divided about whether the Hebrew word translated in 1 Kings 10:28; 2 Chron. 1:16 as “Egypt” (*mitsrayim*) should instead be “Musri,” another country in Asia Minor, near Cilicia, and famed for horses. Luke and Paul include Cilicia with Syria in their writings (Acts 6:9; 15:23, 41; 21:39; 22:3; 23:34; 27:5; Gal. 1:21), which reflect the political changes that transpired from 100 BC through the first century AD.

KUN An Aramean city conquered by David, mentioned only in 1 Chron. 18:8 (the parallel 2 Sam. 8:8 uses a different name, “Berothai”). Kun was one of two cities from which David took a great quantity of bronze, later used by Solomon to make implements for the temple (2 Chron. 4:2–5, 18). Kun may have been located in the northern Beqaa Valley of Lebanon, at or near the modern village of Ras Baalbek, near the Syrian border.

KUSHAIAH A Levite, the father of Ethan, who was appointed as a Levitical singer under Heman when David moved the ark of the covenant from the house of Obed-Edom to Jerusalem (1 Chron. 15:17). He was a descendant of the family of Merari (1 Chron. 6:44, where he is called “Kishi”). *See also* Kishi.

KUTH, KUTHAH A Sumerian name for the city that was the center of the worship of the Mesopotamian deity Nergal, the god of the underworld, identified with modern Tell Ibrāhîm, twenty miles northeast of Babylon. Sargon II (721–705 BC) deported a significant portion of this city’s population to Samaria in order to repopulate it (2 Kings 17:24, 30). The new blended population in Samaria fused the worship of Nergal with the local worship of Yahweh (2 Kings 17:30–34).

L

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L A hypothetical source used in the composition of the Gospel of Luke. The Four Source Hypothesis regarding the Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke) proposes that Mark was written first, and that Luke and Matthew made use of Mark as well as another shared source (Q), while each also had access to a source they did not share in common (designated "M" for Matthew and "L" for Luke).

LAADAH A grandson of Judah through Shelah, he was the father of Mareshah and the brother of Er (1 Chron. 4:21).

LAADAN *See* Ladan.

LABAN **(1)** Rebekah's brother (Gen. 24:29) and Rachel and Leah's father (29:16). Laban is involved in the betrothal of Rebekah to Isaac (24:29–51), but he is best known for his deceitfulness and trickery, especially in his dealings with his nephew Jacob (29:1–31:55). Jacob, following his own crafty acquisition of Esau's birthright and Isaac's blessing, fled to Laban's home in Harran, located in Paddan Aram. After his arrival, Jacob agreed to serve Laban for seven years in order to marry his younger daughter, Rachel. Similar to Jacob's deception of his blind father, Laban secretly gave Jacob his oldest daughter, Leah, instead of Rachel on his wedding night. To justify his actions, Laban appealed to the societal custom that the oldest must be married first, and he demanded seven more years of labor from Jacob in order for him to marry Rachel.

Laban is characterized by this type of self-centeredness throughout the narrative. He continued to cheat Jacob, knowing that Jacob was the key to his own prosperity. Jacob remained in Laban's home for twenty years (Gen. 31:41) but afterward fled with his family and possessions. Laban stopped Jacob on the way, and the two made a covenant (31:43–54).

(2) One of the places named to identify the location of Moses' speech to the Israelites concerning God's commands (Deut. 1:1).

LABOR *See* Work, Theology of.

LACE *See* Cord.

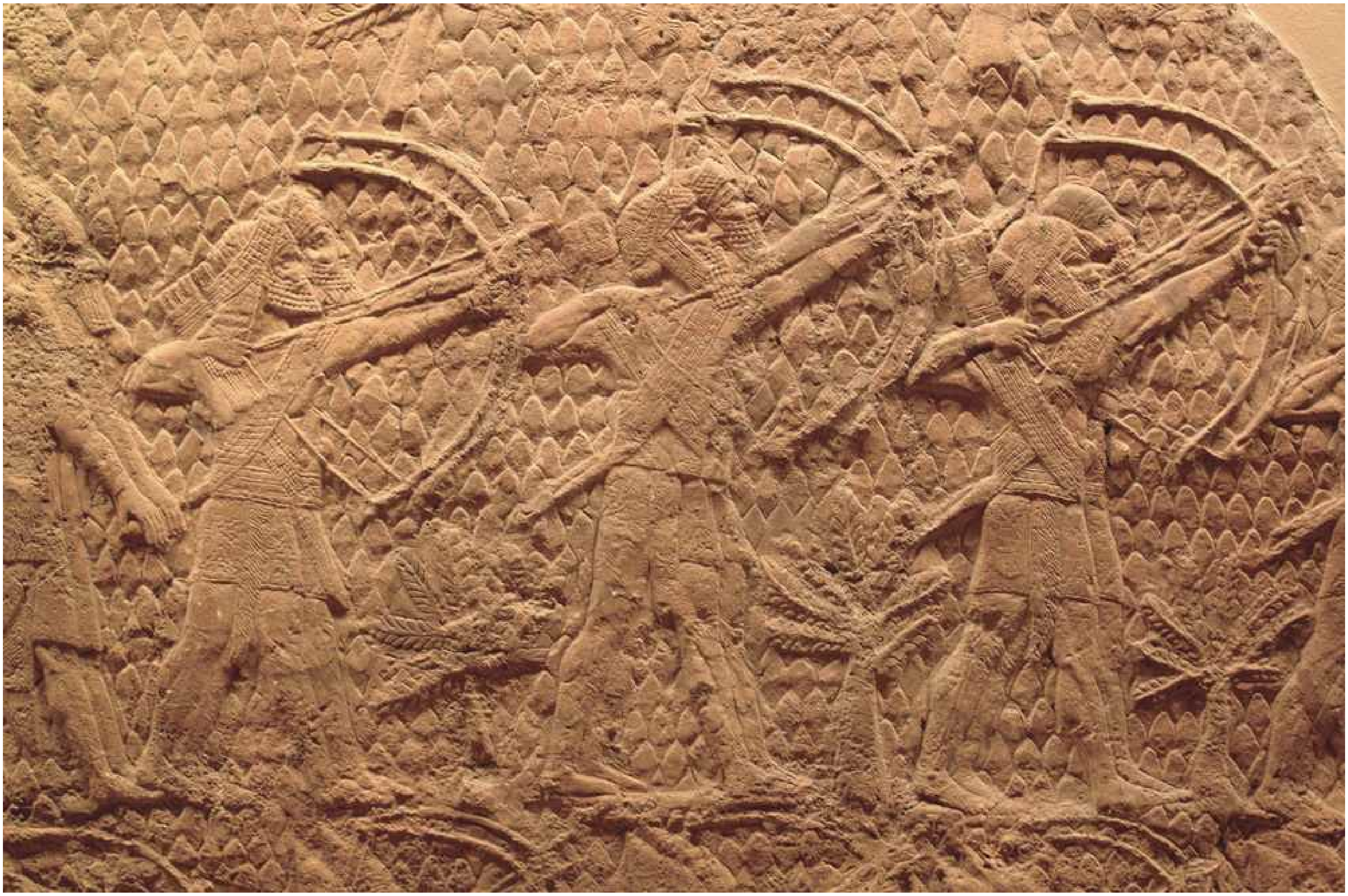
LACHISH Lachish was in the foothills of the Shephelah, thirty miles to the southwest of Jerusalem, and it controlled the road that ran from the north to the south hill country. It is usually identified with modern Tell el-Duweir, which has been extensively excavated.

Before the monarchy. Lachish is mentioned in Egyptian sources as early as the fifteenth century BC. These sources include letters from the kings of Lachish. We first hear of Lachish in the OT at the time of the conquest when, under its king Japhia, it formed part of a coalition of five Amorite city-states. Joshua defeated the coalition, killed the kings, and totally destroyed the cities (Josh. 10:1–35; 12:11). Archaeologists have found evidence of Canaanite occupation prior to this time, and also of the destruction of the city in the late second millennium BC. After the conquest, Lachish was allotted to the tribe of Judah (15:39), but there is no archaeological evidence of Israelite occupation until the time of the monarchy.

During the monarchy. During the monarchy, Lachish was the most important of a double line of fortified cities guarding the western approaches to Jerusalem. It probably was one of Solomon's chariot cities (1 Kings 9:19; 10:26) and certainly was fortified by Rehoboam (2 Chron. 11:9). Amaziah fled to Lachish from a conspiracy against him in Jerusalem, but he was followed and killed there (2 Kings 14:19; 2 Chron. 25:27). When Sennacherib of Assyria invaded Judah in Hezekiah's reign, he besieged and captured Lachish, making it his headquarters for further threats against Jerusalem, which were miraculously averted in answer to prayer (2 Kings 18:13–19:37; 2 Chron. 32:1–22; Isa. 36–37).

Lachish plays an important role in Micah's lament over the cities of Judah (Mic. 1:13), where it is closely linked to Jerusalem. Using a wordplay on the similarity between the name "Lachish" and a rare Hebrew word for a chariot "team" of horses, Micah says that Lachish must harness its chariots, presumably for flight, because it was "where the sin of the Daughter Zion began."

The archaeological data from Lachish in this period are rich. The layer known as Level V probably was destroyed during Shishak of Egypt's campaign against Rehoboam in 925 BC (2 Chron. 12:2–4); the next layer, Level IV, seems to have been destroyed not in warfare but rather by a natural disaster such as an earthquake. In the eighth century BC, Lachish (Level III) was at its largest, richest, and most heavily defended, but this was the city that Sennacherib destroyed and burned in 701 BC. Archaeologists have found not only jars with seals from Hezekiah's reign, a deep well for freshwater, the massive double city walls and the gatehouse, but also evidence of the battle, including the attackers' huge siege ramp and the smaller ramp on the other side of the walls built by the defenders, weaponry from the battle, ashes lying three feet thick, and mass graves.



Assyrian relief depicting the siege of Lachish

Sennacherib was so proud of his victory over Lachish that he decorated his palace in Nineveh with vivid reliefs of it, which can be seen in London's British Museum. These show the fortifications of the city and the siege engines positioned on the ramp. While the Assyrian army attacks, the Judeans hurl flaming torches from the walls, only for the Assyrians to extinguish them with ladles of water. Prisoners, including women and children, are led out of the city past gruesome scenes of execution, and objects connected with Judah's worship are carried away as spoils of war. Sennacherib also left a written account of his campaign, in which he claimed to have deported two hundred thousand people from the city.

When the city was next rebuilt (Level II), probably in Josiah's day, it was much smaller and less fortified. It held out against the Babylonians longer than most (Jer. 34:7) but eventually fell. The Lachish letters are military communications found in the gatehouse, describing the system of beacons used to communicate between the defensive hill forts as the enemy closed in.

After the exile. After the Babylonians destroyed and burned the city, archaeological evidence suggests it lay abandoned for some time. Nehemiah reports that it was resettled after the return from exile (Neh. 11:30). Archaeological remains from the Persian and Hellenistic periods indicate that this rebuilding (Level I) was in use until the second century BC.

LADAN **(1)** A grandson of Levi through Gershon (1 Chron. 23:7; 26:21). Ladan is sometimes called

“Libni” (Exod. 6:17; Num. 3:18; 1 Chron. 6:17, 20). In 1 Chron. 23:8–9, three sons of Ladan (Jehiel, Zetham, Joel) are listed, but then follow three sons of Ladan’s brother, Shimei (Shelomoth, Haziel, Haran) and the words “these were the heads of the families of Ladan.” **(2)** A descendant of Ephraim through Tahan (1 Chron. 7:25–26).

LADDER While sleeping at Bethel, the patriarch Jacob had a dream in which a “ladder” (NRSV, KJV, NASB) or “stairway” (NIV, NET) extended from earth to heaven. In Jacob’s dream, angels of God were ascending and descending the ladder, and God himself stood atop the ladder as he blessed Jacob (Gen. 28:10–15). Jesus alluded to this incident, likening himself to the ladder in Jacob’s dream (John 1:51).

LADY CHOSEN BY GOD *See* Elect Lady.

LAEL The father of Eliasaph (Num. 3:24). Eliasaph was the head of the Gershonite clan of the Levites, the clan that cared for and transported the curtains associated with the sanctuary.

LAHAD A descendant of Judah through Jahath. Descendants of Lahad and his brother, Ahumai, were among “the clans of the Zorathites” (1 Chron. 4:2).

LAHAIROI *See* Beer Lahai Roi.

LAHMAM *See* Lahmas.

LAHMAS A city allotted to the tribe of Judah after the Israelite conquest of Caanan (Josh. 15:40). Lahmas lay in the fertile Shephelah region, between the central highlands and the Mediterranean coast, in southern Palestine. Some English versions (NRSV, KJV, ESV), following an alternate manuscript tradition, have “Lahmam” rather than “Lahmas.” Confusion in the manuscript copying process likely arose due to the similar appearance of the Hebrew letters *samek* and final *mem*.

LAHMI According to 1 Chron. 20:5, Lahmi the brother of Goliath the Gittite was a Philistine who carried a huge spear. Lahmi and three other gigantic descendants of Rapha in Gath were killed in battle by David’s men. Elhanan son of Jair was responsible for Lahmi’s death (see 2 Sam. 21:18–22; 1 Chron. 20:4–8). According to 2 Sam. 21:19, the verse parallel to 1 Chron. 20:5, Elhanan killed Goliath the Gittite, but the text makes no mention of Lahmi (see NIV mg.). Copyist error may have given rise to the discrepancy, as the Hebrew for “Bethlehemite [killed] Goliath the Gittite” (2 Sam. 21:19) is very similar to “[killed] Lahmi the brother of Goliath the Gittite” (1 Chron. 20:5).

LAISH **(1)** The father of Paltiel the second husband of Michal, daughter of King Saul (1 Sam. 25:44; 2 Sam. 3:15). Saul had earlier given Michal to David in marriage, then later to Paltiel when David fell out of favor. **(2)** A city in the upper Jordan Valley in far northern Israel, conquered by the tribe of Dan during the time of the judges and renamed “Dan” (Judg. 18:2, 7–10, 27–29). In Josh. 19:47 the original name is given as “Leshem” instead of “Laish.” The location is identified with Tel Dan, the site of several copious springs that form the headwaters of the Jordan River. Excavations show that settlement began about 3000 BC, and a sudden change in the material culture at the time of the judges probably reflects the Danite conquest.

LAISHAH A town within the tribal allotment to Benjamin, near Jerusalem, mentioned only in Isa. 10:30 in connection with Gallim and Anathoth. In his prophecy, Isaiah tells Laishah to “listen” (NIV) or “pay attention” (NASB) as it nervously anticipates the devastating impact of the Assyrian army approaching Jerusalem from the north.

LAKE OF FIRE *See* Eschatology; Fire; Hell.

LAKE OF GENNESARET *See* Sea of Galilee.

LAKKUM A town on the border of the tribal allotment to Naphtali. It was the closest named point on Naphtali’s border to the Jordan River, named immediately after Adami Nekeb and Jabneel (Josh. 19:33). It lay just south of the Sea of Galilee.

LAMA *See* Eloi, Eloi, Lama Sabachthani.

LAMB *See* Lamb of God; Sheep.

LAMB OF GOD A title of Jesus used in the Gospel of John, the Letters of John, and the book of Revelation. This title and its image represent a particular insight of some early Christian communities into the identity and mission of the Messiah.

The phrase first appears in John 1:29, where John recognizes Jesus as the one “who takes away the sin of the world,” and then again in John 1:36, when John’s outcry causes two of his disciples to become the first followers of Jesus. “Lamb of God” is essentially an expansion and reinterpretation of a number of OT traditions and their application to Jesus.

The main reference is to the Passover feast, during which John places the passion narrative, at which a lamb is slaughtered and eaten. This is a celebration and an echo of the original Passover, in which the Hebrew people smeared lamb’s blood on the frames of their doors so that the judgment upon Egypt’s firstborn would not strike the Hebrews (Exod. 12:1–15). The salvation that John envisions, however, is different from the exodus narrative in many respects. The enemy from which God’s people are saved is no longer a geopolitical oppressor but rather sin itself. Israel has now been expanded to contain the entire human race. The “lamb” has undergone quite a transformation and is now to be identified with the Messiah and even God himself. For NT believers, Jesus’ death and resurrection are a completion of the Passover. Rather than saving one people from one specific danger, God’s salvation reaches universal efficacy in Jesus Christ, taking away the sin of the world.

The other figure that feeds meaning into “Lamb of God” is the Suffering Servant of Isa. 53. Isaiah says, “He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth” (53:7). John perhaps means to fulfill this verse specifically in John 19:9. Lambs were also a part of the cultic worship of Israel and were acceptable for more than one offering (e.g., Lev. 3:7; 4:32; 5:6).

The Suffering Servant, the paschal (Passover) lamb, and the lambs for ritual sacrifice are not merely victims but vicarious victims that take on themselves the punishment, guilt, and suffering of others. Thus, others are freed from their burdens. This is the logic that John applies to the death of Jesus.

While that may be the most obvious meaning of the title “Lamb of God,” there is a deeper, subtler meaning that the book of Revelation draws out completely. A lamb is powerless, vulnerable, and small, and yet that is how God works. The image of a lamb highlights the reversal of the world's expectations for any savior. While the world might expect, as the Hebrews of Jesus' day did, a holy conqueror to overpower all enemies, the world received a lamb, sacrificed on our behalf. "See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has triumphed. . . . Then I saw a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain" (5:5–6). The juxtaposition of the announcement of the "Lion of the tribe of Judah" and the reception of a "Lamb, looking as if it had been slain" is striking. Only the lamb is "worthy to take the scroll . . . because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased for God persons" (5:9). Remembering that Jesus is the Lamb of God and not the Lion of God gives Christians pause to remind themselves that it is not in the great things of the world that God does his work but rather in the broken faithfulness of his Son. For this reason, the image of a lamb taking the reins of history by holding the heavenly scroll became popular in early Christian worship.

LAME, LAMENESS A condition or ailment that renders one unable to function properly (most often in movement), or a term for an individual affected by such a condition or ailment (Job 29:15; Prov. 25:19; 26:7; Isa. 33:23; Matt. 15:30–31; 21:14; Luke 14:13, 21; John 5:3). In the OT, lame humans were not allowed to come near the altar (Lev. 21:18), nor was it allowed to sacrifice lame animals to the Lord (Deut. 15:21). Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan and grandson of Saul, was lame because in his youth he was dropped by his nurse (2 Sam. 4:4; 19:26). The Major and the Minor Prophets speak of God's redemption of Israel in terms of the correction of lameness (Isa. 35:6; Jer. 31:8; Mic. 4:6–7; Zeph. 3:19). To John the Baptist's question of whether he was the Christ, Jesus responded, "The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor" (Matt. 11:5; Luke 7:22).

LAMECH **(1)** A descendant of Cain and the husband of both Adah and Zillah, and thus the first polygamist (Gen. 4:18–24). After killing a man who had wounded him, he sings to his wives, boasting of his violent deed. He has three sons: Jabal, the first herdsman; Jubal, the first to play the harp and the flute; and Tubal-Cain, the first metalworker. **(2)** A descendant of Seth, a son of Methuselah, and the father of Noah (Gen. 5:25–31). He prophesied that Noah would bring relief from the curse on the ground. Genesis records his life span as 777 years. He is listed as an ancestor of Jesus (Luke 3:36).

LAMENT *See* Grief and Mourning; Lamentations, Book of; Psalms, Book of.

LAMENTATIONS, BOOK OF In the order of the English canon, Lamentations is tucked away between Jeremiah and Ezekiel, probably because of the tradition that Jeremiah was its author. In the Hebrew canon, however, this book is found with the other five festal scrolls (Megilloth), since it was used on the ninth of Ab, the commemoration of the destruction of the temple in 586 BC. Though brief, Lamentations is memorable for its powerful poetic expression of deep mourning over tremendous loss.

Stones from the Roman destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70, on the southern side of the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. Lamentations mourns the earlier destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians in 587 BC.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Lamentations is anonymous and nowhere mentions either the author or the time period in which it was written, though the latter, as we will see, is clear from the contents of the book. Traditionally, Jeremiah is thought to be the author. This connection goes back at least to the time of the LXX (c. 280–100 BC), which adds a line to the beginning of the book: “And it came to pass after Israel had gone into captivity, and Jerusalem was laid waste, that Jeremiah sat weeping and composed this lament over Jerusalem and said. . . .” This connection also accounts for the Greek order (followed by the Latin Vulgate) that placed Lamentations right after Jeremiah (excluding Baruch, a book not included in the Protestant canon).

While it is not impossible that Jeremiah wrote the book, many think it unlikely because of a contrast in attitudes expressed concerning the destruction of Jerusalem. In the book that bears his name, Jeremiah emphasizes that, due to their sin, the people are responsible for the fate of the city. In Lamentations, the unnamed author is much more sympathetic toward the inhabitants of Jerusalem (though still acknowledging the role that sin played) and questions whether God has taken his punishment too far. Of course, it is possible that the prophet changed perspective over time. In the final analysis, it is best to remember that the book does not claim an author. The identification of an author does not affect interpretation.

On the other hand, the general time period of the book's composition is relatively obvious from its content. The book laments the widespread and devastating destruction of Jerusalem. While it is true that the book never names the Babylonians as the culprits, it is highly likely that they were responsible for the destruction that inspired the writing of these laments. Babylon had come to dominate Judah by at least 605 BC (Dan. 1:1–2). However, first King Jehoiakim and then Zedekiah revolted against their overlords, both times leading to deportations into exile (597 BC and 586 BC, respectively). The second occasion was by far the most devastating for the people of God. The Babylonians not only defeated them and exiled the leading citizens, but also ransacked the city and destroyed the temple.

Thus, the book was written in the aftermath and in response to the horrific destruction of Jerusalem and the dismantling of the temple. The emotions expressed are raw and are best understood as those of an eyewitness. Thus, the book most likely was written soon after 586 BC, when these events took place.

However, a minority position believes that the book was written not right after the events but rather in connection with the rebuilding of the temple that took place between 520 and 515 BC, after the exiles were brought back into the land. This view is motivated by a genre of similar texts written in Sumerian (see below) that mention being performed in a ritual of rebuilding.

LITERARY CONSIDERATIONS

The title of the book, "Lamentations," also names its genre. Like the laments of the psalms, this book is a cry of anguish and an expression of loss. In the case of this book, the lament is clearly corporate, in spite of the fact that it is often expressed in the first-person singular (a common phenomenon in the Psalter as well). The unnamed and unidentified first-person speaker clearly speaks for the community as a whole. On two occasions the poet speaks through a poetic personification. In chapter 1 we encounter Jerusalem personified as a grieving widow, and in chapter 3 Jerusalem again is personified, this time as a man of affliction.

Lamentations is thus a corporate lament—more specifically, a city lament that conveys the community's grief in a way similar to earlier texts written in Sumerian. There are five such texts, the most famous of which is the Lamentation over the Destruction of Sumer and Ur. They are dated to around 2000 BC, after the fall of the great southern Mesopotamian city of Ur at the hands of marauders. These ancient Near Eastern texts are formally similar though theologically quite distinct, as they assume a world with many different gods and goddesses.

Lamentations is composed of five smaller poems, each structured in some way related to the Hebrew alphabet. The first two chapters are written in an acrostic style: each verse begins with a successive letter of the alphabet (thus each chapter has twenty-two verses, the number of letters in the Hebrew alphabet). The third chapter has three times as many verses because each letter of the alphabet begins three verses in a row. Chapter 4 then proceeds through the alphabet with each letter beginning each verse; the final chapter is technically not an acrostic because it is not ordered according to the alphabet, but it too has twenty-two verses. Strong emotions are expressed, but the poet works in a very orderly way to express the community's grief.

OUTLINE

I. Lament for and by Jerusalem (1:1–22)

II. The Lord Is Like an Enemy (2:1–22)

III. Man of Affliction (3:1–66)

IV. The Luster Has Faded for the People of God (4:1–22)

V. A Final Lament and Appeal (5:1–22)

THEOLOGICAL MESSAGE

As Lamentations passionately considers the destruction of Jerusalem, it sees God as an enemy (2:5). Israel has experienced God as a warrior, winning the victory for it against incredible odds. One only has to think of the crossing of the Red Sea or the conquest of Canaan to remember this. However, here God is seen as a warrior against his people.

Lamentations does acknowledge that God has turned his anger against his people in this way because of their sin (1:8, 14, 18; 3:40–42). Even so, this theme, though present, is not the major response to God’s punishment. The primary response is to describe the horrible suffering experienced by God’s people with the hope of garnering God’s pity. Interestingly, the book ends not on a strong note of resolution but with a rather pitiful plea: “Restore us to yourself, LORD, that we may return; renew our days as of old unless you have utterly rejected us and are angry with us beyond measure” (5:21–22).

Even so, the theological message of Lamentations is not purely negative. There is also hope, but it is expressed only briefly. In the heart of the book (3:22–33), the poet expresses his assurance that God does not abandon those who turn to him for help. This section indicates that they do expect that God will forgive them and restore them.

NEW TESTAMENT CONNECTIONS

Similar to the laments of the Psalter, the book of Lamentations invites honesty with God in the face of suffering. Christians have a tendency to downplay the negative aspects of life and not honestly share struggles prayerfully with God. If God is in control and loves his people, then even horrible tragedy is part of his good plan. While this may be ultimately true, Lamentations is a model of the bold prayer of the righteous, where the tears of grief are abundantly shared.

In addition, as noted above, Lamentations expresses that God has moved against his people as a warrior. In the past, he has fought for his people; here, because of their sin, he fights against them.

But Lamentations does not bring the development of this theme to a close. The prophets of the exilic and postexilic periods look to the future and see the Divine Warrior. Their vision is not of God as an enemy of his people; rather, it is a vision of a future intrusion of God the warrior to fight on behalf of his people (Dan. 7; Zech. 14; Mal. 4). The NT identifies Jesus as the Divine Warrior who defeats the forces of evil on the cross (Col. 2:13–15) and as the one who will come again in the future for the final battle against all human and spiritual enemies of God (Rev. 19:11–21). Jesus Christ is the Divine Warrior, who fights on behalf of his people against the most powerful enemy of all, Satan.

LAMP, LAMPSTAND Although the Bible never describes the lamps used by ancient Israel or the early church, archaeology informs us what they were like. Early lamps were small pottery bowls with a slight lip for a wick. Some had multiple wick holders to produce more light (Zech. 4:2). Over time, the lip became a spout to one side. By the Persian period, lamps with a covered oil reservoir were imported from Greece. Some lamps, like the seven-branched golden menorah of the tabernacle, were made of metal. During the Roman era, pottery and metal lanterns were developed for outside illumination, replacing torches, which had been used previously (Judg. 7:16). Those who sought Jesus in Gethsemane carried both torches and lanterns (John 18:3).

Lamps were commonly found in family dwellings (2 Kings 4:10; Matt. 5:15). They also played an important role in the tabernacle and temple (Exod. 25:31–39; 1 Kings 7:49), where they not only illuminated their interiors but also, having the shape of a tree, symbolically evoked memories of Eden. Lamps could be carried or placed on a shelf or stand. Since they could hold only enough olive oil to burn for several hours, a woman who ensured that “her lamp does not go out at night” would have been particularly diligent (Prov. 31:18).

The Bible frequently uses lamp or light metaphorically. It can symbolize life (Job 18:6; 21:17; Prov. 13:9; 20:20; 24:20) or the continuation of the Davidic line (2 Sam. 21:17; 1 Kings 11:36; 15:4; 2 Kings 8:19). Jesus is the light of the world, who gives spiritual life (John 8:12; 9:5; 12:46; cf. 1:9; 3:19). John the Baptist was a lamp illuminating the way to the Messiah (John 5:35). Jesus’ followers should shine as lights so that the world can see their good works and praise God (Matt. 5:14–16). God’s word is a lamp to guide one’s way (Ps. 119:105; Prov. 6:23). God himself is a light who enables people to live in difficult times (2 Sam. 22:29; Job 29:3). In one of Jesus’ parables, the foolish virgins who did not prepare enough oil to keep their lamps burning serve as a warning for people to be ready for Christ’s return (Matt. 25:1–13).

LANCE, LANCET A lance (NIV) or lancet (KJV) is a sharp-pointed object with a shaft. While lances normally were used as weapons (e.g., Job 39:23; 41:29; Jer. 50:42), the prophets of Baal used lances and swords to cut themselves in order to arouse their god to action (1 Kings 18:28).

LAND *See* Earth, Land.

LANDMARK *See* Boundary Stone.

LAND OF OBLIVION The expression “land of oblivion” (NIV, NET) or “land of forgetfulness” (KJV, NASB, NRSV) refers to the place where the dead go (Ps. 88:12).

LANE In the Lukan parable of the great banquet, some versions use “lane” to translate the Greek word *rhymē* (Luke 14:21 KJV, NRSV, NASB), referring to an alleylike roadway within the city from which a servant was to collect disabled people. The NIV uses “country lane” in the same parable (14:23) to translate the Greek word *phragmos*, which actually is a fence or hedge but here indicates a path along it.

LANGUAGE, CONFUSION OF *See* Babel; Pentecost.

LANGUAGES OF THE BIBLE Scripture is written in three languages: Hebrew and Aramaic, two related Semitic languages, in the OT; and Koine (common) Greek in the NT. From the sixth century to the end of the fourth century BC, Aramaic was the lingua franca (trade language) of major portions of the ancient Near East, until Greek became the major trade language, from the end of the fourth century BC through the first century AD and beyond. Modern versions and dialects of all three languages are spoken today. Hebrew has been the national language of Israel since its re-creation in 1948. Aramaic dialects are spoken by small pockets of people—certain villages in the Anti-Lebanon area, groups in Azerbaijan and Kurdistan, and remnants of the gnostic sect of the Mandaeans. Greek is spoken by more than fifteen million Greeks, Cypriots, and others. Even though each language has changed and adapted over the centuries, most modern speakers would still recognize much of their language's ancient forms. The main differences are in grammar, vocabulary, and, for Hebrew, writing script.

Hebrew is a North Semitic language written from right to left, having twenty-two consonants, and originally written without vowels. It is difficult to know how long Classical (or biblical Hebrew) was used, but the earliest extant Hebrew texts come from the twelfth ('Izbet Sartah Abecedary) and tenth centuries (Gezer Calendar) BC and extend at least until about AD 132–35 (manuscripts from Murabba'at caves).

Aramaic is also a North Semitic language, is very similar to Hebrew, and uses the same alphabet and often the same writing script. There are very few portions of the OT written in Aramaic (Dan. 2:4b–7:28; Ezra 4:8–6:18; 7:12–26; and a few phrases in Gen. 31:47; Jer. 10:11). It was most likely the common language spoken by Jesus and the disciples.

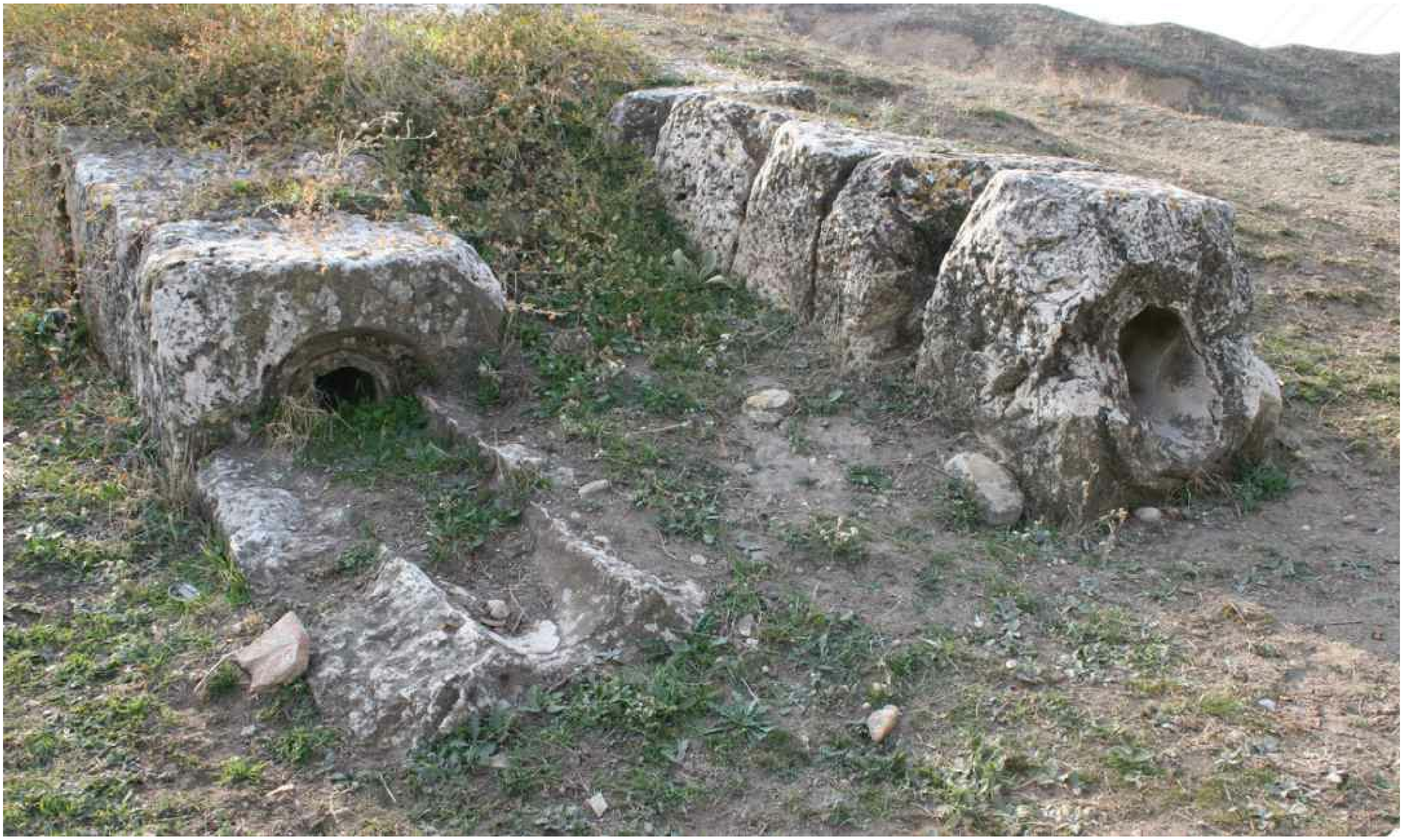
Following the conquests of Alexander the Great, Koine Greek became the lingua franca to help unify the Greek Empire. This highly inflected language (i.e., changes to words indicate grammatical function) is complex and precise, capable of expressing fine nuances and abstract ideas. The verb system has three voices (active, middle, passive), six aspects that convey the time of action (past, present, future) and the kind of action (durative: "I was eating"; completed: "I have eaten"; undefined: "I ate"), four moods that denote actuality or potentiality (indicative, subjunctive, imperative, optative), and participles and infinitives. *See also* Aramaic; Greek Language; Hebrew Language.

LANTERN In John 18:3 the detachment of soldiers and officials from the chief priests and Pharisees carried two illuminating devices as they arrested Jesus at night in the garden of Gethsemane. The lantern differed from the torch in that the former included something to protect its fire from the elements.

LAODICEA An ancient city in Asia Minor founded by Antiochus II in the third century BC and named for his wife, Laodice. It was located on the Lycus River at the head of the Maeander Valley. Paul and Epaphras had some contact with the church in Laodicea (Col. 2:1; 4:13, 15–16), and Paul probably sent a letter to the believers in that locale. Although no letter by this name appears in the NT, Col. 4:16 asks the Colossian believers, who lived about ten miles up the Lycus Valley from Laodicea, to share their letter with the Laodiceans and also to "read the letter from Laodicea." Because the second-century heretic Marcion believed that Ephesians was written to Laodicea, some scholars identify Ephesians as "the letter from Laodicea." A later, apocryphal Epistle to the Laodiceans, written in Latin, is of dubious authenticity. Most likely the genuine letter from Laodicea has not been preserved from antiquity.

Laodicea is also the location of one of the seven churches to which John was instructed to send a letter containing his vision (Rev. 1:11). The specific address to Laodicea rebukes the Christians there, most likely for a compromised faith resulting in an ineffective witness, and it issues a call for them to repent. Among his indictments, John reproves the church for being lukewarm, accuses it of relying on its own wealth, describes it as naked and in need of white clothes, and alludes to its blindness that should be healed with eye salve (Rev. 3:16–18).

Historical information about the city provides insight into the appropriateness of the metaphorical details that John includes in his description of the Laodicean church. While nearby Hierapolis boasted hot springs and Colossae accessed a supply of cold, running water, Laodicea's location required that its water be piped in via aqueduct from a spring several miles away. By the time the water arrived, it was tepid, barely drinkable, and emetic. Ruins of these aqueducts still visible in the area are caked with mineral deposits. Furthermore, Laodicea was the wealthiest city in its region during Roman times. It was known for banking, such that even Cicero is reported to have stopped there to cash drafts in 51 BC. When Laodicea was destroyed by an earthquake in AD 60, the self-sufficient city relied on its own abundance and refused assistance from the Roman senate. Laodicea was recognized for its textile industry, which included the production of glossy black wool that was exported throughout the Mediterranean world. Finally, a medical school is associated with Laodicea and is known for ophthalmology and its production of an eye salve.



The remains of water pipes excavated at ancient Laodicea

LAODICEAN *See* Laodicea.

LAODICEANS, LETTER TO THE Colossians 4:16 mentions "the letter from Laodicea," usually understood as written by Paul. It no longer survives, and we have no clear evidence that it ever circulated among early Christians. Various people capitalized on this perceived opportunity by writing their own pseudonymous Letter or Epistle to the Laodiceans, attributing it to Paul. The practice of writing pseudonymous/forged letters and writings in the name of authoritative figures occurred cross-culturally in the ancient Mediterranean, including among some early Christians.

The Muratorian Canon fragment (second or fourth century AD) references, and rejects as a heretical forgery, one such Letter to the Laodiceans. A Latin pseudonymous Letter to the Laodiceans, written anywhere between the second and the fourth century AD and also attributed to Paul, survives.

The short and intentionally nonspecific letter strings together various quotations from and allusions to Paul's letters, especially Philippians.

For some early Christians, the Letter to the Ephesians possibly went by the name "Letter to the Laodiceans."

LAPPIDOTH Deborah is identified as "the wife of Lappidoth" (Judg. 4:4). The Hebrew word for "wife" also means "woman," and *lapid* is a torch, perhaps indicating something of Deborah's character.

LAPWING In Lev. 11:19; Deut. 14:18 the KJV translates the Hebrew word *dukipat* as "lapwing," referring to one of the unclean birds that the Israelites were forbidden to eat. More-recent versions translate the Hebrew word as "hoopoe." The bird is characterized by an erectile crest on its head and the ability to produce a foul-smelling secretion. The hoopoe became the national bird of Israel in 2008.

LASCIVIOUSNESS Six times the KJV translates the Greek word *aselgeia* as describing the evil behavior of "lasciviousness." The NIV translates the Greek word in these same contexts as "lewdness" (Mark 7:22), "debauchery" (2 Cor. 12:21; Gal. 5:19; 1 Pet. 4:3), "sensuality" (Eph. 4:19), and "license for immorality" (Jude 4).

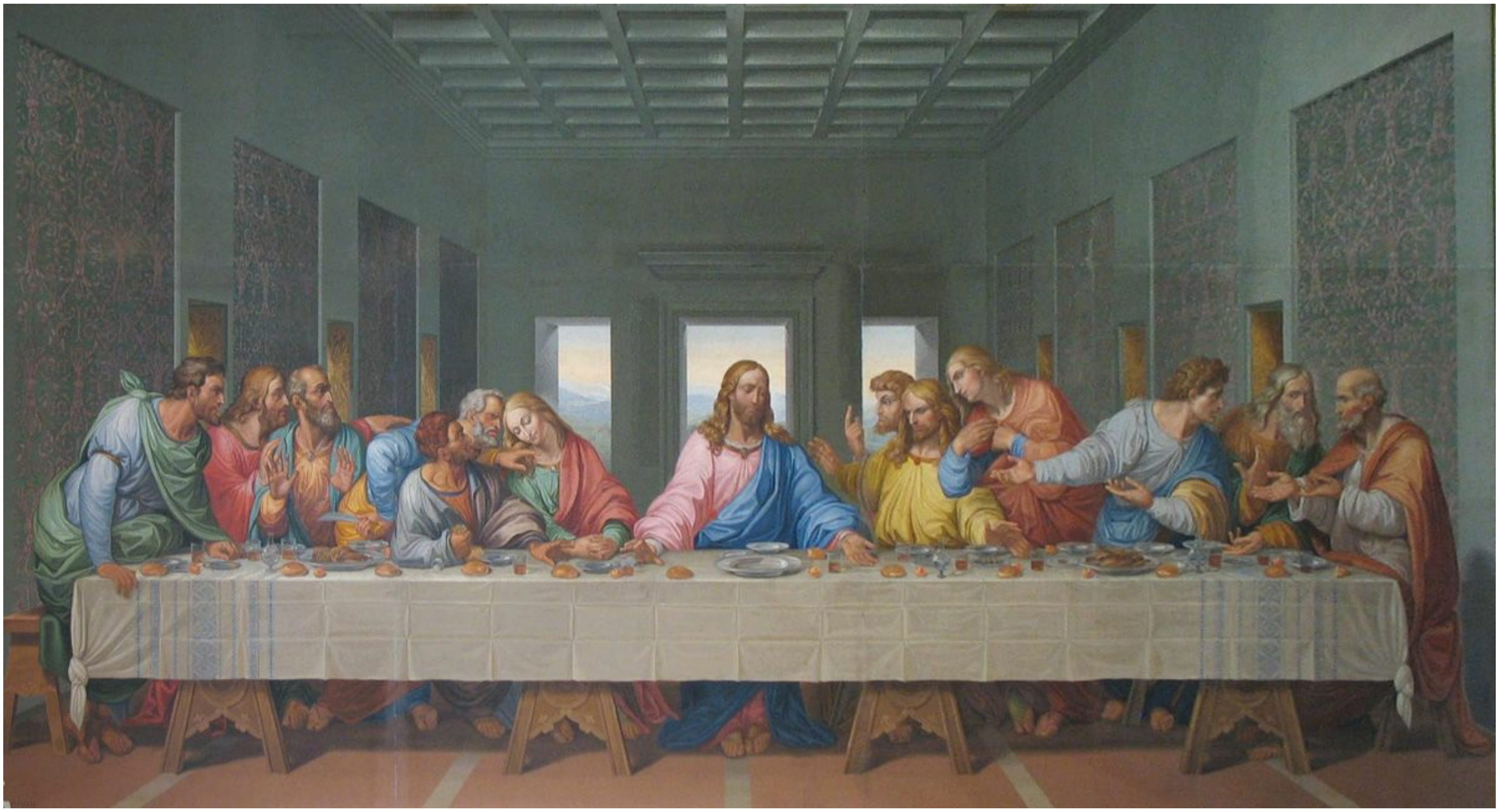
LASEA A town mentioned in Luke's narrative of Paul's sea voyage to Rome (Acts 27:8). Lasea was on the south side of Crete, near the harbor of Fair Havens.

LASHA A town on the border of the early Canaanite settlements. Lasha appears last in the description of Canaan's borders, being preceded by Sidon in the northwest, Gerar and Gaza in the southwest, and Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboyim in the southeast near the Dead Sea (Gen. 10:19). Lasha's exact location is unknown, but the geographical sequence of the preceding cities indicates that it was on the northeastern extremity of Canaan.

LASHARON A city west of the Jordan River that Joshua and the Israelites conquered (Josh. 12:18). The KJV notes that "Sharon" is an alternative reading for "Lasharon" based on the LXX text of Josh. 12:18, which reads "king of Aphek of Sharon." If one accepts the LXX reading, then this verse refers to only one city and the number of conquered kings in the list drops to thirty, which differs from the total of thirty-one offered in Josh. 12:24. Modern translations render the word as "Lasharon," without comment.

LAST DAY, LAST TIME *See* Eschatology; Judgment Day.

LAST SUPPER According to the Gospels and Paul, Jesus had a final meal with his closest followers the night before his crucifixion, which is remembered as the "Last Supper" (Matt. 26:26–29; Mark 14:22–25; Luke 22:15–20; 1 Cor. 11:23–26; cf. John 13:1–30, which mentions the meal but describes and focuses on Jesus washing his disciples' feet and elaborates on the betrayal by Judas Iscariot). The Synoptic and Pauline accounts of the meal fit into two distinct groups according to their representation in the NT: Matthew/Mark and Luke/1 Corinthians. The unique aspects of Luke/1 Corinthians include "do this in remembrance of me," the "new covenant in my blood," and "which is poured out for you." Matthew/Mark include Jesus' command to "take" the bread, his giving "thanks" before taking up the cup, and his referring to the cup as "my blood of the covenant" and his blood poured out for "many."



The Last Supper by Raffaelli, based on the work of Leonardo da Vinci

Two further issues involve when this meal took place and whether it was a Passover meal. According to the Gospels, Jesus was crucified on a Friday (Matt. 27:62; Mark 15:42; Luke 23:54; John 19:31, 42). However, in the Synoptic Gospels the supper was a Passover meal (Matt. 26:17–19; Mark 14:12–16; Luke 22:7–15), but John 13:1, 29; 18:28; 19:31 imply that the trial and crucifixion took place before Passover. It may be that John is correct, and Jesus had a quasi-Passover meal ahead of the actual Passover because he knew that he would not live long enough to celebrate it. Or perhaps the Synoptics are correct, and John altered the chronology in order to have Jesus crucified on the same day the Passover lambs were sacrificed, thus making a theological point about Jesus as the Lamb of God. In any event, the meal was symbolic of the new exodus, the renewal of the covenant, and the atonement that Jesus would achieve through his death.

In the early church this commemorative meal became an integral part of the fellowship and worship of the first Christians. It was variously referred to as giving thanks (lit., "Eucharist," [from the Greek word for "thanks"]) (Matt. 26:27; Mark 14:23; Luke 22:17, 19; 1 Cor. 11:24), "the breaking of bread" (Acts 2:42, 46; 20:7, 11), "communion" (1 Cor. 10:16 KJV), the "Lord's table" (1 Cor. 10:21), the "Lord's Supper" (1 Cor. 11:20), and a "love feast" (Jude 12). *See also* Lord's Supper.

LATCHET In the KJV "latchet" refers to the portion of a sandal that bound the walking surface to the wearer's foot (NIV, NASB: "strap"). John the Baptist said that he was unworthy of the menial task of loosing the latchet of Jesus' sandals (Mark 1:7; Luke 3:16; John 1:27).

LATIN The language of the Roman Empire. John 19:20 reports that the inscription on the cross of Jesus was written in Latin as well as Greek and Aramaic (cf. Luke 23:38 KJV, which includes the reading, found in some Greek manuscripts, "in letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew").

LATRINE An outhouse or a place of undisposed waste. The temple of Baal was torn down and then converted into a latrine by Jehu (2 Kings 10:27), a definitive act that demonstrated to witnesses the superiority of Yahweh over Baal.

LATTER DAYS *See* Eschatology; Judgment Day.

LATTICE A window through which air could pass but was protected by a structure of criss-crossed wood or metal strips. As elsewhere in the ancient Near East, window scenes in biblical literature often forebode ill fate. The motif of the woman at the window is commonly attested in the ancient Near East, and there are several biblical examples of such women and their perils (Josh. 2:15–21; Judg. 5:28; 1 Sam. 19:12; 2 Sam. 6:16–23; 2 Kings 9:32). The window portends danger for men also, though not in forms as tragic as those that women faced (Gen. 8:6; 26:8; 2 Kings 1:2; 13:17; Prov. 7:6; Acts 20:9).

LAUGH In the Bible, "laugh" rarely denotes a response to humor. Most prominent in the Scriptures is the laugh of scorn or derision. Animals and humans can laugh at danger (Job 5:22; 39:7; Prov. 31:25). God laughs at those who oppose him (Pss. 2:4; 37:13; 59:8), and Wisdom laughs at those who ignore her (Prov. 1:26). People can become laughingstocks to others (Exod. 32:25; Lam. 3:14). Jesus was laughed at in ridicule (Matt. 9:24; Mark 5:40; Luke 8:53).

Laughter is prominent throughout the narrative of Isaac's birth. Both Abraham (Gen. 17:17) and Sarah (18:12) laughed when they heard that Isaac would be born to them in their old age. When Isaac, whose name means "he laughs" (see 17:19 NIV mg.), was born, Sarah spoke of the laughter that God had brought to her and that others would have (21:6).

Furthermore, the biblical writers often contrast laughter with mourning. In such instances, laughter represents feelings of happiness or joy (Eccles. 3:4; Luke 6:21, 25; James 4:9).

LAUNDERER'S FIELD *See* Washerman's Field.

LAVER A water-containing vessel (NIV: "basin") used at the tabernacle and the temple. The laver at the tabernacle stood on a bronze stand, between the tent of meeting and the bronze altar (Exod. 30:18). Whenever the Israelite priests went into the tent of meeting or approached the bronze altar, they were to wash their hands and feet with the water in the laver. Failure to do so meant death (Exod. 30:19–21). Solomon's temple had ten bronze lavers that sat on movable bronze stands (1 Kings 7:30, 38). Each laver was approximately six feet in diameter and held about 230 gallons of water (see 1 Kings 7:31, 38 NIV mg.). The wicked king Ahaz removed these lavers from their stands during his reign (2 Kings 16:17).

LAW

TERMINOLOGY

The word "law," often referred to as "Torah," occurs 220 times in the OT and derives from a

Hebrew root that means “to teach or instruct.” Biblical law is the body of instructions or teachings that serve to govern and maintain the covenant relationship between God and Israel. The distinctive relationship that Israel enjoyed with God was unparalleled in the ancient Near East. Unlike the Gentile nations, Israel received from Yahweh an instrument outlining his expectations of them, a set of guidelines by which to sustain that covenant relationship (Deut. 4:6–8). Outside the OT, the “Torah” or “Law” often refers to the first five books of the Bible, called the “Pentateuch” (Matt. 5:17–18; Luke 2:22). Second Temple Judaism commonly referred to the Pentateuch in this way.

The term “Torah” is not limited to cultic or ceremonial practice, but embraces civil and social law. In addition, the Torah refers to the prophetic word and more broadly incorporates the idea of parental instruction. The Hebrew word *torah* is employed in a variety of expressions, variously rendered in English versions: “the law” (Deut. 1:5; 4:8, 44; 2 Kings 23:24), the “Book of the Law” (Deut. 28:61; 29:21; Josh. 1:8; 2 Kings 22:8), the “Book of the Law of Moses” (Josh. 8:31; 23:6), the “law of Moses” (Josh. 8:32; 1 Kings 2:3), the “Book of the Law of God” (Josh. 24:26), and the “law of the LORD” (2 Kings 10:31)—all of these indicate the divine origin of the instructions or reinforce the association of the Torah with Moses as Israel’s mediator. The OT notes that Moses “wrote a Book of the Law,” which was placed by the ark for reference (Deut. 31:26) and read aloud every seven years, during the Feast of Tabernacles, to all the assembly (Deut. 31:9–13). The book is not mentioned again until its discovery in the temple during the reign of King Josiah (2 Kings 22:8). The discovery of the book initiated a religious reform by Josiah that focused on the centralization of worship and the destruction of idols.

The OT employs a number of close synonyms for “law,” including “commandments,” “testimony,” “judgments,” “statutes,” “ordinances,” “decrees,” and “precepts.” Each of these terms reflects varying nuances or particular aspects of the divine instruction. Unfortunately, all these words as translated into English subtly misrepresent the “law” as an odious external set of rules that inhibit human freedom and require punishment for disobedience. This perspective suggests that obedience to the divine law was coerced by the threat of divine judgment. Contrary to this misconception, the people of Israel rejoiced in following Yahweh’s instructions because their greatest desire was to please and live in harmony with him. Yahweh’s people enjoyed the privilege of receiving divine revelation consisting of directions that assured divine favor. Although perfect adherence to these instructions proved to be an impossible task, Yahweh’s covenant stipulations provided an ideal toward which his people were expected to make progress as they constantly strived to fulfill that ideal. The Torah in its broadest sense reflects a verbal expression of the character, nature, and will of God.

TYPES OF LAW

In general, Torah may be subdivided into three categories: judicial, ceremonial, and moral, though each of these may influence or overlap with the others. The OT associates the “giving of the Torah” with Moses’ first divine encounter at Mount Sinai (Exod. 19–23) following the Israelites’ deliverance from the land of Egypt, though some body of customary legislation existed before this time (Exod. 18). These instructions find expansion and elucidation in other pentateuchal texts, such as Leviticus and Deut. 12–24, indicating that God’s teachings were intended as the code of conduct and worship for Israel not only during its wilderness wanderings but also when it settled in the land of Canaan following the conquest.

More specifically, the word “law” often denotes the Ten Commandments (or “the Decalogue,” lit., the “ten words”) (Exod. 34:28; Deut. 4:13; 10:4) that were delivered to Moses (Exod. 20:1–17; Deut.

5:6–21). These commandments reflect a summary statement of the covenant and may be divided into two parts, consistent with the two tablets of stone on which they were first recorded: the first four address the individual's relationship to God, and the last six focus on instructions concerning human relationships. Despite the apparent simplistic expression of the Decalogue, the complexity of these guidelines extends beyond individual acts and attitudes, encompassing any and all incentives, enticements, and pressures leading up to a thing forbidden. Not only should the individual refrain from doing the prohibited thing, but also he or she is obligated to practice its opposite good in order to be in compliance.

Judicial law. The Book of the Covenant (Exod. 20:22–23:33), closely associated with the Ten Commandments, immediately follows the Decalogue and may be subdivided into casuistic, or "case," law (21:2–22:17) and a variety of miscellaneous laws, many which are apodictic, or absolute, commands. The divine instructions cannot address an infinite range of circumstances; consequently, the casuistic laws describe the judicial process in light of general situations, which form the precedence upon which future specific judgments can be made. Apodictic instructions, generally identified by imperatives or volitional forms, set forth a strict prohibition followed by the consequences of disobedience. Government in early Israelite history revolved around the authoritative decisions of judges, who declared a verdict based on custom or precedent (Exod. 18:13–27). The moral emphasis of the Decalogue and the Book of the Covenant provides the underlying theological reasons for obeying God's law and forms an important part of the ethical foundation of pentateuchal discussions and elaborations of law.

Ceremonial law. Ceremonial, or cultic, law includes the instructions guiding the construction and preparation of the tabernacle for worship combined with the Levitical guidelines dictating the proper execution of ritual sacrifice and cultic practice. The significance of the tabernacle as a portable sanctuary of Yahweh and its integral connection with God's promise to dwell among the Israelites are reinforced by the tabernacle's association with the appearance of Yahweh at Sinai and the inauguration of the covenant. The tabernacle becomes the place where the people meet God through a mediator and seek continued divine favor through ritual purification, sacrifice, and atonement.

Leviticus systematically outlines the procedure for priestly selection and succession, details the consecration of cultic vessels and priests, describes conditions for participation and the celebration of sacred festivals (Lev. 16; 23–25), and addresses other issues such as blasphemy, sexual behavior, and false prophecy. The sacrificial regulations cover sin offerings (6:25), guilt offerings (7:1, 7), burnt offerings (6:9), grain offerings (6:14), and fellowship offerings (7:11). The book of Leviticus also provides extensive instruction concerning the designation of "clean" (consecrated) and "unclean" (profane), reinforcing the separateness of God's chosen people (e.g., 11:46; 12:7; 13:59; 14:2, 32; 15:32–33). Uncircumcised foreigners were excluded from participation in Israel's sacred assemblies.

Moral law. Economic hardship presented numerous challenges in Israelite society that were resolved through laws concerning debt and slavery. A series of laws sought to protect the property and rights of those indebted to creditors (Exod. 22:25–27; Deut. 24:6, 10–13; 2 Kings 4:1; Amos 2:8). Those who were enslaved in order to compensate for their debts had to be released after six years of service (Exod. 21:2, 11; Deut. 15:12–18). Property and persons who were turned over to creditors could often be redeemed (Lev. 25:25–28, 47–55). Those who harvested crops were instructed to leave the corners of fields and the remnants of crops for gleaning by the poor (Deut. 24:19–22; Ruth 2:2–6). The systematic mistreatment of the marginalized in society led to widespread corruption among the judiciary, angering Yahweh and leading to the exile (Isa. 1:15–17; Amos 2:6–7;

11–13). It is clear that this type of law was reenacted during the postexilic period (Neh. 5:1–13; Jer. 34:8–16).

TORAH IN WISDOM LITERATURE AND IN THE PROPHETS

OT wisdom literature develops the concept of Torah as human instruction for daily living, underscoring the dynamic character of the law and its permeation of all areas of life. Vigilant obedience to the law results in wise and godly conduct. In Proverbs, the son is admonished by the father to obey the Torah (Prov. 3:1; 4:2; 6:23), and the pupil is instructed by the teacher to respect the law (13:13) and to resist the company of those who do not obey the Torah (28:4), with such observance resulting in God's blessings (29:18) and answers to prayer (28:9). The wise woman familiarizes herself with the Torah because the responsibility for instruction of her household lies with her (31:26).

The book of Psalms contains three compositions typically classified as Torah psalms (1; 19; 119). In Ps. 1 continual reflection on the Torah manifests itself in the prosperity and the wisdom of the obedient. Psalm 19 celebrates the benefits of keeping the Torah, including wisdom, joy, enlightenment, life, and moral discernment. In a lengthy acrostic arranged according to the Hebrew alphabet, Ps. 119 exploits the attitudes, effects, and practicality of the Torah as exemplified in the life of the faithful.

In the prophetic material, Torah refers to teaching administered in the name of Yahweh, either by the priests or the prophets. Moral decline, manifested by the social injustice of Israel's leadership coupled with idolatry and syncretistic worship, was directly attributed to the failure of the priests to uphold the Torah and their negligence in instructing the community (Jer. 2:8; 8:8; Ezek. 7:26; 22:26; Hos. 8:1–12; Amos 2:4). The prophetic emphasis on justice and righteousness as characteristic qualities of God's people highlights the importance placed on fair and equitable treatment (e.g., Isa. 5:23–24; 26:1–11; 48:17–19; 58:6–9; 59:9–14). The Torah provided the authoritative point of departure in the composition of prophetic messages and teachings, undergirding the authority and genuineness of the prophetic proclamations and exhortations to the contemporary audience. The messages of the prophets were in fact not new, but were simply the adaptation and transformation of pentateuchal texts already generally accepted by the community as authoritative.

BIBLICAL LAW AND ANCIENT NEAR EASTERN SOURCES

Biblical law did not develop in isolation from other legal systems; rather, it appears to follow long-established, widespread, and standardized patterns of Mesopotamian law. A persuasive number of parallels between customs and familial relationships addressed in the Nuzi tablets and archaic elements in the patriarchal narratives seem to suggest that the patriarchs operated under Hurrian law. The Nuzi tablets clarify the subjects of adoption, marriage, and economic transactions, apparently exerting an influence on the lives of the early OT patriarchs. The wife-sister accounts of Abram and Isaac, in which the marriage eligibility of Sarai and Rebekah arise (Gen. 12; 26), as well as Abraham's proposed adoption of his servant Eliezer as an heir (Gen. 15:2–4) and his siring of Ishmael through Sarai's servant Hagar (Gen. 16), reflect customary practice described in these documents.

A vast range of legal documents regulating judicial procedures provides material for comparative analysis with biblical texts. Included among these discoveries are a number of law collections, generally named after the ruler who commissioned them. Archaeologists have uncovered evidence, from as early as the twenty-first century BC, of two surviving Sumerian legal collections affirming the ancient origins of societal governance. The Laws of King Ur-Nammu, recorded during the last great period of Sumerian literacy (2111–2095 BC), are preserved in scribal copies from Nippur dated between 1800 and 1700 BC and consist of a fragment and two partial stone tablets. Written in a casuistic format, the texts attest to twenty-nine stipulations, including legislation addressing weights and measures; protections for widows, orphans, and the impoverished; sexual offenses; marital laws; slavery; false testimony; and property abuses.

A tablet containing the Sumerian Ur-Nammu law code (2111–2095 BC)

A second Sumerian law collection dating from the nineteenth century BC, that of King Lipit-Ishtar, the fifth ruler of the Isin dynasty in lower Mesopotamia, consists of a prologue, thirty-eight wholly or partially restored laws, and an epilogue. These laws, bequeathed to Lipit-Ishtar by the Sumerian deities Anu and Enlil in order to "establish justice in the land," represent civil laws governing business practices, slavery, property, family, and inadvertent injury to an individual. What appear to be an additional thirty-eight laws, comprising the second half of the code, have been destroyed along with part of the prologue. All these laws were recorded in a casuistic format.

The Laws of Eshnunna, written in Akkadian, consist of two tablets containing approximately sixty different laws. The authorship and date of origin remain unknown, but historians suggest that this law collection, which has no prologue or epilogue, was contemporary with the Code of Hammurabi (1728–1686 BC). Though written in a casuistic format, this artifact assigns penalties on the basis of social status.

The Code of Hammurabi, named for the sixth of eleven kings of the Old Babylonian dynasty, is perhaps the most famous and most complete of the ancient Mesopotamian collections. In 1902, French archaeologists discovered the code on a black diorite stela, nearly eight feet tall, in what was ancient Susa. Multiple copies of the code have been preserved. Written in Akkadian cuneiform, the law collection consists of 282 legal paragraphs created to promote public welfare and the cause of justice. The format of the code, which includes a prologue, an epilogue, and a category of cursings for disobedience and blessings for obedience, closely mirrors the structure of the book of Deuteronomy. The casuistic format addresses laws governing public order and individual private law. The penalties prescribed for capital offenses, of which there were thirty, were harsh and often cruel, including bodily mutilation, multiple punishments, and vicarious punishment. Retaliatory consequences for the protection of private property were exceptionally cruel, taking the form of torture or excessive fines. Often, those who were presumed guilty would be thrown into the river; survival indicated innocence, while drowning demonstrated guilt. A predominant feature was the *lex talionis* (the law of retaliation, or measure for measure), whereby a corresponding penalty was exacted against the offender based on the crime. For instance, if a child was killed, the death of the offender's child was required. Capital crimes included theft of property and adultery. Contrary to biblical law, Hammurabi's code made financial provision for the loss of life, whereas in the OT the value of life was immeasurable.

The argument from silence suggests that in the absence of a full biblical law code, legal instructions and stipulations in the biblical text consist primarily of codicil emendations, that is, additions and innovations to already existing laws. For example, the discussion on divorce in Deut. 21 describes the execution of a document without giving details concerning the content or form of such a document. The passage also mentions a yet undiscovered "book of divorce." The absence of legal material on commercial and business law as well as specifics concerning inheritance and other common subjects points to a more comprehensive body of unwritten law reflecting preexisting societal norms. Israelite society was therefore indebted to its Mesopotamian predecessors for its implementation of law as a means of protecting citizens, and for many legal provisions eventually adapted by the biblical text.

THE CHARACTER OF BIBLICAL LAW

Although Israelite law was in some ways influenced by the legal codes of other ancient Near Eastern cultures, biblical law retained a distinct identity centered on the relationship between Yahweh and his chosen people. Law in the OT is presented not as secular instruction but rather as divine pronouncement, receiving its authority as an expression of the divine will. The entirety of the divine instruction originates with God, and he is both author and guarantor of the covenant with his people. The people of Israel, then, are held responsible to God for their actions and not just to a legislative body or human ruler. The will of the Israelite is wholly surrendered to the will of God to such a degree that every aspect of an individual's life is inextricably connected to the divine teachings. God assigns the stipulations and requirements of the law to the entire corporate body of Israel. The responsibility for covenant fidelity does not lie solely with the community leadership; rather, it is shared by every individual in the community, whose dual role includes ensuring both the fair execution of justice in the community and personal observance of the law. God's instructions are proclaimed publicly and apply equally to all social strata without distinction, apart from specific direction concerning slaves.

Torah becomes the corpus of teaching directed toward the entire community. The didactic purpose of the law is evident by the motive clauses appended to many apodictic and casuistic instructions that elaborate on the ethical, religious, or historical reasons for covenant faithfulness. The pedagogical aim serves to appeal to the Israelite conscience as a means of motivating obedience. In addition, the teaching that humanity is created in the divine image reinforces the sacredness of human life as a foundational concern of the law. Religious rather than economic values prevail, eliminating the death penalty for all property crimes. Individual culpability predominates in the biblical corpus, abolishing the notion of vicarious punishment advocated in extrabiblical legislation. Each offender pays the consequences of his or her behavior. Each person, created by God and enjoying equal status with all others, receives fair and equitable treatment.

THE LAW AND THE NEW TESTAMENT

The contemporary significance of the Torah is recognized in the NT by Jesus' declaration that his incarnation served to fulfill the law (Matt. 5:17). He affirms the continued legitimacy of the law (Matt. 5:19) and appeals to the law as the governing authority for proper practice and behavior (Matt. 12:6, 42; Luke 4:1–11; Mark 7:9–12; 10:17–19).

The relationship between gospel and law in both Testaments demonstrates far greater continuity than is recognized by many Christians. Covenant theologians affirm that the Mosaic law described a "covenant of works," which functions differently from the NT's "covenant of grace," while dispensationalists often teach that grace supersedes and abolishes the demands of the law. The conditional nature of the Mosaic covenant differs from that of the Abrahamic covenant, since the unconditional promise of the Abrahamic covenant suggests that the blessings promised to Abraham and his seed would be realized not because of human obedience but rather through divine fidelity (Gal. 3:15–27). The Mosaic covenant, or covenant of law, is not contrary to the promises of God (Gal. 3:21); instead, God graciously entered into relationship with the people of Israel, redeemed them from Egypt, and then gave them the law so that they would respond in humble obedience to his redeeming work. Thus, Mosaic law provided through a mediator a way for God to reveal himself to Israel. Consequently, the idea that Israelite religion was legalistic is mistaken. It did not teach that one could earn salvation by "keeping the law"; rather, an individual entered into the covenant with God by grace. When God established the covenant with his people, he forgave their sins. He did not demand a certain level of attainment as a prerequisite for entering into that relationship, nor did Israel have to obey the law perfectly in order to achieve salvation. Instead, the covenantal arrangement instituted a means of forgiveness through the sacrificial system, making the removal of the barrier of sin available to the people. Israel's obedience to the law was a response to God's gracious and redeeming work. Law and covenant were complementary.

Ongoing discussions explore the question concerning the relevance of the law for Christians today.

Many scholars from past centuries, such as Martin Luther, claimed that the believer is freed entirely from the law of Moses, including its moral requirements. The OT law is binding only insofar as it agrees with the NT and mirrors natural law. John Calvin, on the other hand, maintained that the moral laws of the OT are obligatory for the believer, and he asserts that this is the principal function of law. Calvin's sense of keeping the moral law does not compromise the message of grace, for keeping the moral law, as opposed to the ceremonial or civil law, does not earn salvation but instead forms the acceptable response of the believer to God's grace. Other Reformation scholars suggested that the law was abolished with the coming of Christ, and, as a result, while the moral norms remain in effect, the ceremonial laws have been fulfilled with the coming of Christ. Although the penalties originally prescribed for disobedience are no longer effective, keeping the moral law reflects the proper outcome of a life lived by the Spirit of God. *See also* Ten Commandments; Torah.

LAW, ADMINISTRATION OF *See* Court Systems; Judge; Sanhedrin.

LAW, ROMAN *See* Roman Law.

LAWGIVER Law, more properly labeled "Torah," is instruction. In the Bible, Moses is portrayed as the lawgiver par excellence, dispensing God's Torah from Sinai (Exod. 20:1–17) and delegating legal matters to others (18:24–26). The Ten Commandments are distinct from other forms of Torah in that they are described as having been given by "the finger of God" (Exod. 31:18). That is, Moses functions as an agent of God, the true lawgiver. Unlike law in the broader cultural environment, Torah came to Israel with God's authority. Yet even this authority had to be recast for each generation (Deut. 29:1; Num. 36:13).

Jesus' instruction in the Sermon on the Mount includes the important statement "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them" (Matt. 5:17). Although some of his detractors have perceived him as antinomian, Jesus assures his listeners that his teaching is in continuity with OT law. Indeed, the OT law finds its eschatological climax in the instruction by Jesus, who, like Moses, dispenses law from the mountainside.

LAWLESS, LAWLESSNESS "Lawless" and "lawlessness" are English renderings of the Greek noun *anomia*, which literally means "without law" (cf. *anomos* in 1 Tim. 1:9) but often refers more generally to sinfulness or wrongdoing of any kind (e.g., Ps. 5:4 [5:5 LXX]; Matt. 7:23; Heb. 10:17; 1 John 3:4). Paul speaks about a man who so personifies evil that he can be called the "man of lawlessness" (2 Thess. 2:3–10). The "secret power of lawlessness" is already at work and will manifest itself in the appearance of this man, the antichrist (2 Thess. 2:7). Some Bible versions (e.g., NIV, NRSV) also use "lawless" to translate the Greek adjective *athesmos* (2 Pet. 2:7; 3:17; also 3 Macc. 5:12 LXX). This word, which occurs much less often in the Bible than *anomia*, is translated as "unprincipled" in the NASB.

LAWYER A Jewish expert in the Mosaic law (e.g., Matt. 22:35; Luke 7:30; 11:52). The term is used frequently in Luke's Gospel, usually with a negative connotation. The experts in the law frequently tested Jesus with questions, and he often condemned the scribes for burdening the people. Lawyers or scribes were tasked to study the Mosaic law, teach the law to others, often in the synagogues and schools, and decide disputes regarding the law. The term could also be used in the general sense of "jurist" (Titus 3:13).

LAYING ON OF HANDS Laying hands on someone/something has two literal uses and two with symbolic significance. (1) Literally, to take something (e.g., Exod. 22:8–11; Esther 9:10–16; Matt. 26:51; Luke 9:62) or someone—that is, to make an arrest (e.g., Neh. 13:21; Matt. 26:50; Mark 14:46; Luke 20:19; 21:12; 22:53; John 7:30, 44; Acts 4:3; 5:18; 12:1; 21:27). (2) Literally, to lay hands on persons (or things) so as to hurt or destroy them (e.g., Gen. 22:12; 37:22; 1 Sam. 22:17; 24:5–13; 26:9–23; Job 1:12; 9:33; Isa. 11:14; Jer. 15:6; Ezek. 39:21). (3) Laying a hand over one's mouth as a symbolic gesture of amazement (Mic. 7:16) or humility (Job 40:4). (4) A gesture to symbolize the transfer of something from one person to another. Transfer symbolism applications include the transfer of representative identity in sacrificing (e.g., Exod. 29:10–19; Lev. 1:4; 16:21; Num. 8:10–12; 2 Chron. 29:23–24), of authority in commissioning (ordination) (e.g., Num. 27:18–23; Deut. 34:9; Acts 6:6; 13:3), of blessing (e.g., Gen. 48:13–20; Matt. 19:13–15), of life and health (e.g., Matt. 8:3, 15; 9:18, 25, 29; 20:34; Mark 6:5; 7:32–33; 8:22–26; 16:18; Luke 4:40; 7:14; 13:13; 22:51; Acts 8:17; 9:12, 17; 28:8), and of the Holy Spirit and spiritual gifting (Acts 8:17–19; 9:17; 19:6; 1 Tim. 4:14; 2 Tim. 1:6).

Three additional things should be noted about this transfer symbolism. First, the laying on of hands is symbolic rather than purely causative. This is evidenced when Jesus and the apostles credit faith, and not mere touch, for healings (e.g., Matt. 9:22, 29–30; Luke 17:19; Acts 3:12–16; 14:9; cf. Matt. 13:58), when healings occur from a distance (e.g., Matt. 8:5–13; 15:21–28; John 4:46–54) and/or with no apparent touch involved (e.g., Matt. 8:28–34; 9:1–8, 32–33; 12:22; 17:14–21; Mark 1:23–28; Luke 17:11–19; John 5:1–9; 11:1–44; Acts 5:15; 9:32–35, 40–41; 14:8–10; 16:18), when the Holy Spirit comes upon people without touch (e.g., Acts 10:44–45), and when Peter strongly rebukes Simon Magus for assuming that the Holy Spirit is dispensed by mere touch (Acts 8:17–24).

Second, the early church used the laying on of hands for commissioning church workers (Acts 6:6), missionaries (Acts 13:3), and elders (Acts 14:23 [the Greek word used for "appointing," *cheirotoneō*, is derived from the words for "extend," *teinō*, and "hand," *cheir*; cf. 2 Cor. 8:19). Since the act was conducted by apostles (Acts 6:6), by prophets and teachers (Acts 13:1–3), by Paul and Barnabas (Acts 14:23; 2 Tim. 1:6), and by church elders (1 Tim. 4:14), we may conclude that the early church had no established hierarchy for ordination.

Third, the NT has some guidelines for commissioning Christian workers (cf. Heb. 6:2). Church leaders have weighty responsibilities (Acts 20:28; 1 Tim. 3:1–13; 5:17; Titus 1:5–9; 1 Pet. 5:1–4), so it is not surprising that a church elder/overseer must not be a recent convert (1 Tim. 3:6) or hastily ordained (1 Tim. 5:22), and that a deacon must first be tested (1 Tim. 3:10).

LAZARUS **(1)** The brother of Mary and Martha and a resident of Bethany, his story is told in John 11:1–44, and he appears again in John 12:1–11 at a supper given in Jesus' honor. Lazarus is described as one whom "Jesus loved," prompting speculation that he is to be identified as "the disciple whom Jesus loved" (cf. John 13:23; 19:26; 20:2–3, 8; 21:7, 20–24). When an illness led to Lazarus's physical death, Jesus traveled to Bethany and grieved. Four days after Lazarus's death, Jesus asked mourners to remove the tombstone, prayed, and called for Lazarus to come out. Miraculously restored to life, Lazarus emerged from the tomb still wrapped in his grave clothes.

Later, Lazarus attended a banquet in honor of Jesus, where some were drawn to see him in addition to Jesus. Lazarus's miraculous resurrection prompted many Jews to believe in Jesus. According to Eusebius, the tomb of Lazarus was a pilgrimage site for Christians in his day, and tradition about its location stems from an early date.

(2) A beggar in one of Jesus' parables (Luke 16:19–31). Generally, characters in parables are literary creations and remain unnamed. The naming of Lazarus may suggest that he was a historical figure, but it may also serve to emphasize the role reversal between the named Lazarus and the unnamed rich man, who overlooked him in life but sought his aid after death.

LEAF, LEAVES Outgrowth(s), usually green, of the stem of a plant. In Gen. 8:8–11, an olive leaf in the beak of a dove signals to Noah that the waters of the flood are receding. Many OT passages contain references to leaves as a metaphor for prosperity (Ps. 1:3; Prov. 11:28) as well as for destitution (Job 13:25; Isa. 1:30; 34:4; 64:6). A key difference between the two metaphors depends on whether the leaf is withered. The righteous will thrive like a green leaf (Prov. 11:28), whereas Job, discussing his suffering, refers to himself as a windblown leaf (Job 13:25). In the NT, Jesus curses a fig tree that has leaves but no fruit, immediately causing it to wither (Matt. 21:18–22; Mark 11:13–14, 20–25). Leaves are also used as an illustration by which Jesus teaches about expectations for the Son of Man to return (Mark 13:26–28). In Revelation, the leaves of the tree of life are for the healing of the nations (22:2).

LEAGUE An alliance or covenant. “League” appears most often in the KJV (e.g., Josh. 9:6–16; 2 Sam. 3:12–13; Dan. 11:23), and not at all in the NIV, which prefers “treaty,” “covenant,” “compact,” “agreement.”

LEAH The older of Laban’s two daughters (Gen. 29:16) and a wife of Jacob (29:23). The biblical description of Leah, whose name means “cow,” is not altogether flattering. Her marriage to Jacob resulted from Laban’s deception of Jacob, who expected to marry Laban’s younger, more attractive daughter, Rachel, which he did soon thereafter (29:26–28). Genesis explicitly says that Jacob loved Rachel more than Leah (29:30). However, God, because Leah was less loved, opened her womb (29:31). As a result, she bore six of Jacob’s sons, Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun (35:23), and also a daughter, Dinah, who is the subject of Gen. 34. Leah’s fertility was the cause of the barren Rachel’s strife (Gen. 29–30). Needless to say, a palpable tension is depicted between the two sisters, who also relinquished their maidservants to Jacob as secondary wives for the purpose of having more children. Leah was buried in the cave at Machpelah with Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, and Rebekah (49:30–31).

LEANNOTH According to the superscription of Ps. 88, the psalm was to be performed according to “mahalath leannoth,” possibly a musical tune (NIV note: “The Suffering of Affliction”). The meaning of the Hebrew phrase is uncertain, but the word *leannoth* here seems to refer to affliction.

LEATHER A material made from the skin of animals, leather was used for various articles, including belts (2 Kings 1:8) and sandals (Ezek. 16:10). Leviticus gives detailed instructions on how to deal with contaminated leather articles and textiles (Lev. 13:48–59). John the Baptist’s leather belt and garment of camel’s hair recalled Elijah’s style of dress (Matt. 3:4; Mark 1:6).

The instructions for building the tabernacle refer frequently to *takhash* skin (NIV: “durable leather”; Exod. 25:5; 26:14; 35:7, 23; 36:19; 39:34; Num. 4:6, 8, 10–12, 14, 25), a fine leather also used for sandals (Ezek. 16:10). Various suggestions for the animal represented by this term include badger (KJV), porpoise (NASB), sea cow (NIV 1984), dolphin (MSG), manatee (HCSB), seal (ASV), goat (ESV), and others. Perhaps the most likely candidate is the dugong, a large marine animal that lives in the Red Sea. Its skin would be hard enough to protect the tabernacle and its furniture as well as to be made into shoes. Other interpreters suggest that *takhash* actually refers to the color of the skin.

LEAVEN In biblical Israel, leaven used for making bread was a fermented lump of dough saved from an earlier batch. Like sourdough starter, it was added to a new batch of bread, which rose due to the fermentation process. Although the word "yeast" is found in some translations of the Bible, there is no clear evidence that ancient Israel was familiar with it.

Unleavened bread

Biblical teaching often views leaven as something to avoid. This may be because fermentation was linked with corruption, which to Israel implied uncleanness. Leaven was prohibited during Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread to remind the people of Israel that they left Egypt in haste, with no time for bread to rise (Exod. 12:15–20, 39). Leavened bread was forbidden in burnt offerings (Lev. 2:11). It was allowed, however, when brought as firstfruits, a thank offering, a peace offering, or as a wave offering during the Feast of Weeks (Lev. 2:12; 7:13; 23:17). This was possibly because it would be eaten by the worshipers and priests and not burned on the altar.

In the NT, leaven usually retains its negative connotations. Jesus instructed his disciples to beware the leaven—the teaching—of the Pharisees and the Sadducees (Matt. 16:6–12). Paul taught that the sin of one, like leaven, could corrupt the many (1 Cor. 5:6–8). He also wrote that legalism perverts the gospel just as leaven works through a batch of dough (Gal. 5:9). Positively, Jesus compared the growth of God’s kingdom to leaven, which invisibly spreads through a large quantity of dough (Matt. 13:33).

LEBANA *See* Lebanah.

LEBANAH One of the ancestors of the temple servants (Nethinim) who returned to Jerusalem after the Babylonian captivity under the leadership of Zerubbabel in 539 BC or soon after (Ezra 2:45; “Lebana” in Neh. 7:48). The fact that many of the names in the list are foreign has led to the belief that they were originally prisoners of war who were pressed into service to perform menial tasks as they assisted the Levites.

LEBANON

Geography and economy. Biblical Lebanon is the region that consists of two parallel mountain ranges north of Israel, whose boundaries are very similar to modern-day Lebanon. The south-southwest range is called “Lebanon,” and the north-northeast range “Anti-Lebanon” (i.e., “all Lebanon to the east” [cf. Josh. 13:5]). Between the two ranges is the Valley of Lebanon, where the city of Baal Gad was located (Josh. 11:17; 12:7). At the southern end is Mount Hermon, where the snowcapped peaks probably gave rise to its name, which in Hebrew means “to be white” (Jer. 18:14). Biblical references probably have in view Mount Lebanon (Judg. 3:3), with an elevation of ten thousand feet. Historically, the region was not as prosperous as the coastal Phoenician cities, although it was well known for its lumber industry. The fruits (Ps. 72:16), wine (Hos. 14:7), flowing waters (Song 4:15), and animals (Song 4:8) are described effusively in the OT. The region marks the northern boundary of the promised land (Deut. 1:7; 3:25; 11:24; Josh. 1:4; 9:1), which Joshua never conquered (Josh. 13:5; Judg. 3:1–3). Later, Solomon seems to have built cities in it (1 Kings 9:19; 2 Chron. 8:6).

Archaeological evidence indicates that trees found in the region, such as pine, cypress, and cedar, were greatly sought after from the time of the Middle Bronze Age (2200–1550 BC) to the Byzantine period (AD 324–638) for use in the construction of buildings and boats (cf. Ezek. 27:5). Cedar wood from the forests of Lebanon was shipped to Solomon by the king of Tyre for building the temple in Jerusalem (1 Kings 4:33; 5:6–10; 2 Kings 14:9; 2 Chron. 2:8–16; Song 3:9). When the forest belonged to the king of Persia, he authorized cedar wood to be sent for the building of the second temple (Ezra 3:7).

Metaphorical use of “Lebanon.” Important to the present discussion is the metaphorical use of the term “Lebanon,” particularly in the OT, where the term occurs over seventy times (the name does not appear in the NT). First, associated with the mountainous range in the region, Lebanon evokes images of glory, fertility, and abundance. For example, the high elevation gives Lebanon the sense of majesty and glory (Isa. 35:2; 60:13; cf. 2 Kings 19:23), which is further equated with the glory of Jerusalem (Isa. 60:13; Ezek. 17:3, 22; cf. Isa. 10:34; Zech. 11:1) and the restored Israel (Zech. 10:10–11; cf. Jer. 22:6). The melting snows, plus the annual rainfall, ensure abundance and fertility (Ps. 104:16; Song 4:15; Jer. 18:14; cf. Ps. 72:16). The glory of Lebanon is linked with Sharon, Bashan, and Carmel in the territory of Israel (Isa. 2:13; 35:2; cf. Isa. 33:9; Nah. 1:4).

Second, of all the coniferous trees in the forest of Lebanon, cedars receive the greatest attention and have been regularly used to indicate stature and beauty. For example, their sweet smell describes the desirability of renewed Israel (Song 4:11; Hos. 14:7), and their magnificence reminds one of the beautiful trees in Eden (Ps. 104:16; Ezek. 31:9, 16). These towering evergreens are a fitting image of humankind. The righteous people are compared to a cedar of Lebanon (Ps. 92:12–15); the legs of the bridegroom are as noble as the cedars (Song 5:15); and even kings, both Davidic (Isa. 14:8; Ezek. 17:3) and foreign (Isa. 10:34; Ezek. 31:3–18), as well as their subjects (Judg. 9:15), are likened to the cedars of Lebanon. Quite often, they are symbols of political entities (Isa. 2:13; 40:16), such as Judah (Ezek. 17:3), Assyria (Ezek. 31:3), and Tyre (Ezek. 27:5).

Third, Lebanon, together with its forest, is used to depict negative images. For example, all its glories and riches combined are not enough for a sacrificial offering to God (Isa. 40:16). The barrenness of Lebanon is the result of God's judgment (Isa. 33:9). Prophetic oracles are often associated with Lebanon. The cutting down or withering of the choicest trees is spoken of as judgment against the proud (Isa. 2:13; 33:9; Ezek. 31:15; Nah. 1:4), against the wicked nation of Tyre (Ezek. 27:1–9) and Judah (Jer. 22:6–7).

Fourth, exegetical traditions resulting from the metaphorical richness of Lebanon are found in later Jewish literature. For example, based on the root (*lbn*) of the term "Lebanon," which means "to be white," the rabbis interpreted it to refer to the temple, for it whitens the sin of Israel (*b. Yoma* 39a). The sweet fragrance of the cedars in Lebanon (Hos. 14:6) causes interpreters to connect it with the smell of the youth of Israel exhaled in the last day (*b. Ber.* 43b).

LEBAOTH *See* Beth Lebaoth.

LEBBAEUS One of the twelve apostles, according to the KJV of Matt. 10:3. Other English versions read "Thaddaeus." The KJV, following a different Greek manuscript tradition, lists "Thaddaeus" as Lebbaeus's surname. This apostle is elsewhere called "Judas son of James" (Luke 6:16).

LEB KAMAI A transliteration of the Hebrew phrase *leb qamay*, which occurs only in Jer. 51:1. Although the phrase is theoretically translatable as "the heart of those rising against me" (cf. KJV), most modern commentators recognize here a coded name for the Kasdim (Chaldeans), inhabitants of ancient Babylon. The phrase results from a simple substitution scheme, known as *atbash*, whereby the first letter of the alphabet is replaced by the last letter, the second letter with the next to last, and so on.

LEBO HAMATH Probably associated with modern Lebweh, Lebo Hamath is located in the northern Beqaa Valley, near one of the sources of the Orontes, about fourteen miles northeast of Baalbek. Lebo Hamath, whose name means "entrance to Hamath," marked the northernmost boundary of Israel (Num. 34:8; Ezek. 47:15) and separated Israel from the land of Hamath (2 Kings 23:33). The area from Lebo Hamath to the Wadi of Egypt or to the Sea of the Arabah represented "all Israel" (1 Kings 8:65; 2 Kings 14:25). The twelve Israelite spies went as far north as Lebo Hamath (Num. 13:21). After the conquest, portions of land that remained to be conquered extended to Lebo Hamath (Josh. 13:2–5). Some of the nations left to test Israel lived in the area (Judg. 3:1–3). David campaigned as far north as Hamath and was sent gifts by King Tou of Hamath (1 Chron. 18:3, 9). Jeroboam II later restored the boundaries of Israel to Lebo Hamath (2 Kings 14:25). Remnants of Israel settled in Hamath (Isa. 11:11), and Gentiles from Hamath settled in Israel (2 Kings 17:24).

LEBONAH This city is located about ten miles north of Bethel and ten miles south of Shechem.

Shiloh stands about three miles to its southeast. This city is mentioned only in Judg. 21:19, but since it can be identified with modern el-Lubban, it is helpful in fixing the location of biblical Shiloh.

LECAH *See* Lekah.

LEECH A bloodsucking animal mentioned in Prov. 30:15. The proverb metaphorically says that the leech has two daughters, who cry, “Give! Give!”

LEEK A vegetable relative of the onion for which the Israelites cried out during their wilderness wanderings. Although God provided manna for the Israelites, they began to complain about the lack of variety in their diet, noting that in Egypt they had eaten many different kinds of foods, including leeks (Num. 11:4–6).

Leeks

LEES *See* Dregs.

LEFT The ancient Near Eastern world was oriented toward the east. Thus, in the Bible “left” sometimes means “north” (as the NIV translates the Hebrew word *semo’l* in Gen. 14:15). Often, “left” has a negative connotation. In Eccles. 10:2 a fool is inclined to the left, and in Matt. 25:33 the goats are separated from the sheep by being put on the left. However, in many texts “left” has no negative association. For example, in Prov. 3:16 Wisdom holds riches and honor in her left hand.

LEFT HAND *See* Left.

LEG Excepting the table legs in Exod. 25:26, legs in the Bible belong to animals, people, statues, or angelic creatures. God gives instructions for the ceremonial dispensation of animal legs (Exod. 12:9; Lev. 1:9, 13; 4:11; 8:21; 9:14) or their role in distinguishing clean from unclean animals (Lev. 11:21–23). Leg meat is a choice portion for guests (1 Sam. 9:22–24). The legs of humans, statues, or angels epitomize strength (1 Sam. 17:6; Ps. 147:10; Dan. 2:33; 10:6; Rev. 10:1), weakness (Deut. 28:35; Prov. 26:7; Dan. 5:6; Hab. 3:16), immodesty (Isa. 47:2), or sensuality (Song 5:15; 7:1). Roman soldiers broke the legs of people being crucified in order to hasten their death (John 19:31–33).

LEGION A Roman army division consisting of approximately six thousand soldiers. Jesus once encountered a demon-possessed man who, when asked his name, replied, “My name is Legion, . . . for we are many” (Mark 5:9). Jesus cast the evil spirits out of the man and into a herd of pigs, and the entire herd, about two thousand animals, drowned (Mark 5:1–20; Luke 8:26–39). When Peter attempted to fight those who arrested Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane, Jesus ordered him to put away his sword, saying that he could immediately have twelve legions of angels at his disposal (Matt. 26:53).

LEHAB, LEHABIM *See* Lehabites.

LEHABITES One of the seven groups of descendants of Noah through Mizraim. “Lehabite” presumably comes from “Lehab,” their eponymous ancestor, who is known only through the reference to his descendants (Gen. 10:13; 1 Chron. 1:11).

LEHEM A transliteration of a Hebrew word (*lekhem*) meaning “bread” or “food.” Though most often translated as a reference to bread, the Hebrew word can also form part of a place name, such as “Jashubi Lehem” (1 Chron. 4:22) or “Bethlehem” (e.g., Ruth 1:1; 1 Sam. 17:12). The latter name, from *beth* (“house”) and *lekhem*, appears as two words in Hebrew and literally means “house of bread.”

LEHI A transliteration of a Hebrew word (*lekhi*) meaning “jawbone,” Lehi was also a site in Judah where Samson struck down one thousand Philistines with a donkey’s jawbone. After Samson’s victory over the Philistines, God opened up a spring in Lehi so that Samson could quench his severe thirst (Judg. 15:9–19 [see NIV footnote at v. 17]).

LEISURE TIME Leisure time offers a respite from work, those essential duties of life such as paid employment and maintaining a household, to pursue other activities. Such nonobligatory pursuits range from entertainment to fine art, from peaceful relaxation to physical activity.

From the beginning, humankind was intended to work (Gen. 1:28; 2:15), but God also set apart one day per week for his creatures to share in his divine rest (Gen. 2:2–3; Exod. 20:8–11). This weekly rest should bring to mind God’s creation and the final rest in the age to come (Heb. 4:9–11). Although leisure time and Sabbath observance are not identical, both are opportunities to give thanks, worship, and put hope in God. They also refresh and enrich earthly life.

Indeed, every good thing is a gift from the Father (James 1:17), including time off from daily duties. How one uses leisure time is thus a matter of stewardship, much like one's use of money and working time (cf. Matt. 25:14–30). Thus, although the Bible does not discuss playing sports or writing poetry, it does proclaim Christ as Lord over all spheres of life. Therefore "whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God" (1 Cor. 10:31).

LEKAH The son of Er from the tribe of Judah (1 Chron. 4:21). Lekah may also be a town in the tribe of Judah.

LEMUEL A foreign king who is the source of a collection of wise sayings that he learned from his mother. The sayings are recorded in the book of Proverbs (31:1–9). The main topics addressed in this teaching focus on drinking and women, two areas that are likely to tempt leaders. Commentators generally agree that the geographical designation of Lemuel's kingdom is Massa, a region of Arabia. Beyond this, little is known concerning the king's identity.

LEND *See* Banking; Interest; Loan.

LENT The season of the Christian year that begins with Ash Wednesday and serves as a preparation for Easter. It is considered a time to reflect upon Christ's temptations in the wilderness or sufferings on the cross, consider one's mortality, and strive for spiritual renewal. In memory of Jesus' temptations, Lent encompasses forty days, during which many Christians fast in order to share in Christ's suffering. Historically, it was a time to prepare for baptism.

The final week of Lent is Holy Week. It begins with Palm Sunday, when many churches celebrate Jesus' triumphal entry by holding a procession of people carrying palm branches and declaring, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" Holy Thursday is also known as Maundy Thursday, from the Latin *mandatum novum* ("new commandment"). This day commemorates the Last Supper, when Jesus washed his disciples' feet and announced the new commandment that they should love one another. Some churches practice footwashing on this day. Holy Week concludes with Good Friday, the day of Jesus' crucifixion, which is the most solemn day of the church year. Good Friday services frequently are conducted in quietness and solemnity as the horrors of the crucifixion are considered. Expressions of joy must wait until Easter.

LEOPARD The fourth-largest member of the cat family, easily recognized by its spotted coat (though some specimens are completely black), this animal was found throughout Africa and the Near East, though recently it has disappeared from the Palestine area. Leopards have adapted to environments from rain forest to desert terrain. Adult males can reach over seven feet (plus a three-foot tail) in length and weigh up to two hundred pounds. Whereas the larger lion hunts in packs, the leopard stealthily hunts alone. An opportunistic hunter, the leopard lives on almost any kind of meat but seems to prefer midsized antelopes.

In the Bible, the leopard often appears in parallel thoughts with the lion (Song 4:8; Hos. 13:7) or the wolf (Isa. 11:6; Jer. 5:6; Hab. 1:8). The peace of the messianic era is symbolized by the leopard and the goat lying down together (Isa. 11:6). The visions of Daniel (7:6) and of Revelation (13:2) both include beasts resembling leopards.

LEPROSY It is important to distinguish biblical leprosy, which was primarily a discoloration of the skin, from Hansen's disease, what we today call "leprosy." Lepers were ritually impure, which caused them to be ostracized by other Israelites and banished from God's presence (Lev. 13:45–46). They were one of three types of people who were to be excluded from the camp of Israel (Num. 5:1–4). Moderns are slow to draw a correlation between physical illness and moral failure, but the ancients rarely made a distinction between the aesthetic and the moral: ugly is evil, beautiful is good. The leper's physical deformation would have been perceived by many as the outworking of a moral flaw. Some believed that leprosy was God's judgment for slander. God judged Miriam with leprosy (Num. 12:10). God healed Naaman from leprosy through Elisha (2 Kings 5:1–14). Jesus cleansed several people from leprosy (Matt. 8:1–4 pars.; Luke 17:11–19). Of special significance is his willingness to touch the leper, which, were it not for the emanating purity of the Holy Spirit, would have rendered him impure. But instead the leper was purified.

LESHEM A city in northern Palestine that was later named "Dan" when the descendants of Dan conquered it during Joshua's conquest of Canaan (Josh. 19:47).

LETTER A missive or epistle (2 Chron. 35:4; Ezra 4:7). Usually, ancient Near Eastern letters were written on perishable materials, as opposed to, for example, inscriptions in stone. Since there are few places where such material could survive (deserts or anaerobic bogs), one would expect few surviving letters; yet they number in the tens of thousands. The ancients were letter writers. Significantly, reading old letters has remained a significant aspect of the Christian faith. Today, many Christians regularly read someone else's mail—the letters of the NT—and face the expected interpretation challenges.

FORM

Old Testament letters. Although more than a dozen letters are embedded in the OT (e.g., 2 Sam. 11:15; 1 Kings 21:9–10; 2 Chron. 21:12–15), no OT book is in letter form. Embedded OT letters are truncated or summaries and tell us little of the typical ancient format. From the Lachish letters we infer that Hebrew letters generally opened with "To Addressee, greetings (or blessing)," a technical word of transition ("and now"), and no formal closing. By the Second Temple period, Aramaic letters were evolving into the structure seen in Greco-Roman style.

New Testament letters. Unlike the OT, the NT has twenty-one books in letter form: the thirteen traditional letters of Paul, the anonymous letter of Hebrews, James, 1–2 Peter, 1–3 John, and Jude. Two letters are embedded in Acts (15:23–29; 23:26–30). It is unlikely that the "letters" in Rev. 2–3 were ever dispatched letters. The NT also mentions other letters (Acts 18:27; 1 Cor. 5:9; 7:1; 16:3; 2 Cor. 2:3–4; Col. 4:16; 2 Thess. 2:2; 3:17).

Extant NT letters share the basic format of Greco-Roman letters, beginning with "Sender to Recipient, greetings [*chairein*]." A prayer (much less commonly a thanksgiving) transitioned into the letter body. The body of the letter opened with various phrases in a set format (stereotyped formula), such as disclosure: "I want you to know, brother(s), that . . ." (P.Oxy. 1493; Gal. 1:11); astonishment: "I am astonished how . . ." (P.Mich. 8.479; Gal. 1:6); petition, joy, and so forth.

The letter closed with final admonitions, greetings, good wishes, and sometimes a date. In addition to a set structure, the content was often far more stereotypical than letters today. Even letters to a family member had generic greetings, set phraseology, and standardized wishes for good health.

Yet, looking beyond the basic letter outline and the use of everyday language and formulas, it becomes clear that NT letters were not part and parcel with typical papyrus letters. Rather than the typical honor markers of rank or city, NT letter writers identified themselves by association with Jesus, sometimes describing themselves as slaves in his household (Rom. 1:1; James 1:1). The typical letter greeting (*chairein*) was Christianized into "grace" (*charis*), with the addition of "peace" (*eirēnē*)—the equivalent of Jewish *shalom*. A closing benediction was used instead of the typical final health wish/farewell. More significantly, most NT letters were far longer and more complex. The typical private letter of the poor averaged 87 words in length. Literary letters were much longer. Cicero averaged 295 words. Seneca led, with an average 995 per letter. Paul's letter to Rome has 7,114 words. Paul averaged (including all 13 letters) 2,495 words. Not surprisingly, Paul's opponents ridiculed his letters as "weighty" (2 Cor. 10:10).

Letters of the NT also assume that the audience is familiar with Jewish Christian tradition (e.g., Jude), inserting hymnic fragments, traditions, OT quotations/allusions, and so on, often without explanation or indication. The letters were to be read in front of the congregation (1 Thess. 5:27). Paul included longer and more complex thanksgivings than any known ancient writer, often using the opening thanksgiving to preview the letter's main topics (e.g., 1 Cor. 1:4–7). Paul's letters also contain large amounts of paraenesis (moral exhortation).

Although the typical papyrus letter was brief, thus keeping its cost reasonable, it was still not a trivial expense. For example, a soldier wrote a typical letter home to indicate that he had reached his assignment safely (P.Mich. 8.490), with a likely cost of about a half denarius, or in modern United States currency, about fifty dollars. Yet the length of many NT letters made them far more expensive. Writing to the Romans today would have cost Paul over two thousand U.S. dollars. A letter for public reading (Col. 4:16) needed quality papyrus in good handwriting, not some draft in hurried scrawl (Cicero, *Att.* 13.14–25). Appearances mattered. (For speakers, appearance was an important part of the rhetoric.)

The official Roman postal service was not for private use. The common person entrusted letters to someone already going to or near the desired destination. This method was popular, free, and surprisingly reliable, though haphazard (P.Mich. 8.499). Otherwise, sending a letter required dispatching a private carrier, often a slave, or a hired carrier (*tabellarius*). These carriers had advantages. They could guarantee the letter's authenticity, since forgeries existed (2 Thess. 2:2). If able, they carried other items, often mentioned in the letter (P.Mich. 8.465–467) or the reply (Phil. 4:18). Carriers often provided additional (or confidential) details (so Col. 4:7; Cicero, *Fam.* 11.20.4; 11.26.5). The writer often commended the carrier as "trustworthy" to guarantee the carrier's veracity. In Eph. 6:20–22, Paul wants it clear that he intended Tychicus to talk about Paul's imprisonment (as proof that Paul was not ashamed of his chains), and not that Tychicus was merely revealing secrets, as sometimes was done (1 Cor. 1:11). Finally, Paul may have selected a specific carrier to facilitate that letter's reception (Romans, Colossians). (*See also* Paul.)

FUNCTION

On the simplest level, letters had two primary functions. Expressions such as "I pray for your health and success" (P.Mich. 8.477) and "Write me how you are and what you want" (P.Mich. 8.498) were to start or keep a relationship with the recipient. Letters were also to inform (Cicero, *Fam.* 2.4.1), as when a son wrote his father, "While I was lying ill on the ship, they were stolen from me" (P.Mich. 8.468). Yet around the NT period, aristocratic writers (beginning with Cicero, then Seneca to Pliny) were modifying the simple private letter, lengthening it and elevating its style. They were using private letters to propagate religious, political, and philosophical ideas.

Scholarly study affected the study of NT letters for nearly one hundred years by arguing for a sharp distinction between "letters" (the letters of the lower classes, seen largely in the recently discovered papyri) and "epistles" (the literary letters of the aristocratic elite). Thus, Adolf Deissmann argued that the forms of NT letters (*koine* vocabulary, the diatribe, etc.) were indicators of the letter's intended function: as private letters, they were artless, unschooled, and dashed off in the midst of a flurry of other activities. On the other hand, Cicero intended his "epistles" to Atticus to be read by the broader aristocratic community and thus wrote with that in mind, creating artfully composed treatises in letter form. Although they had the appearance of private letters, Cicero carefully crafted his "epistles," knowing that others were reading over Atticus's shoulder. NT letters were not "epistles"; they were spontaneous and should not be read as careful compositions. Yet biblical letters were not merely private documents. Even those addressed to individuals (1–2 Timothy, Titus) seem to speak to the church behind the recipient (3 John attempts to work around Diotrephes and address the church behind Gaius). Our categories of "public" versus "private" fit the ancient world poorly. Since the general function of letters was changing, NT letters should be seen as part of this shifting landscape.

Moreover, as Greco-Roman letters continued to be studied, NT letters seemed more than mere artless notes, scribbled in a spare moment. Indeed, seeing signs of careful rhetorical composition, scholars have noted similarities with categories outlined in Greco-Roman rhetorical handbooks for speeches: forensic (judicial), epideictic (demonstrative), and deliberative. Arguing that letters were, in a sense, written speeches, various scholars have attempted to identify elements in NT letters that match the required outline for a specific rhetorical argument, meaning that a letter's rhetorical form could indicate its function. Thus, identifying the rhetorical form would reveal the author's motive for writing, whether the writer was intending to make a legal defense of personal status or to shape the behavior of the readers. While these studies generate lively debate and some interesting results, the usefulness of applying them to letters is still unclear. Rhetorical analyses of passages in the letters have proved to be more helpful than those categorizing an entire letter. Obviously, biblical letter writers were not writing in a vacuum, but biblical letters seem to mix purposes and not fit neatly into rhetorical categories.

Biblical letters were not dashed off with anything remotely resembling the rapid-fire pace at which email and text messages are sent today. Even phrases that seem to imply casual correspondence (1 Cor. 1:16) are more likely signs of careful rhetorical arguments. It is unlikely that biblical letters represent the work of just a long day or a few evenings. These letters show signs of careful composition (noticed more as scholars better understand ancient rhetoric and epistolary practices). The use of coworkers, secretaries, rough drafts, and revisions suggests that a NT letter was likely worked and reworked before being dispatched.

LETUSHIM *See* Letushites.

LETUSHITES The descendants of Abraham through his wife Keturah and their grandson Dedan, as were the Ashurites and the Leummites. The tribal name is derived from the name of their forefather, Letush (Gen. 25:3).

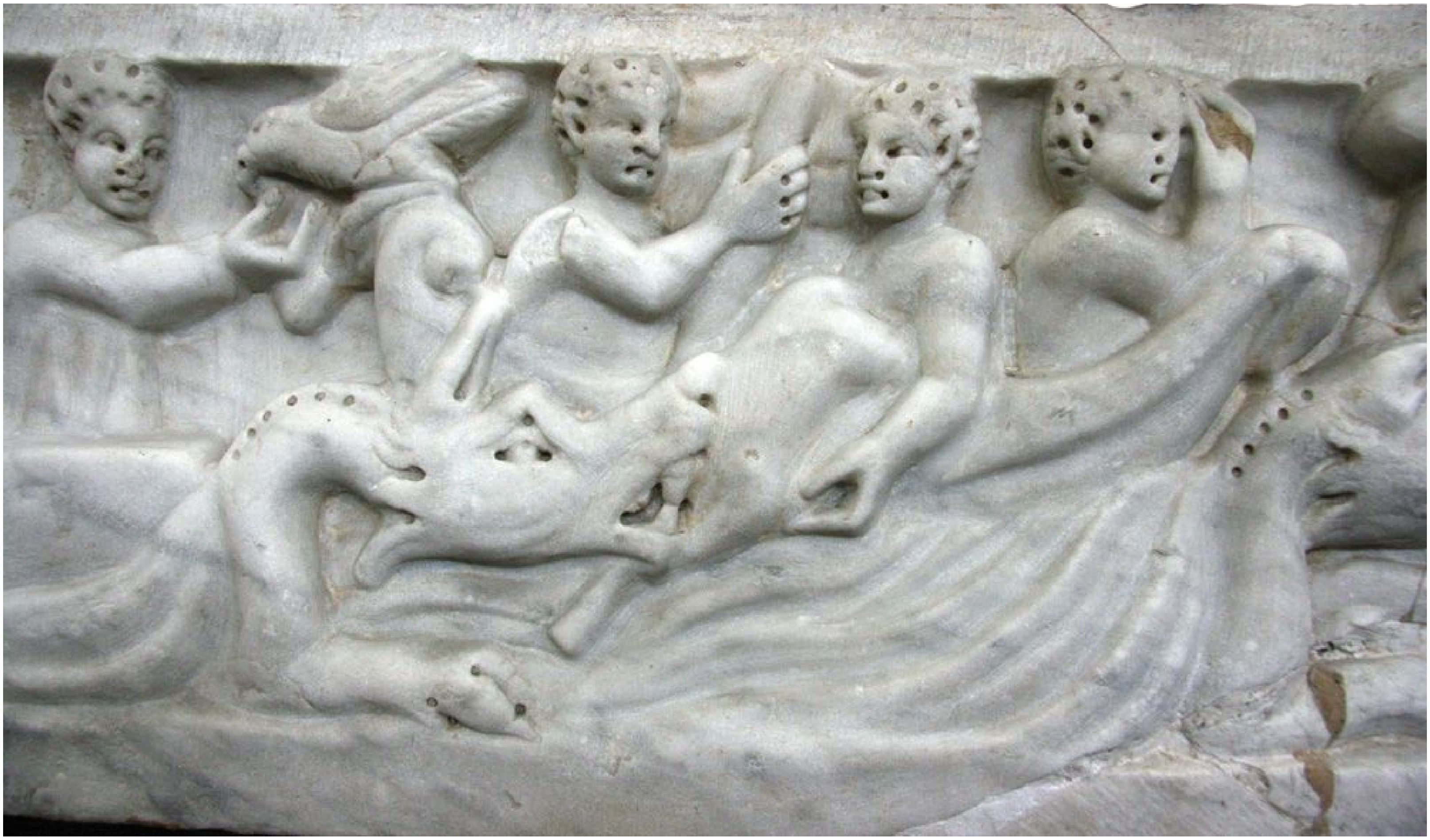
LEUMMIM *See* Leummites.

LEUMMITES The descendants of Abraham through his wife Keturah and their grandson Dedan, as were the Ashurites and the Letushites. The tribal name is derived from the name of their forefather, Leum (Gen. 25:3).

LEVI **(1)** A great-grandson of Abraham, grandson of Isaac, and the third son of Jacob by Leah (Gen. 29:34). Levi's sons were Gershon, Kohath, and Merari (46:11). The Israelite Levites were descended from Levi. Levi's only notable act was a brutal slaughter to avenge his sister Dinah's honor. When Shechem "violated" Dinah (34:2), Levi and his brother Simeon duped all the males of the city in which Shechem lived by suggesting that they will be able to marry Israelite women, such as Dinah, if they will first be circumcised. As the men of the city lay in pain from the procedure, the two brothers killed the unsuspecting men (Gen. 34). From his deathbed, Jacob cursed Levi and his brother Simeon for their actions (49:5–7). **(2)** The great-grandfather of Joseph, Jesus' earthly father (Luke 3:24). **(3)** A descendant of David through Simeon, also an ancestor of Joseph (Luke 3:29). **(4)** Also known as Matthew, Levi son of Alphaeus was one of Jesus' twelve apostles and a tax collector by trade (Mark 2:14).

LEVIATHAN A transliteration of a Hebrew word (*liwyatan*) that refers to some kind of sea creature, variously mentioned in OT passages extolling God for his mighty work and power.

The word may not refer to the same creature in each OT verse in which it occurs. Psalm 104:26 may be describing a whale; however, in most of the OT, it is probable that "Leviathan" is the proper name of a mythical sea monster that also appears in ancient Ugaritic myths. In these documents, Leviathan is usually depicted as a multiheaded and chaotic dragon that wreaks havoc upon the cosmos and can be slain only by the gods. Drawing on this mythological background, Ps. 74:14 praises God because during his work of creation he "crushed the heads of Leviathan and gave it as food to the creatures of the desert."



A sea creature shown on a Roman sarcophagus (fourth century AD). Leviathan is typically perceived as a sea creature.

A similar idea is present in Job 41:1–34 (cf. 3:8). Here Leviathan is described as a creature that no mere human can defeat or even look upon (41:9). It breathes out fire and smoke (41:18–21), cannot be pierced by sword or spear (41:26), and fears no earthly being (41:33). Such hyperbolic descriptions are most intuitively explained in terms of Leviathan's mythological background, used here to dramatically accent the all-encompassing power of God.

None of these passages implies the actual existence of the creature described; on the contrary, they draw on this material to metaphorically accent God's unique and preeminent authority over the forces of chaos. Leviathan, and by extension the destructive power of the sea, represents a threat beyond the control of humanity. God alone is able to slay "the monster of the sea," an act that signals God's final judgment upon the wickedness of the earth (Isa. 26:20–27:1). Revelation may draw on this imagery as well, for God alone is able to destroy the beast and the seven-headed dragon (12:3; 13:1; 19:20) and thereby bring peace to the earth.

LEVIRATE LAW, LEVIRATE MARRIAGE A custom whereby the brother of a man who died without sons married the man's widow (Gen. 38; Deut. 25:5–10). The firstborn son from the union became the dead man's heir. If the brother refused, he took part in a ceremony that released him from his obligation. Ruth 4 most likely describes a levirate marriage, although it is Ruth who marries Boaz, not Naomi, who is Elimelek's widow. Levirate marriage is used by the Sadducees in their attempt to trap Jesus with a question about the law (Matt. 22:23–33 pars.).

LEVITES One of the twelve tribes of Israel, descended from Jacob's third son, Levi. The smallest of the tribes during the wilderness wanderings, the Levites provided Israel with the priests who offered sacrifices to God and other ministers who cared for the tabernacle and its sacred furnishings. The term "Levite" is somewhat fluid in meaning, sometimes referring solely to the nonpriestly descendants of Levi and other times including the Aaronic priests. When used in the first manner, the Levites are almost always portrayed as assisting the priests in the service of the tabernacle or temple.

Old Testament. The Bible consistently states that only the priests could offer sacrifices to God and draw near to the ark and other holy items in the tabernacle. The other Levites were warned, on pain of death, not to come into contact with the holy things (Num. 18:3). Divided into three kinship groups—Kohathites, Gershonites, Merarites—they joined the priests in camping around the tabernacle in order to guard against anyone entering it, thus protecting it and their fellow Israelites from God's wrath. Their duties included dismantling the tabernacle whenever Israel broke camp and transporting the tent, the ark of the covenant, and other sacred items to a new location, where they would reassemble the tabernacle.

Apparently the Levites were given their special realm of service in part due to their diligence in purging the camp of sinners after the episode of the golden calf (Exod. 32:26–29), and in part because at the time of the exodus their population was roughly equivalent to the number of firstborn males in all Israel, for whom they served as substitutes (Num. 3:39–43).

The Levites uniquely received no inheritance when the land of Canaan was divided. Their dispersal in forty-eight cities throughout Canaan and the Transjordan (Num. 35:1–8), while linked to Jacob's curse against Levi and Simeon for acts of murder and cruelty (Gen. 49:5–7), positively allowed the Levites to represent God among the other tribes. Lacking their own land, they were dependent upon their fellow Israelites, who supported them with their tithes. The Levites in turn gave a tithe of their tithe to the priests.

During the time of David and Solomon, when worship was centralized in Jerusalem, the Levites received new roles because there was no longer any need to transport the tabernacle (1 Chron. 23:2–5, 25–32). Temple duties included purifying the sacred objects, providing the showbread and flour for the grain offerings, and bringing thanks and praise to God during the morning and evening sacrifices and at the festivals. Some Levites were appointed as prophets and musicians (1 Chron. 25:1). Others served the king as gatekeepers, treasurers, judges, scribes, and other officials. On occasion, Levites made up the king's bodyguard (2 Chron. 23:7).

At various times during Israel's history, certain Levites assumed the role of priest even though it was usually reserved for Aaron's descendants. Judges tells how one man, Micah, hired a Levite as his personal priest. The context, which tells how Micah made a shrine, ephod, and some idols, makes it clear that this was inappropriate, as it took place when "everyone did as they saw fit" (Judg. 17:5–12). Micah's mistake was multiplied when the tribe of Dan seized his idols and ephod and took the Levite to be their priest (18:14–21). Anticipating the reestablishment of worship in Israel after the exile, Ezekiel recounts that the Levites formerly abandoned worshiping Yahweh and led the nation in worshiping idols. Although they will no longer serve as priests, they will be allowed to perform other duties in the temple. Only Levites descended from Zadok could serve as priests (Ezek. 44:10–16).

New Testament. The NT says little about the Levites. Jesus' parable of the good Samaritan castigates both Levites and priests, as representatives of Jewish religion, for failing to aid the robbed and injured man. The book of Hebrews demonstrates that Jesus' priestly role is essential because the work of the Levitical priesthood is imperfect. It also insists that Christ's work can be understood only in the context of the priests. Whereas the Levites as a class are occasionally portrayed negatively, Barnabas the Levite became an important leader in the early church (Acts 4:36).

LEVITICAL CITIES Forty-eight cities allocated to the Levites in lieu of a larger inheritance of land like those afforded the other tribes of Israel (Josh. 13:1–14:5). The cities are listed in Josh. 21:1–42; 1 Chron. 6:54–81.

Included with the cities on the lists are six cities of refuge designated for fugitives from violent reprisal—the designated duty of the nearest male relative to the deceased—in cases of homicide without intent (Num. 35:6, 13–15). However, in cases of murder the boundaries of these cities offered no protection from the penalty of death. The cities of refuge were located on either side of the Jordan Valley (three on each side), facilitating access from the various parts of the nation.

In view of the absence of a substantial allotment of territory, there has been speculation concerning the Levites' economic sustenance. It has been noted that, in addition to the Levitical cities, the Levites received from the other tribes parcels of land for pasture (Num. 35:1–8; Josh. 14:4). Beyond the raising of cattle (as suggested in the aforementioned texts), the Levites supported themselves with offerings from the other tribes (Num. 18:21–32; Deut. 18:1–5). Additional offerings may have been received by their being included with "the foreigners, the fatherless and the widows" as recipients of tithing (Deut. 14:27–29; 26:13).

The stated reason for excluding the Levites from a larger inheritance of land is their designation as servants in the sanctuary, assistants to the Aaronide priesthood (Num. 18:24; Deut. 10:8–9; Josh. 18:7). As such, God himself is their "inheritance." This understanding comes to expression in the divine claim to the Levites as the "firstborn" among the tribes of the nation, a substitute for the divine claim to the firstborn, human and animal, from every Israelite household (Num. 3:11–13, 40–42). Another possible explanation, albeit one less prominent in the OT, is the scattering of Levi as a consequence of its eponymous ancestor's affinity for (unjust) violence, so portrayed in the blessing of Jacob (Gen. 49:5–7). The reference is to Levi's part in hostilities against the household of Hamor (Gen. 34:25–31).

LEVITICUS, BOOK OF The title "Leviticus" means "matters pertaining to the Levites," the priestly tribe of Israel. Thus, topics such as sacrifice and ritual laws that deal with food, skin disease, mildew, and incest are prominent. Although the story line is hard to keep in mind in the midst of all the laws, the Israelites are still wandering in the wilderness, and one of the most notable events of this period is the ordination of the priests and Levites. Most of these topics are foreign and seemingly irrelevant to contemporary audiences. However, as an example, sacrifice and priesthood not only are fundamental theological concepts in the OT but also are important for understanding the NT, where Jesus is proclaimed as the ultimate sacrifice and the ultimate priest. It is impossible to grasp fully this NT teaching without understanding the theology of Leviticus.

AUTHOR AND DATE

Leviticus is the third book of the Pentateuch, so the issues of author and date are the same as that of Genesis. (*See* Genesis, Book of.)

GENRE AND STRUCTURE

While much of the content of Leviticus is legal, the reader should not lose sight of the fact that narrative history continues and frames the law. The opening verses describe God as speaking from the tabernacle to Moses in the wilderness. Indeed, three chapters (8–10) narrate events in the wilderness, though even these are connected to the central theme of the priesthood, since chapters 8–10 describe the ordination of the priests and Levites as well as the first priestly rebellion.

OUTLINE

I. Sacrificial Laws (chaps. 1–7)

II. The Ordination and First Sin of the Priesthood (chaps. 8–10)

III. Laws to Protect Ritual Cleanness (chaps. 11–16)

IV. Holiness Code (chaps. 17–27)

THEOLOGICAL MESSAGE

Most of the laws of Leviticus concern worship of the holy God of Israel, who is present in the camp. Two phrases recur throughout the book. First, many of the laws find their motivation in the statement "I am the LORD your God" (18:2, 4, 5; 19:3–4, 10; 20:7). The second is God's proclamation and demand "Therefore be holy, because I am holy" (11:45; 19:2; 20:26). The book of Leviticus thus teaches that God is separate from the present world, and that only those who are also freed from the taint of sin are permitted to enter into his presence. This works out in three areas: the sacrificial system, the priesthood, and purity.

Leviticus describes five sacrifices (chaps. 1–7): the burnt offering, the grain offering, the fellowship offering, the sin offering, and the guilt offering. The description of these sacrifices focuses on performance rather than significance, so modern readers must engage in some measure of guesswork as to what these sacrifices meant to those who performed them. Nonetheless, it is fairly clear that there are three main functions to these sacrifices: atonement, gift, and fellowship. The burnt offering, for instance, emphasizes atonement. When sin has broken the covenant relationship with God, a person may offer a burnt offering in order to atone, or restore relationship. The grain offering is a gift to God the king. Indeed, the Hebrew word for "grain offering" is more literally translated as "tribute." Finally, with the fellowship offering (or peace offering), we see the third important function of sacrifice: fellowship. After all, the priest and the worshipers actually eat most of this sacrifice. Elsewhere in the Pentateuch, we see that more than one type of sacrifice is offered at the same time. The sin and the guilt sacrifices, like the burnt sacrifice, emphasize atonement and the restoration of the covenant relationship.

A horned incense altar from Megiddo. Leviticus describes several types of sacrifices and offerings.

God is holy, separate from the present sinful world, and the priests live and minister in their realm. They too are holy or set apart. We see this in the very clothes that they are given when they are ordained. The fabric is similar to the fabric of the tabernacle itself. Many of the laws are directed toward the priests themselves. They must be holy because their job is to preserve the holiness of the camp. The story of the sin of Nadab and Abihu (chap. 10) illustrates God's intolerance of priestly irregularities.

A major concern of the laws of Leviticus involves cultic purity, or cleanness. Food (chap. 11), childbirth (chap. 12), skin diseases and mildew (chaps. 13–14), and bodily discharges (chap. 15) are a few of the many topics treated in the book in connection with cleanness. God was present in the camp; the priests had to maintain the camp's purity.

The reason why something or someone was considered clean or pure is not always clear to the modern reader. Sometimes these laws seem to preserve a kind of ancient health code, but clearly this is not the overarching explanation. If, for instance, the animals listed as unclean for food were unhealthy, why were these food laws later done away with? If the legislation concerning skin disease was all about hygiene, why was a person totally covered with the disease considered clean (13:12–13)?

The best explanation seems to be that these laws reflect a number of different concerns, including, at times, health, but also to promote a symbolic system that protects as holy certain substances, such as blood and semen, that are closely associated with life. It also treats as clean those things thought to conform to their creation norms as well as things that are whole rather than mixtures. The function of the laws was to separate the behavior of Israelites from the rest of the world. Thus, when the wall separating Jew and Christian was removed by Christ (Gal. 3:28; Eph. 2:11–22), these laws were no longer to be observed.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Theologically, the book of Leviticus is important in its descriptions of fundamental categories such as sacrifice, holiness, and the presence of God. The complexity involved for an ancient Israelite who desired to come into the presence of the holy God reminds the Christian to be thankful that Jesus offered himself as a once-and-for-all sacrifice for his people.

The laws of Leviticus also demonstrate God's care and concern for his creation, not only human but also animal and inanimate. Nowhere is this expressed more powerfully than in chapter 25, which extends the idea of Sabbath rest beyond people to the land itself and beyond a weekly Sabbath to a Sabbath Year every seven years and a Jubilee every fiftieth year. This is a time of rest, redemption, and restoration.

LEVY A program of conscription (1 Kings 5:13 KJV) or a payment of tribute (Num. 31:28–41 NASB; 2 Chron. 36:3; 2 Kings 23:33 NIV) imposed on individuals or nations.

LEWDNESS Lewdness relates to shameful sexual behavior. Among translations, the word "lewdness," or one of its cognates, occurs most frequently in Ezekiel (16:27, 43, 58; 22:9, 11; 23:21–49) and Hosea (2:10). In these contexts, lewdness is associated with prostitution and adultery. It has a twofold sense in many of the passages: (1) metaphorically, it describes the nation of Israel breaking the covenant with Yahweh by engaging in the idolatry of neighboring nations; (2) literally, it describes the individuals of Israel performing shameful sexual acts that often accompany pagan worship.

LEX TALIONIS *Lex talionis* is a Latin term meaning "law of retribution." The principle is that the penalty should equal the crime. As expressed in the Torah ("eye for eye, tooth for tooth . . ."; Exod. 21:24; Lev. 24:20), it sounds brutal, but in reality it restrains excessive punishment (see Gen. 4:23–24).

LIBERALITY Liberality is the characteristic of being generous, the willingness to give of one's possessions to help others. It relates both to the amount of the gift and the attitude of the giver: the gift consists of a proportionally great amount (2 Chron. 31:5; 2 Cor. 8:2), and the giver offers the gift freely and cheerfully (Deut. 15:10; 2 Cor. 9:7). Liberality is a characteristic of God (James 1:5) and the righteous (Ps. 37:21, 26; 2 Cor. 9:13).

LIBERTINES *See* Freedmen, Synagogue of the.

LIBERTY, LIBERATION A recurring theme in both Testaments involving freedom from bondage. God values liberty and expects his people to live in a way that exhibits and promotes this value. The event of the exodus (Exod. 12:31–14:31) is often referenced to encourage the people of God to live in a way that encourages liberty (e.g., Exod. 22:21; Lev. 25:10; Deut. 10:17–19; cf. Ezek. 46:17). Following God's precepts is considered walking in liberty (Ps. 119:45). Jesus explains his ministry in terms of God's liberation (Luke 4:16–20; cf. Gal. 5:1). Liberty is valued not for its own sake but rather for the freedom to follow God (Lev. 25:42; Rom. 14:7–8; 1 Cor. 6:12–20). Living in freedom must include living a life of love for others (1 Cor. 8:9; 10:29).

LIBNAH **(1)** A town in the Shephelah conquered by Joshua (Josh. 10:29) and then allotted to the tribe of Judah (Josh. 15:42). However, later it is mentioned as one of the Levitical cities allotted to the sons of Aaron (Josh. 21:13; 1 Chron. 6:57). The city revolted from Judean rule under King Jehoram (2 Kings 8:22), but it was again under Judean control during King Hezekiah's reign when it was attacked by the Assyrian king Sennacherib (2 Kings 19:8; Isa. 37:8). Libnah is last mentioned as the hometown of King Josiah's wife, Hamutal, the mother of both Jehoahaz (2 Kings 23:31) and Zedekiah (2 Kings 24:18; Jer. 52:1). No other ancient texts mention Libnah, and identifying its exact location is difficult. Three different tells have been identified as biblical Libnah (Tell es-Safi, Tell Judeidah, and Tell Bornat); however, all three have been called into question. At present, its identification remains uncertain. **(2)** An unidentified spot where the Israelites camped during the wilderness wanderings (Num. 33:20–21).

LIBNI **(1)** A son of Gershon and grandson of Levi. Shimei was his brother, and Jahath was his son (Exod. 6:17; 1 Chron. 6:20). **(2)** A son of Mahli and great-grandson of Levi (1 Chron. 6:29).

LIBNITES Descendants of Libni, the son of Gershon and grandson of Levi (Num. 3:21; 26:58).

LIBRARY Ancient libraries played an important role in the transmission and preservation of the Bible. Our knowledge of the size and scope of ancient libraries continues to increase. Ancient libraries differed in size, ranging from small collections contained in well-to-do private residences to massive temple and palace archives. The larger collections usually contained texts in several different languages. The texts themselves could include various modes of writing, such as clay impressed with a stylus; broken pottery (potsherds) etched with a sharp tool; or papyrus or vellum (animal hide) inscribed with ink.

OLD TESTAMENT PERIOD

The most extensive libraries maintained during the time period of the OT consisted of cuneiform collections of clay tablets. We know of approximately three hundred libraries and archives dating from 1500 to 300 BC, extending over the entire Fertile Crescent from Elamite Anshan (northeast of the Arabian Gulf) at the southeast extremity, to Hittite Shapinuwa in modern Turkey at the northern extremity, to Egyptian Akhetaten at the southwestern extremity. Most of the Mesopotamian buildings were designed around a large inner courtyard, and the library most often was located in a room adjacent to this courtyard, which provided important access to good reading light. The lifetimes of these libraries also varied from those used only for a couple of years to two libraries used for 140 years.

Assyria and Babylonia. The largest collection of texts consisted of about thirty thousand clay tablets and fragments found in the libraries of Nineveh. The palace of Sennacherib (704–681 BC), located by the western wall on the northern side of the river that transected the city, included three libraries. The main library consisted of two adjacent rooms that housed most of the literary texts found in the city. Within a second library, around 450 clay seal impressions (bullae), with royal seal impressions on one side and indications of rope fasteners on the other side, were discovered that likely were attached to administrative documents written on scrolls or papyri that have long since disintegrated. The third library contained cuneiform documents, some of which contained Aramaic summaries of their contents. The palace of Ashurbanipal (668–627 BC) was located north of Sennacherib's. This palace also contained one main library with a large number of literary texts and one smaller library housing documents for military officials. Although Ashurbanipal's library received donations of texts from individuals such as Ashurbanipal's brother and from the crown prince's chief eunuch, it is unclear whether any policy of acquisition was in place.

The Assyrian capital city of Assur contained fifty-three different libraries and archives. In the temple to the god Assur, one library was kept by the supervisor of the temple offerings. One large library of 420 clay tablets, located in an administrative building near two of the prominent city temples, was kept by the stewards of several kings from Shalmaneser I (1273 BC) to Ashur-bel-kala (1056 BC). One small administrative archive with receipts and the like belonged to the cattle and sheep fattener. One small library of only 6 tablets appears to have been the handbook library for the exorcist of the king. One library of 140 clay tablets belonged to a prominent family in the city and consisted of various legal documents, such as loans, adoption certificates, inheritance contracts, and receipts. One of the city's governors maintained a personal library with loan documents, inventory lists, and other administrative documents.

The city of Babylon contained some twenty libraries. One of these libraries, thought to be located near the famous hanging gardens of the south palace, contained 290 administrative records from Nebuchadnezzar's reign (605–562 BC). Among these records is a list of prisoners of war mentioning King Jehoiachin of Judah, deported by Nebuchadnezzar. The north palace also contained a large library containing 950 loan and real-estate cuneiform documents from the Persian period (specifically, 465–404 BC). About 21 of these cuneiform documents have summary notes in Aramaic on them. There was also, unsurprisingly, a large library in the temple of Nabû, the patron god of scribes. The 1,500 school tablets found in this temple suggest that it was used as a scribal training school.

Ugarit. The seventeen archives and libraries discovered at Ugarit are significant for our knowledge of the Canaanites because it is from these texts that we have access to the myths of Baal and El written in the local language of Ugaritic. Most of the texts in this archive span a very short period (1230–1175 BC) during the reigns of three successive kings. There were eight different libraries in the royal palace, with the largest of these holding some 254 clay tablets, while the smallest contained only 14 clay tablets. Although most tablets were written in the local language of

Ugaritic, many of the letters and administrative documents were written in Akkadian, the commercial lingua franca throughout the region at that time. In addition, a number of religious texts were written in Hittite or Hurrian. In this set of libraries we see the importance of bilingualism for the scribes, as evidenced in the exchange at the aqueduct with the Assyrian field commander (2 Kings 18:17–37, esp. v. 26).

Hebrew and Aramaic collections. In addition to the cuneiform libraries, a number of libraries have been discovered with Hebrew and Aramaic preserved on ostraca (broken pieces of pottery used for writing). The palace in the northern capital of Samaria contained an administrative library with 102 Hebrew ostraca from the eighth century BC. These documents are often referred to as the Samaria ostraca and are receipts and logs of the delivery of oil and wine to different locations. The city of Lachish had a small military library of letters, located to the right of the outer gate; the library was maintained by Yaosh, the commander of the city shortly prior to its invasion in 587/586 BC. Dating even later, from the fifth century BC, are documents left by a small Jewish community on the island of Elephantine, at the southern border of Egypt; this small group of private documents written both on ostraca and papyrus concern everything from dreams to payment of debts, and include a note about a garment left in the temple of Yahweh.

Room where the library of Lachish letters was found at the ancient site of Lachish

Certainly the royal palace at Jerusalem also contained libraries and archives, as was common throughout the region. The OT mentions various books that most likely were housed in libraries or archives of this sort. The Chronicler refers to “the book of the kings of Judah and Israel,” which the reader may consult for more information on a given king (e.g., 2 Chron. 25:26). Other books mentioned include “the Book of the Wars of the LORD” (Num. 21:14), “the Book of Jashar” or literally “the Book of the Upright” (Josh. 10:13), “the book of the annals of Solomon” (1 Kings 11:41), “the book of the annals of the kings of Israel” (1 Kings 14:19), and “the book of the annals of the kings of Judah” (1 Kings 14:29).

Alexandria. Whereas much of our knowledge about the aforementioned libraries comes from archaeological excavations of the sites, our knowledge of the library at Alexandria is only textual in nature, though it is varied and plentiful enough to provide credibility for its existence. Two main features that distinguish this library from its predecessors and make it more comparable to modern libraries are its use of full-time librarians and the focus of these librarians on acquisitions. The position of head librarian at Alexandria was by royal appointment and was held in high esteem. Ptolemy III (246–221 BC) borrowed books from rulers the world over for copying. Galen reports that customs officials in Alexandria had orders to confiscate any books that were aboard passing ships, which would then be copied. More often than not, the original texts were then deposited in the library, and it was the copies that were returned to the original owners, with Alexandria forfeiting the bond money that had been deposited for “borrowing” the books. This practice enabled the library at Alexandria to collect some four hundred thousand mixed scrolls with multiple works and another ninety thousand single scrolls by the time of Callimachus (305–240 BC).

This practice is also mentioned in the *Letter of Aristeas* as the motivation for Demetrius of Phalerum, the librarian of Alexandria, to commission the translation of the Pentateuch into Greek. Whether or not there is any historical validity to this claim in relation to the Pentateuch itself, the emphasis of the library at Alexandria on acquisitions and copying clearly was well known.

NEW TESTAMENT PERIOD

One of the most important libraries related to the history of the Bible is the Dead Sea Scrolls, an archive of nine hundred parchment scrolls first discovered in caves near Qumran in 1947. These texts date from 150 BC to AD 70, overlapping the period of the NT. Although many scholars think that these caves served as a type of offsite storage facility for the library of the community that produced them, other scholars have suggested, on the basis of remains of a shelving system found within the caves, that these caves served as permanent libraries for the community. Biblical manuscripts make up about 40 percent of the archive (including portions of every OT book except Esther), and an additional 30 percent of the manuscripts are apocryphal or pseudepigraphical manuscripts. The remaining 30 percent of the archive has been classified as sectarian documents, including commentaries on different books of the OT and rules for proper living within the community.

LIBYA There are different Hebrew words rendered as “Libya.” Classical writers used “Libyan” to refer to any African except an Egyptian. In the Bible, Libya is sometimes referred to as “Put” (KJV: “Phut”) (Gen. 10:6; Ezek. 27:10). Libyans served in the army of Egypt and Ethiopia (2 Chron. 12:3; 16:8; Nah. 3:9). Ezekiel prophesied that Libya (KJV: “Chub”) and other nations would be ruined (Ezek. 30:3–5). One of its cities was Cyrene, home of Simon who was forced to carry the cross of Christ (Matt. 27:32; Mark 15:21; Luke 23:26). Libyans were present at Peter’s sermon on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:10).

LIBYAN *See* Libya.

LIFE Life is a complex, multifaceted concept in the Bible. Various Hebrew and Greek terms convey the idea of life. Life is described in both a natural and a theological sense.

LIFE IN THE NATURAL SENSE

In its natural sense, "life" may convey the following: (1) the vital principle of animals and humans, (2) the length of time that one has life, (3) the complete plot and cast of characters of an individual's lifetime, or (4) the means for maintaining life.

First, life is the vital principle of animals and humans. This use of the term is its popular sense. It refers to the quality of having an animate existence or the state of being animate. Therefore, it is expressed in terms of ability or power; one who has life has the power to act. On the other hand, "death" is its antonym; one who is dead no longer acts. In the Bible, life in this sense applies to both animals and humans; however, the quality of life differs because humans are made in the image of God (Gen. 1:26; 5:1; 9:6). Life is manifested in the breath of life, so that one who no longer has the breath of life no longer has life (Gen. 2:7; 6:17; Job 12:10; 27:3; Rev. 11:11). At the same time, life is seated in the blood. For this reason, blood should not be consumed but should instead be poured out and buried (Gen. 9:3–5; Lev. 17:10–16; Deut. 12:23–25). Although life may cease because of physical causes (whether disease, murder, accident, etc.), God is ultimately the Lord of life. He gives life through his breath of life (Gen. 2:7; Ezek. 37:4–14); he sustains life through his spirit (Ps. 104:29–30; cf. Gen. 6:3; 1 Cor. 15:45); he delivers from death (Gen. 5:24; Ps. 30:3; 1 Cor. 15); he gives life and puts to death (Deut. 32:39; 1 Sam. 2:6). Life, therefore, is first and foremost a gift from God.

In a discussion of life as the vital principle, it is important to address the question of the afterlife. The Bible affirms the significance of both the material and the immaterial components of a human being. The body is not merely a shell in which the true person is housed. Death is not the soul's escape from the body's prison, as evidenced by the resurrection of the dead (Ezek. 37:1–14; Dan. 12:2; Luke 14:14; 1 Cor. 15). Human beings are not created to live a disembodied existence ultimately. The fate for those who experience eternal life is the resurrection of the body made from an incorruptible source (1 Cor. 15, esp. vv. 42–50). For others, their fate lies in eternal death (Matt. 25:46; Rev. 20:6–15; 21:8).

Second, in both Testaments, "life" may also refer to the duration of animate existence—one's lifetime. The duration of one's life in this sense begins at birth and ends at death (Gen. 23:1; 25:7; 47:9, 28; Luke 16:25; Heb. 2:15). This period of time is brief (Ps. 90:10; James 4:14). The Bible describes two ways that one's lifetime may be extended: first, God gives additional time to a person's life (2 Kings 20:6; Ps. 61:6; Isa. 38:5); second, one gains longer life by living wisely and honoring God (Prov. 3:2; 4:10; 9:11; 10:27).

Third, sometimes "life" refers to the complete plot and cast of characters of an individual's lifetime. In other words, "life" may refer to all a person's activities and relationships (1 Sam. 18:18 KJV; Job 10:1; Luke 12:15; James 4:14).

Fourth, "life" rarely may refer to the means of livelihood (Deut. 24:6; Prov. 27:27; Matt. 6:25; Luke 12:22–23). These passages highlight two aspects of life in this sense: (1) people are responsible to guard life; (2) God gives this life because of his great concern, which exceeds his care for the birds and flowers.

LIFE AS A THEOLOGICAL CONCEPT

Beyond its natural sense, life is developed as a theological concept throughout the Bible.

Old Testament. The first chapters of Genesis set the stage for a rich theological understanding of life. First, God creates all things and prepares them for his purposes. He is the creator of life, and life is a gift from his hand. The pinnacle of his creative activity is the creation of humankind. God blesses the man (Adam) and the woman (Eve) whom he creates. God prepares a special place, a garden, for them, so that they may be able to live in perfect communion with him, under his blessing. At the center of the garden lies the tree of life. The tree of life demonstrates that the garden is both the sphere of God's provision and the symbol of life itself. At the same time, God commands the man not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, "for when you eat from it you will certainly die" (Gen. 2:17).

At this point, life and death take center stage. What follows in the narrative (Gen. 3) is a presentation of the meaning of life and death as theological concepts. Adam and Eve disobey the divine commandment. As a result, they die. However, their death is not death in the natural sense. Instead, when they disobey God's commandment, there are three results: (1) a curse is pronounced, (2) they are exiled from the garden away from God, and (3) they are prevented from eating from the tree of life (3:14–24). Death in this case is not ceasing to breathe and move but is curse and exile; in other words, to die is to be removed from the place of God's presence and blessing and be placed under a curse. Life, then, is the opposite: to live is to be settled in the place of God's presence and blessing.

It is also important to recognize in this narrative that obedience to God's commandment leads to life, but disobedience to his commandment leads to death. This principle is picked up throughout the Bible. Its clearest expression is found in Lev. 18:5: "Keep my decrees and laws, for the person who obeys them will live by them."

This narrative also draws an important connection taken up in other parts of the Bible, especially Proverbs: the connection between life and wisdom. In the garden there are two trees at the center: the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Although there is some question concerning what is precisely meant by the knowledge of good and evil, it is likely that wisdom is in view. Two pieces of evidence support this conclusion: (1) knowledge and wisdom as well as good and evil are central concerns for the book of Proverbs; (2) the narrative associates the tree with wisdom. When Eve considers eating from the tree, she notices that it is like the other trees in that it has a pleasant appearance and is good for food (Gen. 2:9), but it is also distinct from the other trees because it is desirable for making one wise (3:6). By eating the fruit, she and Adam attempt to gain wisdom contrary to God's command. As a result, this type of wisdom leads to death. However, true wisdom has the opposite effect. It leads to life, being a tree of life itself (esp. Prov. 3:18; also 3:1–2; 4:10–23; 6:23).

Although these themes—life, blessing, obedience, and wisdom—are found in various places throughout the Bible, they come together most explicitly in Deuteronomy. There devotion and obedience to God are viewed as the means of attaining wisdom and understanding (Deut. 4:5–9). Following God leads to living in the land that God had promised and enjoying his blessings there (28:1–14); however, forsaking God leads to all kinds of curses and ultimately to utter defeat and exile from the land (28:15–68). The choice to follow God and obey him or to forsake God and disobey him results in either life or death, good or bad, blessing or curse (30:15–20).

Life as a theological concept therefore has the following characteristics: being in the presence of God rather than exile, and experiencing his blessings rather than his curses. Such life may be attained through devotion and obedience to God and through the wisdom that comes from God.

New Testament. This concept of life forms the background for that of the NT as well. The NT often speaks of eternal life, especially in the writings of John. Eternal life is being in fellowship with God the Father and Jesus Christ (John 17:3). One may experience eternal life before natural death and beyond it into the eternal future (John 3:36; 5:24; 6:54; 10:28). At the same time, eternal life may refer more narrowly only to the time of perfect fellowship with God that lies beyond natural life (Matt. 25:46; Mark 10:30; Rom. 2:7). Because life consists of being in fellowship with God and living in his blessings, John can state that the one who believes in Jesus "has eternal life and will not be judged but has crossed over from death to life" (John 5:24). In other words, the person who believes in Jesus has been transferred from God's curse to his blessing, from death to life. Furthermore, Jesus declares that he is life, and that those who believe in him will live and not die; that is, they will never be removed from his presence and blessing (John 11:25–26).

LIFE, BOOK OF An image of heavenly record keeping (Luke 10:20), a book with the names of all who have lived. If one fails to be included among the "righteous," one's name is then erased, "blotted out" (Ps. 69:28; see also Exod. 32:32; Rev. 3:5; 20:15).

LIFE, ORIGIN OF Before the Enlightenment, the idea that all forms of life were created by God went largely unquestioned. That the God of Israel created by his word all plants and animals (Gen. 1:11–12, 20–25), "breathed . . . the breath of life" into the first human (2:7), and created male and female ancestors of all humankind (1:25–27) was taken as clear expression of the fact that God is the sole source and author of all life (Pss. 36:9; 139:13–16; Jer. 17:13). The whole of life—physical, emotional, and intellectual—originates from God himself as creator of all things. Not only does he create life, but also if God withdraws his breath of life, humans return to dust (Gen. 6:17; 7:23; 1 Sam. 2:6; Job 34:13–15; Ps. 104:29). Since the Enlightenment, questions regarding the origin of life have been taken up by the natural sciences. Philosophical rationalism insists that all life on earth must have originated from inanimate matter and not from a supernatural source.

LIFE, TREE OF *See* Tree of Life.

LIFE SPAN The typical length of time that a person can be expected to live. Genesis claims remarkably long life spans for the generations immediately after the fall, with the longest life attributed to Methuselah—969 years, essentially a millennium (Gen. 5:27). However, the Bible assumes a general life span of 70 years, and in special cases 80 (Ps. 90:10). Isaiah describes the span as a "king's life" (Isa. 23:15). Determining the average life span of the typical Israelite is difficult because of a dearth of evidence. However, archaeology suggests that many first-century people did not live past their fortieth birthday. In Rome, sepulchral inscriptions (which are biased in favor of the upper classes) suggest that the median age of death was about 34 years for wives and 46 years for husbands. Children were especially vulnerable to disease, hunger, and violence. About one-third of Roman children died before the age of ten.

LIFE SUPPORT When one or more of a person's vital bodily systems fails to function without the aid of medical technology, physicians and family members must sometimes make the painful decision to either continue or end life support. Some people decide for themselves in advance and record their wishes in a living will.

This raises important ethical questions. When is a person dead? To what extent and with what measures should life be preserved? Does quality of life matter? More specifically, should "life" or "personhood" be defined by the ability to choose? By consciousness? By neocortical function?

In light of these dilemmas, the mind-body relationship deserves particular Christian reflection. Somehow, mind and body form an organic, unified creature made in God's image. Human life is therefore of highest value in creation (Gen. 1:26; 9:6). Also worth consideration is the physical, bodily nature of the resurrection (1 Cor. 15). Scripture's high regard for the body seems to call into question ethical paradigms that downplay the desirability of preserving it. In any case, the beginning and the end point for someone faced with difficult medical choices is the apostle's exhortation to act in faith, hope, and love (1 Cor. 13:13).

LIGHT Scientifically, light may be described as electromagnetic radiation, exhibiting qualities of both waves and particles, traveling 186,282 miles per second from a light source, such as the sun or a lightbulb. In contrast, ancient Mediterranean thought presupposes that light, a kind of fire and fundamental constituent of matter, emanates from the human eye like a beam; and for some, the intensity of its radiance and luminosity depends upon the morality and direction of the seer's heart. Even today, many Europeans are fearful of the "evil eye," when a person is able to curse other human beings by merely looking at them. Jesus refers to the evil eye as emanating from an evil heart (Mark 7:22 [NIV: "envy"]; see also Gal. 3:1). Contemporary experiences of this seemingly counterintuitive reversal of empirical reality are the common perception of being watched from behind (turning and seeing that, in fact, this was the case), the luminous screen of the imagination, dreams after closing one's eyes, and expressions such as Shakespeare's "death-darting eye."

Jesus appropriates this popular assumption for the sake of his point: "The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are healthy, your whole body will be full of light" (Matt. 6:22). Another way of translating the verse is "If the eye is focused, your whole body will be enlightened." In the larger context, Jesus is exhorting disciples to turn their eyes from Mammon (wealth as an idol) to God's throne, where their real treasure is (Matt. 6:19–24). He claims that only those with pure hearts will see God (Matt. 5:8). Paul speaks of the "eyes of your heart" (Eph. 1:18), which are opened by the Holy Spirit—a phenomenon that he experienced on the way to Damascus, which, ironically, led to the temporary blindness of his eyes to see Christ, who was at the right hand of the Father in heaven (Acts 9:1–19; cf. 2 Cor. 3:7–18). The Bible does not require that light be limited to either the scientifically objective or the experientially subjective perspective; it appropriates the phenomenon to elucidate a deeper reality to creation and God, the possibility of seeing the light beyond light.

God begins his creation with light, which precedes the creation of sun, moon, and stars and throughout Scripture is an unqualified good (Gen. 1:3–5, 15–18; Exod. 10:23; 13:21). The comfort of light is more difficult to appreciate in a world that runs on electricity. In the ancient world, people rarely traveled at night and usually went to bed soon after sunset. The only light in the home was a small oil lamp set on a stand, which burned expensive olive oil. Light is a biblical synonym for life (Job 3:20; John 8:12). Seeing the light means living (Ps. 49:19; see also Job 33:30). Conversely, darkness is often a symbol of adversity, disaster, and death (Job 30:26; Isa. 8:22; Jer. 23:12; Lam. 3:2). Death is likened to the extinguishing of a flame (Prov. 13:9; Sir. 22:11). God initially overcame the chaotic darkness when he created light, and ultimately God's own glory will replace light in the new heavens and earth (Rev. 21:23–25). It is therefore not surprising that God is often associated with light (James 1:13–18).

Herodian-era oil lamp

John, who offers perhaps the most profound meditations on light, claims that God is light (1 John 1:5). The predicate appropriates the intrinsic beauty of light, a quality that draws people’s hearts back to the author of beauty. For the apostle, light represents truth and signifies God’s will in opposition to the deception of the world (John 1:9; 12:46). Light stands for purity and signifies God’s holiness as opposed to the unrighteousness of the world (John 3:19–21). Light is where God is, and it radiates from the place of fellowship between God and his creation (John 1:7). *See also* Light of the World.

LIGHTING *See* Lamp, Lampstand.

LIGHTNING References to lightning play a significant role in various theologically rich portrayals of God. God is sovereign over all creation and thus in control of the lightning. As one of God’s servants, lightning obeys his commands (e.g., Job 36:32; 37:15; 38:24–25; Pss. 18:12–14; 135:7). Lightning is also called upon to give praise to God (Ps. 148:7–8). God’s use of lightning against his enemies (Exod. 9:23–24; 2 Sam. 22:13–15; Pss. 78:48; 144:6) forms part of the OT picture of God as warrior. (Artwork from other ancient Near Eastern civilizations depicts their deities as making war on their enemies and holding lightning bolts in their hands, ready to hurl them down to the earth.)

Various theophanies (appearances of God) are accompanied by lightning (Exod. 19:16; 20:18). In other visionary theophanies, lightning is used either to describe the appearance of God's attendant creatures or to describe God's own appearance (Ezek. 1:4, 13–14; Dan. 10:6; Matt. 24:27; Luke 9:29; 17:24). God's judgments are described either as being accompanied by lightning or as being like lightning (Hos. 6:5; Zech. 9:14; Rev. 4:5; 8:5; 11:19; 16:18).

LIGHT OF THE WORLD John's Gospel features teachings of Jesus during the Festival of Booths (7:14–8:59). During this festival, four very large menorahs were set up in the court of women in the temple to provide light for dancing throughout the night (*m. Sukkah* 5:2). In the same location Jesus says, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life" (John 8:12; cf. Mark 12:41–44). The Mishnah notes that during this festival "there was not a courtyard in Jerusalem which was not lit up" (*m. Sukkah* 5:3). Jesus extends the range of the light to "the world." He perhaps alludes to Isaiah, who prophesied that even the Gentiles, who live in darkness, will see a great light (Isa. 9:1–2, cited as a fulfillment of prophecy in Matt. 4:14–16). In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus applies the same epithet, "light of the world," to his disciples, who are compared to a lighted city on a mountain (Matt. 5:14). Jesus probably describes an inner light—the effect of a purified heart—which he juxtaposes with the external "shining" of the scribes and the Pharisees (Matt. 6:1–2).

LIGN ALOES Fragrant trees seen by Balaam in a vision from God (Num. 24:6 KJV). More-recent versions shorten the term to "aloes."

LIGURE A jewel placed in the third row of the high priest's breastpiece (Exod. 28:19; 39:12). More-recent translations use the term "jacinth."

LIKENESS The word "likeness" is used in various contexts. In 2 Kings 16:10, King Ahaz wanted to have the exact likeness and pattern of the altar from Damascus, indicating a physical replica. In 2 Chron. 4:3, "likeness of oxen" (NKJV; NIV: "figures of bulls") is a physical reference. In Ezekiel's visions the word "likeness" refers to visual similarities (Ezek. 1). Isaiah 13:4 speaks of "a noise on the mountains, like that of a great multitude," referring to an auditory similarity.

The foundational concept, however, is found in Gen. 1:26: "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness." This announces the high status of humans as the pinnacle of God's creation (also Gen. 5:1–2). Genesis 5:3 says that Adam fathered Seth "in his own likeness, in his own image," employing both words found in 1:26. The precise meaning of this has been much debated. Three things are to be noted. First, the expression "let us," versus "let there be," implies a personal aspect. It refers to the human capacity to relate to God in worship and obedience of his word (2 Cor. 4:4; Eph. 4:24). Second, the word "likeness" describes human beings as not simply representative of God but representational. Humankind is the visible, corporeal representative of the invisible, bodiless God. Third, being in God's likeness/image sets human beings apart from everything else that God has made. Humankind's supremacy and uniqueness are emphasized.

LIKHI A descendant of Manasseh son of Joseph, Likhi was the third son of Shemida (1 Chron. 7:19), a clan head within Manasseh (Josh. 17:2; 1 Chron. 7:10).

LILITH *See* Night Creature, Night Monster.

LILY A flowering plant esteemed by the Hebrews for its beautiful blossoms. Lily decorations were in the temple as part of the garden imagery connecting the temple to the garden of Eden (1 Kings 7:19, 22, 26). The lily is prominent in the poetry of the Song of Songs (Song 2:1–2; 5:13; 6:2–3), and God used it to picture the future prosperity of Israel (Hos. 14:5). Jesus alluded to the beauty and carefree existence of lilies as he encouraged listeners not to worry about clothing (Matt. 6:28; Luke 12:27).

LILY OF THE COVENANT Apparently a musical term of uncertain meaning that occurs in the headings of Pss. 60 ("lily"); 80 ("lilies"). More precisely, it is "lily of the testimony" (NLT, NKJV; NIV: "lily of the covenant"). It is possible that the two words should be read independently of each other: "Lily. Testimony."

LILY WORK Architectural ornamentation resembling lily flowers that adorned the capital of two cast bronze pillars in Solomon's temple (1 Kings 7:19, 22 KJV [NIV: "shape of lilies"). The lily-covered pillars, named "Jakin" and "Boaz," stood at the portico of the temple (1 Kings 7:21; 2 Chron. 3:17).

LIME A calcium oxide powder produced by the burning of limestone in kilns, useful as plaster or mortar. Inscriptions could be made on a stone surface coated with lime (Deut. 27:2, 4 NASB; cf. Dan. 5:5 [NIV: "plaster"]). Burning human bones down to a limelike substance (NIV: "ashes") signified judgment or desecration (Isa. 33:12; Amos 2:1).

LIMESTONE *See* Chalkstone.

LINE The word "line" is used a number of ways in the Bible. Most commonly, "line" refers to the family line of descent, which emphasizes succession through fathers and sons (Gen. 19:32; Num. 26:11; Deut. 25:9–10; Ruth 4:18; 1 Sam. 2:31–32, 36; Ezra 2:6, 40; Ps. 89:4; Isa. 48:1; Luke 2:4). Secondarily, a line is a tool used by an artisan or a carpenter for measuring length (2 Chron. 4:2; Job 38:5; Isa. 44:13); it is used metaphorically, in conjunction with a plumb line, to signify God's judgment (Isa. 28:17; 34:11). A battle line is an array of soldiers readied for an imminent conflict (1 Sam. 17:2, 8; 2 Chron. 13:3). A line is also a queue (Ruth 4:4) or a boundary (Ps. 16:6), including a standard for behavior (Gal. 2:14). Finally, it is a physical cord or thread (Josh. 2:18; Ezek. 40:3 KJV), such as a fishing line (Matt. 17:27).

LINEAGE This term is used in Luke 2:4 (KJV, RSV) to refer to the family descent of Joseph from David. The Greek term, *patria*, is translated by the NIV as "line."

LINEN A type of cloth woven with fibers from the flax plant. Common in Palestine and known for its strength, coolness, and remarkable whiteness, linen served many uses, especially in the tabernacle (Exod. 25–28; 35–36; 38–39). Both wealthy and common people wore linen garments, but luxurious fine linens were worn by the rich (Isa. 3:23; Ezek. 16:10; Luke 16:19; Rev. 18:12, 16). In NT times, the Jews extensively used linen burial shrouds, as at Jesus' burial (Matt. 27:59; Mark 15:46; Luke 23:53; John 19:40; 20:5–7).

LINTEL The horizontal beam on top of a doorway. God commanded the Israelites to sprinkle lamb’s blood on their doorposts and lintels in preparation for the first Passover, the sight of which would identify the Israelite houses and spare them the destruction that God would bring upon the Egyptians (Exod. 12:7, 22–23 NRSV [NIV: “top of the doorframe”]). The lintel was part of a five-sided doorjamb for the olive-wood entrance door of Solomon’s temple (1 Kings 6:31 NRSV). Birds would roost on the lintels of Nineveh’s deserted doorways after its destruction (Zeph. 2:14 KJV).

LINUS A Roman Christian, with Pudens and Claudia, from whom greetings are relayed from Paul (2 Tim. 4:21). According to Irenaeus (*Haer.* 3.3.3) and Eusebius (*Hist. eccl.* 3.2), for twelve years this Linus was the first bishop of Rome after the apostles, ordained to that office by Peter and Paul and preceding Clement in it.

LION Several Hebrew words in the OT are translated as “lion,” most commonly *’ari*, but also *lebe’* (Ps. 57:4), *layish* (Prov. 30:30), and *shakhal* (Job 10:16). The terms *kepir* (Isa. 31:4) and *gur* (Deut. 33:22) probably refer to a young lion or cub, although the precise difference between the terms is not always clear. The only Greek term found in biblical texts is *leōn*. Lions appear to have lived widely throughout the ancient Near East in OT times, but by the time of the NT they appear to have been far less common in the wild, although the Romans used them for cruel entertainment.

The lion’s strength, ferocity, and unpredictability probably stand behind its symbolic use in reference to God (Job 10:16; Hos. 13:7), Israel’s enemies (Pss. 17:12; 22:21; Jer. 2:30; 5:6), and even the devil (1 Pet. 5:8). Overcoming a lion is a sign of strength and, in light of ancient Near Eastern royal connections, highlights the victor’s qualities as a leader (e.g., Judg. 14; 1 Sam. 17:34–37).

Cast tin-bronze weight in the shape of a lion (fifth century BC)

LIONS' DEN *See* Den of Lions.

LIPS The soft outer flesh that surrounds the mouth. The Hebrew word translated "lip" usually refers to the upper lip, which was often covered by the hand or garment as a sign of sorrow (2 Sam. 19:4). In the OT, the lips are used to describe the demeanor of the person to whom they belong. Lips are often synonymous with speech or language (Job 12:20). For example, lips can be faltering (Exod. 6:30), flattering (Ps. 12:2), deceitful (Ps. 17:1), lying (Prov. 12:22), evil (Prov. 17:4), unclean (Isa. 6:5), honest (Prov. 16:13), truthful (Prov. 12:19), righteous (Prov. 10:21), and joyful (Ps. 71:23).

LITTER A portable chair or couch supported by horizontal poles and carried by porters to transport a single passenger in a public procession. Isaiah describes a future time when people from all nations will travel by litter and other vehicular means to Jerusalem to worship God (Isa. 66:20 KJV [NIV: "wagons"]).

LIVING BEINGS, LIVING CREATURES An animate creation of God. The first reference to a living creature is in Gen. 1:20, where God creates sea life en masse. In this way, living creatures are set apart from the inanimate and plant life. As with all living beings, the living creatures on the land were to reproduce with their own kind (1:24). Humankind belongs to the category of living being but is also distinct by virtue of being created in the image of God. This is evident in God's more personal involvement in humanity's creation and in the authority given to humans over the rest of the living beings (1:26–27; 2:19). After the flood, God makes a unique covenant, one that is with all "living creatures" and not just humankind (9:10–16). There are also references to strange "living creatures" who appear to be angels. This designation may indicate that the beings are part of God's creation but were not part of the created order subjected to the categorization and authority of humankind (Ezek. 1:5–22; Rev. 6:1–7; 7:11).

LO-AMMI A transliteration of the Hebrew phrase "not my people" (*lo' 'ammi*), the name of Gomer and Hosea's third child (Hos. 1:9). While this name symbolizes a stunning reversal of Israel's relationship with God, a message of hope follows this declaration, promising that the child's name will be changed to "Ammi," "my people" (Hos. 2:23). *See also* Lo-Ruhamah.

LOAN Though often involving money, a loan can be anything that one party lends to another party without relinquishing ownership. Loans are discussed as a way in which to provide for the needy within one's community (Deut. 15:7). Although accruing debt is not desirable (Deut. 15:6; Prov. 22:7), loans are allowed and even commanded, albeit with regulations that mitigate some of the risk. A pledge may serve as collateral to help ensure that the loan will be repaid and then is to be returned upon repayment (Ezek. 18:7; 33:15). The pledge is optional (Ezek. 18:16), but when enacted, the item must belong to the debtor and not be provided by another party (Prov. 22:26). When waiting to receive a pledge, one must not enter the neighbor's house but rather must wait outside (Deut. 24:10–11). An item needed for one's livelihood is not an appropriate pledge (Deut. 24:6; Job 24:3). If the borrower is poor and uses a cloak as a pledge, the creditor should allow the person to use it for warmth at night (Exod. 22:26; Deut. 24:12–13; Amos 2:8).

Making loans is a means of providing for the neighbor in need and is not intended as a way to increase one's wealth. When a loan is made between Israelites, no interest is to be exacted (Exod. 22:25; Lev. 25:35–38; Deut. 23:19; Neh. 5:7), although interest is allowed when lending to a foreigner (Deut. 23:20). Lending money without interest is expected of one whose walk is blameless and who does what is right (Ps. 15:1–5; Prov. 28:8). In Deuteronomy the community is encouraged to lend freely to needy neighbors so that all the needs within the community will be met and the community will enjoy blessings from God, who hears the cry of the needy (15:7–11).

While it is expected that loans be repaid, the goal of a loan is not repayment but rather provision. Loans therefore are not to endure for a lengthy period of time. Every seventh year all creditors are expected to cancel the loans made to fellow Israelites as a part of God's time for canceling debts (Deut. 15:1–2).

LOBE OF LIVER *See* Caul.

LOCK It is unclear exactly how widespread locks were, but they are biblically attested. A wooden bolt-and-tumbler lock was used to lock the doors of houses, granaries, temples, and palaces. The lock was fastened to the inside of the door and accessed by a hole into which the hand and key were placed (Song 5:4–6). The key was relatively large, ranging from ten to twenty inches and carried on the shoulder (Isa. 22:22). A wooden box with loose pins was attached to the inside of the door above the bolt. The wooden bolt had notches into which the pins would fall to lock the door. The key's teeth would match the pins on the box, allowing them to be pushed up, which would free the bolt and unlock the door (cf. Judg. 3:24). Metal keys resembling modern ones were used no earlier than the Roman period.

LOCUST A swarming insect notorious for its devastating effects on vegetation. Ten different terms are employed to describe locusts, nine in the OT and one in the NT. Several passages in the OT employ multiple terms for locusts. Sometimes a clear distinction appears in the text between various species of locusts, though the distinctions are not always apparent in English, as is evidenced by the various translations of the terms (Lev. 11:22; Joel 1:4; 2:25). The various types of locusts have been described as grasshoppers, crickets, katydids, locusts, great locusts, young locusts, and other locusts. Some suggest that several of the Hebrew terms represent various stages in the life cycle of a locust. At other times, the use of multiple terms for locusts in the OT likely reflects Hebrew parallelism, with the terms being used synonymously (Isa. 33:4; Nah. 3:15–17).

The swarming behavior of locusts appears in the OT as a trope for large human armies (Judg. 6:5; 7:12; Jer. 46:23; 51:14) and as an image and instrument of God's judgment (1 Kings 8:37; Pss. 78:46; 105:34; Amos 7:1). Destructive locusts were the eighth plague of Egypt (Exod. 10:12–14), and they feature as one of the curses for covenant breaking in Deut. 28:38. They are also noted as acceptable for food in Lev. 11:22 and as part of the diet of John the Baptist (Matt. 3:4; Mark 1:6).

Some wrongly assume as inaccurate or prescientific the biblical description of the number of legs a locust has. However, Lev. 11:20–23 clearly explains both the total number of "legs" that locusts have and the distinction between the types of locusts that were considered unclean. Locusts that only crawl on the ground were considered unclean, while those that use their jointed legs to hop were considered clean and thus eligible for consumption. Thus, four of their legs were used for crawling, while two were used for hopping.

The use of locusts in the book of Joel is particularly significant. In fact, one's interpretation of the book of Joel largely depends on the identity of the locusts described in chapters 1–2. Three explanations typically are given for the function of the locusts in Joel. Some interpreters have suggested that these are literal locust plagues described in both chapters (such plagues were common in the ancient Near East). Others have argued that both chapters refer to an enemy approaching from the north, which is usually identified with Babylon. Still others maintain that the locusts represent a future, eschatological army of God. However, a fourth option for the identity of the locusts in Joel is most consistent with the text as well as the overall context of Scripture. It seems most likely that 1:4 and 2:25 are describing literal waves of locust plagues; however, the locusts are only a precursor of the coming danger, which will be in the form of an enemy from the north (Babylon).

LOD A Benjamite village (1 Chron. 8:12) in the northeast Philistine Plain region of Judah, eleven miles southeast of the seaport of Joppa. It was one of many towns repopulated by Jews returning from exile in Persia after the Babylonian captivity (Ezra 2:33; Neh. 7:37; 11:35). Located at the intersection of a major north-south international trade route and an east-west highway leading to Jerusalem, Lod was renamed “Lydda” in NT times. Peter healed the paralytic Aeneas in Lydda (Acts 9:32–34).

LO DEBAR A city that lay just east of the Jordan River. Scholars have suggested that Debir, mentioned in the tribal allotment to Gad (Josh. 13:26), may be the same city (the Hebrew here for “of Debir” is spelled with the same consonants as the Hebrew for “Lo Debar”). Mephibosheth was staying in Lo Debar at the house of Makir son of Ammiel when David was seeking to show kindness to a member of Saul’s family after Saul’s death. Summoned by David, Mephibosheth traveled southwest to Jerusalem and settled there, “because he always ate at the king’s table” (2 Sam. 9:1–13).

As David and his men fled from Absalom during Absalom’s rebellion, they came to Mahanaim, in the vicinity of Lo Debar, where Makir son of Ammiel came with Shobi son of Nahash from Rabbah of the Ammonites (present-day Amman, Jordan) and Barzillai the Gileadite from Rogelim to offer the weary fugitives a wide variety of provisions (2 Sam. 17:27–29). The northern kingdom later conquered Lo Debar in an unrecorded battle, which led to an ungodly joy and pride that Amos criticized (Amos 6:13).

The precise location of Lo Debar remains uncertain. Scholars have suggested a site within the Jordan River Valley, approximately ten miles south of the Sea of Galilee. This would place Lo Debar approximately sixty miles northeast of Jerusalem and forty-five miles northwest of Amman, at the northern end of the territory allotted to Gad.

LODGE To spend the night while traveling, usually under a host’s roof (Gen. 24:23 KJV), but the word can also apply to sleeping out in the open (Judg. 19:20 KJV). It also means “to dwell or associate with” (Ruth 1:16 KJV); “to dwell metaphorically,” as evil thoughts in the heart (Ps. 55:15); and “to roost or nest,” as a bird (Matt. 13:32 KJV). To lodge a charge is to make a legal or public accusation (Ezra 4:6). As a noun, a “lodge” is a place to spend the night (Isa. 1:8 KJV).

LOFT The upper room of a house in 1 Kings 17:19 KJV.

LOG **(1)** The smallest unit of liquid measure, about one cup, it was used to measure oil for a guilt offering in purification ceremonies for one cleansed from an infectious skin disease (Lev. 14:10, 12, 15, 21, 24). **(2)** A section of a tree trunk, such as the cedar and pine logs used for building the temple (2 Sam. 5:11; 1 Kings 5:8; 1 Chron. 14:1; 22:4; Ezra 3:7; see also Eccles. 10:9). Jesus uses hyperbole in contrasting metaphorical logs and sawdust in sinners’ eyes (Matt. 7:3–5 NRSV [NIV: “plank”]).

Neo-Assyrian relief showing the transport of logs from the palace of Sargon II in Khorsabad (713–706 BC)

LOGIA A Greek word meaning “words,” “sayings,” “utterances.” In NT studies it refers to three separate ideas. The first use of this term in reference to Christ comes to us from the early church father Eusebius, who quotes from a work by Papias called “Exposition of the Lord’s Logia.” This is concurrent with the general use of the term, which refers to the general utterances or sayings of Jesus. These sayings are found in the NT, specifically within the Gospels. The second use of the term is in reference to those sayings of Christ thought to be original and therefore found within the hypothetical Q document, discussed among modern scholars as a source for the Gospels of Matthew and Luke. A third use of the term is in reference to two documents found at Oxyrhynchus in Egypt. These documents contain small sayings introduced by the words *legei Iēsous* (“Jesus said”). Of the two documents, a total of eighty-four lines have been partially preserved. Approximately half of the sayings have been identified as having parallel sayings within the Gospels. It has been argued that these documents make up part of the Q document. It is also possible that these documents served as source material for the *Gospel of Thomas*. Due to lack of evidence, their official relationship to the NT Gospels and other texts remains uncertain.

LOGOS A Greek term meaning “word,” a title given to Jesus Christ that indicates his preexistent divine nature and his identity as the climactic revelation of God (John 1:1, 14; 1 John 1:1; Rev. 19:13).

PHILOSOPHICAL AND OLD TESTAMENT BACKGROUNDS

The background of the Logos concept is complex. It has roots in both Greek philosophy (Stoicism) and the OT. Both of these likely influence to some degree the NT use of the term, but neither is decisive. The NT goes its own way in defining the Logos. The Logos is adapted to fit the unique NT context and redefined in a historical person, Jesus of Nazareth.

In Stoic thought, Logos was Reason, the impersonal rational principle governing the universe. Stoicism understood Logos as the omnipresent force used by God to create and sustain the world. Logos held the intricate workings of the world together. Philo, a Hellenistic Jewish philosopher, taught that the Logos was the ideal, primal human being from whom all other human beings derived.

Although the Stoic background of the Logos likely bears at least some influence on the NT use, the OT probably has a more direct influence. The Logos in the OT is closely associated with the Wisdom tradition (Prov. 8). Wisdom is personified as the "master worker" at God's side during creation (8:30 NRSV). Similarly, Wisdom was "established from everlasting, from the beginning, before there was ever an earth" (8:23 NKJV). Wisdom, like the NT Logos, claims preexistence and participation in God's creative activity.

The OT depiction of God's Word as the agent of creation is perhaps an even more direct influence (Gen. 1). The phrase "In the beginning" (John 1:1) clearly echoes the introduction of the creation account (Gen. 1:1). The repeated phrase "And God said" in Gen. 1 illustrates how God is so powerful that he creates simply by speaking creation into existence. God's Word is the powerful agent of creation (Ps. 33:6). In summary, God's Wisdom and Word are both active agents in creation.

God's Word is largely an impersonal force in Gen. 1, but it develops more personal characteristics in Isa. 55:9–11. God's personified Word is sent by God in order to accomplish a specific divine purpose that will not fail (v. 11). It also returns to God, who sent it, after accomplishing its mission (v. 11). God's Word functions as his personal and effective speech as it reveals God's perfect will. Like Wisdom, God's Word is personified and reveals God's will to humanity, accomplishing its divinely ordained purpose. The Word of God as exemplified in Isa. 55 probably has the most direct influence on the NT use of the Logos.

NEW TESTAMENT USAGE

Scholars debate which of the aforementioned concepts is the primary influence for the NT use of the Logos. Perhaps each bears at least some degree of influence, but more importantly, each is adapted and altered to fit the unique christological context of the NT. The NT goes its own way in defining the Logos; it is defined in the historical flesh-and-blood person of Jesus of Nazareth (John 1:14; 1 John 1:1; Rev. 19:13).

What is an impersonal force in Stoicism and the OT becomes profoundly personal in the NT. Similar to Stoic Reason, all creation is created by and through the Logos (John 1:3) and is even held together by him (Col. 1:16–17). But unlike Stoic Reason, the NT Logos is no abstract metaphysical principle but rather the historic person Jesus Christ. And unlike personified Wisdom, which was created by God (Prov. 8:22–25), the NT Logos exists eternally as God and was "with" God in the beginning (John 1:1–2). Where Wisdom is present with God and is one of his attributes, the NT Logos is God as the Second Person of the Godhead. Further, the Word of God in the Genesis creation narrative is largely an impersonal force by which God creates the universe, whereas Jesus is the personal agent of creation (John 1:3; Col. 1:16–17).

Finally, although Isaiah's Word of God is God's effective speech that leads to action and accomplishes its purpose, it remains impersonal. The NT language is strikingly similar to Isaiah's Word of God, as Jesus is "sent" by the Father to do his will (John 4:34) and completes the work that God has given him to do (John 17:4). But while the Word of God in Isaiah remains a personification, the NT Logos refers to an actual historical person, the incarnate Lord Jesus Christ. The Word takes on flesh-and-blood humanity in Jesus and is the uniquely personal revelatory message of God. Jesus preached the Word with his mouth, enacted the Word with his actions, and embodied the Word in his person. "The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us" (John 1:14).

LOINS Anatomically, "loins" refers to the waist and lower back. In the NIV, the term primarily refers to parts of sacrificial animals (Lev. 3:4, 10, 15; 4:9; 7:4). Generally, where the KJV uses "loins," the NIV prefers "waist." Sackcloth was worn around this part of the body to signify mourning (Gen. 37:34; 1 Kings 20:31–32) and a sword was hung here (2 Sam. 20:8). A garment made for the loin area, sometimes referred to as a loincloth (Job 12:18), was comparable to underwear (Exod. 28:42). The expression "gird the loins" is an idiom for readiness (Job 38:3; Prov. 31:17; Luke 12:35; Eph. 6:14 KJV) and a metaphor for nonphysical preparation (1 Pet. 1:13 KJV), since the belt was worn on the waist (near the loins) and garments were tucked into the belt for work, quick movement, and battle (Exod. 12:11; 1 Kings 18:46; Nah. 2:1). "Loins" also can refer to the genitalia (1 Kings 12:10 KJV [NIV: "waist"]; Jer. 30:6 KJV [NIV: "stomach"]) or be part of an idiom denoting descendants (Gen. 35:11; 46:26 KJV).

LOIS The devout Jewish Christian maternal grandmother of Timothy. Paul praises her faith as a legacy to both her daughter Eunice and her grandson (2 Tim. 1:5).

LONG LOBE OF LIVER *See* Caul.

LONG-SUFFERING *See* Patience.

LOOKING GLASS In Job 37:18 the KJV translates the Hebrew word *re'i* as "looking glass" (NIV: "mirror"). However, the item referred to here is a mirror formed of molten brass and steel. These mirrors were smooth and polished, made without the least flaw or crack. Here the "looking glass" represents the purity and brightness of the glory of God and the wonder of his celestial handiwork. *See also* Mirror.

LOOM Although the use of looms was widespread in biblical times, biblical references provide little detail, and so we must rely mostly on archaeological and anthropological evidence. There were essentially two types of looms, the horizontal and the vertical. The horizontal was older and more common. It consisted of two beams tied to four pegs driven into the ground. The warp was stretched between them. The vertical loom consisted of two vertical beams and one horizontal. On the vertical loom, the warp was strung from the horizontal beam and held taut by a perforated ball of clay or stone, called a "loom weight." As the warp was held taut on the loom, the horizontal yarn—the woof, or weft—was passed over and under its strands. This is the picture that emerges from the story of Samson and Delilah. Delilah tries to take Samson's strength by weaving his hair into the warp of the loom. She then fastens it with a loom pin (Judg. 16:13). It is likely that some of the artistic pieces discussed in Exod. 35:35 were made with a loom, showing the artistic talent of people in those days.

Reconstructed vertical loom with loom weights

LOOPS Fabric rings crafted according to God’s instruction for the purpose of fastening the tabernacle curtains. Two sets of fifty pairs each are prescribed to edge the curtains. Each pair of opposing loops was to be joined with a bronze clasp (Exod. 26:4–6, 10–11; 36:11–13, 17–18).

LORD

OLD TESTAMENT

The Hebrew word for "LORD," *yhwh* (usually pronounced "Yahweh"), occurs more than 6,800 times in the OT and is in every book except Ecclesiastes and Esther. "Yahweh" is God's personal name and is revealed as such in Exod. 3:13–14. God tells Moses to declare to the Israelites in Egypt, "I AM has sent me to you" (3:14). The Hebrew behind "I AM" connotes active being; the Lord is the one who is there for his people and, in the book of Exodus, does so through miraculous events (14:13–14). This demonstrates the close association between one's name and one's character in the ancient world. Yahweh is one who is with his people (Exod. 3:12; 6:2, 4; Isa. 26:4). Although the divine name is used before the exodus (Gen. 12:1; 15:1), it is not until the time of Moses that God reveals its redemptive significance. Nonetheless, the divine name is used in Genesis in contexts where the immanence of God is evident. In Gen. 3:8 "the LORD God . . . was walking in the garden in the cool of the day." Further, the Lord makes a covenant with Abraham (Gen. 12; 15; 17), and the Lord will remain faithful to his covenants for a thousand generations (Deut. 7:9). Later in Israel's history, Micah, in the face of those who worship other gods, reassures the people of Israel that Yahweh is distinct from all others, and that they will walk in his name because he will one day act to effect justice for all (Mic. 4:3–5).

The divine name also occurs as a form of address in various prayers throughout the OT (Gen. 15:2, 8; Exod. 5:22; 2 Sam. 7:18; 2 Kings 6:17), most notably in the psalms, where it occurs over two hundred times. In the psalms an abbreviated form of the name is often seen in an exclamation of praise, *hallelu yah*, "praise Yah[weh]" (e.g., Pss. 149:1; 150:1).

It is interesting to note the origin of the pronunciation of *yhwh* as "Jehovah." To avoid breaking the third commandment, against misusing the name of God, pious Jews did not pronounce the divine name *yhwh*, substituting the word *'adonay* ("my master") in its place. In medieval times Jewish scholars added vowels to the consonantal text of the Hebrew Bible to aid in correct pronunciation. For *yhwh*, they used the vowels of *'adonay*, which, when pronounced, creates a name unknown to the biblical authors, "Jehovah."

In the postexilic period the appellation "Yahweh" occurs far less frequently, being replaced by *adonay* (Hebrew) or *kyrios* (Greek). The latter is used for Yahweh over six thousand times in the LXX. In Hellenistic literature *kyrios* is used to describe various gods and goddesses. The Roman emperors were also called *kyrios*, often with implications of deity. Some argue that the early Christians employed the title polemically to refer to Christ, the true *kyrios*. A clear example is found in Phil. 2:11, where it is said that every tongue will confess that "Jesus Christ is Lord" (cf. 1 Cor. 8:5–8). *Kyrios* was also used nonreligiously to refer to a "master" of a slave and as a term of respect to address someone of superior status ("sir"). Peter addresses Jesus as "lord" when he washes Peter's feet (John 13:6).

NEW TESTAMENT

In the NT, the majority of occurrences of "Lord" (*kyrios*) appear in Luke-Acts and the writings of Paul, perhaps due to the predominantly Hellenistic audiences of these texts, who would know well its Greco-Roman connotations. As for Paul, the use of "Lord" by Luke may point to the deity of Jesus. In the Lukan birth narrative, Elizabeth wonders why "the mother of my Lord should come to me?" (Luke 1:43; cf. 7:19; 10:1). In Acts 1:21 the name "Jesus" is preceded by the definite form of "Lord," reflecting an oft-repeated confessional title in Acts and Paul (Acts 15:11; 20:35; 2 Cor. 1:2). According to some, if Matthew intends a divine connotation by his use of the term "Lord," it is more oblique. For instance, in Matt. 4:7 Jesus quotes Deut. 6:16, where "the Lord" is Yahweh and not Jesus (cf. Matt. 9:38). There are occasions in Mark where "lord," although appearing to function in a nonreligious sense, does seem to point to Yahweh. In Mark 2:28 Jesus claims that "the Son of Man is lord even of the sabbath" (NRSV). Since the Sabbath belongs to Yahweh and falls under his sovereign authority (Exod. 20:8–11), it is quite probable that Mark's readers would now ascribe that dominion to the Son of Man. This is not unlike his authority to forgive sins (Mark 2:10), which, as the scribes rightfully point out, is something that only Yahweh can do. In light of these usages, one cannot help but think that the use of the term in Mark 11:3, at the triumphal entry, also carries divine significance. In John, there are examples of both the nonreligious use of "lord," as a reverent form of address (5:7; 9:36), and the religious, divine sense, particularly after the resurrection (20:28; 21:7).

It is quite likely that Jewish Christians, even before Paul, regarded Jesus as one who shares in Yahweh's divinity. In his letter to the Corinthians, a Greek-speaking congregation, Paul uses the expression *marana tha* (1 Cor. 16:22), a Greek transliteration of an Aramaic phrase that means "Our Lord, come!" This term likely was a part of an early Jewish Christian liturgy. Further, there are places where Paul refers to Jesus simply as "the Lord," suggesting a common understanding of the appellation among the early Christians (Rom. 14:6; 1 Cor. 3:5). In addition to Phil. 2:11, Paul expresses the divinity of Jesus by alluding to Deut. 6:4, the Shema, in 1 Cor. 8:6: "Yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom all things came and for whom we live; and there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things came and through whom we live." In the book of Revelation divine status is ascribed to Jesus. While in the vision of God in Rev. 4 the title is used of God (4:8, 11), at the conclusion of the book appears the invocation "Come, Lord Jesus" (22:20; cf. 22:21).

For Paul, a particularly important component of the lordship of Jesus is his resurrection, through which he becomes "the Lord of both the dead and the living" (Rom. 14:9; cf. 1:4), and his return marks the "day of the Lord," which in the OT was the day of Yahweh (1 Thess. 5:2; cf. 5:23). Exactly how Jewish Christians could attribute such a status to Jesus and yet maintain a strict monotheism remains a matter of considerable debate. Is Christ included in the identity of the Godhead, or is he an intermediary figure (of which Second Temple Judaism had many), possessing a quasi-divine status? If Jesus is an intermediary figure, then his authority to do that which only Yahweh can (such as forgiving sins and fulfilling roles originally referring to God) suggests a very close identification between Yahweh and Jesus himself. *See also* Names of God; YHWH.

LORD IS MY BANNER *See* Jehovah Nissi.

LORD IS PEACE, LORD IS SHALOM *See* Jehovah Shalom.

LORD IS THERE *See* Jehovah Shammah.

LORD OF HOSTS *See* Names of God.

LORD'S DAY Another name for Sunday, this term reminds us that this day belongs to the Lord and should be used for his honor and glory. The term itself is used only once in Scripture, where John mentions how he was in the Spirit "on the Lord's Day" when Christ commissioned him to write the book of Revelation (Rev. 1:10). There are no other specific details clearly given in Scripture about the identification of this day or how it was observed. Our understanding of this term and how it fits in with other passages of Scripture touches on three separate issues.

A special day. First, should Christians today celebrate any day of the week in a special way? At least some believers throughout history have believed that it is possible to observe every day of the week as equally special in the sense that “this is the day that the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it” (Ps. 118:24 ESV). Paul regards the observance of special days for worship as an area of Christian freedom: “One person considers one day more sacred than another; another considers every day alike. Each of them should be fully convinced in their own mind” (Rom. 14:5). The same principle is found in Col. 2:16: “Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day.” Nevertheless, most Christians have concluded that the expression “the Lord’s Day” clearly points to a specific day during the week when the Lord is to be worshiped in a special way.

A specific day. Second, which day of the week should we celebrate in a special way? When is the Lord’s Day? For OT believers, the answer is clear: it is the last, or seventh, day of the week. In the Bible, both the idea of a seven-day week and the setting apart of the seventh day are based ultimately on the creation account in Gen. 2:1–3. This Sabbath principle is codified in the Ten Commandments, which indicate that the Sabbath is to be kept holy by requiring people and their animals not to engage in work (Exod. 20:8–11; Deut. 5:12–15). Observance of the seventh day, or Sabbath, continues among Jews in the present. More recently, other groups, such as Seventh-Day Adventists and Seventh-Day Baptists, have felt the weight of this OT evidence and have continued to observe Saturday as the proper day for worship.

Nevertheless, most Christians have been persuaded by the practice of the early church to gather together for worship on the first day of the week. Two key passages of Scripture provide support for this conclusion. In Acts 20:7 the church had gathered for the Lord’s Supper specifically “on the first day of the week,” and in 1 Cor. 16:2 Paul instructs the church at Corinth to collect an offering specifically “on the first day of every week” (presumably during its local weekly meetings). Thus, most Christians have concluded that they are no longer under the OT observance of the Sabbath as the seventh day of the week (cf. Rom. 14:5; Col. 2:16), and now they are to worship in honor of Jesus’ resurrection “on the first day of the week” (Matt. 28:1 pars.).

A sacred day. Third, how should we celebrate this day? The Puritans and others throughout church history have considered Sunday as the Christian Sabbath. In other words, they made the shift from the seventh day of the week in the OT to the first day of the week in the church age, but they believed that all the OT rules and regulations for the Sabbath were still binding on believers today. Nevertheless, most Christians today accept Sunday as the “Lord’s Day,” when they worship in a NT manner and not under the letter of the OT ceremonial law, with its focus primarily on resting or not working. Under the OT system there was no concept of people gathering together on a regular weekly basis for corporate worship. OT worship revolved around various annual feasts and festivals when people would gather together at the central temple in Jerusalem a few times each year. The idea of weekly worship services emerged only later, during the Babylonian captivity, with the development of the Jewish synagogue. Thus, most Christians have concluded that Sunday is no longer a transposed OT Sabbath, but rather the NT Lord’s Day, and consequently that it should be celebrated accordingly, as when “they devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer” (Acts 2:42).

LORD’S PRAYER This prayer, found but not named as such in Matt. 6:9–13; Luke 11:2–5 (see also *Did*. 8.2, which follows the Matthean version), is a version of the Jewish Qaddish prayer revised around the theme of the kingdom of God and is a paradigmatic model of prayer given by Jesus to his followers.

JESUS AND PRAYER

Prayer was a key element of Jewish piety and devotion to God. It was a large part of meetings in synagogues, annual festivals, worship in the temple, and daily recitals of the words of the law. Jesus is remembered as withdrawing into lonely and desolate places for times of prayer (Mark 1:35; 6:46), most poignantly in the garden of Gethsemane (Mark 14:32–42 pars.). Jesus' time in the wilderness probably was a time of prayer and fasting as well (Mark 1:12–13 pars.). Besides the Lord's Prayer, another prayer of Jesus celebrates God's revelation to the disciples after their short itinerant mission (Matt. 11:25–26 // Luke 10:21).

The evangelist Luke emphasizes Jesus at prayer more than any other Gospel writer. Luke's Gospel portrays Jesus as praying at his baptism (3:21), prior to his selection of the Twelve (6:12–13), prior to Peter's confession of him as Messiah (9:18), at his transfiguration (9:28–29), prior to his teaching on the Lord's Prayer (11:1), for Peter (22:32), and twice while on the cross (23:34, 46). Jesus also taught much about prayer, concerning how his disciples are or are not to pray and how to show genuine devotion in the kingdom community without hypocrisy (Mark 11:24–25; Matt. 5:44 // Luke 6:28; Matt. 6:5–8; Luke 11:5–13; 18:1–14; 21:36).

In the Fourth Gospel, Jesus' prayers underscore the unique nature of the relationship between the Father and the Son (John 11:41–42; 12:27–28). Jesus' high priestly prayer for the disciples concerns their preservation and the role of the Holy Spirit in their lives (17:1–26). A distinctive characteristic of Jesus' prayers is that God is addressed by the Aramaic word *abba* ("father"), and this became common in early Christian worship (Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:6).

THE LORD'S PRAYER: MATTHEW AND LUKE

The Lord's Prayer takes distinct forms in Matthew and in Luke (see table 2). The differences in the two prayers might be attributable to Jesus teaching two different versions. More likely, Matthew and Luke both knew the prayer from a common source (written or oral), and Matthew's version is a more liturgical elaboration of Luke's shorter and more "original" version. Matters are complicated somewhat by the fact that later Christian scribes had a propensity for harmonizing the two prayers and sometimes amended them in their respective manuscripts. Both prayers agree that (1) God is the Holy Father, (2) the kingdom is yet to come in its fullness, (3) followers of Jesus depend on God for their daily provisions, (4) followers of Jesus depend on God for forgiveness, (5) which is reciprocated in the forgiveness of others, and include (6) the supplication that God not let them fall into the final tribulation.

Table 2. The Lord's Prayer in Matthew and Luke

Matthew 6:9–13	Luke 11:2–4
Our Father in heaven,	Father,
hallowed be your name,	hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,	your kingdom come.
your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.	
Give us today our daily bread.	Give us each day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts,	Forgive us our sins,

as we also have forgiven our debtors.	for we also forgive everyone who sins against us.
And lead us not into temptation,	And lead us not into temptation.
but deliver us from the evil one.	
For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen. [added in some late manuscripts; see NIV mg.]	

THE LORD’S PRAYER: THE PETITIONS

The prayer can be broken up into a number of petitions. First is the petition addressed to God as Father and self-sanctifier. God is invoked as Father, and his name represents both his character as a loving father and his authority as the master over all creation. The prayer is theocentric, and it reads literally “let your name be sanctified,” which is a plea that God’s holiness will become more and more evident. The Lord’s Prayer is not some kind of “I want” list, but rather a burst of praise expressing the hope that God’s sheer goodness and Godness will be acknowledged by all.

The second petition is for God to finally establish his kingdom. The “kingdom of God” is more akin to God’s reign, rule, or government. It is referred to rarely in the OT (e.g., Dan. 2:44; Obad. 21); much more prominent is the theme of God as “king.” In many of the psalms God already is king of Israel and the nations (e.g., Pss. 93–99), and yet the prophets could look forward to the day when Yahweh would again show himself to be king precisely through his deliverance of Israel, which would be the ultimate expression of the kingly power (e.g., Isa. 52:7; Zech. 14:9). The prayer for the coming of the kingdom of God is a prayer for God to establish his reign or rule in its final and full manifestation on earth. Although the kingdom was partially present during Jesus’ ministry by virtue of his exorcisms and healings (e.g., Mark 1:15; Luke 11:20), it still awaits its final consummation. Matthew’s version has “on earth as it is in heaven” and may indicate a millennial view of the kingdom as supplanting earthly kingdoms, resulting in the transformation of the present age. The petition does not promote escapism from the world but rather points toward its eventual redemption and transformation by the glorious power of heaven becoming a reality upon the earth.

Third is the petition for daily provision of physical needs. The “daily bread” petition looks to God as the provider and caregiver of his people. Elsewhere in the Sermon on the Mount/Plain, Jesus preaches dependence on God as a means of escaping the worry and lure of wealth and money (Matt. 6:25–33 // Luke 12:22–34). Bread was a powerful symbol for sustenance and life (e.g., Prov. 22:9; Lam. 2:12; John 6:35, 48; Sir. 29:21; 34:25). The petition assumes that God is interested in the most mundane aspects of human existence, and that he gives what is needed, not always what is wanted. God sustains his people in their hour of need as proof of his fatherly care and compassion.

Bread stamp used to create a design on the bread before baking (first century AD). The Lord's Prayer includes a petition for daily bread.

Fourth is the petition for divine forgiveness in coordination with mutual forgiveness among the community of Jesus' followers. The prayer does not ask God to forgive persons who then in turn forgive others; rather, in reverse, the prayer implies that God forgives in the same way that humans forgive each other (Matthew) or on the basis of humans forgiving each other (Luke). The role of mutual forgiveness within the new covenant community is spelled out clearly by Paul in Colossians: "Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you" (Col. 3:13).

Fifth is the petition to be spared eschatological tribulation and the malevolence of Satan. The word *peirasmos* can mean "testing," "trial," "temptation," or even "tribulation" or "ordeal." The prayer could constitute a plea for help in the face of personal trials and struggles in the believer's life and in the journey of discipleship (e.g., 1 Cor. 10:13; James 1:2), or it could denote a request to be kept from the eschatological ordeal that will precede the final and full establishment of the kingdom of God (e.g., Mark 14:36, 38; Rev. 3:10). Importantly, what is feared in this prayer is not experiencing the *peirasmos* but rather succumbing to it—the fear of failure. In addition, the prayer asks to be delivered from *ho ponēros*, "evil," or (more likely) "the evil one" (cf. Matt. 5:39)—that is, the devil or Satan. God tests his people to strengthen them and prove their faithfulness, while Satan tempts people to subdue and destroy them. This prayer acknowledges the fragility and helplessness of the human state in the face of human, spiritual, and cosmic evil. The prayer seeks liberation from evil in the coming reign of God's eschatological kingdom.

THE LORD'S PRAYER: THE THEOLOGY

The theological framework, ethical exhortation, and social dynamics created or presupposed by the prayer are as follows.

First, God is the Father of the followers of Jesus. This is axiomatic in the Gospels and is repeated by the Christian prayer that addresses God the Father as "Abba" (Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:6).

Second, an overarching importance is attached to the kingdom of God as the context in which all prayer is prayed. The tension of the prayer—the very fact of needs and the threat of continuing perils—exists only because God's plan to restore Israel and renew creation has not yet been put into full effect. God's kingdom has broken into the world through the work of the Son of God and the giving of the Holy Spirit, and yet it still awaits a final consummation, when God is "all in all" (1 Cor. 15:28) and finally repossesses the world for himself. The prayer presupposes the "now" and the "not yet" of God's saving action and balances prayers of triumph and lament in light of current temptations and the coming victory of God.

Third, in this prayer salvation not only is spiritual (understood as going to heaven when one dies) but also involves the physical well-being of a person and healthy relationships within the believing community. Just as God is concerned with physical human needs, so should humans be with their fellow humans. If human beings forgive, then God also forgives them. Human relations are to mirror the values of heaven and the vision of the kingdom.

Fourth, the world order currently exists in partial subjugation to evil powers opposed to God's rule, which is simply part of the dire situation of "this age." The prayer presupposes an apocalyptic worldview characterized by dualism (God/Satan, good/evil, present/future, etc.), the necessity of encountering and persevering against evil, and divine intervention to put the world order right and replace it with the kingdom of God.

Fifth, discipleship involves a variety of traits and characteristics. This prayer depicts the disciple as trusting and as exhibiting faith in God's purpose and plan. The prayer presumes that disciples cling to God in dependence upon him in their day-to-day need. The prayer assumes that disciples try to imitate God in reflecting goodness, love, holiness, and peace in their respective communities. The prayer also admonishes endurance in the face of trials and persistence (not repetitiveness) in the discipline of prayer.

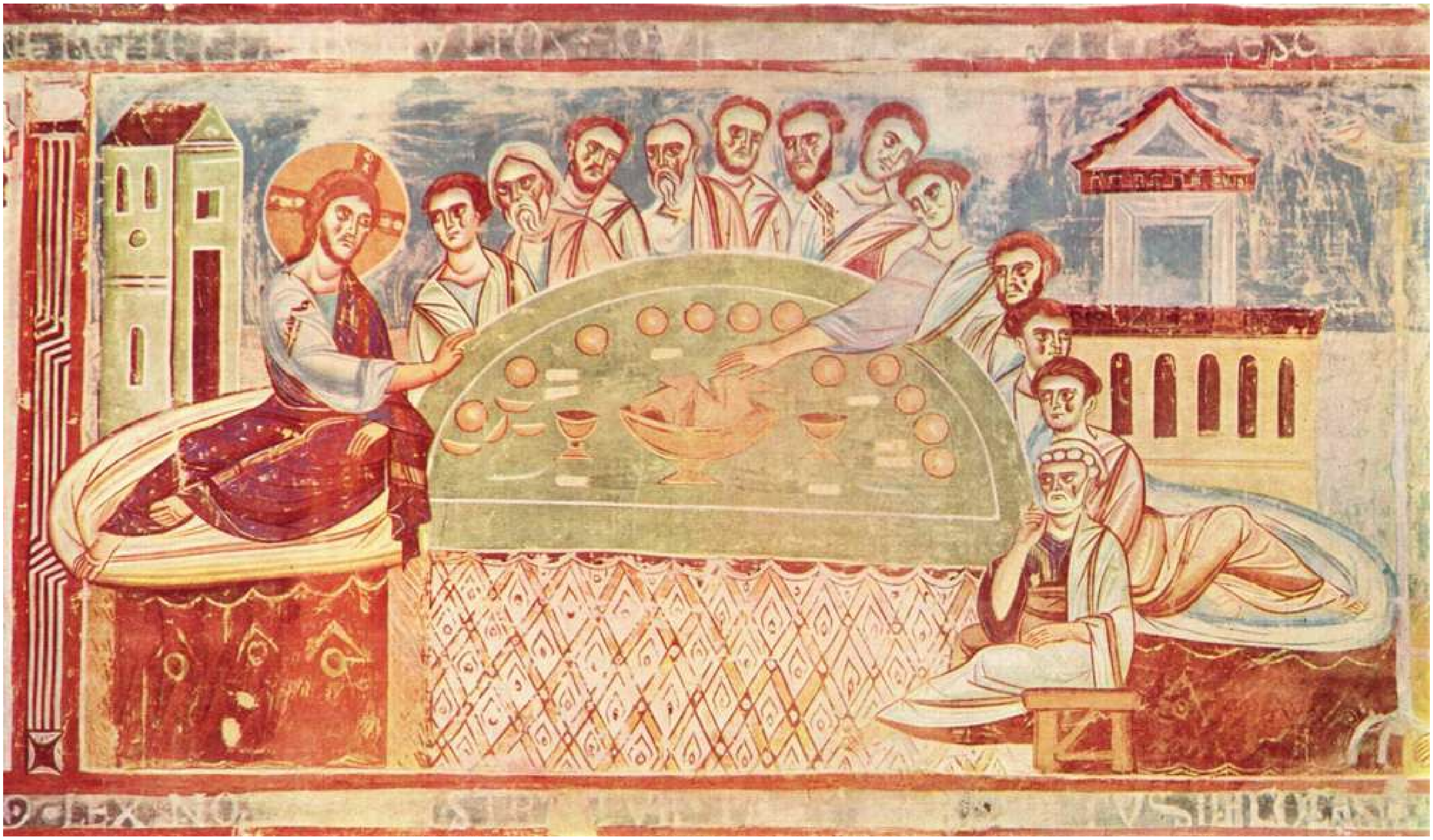
Sixth, although the prayer does not have an explicit Christology, one can be found implicitly. It seems implied that Jesus is a mediator between the Father and the disciples, and that he possesses an important role in the final manifestation of the kingdom. It is, after all, the disciples of Jesus who are promised a special place in the kingdom and a special relationship with the God of Israel.

SUMMARY

The Lord's Prayer has remained a common thread in the devotional life of followers of Jesus for two millennia because it is simple, memorable, poignant, and yet profound. It is not the prayer of an elite few; it belongs to all who cry out to God as Father and see the way to God in Jesus Christ, the exalted Lord and Messiah of Israel. As teachings of Jesus hold immeasurable significance for the life, faith, praxis, and service of his followers, this prayer encapsulates a motif of Jesus' own mission: God as king and the love of God for his own people.

LORD'S SUPPER The meal of remembrance instituted by Jesus Christ during the Passover celebration (Matt. 26:26 pars.) prior to his crucifixion. While with his disciples, Jesus took bread and broke it and said, "Take and eat; this is my body" (Matt. 26:26). After this, he took wine, gave thanks, and then gave it to them and said, "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins" (Matt. 26:28). After Jesus' death and resurrection, this breaking of bread and drinking of wine in his memory became a primary symbol of Christianity (1 Cor. 11:26).

The apostle Paul had harsh things to say to the Corinthian church for inappropriately celebrating the Lord’s Supper, for some went hungry while others became drunk (1 Cor. 11:17–26), and thus the whole point of Jesus’ sacrificial death was lost. *See also* Last Supper.



Fresco of the Lord’s Supper (Sant’Angelo in Formis, Capua, Italy, AD 1100)

LORD WILL PROVIDE *See* Jehovah Jireh.

LO-RUHAMAH A transliteration of the Hebrew phrase “not pitied,” or “not loved” (*lo’ rukhamah*), it occurs in Hos. 1:6 as the God-given name of Gomer and Hosea’s second child, a daughter. Lo-Ruhamah’s name indicates the perilous status of the northern kingdom before God in the time leading up to the exile. This pity carries the connotation of God’s motherly compassion for Israel, as other instances of the root word for this name are translated “compassion” and “womb.” Significantly, in Hos. 2:23 God changes her name from “Not Loved” to “Loved,” showing his endangered but enduring compassion on Israel. *See also* Lo-Ammi.

LOT A nephew of Abraham (Gen. 11:27–14:16) and a resident of Sodom (18:16–19:38). When God called Abraham to go to Canaan and leave his family behind, he still took Lot with him. Lot, however, proved to be a burden to his uncle in several aspects. Tensions arose between their herders, so Abraham graciously allowed Lot to choose his land first. Lot selected the fertile area near Sodom, just south of the Dead Sea, where he settled. When Lot and his family and property were captured in battle by King Kedorlaomer of Elam and his three allies, Abraham rescued his nephew, defeated the coalition, and restored Lot’s entire household.

When forewarned of God’s intentions to destroy Sodom, Abraham attempted to convince God not to destroy the city if ten righteous people could be found there. Presumably, Abraham’s efforts were based on his desire to protect Lot, who resided there. Apparently, not even ten righteous people were found in the city, but before the city was to be destroyed, two angels were sent to warn Lot and his family. When the messengers arrived, Lot would not allow them to spend the night in the town square, to protect them from the men of Sodom. All the men of the city surrounded Lot’s house and demanded that the guests be brought out so that they could have sex with them. Instead, Lot offered his two daughters. However, the angels struck the Sodomites outside with blindness, which frustrated their efforts, so they left Lot, his guests, and his daughters alone.

The next morning, the angels forced Lot and his wife and daughters out of the city, and then God rained sulfur and fire from heaven on Sodom and Gomorrah. Lot’s wife refused to heed the angel’s warning, and when she turned back to look, she became a pillar of salt. Lot’s two daughters, fearing that they would be unable to marry, got their father drunk, committed incest, and became pregnant; thus Lot became the father (and grandfather) of Moab and Ben-Ammi, ancestor of the Ammonites (Gen. 19:37–38). Jesus used the example of Lot, his wife, and the city of Sodom to illustrate how the kingdom of God will come (Luke 17:28–32). Lot’s sins relative to his daughters apparently are ignored in 2 Pet. 2:7, where he is called “righteous Lot.”

LOTAN The first of seven sons of Seir the Horite (Gen. 36:20; 1 Chron. 1:38), he was a clan leader of the Horites (Gen. 36:29). Lotan’s sister was Timna (Gen. 36:22), the ancestor of the Amalekites with Esau’s son Eliphaz (36:12).

LOTS Possibly made of stone or wood, lots apparently were shaken or tossed from a container to help make decisions, on the assumption that God(s) directed the outcome (Prov. 16:33). Many peoples throughout the ancient Near East cast lots. Surprisingly, available sources do not make clear what exactly the lots were and how people cast them. Information from Mesopotamia and related terms in Arabic suggest that the lots were made of stone, whereas ancient Sumerian lots apparently were made of wood. The numerous references to Israelites casting lots give no indication of the material. Descriptions of the process in the Bible include the Hebrew terms for “cast” (Josh. 18:6), “make fall” (1 Chron. 24:31 [usually translated “cast”]), “be shaken” (Prov. 16:33 [also translated “cast”]), and “come out” (Josh. 19:1), which suggests that the items were put into some kind of container and shaken until the piece(s) chosen by God came out.

The casting of lots was one of several methods that ancient peoples used to get information from God(s) about the past, present, or future. Many such practices—including astrology, use of a divining rod, and examination of animal livers—were forbidden to the Israelites, apparently because these looked to other (supposed) gods for wisdom or direction. A few such practices, including the interpretation of dreams or the casting of lots, were allowed.

One finds the casting of lots in both Testaments in a number of different situations. Sometimes the lot was used to uncover truth about who had committed some wrong in the past (Achan [Josh. 7:14, 18]; Jonathan [1 Sam. 14:41–42]). Other times Israelites used lots to determine God’s choice (Saul as king [1 Sam. 10:20–21]; Matthias as a disciple [Acts 1:26]) or to divide things, such as tribal allotments of land (Num. 26:55–56). Tasks and services could be determined by casting lots (Levitical service at the temple [1 Chron. 26:13–16]; who would live in rebuilt Jerusalem [Neh. 11:1]). Non-Israelites also cast lots to determine guilt (Jon. 1:7), divide property captured in war (Nah. 3:10), and determine the best date for an event (when to massacre Jews [Esther 3:7; 9:24]).

The concept that God directed the course of events also led to figurative use of the term “lot” as one’s fate in life (Ps. 16:5; Jer. 13:25). *See also* Urim and Thummim.

LOTUS Mentioned only once, the biblical lotus plant is an aquatic tree broad enough to conceal a large, grass-eating mammal (perhaps a hippopotamus) that hides in its shade (Job 40:21–22).

LOVE

OLD TESTAMENT

Preconditions to love. According to the OT, three preconditions must exist for us to know what it means to love.

First, we have the capacity for relationships because we are made in the likeness of a personal God. God created us to reciprocate love back to him, in a relationship of mutual love.

Second, the true meaning of love depends on a true understanding of God, whose love causes him to pursue human beings even though their hearts have turned away from him for other substitute “loves.” This second point assumes that human beings still love, but they do so in a way distorted by sin. Sin causes human beings to live their lives as though God did not exist. However, God in his mercy has chosen to intervene through his redemptive acts in history and through revelatory speech in order to deliver people from the blindness and corruption of sin. His pursuit of his unfaithful sons and daughters gives us a picture of what true love looks like.

Third, God’s pursuit of human beings in history was by means of election and the establishment of a covenant. God chose to make himself known to a particular people, those who would descend from Abraham. God called Abraham to leave his country and go to a new place that he would inherit as a new homeland, where his descendants would be blessed (Gen. 12:1–3; 15; 17). God’s promise to Abraham took the form of an everlasting covenant, by which he guaranteed that he would fulfill what he had promised. He would be the God of Abraham’s descendants, and they would be his people. They would receive the land of Canaan as an inheritance (17:6–8). In response, Abraham’s descendants were to obey God’s covenant by circumcising their male children (17:9–14). This covenant would depend not on human faithfulness but on God’s faithfulness. God would redeem this people to be his own special people.

Several generations later, God addressed the people through Moses, telling them that he chose them for no other reason than that he loved them (Deut. 7:7–8). Through Moses, God freed the people from their slavery in Egypt and gave them the law. The law told them how to live holy lives in response to God. It also included the provisions for atonement through the sacrificial system. In short, loving God involved obeying his statutes.

Love in wisdom books. The OT wisdom books Job, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes give us further insight into the meaning of love. Proverbs exhorts its readers, “Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it” (4:23). One’s affections are the gateway to the allegiances of one’s heart. Once one’s affections have been hijacked by sinful passions, allegiance to God is subjugated to another “master.” To the degree that sin usurps the throne of the heart, it will steer the course of one’s actions (i.e., one’s “path”).

In the book of Job, Satan is convinced that Job serves God only because God blesses Job, so Satan challenges God to let him afflict Job. Satan insists that if God removes Job’s blessings, Job will curse God to his face (1:10–12). When God agrees to remove the hedge of protection and allows Job to suffer, the depth of Job’s love for God is vindicated. Although perplexed that God would allow him to endure such suffering, he endures without forsaking God. Job loved the giver more than his gifts, so his love did not turn to hatred when the gifts of God were removed.

In the book of Ecclesiastes, Qoheleth (the Teacher) reflects honestly on the many vain pursuits and unexplainable dissonances that characterize life "under the sun." Only faith-filled love for God can enable one to live each moment of life with joy instead of striving to find meaning in "under the sun" pursuits. This love chooses to trust the inscrutable wisdom of God in the face of life's many enigmas, uncertainties, and sufferings. One can do this honestly because of the belief that God's just rule over the affairs of the universe will be vindicated at the future day of judgment (Eccles. 12:14).

Marriage metaphor. The Bible uses the metaphor of marriage to describe God's covenant relationship with his people (Isa. 54:5–8). This metaphor captures the intimate character of the relationship that God desires to have with his people. Marriage is the most intimate human relationship in two ways. First, marriage is a relationship in which knowledge is the most intimate. A spouse can see many of the flaws that are hidden from others. Thus, each spouse must accept and love the other for who that person is, in spite of his or her imperfections. Second, the depth and passion of the expressions of love are most intimate in marriage. Consequently, there is no greater pain than that caused by unfaithfulness to this covenant.

Sadly, as the story of the OT unfolds, God's "wife" betrays him. How so? His people worship idols in their hearts (Ezek. 14:1–5). Because God is jealous for the exclusive love of his people, idolatry is spiritual unfaithfulness. God wants both the allegiance and the affection of their hearts to be reserved exclusively for him. The people continue the formalities of worship, but their hearts have turned away from God. The book of Hosea illustrates the sense of betrayal that God feels when his people are spiritually unfaithful. God tells Hosea to marry a woman who will be unfaithful to him. Subsequently, she leaves Hosea for one lover after another. This story is intended to give God's people a vivid picture of how painful their spiritual betrayal of him is. His heart is crushed by the rebellious and idolatrous condition of his people. Hosea's wife ends up on the market as a prostitute, and God tells him to buy her back and love her again.

NEW TESTAMENT

The story of God's love for his people is expanded by what the Father did centuries later when he sent Jesus to pay the ransom for the sins of his people so that they might be healed of their rebellion and receive eternal life (John 3:16; 17:24). The death and resurrection of Christ were necessary because sin had to be atoned for. This love is a free gift that comes to the one who trusts in Christ for forgiveness of sin and a new heart. The new heart inclines one to please God. The gift of the Spirit enables one to bear the "fruit" of love (Gal. 5:22–23). As Abraham's engrafted children (Gal. 3:7), believers are called by God to live as pilgrims on their way to a heavenly promised land (Heb. 11:9–10; 1 Pet. 2:11).

Christ modeled genuine love by serving us (Mark 10:42–45). His love should motivate us and enable us to practice sacrificial service toward others (Matt. 22:39; 1 John 3:16). It should also cause us to practice forbearance, long-suffering, and forgiveness toward those who wrong us (Matt. 18:21–35). It should cause us to repay evil with good (Rom. 12:14). Our love for truth should motivate us to act in the best interests of others (1 Cor. 13:4–8) in the hope that they may become reconciled to God (2 Tim. 2:24–26).

LOVE, BROTHERLY *See* Brotherly Love.

LOVE FEAST The "love feast" (*agapē*) was a common meal shared by early Christians in conjunction with their celebration of the Eucharist, the Lord's Supper. The term occurs in Jude 12 and, in some manuscripts, 2 Pet. 2:13. This type of gathering for fellowship evidently was a common feature of early Christianity. Jude exhorts the community to which he writes to rid itself of the immoral, godless people who "are blemishes at your love feasts." A similar group appears to be infiltrating the "love feast" referred to in 2 Pet. 2:13. In 1 Cor. 11:17–34 is described some form of a common meal that included the Eucharist (cf. Acts 20:7), and it is likely that the Eucharist was very much a part of the love feasts mentioned in Jude and 2 Peter. Outside the NT, there is evidence in the letters of Ignatius of Antioch, in the early second century, that the Eucharist and love feast were held together. Ignatius says that the bishop must be present for both the feast (*agapē*) and baptism (Ign. *Smyrn.* 8).

Further into the second century, a distinction appears to be drawn between the Eucharist and the love feast. It is not clear whether the meal described in *Did.* 9–10 is the Eucharist or the love feast. Some think that the thanksgiving offered over the cup and the bread reflects the pattern of a love feast rather than the Eucharist, since it is the opposite of the sequence in the NT (Mark 14:22–23; cf. Luke 22:17–19). The phrase "after you have had your fill" (*Did.* 10.1), if interpreted literally, could also indicate a common meal. Yet *Did.* 14.1 clearly sets forth the celebration of the Eucharist on Sunday. Interestingly, *Did.* 14.2 contains an injunction, likely inspired by Matt. 5:23–24, to reconcile with another believer if need be before participating in the ritual. Justin Martyr records a regular Sunday service in which the Eucharist was celebrated following the reading of Scripture and a homily. In his description, found in *First Apology*, the Eucharist is clearly not a meal. Some suggest that the love feast occurred after the service of word and table. At that point the wealthy came with food for a communal meal with the poor. Tertullian, in the late second century, affirms that the love feast definitely benefited the poor.

LOVING-KINDNESS A translation of an important Hebrew word, *khesed*, also translated "mercy," "kindness," "goodness," or simply "love." Closely related to covenant relationship and faithfulness, it could be rendered "covenant love" or "steadfast love." Primarily used of God's love for his people, it is a characteristic that they should reflect toward him and others. It is referred to most frequently in the Psalter. *See also* Kindness.

LOWLAND *See* Shephelah.

LUBIM In the KJV of Nah. 3:9, a name for the people of Libya (NIV: "Libya"; NRSV: "Libyans"). Nahum's oracle against Nineveh, the capital city of Assyria, recalls the destruction of Thebes. If strong allies such as Put and Libya could not rescue Thebes, then Nineveh would not be impregnable (Nah. 3:8–11).

LUCAS *See* Luke.

LUCIFER Some translations (e.g., KJV), following the Vulgate, translate as "Lucifer" (Lat. "light-bearer") the epithet of the king of Babylon in Isa. 14:12 (NIV: "morning star"). Originally, the term referred to Venus (the "shining one"), which appears as one of the brightest objects in the night sky. In medieval Christian theology Isa. 14:3–23 was interpreted (in light of Luke 10:18) as a history of the figure called "Satan" or "the devil" in the NT and in a handful of OT texts. As a result, the name

“Lucifer” was applied to this figure.

LUCIUS **(1)** Lucius of Cyrene is among the prophets and teachers who hear the call of the Holy Spirit while worshiping in the church at Antioch. He is one of several believers who fast, pray, and lay hands on Paul and Barnabas to consecrate their departure for Paul’s first missionary journey (Acts 13:1–3). **(2)** A relative or compatriot of Paul who adds greetings to the Roman church in the letter that Paul writes to that church from Corinth (Rom. 16:21). Several church fathers have attempted to equate both men with the apostle Luke.

LUD A son of Shem (Gen. 10:22; 1 Chron. 1:17); the plural form, “Ludim” or “Ludites,” refers to a Hamitic people descended from Mizraim (Gen. 10:13; 1 Chron. 1:11). Possibly, two distinct peoples are in view, or else the Ludites might be the Lydians of Asia Minor (as Josephus thought), the Ludbu of Assyria, or an otherwise unknown North African tribe. The mixed testimony of Scripture makes a firm identification impossible. Some passages associate them with African nations (Gen. 10:13; 1 Chron. 1:11; Jer. 46:9; Ezek. 30:5), others with peoples of Mesopotamia (Gen. 10:22; 1 Chron. 1:17), and others with both (Isa. 66:19; Ezek. 27:10). It remains possible that over time the group migrated from one area to another.

The OT prophets regarded the Ludites as warriors who were adept archers (Isa. 66:19; Jer. 46:9; Ezek. 27:10). At times they were allied with Tyre (Ezek. 27:10) and Egypt (Jer. 46:9; Ezek. 30:5). Ezekiel proclaimed that they would be judged along with Egypt, and Isaiah that they would be included among the nations to witness God’s glory.

LUDIM, LUDITES *See* Lud.

LUHITH A town of the eastern Dead Sea region of Moab through which fugitive Moabites passed, as prophesied in Isa. 15:5; Jer. 48:5. The location is uncertain; it is mentioned in conjunction with Zoar, a city at the southern tip of the Dead Sea.

LUKE The author of the third Gospel and the book of Acts; coworker, loyal friend, and periodic companion of Paul during his missionary journeys; and by profession a medical doctor.

Although Luke was not an eyewitness of Jesus’ earthly ministry (Luke 1:1–4), the use of the pronoun “we” indicates that he was present for some of the events critical to the missionary expansion of the early church (Acts 16:10–17; 20:5–15; 21:1–18; 27:1–28:16). Luke is mentioned in Paul’s letters, being identified as a “dear friend” and “doctor” (Col. 4:14) and, by inference, as a Gentile (Col. 4:11). He also provided support for Paul during his imprisonments in Rome (2 Tim. 4:11; Philem. 24).

Luke was an accomplished historian. His medical training of accurate observation and diagnosis served him well in composing both a biography of Jesus and the historical narrative of Acts. These books together contribute more than a quarter of the NT, more than any other writer.

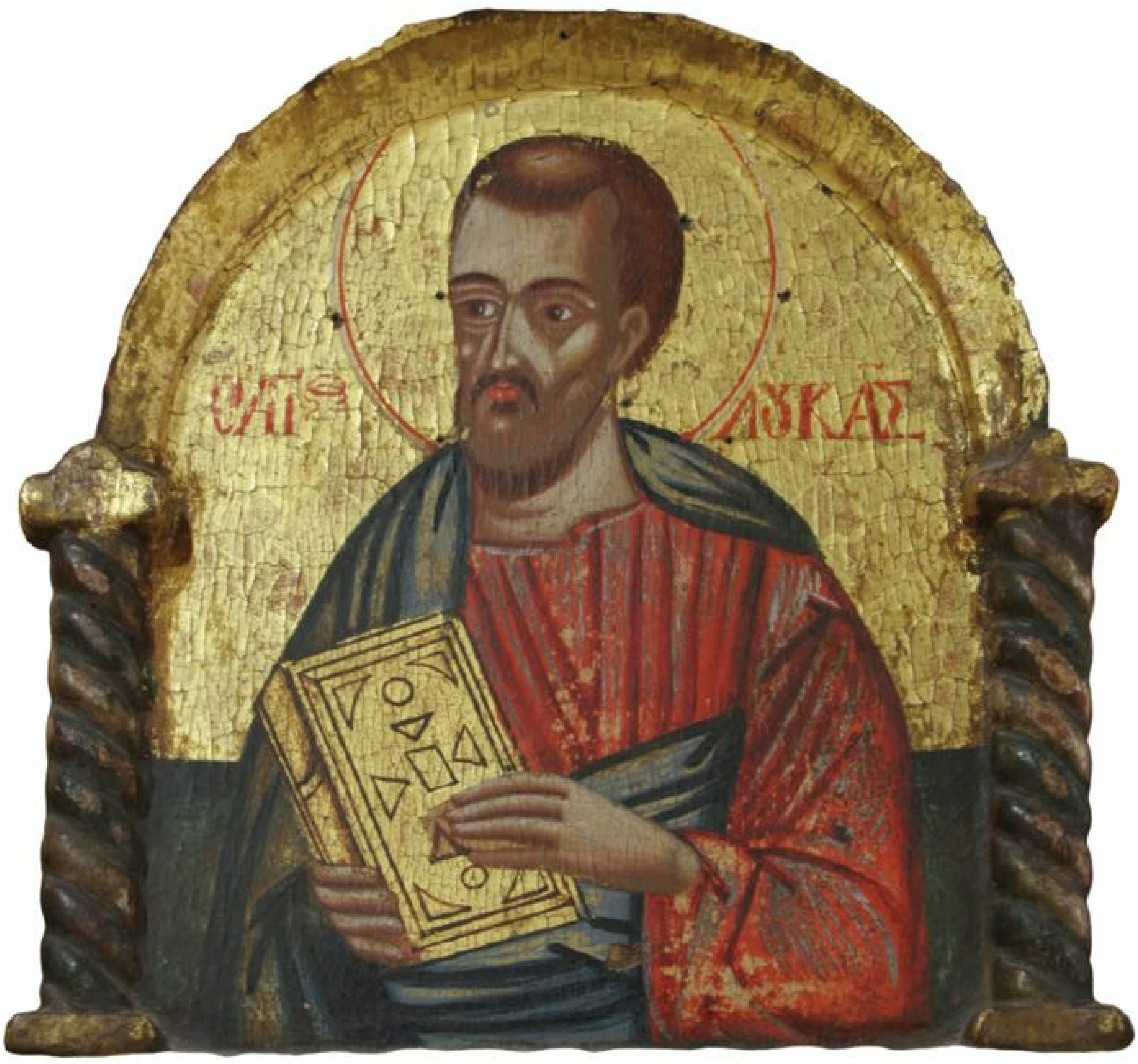
The distinctive features of his writing reveal something of him as a person. He took a keen interest in individuals both rich and poor, men and women, respectable and outcast, the elderly and children. This interest served to demonstrate that in the gospel the fulfillment of OT promises was taking place. Hence, all kinds of people were entering into God’s kingdom through the apostolic preaching of the word of Jesus.

He was also a skillful apologist and diplomat who demonstrated that the Christian faith was no threat to Roman law and order.

LUKE, GOSPEL OF

THEME

The Gospel of Luke has been traditionally known as the Gospel that portrays Jesus as the perfect man who came to bring salvation to all humanity (2:32; 3:6; 4:25–27; 9:54; 24:47). This thematic focus is captured in the frequent use of the words "gospel" or "good news" (1:19; 2:10; 3:18; 4:18, 43; 7:22; 8:1; 9:6; 16:16; 20:1) and "salvation" (1:69, 71, 77; 3:6; 19:9). By way of contrast, the word "salvation" does not appear in either the Gospel of Matthew or the Gospel of Mark. The author aptly summarizes the focus of the third Gospel in Luke 19:10: "For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost."



Icon of Luke (nineteenth century AD)

AUTHORSHIP, RECIPIENT(S), DATE

The author of this Gospel also penned the book of Acts (cf. Luke 1:1–4; Acts 1:1–3). These two books comprise almost one-third of the NT. Luke is not directly named as the author of this Gospel, but the early church attributed it as well as the book of Acts to him. The author of Acts included himself in the "we" passages of that book (Acts 16:10–17; 20:5–15; 21:1–18; 27:1–28:16). According to these passages, the narrator was a companion of Paul. This harmonizes with other Scriptures in which Paul identified Luke as one of his coworkers (Col. 4:14; 2 Tim. 4:11; Philem. 24). Luke accompanied Paul on part of his second missionary journey (Acts 16:10–17) and on his journey to Rome when the apostle experienced shipwreck on the island of Malta (Acts 27–28). Even after some of the other missionaries deserted Paul, Luke remained at his side to minister to his needs (2 Tim. 4:11). Apparently, Luke was a Gentile physician (Col. 4:14). This would explain why he described sicknesses with such precision.

Luke addressed his Gospel to Theophilus, who possibly was a patron or government official and undoubtedly a believer and follower of Christ. His name means "lover of God." Although Theophilus was the immediate recipient, Luke no doubt had a larger audience in view.

The dating of the Gospel of Luke is contingent upon the date ascribed to the book of Acts, which was written after the Gospel account (cf. Luke 1:1–4; Acts 1:1). In his Gospel, Luke portrays the destruction of Jerusalem as a future event (Luke 21). This implies that the Gospel was written before AD 70. In addition, Acts was written probably before the death of Paul, since the apostle was still alive in Rome at the end of that account (Acts 28:30). It is traditionally held that Paul was executed during his second imprisonment in Rome around AD 67 (2 Tim. 4:6). Leaving time for Paul's travels and ministry between his first and second Roman imprisonments would place the writing of Acts around AD 63. While Paul was a prisoner in Caesarea, Luke would have had a two-year period to interview witnesses and research sources in order to write his former account (Acts 24:27). This would place the authorship of the Gospel of Luke around AD 60 in either Caesarea or Rome.

PURPOSE

Luke is unique among the Gospel writers in declaring his purpose at the outset of his writing. He informs his readers that he has used several sources available to him when composing his Gospel. These sources were written by "eyewitnesses and servants of the word" and were already being handed down to others (1:2). Luke maintains that he investigated these sources thoroughly and gleaned from them the information that he then put into an "orderly account" (1:3). Luke's purpose was to instruct Theophilus about the "certainty" of the events that surrounded the life and ministry of Jesus the Messiah (1:4). The chronological data provided in 1:1–4; 2:1; 3:1–2 reinforce this purpose.

Beyond his specific instructions to Theophilus, the content of this Gospel reveals that Luke had a universal audience in mind. Although his audience likely included Jews, he appears to be writing primarily for Gentiles (2:32; 3:6; 4:25–27; 9:54; 24:47). The following observations make this clear: he explains the location and names of places that would have been common knowledge to the Jews (8:26; 21:37; 23:51; 24:13); he locates John's ministry in the reign of the Roman caesar (1:5; 2:1); he uses words that Gentiles would understand, such as "teacher" instead of "master" or "rabbi" (3:12; 6:40; 7:40; 8:49; 9:38; 10:25; 11:45; 18:18; 19:39; 21:7; 22:11); he usually quotes from the LXX, the Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures (2:23–24; 3:4–6; 4:4, 8, 10–12, 18–19; 10:27; 18:20; 19:46; 20:17, 28, 37, 42–43; 22:37). Luke seeks to show that the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus are indeed the fulfillment of God's promises to Israel, but the salvation that he has accomplished is for all people everywhere.

LUKE'S NARRATIVE

Jesus' childhood. Scholars have praised Luke's literary excellence, historical sensitivity, and social concern. Luke records more information about the birth and early years of Jesus than any of the other canonical Gospels. The account begins some four hundred years after the last events of the OT with the angel of the Lord announcing to Zechariah the birth of John the Baptist, the forerunner of the Messiah (1:11). Six months later the angel Gabriel announces to Mary the birth of Jesus, the heir to the throne of David who "will reign over Jacob's descendants forever" and whose "kingdom will never end" (1:26, 31–33). Historically, Luke ties Jesus' birth to the reign of Caesar Augustus and his ministry to the rule of Tiberius Caesar (2:1; 3:1). His interpretation of these events is that God has prepared salvation "in the sight of all nations" (2:30–31) and "all people will see God's salvation" (3:6). In these early chapters the narrator links Christ's humanity and his salvation purpose all the way back to Adam (3:23–38). Yet the humanity of Jesus is carefully balanced with his deity. The term "Lord" is used nineteen times in reference to God at the beginning of the Gospel, but it is also applied to Christ in 2:11. In Gabriel's announcement to Mary, the child is called "the Son of the Most High" (1:32). He was recognized as such also by demons (4:34, 41; 8:28), by Jesus himself (10:22; 22:70), and by God the Father (3:22; 9:35).

The writer also accentuates the ministry of the Holy Spirit by revealing that key characters such as John the Baptist, Mary, Elizabeth, Zechariah, Simeon, and Jesus were filled with the power of the Spirit (1:15, 35, 41, 67; 2:25–27; 3:16, 22; 4:1, 14, 18; 24:49).

Jesus' ministry in Galilee. In chapters 4–9, Luke chronicles Jesus' ministry in Galilee. His early miracles and ministry serve as messianic credentials that substantiate his authority and message, demonstrating that he is the Messiah and that in him the kingdom of God has drawn near (1:33; 4:40–43; 6:20; 7:28; 8:1, 10; 9:2, 11, 27, 60, 62). Prayer is a discipline that Jesus practices from the beginning of his ministry to the end (3:21; 5:16; 6:12; 9:18, 29; 22:32, 40–42). The Messiah's initial popularity is countered by jealousy and growing opposition, especially from the religious establishment (4:28–30, 36–37; 5:15, 20–22, 26; 6:11; 7:16, 30, 39). In these early chapters, Jesus calls his disciples and begins to prepare them for the full implication of what it will mean to follow him (5:1–11, 27; 6:12–16).

Jesus' journey to Jerusalem. In 9:51–19:27, Luke records an extended account of Jesus' journey toward Jerusalem from Galilee. This section contains several parables and narratives not found in any of the other Gospels. Throughout this section the narratives, miracles, and parables point to a Messiah who came expressly to seek out and save the lost, especially the disadvantaged, the underprivileged, and those outside the Jewish establishment, such as the Samaritans, women, children, notorious sinners, and the poor. Luke records more about Jesus' view of money and material things than any other book of the NT. Joy and salvation characterize the ministry of the Messiah (1:14; 8:13; 10:17, 21; 13:17; 15:5, 9, 32; 17:15–16; 19:37). But the establishment in Israel, particularly the Pharisees, rejects his claims (4:28–29; 5:21–24, 30; 6:7–11; 7:30, 39; 8:36–37; 9:7–9, 53; 10:25, 29; 11:15–16, 37–53; 13:31; 14:1; 15:1; 16:14). As this rejection and opposition increase, he begins to reveal to his followers his coming death and calls them to an ever-increasing commitment to his purpose and person (9:22–26, 57–62; 10:1–3; 14:25–35).

Jesus' death and resurrection. Once Jesus reaches Jerusalem, the stage is set for the official presentation of the king to the nation (19:28–44). But rather than joyfully accepting the Messiah, the nation’s leaders hotly contest his claims (19:39; 20:1–2, 19, 20, 27). Jesus weeps over the city (19:41) and announces its future judgment and his future coming in glory (21:6–36). Luke brings his narrative of Jesus’ ministry to a close by recording the events that lead up to the death of the Messiah: the betrayal by Judas (2:1–6), the Last Supper (22:7–23), Jesus’ arrest (22:47–53), the denial by Peter (22:54–62), Jesus’ crucifixion, and finally his death and burial (23:26–56). However, this unjust and tragic end is trumped by Jesus’ glorious resurrection (24:1–12). Luke alone records the postresurrection conversation on the Emmaus road, where Jesus reveals himself to the two disciples and subsequently explains his victory over death (24:25–26, 45–49). The account closes with the Messiah’s ascension into heaven (24:50–53), preparing the reader for the sequel that continues in the book of Acts (Acts 1:1–5).

OUTLINE

I. The Prologue (1:1–4)

II. The Birth and Childhood of Jesus Christ (1:5–2:52)

III. John Prepares the Way for Christ (3:1–4:13)

IV. The Ministry of the Son of Man in Galilee (4:14–9:50)

V. The Son of Man Faces Rejection on His Way to Jerusalem (9:51–19:27)

VI. The Ministry of the Son of Man in Jerusalem (19:28–21:38)

VII. The Passion of the Son of Man (22:1–23:56)

VIII. The Resurrection of the Son of Man (24:1–53)

LUKEWARM A description of something, typically water, that is neither hot nor cold but rather a tepid mixture of the two. Jesus warns the church at Laodicea in the book of Revelation that their lukewarm, or apathetic, lifestyle will cause them to be spit out of Jesus’ mouth (Rev. 3:16).

LUNATIC In Matt. 17:15 the NASB translates the Greek verb *selēniazetai* as “he is a lunatic” to describe a demonically afflicted boy. The Greek word literally means “to be moonstruck” and is etymologically linked (as is the English word “lunatic”) to the belief that the moon’s phases provoke certain mental or spiritual afflictions. Several modern versions prefer translations of the Greek word that denote an epileptic condition (e.g., NIV: “he has seizures”; NRSV: “he is an epileptic”), as the context suggests (Matt. 17:14–21; Mark 9:14–29).

LUST In modern cultures, lust typically is associated with indulging in illegitimate sexual fantasizing. In Scripture, however, the word “lust” is sometimes used to translate Greek and Hebrew words that have a wider range of meanings. “Lust” can refer to an inordinate (i.e., idolatrous) passion that rules one’s heart, whether or not one acts upon it. After Moses led the children of Israel in the desert for some time, they became tired of the manna that God was providing and began to “crave” the delicacies that they had enjoyed in Egypt. Their inordinate desire for meat caused them to become disgruntled and complain to Moses (Num. 11:4–9). The desire became idolatrous when it morphed from a legitimate desire into a demand.

The Bible distinguishes between temptation, which appeals to one’s desire (1 Cor. 10:13), and lust, which takes captive one's affections and imagination, enslaving a person. "Each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death" (James 1:14–15). There are good desires that turn into sinful ones, but there are also desires that are inherently sinful. Jesus identified an inward yearning to have another person's spouse as adultery, because affections and imagination have been hijacked by desire for emotional and sexual fulfillment outside the legitimate context of marriage (Matt. 5:28). By the Spirit, we are to mortify inordinate desires (Gal. 5:16–18).

LUTE *See* Music, Instruments, Dancing.

LUZ **(1)** A town whose Canaanite name Jacob changed to "Bethel" because of the dream theophany that he had there on his way to Paddan Aram (Gen. 28:19; 35:6; 48:3; see also Josh. 16:2; 18:13; Judg. 1:23). **(2)** A city built in Hittite territory by a Canaanite resident of Bethel (the Luz mentioned above) that was spared by the Israelites who attacked it during the conquest (Judg. 1:22–26). It is uncertain whether the Hittite territory mentioned in this passage was to the north in Syria or Lebanon, or in a Hittite enclave in the hill country of Palestine.

LXX The common abbreviation for the Septuagint, an early Greek translation of the OT. Tradition states that the Septuagint was initially compiled by seventy-two elders in seventy-two days; therefore LXX, the Roman numeral for "seventy"—the closest round number to seventy-two—is an appropriate abbreviation. *See also* Septuagint.

LYCAONIA Paul's missionary journeys took him through this region in south-central Asia Minor where the cities of Lystra and Derbe lay (Acts 14:6–22; 18:23; 19:1).

LYCAONIAN *See* Lycaonia.

LYCIA A Roman province in southwest Asia Minor where Paul and his companions boarded an Alexandrian ship en route to Rome (Acts 27:5–6).

LYDDA This city, called "Lod" in the OT, lies about halfway between Jerusalem and Joppa in the coastal plain. A Benjamite settlement, it is mentioned in Neh. 11:35 in the resettlement. In the only NT reference to the city, Luke notes that it was at Lydda that Peter visited and healed Aeneas, a paralytic who had been bedridden for eight years (Acts 9:32–34). The witness of this miracle resulted in a great turning to the Lord (9:35).

LYDIA **(1)** A "dealer in purple cloth" "from the city of Thyatira" who believed and was baptized when Paul came to Philippi on his second missionary journey (Acts 16:14). Luke records that Lydia was "a worshiper of God," a designation that he uses elsewhere only in Acts 18:7. The description is similar to "God-fearing," which applied usually to devout Gentile followers of the Jewish God (Acts 10:2; 17:17).

Paul shared the gospel with Lydia and her female companions at a place of prayer near a river. God "opened her heart to respond to Paul's message" (Acts 16:14), and Lydia became the first named Christian convert in Europe. Lydia then invited Paul and his companions to stay at her house (16:15), indicating that she was a woman of some means. Paul, Luke, and the rest of the missionary band seem to have stayed at Lydia's house until they left Philippi (16:40).

Lydia's hometown, Thyatira, over two hundred miles from Philippi, is home to one of the seven churches of Revelation (Rev. 2:18–29).

(2) A region in western Asia Minor, mentioned in Jeremiah and Ezekiel in close connection with Cush and Put (Jer. 46:9; Ezek. 27:10; 30:5).

The Krenides River near Philippi, the traditional site where the apostle Paul met Lydia, the dealer in purple cloth

LYDIAN *See* Lydia.

LYE A harsh alkaline mineral cleansing agent leached from wood ashes. In some Bible translations, lye is referred to metaphorically in conjunction with soap, a vegetable alkali mixed with oil, to emphasize the inadequacy of human effort to eradicate guilt before God (Job 9:3 [NIV: "cleansing powder"]; Jer. 2:22 [NIV: "soap"]) as opposed to God's ability to cleanse and redeem sinners (Isa. 1:25 NASB).

LYRE *See* Music, Instruments, Dancing.

LYSANIAS The ruler of Abilene, a Roman tetrarchy adjacent to the province of Syria, when John the Baptist's public ministry began (Luke 3:1). Pontius Pilate, Herod (Antipas) tetrarch of Galilee, and Philip tetrarch of Iturea and Traconitis were Lysanias's contemporaries.

LYSIAS A Roman tribune who provided a military escort for Paul's transportation to Caesarea to appear before the governor Felix (Acts 23:23–25). Lysias sent a letter to Felix explaining the reasons for the arrest. Subsequently, Felix suspended judgment on Paul's case until Lysias arrived in Caesarea (Acts 24:22).

LYSTRA A Lycaonian city one hundred miles north of the Mediterranean in what is now Turkey. On the first missionary journey, Paul and Barnabas fled to the cities of Lystra and Derbe (and the surrounding area) to avoid execution in Iconium (Acts 14:1–6). In Lystra, Paul healed a lame man, causing a stir when the townspeople assumed that Paul and Barnabas were gods, Barnabas being Zeus and Paul being Hermes. After refusing their worship, Paul and Barnabas evangelized the people (Acts 14:7–17). Later, persuaded against Paul and Barnabas by some Jews from Antioch and Iconium, the people stoned Paul (Acts 14:18–19). After Paul recovered, the two men left for Derbe (Acts 14:20). Paul came though Lystra again on the second journey, this time circumcising Timothy, who then joined their team.

M

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M Designation for a hypothetical source used in the writing of the Gospel of Matthew. According to the Four Source Hypothesis of the composition of the Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke), Mark wrote first, and Luke and Matthew used Mark, shared another source in common (Q), and had other sources unique to each of them (M and L).

MAACAH, MAACATH *See* Maakah.

MAACHAH, MAACHATHITES *See* Maakah.

MAADAI One of the Israelite men guilty of intermarriage with foreign women during the time of Ezra (Ezra 10:34).

MAADIAH *See* Moadiah.

MAAI One of the musicians who played at the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem at the time of Nehemiah (Neh. 12:36).

MAAKAH **(1)** The fourth son of Nahor, Abraham's brother, by the concubine Reumah (Gen. 22:24). **(2)** The wife of David who gave birth to Absalom, she was the daughter of Talmai king of Geshur (2 Sam. 3:3; 1 Chron. 3:2).

(3) The mother of Abijah, second king of Judah, also identified as the daughter of Absalom (1 Kings 15:2 [NIV: "Abishalom," a variant of "Absalom"; see NIV mg.]) and the wife of Rehoboam (2 Chron. 11:20–21). In 2 Chron. 13:2 she is also identified as the mother of Abijah, but here as a descendant of Uriel of Gibeah, likely avoiding a negative reference to Absalom. She is also mentioned as the grandmother of the third king of Judah, Asa. Asa deposed his grandmother because she worshiped false gods (1 Kings 15:10; 2 Chron. 15:16).

(4) The father of Achish, the king of Gath during Solomon's reign (1 Kings 2:39). **(5)** Caleb's concubine, the mother of Sheber and Tirhanah (1 Chron. 2:48). **(6)** In a difficult and obscure text, Maakah is named as the wife of Makir, a descendant of Manasseh (1 Chron. 7:14–16). Some versions translate the passage in a way that refers to a second Maakah as the sister of Makir (e.g., NIV), but this is not the best understanding of the passage. **(7)** The wife of Jeiel, a descendant of Benjamin (1 Chron. 8:29; 9:35). **(8)** The mother of Hanan, one of David's mighty warriors (1 Chron. 11:43). **(9)** The mother of Shephatiah, an officer in David's kingdom (1 Chron. 27:16).

(10) A region mentioned in connection with Geshur and other locations northeast of the Sea of Galilee (Josh. 12:5; 13:11, 13; 2 Sam. 10:6, 8; 1 Chron. 19:7), home of the Maakathites (Deut. 3:14). The other sons of Nahor and Reumah (Tebah, Gaham, Tahash), like Maakah (Gen. 22:24), gave their names to locations in what is today Lebanon and Syria. Maakah the wife of David and mother of Absalom also came from this region (2 Sam. 3:3; 1 Chron. 3:2).

MAAKATH, MAAKATHITES *See* Maakah.

MAALEHACRABBIM *See* Akrabbim.

MAARATH A hill-country village in the tribal territory of Judah (Josh. 15:59).

MAAREH-GEBA *See* Gibeah.

MAASAI A priest who returned from the Babylonian captivity to live in Jerusalem (1 Chron. 9:12). He may be the same person as Amashsai (Neh. 11:13).

MAASEIAH **(1)** A Levite recruited to play the lyre during the procession of the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem (1 Chron. 15:18, 20). **(2)** The son of Adaiah, he was a military commander who covenanted with Jehoiada to remove Athaliah from power and install Joash (2 Chron. 23:1). **(3)** An officer of King Uzziah who helped organize the army into divisions (2 Chron. 26:11). **(4)** The son of King Ahaz who was killed by Zikri the Ephraimite (2 Chron. 28:7). **(5)** An official sent by King Josiah to repair the temple (2 Chron. 34:8). **(6)** A descendant of Jeshua (Ezra 10:18) listed among those guilty of marrying foreign women during the time of Ezra.

(7) A descendant of Harim (Ezra 10:21) listed among those guilty of marrying foreign women during the time of Ezra. **(8)** A descendant of Pashhur (Ezra 10:22) listed among those guilty of marrying foreign women during the time of Ezra. **(9)** A descendant of Pahath-Moab (Ezra 10:30) listed among those guilty of marrying foreign women during the time of Ezra. **(10)** The son of Ananiah and the father of Azariah, who helped to repair the wall of Jerusalem (Neh. 3:23). **(11)** One of the leaders who accompanied Ezra as he read the law (Neh. 8:4). **(12)** One of the thirteen Levites who interpreted the law for the people (Neh. 8:7). **(13)** One of the leaders who signed Ezra’s covenant (Neh. 10:25). This may be the same person as #9 or 11.

(14) The son of Baruch, he is listed among the first residents of Jerusalem after the exile (Neh. 11:5). **(15)** A Benjamite ancestor of Sallu (Neh. 11:7). **(16)** One of the priestly trumpeters who played to dedicate Jerusalem’s walls (Neh. 12:41). He may be the same person as #6, 7, or 8. **(17)** A priest involved in dedicating the temple (Neh. 12:42). He may be the same person as #6, 7, or 8. **(18)** The father of Zephaniah the priest (Jer. 21:1; 29:25; 37:3). **(19)** The father of Zedekiah the prophet (Jer. 29:21). **(20)** The son of Shallum, he was a temple doorman (Jer. 35:4). He may be the same person as #18.

MAASIAI *See* Maasai.

MAATH An otherwise unknown postexilic ancestor of Jesus mentioned only in Luke 3:26 as the son of Mattathias and father of Naggai.

MAAZ The first son of Ram and a grandson of Jerahmeel (1 Chron. 2:27).

MAAZIAH **(1)** A priest to whom David assigned the last of twenty-four positions in the priestly order of service (1 Chron. 24:18). **(2)** One of the officials who sealed the covenant with God following Ezra’s reading of the law (Neh. 10:8).

MACBANNAI *See* Makbannai.

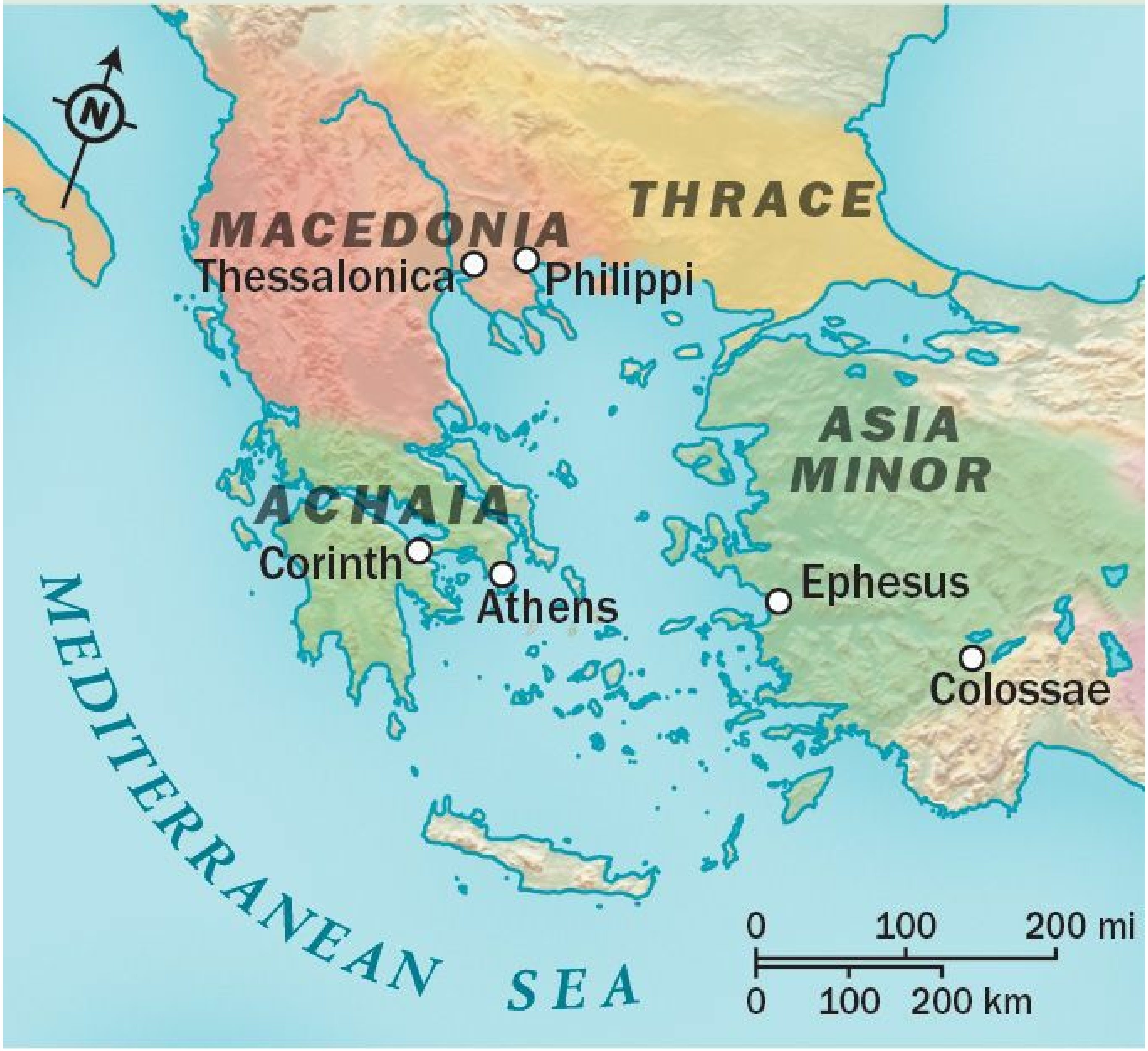
MACBENAH *See* Makbenah.

MACCABEES From an Aramaic word meaning “hammer,” the term “Maccabees” is identified with the Jewish national liberation movement in the mid-second century BC headed by Judas, son of the Hasmonean priest Mattathias. “Maccabeus” was Judas’s nickname, given to him presumably because of his prowess in battle. The term also refers to the deuterocanonical books of 1–2 Maccabees, which provide historical and theological perspectives on the period, and to the later books 3–4, which are about entirely different subjects. *See also* Judas Maccabeus.

MACEDONIA The territory linking the Balkans with the Greek Peninsula. Though its borders shifted through its history, Macedonia stood north of Thessaly and mainland Greece, east of Epirus, and west of Thrace. Its topography is dominated by mountains and coastal plains along the Thermaic Gulf and northern shore of the Aegean Sea. The name “Macedonia” comes from a Greek word referring to “tall ones” or “highlanders.”

CULTURE AND LANGUAGE

Ethnically, the Macedonians were composed of various groups, including Dorians, Illyrians, and Greeks. Macedonians were distinct from but related to the Greeks. Hesiod, an early Greek poet (c. 700 BC), described Macedonia as a “cousin” of the Greeks. To other early Greek writers, the Macedonians were “barbarians.” Alexander I (r. 498–454 BC) embraced the Greek connection to Macedonia by claiming descent from the hero Heracles. After a court determined his claims to be true, he was permitted to participate in the Olympic games, an honor reserved only for Greeks. The Macedonians and the Greeks held similar religious beliefs, as both worshiped the twelve Olympian gods in similar ways. In fact, Mount Olympus is located in Macedonia. Macedonian artwork illustrated these shared religious beliefs as it expressed themes from Greek mythology.


MACEDONIA DURING THE TIME OF PAUL

N
MACEDONIA
THRACE
Thessalonica
Philippi
ASIA
MINOR
ACHAIA
Corinth
Athens
Ephesus
Colossae
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
0
100
200 mi
0
100
200 km

The Macedonian language was a Greek dialect with numerous Phrygian and Illyrian loanwords and elements. To combat the divisive effect of numerous Greek dialects, including Macedonian, Alexander the Great spoke and spread Koine, or common, Greek. In fact, Alexander’s use of Koine Greek was the single greatest factor for the NT being written in Greek.

Although Macedonia had been on the fringe of Greece geographically and culturally, the Macedonians and the Greeks shared much in the way of language, culture, and religion. Especially from the time of Philip II (r. 359–336 BC), the Macedonians embraced Greek education and philosophy. Alexander the Great, a student of the Greek philosopher Aristotle, was the product of a combined Greco-Macedonian culture. Through his conquests, Alexander spread his blended Greco-Macedonian culture, also known as Hellenism, throughout the East, where the populace would speak Koine Greek, worship Greek gods, mimic Greek architecture, build Greek-styled cities, educate their young in gymnasiums, and reexamine the world through Greek philosophy. Differences between

Macedonians and Greeks were further muted by exposure to much more distinctive Egyptian and Mesopotamian cultures. In the NT, “Greek” was less a nationality designation (Acts 20:2) and more of a cultural designation (John 12:20; Acts 14:1). Even Jews could be “Greek.”

HISTORY

According to Herodotus, around 650 BC Perdiccas I, the first in the Macedonian list of kings, established the Argead dynasty, which lasted until Alexander the Great. During the Persian invasions (c. 480 BC), the Macedonians cooperated with the Persians, but they also secretly provided supplies to the Greeks. However, it would be through the Macedonians that the Greeks would achieve vengeance against the Persians. Philip II would first unite the rival Greek city-states at the battle of Chaeronea in 338 BC. After Philip’s assassination, Alexander led one of the greatest campaigns in history to completely conquer the Persian Empire, which had stretched from Egypt to India (1 Macc. 1:1–7). Because Alexander had no heir, following his death the massive Macedonian empire dissolved into civil war among factions led by his former generals. Ultimately the rule of Macedonia and Greece fell to Antipater until his death in 319 BC. Years of conflict led to the establishment of the Antigonid dynasty, which lasted until the Roman invasion. Philip V won the first Macedonian war (212–205 BC) against Rome, but subsequent wars with Rome led to Macedonia being divided into four republics in 168 BC (1 Macc. 8:5). Twenty years later Rome annexed Macedonia, and in 146 BC Rome made Greece a protectorate administered from Macedonia.

During Rome’s own civil wars, many of the battles were fought in Greece and Macedonia. For example, at the battle of Philippi in 41 BC, Octavian defeated Brutus and Cassius, the assassins of Julius Caesar. In 27 BC Octavian, later known as Augustus, turned Macedonia into a senatorial province and separated it from Achaia. In AD 15 Tiberius combined Macedonia, Achaia, and Moesia into one large imperial province. However, in AD 44 Claudius again separated Macedonia from Achaia and made them senatorial provinces. This was the political status when Paul traveled through “Macedonia and Achaia” during his missionary journeys (Acts 19:21; Rom. 15:26; 1 Thess. 1:7).

THE JOURNEYS OF PAUL

From the time that Paul received his vision of a Macedonian man calling him to proclaim the gospel (Acts 16:9), Macedonia played a significant role in Paul’s journeys and the early church. He established three churches there and wrote three letters to them (Philippians and 1–2 Thessalonians). Several of Paul’s companions were Macedonians, including Sopater, Aristarchus, Secundus, and Jason (Acts 17:4–7; 20:4). In Paul’s correspondence he spoke of Macedonia at least sixteen times in six different letters. Answering the Macedonian call during his second missionary journey, Paul arrived in Philippi, which was “a Roman colony and a leading city of that district of Macedonia” (Acts 16:12). There he led Lydia, the first known European convert, to the gospel. After casting an evil spirit out from a slave girl, Paul and Silas were imprisoned, and they led the Philippian jailer and his family to the gospel (Acts 16:16–40). Lydia and the Philippian church generously supported Paul’s ministry and the church in Jerusalem (Rom. 15:26–27; 2 Cor. 8:1–5; Phil. 4:15–17).

Paul then traveled along the paved Via Egnatia to Thessalonica, where he established a church composed of “some” Jews and a “great many” Greeks and leading women (Acts 17:4). He stayed there at least three Sabbaths before opposition drove him to Berea (17:1–9), where many examined the Scriptures and more eagerly accepted the gospel (17:11). From Berea, he left Macedonia for Athens and Corinth in Achaia. Paul later returned to Macedonia during his third missionary journey

(20:1–6).

MACEDONIANS *See* Macedonia.

MACHAERUS A fortress located four miles east of the Dead Sea, Machaerus is not named in Scripture, but the Jewish historian Josephus lists it as the place where Herod Antipas imprisoned and beheaded John the Baptist (*Ant.* 18.119; cf. Matt. 14:1–12). It is situated on a prominent height between Wadi Zarqa Ma'in and Wadi Heidan. Originally fortified by the Hasmonean king Alexander Jannaeus and destroyed by the Romans in the first century BC, the fortress was rebuilt by Herod the Great, who continued to use the site, as did his son Antipas. Machaerus is identified with the ruins near the modern village of Mukawir. Excavated remains date to the first centuries BC and AD, as well as to the final Roman destruction in AD 72.

MACHBANAI *See* Makbannai.

MACHBENAH *See* Makbenah.

MACHI *See* Maki.

MACHIR, MACHIRITES *See* Makir.

MACHNADEBAI *See* Maknadebai.

MACHPELAH A cave at Hebron purchased by Abraham as a burial place for his wife Sarah (Gen. 23). Machpelah became the burial site for most of the patriarchs and their wives. Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah, and Jacob and Leah were buried in the same cave (Gen. 49:31). By starting this family burial site in Canaan, Abraham marked Canaan as the ancestral homeland for future Israelites, as opposed to Ur or Harran, where his family had lived earlier. At about the time of Jesus, a massive structure sixty feet high was erected over the cave, apparently by Herod the Great. Still intact, this building has been used through the years as a Jewish memorial, a Crusader church, and now a Muslim mosque. Six cenotaphs (representative tombs) dominate the interior of the building, commemorating the patriarchs and their wives originally buried in the cave below.

MACNADEBAI *See* Maknadebai.

MADABA *See* Medeba.

MADAI In the Table of Nations (Gen. 10:2; see also 1 Chron. 1:5, a genealogy of the three sons of Noah that reflects later nations and languages), Madai is the third of Japheth's seven sons. He is considered to be the ancestor of the Medes, a people who lived in the Iranian plateau.

MADIAN *See* Midian, Midianites.

MADMANNAH **(1)** A place in the Negev, the southernmost region of Judah (Josh. 15:31). Some want to translate the name as "Dung Heap." However, there is a probable connection with the personal name "Madmannah" in 1 Chron. 2:49, and it is implausible that a person would be given a name carrying that meaning (*see also* Madmen; Madmenah). Joshua 19:5 puts a city, Beth Markaboth ("house of the chariots"), in a list where one might expect Madmannah; thus it is likely that the name of this city may have changed. The city might be identified today with Khirbet umm Deimneh. **(2)** The son of Shaaph and a grandson of Maakah, Caleb's concubine (1 Chron. 2:49).

MADMEN A Moabite town of uncertain location (Jer. 48:2). It appears in an oracle against Moab and employs a wordplay when it states that Madmen will be "silenced" (from the Hebrew verb *damam*). Some believe that it is related to the Hebrew word for "dung heap," and that its actual reference is to the Moabite city Dimon. *See also* Madmannah; Madmenah.

MADMENAH A place whose name has been etymologically connected to the Hebrew word for "dung heap." The town is mentioned in a prophetic, not actual, description of an Assyrian attack on Jerusalem (Isa. 10:31). Although the Assyrians advance, getting as close to Jerusalem as Madmenah, God stops them before they can take Jerusalem. *See also* Madmannah; Madmen.

MADON A town mentioned as part of the Canaanite northern coalition against Joshua led by Jabin king of Hazor (Josh. 11:1). Joshua defeated this coalition, and Madon's king, Jobab, is listed as one defeated by the Israelites (Josh. 12:19). Its exact location is uncertain.

MAGADAN A region probably on the western side of the Sea of Galilee. Jesus went here after feeding the four thousand (Matt. 15:39 [KJV: "Magdala"]). However, the parallel account in Mark names the location where Jesus and his disciples traveled to as Dalmanutha (Mark 8:10). The exact location is unknown.

MAGBISH A site in Judah or possibly Benjamin of otherwise unknown location. Ezra 2:30 mentions that 156 exiles from this place returned from Babylonian captivity under the leadership of Zerubabbel.

MAGDALA Magdala, located four miles north of Tiberias, was a center for fishing and boats on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee around the first century AD. Its Greek name was "Taricheae." "Magdala" appears only in the KJV of Matt. 15:39, where other versions follow the better reading, "Magadan." Mary Magdalene (Mary from Magdala) was one of Jesus' closest followers (Matt. 27:55–56; John 20:1).

A boat mosaic from Magdala (first century AD)

MAGDALENE *See* Magdala; Mary.

MAGDIEL One of the chiefs of Edom (Gen. 36:43; 1 Chron. 1:54). “Magdiel” is also likely the name of an Edomite tribe.

MAGGOT A general term for the larvae of any fly. Associated with decay and destruction (Exod. 16:20, 24; Isa. 14:11), the word connotes a sense of disgusting brevity and insignificance (Job 25:6).

MAGI According to Matt. 2:1–12, “Magi from the east” visited Jesus after his birth. It is unclear how old Jesus was at this time, and some have proposed that the visit occurred as late as his second year, based on Herod’s order to kill all the male children in Bethlehem under the age of two (Matt. 2:16). The tradition that the visit occurred shortly after Jesus’ birth (as reflected in the celebration of Epiphany on January 6) and the artistic tradition of depicting the magi alongside the shepherds of Luke 2:8–20 cannot be confirmed from the biblical accounts. The magi visited Jesus in a house (Matt. 2:11), not in an inn or stable (cf. Luke 2:7). The magi appear only in Matt. 2:1–12, and the shepherds only in Luke 2:8–20. The contrasting stories of magi and shepherds probably represent the distinct theological interests of Matthew and Luke. The story of the magi and their gifts recalls Ps. 72:10; Isa. 60:6.

The word “magi” suggests neither wise philosophers in the Greco-Roman sense nor the kings of later artistic depictions, but rather the sages of Eastern wisdom. Whoever they were, the magi were observers of the heavens. On the basis of Matthew’s portrayal of the magi’s knowledge of Hebrew Scripture (Matt. 2:5–6), some have suggested that the magi were Jews of Mesopotamia. The number and names of the magi are not mentioned in Matthew, but tradition has assigned them both names (Melchior, Caspar, Balthasar) and number. The tradition of there being three wise men perhaps is derived from the three gifts mentioned in Matt. 2:11, but this inference probably is not intended by the evangelist.

Elsewhere in the NT, the Greek noun *magos* and the related verb *mageuō* have the negative connotation of sorcery and magic (Acts 8:9–11; 13:6, 8).

MAGIC *See* Divination and Magic.

MAGIC BAND *See* Magic Charm.

MAGIC CHARM A condemned object in Ezekiel’s denunciation of false prophetesses who prophesied out of their own inspiration (Ezek. 13:18). It was a sewn object placed on the wrist and associated with veils of various lengths. Although the exact function is unknown, this item was used in magical practices involving “the hunt for the soul.” The Israelites likely derived the practice from Mesopotamia, a civilization entrenched in magic.

MAGISTRATE A government official with administrative or judicial functions. In the OT, the NIV and other modern translations use the term “magistrate” to render Aramaic words in Ezra 7:25 and Dan. 3:2–3 that denote a leadership position with a role in administering justice. In the NT, these Bible versions use the term exclusively in Luke-Acts, primarily for the leaders in Philippi before whom Paul and Silas are accused in Acts 16 (see also Luke 12:58). The KJV also uses the term in Judg. 18:7; Luke 12:11; and Titus 3:1 to refer to rulers or judges.

MAGNIFICAT The first word of the Latin translation (*Magnificat anima mea Dominum*) of Mary’s song (Luke 1:46–55) that celebrates God’s humiliation of the proud and his vindication of the lowly. It resembles the OT song of Hannah (1 Sam. 2:1–10). Three Latin manuscripts attribute the Magnificat to Elizabeth rather than to Mary.

MAGOG *See* Gog and Magog.

MAGOR-MISSABIB After being punished as a false prophet by the priest Pashhur, Jeremiah renames him “Magor-Missabib,” which means “terror on every side” (Jer. 20:1–6). Since the priest epitomizes the sins of Judah as well as the Judeans’ resistance to God’s message through Jeremiah, he also represents the punishments that will come not just to him but to all Judeans.

MAGPIASH One of the lay leaders who sealed the reaffirmed covenant of God with Judah after the reestablishment of the law and the rebuilding of the wall of Jerusalem (Neh. 10:20).

MAHALAB A site in Asher according to Josh. 19:29 NRSV. However, there are textual issues associated with this name. This reading is based on the LXX, whereas the Hebrew reads *mekhebel* (NET: “from Hebel”). Further, comparison with Judg. 1:31 suggests that this site is the same as that of Ahlab.

MAHALAH *See* Mahlah.

MAHALALEEL *See* Mahalalel.

MAHALALEL **(1)** A patriarch listed in Gen. 5 among Adam's descendants (cf. 1 Chron. 1:2). He was fathered by Kenan in the fourth generation after Adam; he was 65 when he fathered Jared, and he lived to be 895 years old (Gen. 5:12–17). In Luke 3:37 the Greek form of the name is "Mahalaleel" (KJV: "Maleleel"). **(2)** The father of Shephatiah and a descendant of Judah through Perez (Neh. 11:4).

MAHALATH **(1)** A granddaughter of Abraham and the daughter of Ishmael who married Esau (Gen. 28:9). In Gen. 36:3 she is named "Basemath." **(2)** A wife of King Rehoboam. She was the daughter of David's son Jerimoth and Abihail (2 Chron. 11:18). **(3)** A term of uncertain meaning found in the superscriptions of Pss. 53; 88. The term is likely a musical or choreographic instruction. In Ps. 88 the term is followed by *le'annot* (which can mean either "to inflict" or "to sing out") and may indicate a kind of lamentation rite, a type of responsive performance by two groups, or a completed rite of affliction.

MAHALATH LEANNOTH *See* Mahalath.

MAHALI *See* Mahli.

MAHANAIM This city, whose name means "two camps," was named by Jacob when he met the angels of God right before his encounter with God at Peniel (Gen. 32:2). After the conquest and settlement, Mahanaim was located on the border of Gad and Manasseh and set aside as a Levitical city (Josh. 13:26, 30; 21:38). It served as the capital for Saul's son Ish-Bosheth until his murder led to the unification of David's kingdom (2 Sam. 2:8, 12, 29). David sought refuge here when pursued by Absalom and used it as his headquarters when fighting against his son (2 Sam. 17:24, 27; 19:32). Solomon made it the seat of one of his administrative districts (1 Kings 4:14). Situated east of the Jordan and north of the Jabbok Rivers, its precise location remains uncertain. According to the Song of Songs 6:13 the woman asks the man why he looks at her as on the "dance of Mahanaim," which is better translated the "dance of two war camps." Whatever the translation, the context makes it clear she is referring to the fact that he cannot take his eyes off of her.

MAHANEH DAN This name, literally meaning the "camp of Dan," occurs only in the book of Judges (13:25; 18:11–13). It is situated west of Kiriath Jearim and between Zorah and Eshtaol. It is the place where six hundred Danite warriors camped during their migration before they came to the house of Micah in the hill country of Ephraim and also where the spirit of the Lord "began to stir" Samson. It is possible that this name was used only for Danite encampments that were located in the territory of Judah.

MAHARAI A descendant of Zerah and one of David's thirty mighty warriors. He was one of two mighty warriors from Netophah, less than ten miles south of Jerusalem (2 Sam. 23:28–29; 1 Chron. 11:30). Maharai's division of twenty-four thousand soldiers was on duty in the tenth month of the year

(1 Chron. 27:13).

MAHATH **(1)** A descendant of Levi through Kohath and Amasai, and also an ancestor of Heman the musician (1 Chron. 6:35). **(2)** A descendant of Levi through Kohath and Amasai, he worked as a Levitical supervisor under Konaniah and Shimei to reopen the temple during King Hezekiah's reign (2 Chron. 29:12; 31:13).

MAHAVITE A designation indicating that Eliel, one of David's thirty mighty warriors, was from Mahavah (1 Chron. 11:46).

MAHAZIOTH One of Heman the seer's fourteen sons, who were Levites set apart for ministering in the temple with music (1 Chron. 25:1, 4–6, 30).

MAHER-SHALAL-HASH-BAZ A name whose precise translation is disputed but means something close to "the spoil speeds, the prey hastens." God commanded Isaiah to give one of his sons this name as part of a prophecy that Judah would soon be delivered from the Syro-Ephraimite threat (Isa. 8:1–4). Specifically, the prophecy assured Judah that this turn of events would occur before Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz could speak. This prophecy dealt with the same threat as in Isa. 7 but added the assurance that the promised deliverance would take place swiftly. The prophecy found fulfillment when Assyria plundered Ephraim in 733 BC and conquered Damascus in 732 BC. The birth of Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz can therefore be dated with some confidence to 734 BC.

MAHLAH **(1)** One of the five daughters of Zelophehad. They appealed to Moses for special provision to allow them to receive their father's inheritance in the promised land because he had no sons (Num. 26:33; 27:1–11; 36:11). Once in the land, the daughters renewed their petition before Joshua, and they were given an allotment among the brothers of their father within the tribe of Manasseh (Josh. 17:3). **(2)** A son or daughter of Hammoleketh, a descendant of Manasseh (1 Chron. 7:18).

MAHLI **(1)** A grandson of Levi, son of Merari, and brother of Mushi. He was the head of a Levite clan (Exod. 6:16–19; Num. 3:17–20). Mahli's son Eleazar died without a son (1 Chron. 23:21–22). **(2)** A great-grandson of Levi, he was the son of Mushi (1 Chron. 6:47; 23:23) and a nephew to the Mahli of Exod. 6:16–19; Num. 3:17–20.

MAHLITES The descendants of Mahli, son of Merari and grandson of Levi (Num. 3:33). The Mahlites were one of several Levite clans (Num. 26:58). Sherebiah, a Mahlite, accompanied Ezra from Babylon to Jerusalem (Ezra 8:18).

MAHLON The first husband of Ruth the Moabite (Ruth 4:9). When famine struck Judah, Mahlon traveled with his family to Moab in search of food (1:1–2). There, Mahlon took Ruth as his wife, but he died after living about ten years in Moab (1:4–5). Ruth's second husband, Boaz, maintained Mahlon's name and property by taking Ruth as his wife and fathering a son on Mahlon's behalf (Ruth 4:10, 17; cf. Deut. 25:5–6).

MAHOL The father of Heman, Kalcol, and Darda. His sons were renowned wise men (Solomon was lauded as surpassing their wisdom [1 Kings 4:31]). Some suggest that the title "sons of Mahol" may refer to members of a musicians' guild or a group of temple dancers. It was not unusual to observe prophetic wisdom in musicians (1 Sam. 10:5; 2 Kings 3:15–19; 1 Chron. 25:1–6).

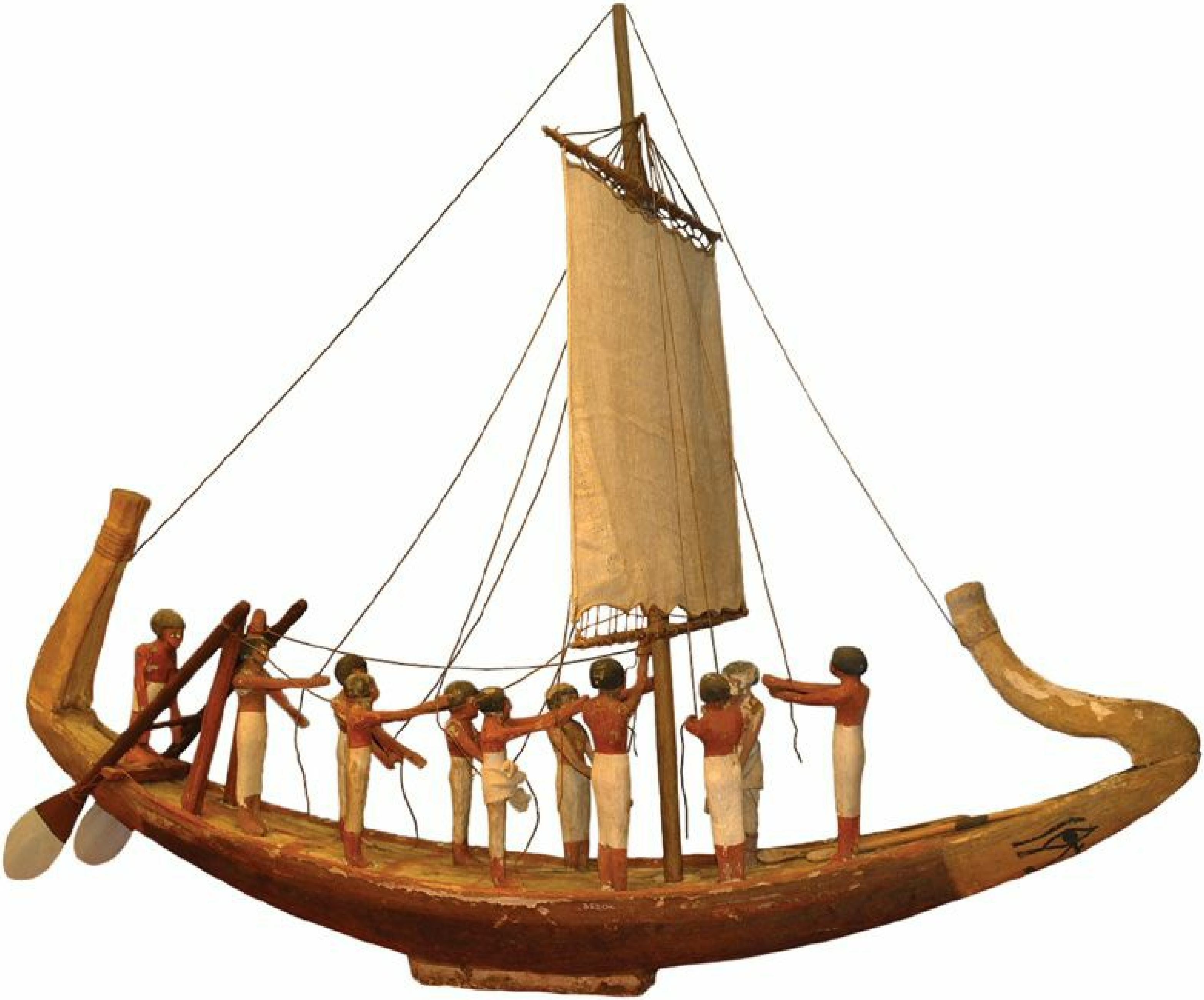
MAHSEIAH The grandfather of Baruch, Jeremiah's scribe (Jer. 32:12), and of Seraiah, the quartermaster of King Zedekiah of Judah (Jer. 51:59).

MAID, MAIDEN The KJV translation for a young girl, an unmarried woman or virgin, or a female servant. At least five Hebrew words are used to refer to such women. *Betulah* refers to an unmarried virgin or a young woman who has had no sexual experience (Gen. 24:16; Job 31:1; Exod. 22:16–17). A man who forcefully lay with such a woman was expected to marry her (Deut. 22:13–19). When David was old, a virgin was found to lie at his side to keep him warm (1 Kings 1:2). Israel as a nation is identified as a young virgin (Jer. 31:4). The second term is *'amah*, translated "bondwoman," "maidservant," "maid," "bondmaid," "servant," or "female servant" (Gen. 20:17; Exod. 2:5). The third is *shipkhah*, which refers to a female slave who is of close kinship to her master (Gen. 29:24). The fourth is *na'arah*, which is translated "unmarried girl" (Esther 2:4 [NIV: "young woman"]) or "servant" (Esther 4:4 [NIV: "female attendant"]; Ruth 2:23). The fifth is *'almah*, which is translated "girl" (Exod. 2:8), "virgin" (Isa. 7:14), or "maiden" (Prov. 30:19 [NIV: "young woman"]).

In the NT, several Greek words are sometimes translated as "maiden" in the KJV. *Parthenos* refers to a "virgin," male or female (Matt. 1:23; Acts 21:9; Rev. 14:4). *Pais* generally means "a young girl," "maiden," or "child" (Luke 8:51, 54). *Paidiskē* refers to a "female slave," "servant maid," or "servant girl" (Mark 14:66; Luke 12:45). The word *korasion* refers to a "girl" or "little girl" (Matt. 9:24–25). *Nymphē* refers to a "young wife" or "bride" (Luke 12:53; Rev. 21:2).

MAIMED Several Hebrew and Greek words referring to bodily mutilation are translated as "maimed" or sometimes as "crippled" or "lame." In ancient Israel such physical defects made Levites ineligible for priestly service (Lev. 21:16–23) and rendered animals unfit for sacrifice (22:22). In Jesus' time the maimed were on the fringes of society because their condition was considered a sign of God's contempt for them. Christ's public ministry therefore scandalized the Jewish establishment of his day because he healed and associated with social outcasts like the maimed. In one of his parables the "poor and maimed and blind and lame" (Luke 14:21 RSV) would be brought to the banquet, but the host would reject those who were invited but made excuses not to attend.

MAINSAIL The mainsail of a ship is the largest sail, attached to its main mast. In contemporary pictures of ships in OT times, the ships are square-rigged; that is, the mainsail is attached to a spar running perpendicular to the keel, as opposed to the fore-and-aft rig, with the mainsail in line with the keel and aft of the mast.



Egyptian model of a boat with mainsail (1900 BC)

MAKAZ A city in Solomon’s second administrative district (1 Kings 4:9), one of four cities for which Ben-Deker was the officer. Each officer supplied food and provisions for the king and his household for one month in the year.

MAKBANNAI One of the eleven Gadite army commanders who defected from Saul to support David before he became king (1 Chron. 12:13).

MAKBENAH The son of Sheva and the brother of Gibea in the genealogy of Judah (1 Chron. 2:49). The name may also refer to a place in the Judean hills south of Hebron, but the precise identification is uncertain.

MAKHELOTH The tenth encampment of the Israelites after leaving Mount Sinai (Num. 33:25–26).

Since its meaning (“to assemble”) is the same as for Kehelathah (Num. 33:22–23), some have suggested that they are the same location.

MAKI From the tribe of Gad of the wilderness generation, he was the father of Geuel, one of the twelve spies sent by Moses to explore Canaan (Num. 13:15).

MAKIR **(1)** The oldest son of Manasseh and a grandson of Joseph (Josh. 17:1). He was the father of Gilead, Peresh, and Sheresh (Josh. 17:3; 1 Chron. 7:16) and an unnamed daughter (1 Chron. 2:21). His children were “placed at birth on Joseph’s knees” (Gen. 50:23), an idiom for legal adoption and inheritance rights. This places the Makirite clan, which Makir headed (Num. 26:29), in Egypt and under the house of Joseph. Makir had a brother, Asriel (1 Chron. 7:14), and a wife, Maakah (1 Chron. 7:16).

After assisting the other Israelite tribes in the conquest of Canaan (Num. 32:39–40), the descendants of Makir captured Transjordan Gilead, which Moses earlier had allotted to Makir (Deut. 3:15). In the Song of Deborah, Makir is named in a geographical listing of the tribes as they leave to battle Sisera (Judg. 5:14). Makir occurs in the list (after Ephraim-Benjamin and before Zebulun, Issachar, and Naphtali) where Manasseh typically would be listed.

(2) The son of Ammiel from Lo Debar and a descendant of Manasseh. Saul’s son Mephibosheth lived in his house (2 Sam. 9:4–5). Makir also brought beds, basins, vessels, and food to support David and his people during the time of Absalom’s rebellion (2 Sam. 17:27–29).

MAKIRITES *See* Makir.

MAKKEDAH A city in the foothills west of the Judean hill country that figures prominently in the account of Israel’s conquest of southern Canaan. Following the battle at Gibeon in which the sun stood still (Josh. 10:12–13), Joshua and the Israelite army chased the enemy coalition out of the hills as far as Makkedah (10:10), one of the cities in Canaan ruled by a king (12:16). After the battle Joshua killed the five confederate Amorite kings in a ceremony at a cave at Makkedah, where they had sought refuge (10:16–27). Israel’s army then camped there before conquering the city (10:21, 28). Makkedah was in the vicinity of Lachish (15:37–41), but its exact location is uncertain.

MAKNADEBAI A descendant of Binnui, he is listed among the Israelites who sent away their foreign wives during the postexilic reforms of Ezra (Ezra 10:40).

MAKTESH In Zeph. 1:11 the KJV transliterates the Hebrew word *maktesh* as the name of a district in or near Jerusalem. The word means “mortar”; thus, some versions translate it as the name “Mortar” (ESV, NASB, NRSV), while the NIV describes the area as “the market district.”

MALACHI, BOOK OF Malachi is one of the last prophetic voices in the OT. It is likely for this reason that it is the last of the twelve Minor Prophets, the last book in the entire OT, at least in the English order of books. In the Hebrew canon it concludes the second of three parts of the Hebrew Bible, the Nebiim, or Prophets.

Since the prophet comes from the period after the judgment of the exile, it is sad to see that he addresses the sin of the people and thus threatens further judgment. Intriguingly for the Christian, the book ends with the promise that Elijah will come before that great day of judgment, a promise that the NT authors see fulfilled in the person of John the Baptist, whose ministry comes as a prelude to the appearance of Jesus Christ (Matt. 3; Mark 1:1–8; Luke 3; John 1:19–34).

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The superscription of the book (1:1) names Malachi as the vehicle through whom God addresses his people. The fact that the prophet is identified by name and not by place of birth or parentage has led some to suggest that "Malachi" is not a person's real name but refers simply to "my messenger," which is the meaning of the Hebrew. Messenger is a theme in the book, as the prophecy later promises a future messenger who will prepare the way for the coming of the Lord (3:1; 4:5). However, since the rest of biblical prophecy makes a point of identifying its oracles with a particular person, it is best to think of "Malachi" as a real person's name.

The superscription also lacks a historical indicator—for instance, the names of kings during whose reign the prophet ministered. Nonetheless, internal indications point to the Persian period, probably sometime in the years 475–460 BC, before the work of Ezra and Nehemiah.

LITERARY CONSIDERATIONS AND OUTLINE

The superscription describes the contents of the book as "a prophecy" and "the word of the LORD." The book's contents support this genre identification, as the author brings charges against the religious and ethical behavior of the people of God and also looks forward to the future day of judgment, which leads to the redemption of the faithful.

The prophecy's structure is based on a series of disputations or challenges directed toward God's sinful people. The six disputations have a common structure. God begins by asserting a truth about the nature of his relationship with his people. In the second disputation (1:6–2:9), for instance, God asserts that he is the priests' master and father and asks why they treat him with contempt (1:6). The response comes in the form of a question, in this case "How have we shown contempt for your name?" (1:6). God then responds by listing the ways they have done so.

Six such disputes are framed by a superscription announcing the oracle and by a conclusion in which God demands observance of the law and announces the future coming of Elijah:

I. Superscription: God's Prophecy through Malachi (1:1)

II. Dispute about God's Love for His People (1:2–5)

III. Dispute about the Contempt That the Priests Show God (1:6–2:9)

IV. Dispute about Israel's Breaking of the Covenant (2:10–16)

V. Dispute about God's Justice (2:17–3:5)

VI. Dispute about Repentance (3:6–12)

VII. Dispute about Harsh Words against God (3:13–4:3)

VIII. Conclusion: Observe the Law, Watch for Elijah (4:4–6)

THEOLOGICAL MESSAGE

As is typical of the biblical prophets, the covenant is at the center of Malachi's prophetic proclamation. Three covenants in particular are cited: the covenant with Levi (2:8), the covenant of the fathers (2:10), and the covenant of marriage (2:14). God's people have violated these covenants. God loves them in a special way, but they do not return that love. Their sin breaks their covenant relationship; thus the prophet warns them of the possibility of future judgment. Even so, God is also a redeemer, and so Malachi also presents a vision of future restoration. He foresees a day when God will intervene in the world, bringing victory to those who obey God's laws and punishment to those who do not (3:1–5; 4:1–6).

NEW TESTAMENT CONNECTIONS

Malachi challenges the people of God today to examine their lives and ask whether their behavior matches their belief. Do Christians acknowledge God's love for them (1:2–5)? Do they honor and respect God as they should (1:6–2:9)? Do they honor their relational commitments, particularly those made in the covenant of marriage (2:15–16)? These are just some of the issues that the ancient prophet raises for modern Christian reflection and application.

Mark begins his Gospel with a quotation that combines Mal. 3:1 with Isa. 40:3, announcing the messenger who will precede the coming of the Lord. In the last chapter of Malachi, this messenger is identified with Elijah, who will precede the Lord on the day of victory and judgment. John the Baptist fulfills the role, thus implying that Jesus is the Lord who brings victory and judgment. Jesus himself later identifies John as Elijah, whose heralding role is anticipated in Malachi (Matt. 11:7–19; cf. Luke 7:18–35). Thus, the future hopes of the book of Malachi find their fulfillment in the Gospels.

MALACHITE Green in color, malachite is a basic carbonate of copper. A significant ore of copper, this mineral polishes well and is used especially as a gem or for making various ornamental items. Malachite was one of several different kinds of stones in the mosaic pavement of the royal palace of King Xerxes (Ahasuerus) (Esther 1:6 [NIV: "porphyry"; KJV: "red marble"]).

MALCAM, MALCHAM *See* Malkam.

MALCHIAH *See* Malkijah.

MALCHIEL, MALCHIELITES *See* Malkiel.

MALCHIRAM *See* Malkiram.

MALCHISHUA *See* Malki-Shua.

MALCHUS A slave of the high priest whose ear was cut off by Peter on the night of Jesus' arrest in Gethsemane (John 18:10). The name means "king," and he may have been a leading servant of the high priest. All four Gospels mention that the high priest's slave had his ear cut off by one of Jesus' disciples. Only John reports that the slave's name was "Malchus" and that Peter was the perpetrator, and only Luke reports that Jesus healed his ear (Luke 22:51). While Peter was standing outside Jesus' trial, a relative of Malchus who was also a servant of the high priest accused Peter of being with Jesus in the garden (John 18:26).

MALEFACTORS In Luke 23:32–33, 39 the KJV translates the Greek word *kakourgos* as "malefactor," referring to two "criminals" (NIV) crucified beside Jesus. In Matthew and Mark the two are referred to as *lēstai* (“thieves, robbers”). This was a derogatory way in which the Romans referred to rebels or insurrectionists, as common criminals. Like Barabbas, these two probably were arrested as part of a rebellion against the Roman government (Mark 15:7).

MALELEEL *See* Mahalalel.

MALICE Wickedness, hatred, or ill intentions (Num. 35:20; Mark 7:22; Eph. 4:31; 1 Pet. 2:1). Malice characterizes the lives of those who are under the wrath of God (Rom. 1:29), but for believers in Christ, malice is a thing of the past (Titus 3:3).

MALKAM **(1)** Descended from Benjamin, he was the fourth of seven sons born to Shaharaim by his wife Hodesh after he divorced Hushim and Baara and was the head of a family (1 Chron. 8:9–10 [KJV: “Malcham”]). Malkam was born in the land of Moab (1 Chron. 8:8), either during the time when Moab was subservient to Israel (cf. 2 Sam. 8:2; 2 Kings 3:5) or during a time of peace (cf. Ruth 1; 1 Sam. 22:3–4). **(2)** The name appears elsewhere as an object of Judah’s idolatry (Zeph. 1:5 [NIV: “Molek”; KJV: “Malcham”]) and may simply be a variant spelling for “Milcom” (so the NRSV), god of the Ammonites (1 Kings 11:5, 33; Jer. 49:1, 3; cf. Amos 1:15, where the Hebrew term is translated as “[her] king” [NIV]).

MALKIEL A grandson of Asher (Gen. 46:17; 1 Chron. 7:31) and the ancestor of the Malkielites (Num. 26:45).

MALKIELITES *See* Malkiel.

MALKIJAH **(1)** An ancestor of the musician Asaph (1 Chron. 6:40). **(2)** A descendant of Aaron, he was the leader of a priestly division during David’s reign (1 Chron. 24:9). **(3)** The ancestor of Pashhur, who came to Jeremiah with a request from King Zedekiah (Jer. 21:1). **(4)** An ancestor of Adaiah, who returned to Jerusalem after the exile (1 Chron. 9:12; Neh. 11:12). **(5)** A descendant of Parosh, he sent away his foreign wife during Ezra’s reforms (Ezra 10:25). **(6)** A descendant of Harim, he sent away his foreign wife during Ezra’s reforms (Ezra 10:31). **(7)** The son of Harim, he repaired a section of the Jerusalem wall and the Tower of the Ovens (Neh. 3:11). **(8)** The son of Rekab, ruler of the district of Beth Hakkerem, he repaired the Dung Gate of the Jerusalem wall (Neh. 3:14). **(9)** One of the goldsmiths who repaired part of the Jerusalem wall (Neh. 3:31). **(10)** One of the leaders who stood with Ezra when he read the law of Moses to the people (Neh. 8:4). **(11)** A priest who signed Ezra’s covenant after the exile (Neh. 10:3). **(12)** A priest who sang during the dedication of the wall (Neh. 12:42). Some of these references may speak of the same person.

MALKIRAM The second son of King Jehoiachin (Jeconiah) of Judah, who was carried off into Babylonian exile in 597 BC (1 Chron. 3:18).

MALKI-SHUA The son of King Saul and Ahinoam (1 Sam. 14:49; 1 Chron. 8:33; 9:39). He was struck down and killed on Mount Gilboa during a battle with the Philistines (1 Sam. 31:2; 1 Chron. 10:2).

MALLOTHI A son of Heman (seer of King David), he was the chief of a section of tabernacle musicians during the reign of David. He and his brothers were under the direction of their father with cymbals, harps, and lyres in service of the house of God (1 Chron. 25:4, 26).

MALLOW A plant, probably a species of the genus *Atriplex*, more commonly known as a saltwort. This is a large, bushy shrub that thrives in sandy, salty soil. The mucilaginous plant has many medicinal uses. Although "mallow" is found in Job 30:4 (NRSV [NIV: "salt herb"]), this reference is most likely to another plant (*Atriplex halimus L.*) known as sea purslane. This plant better fits the description of a marsh plant gathered for food by the poor during a time of famine. The NRSV follows the LXX by inserting "mallow" into Job 24:24 in a comparison of fading flowers to the unrighteous. Most other translations follow the Hebrew and read "all others." While the NRSV translates Job 6:6b as "is there any flavor in the juice of mallows?" most translations take the relevant word to refer to the white of an egg. *See also* Purslane.

MALLUCH, MALLUCHI *See* Malluk.

MALLUK **(1)** Great-grandfather of Ethan, one of the Levite musicians appointed by David to minister in the tabernacle (1 Chron. 6:44). **(2, 3)** Two of those who were guilty of marrying foreign women in the time of Ezra (Ezra 10:29, 32). **(4, 5)** Two of those who signed the covenant renewal with Nehemiah (Neh. 10:4, 27). The first of these may be the same priest mentioned in Neh. 12:2 (see #6). **(6)** One of the priests and Levites who returned with Zerubbabel and Joshua (Neh. 12:2). In Neh. 12:14, Malluk's family is included among the priestly families during the time of the high priest Joiakim. The spelling "Malluchi" (see 12:14 ESV, NASB, NRSV) may be a transcriptional error (the LXX has *Malouch* ["Malluch"] and the Qere suggests Melichu [KJV; NKJV]).

MALTA An island of strategic importance about sixty miles south of Sicily in the Mediterranean Sea, Malta was famous in ancient times for shipwrecks. It is the location of Paul's shipwreck on his way to Rome for trial (Acts 28:1). After the shipwreck, Paul was stuck on the island for three months and was taken care of by the island's residents. Here Paul was bitten by a viper but suffered no ill effects. Today Saint Paul's Bay is the accepted location of the shipwreck.

Saint Paul’s Bay, Malta

MAMMON A transliteration of the Greek rendering of the Aramaic noun *mamōnas*, which signifies “wealth” and is translated by the NIV as either “money” or “worldly wealth” (Matt. 6:24; Luke 16:9, 11, 13). Only Jesus uses the term in the Bible. Since the early church retained the Aramaic, it is likely that the word itself retains significance. Jesus warns, “You cannot serve both God and mammon [NIV: “money”]” (Matt. 6:24 KJV). In this case, mammon is placed in parallel with God, which suggests that it has taken on the significance of an idol. Like all false gods, mammon promises pleasure to worshipers but ultimately enslaves them. However, Jesus also uses the term in a broader sense, “worldly wealth,” where it is not necessarily possessive and can be mastered and shrewdly redirected to advance the kingdom of God (Luke 16:9, 11).

MAMRE A site near Hebron where Abraham settled (Gen. 13:18; 14:13; 18:1). Its location was identified in association with “great trees.” Abraham acquired a burial area in Machpelah, described as being in the vicinity of Mamre (23:17, 19; 25:9; 49:30; 50:13), where a number of the patriarchs and matriarchs were buried. Later, Isaac lived in the area (35:27). A man named “Mamre” helped Abraham defeat a coalition of eastern kings (14:24); perhaps the site was named after him. Today archaeologists identify Mamre with Haram Ramet el-Khalil, two miles north of Hebron.

MAN *See* Humanity.

MANAEN One of the prophets and teachers in the church at Antioch. His name is a Greek rendering of the Hebrew name “Menahem.” Manaen was “brought up with” Herod Antipas the tetrarch (Acts 13:1). It has been suggested that boys raised as companions of royal princes were so described and retained this title as adults. Since he knew Herod, Manaen may well have served as a source of information for the writing of Luke’s Gospel (cf. Luke 3:19–20; 9:7–9; 13:31; 23:7–12). An earlier Manaen was an Essene acquaintance of Herod the Great (father of Herod Antipas) who predicted Herod the Great’s rise to kingship (Josephus, *Ant*. 15.373–79).

MANAHATH **(1)** A son of Shobal and a descendant of the Horite Seir (Gen. 36:23; 1 Chron. 1:40). **(2)** A city or town to which the inhabitants of Geba (Benjamites from the clan of Ehud) were carried into exile (1 Chron. 8:6).

MANAHATHITES Two Calebite half-tribes: one half from the ancestor Shobal, and the other half from Salma (1 Chron. 2:50–54).

MANASSEH **(1)** A son of Joseph and grandson of Jacob. He was Joseph’s firstborn, but Jacob blessed Ephraim his brother over Manasseh (Gen. 48:13–20). Joseph received a double portion over his brothers because the two tribes of Israel traced their ancestry back to him through his two sons. In keeping with Jacob’s blessing, the tribe of Ephraim overshadowed the tribe of Manasseh (*see* Manasseh, Tribe of).

(2) The fourteenth king of Judah (698–642 BC), his rule was so wicked that it secured the doom of his kingdom (2 Kings 20:21–21:18; 2 Chron. 32:33–33:20).

The account of his rule in 2 Kings focuses exclusively on the perversity of his leadership and the negative consequences that flowed from his reign. Many kings promoted or tolerated the worship of pagan deities, but only Manasseh is associated with the practice of child sacrifice, offering up his own son (2 Kings 21:6). He “also shed so much innocent blood that he filled Jerusalem from end to end” (2 Kings 21:16). Such sin elicited a strong reaction from God, who announced that he would “wipe out Jerusalem as one wipes a dish, wiping it and turning it upside down” (2 Kings 21:13).

Interestingly, 2 Chronicles, a postexilic historical work, expands our knowledge about this king to include the account of his end-of-life conversion. This story is absent from 2 Kings because that book tells the history of God’s people in order to explain why they were in exile. Manasseh’s change of life happened when his Assyrian overlords, angry over an unspecified offense, dragged him to their capital with a hook in his nose. Because of Manasseh’s change of heart, God blessed the remainder of his reign, although God did not reverse the judgment of destruction that his sins evoked against Judah (Jer. 15:4).

(3) An Israelite, a descendant of Pahath-Moab, guilty of marrying a foreign woman during the time of Ezra (Ezra 10:30).

(4) An Israelite, a descendant of Hashum, guilty of marrying a foreign woman during the time of Ezra (Ezra 10:33).

MANASSEH, TRIBE OF One of the twelve tribes of Israel. Along with Ephraim, it is traced to Joseph rather than Jacob. Manasseh and Ephraim were the two sons of Joseph, each of whom received a tribal portion (resulting in Joseph getting a double portion) along with the sons of Jacob

(Gen. 48). At the same time, Manasseh, the older brother, lost his birthright to Ephraim when Jacob crossed his hands and put his right hand on Ephraim when giving the inheritance. This follows the tradition in Genesis of the younger son supplanting the older. The exact status of the tribe of Manasseh is a complex issue, but it is clear that Manasseh and Ephraim were rivals for status and power during the early northern kingdom monarchy. Based on the land descriptions in the book of Joshua, Manasseh would have had the largest tribal territory. It also uniquely had land on both sides of the Jordan River, which may have contributed to Manasseh being one of the least unified tribes in Israel. Many of the most important cities of the northern kingdom were located in Manasseh, including the capital cities of Shechem and Samaria and the major military cities of Megiddo and Jezreel.

MANASSITES Members of the half-tribe of Manasseh (Deut. 4:43; Josh. 16:9; 17:12; cf. Deut. 29:8; 2 Kings 10:33; 1 Chron. 26:32).

MANDRAKE A plant of the nightshade family common throughout the Mediterranean area. In antiquity it was believed to be an aphrodisiac and an aid in achieving conception. This can be seen in the negotiation between Rachel and Leah for the mandrakes found by Reuben (Gen. 30:14–15). Rachel evidently desired the mandrakes as a cure for her infertility, but the narrative is clear that Rachel’s infertility is overcome later only through the intervention of God (30:22). The same associations also lie behind the reference to the fragrance of the mandrakes in Song 7:13, which is the only other biblical reference to mandrakes.

MANGER A container or basin that holds the feed for domesticated farm animals such as cattle, sheep, or horses (Prov. 14:4; KJV: “crib”). Job speaks of a manger in relation to a wild ox, asking, “Will it stay by your manger at night?” (Job 39:9), implying that mangers are used for domesticated animals only. Isaiah laments Israel’s waywardness, unlike the donkey, which knows its “owner’s manger” (Isa. 1:3). For want of a room at the inn, Mary wrapped Jesus in cloths and placed him in a manger shortly after his birth (Luke 2:7). Nearby, shepherds were told by angels that Christ the Lord had been born in Bethlehem, and that the sign to them would be a baby wrapped in cloths lying in a manger (2:12). They journeyed to Bethlehem and found Jesus just as the angels had said (2:16).

A cow feeding from a manger

MANNA Miraculous, heavenly bread that God rained down for the Israelites to eat during their wilderness wanderings (Exod. 16:1–35). The word *manna* likely comes from the Hebrew phrase *man hu'* (“What is it?”), reflecting the Israelites' puzzled response to God's gracious provision (Exod. 16:15). It resulted from a layer of dew that fell on the camp at night and evaporated in the morning, leaving fine flakes resembling frost on the ground (Exod. 16:14; Num. 11:9). Manna was white like coriander seed and tasted like wafers made with honey and olive oil (Exod. 16:31; Num. 11:8). It could be crushed into a paste and then either boiled or baked (Num. 11:8).

God sent a fresh supply of manna each day to test whether the Israelites trusted him to provide (Exod. 16:4). It was designed to rot away in order to keep the people from hoarding their own supply instead of trusting God (16:19–20). The Israelites were allowed to gather manna for six days, but it did not appear on the ground on the Sabbath. To prepare for the Sabbath, they gathered twice as much on the sixth day, which miraculously lasted through the Sabbath (16:5, 23–26).

Tamarisk bushes in the Sinai region secrete a seasonal, rich, honeylike sap that eventually crystallizes and falls to the ground and is called “manna” to this day. However, this natural phenomenon does not completely explain or match the biblical tradition. Biblical manna was truly a miracle.

MANOAH The father of Samson (Judg. 13:24; 16:31). The Samson story in Judges begins with an introduction of his father, Manoah, a Danite from Zorah whose wife was barren (13:2). An angel of the Lord appears to Manoah's wife, who is nameless throughout the narrative, and declares that she will have a son and that he must be raised as a Nazirite. Manoah requests that the Lord send this "man" again, which he does. Manoah and his wife finally realize the identity of the angel of the Lord after he has disappeared in the flames of their sacrifice (13:9–21).

MAN OF LAWLESSNESS, MAN OF SIN At 2 Thess. 2:3 various Greek manuscripts speak of either "the man of lawlessness [*anomia*]" or "the man of sin [*hamartia*]," by which Paul refers to the antichrist, who will usher in the last days. *See also* Antichrist; Lawless, Lawlessness.

MANSERVANT A male servant, often considered part of the household (Exod. 20:17; 21:26), almost always discussed in conjunction with the maidservant. *See also* Slave, Servant.

MANSION On the night of his arrest, Jesus promised his disciples that he was going away "to prepare a place" for them. He assured them that his "Father's house" had ample room. In John 14:2 the KJV translates the Greek term *monē* as "mansion." In the Latin Vulgate, the Greek term is translated *mansio*, meaning a "dwelling" or "home." The KJV translators rendered the term as "mansion," meaning a "dwelling place." Today, however, the word "mansion" refers to a large, elaborate home and thus can be misleading as a translation of *monē*. Thus, Jesus promised his disciples that he would prepare eternal places for them to live with him, and so *monē* is better translated as "dwelling place" or "room," as in the modern translations.

MANSLAYER In Num. 35:6, 11–12 the KJV translates the Hebrew word *ratsakh* as "manslayer," referring to a person who had accidentally killed someone (compare "manslaughter" in modern usage). God directed the Israelites to set aside six Levitical cities of refuge to which a manslayer could flee from an avenger in order not to die without a trial (Num. 35:6–15). In 1 Tim. 1:9, the KJV also translates the Greek word *androphonos* as "manslayer," where most modern translations render it as "murderer."

MANTLE An outer garment (usually "cloak," "garment," or "robe" in the NIV). A mantle was among the items that Achan stole from the plunder at Jericho (Josh. 7:21). The biblical authors sometimes used "mantle" figuratively in poetic literature (Ps. 89:45 NIV; Isa. 59:17; 61:3; Heb. 1:12 NASB). Elijah's mantle is the most prominent in the Bible. Elijah cast his mantle over Elisha to signify that Elisha would be his successor (1 Kings 19:16, 19). Later, both Elijah and Elisha used Elijah's mantle to part the Jordan River (2 Kings 2:8, 13–14). See also 1 Kings 19:13.

MANUHOTH *See* Manahathites.

MANURE *See* Dung.

MANUSCRIPT Technically, any handwritten document, including records, letters, and Scriptures. The term commonly refers to copies of biblical documents made before the advent of the printing press. Surviving OT manuscripts are in scroll form; NT ones are in codex (book) form.

MAOCH *See* Maok.

MAOK The father of Achish, the king of the Philistine city of Gath who gave David and his family sanctuary during his flight from Saul (1 Sam. 27:2). Maok is called “Maakah” in 1 Kings 2:39.

MAON **(1)** The son of Shammai, he was a descendant of Caleb and an unnamed wife. Maon also is identified as the father of Beth Zur (1 Chron. 2:45), meaning that he was either the ancestor of the people of Beth Zur or the founder of that city. “Maon” can also have a collective meaning for the people of Maon who founded the city of Beth Zur. **(2)** One of the towns belonging to the tribe of Judah (Josh. 15:55), located nine miles south of Hebron. It has been identified as Tell Main today. Abigail’s husband, Nabal, resided here (1 Sam. 25:2). David hid from Saul in the Desert of Maon (1 Sam. 23:24–25).

MAONITES A people group included in a list of Israel’s oppressors during the time of the Judges (Judg. 10:12). This may be the same group as the Meunites, whom the sons of Simeon dispossessed during the reign of King Hezekiah of Judah (1 Chron. 4:41), and against whom King Uzziah successfully battled (2 Chron. 26:7). Some scholars and translations, following the LXX, emend the text to “Midianites.”

MARA Meaning “bitter,” this name is chosen by Naomi following the death of her husband and sons. Upon her return to Bethlehem, she requests that the people call her “Mara” because God has made her life bitter (Ruth 1:20–21).

MARAH An Israelite encampment in the Desert of Shur (Exod. 15:23) that was reached following a three-day journey after the Israelites crossed the Red Sea (Num. 33:8). The name means “bitter” and describes the bitter, brackish water found there. The Israelites complained against Moses because of the water, and God instructed him to cast a tree into the water, which made it sweet and drinkable. The exact location of Marah is debated and cannot be established with certainty.

MARALAH A border town in the territory of Zebulun (Josh. 19:11 [ESV: “Mareal”]). The location is in the Jezreel Valley, probably north of Megiddo.

MARANATHA Paul uses this term in 1 Cor. 16:22 (KJV; see NIV mg.) when closing that letter. “Maranatha” is actually two Aramaic words, *marana tha*, meaning “Our Lord, come.” Some suggest that the term should be divided as *maran atha*, which would mean “Our Lord has come.” This phrase also occurs in the early Christian writing the *Didache* (10.6) in a liturgical context. Suggestions regarding how to divide and thus translate the term are primarily decided on a contextual basis. Two similar passages suggest that eschatological hope may be a key factor. Near the end of Revelation, the author writes, “Come, Lord Jesus” (Rev. 22:20). Also, Paul, discussing the Lord’s Supper, refers to proclaiming the Lord’s death “until he comes” (in 1 Cor. 11:26). Both of these references are in Greek, but they suggest the future aspect to the early Christian’s hope for Christ’s return, which fits with translating “Maranatha” as “Come, O Lord.” The use of an Aramaic formula indicates an early reference to Jesus in a way normally reserved for God.

MARCUS In Col. 4:10; Philem. 24; 1 Pet. 5:13 the KJV uses this name to translate *Markos*, otherwise translated as “Mark” (cousin of Barnabas, coworker of Paul and Peter, and likely author of the Gospel that bears his name).

MARDUK Marduk rose in status to become the principal deity in the Babylonian pantheon beginning in the second millennium BC. The Babylonian epic *Enuma Elish* recounts Marduk’s creation and ultimate triumph over other deities within the Babylonian pantheon (in particular, the primordial goddess Tiamat), and in doing so describes him as the deity primarily responsible for the creation of the universe. Marduk (or “Merodach,” the Hebrew form of the name) is mentioned only once in the Bible, at Jer. 50:2, which announces the impending invasion and defeat of Babylon by a nation from the north. “Marduk” also forms part of the names of the Babylonian kings Awel-Marduk (2 Kings 25:27; Jer. 52:31) and Marduk-Baladan (2 Kings 20:12 [the Hebrew text and the KJV read “Berodach”]; Isa. 39:1), as well as being the origin of “Mordecai” (Esther 2:5).

MARDUK-BALADAN The king of Babylon in 721–710 BC, Marduk-Baladan was a Chaldean who later led two Babylonian revolts against the Assyrian king Sennacherib. He also sent emissaries to King Hezekiah of Judah (Isa. 39:1). The Neo-Assyrian Empire had dominated Babylon for nearly half a century. Although there were pro-Assyrian sentiments in some cities, the peoples in Babylon were not unified. Some Babylonians, Chaldeans, and Arameans opposed Assyria. Marduk-Baladan took the throne for nine months in 703 BC and with Elamite support returned in 700 BC, only to be routed by Assyria. Marduk-Baladan’s communication with Hezekiah probably came during his brief control of Babylon. Hezekiah had revolted against Assyria prior to Sennacherib coming to the throne in 704 BC; thus Marduk-Baladan was exploring a possible alliance with Hezekiah against Babylon. Seeing this as a lack of trust in God, Isaiah condemned Hezekiah and prophesied that it would be Babylon that would destroy Judah. In 2 Kings 20:12 the MT reads “Berodach-Baladan” (similar to “Merodach,” the Hebrew form of “Marduk”), but several Hebrew, Greek, Aramaic, and Latin witnesses agree with the reading in Isa. 39:1.

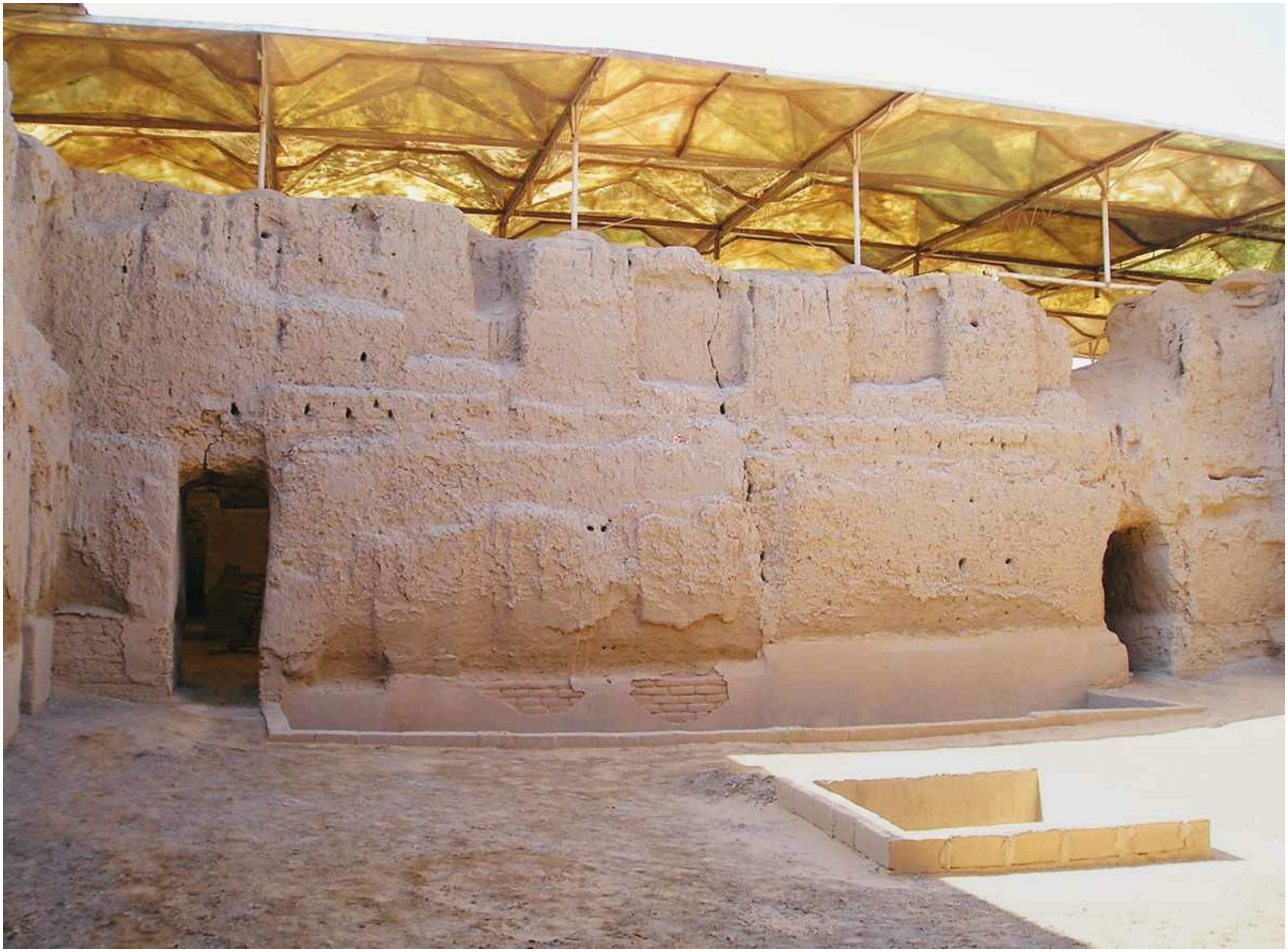
MARE *See* Horse.

MAREAL *See* Maralah.

MARESHAH **(1)** A son of Caleb (1 Chron. 2:42) who may have given his name to the town called by this name (see #2). **(2)** Mareshah is listed among the towns in the western foothills of Judah (Josh. 15:44) and is identified today as Tell Sandahanna, one mile south of Beth Guvrin. It was fortified by Rehoboam (2 Chron. 11:8). Zerah, an Ethiopian war leader, advanced as far as Mareshah but was pushed back by King Asa at the Valley of Zephathah, near the site (2 Chron. 14:9–10). Mareshah was the hometown of Eliezer son of Dodavahu, a prophet who spoke against Jehoshaphat (2 Chron. 20:37). It is mentioned in a prophetic oracle in Micah (1:15) as a town that will experience destruction. **(3)** The son of Laadah in the tribe of Judah (1 Chron. 4:21).

MARI Mari (modern Tell Hariri), located in Syria, was first excavated by André Parrot (beginning in 1933) and then later by Jean-Claude Margueron (beginning in 1979). The site appears to have been a highly significant center for political and commercial activity. It shows evidence of extensive building and engineering projects (including a circular wall around the city and well-developed irrigation canals, as well as numerous royal and sacred structures), and more than twenty thousand Akkadian texts have been unearthed there.

The site seems to have been inhabited since the Early Dynastic I period (2950–2750 BC), with a continuous human population until around 1760 BC, when the city was destroyed by Hammurabi. After that, there is evidence of periodic occupation (including small villages during the Assyrian and Seleucid periods), but nothing approaching the scope and wealth of Mari as it had been before the eighteenth century BC. Given the very early occupation of the site, Mari provides very little direct evidence relating to the history of the ancient Near East during much of the biblical period. Nevertheless, the Mari archives do provide a wealth of useful information about the economy and administration of that particular region during the Old Babylonian period (roughly 2000–1500 BC). Thus, it is possible to argue that the discoveries from Mari afford us a glimpse of political, economic, and religious life in Mesopotamia somewhere around the time of the patriarchs and perhaps even earlier.



Remains of the palace of Zimri-Lim at Mari

For the most part, the Mari archives comprise economic and administrative texts, although personal letters are also well attested, along with various literary and religious texts and the fragments of a few treaties.

The economic and administrative texts reflect the accumulation and disposition of raw materials at Mari. These include catalogs of expenses in food, drink, metal, and fabrics, as well as the reception of various commodities from other locations, often of a diplomatic nature. Among these economic texts are tablets describing the costs incurred for the upkeep of the royal harem, at least during the reigns of Yasmah-Addu (1982–1775 BC) and Zimri-Lim (1775–1761 BC). This has been taken as an indication that the kingdom may have been under some degree of military pressure, thus making the protection of the royal family a pressing concern throughout that period. In addition to these economic concerns, numerous texts have been identified as enumerating censuses of both the military and the general population, as well as lists of fields and expected grain production and copies of oaths taken by a large number of women according to their social status.

The personal letters unearthed at Mari primarily concern diplomatic and administrative issues, although they are also a rich reserve of personal names and information as well as data regarding the conduct of everyday life, making them a highly significant class of texts in their own right. Interestingly, several categories of correspondence have not been unearthed, although they certainly would have been expected in a location as wealthy and significant as Mari. The lack of these documents probably is attributable either to evasive action taken by the servants of Zimri-Lim shortly before the fall of the city or to removal by the servants of Hammurabi in its immediate aftermath. These include correspondence from Hammurabi and the kings of Aleppo, as well as the duplicates of documents sent to the royal chancellery during the reign of Zimri-Lim.

Many treaty documents known to have existed from other sources have not yet been recovered at Mari, although a few such texts are still extant. Among them are a badly broken treaty between Zimri-Lim and Ibal-pi-el II of Eshnunna (year four of Zimri-Lim) and an early draft (“small tablet”) of a treaty between Mari and Babylon (against Elam).

Literary texts are not particularly well attested among the documents from Mari, although a few examples of what are arguably literary compositions do exist.

MARINER *See* Ships, Sailors, and Navigation.

MARK, GOSPEL OF Mark’s Gospel is a fast-paced, action-packed narrative that portrays Jesus as the mighty Messiah and Son of God, who suffers and dies as the servant of the Lord—a ransom price for sins. Mark’s purpose is to provide an authoritative account of the “good news” about Jesus Christ and to encourage believers to follow Jesus’ example by remaining faithful to their calling through persecution and even martyrdom. A theme verse is Mark 10:45: “For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

NARRATIVE STRUCTURE (PLOT) AND MAIN THEMES

Mark’s narrative may be divided into two main parts. The first half of the story demonstrates that Jesus is the mighty Messiah and Son of God (1:1–8:26); the second half reveals that the Messiah’s role is to suffer and die as a sacrifice for sins (8:27–16:8).

Messiah and Son of God. Unlike Matthew and Luke, Mark does not begin with stories of Jesus’ birth but instead moves directly to his public ministry. As in the other Gospels, John the Baptist is the “messenger” who prepares the way for the Messiah (cf. Isa. 40:3; Mal. 3:1). John preaches a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins and announces the “more powerful” one, the Messiah, who will come after him (1:7). When Jesus is baptized by John, the Spirit descends on him, empowering him for ministry. After his temptation (or testing) by Satan in the desert, Jesus returns to Galilee and launches his ministry, proclaiming the "good news" (gospel) that "the time has come. . . . The kingdom of God has come near" (1:15).

During his Galilean ministry, Jesus demonstrates extraordinary authority in teaching, healing, and exorcism. He calls fishermen from their occupation, and they drop everything and follow him (1:16–20). He claims authority to forgive sins (2:10) and authority over the Sabbath command (2:28). He reveals power over natural forces, calming the sea (4:35–41), walking on water (6:45–52), and feeding huge crowds with a few loaves and fishes (6:30–44; 8:1–13). The people stand "amazed" and "astonished" (a major theme in Mark) at Jesus' teaching and miracles, and his popularity soars.

Jesus' authority and acclaim provoke opposition from the religious leaders of Israel, who are jealous of his influence. The scribes and Pharisees accuse him of claiming the prerogative of God (2:7), associating with undesirable sinners (2:16), breaking the Sabbath (2:24), and casting out demons by Satan's powers (3:22). They conspire to kill him (3:6).

A sense of mystery and awe surrounds Jesus' identity. When he calms the sea, the disciples wonder, "Who is this?" (4:41), and King Herod wonders if this might be John the Baptist risen from the dead (6:16). Adding to this sense of mystery is what has come to be called the "messianic secret." Jesus silences demons who identify him as the Messiah and orders those he heals not to tell anyone what has happened. This secrecy is not, as some have claimed, a literary device invented by Mark to explain Jesus' unmessianic life; rather, it is Jesus' attempt to calm inappropriate messianic expectations and to define his messianic mission on his own terms.

Messiah's role to suffer and die. The critical turning point in the narrative comes in 8:27–33, when Peter, as representative of the disciples, declares that Jesus is the Messiah. The authority that Jesus has demonstrated up to this point confirms that he is God's agent of salvation. Yet Jesus startles the disciples by announcing that his messianic task is to go to Jerusalem to suffer and die. Peter rebukes him, but Jesus responds, "Get behind me, Satan! . . . You do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns" (8:33). Jesus will accomplish salvation not by crushing the Roman occupiers, but by offering his life as a sacrifice for sins.

In the second half of the Gospel, Jesus journeys to Jerusalem, three times predicting that he will be arrested and killed (8:31–32; 9:31; 10:33–34). The disciples repeatedly demonstrate pride, ignorance, and spiritual dullness (8:33; 9:32–34; 10:35–41), and Jesus teaches them that whoever wants to be first must become last (9:35); that to lead, one must serve (10:45); and that to be Jesus' disciple requires taking up one's cross and following him (8:34).

When he comes to Jerusalem, Jesus symbolically judges the nation by clearing the temple of merchants (11:15–17) and by cursing a fig tree (representing Israel), which subsequently withers (11:12–14, 20–21). He engages in controversies with the religious leaders (chaps. 11–12) and teaches the disciples that Jerusalem and the temple will be destroyed (chap. 13). Judas Iscariot, one of Jesus' own disciples, betrays him. Jesus is arrested and brought to trial before the Jewish Sanhedrin, which finds him guilty of blasphemy. That council turns Jesus over to the Roman governor Pilate, who accedes to his crucifixion (chaps. 14–15).

The crucifixion scene in Mark is a dark and lonely one. Jesus is deserted by his followers, unjustly condemned, beaten by the soldiers, and mocked by all. Apparently deserted even by God, Jesus cries out from the cross, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (15:34). Yet the reader knows by this point in the story that Jesus' death is not the tragedy that it seems. This is God's means of accomplishing salvation. Upon Jesus' death, the curtain of the temple is torn, opening a new way into

God's presence. The Roman centurion at the cross cries out, "Surely this man was the Son of God!" (15:39). The death of the Messiah is not a defeat; it is an atoning sacrifice for sins. Three days later Jesus rises from the dead, just as he has predicted. When Jesus' women followers come to the tomb, the angel announces, "He has risen! He is not here" (16:6). Jesus the Messiah has turned tragedy into victory and has defeated sin, Satan, and death.

LITERARY FEATURES

Mark writes with a rough Semitic style characterized by colorful detail and dramatic effect. He emphasizes Jesus' actions rather than extended teaching. For its length, Mark's Gospel records more miracles and less teaching than the other Gospels. The author's fondness for the term "immediately" (*euthys*) and use of the Greek historical present tense give the narrative a fast-paced, vivid, and realistic style.

One of Mark's favorite literary techniques is intercalation, a sandwiching method whereby one episode is interrupted by another, with the two mutually interpreting each other. One example of this is the clearing of the temple, which is sandwiched between the cursing and withering of the fig tree (11:12–25). Both episodes symbolically represent Israel's spiritual failure and coming judgment. Other intercalations appear in 3:20–35; 5:21–43; 6:7–30; 14:53–72.

Mark is also fond of groups of three, or triads. Three boat scenes illustrate the disciples' lack of faith and comprehension (4:35–41; 6:45–52; 8:14–21). In three cycles of events, Jesus predicts his death and then teaches his disciples about servant leadership (8:31–38; 9:31–37; 10:32–45). In the Olivet Discourse, Jesus three times tells his disciples to be alert (13:33, 35, 37), and then three times he finds them sleeping in Gethsemane (14:37, 40, 41). Peter denies Jesus three times (14:68, 70, 71), and three three-hour intervals are mentioned during the crucifixion (15:25, 33, 34). These and other literary devices provide color to Mark's narrative and carry the story forward.

AUTHORSHIP

Early church tradition identifies the author of this Gospel as John Mark, son of Mary (Acts 12:12), cousin of Barnabas (Col. 4:10), missionary companion of Paul and Barnabas (Acts 13:5), and later companion of Peter (1 Pet. 5:13). Church tradition claims that Mark became Peter's interpreter while working with him in Rome and put into writing Peter's version of the Gospel.

Most scholars consider Mark to have been the first Gospel written and think that Matthew and Luke both used Mark as one of their sources.

AUDIENCE, LIFE SETTING, AND DATE

The specific audience of Mark's Gospel is uncertain, although the author's tendency to explain Jewish customs and terms suggests a primarily non-Jewish (Gentile) readership. Mark also sometimes provides Latin equivalents for Greek terms. This would agree with the church tradition that the Gospel was composed by John Mark in Rome and was intended for the Roman church.

A Roman setting and destination also fit well with the theme of faithfulness through suffering that runs through Mark's story. Many scholars place the origin of Mark's Gospel in Rome in the mid-60s AD, in the context of the emperor Nero's persecution of Christians. Mark writes to encourage his readers to endure suffering for the gospel, to take up their crosses and follow Jesus, for "even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many" (10:45).

OUTLINE

I. The Preparation of the Son of God (1:1–13)

II. The Authoritative Ministry of the Son of God in and around Galilee (1:14–8:26)
    A. The kingdom authority of the Son of God (1:14–3:12)
    B. The disciple family of the Son of God and those outside (3:13–6:6)
    C. The mission of the Son of God (6:7–8:26)

III. The Suffering of the Son of God as Servant of the Lord (8:27–16:8)
    A. The confession of Peter and the servant Messiah (8:27–10:52)
    B. The Son of God confronts Jerusalem (11:1–13:37)
    C. Climax: The death of the Son of God (14:1–15:47)
    D. Resolution: The resurrection of the Son of God (16:1–8)
    E. Appendix (16:9–20)

MARK, JOHN Patristic evidence identifies John Mark (Mark) as the author of the second Gospel. The house of Mark's mother, Mary, served as a place for early Christians in Jerusalem to meet and pray (Acts 12:12). Mark followed his cousin Barnabas from Jerusalem to Antioch and joined Barnabas and Paul on their first missionary journey (Acts 13:5), working with them in Cyprus. When they left for the mainland of Asia Minor, Mark returned to Jerusalem (13:13). Later, when Paul and Barnabas wished to return to the churches that they had established, Barnabas wanted to take Mark again, but Paul objected because of Mark's prior desertion (Acts 15:38). Paul and Barnabas differed so markedly on this point that they parted ways, with Barnabas and Mark going to work in Cyprus, while Paul and Silas traveled elsewhere. The NT tells nothing more of Mark for ten years. The former disagreement apparently was resolved, for Mark was later present with Paul in Rome and received Paul's recommendation to the Colossian church (Col. 4:10). Paul also speaks positively of Mark's use in ministry (2 Tim. 4:11). It is quite likely that Mark was associated with Peter during this same period in Rome (1 Pet. 5:13).

MARKETPLACE The public space in a town set up for commerce and public gatherings; also, a region renowned for its trade. Ancient Palestinian towns conducted business at the city gate, including the marshaling of troops (2 Chron. 32:6) and holding of religious assemblies (Neh. 8:1). The Phoenician seaport of Tyre was labeled the "marketplace of the nations" (Isa. 23:3), where numerous goods, such as metalwork, ivory, fine fabrics, spices, and livestock, were exchanged with neighboring nations (Ezek. 27:12–23).

By NT times, Herod the Great had rebuilt many Palestinian cities with a central Greek-style marketplace, or *agora*, where children played (Matt. 11:16; Luke 7:32), day laborers gathered (Matt. 20:3), and religious leaders networked (Matt. 23:7; Mark 7:4; 12:38; Luke 11:43; 20:46). In the smaller Galilean villages, Jesus healed sick people in the marketplaces (Mark 6:56). Paul suffered hostile magistrates and mobs in the Greek marketplaces of Philippi and Thessalonica (Acts 16:19; 17:5), while in Athens the marketplace was his venue for preaching to the public and curious philosophers (Acts 17:17–18). Jesus berated the sellers in the Jerusalem temple courts for imitating a marketplace (John 2:16), and Paul assured the Corinthians that they may eat meat of unknown provenance sold in the marketplace (1 Cor. 10:25).

Archaeological remains of the marketplace (the forum, or *agora*) at Thessaloniki

MAROTH A town in the lowland (Shephelah) of Judah. In his prophetic judgment against Samaria and Jerusalem, Micah speaks of Maroth, whose name sounds like the Hebrew word for "bitter," as writhing in pain (Mic. 1:12) and under attack by enemies even to the gate of Jerusalem. It may be the same town as Maarath (Josh. 15:59).

MARRIAGE An intimate, exclusive, lifelong covenant relationship between a man and a woman wherein a new family is established.

THEOLOGY OF MARRIAGE

The biblical basis for marriage is recorded in Gen. 2:18–24, which establishes a number of important points relating to marriage.

First, in Gen. 2:18 God highlights the first expressed inadequacy within creation: the man is alone. The solution to the man's solitude is found not among the animals (a fact demonstrated by the careful search expressed by having the man name each of them) but in a creature specifically created to address the problem of his solitude: woman. She is created from his "rib" (a better translation is "side"), so that she is more like him than any of the animals. In spite of this, she is not a clone, but rather a complement to him. She is described as a "helper suitable for him," which highlights her fulfillment of the inadequacy God had previously identified.

Second, the role of the wife is not restricted to providing a means by which to fulfill the command to fill the earth (through bearing children), for the problem identified in Gen. 2:18 cannot be reduced to this alone. The OT establishes that human beings are relational and social, and that isolation is not good, quite aside from considerations relating to childbearing. Indeed, when marriage is employed as a metaphor for the relationship between God and his people (see below), it can be conceptualized quite apart from the notion of procreation, suggesting that the latter should not be considered the primary purpose of marriage.

Third, Gen. 2:23 describes the relationship between the man and the woman in terms strongly reminiscent of the traditional kinship formula used with reference to family members elsewhere in the OT: "bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh" (cf., e.g., Gen. 29:14; Judg. 9:2; 2 Sam. 5:1; 19:13–14—similar to the modern English expression "my flesh and blood"; see also Matt. 19:5; Eph. 5:31). Although "be united" (other translations use "cleave") and "one flesh" are frequently understood to refer to sexual union, this is not the only, or even the primary, implication of the words. Genesis 2:24 expresses the unification of the husband and the wife as the antithesis of the man's leaving his father and mother. These terms ("leave" or "forsake," "be united" or "cleave") are used elsewhere in covenantal contexts. "Cleave" is usually used of people in the sense of clinging to another out of affection and loyalty (Gen. 34:3; Ruth 1:14; 2 Sam. 20:2; 1 Kings 11:2). It is also frequently used of Israel clinging to God (Deut. 10:20; 11:22; 13:5; 30:20; Josh. 22:5; 23:8). "Forsake" is used of breaking covenants (Deut. 12:19; 14:27; 29:25; Jer. 1:16; 2:13, 17, 19; 5:7; 16:11; 17:13; 19:4; 22:9). The verb also appears in the context of marital divorce in Prov. 2:16–17; Isa. 54:6; 62:4.

The implication of Gen. 2:24 is that the man was formerly "united" to his parents in a familial relationship, but when he marries, the covenantal relationship with his parents is superseded by the new relationship with his wife. Thus, in establishing the covenantal relationship of marriage, the man and the woman form a new family unit (they become "one flesh," which parallels the kinship formula more fully expressed in Gen. 2:23). It is noteworthy that Gen. 2 thus defines a family as husband and wife; a family is formed before any children are born. Furthermore, the emphasis on the priority of the relationship between husband and wife is particularly striking, given both the importance of honoring one's parents (Exod. 20:12; Deut. 5:16) and the distinctly patrilocal nature of inheritance whereby sons would remain in the parents' household after marriage and ultimately inherit a share of it, but daughters would leave their parents' house to be with their husbands.

Fourth, the description of the woman as the man's "helper" cannot alone be used to demonstrate that the wife's role was either subordinate or superior to her husband's. Although the term is elsewhere often used as a description of God, it is also used of subordinate helpers, and other contextual indications determine the relative status of the helper aside from the use of the term itself.

MARRIAGE IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

The Bible presents few formal legal, liturgical, or cultic requirements for marriage (whereas there are specific laws dealing with divorce), although it does record some details of specific marriages from which some insight into marriage practices can be gleaned. Marriages often were established through an arrangement between the parents of the husband and those of the wife or between the husband and the parents of his prospective wife (e.g., Gen. 24; 38:6), but there appears to be some diversity, with examples of a man choosing his own wife (e.g., Judah in Gen. 38:2) or instances when the consent of the woman is sought (e.g., Gen. 24:8, 58). The requirement of a formal certificate for divorce (Deut. 24:1, 3), together with examples of marriage contracts from the ancient Near East, are possible evidence that marriage within Israel required certification, although there is no explicit confirmation of this in the OT or in Israel prior to the rabbinic period. The marriages recorded in the OT often involved feasts of varying duration (Gen. 29:22; Judg. 14:12), the bride being accompanied to her home in a festive procession that included music and singing (Ps. 78:63; Jer. 7:34; 16:9), and a blessing pronounced over the bride that she might bear many children (Gen. 24:60; Ruth 4:11). Deuteronomy 22:15 suggests that evidence of the bride's virginity was retained by the wife's family to guard against false accusations by a husband seeking divorce.

Another aspect of marriage that appears to have been normative although not legislated was the payment of a *mohar*, or "bride-price" (Gen. 34:12; Exod. 22:16; 1 Sam. 18:25), as well as the provision of a dowry (1 Kings 9:16). The former was a payment made by the groom's family to the bride's family, the latter an amount given by the father to his daughter. Typically, the former appears to have exceeded the latter in value. The bride-price, at least in later times, functioned as insurance should the wife be divorced.

The Bible does not issue any specific age constraints upon those being married, indicating that the OT practice probably did not differ significantly from that of other nations in the ancient Near East, where girls were considered ready for marriage once they had reached puberty or the age of twelve, and boys were generally slightly older. Constraints were placed on the eligibility of marriage partners, and generally marriages were endogamous: marriage partners were chosen from within the clan, tribe, or nation (e.g., Gen. 24:1–9; 27:46–28:5; cf. Deut. 7:3, which prohibits marriage with some, but not all, foreigners, and Deut. 21:10–14, which permits Israelite warriors to take a wife from among female prisoners of war). While there were exceptions to this constraint (e.g., Moses married a Midianite; Bathsheba was married to a Hittite; Boaz married Ruth, a Moabite), in later times the restriction was given legal sanction under Ezra and Nehemiah (Ezra 9:2, 12; Neh. 13:25; cf. Luke 14:26; 18:29).

In spite of the likelihood that many marriages in the OT and the ancient world in general were arranged, the notion of romantic love as both an ideal for marriage and a basis for choosing one's spouse clearly was known and even regarded as desirable. This is reflected in the approbation given romantic love in Song of Songs as well as in stories such as that of Jacob (Gen. 29:18; see also Judg. 14:1–3; 1 Sam. 18:20).

Socially, marriage was of particular import for a woman in the ancient world, for her well-being usually depended on her place within the house of either her father or her husband. Because inheritance was passed down the male line, women without connection to the house of a man were in a very tenuous state. Inheritance itself was also an important issue in the ancient world, and so great value was placed not just on marriage but also on bearing children (particularly male [*see also* Firstborn]). Associated with these social functions of marriage in ancient Israel is the fact that the OT permits and records a number of instances of polygamy (always polygyny, never polyandry). This afforded social security to widows (*see also* Levirate Law, Levirate Marriage) and helped ensure the line of inheritance. It should be noted, however, that neither the welfare aspect of marriage nor the related acceptance of polygamy is based on the biblical foundation for marriage in Gen. 2, and consequently, polygamy does not reflect the biblical ideal for marriage.

The fundamental importance of the marriage relationship is also highlighted by the severity of the penalties for adultery (e.g., Exod. 20:14; Deut. 5:18; 22:22–24; *see also* Adultery).

MARRIAGE IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

Jesus reinforces the importance of marriage, emphasizing its divine origin and lifelong nature

(Matt. 19:6; Mark 10:9) as well as its inviolability (Mark 10:2–12). In light of this, Jesus' assertion that at the resurrection there will be no marriage is surprising (Matt. 22:30). Although Jesus offers no explanation as to why there will be no marriage following the resurrection, it is perhaps likely that the fundamental need identified by God in Gen. 2:18 (the man was alone) will be solved in a different manner in the age to come: the intimate help and companionship ideally found in marriage will be provided in perfected relationship with God and all others.

Paul elaborates somewhat on marriage in the Christian community. Christian marriage ought to be characterized by mutual submission in some respects (1 Cor. 7:4; Eph. 5:21) while reflecting some asymmetrical aspects of the relationship between Christ and the church in others (Eph. 5:22–33). Christians ought to marry within the church (2 Cor. 6:14–18, although this passage is not restricted to marriage); however, those who are married to nonbelievers are not to seek divorce, but are to remain faithful to their spouses for the sake of both the spouse and their children (1 Cor. 7:10–16).

The NT makes reference to some of the marriage customs of the day, including sharing a feast (Matt. 22:2–12; Luke 12:36; John 2:1–11), the expectation that guests be suitably attired (Matt. 22:11–12), and a procession to the groom's home (Matt. 25:1–13; Luke 12:35–38).

SYMBOLIC USE OF MARRIAGE

Marriage is used figuratively in both Testaments. The relationship between God and his people is described with marriage language (Isa. 62:4–5; Jer. 2:2). By using such language, the prophets emphasize the intimacy and unity inherent in the relationship between God and his chosen people, as well as the devastating betrayal when the covenant is broken. The use of the marriage metaphor is thus extended to the use of divorce language to describe God's treatment of unfaithful Israel (Jer. 3:8), and the notion of adultery and promiscuity is equated with the worship of foreign gods (Ezek. 16; 23). The prophet Hosea's marriage is itself a graphic representation of God's relationship with his people and, in particular, their faithlessness; however, it also holds out the anticipation of a new covenant, one wherein God declares, "You will call me 'my husband'; you will no longer call me 'my master' " (Hos. 2:16). The metaphorical use of marriage to image the relationship between God and his people also reflects the implicit belief in the asymmetrical nature of the relationship between husband and wife in the ancient world.

The NT primarily identifies the church as the bride and Christ as the husband when using marriage language figuratively (e.g., Eph. 5:22–33). In so doing, the NT affirms Christ's deity by explicitly depicting him in the place occupied by God in the OT's use of marriage symbolism. Jesus uses marriage in his parabolic teaching about the kingdom of God (Matt. 22:2–14; 25:1–12), as well as in reference to himself as bridegroom when explaining the behavior of his disciples (Mark 2:19–20; Luke 5:34–35). Revelation depicts the return of Christ as the time of the marriage between the bride and the bridegroom (Rev. 19:7; 21:9).

MARROW Soft, fatty tissue within bones, considered representative of the choicest foods (Ps. 63:5; Isa. 25:6). The imagery of moist marrow connotes vigor and health (Job 21:24). Marrow (KJV, ASV) to the bones is used as a simile for the refreshment (NASB, ESV) or nourishment (NIV) that results from fearing God and departing from evil (Prov. 3:8). The writer of Hebrews describes the penetrating power of the word of God to judge thoughts and attitudes of the heart with the metaphor of dividing joints from marrow (4:12).

MARSENA One of seven top-level officials under King Xerxes (Ahasuerus) who advised him to put away Queen Vashti because of her refusal of the king's command to appear before the banquet (Esther 1:14).

MARSH A swamp or wet piece of land, usually found near the mouth of a river or on the edge of a lake (Job 8:11; 40:21; Ezek. 47:11).

MARSHAL In Jer. 51:27 the prophecy speaks of a *tipsar* who will lead troops against Babylon. The NRSV renders this word as "marshal" (NIV: "commander"; NLT: "leader"; KJV: "captain").

MARS HILL A rocky hill in Athens near the Acropolis, also known as the Areopagus. Mars was the Roman god of war; Ares was his Greek equivalent. "Areopagus" means "Hill of Ares." The hill is mentioned as the place where Paul answered questions posed by Athenian philosophers (Acts 17:19), though most contemporary translations use "Areopagus," which also referred to the supreme moral tribunal in Athens. It is unclear whether Paul actually spoke from the hill itself, but it is certain that he was addressing the council.

MARTHA The sister of Mary and Lazarus, who lived in Bethany (John 11:1–2). In Luke 10:38–42 and John 12:1–8, Martha is depicted as interested only in preparing and serving food to her houseguest, Jesus. As such, she is contrasted with Mary, who spends her time with Jesus. In Luke 10 Martha even enlists Jesus' help in requesting that Mary join her in completing the necessary work. Jesus, however, declares that Martha is "worried and upset about many things" (v. 41) and Mary's actions are more desirable. In a separate account (John 11:1–44), Mary and Martha send word to Jesus that their brother, Lazarus, is sick. Jesus delays the journey to Bethany in order to demonstrate the glory of God, which results in his raising Lazarus from the dead. Upon hearing of Jesus' eventual arrival, Martha goes out to meet him and questions the timing of his journey. In their dialogue, Jesus confirms Martha's faith in him (John 11:27), but before Jesus performs the miracle, she experiences doubt.

MARTYR The English word "martyr" derives from the Greek word family that includes the nouns *martys*, *martyrion*, and *martyria*, involving witness and testimony. The domain of meaning for *martys* ranges from a legal witness or observer of an event or an act (Matt. 18:16; Mark 14:63; Luke 24:48; Acts 7:58; 2 Cor. 13:1; 1 Tim. 5:19; Heb. 10:28) to a person whose testimony for Jesus results in suffering or death (Acts 22:20; Rev. 17:6; cf. 6:9; 20:4). The word is used throughout Acts to refer to the apostles as witnesses of the resurrection and the gospel (e.g., 1:8; 2:32; 3:15; 5:32; 10:39).

In Revelation the word *martys* carries the connotation of dying for one's testimony (2:13; 11:3–7; 17:6; cf. 6:9). Jesus is presented as the ultimate witness or martyr (Rev. 3:14). Those who followed Jesus' example paid with their lives and were shamed in the eyes of society. However, in Revelation the martyrs receive a position of honor, a position closest to the throne of Christ (7:9–17). *See also* Witness.

MARY **(1)** The most important Mary of the NT is the mother of Jesus, who becomes pregnant through the Holy Spirit while still a virgin. In contrast with Matthew's birth narrative, where the emphasis falls on Joseph, Luke's focuses on Mary. Luke's Gospel introduces Mary as the one to whom God sends the angel Gabriel (1:26–27). Gabriel announces that Mary will be the mother of the Messiah from David's line, who will reign over the house of Jacob and have a unique father-son relationship with God. Mary responds in humble obedience as “the Lord’s servant” (1:29–38). When she visits her relative Elizabeth, Mary breaks forth in the Magnificat, a song praising God for caring for the humble, humbling the mighty, and remembering his covenant with Abraham (1:46–55).

After the birth of Jesus and the visit from the shepherds, Mary “treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart” (2:19). An old man, Simeon, announces that although Jesus will be a light of revelation for the Gentiles and Israel’s glory, Mary will be deeply grieved, and her soul will be pierced by a sword (2:35). This is the first hint in Luke’s Gospel that Mary’s child, the Messiah, will suffer. In the only episode from Jesus’ childhood in the Gospel, Mary scolds her son for remaining in the temple while his family traveled back to Galilee (2:48). In Luke’s Gospel, Mary is a humble and obedient woman who reflects deeply about her experiences surrounding the birth of Jesus and cares greatly for him as well. Beyond the birth narratives, Mary does not figure as a prominent character in the Gospels. In John’s Gospel, Jesus speaks sternly to his mother when she wants him to perform a miracle before his “hour has . . . come” (2:4); however, at the crucifixion, Mary is present, and Jesus places her into the care of the Beloved Disciple (19:25–27). Later traditions about Mary’s immaculate conception, perpetual virginity, sinlessness, and roles as co-mediator of salvation and answerer of prayer are not taught in the Bible.

(2) Another Mary mentioned in the Gospels is the sister of Martha, who is praised by Jesus for not busying herself with domestic duties as Martha does, but rather sits at the feet of Jesus, “listening to what he said” (Luke 10:39–40). This same Mary is mentioned on another occasion as the one “who poured perfume on the Lord and wiped his feet with her hair” (John 11:1–2; cf. 12:1–8). The Synoptic Gospels record a similar event in which a woman, left unnamed, anoints either the feet of Jesus (Luke 7:36–50) or his head (Matt. 26:6–13; Mark 14:3–9). With the exception of Luke, it seems as though John, Matthew, and Mark are recording the same event. In each of these three, Jesus associates the anointing with the preparation of his body for burial.

(3) Mary Magdalene makes a brief appearance during the ministry of Jesus, and Luke describes her as one who had been cured of seven demons (Luke 8:2). It is quite unlikely that she is the “sinful” woman of the preceding narrative (7:37–50), an association that has given rise to the erroneous belief that Mary Magdalene was a prostitute. She is the first to witness the empty tomb (John 20:1). Likewise, she is the first to see the resurrected Lord and is commanded to go and tell the disciples about his resurrection (John 20:11–18; cf. Matt. 28:1; Mark 16:1–6; Luke 24:1–10). She is even present for the crucifixion (Matt. 27:56) and the burial of Jesus’ body (Matt. 27:61).

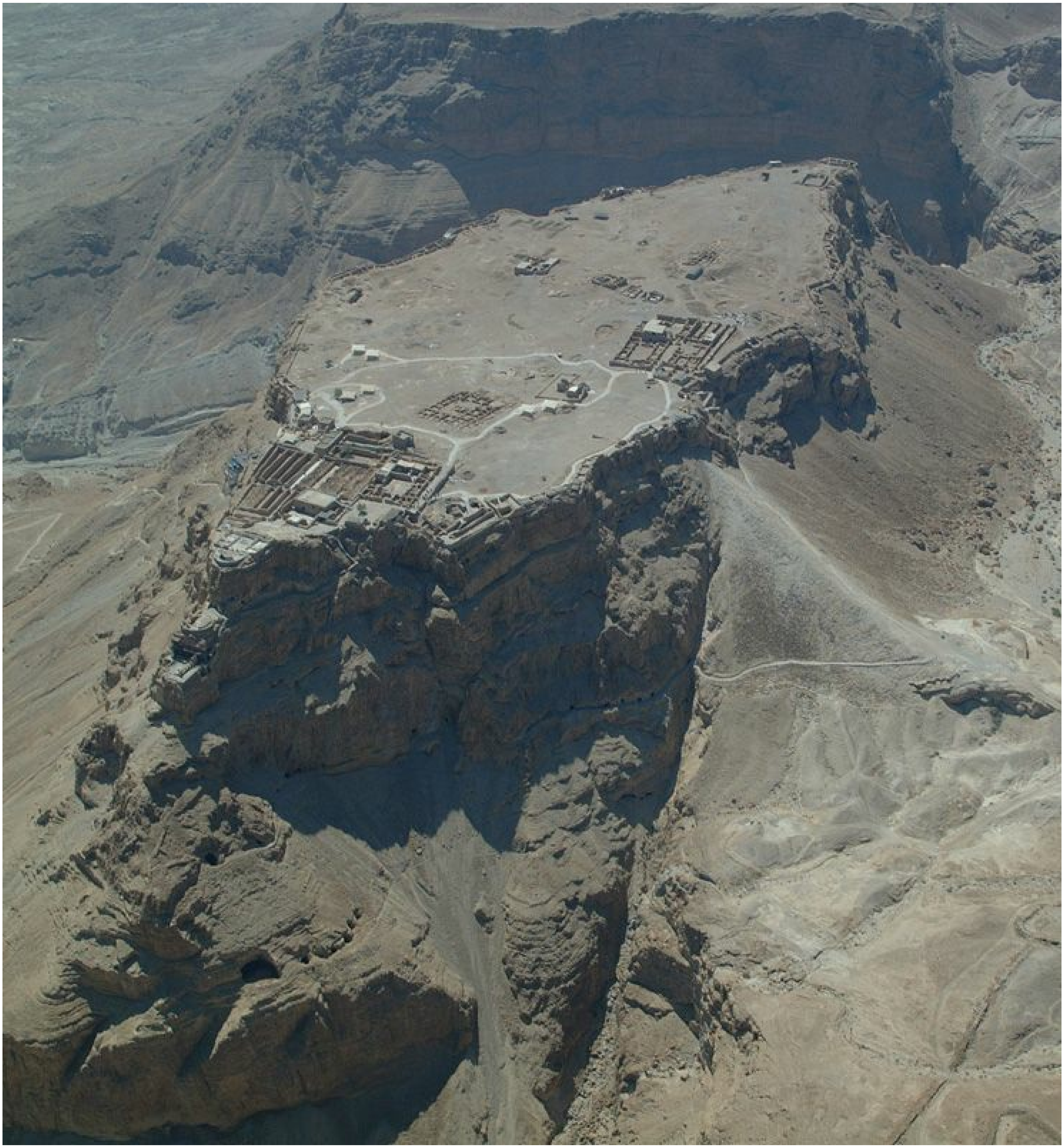
(4) Mary the mother of James and Joses (Matt. 27:56; Mark 15:40) is one of two other Marys who, like Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Jesus, appear at the crucifixion. She may be the same person as #5.

(5) Mary the wife of Clopas (John 19:25) is the second of the two other Marys who, like Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Jesus, appear at the crucifixion. She may be the same person as #4.

(6) Another Mary is the mother of John Mark, to whose house Peter comes after he escapes from prison (Acts 12:12).

(7) In Rom. 16:6, Paul sends greetings to Mary, who “worked very hard” for the church in Rome.

MASADA A rocky mesa, whose name means “mountain fortress,” that rises to a height of about thirteen hundred feet and has a flat top comprising about twenty acres. It is located on the western shore of the Dead Sea, ten miles south of En Gedi. Josephus claims that Jonathan the high priest first built the fortress there (*J.W.* 7.285). It was during the reign of Herod I (r. 37–4 BC) that major fortification took place, probably as a place of refuge (*J.W.* 7.280–300). What is known years after Herod's death is that the Sicarii (Jewish zealots) captured it from the Roman garrison in AD 66 and made additions (e.g., ritual baths, a synagogue) and alterations (e.g., defense enhancement) to the palace-villa. In AD 73, before the Romans breached the military stronghold by means of a constructed siege ramp, most of the Jewish inhabitants ended their lives in self-imposed death (*J.W.* 7.252–425).



The mountain fortress of Masada in the Judean desert

MASCHIL *See* Maskil.

MASH The son of Aram, a descendant of Shem (Gen. 10:23). The LXX and the parallel account in 1 Chron. 1:17 read “Meshek” (which the NIV supplies to Gen. 10:23). *See also* Meshek.

MASHAL **(1)** A Levitical town in the tribal territory of Asher (1 Chron. 6:74). The name is also found as “Misheal” (KJV) or “Mishal” (Josh. 19:26; 21:30). **(2)** A technical term for a proverb, parable, riddle, or simile, *mashal* is used for the Hebrew title of the book of Proverbs (*Mishle*). The word comes from a Hebrew root meaning “to compare, represent,” “be like.”

MASKIL The classification of thirteen psalms (Pss. 32; 42; 44–45; 52–55; 74; 78; 88–89; 142). All are associated with “authors” (David, the sons of Korah, Asaph, Heman, and Ethan) (*see also* Superscription). They include individual and communal laments, royal psalms, instruction, and psalms of mixed type, but none are hymns of praise. The root of *maskil* pertains to understanding or skill. There are two main views as to its meaning. As it relates to “making prudent,” the *maskil* may be meditative or instructive. Or *maskil* may be a designation that skilled musicians were required for proper performance.

MASONS Skilled artisans who cut, dress, and place stone for building projects. Professional masons were employed for large public projects such as palaces, temples, and city walls. The first mention of masons in Scripture is in the description of the building of King David’s palace. Apparently, at that time there were no Israelites with these skills, so David relied on Phoenician masons supplied by King Hiram of Tyre (2 Sam. 5:11–12; 1 Chron. 14:1; 22:2–4). These Phoenician masons also worked on Solomon’s temple along with the developing guild of Israelite masons and a draft of forced-labor stonecutters from all Israel (1 Kings 5:13–18).

Structures dating to the Solomonic period and the monarchic period demonstrate the skill that the Israelite masons had acquired. Hezekiah’s water tunnel was carved from solid rock from opposite ends and met in the middle (2 Kings 20:20); the ability to cut and place immense stones (some thirteen to sixteen feet in length) was so accurate that they could be set without mortar, and it was impossible to insert a knife blade between the joints.

Most masonry utilized native limestone, a soft and abundant stone that could be cut locally, but basalt (a hard, volcanic rock) was also employed. Tools of the masons included saws, hammers, chisels, and small sandstone finishing stones. Large blocks were quarried by placing wood wedges into channels carved into the rock, which were then flooded with water so that the wedges swelled and split the rock.

Herod’s numerous building projects (first century BC) also showcased the talent of masons. For Herod’s temple in Jerusalem, massive stones were cut from a limestone quarry approximately one-half mile away from where they would be placed in the foundation wall supporting the Temple Mount. Many of these stones weighed over one hundred tons; the largest, measuring forty-four feet long, eleven feet thick, and sixteen feet high, weighed over four hundred tons. The Herodian stones bear a distinctive chiseled edge with a flat projecting boss, surrounded by a three-inch-wide frame that was recessed below the face by about three-quarter inches. Some of these can be seen today in the Western Wall in Jerusalem.

Professional guilds have a long history in the ancient Near East and were an important part of the economies of Babylonia, Assyria, and Egypt. Although there is less information about the guilds of

Palestine, evidence suggests that they had parallel structure and influence. Masons, like other artisans, frequently lived and worked together in a particular location.

MASORAH A rabbinic system of rules that govern the copying and reading of the Hebrew Bible. In the Hebrew Bible, there are marginal notes, the Masorah Parva (“small masorah”) and the Masorah Magna (“large masorah”). Both contain valuable information for reading the Hebrew Bible.

MASORETIC TEXT The Masoretic (or Massoretic) Text (MT) generally refers to the Hebrew Bible preserved by a group of medieval scribes known as the Masoretes (which comes from a word meaning “to hand down” or “transmit”). Little is known about the origin of the Masoretes, but there were two schools: Palestinian (western) and Babylonian (eastern). Evidence of Masoretic activity is known by about AD 500. By about the tenth or eleventh century, Babylonian activity disappeared, and western Masoretes tried to eliminate any trace of other influences.

The Masoretes were responsible for three activities. First, they transmitted the consonantal text, and their responsibility was to preserve accurately the text before them. Even where the particular Masoretic tradition differed from the text before them, rather than changing the text to reflect their own tradition, they added marginal notes to alert readers to what they believed the text should read.

Second, they added vowels to preserve the particular vocalic traditions. The importance of vocalization was not only for pronunciation but also for translation, since in Hebrew vowels often determine a word’s meaning (as in English, the consonants *shp* can be vocalized as “sheep,” “ship,” “shop,” etc.). Three different vocalic systems existed: Babylonian, Palestinian, and Tiberian (Tiberias, on the Sea of Galilee). Some of the differences were subtle, but the respective traditions were closely guarded. The Tiberian system eventually supplanted the other two.

Third, the Masoretes added a system of marginal notes and end notes. The main function of the marginal notes was to draw attention to unusual forms or statistical occurrences of words. The end notes detailed the statistics of the book as a whole: how many verses it contained and what the exact midpoint is. This served as a check and balance to ensure accuracy in copying.

Today the term “Masoretic Text” also refers to the scholarly text of the Hebrew Bible. There is, however, no single text that is considered authoritative, and so this name can lead to the misunderstanding that a unified text exists. The Hebrew Bible used by most biblical scholars today (*Biblica Hebraica Stuttgartensia*) is based on the Masoretic Leningrad Codex, dated to the eleventh century, as is a new edition of the Hebrew Bible, *Biblia Hebraica Quinta*. Most important for contemporary scholars is that the corpus of MT texts can be contrasted and compared with the collection of DSS and the LXX because both of these represent earlier and at times very different traditions of the Hebrew Bible.

MASREKAH The city of Samlah, a king of the Edomites who succeeded Hadad of Avith (Gen. 36:36; 1 Chron. 1:47). Masrekah’s location within Edom is unknown; the city appears only in the record of kings “who reigned in Edom before any Israelite king reigned” (Gen. 36:31; 1 Chron. 1:43).

MASSA One of the twelve “princes,” sons of Ishmael, mentioned in Gen. 25:14; 1 Chron. 1:30, progenitors of tribes that evidently settled in northern Arabia. Although these are the only two places where the name occurs for certain in the OT, it is possible that in Prov. 31:1 the word translated “oracle” should rather be understood as the place name “Massa,” thus resulting in the reading “the sayings of Lemuel king of Massa, which his mother taught him.” The word order in the verse gives credence to this reading, as well as the fact that the tribe of Massa is attested in extrabiblical ancient Near Eastern sources (attested as early as the eighth century BC in Akkadian texts). If this reading is correct, then it is also possible that the same word in Prov. 30:1 should be translated as a tribal name as well: “The sayings of Agur son of Jakeh the Massaite.” This would also accord with the fact that Israelite wisdom was part of the larger international wisdom movement in the ancient world. Some scholars have suggested that the sayings contained in Prov. 30–31 are consonant with an origin in an Arabian tribal cultural context.

MASSAH A location on the journey toward Mount Horeb (Sinai) where the Israelites grumbled against God because they had no water. Moses called the place Massah (“testing”) and Meribah (“quarreling”) because of their complaining (Exod. 17:7). Still, at God’s direction, Moses struck the rock at Horeb, and water flowed out. All subsequent references to Massah in the biblical text are about this incident (Deut. 6:16; 9:22; 33:8; Ps. 95:8). Subsequent references to Meribah, however, concern another incident (e.g., Num. 20:13, 24; Deut. 32:51; 33:8). *See also* Meribah.

MAST A structural vertical pole on a sailing vessel that supports the rigging and sails. Made from strong timber (Ezek. 27:5), masts must be attached securely (Isa. 33:23) in order to function.

MASTER The English word “master” translates several Hebrew and Greek words. A few prominent examples follow. In the OT, *’adon*, when it does not refer to God, is translated as “master” (e.g., Gen. 24:14). It often refers to one who is over servants. *Ba’al* is both the personal name of a Canaanite deity and a generic term for “master.” It is used in reference to the master of servants or the husband in a home (e.g., Exod. 21:3 NASB). The Hebrew words *rab* and *sar* are often combined with other words to mean “great” or “chief,” as in “chief [*rab*] of the magicians” (Dan. 4:9). In the NT, “rabbi” (“my *rab*”), borrowed from Aramaic, is used of Jesus and denotes his role as teacher and master (John 4:31). The Greek word *kyrios* is roughly equivalent to the OT word *ba’al* and refers to one who has complete authority (Matt. 6:24). Jesus’ disciples use *epistatēs* when they address him as their leader and teacher (Luke 5:5; 8:24). *Didaskalos* refers to a teacher, but it also carries the weightier connotation of “master” that was ascribed to teachers in the ancient world (Matt. 9:11; 10:25).

MAT A thin mattress or a makeshift bed. In several Gospel stories invalids appear with mats in public spaces (e.g., John 5:1–15). Once, a paralytic was lowered through a roof into a house on his mat (Mark 2:4). Both of these persons were able to pick up and carry their mats after being healed by Jesus (Mark 2:11–12; John 5:8–9).

MATHUSALA *See* Methuselah.

MATRED The daughter of Me-Zahab and the mother of Mehetabel, who was the wife of King Hadad (some manuscripts read “Hadar”) of Edom (Gen. 36:39; 1 Chron. 1:50). However, the LXX and many Latin translations identify this person as the father of Mehetabel.

MATRI The clan of Matri, in the tribe of Benjamin, was chosen by lot when Samuel was selecting a king for Israel. The clan included Kish, the father of Saul (1 Sam. 10:21).

MATRITES *See* Matri.

MATRIX Five times the KJV translates the Hebrew word *rekhem* ("womb") as "matrix" (Exod. 13:12, 15; 34:19; Num. 3:12; 18:15).

MATTAN **(1)** A priest of Baal in Jerusalem who was slain in Jehoiada's attack against Athaliah queen of Judah (2 Kings 11:18; 2 Chron. 23:17). **(2)** The father of Shephatiah, an officer of King Zedekiah during the time of Jeremiah (Jer. 38:1).

MATTANAH An encampment site of the Israelites in the wilderness (Num. 21:18–19). The first encampment after God's provision of well water at Beer. Most scholars understand "Mattanah" to be a Moabite place name. Context suggests that the location is east of the Jordan, possibly Khirbet el-Medeiyineh, about twelve miles southeast of Madaba.

MATTANIAH **(1)** An uncle of King Jehoiachin. King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon installed Mattaniah as king over Judah and changed his name to "Zedekiah" (2 Kings 24:17). **(2)** The son of Mika and descendant of Asaph, he was one of the first Levites to resettle the land of Judah after the Babylonian exile (1 Chron. 9:15; Neh. 11:17, 22; 12:8, 35). **(3)** One of fourteen sons of Heman the musician, he was chosen to minister at the temple with music (1 Chron. 25:4, 16). **(4)** An ancestor of Jahaziel son of Zechariah (2 Chron. 20:14). **(5)** A Levite who worked to reopen the temple during Hezekiah's time (2 Chron. 29:13). **(6, 7, 8, 9)** Four men, descendants of Elam, Zattu, Pahath-Moab, and Bani, who were guilty of marrying foreign women during the time of Ezra (Ezra 10:26, 27, 30, 37). **(10)** A gatekeeper after the Israelite return from captivity (Neh. 12:25). **(11)** Grandfather of Hanan, an assistant to those in charge of the temple storerooms under Nehemiah (Neh. 13:13). He may be the same Mattaniah as in 1 Chron. 9:15; Neh. 11:17, 22; 12:8, 35.

MATTATHA An otherwise unknown ancestor of Jesus mentioned only in Luke 3:31 as a grandson of David, the son of Nathan, and the father of Menna.

MATTATHIAH *See* Mattathias.

MATTATHIAS **(1)** The son of Amos and the father of Joseph, he was an ancestor of Jesus (Luke 3:25). **(2)** The son of Semein and the father of Maath, he was an ancestor of Jesus (Luke 3:26). **(3)** A priest during the intertestamental period who revolted against Antiochus Epiphanes (1 Macc. 2). One of Mattathias's sons was Judas Maccabeus, whose purification of the temple (2 Macc. 10:1–8) is commemorated at Hanukkah.

MATTATTAH A descendant of Hashum who was guilty of marrying a foreign woman, during the time of Ezra (Ezra 10:33).

MATTENAI **(1, 2)** Descendants of Hashum and Bani who were guilty of marrying foreign women during the time of Ezra (Ezra 10:33, 37). **(3)** The head of Joiarib's priestly family during the time of the high priest Joiakim (Neh. 12:19).

MATTHAN Listed in Matthew's genealogy of Jesus as the son of Eleazar and the father of Jacob (Matt. 1:15).

MATTHAT **(1)** The grandfather of Joseph, Jesus' earthly father (Luke 3:24). **(2)** The son of Levi and the father of Jorim, he was a descendant of David through Levi and an ancestor of Joseph, Jesus' earthly father (Luke 3:29).

MATTHEW The traditional author of the first Gospel and one of the twelve apostles (Matt. 10:3). Matthew worked for the government of Herod Antipas as an official for the tax department. This was a responsible position that would have required a good education, fluency in both Greek and Aramaic, and bookkeeping and accounting skills. He was based in Capernaum, a fishing village of Galilee, which lay on the busy Via Maris highway, thus guaranteeing a lucrative income from the tariffs collected on goods from passing travelers (Matt. 9:9). Tax collectors, although holding positions of responsibility, were by no means respected by their fellow Jews. In fact, the Pharisees named tax collectors along with sinners as a despised class (Matt. 9:11; 11:19; Mark 2:16; Luke 7:34; 15:1). Because Matthew was working for an essentially Roman-dominated administration, most Jews would have branded him a traitor to Israel's national interests.

Only the first Gospel calls him "Matthew" (which means "gift of God"). Mark and Luke refer to him as "Levi" (Mark 2:14; Luke 5:27). He was called by Jesus to be a disciple as he was working in the tax booth. The words "follow me," which Jesus spoke to him on that occasion, are the only recorded conversation between the two men. Following his call, he invited Jesus into his home and held a banquet in his honor. On that occasion he invited many of his own kind, an act that outraged the moral sensitivities of the Pharisees, who criticized Jesus for it (Mark 2:15–17). Matthew and those like him (e.g., Zacchaeus [Luke 19:1–10]) are a vivid demonstration of the priority of grace in salvation.

MATTHEW, GOSPEL OF

AUTHOR

Although strictly anonymous, the first Gospel has always been known as "according to Matthew," and no evidence exists that it ever circulated without this name. The author is traditionally the apostle Matthew, a former tax collector (9:9). Mark (2:14) and Luke (5:27) identify him as "Levi," probably his earlier name. This may be further established by the noticeable references to money in the first Gospel: the parables of the unmerciful servant (18:23) and of the daily pay of workers (20:1), the bribe paid to the guards at the tomb to get them to lie (28:12), and Judas's return of the thirty silver coins (27:5). These stories, unique to Matthew, relate the morality of money in an unequivocal way, indicating Matthew's own interests from his former life.

Matthew's Gospel appears first in almost every extant witness to the NT, and it was considered the preeminent Gospel by the early church. It is the Gospel most quoted by the early church fathers. Of the four Gospels, Matthew's is most oriented toward a Jewish audience.

ΟΑΓΙΟΣΜΑΤΘΑΙΟΣ

Icon of Matthew (nineteenth century AD)

SOURCES

A cursory reading of the Gospels reveals that the first three, Matthew, Mark, and Luke (the Synoptic Gospels), share much of the same material. Yet each has its own collection and order of events, reflecting its own theological emphasis. This is quite to our benefit: by examining the differences between the three Gospels, not only do we see different facets of Jesus, but also we can discern and filter the idiosyncrasies of each writer. If Matthew records an event later in his Gospel, there must be a reason consistent with his purposes.

Most current research holds that Mark was written first and provided material for both Matthew and Luke. Matthew tends to smooth out the “rough” Greek of Mark; he also compresses many of the stories, and in a few places he “fixes” passages in Mark that might have seemed unclear or offensive. Material from Mark used by Matthew is generally narrative of Jesus’ life.

Matthew and Luke also contain similar material not found in Mark, the so-called Q material (“Q” is from the German *Quelle*, which means “source”). No Q document is extant. If it ever existed, it may represent an oral tradition. The Q material in Matthew has strong ethical content, such as the

Sermon on the Mount, many of the parables, and the Olivet Discourse. Additionally, Matthew and Luke contain material unique to their own Gospels: M in Matthew, L in Luke. The M material includes the birth and infancy narratives, some of the stories surrounding Jesus' death and resurrection, and a few of the parables.

The use of Mark (not an apostle) by the apostle Matthew is not as surprising as it may seem. Papias reported that Mark wrote the reminiscences of Peter, a member of Jesus' inner circle and the leader of the apostolic group. Surely Matthew would have no problem using Mark's Gospel as a starting point for his own.

DATE

Dating the Gospels is difficult. If Matthew borrowed from Mark, then the date of Mark and how long it would have taken to circulate to Matthew are important in the discussion. The first convincing use of Matthew by an external author is Ignatius, early in the second century. This places Matthew in the period between the early 60s to the early 90s.

Internal evidence includes, as in most NT literature dating, Matthew's relationship to the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. If Matthew wrote after this date, we might expect to see this reflected in some passages, especially in the Olivet Discourse, Jesus' prophecy of the Jewish war. The mention of a city being burned in retribution in 22:7 is casual enough to suggest that Matthew did not know of this happening to Jerusalem. There also are many references to the temple that might have merited a mention of its subsequent loss.

The mention of the temple tax in 17:24 is important. Before AD 70, paying the tax supported the Jewish temple and showed solidarity with Israel. After AD 70, the revenue was diverted to the temple of Jupiter in Rome. Jews were required to continue paying under duress and considered it support of idolatry. Had this been Matthew's world, he likely would have explained this critical point to his readers.

Arguments for a late date include references to the church (Matthew alone among the Gospel writers uses the term *ekklēsia*), possibly indicating an interest in church order that developed later; historical tensions between the church and the Jews, which only peaked in AD 85; and thoughts of a later date for Mark. For some, Matthew's account of Jesus' predictions of the destruction of Jerusalem is so vivid that it would have to have been written afterward. Many consider the theology of Matthew so sophisticated that it would require a later date.

External evidence includes the early church tradition that Matthew was written early, though part of this thinking is that Matthew was written first of the Synoptics. Still, an early date for Matthew seems the best, though the evidence is far from conclusive.

STRUCTURE

Matthew's literary pointers do not necessarily align with his themes, making for a rich, complex structure that is hard to outline. The following are some of the structures that scholars have proposed.

By discourse. Matthew has five clear sections of Jesus' discourses, set apart by a concluding phrase along the lines of "when Jesus had finished saying these things" (7:28; 11:1; 13:53; 19:1; 26:1). The five discourses alternate with related narratives of Jesus' deeds. These discourses should not be thought of as intact, recorded sermons; they are compilations of Jesus' teachings assembled by Matthew. The parallels in the other Gospels of this material differ: some of it is together as Matthew has it, but much of it is scattered in the other accounts. Matthew organized his material into types of stories and types of ministry by Jesus. Early on, Jesus is the ethical teacher; later, he is the stern lecturer warning Israel of impending judgment.

By story line. Another proposed structure concerns the story line of the Gospel. Matthew twice uses the concluding phrase "from that time on Jesus began to . . ." (4:17; 16:21). But these two instances, particularly 16:21, are in the middle of the narrative line and cannot be thought of as major literary structural markers. It is likely that Matthew uses this phrase to notify his readers of a new phase of the story, and possibly of a new approach in ministry by Jesus.

By geography. This concept revolves around the geography and movement of Jesus from his birth, through the ministry in Galilee, around Galilee, and to Jerusalem.

OUTLINE

The following outline offers a thematic organization of Matthew's Gospel:

I. The Miraculous Beginnings of Jesus (1:1–4:11)

II. Ethical Teachings and Miracles (4:12–10:42)

III. Confrontation and Reactions (11:1–16:20)

IV. The Messiah Must Suffer (16:21–20:28)

V. Jesus Claims Authority and Receives Praise (20:29–25:46)

VI. The Death of Jesus (26:1–27:66)

VII. The Resurrection of Jesus (28:1–28:20)

I. The miraculous beginnings of Jesus (1:1–4:11). Jesus' genealogy and childhood show him to be the fulfillment of OT prophecy. His baptism demonstrates this fulfillment; his forty days of testing in the desert identify him with Israel.

II. Ethical teachings and miracles (4:12–10:42). This section begins with a geographical change, as Jesus returns to Galilee. Having instructed his disciples, he sends them out as an extension of his own mission.

III. Confrontation and reactions (11:1–16:20). This section also involves a change of geography. Jesus first is questioned by John's disciples, then by the Pharisees, and finally by the people in his own town. The questions are resolved by Peter's confession.

IV. The messiah must suffer (16:21–20:28). This is the third section that begins "from that time on Jesus began to. . . ." Jesus explains to his disciples that he will die at the hands of the Jews but be raised on the third day. This section includes the transfiguration and many parables concerning judgment and reward. The climax is at the end, when Jesus declares that he has come "to give his life as a ransom for many."

V. Jesus claims authority and receives praise (20:29–25:46). Another geographical shift occurs, as Jesus and his disciples leave Jericho. Jesus acknowledges the title "Lord, Son of David," cleanses the temple, and argues with the Pharisees about the source of his authority. The parables concern sonship and responses to authority. The Pharisees try to entrap Jesus. Jesus teaches about authority, then rebukes the Pharisees. Chapter 24 describes the consequences of the ultimate rejection of authority. The climax is the parable of the sheep and the goats.

VI. The death of Jesus (26:1–27:66). Matthew's Gospel has built-in intensity up to the passion narrative. This section builds again within itself, from the anointing of Jesus in Bethany to the hush as the tomb is closed and sealed.

VII. The resurrection of Jesus (28:1–28:20). The accounts of the resurrection and postresurrection appearances are brief but significant and contain several details not found in the other Synoptics.

THE UNIQUE CONTRIBUTIONS OF MATTHEW

Among the unique contributions of Matthew are his genealogy of Jesus (which differs significantly from Luke's); the birth/infancy narrative of 1:18–2:23, which includes the record of the angel appearing to Joseph, the magi from the East, the slaughter of the innocents, and the flight to Egypt; the Great Commission, where Jesus commands his followers to "go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (28:19); and the Sermon on the Mount (chaps. 5–7), the largest block of the teachings of Jesus in the NT (Matthew contains large blocks of Jesus' teaching in the other discourses as well).

USE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

Matthew's use of the OT is remarkable. Matthew is concerned with showing Jesus as the fulfillment of the OT and God's salvation history. This can be seen in the so-called fulfillment quotations (1:22–23; 2:15, 17–18, 23; 4:14–16; 8:17; 12:17–21; 13:35; 21:4–5; 27:9–10; see also 2:5–6; 13:14; 26:54, 56, and 3:3; 22:31–32) as well as in the narrative portions of the book, particularly in the sweeping statement of 26:56: "This has all taken place that the writings of the prophets might be fulfilled."

Matthew immediately appeals to the OT in recounting the genealogy of Jesus. He divides the history of Israel into three eras: the first culminates in David, the second with the exile—clearly two of the most significant turning points in Israel's history—the third in Jesus, the Christ.

The quote "Out of Egypt I called my son" (2:15), from Hos. 11:1, is an excellent example of Matthew's commitment to fulfillment. The passage in Hosea clearly is not looking forward to this verse, but Matthew employs this short sentence to identify Jesus as the fulfillment of Israel and uses the return from Egypt of the holy family to illustrate the parallels in Jesus' life with the experience of the Jews. Matthew's use of the OT here, and in general, follows ancient, particularly Jewish, interpretive conventions.

Matthew contains a number of OT quotations not found in the other Synoptics. These appear generally as asides from Matthew himself—his own reflections, as it were, not the words of Jesus. Matthew clearly sees the relationship between Jesus and the OT in both directions: Jesus is the total fulfillment of the OT, and the OT is deeply concerned with pointing the way to Jesus.

Matthew then applies OT passages to the life of Jesus: Jesus is the virgin's son in Isa. 7:14 (Matt. 1:22–23), the one coming from Bethlehem to rule over Israel in Mic. 5:2 (Matt. 2:5–6), and the son called out of Egypt in Hos. 11:1 (Matt. 2:15); the slaughter of infants reflects the fall of Judah seen in Jer. 31:15 (Matt. 2:17–18); and Jesus is the great light on Zebulun and Naphtali of Isa. 9:1–2 (Matt. 4:13–16).

JESUS' RELATIONSHIP TO JEWISH LEADERS

Matthew's Gospel is almost universally negative toward the religious leaders, even where parallel passages do not reflect this antagonism (compare Matt. 23:37 with Luke 13:31). Matthew records many groups of leaders: teachers of the law (scribes), Pharisees, Sadducees, chief priests, and elders; he often combines terms, "scribes and Pharisees" being his favorite combination. Matthew portrays the Pharisees as the most hostile to Jesus, identifying them as a "brood of vipers" (3:7).

Yet, the Gospel of Matthew is far from being an anti-Jewish work. Jesus is the fulfillment of the OT; he was sent "only to the lost sheep of Israel" (15:24); people praise the God of Israel for his healing demonstrations. Matthew's point is that it is Israel's leaders and those who reject their Messiah who are bringing judgment upon themselves.

MATTHEW'S BIBLE An early English translation of the Bible by John Rogers. This Bible was completed in Antwerp and published in 1537. Rogers used the pen name "Thomas Matthew" and based much of his work on the Tyndale Bible and the Coverdale Bible.

MATTHIAS The apostle chosen to replace Judas Iscariot (Acts 1:15–26). After Judas's death, Peter called upon the approximately 120 believers in Christ to designate another apostle, one who had been with the apostles from the time of Jesus' baptism by John to Jesus' ascension. The choice of a new apostle would fulfill David's words concerning Judas (see Pss. 69:25; 109:8b). After praying for God's guidance, the believers cast lots, and Matthias was chosen over the other nominee, "Joseph called Barsabbas (also known as Justus)" (v. 23).

MATTITHIAH **(1)** A Levite in charge of baking the offering bread for the temple (1 Chron. 9:31). **(2)** A Levite who accompanied the ark of the covenant from the house of Obed-Edom to Jerusalem (1 Chron. 15:18, 21; 16:5). **(3)** A son of Jeduthun, also a Levite, who performed musical service in the temple (1 Chron. 25:3, 21). **(4)** A descendant of Nebo who was guilty of marrying a foreign woman during the time of Ezra (Ezra 10:43). **(5)** One of the thirteen leaders who stood with Ezra as he read the Book of the Law publicly (Neh. 8:4).

MAUL In Prov. 25:18 the KJV translates the Hebrew word *mepits* as "maul," referring to a "club" (NASB, NIV, JPS) or "war club" (NRSV, ESV).

MAW In Deut. 18:3 the KJV translates the Hebrew word *qebah* as "maw," referring to one of the choice portions of a sacrificed animal to be reserved for the Levitical priest. More-recent versions translate the Hebrew term as "internal organs" (NIV) or "stomach" (NRSV, ESV).

MAZZAROTH A transliteration of an obscure Hebrew term, *mazzarot*, found in Job 38:32. The various ways it can be understood include a proper name of a constellation (KJV, ESV), a reference to the twelve signs of the zodiac (REB), and a generic term for a constellation or stars (NIV, NASB).

MEADOW A lush area of grassland or a piece of low ground near a river. The KJV uses the term at Gen. 41:2, 18, where the reference is to the tall, reedy grass near the banks of the Nile River, as well as in Judg. 20:33 in reference to the "meadows of Gibeah." Modern translations use "meadow(s)" when referring to a pleasant, grassy place (Isa. 44:4; Jer. 25:37; cf. Hos. 9:13), often a metaphor for the blessing of God. Although this word may refer to a place where animals graze (Ps. 65:13; Isa. 30:23; Hos. 4:16), it is used in Scripture much less frequently than the word "pasture."

MEAH, TOWER OF One of the towers in the wall of Jerusalem listed in Nehemiah’s description of the dedication of the rebuilt wall (Neh. 3:1; 12:39). “Meah” is the KJV transliteration of the Hebrew word *me’ah*, which means “hundred.” Thus, other versions identify the structure as the “Tower of the Hundred” (NIV, NRSV).

MEALS *See* Banquet; Food.

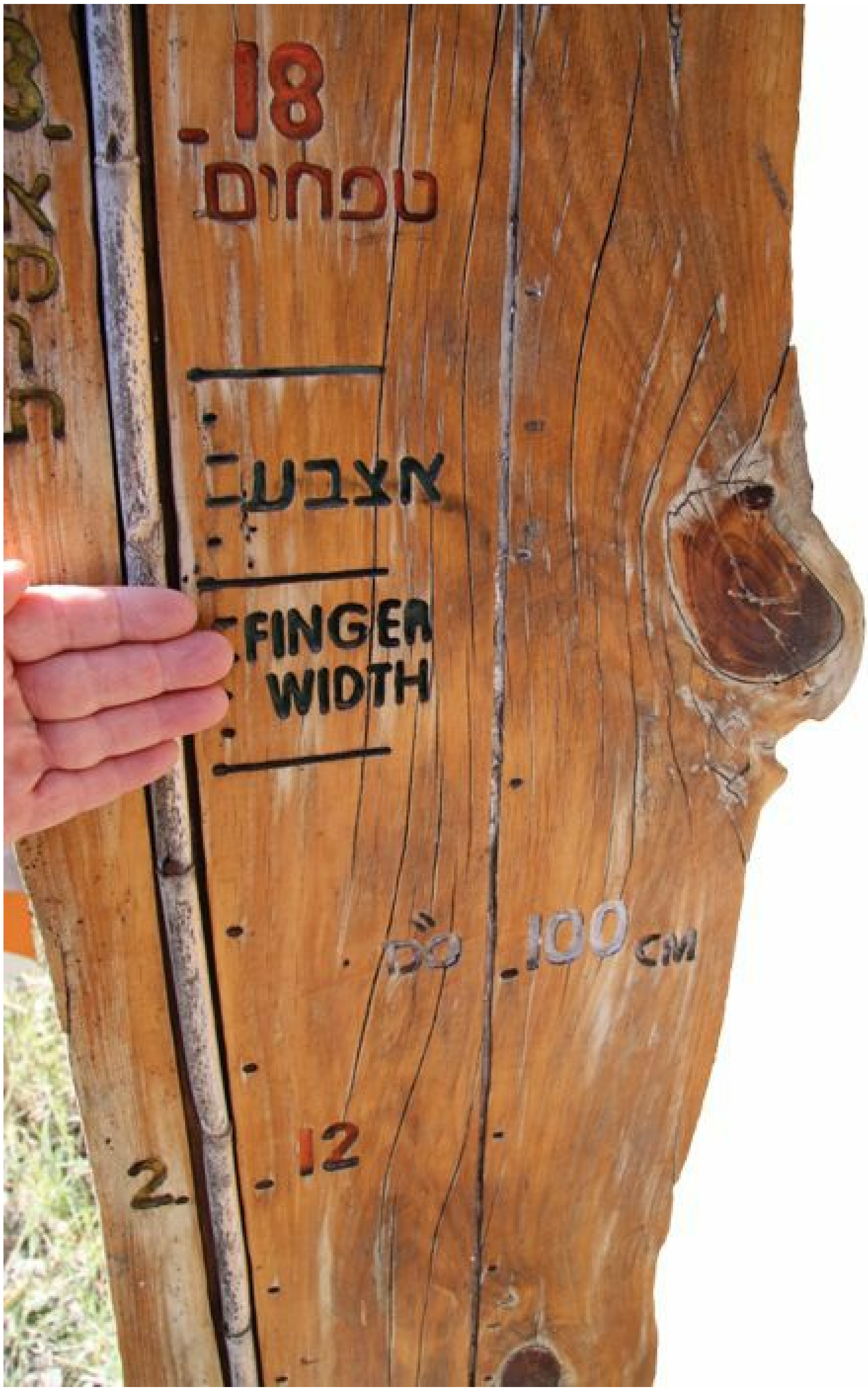
MEARAH A location associated with the Sidonians and part of the territory left unconquered by Joshua (Josh. 13:4). The Hebrew, *me’arah*, can be understood as meaning “cave,” or “from Arah” (NIV, NET), or “Mearah” (NRSV, KJV). The LXX reads “before Gaza.”

MEASURE, MEASUREMENT *See* Weights and Measures.

MEASURING LINE Made of various materials such as flax, the measuring (boundary) line was an important tool used by carpenters, builders, and surveyors to apportion land (Ps. 16:6; Amos 7:17) and figuratively to suggest God’s judgment (2 Kings 21:13; Isa. 28:17; 34:11; Lam. 2:8).

MEASURING REED *See* Measuring Rod.

MEASURING ROD Made from tall bamboolike stalks that grow in marshy areas, this tool, approximately ten feet long, was used by builders to measure objects. It is used to measure the temple in Ezekiel’s vision (Ezek. 40–42), and in the book of Revelation to measure the temple and the new Jerusalem (Rev. 11:1; 21:15).



Measuring rod

MEAT Although for millennia meat has been a major element in many people’s diets, the earliest humans did not eat it. In the garden of Eden, God gave Adam and Eve a diet of plants, particularly fruit (Gen. 2:15–16). God first sanctioned human consumption of animals only after the flood, though with the stipulation that meat not be eaten with blood remaining in it (Gen. 9:3–4; see also Lev. 7:26; 19:26).

In the Mosaic law the Israelites received further restrictions from God concerning the meat they could consume. Among land animals, only those that have a split hoof and chew the cud were “clean” for the Israelites to eat (Lev. 11:1–8). When the Israelites twice complained that they had no meat in the wilderness, God responded both times by sending quail. In the second instance, God became angry and sent a plague among those who had eaten the meat (Exod. 16:2–13; Num. 11:1–35).

In the NT, Jesus declared all foods clean (Mark 7:19), and God confirmed in a vision to Peter that he had rescinded all dietary restrictions (Acts 10:9–16). However, the Jerusalem council instructed Gentile Christians to abstain from certain dietary practices that would be offensive to their Jewish brothers and sisters, including eating blood and eating meat sacrificed to idols (Acts 15:28–29). In 1 Corinthians, Paul continued the discussion of eating meat sacrificed to idols (8:4–13; 10:18–33) and thereby provided guidance on various matters of Christian liberty.

MEAT, UNCLEAN *See* Clean, Cleanness.

MEAT OFFERING The KJV rendering “meat offering” (from Old English *mete*, meaning “food”) is misleading to a modern reader. The offering in question comprises flour, olive oil, and incense. Modern translations use “grain offering.” The strict instructions are found in Lev. 2; 6:15–23.

MEAT SACRIFICED TO IDOLS Meat, or food, sacrificed to idols refers to animal offerings to pagan deities. The expression translates the Greek word *eidōlothyton*, meaning “idol sacrifice,” which was a wordplay on the pagan term *hierothytos* meaning “offered in a temple sacrifice.” Consumption of this meat was prohibited for Gentile converts by the Jerusalem council (Acts 15:29; 21:25) because it was linked to pagan worship, especially when combined with sexual immorality (cf. Ezek. 18:5–6, 15; 22:9; Rev. 2:14, 20). However, the ban eventually created problems for Christians (e.g., dining out), as most meat markets in the Greco-Roman world obtained their inventory from local temples (Rom. 14:21; 1 Cor. 8; 10:18–33). Paul therefore modified the teaching by upholding the prohibition in cases where eating the meat violated one’s conscience, harmed Christian witness, or caused a weaker Christian to stumble, but relaxing it in cases where partaking was a social courtesy or otherwise separated from pagan practice.

MEBUNNAI A Hushathite, he was one of David’s thirty mighty warriors (elite warriors; 2 Sam. 23:27). He probably is the same person as Sibbekai (a Hushathite, of the Zerahite clan), who replaces Mebunnai in parallel lists (1 Chron. 11:29; 27:11) and is also the NIV rendering at 2 Sam. 23:27. He commanded a division of twenty-four thousand men who served King David.

MECHERATHITE *See* Mekerathite.

MECONAH *See* Mekonah.

MEDAD An Israelite elder who, along with Eldad, prophesied in the wilderness camp when the Spirit rested on them. Because this was outside the tabernacle, Joshua asked Moses to rebuke them (Num. 11:26–27).

MEDAN The third of Abraham’s six sons with his concubine Keturah (Gen. 25:2; 1 Chron. 1:32), he is the ancestor of an Arab tribe of which little is known.

MEDEBA A Moabite city and surrounding territory in the Transjordan. Numbers 21:30 mentions it as a site that had been taken from the Moabites by Sihon king of the Amorites, which was defeated and incorporated into Israel and given to the tribe of Reuben (Josh. 13:9, 16). Later in history it is reported as a staging area for the army of the king of Maakah, who had been hired to support Hanun of Ammon in his fight against David (1 Chron. 19:7). Isaiah refers to it in an oracle against Moab (Isa. 15:2). It is also mentioned on the ninth-century BC Moabite Stone (lines 8, 30) as having been freed from Israel by Mesha king of Moab. It is identified with the archaeological site Madaba (or Madeba).

MEDES, MEDIA Media was a country located to the south of the Caspian Sea, to the east of the Tigris River and Zagros Mountains, to the west of Parthia, and to the north of Elam. The northern portion of the modern country of Iran occupies the same area, although at the height of Media's power, the kingdom included parts of modern-day Iraq and Turkey. The best-known city was Ecbatana. The people of Media, the Medes, lived on the steppes and were known among the neighboring countries for their excellent horses.

History of Media. A people called the "Madai," an Indo-Aryan group descended from Japheth, gave their name to the region (Gen. 10:2). Historically, Media appears on the scene in the records of the Assyrian monarch Shalmaneser III, who claims to have invaded Media in the ninth century BC. Other Assyrian monarchs listed the Medes among the peoples who paid tribute to and traded with the Assyrian Empire. The relationship between the two countries was never entirely friendly, and the Assyrian monarchs Tiglath-pileser III (r. 744–727 BC) and Sargon II (r. 721–705 BC) invaded Media and forcibly added parts of the country to the Assyrian Empire and made them pay tribute. These subjugated provinces were no doubt the parts of Media to which Sargon II sent some of the exiles after he conquered the northern kingdom of Israel in 722/721 BC (2 Kings 17:6; 18:11).

After Sargon II, Sennacherib continued to keep the Medes in submission. Yet the Medes were not beaten. They became more powerful, and in an alliance with the Scythians and the Babylonians they rebelled against their Assyrian overlords. In 614 BC Asshur, one of the capitals of Assyria, was captured by the Medes. Cyaxares, the leader of the Medes, joined with Nabopolassar, the leader of the Babylonians, and together they captured Nineveh (612 BC) and Harran (610 BC). This effectively brought an end to the Assyrian Empire and brought the northern portions of the former empire under Median control. Nebuchadnezzar, Nabopolassar's son, married Cyaxares' daughter, thus cementing the alliance.

Media eventually was conquered by Cyrus II, who made Media a province of the Persian Empire and added "King of the Medes" to his titles. Media remained an important culture as part of the Persian Empire, and the dual identification of Persians and Medes remained attached to the empire (Esther 1:19; Dan. 5:28). The combined power of Media and Persia became the dominating empire until the rise of and conquest by the Greeks under Alexander the Great (332 BC).

Media in the Bible. The Medes and Media figure most prominently in the biblical books of Daniel and Esther. Daniel began his exile and rise to fame under the Babylonians but finished his prophetic career under the rule of the Medo-Persian Empire. Both Daniel and other prophets foresaw this change of governance and the Medes' part in the conquest of Babylon (Isa. 13:17; 21:2; Jer. 51:11, 28; Dan. 5:28). The importance of the Median contribution to the culture and governance of the new empire is manifest in the fact that the Medo-Persian ruler Darius is called "the Mede" in Dan. 11:1 due to his mixed ancestry (cf. Dan. 9:1). Indeed, the idea that an established law could not be changed even by the king himself (cf. Esther 1:19) seems to be a Median contribution to the empire and was the political tool used by Daniel's enemies to have him thrown into the lions' den (Dan. 6:8, 12).

Many of the exiled Jews from Judah chose to settle in Media instead of return to Judah, and a portion of their story is recounted in the book of Esther. Esther 1:3 notes that "the military leaders of Persia and Media" were among those present at a great feast of Ahasuerus (Xerxes I). Similarly, in Esther 1:14 the king's closest advisers are labeled "nobles of Persia and Media," indicating the unity of the two countries and the cultural mix among the high officials. The same was true of the high-ranking women in the land (Esther 1:18).

Jews from Media who recognized the Median language being spoken by the Spirit-filled disciples are mentioned in Acts 2:9. Thus, although the country had ceased to be a dominant power in the world, its language and culture were still present during the NT period.

MEDIATOR One who serves as a facilitator of reconciliation between two parties. The role of a mediator was taken by different individuals and offices in the OT, as seen in Abraham interceding for Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. 18:22–32), Moses asking God to forgive Israel (Exod. 32:31–32), and the Israelites begging Moses to speak to God on their behalf (Exod. 20:19). In addition, judges, prophets, kings, and priests assumed intermediary functions at times. Mediation functions bidirectionally: from God to humans, and from humans to God. The prophets are quintessentially the first kind of mediators (God to humans), while the priests took, mostly, the second function (humans to God).

In the NT, the role of mediator is given to Christ, since he alone, as God incarnate, is qualified for it (the "one mediator between God and mankind" [1 Tim. 2:5]). This implies that insomuch as reconciliation between sinful humankind and a holy God is conceivable, Christ alone can facilitate that mediation.

Hebrews develops a theology of mediation by comparing Christ to angels, Moses, and the prophets, declaring that Christ is superior to each in every aspect. Hebrews says that Christ is the mediator of a new and better covenant (8:6; 9:15; 12:24). Many NT passages present Christ engaging in prophetic ministry as he proclaims and interprets God's will for the lost world. His priestly work consists not only of giving himself as the ultimate sacrifice but also of interceding for humans before God and giving the "priestly blessing" from his heavenly abode.

Christ's mediation is to be appreciated in terms of both who he is and what he has done. The eternal mystery surrounding Christ is his incarnate person (God-man) and his atoning death (cleansing all guilt). Through the patristic period and the following scholastic movement, theological reflection on Christ was channeled to the meaning of incarnation, emphasizing Christ's unique status as both true God and true human that makes redemptive work possible.

By comparison, the Protestant Reformers brought Christ's salvific and mediatory work into the forefront of their theology. The Reformed tradition developed the mediatory role of Christ in a threefold manner: prophet, priest, and king.

MEDICINE *See* Diseases and Physical Abnormalities.

MEDITATION In the OT, meditation is primarily focusing on the will of God, verbally repeating God's commandments: one "meditates on his law day and night" (Ps. 1:2). To Joshua, God says, "keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful" (Josh. 1:8). The command presupposes that transformative knowledge must be brought into the horizon of consciousness and remain there. The fruit of mastering a meditative technique is not revelation of the deeper mysteries of reality, as it is in other religious systems, but rather is God's graceful response to open-hearted obedience. Being a prophet was not a self-designation but a calling. By the first century, meditation had become a part of prayer. The Essenes remained silent for an hour before reciting their prayers (Josephus, *J.W.* 2.128, 130, 133). To maintain focus (what the later rabbis call *kavanah*), Jewish men wore phylacteries and tassels. Phylacteries are small leather boxes strapped to the left forearm and the forehead during prayer (see *Let. Aris.* 158–159). Inside the boxes were copies of the

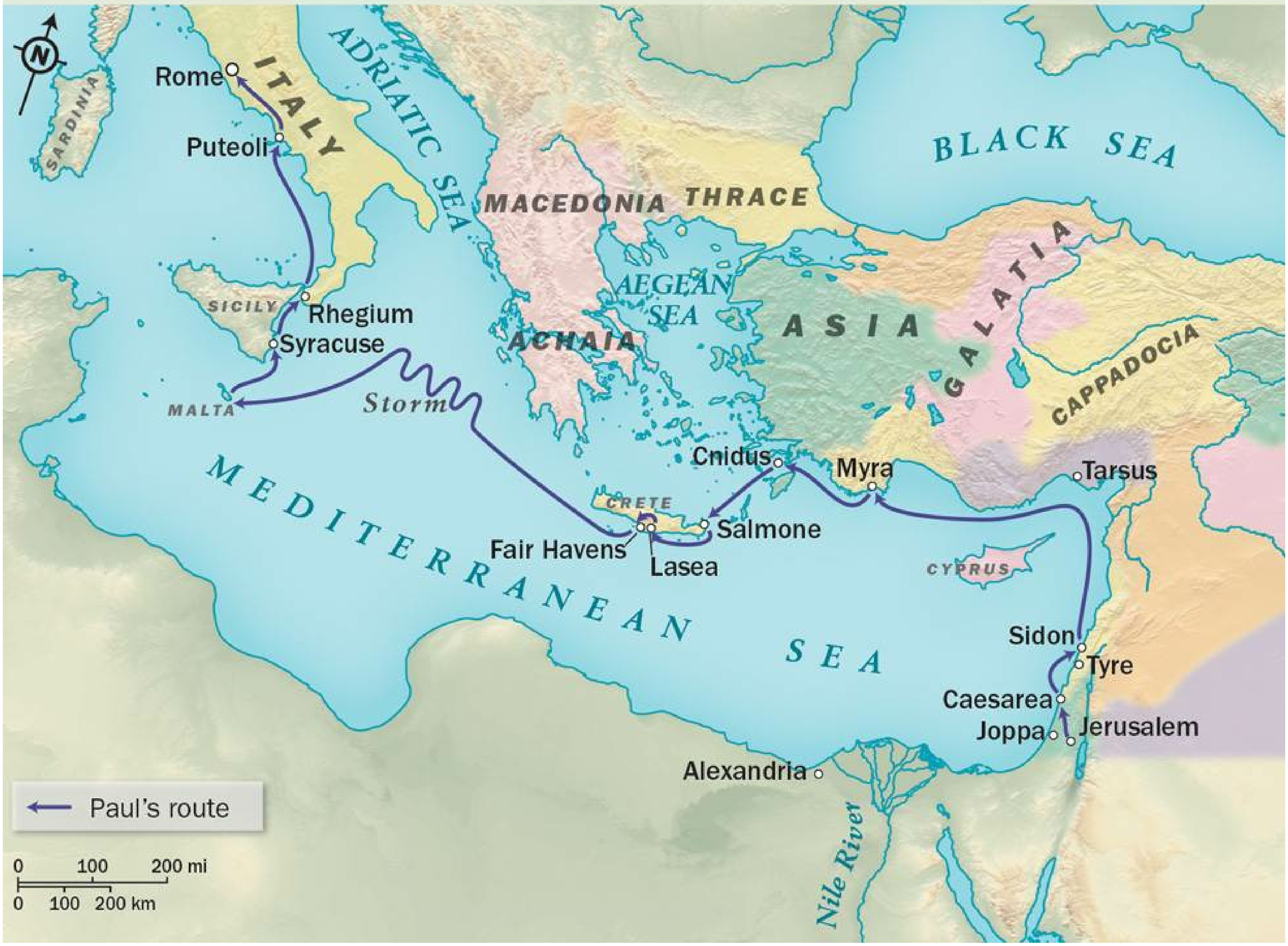
Shema (Deut. 6:4–9; 11:13–21; Exod. 13:1–10, 11–16) written on parchment. Tassels were blue and were attached to the four corners of a cloak (Num. 15:37–39; Deut. 22:12). Jesus wore tassels (Matt. 9:20; 14:36). Paul exhorts his readers to meditate upon the humility of Jesus' historical ministry but also to reflect upon the exalted Christ (Phil. 2:5; 3:15, 19; 4:2; Col. 3:2).

MEDITERRANEAN SEA The major body of water dividing Europe and Africa, extending eastward from the Atlantic Ocean well over two thousand miles to the western shore of Israel. The Mediterranean is almost completely surrounded by land. Though in some places this sea has a width of six or seven hundred miles, it is only nine miles wide at the Strait of Gibraltar, which gives access from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic Ocean. Related bodies of water include the Nile River in Egypt, which flows into the Mediterranean, and the Adriatic and the Aegean seas, adjacent to the north. The Mediterranean is dotted with thousands of islands. Some are notable (Cyprus, Crete, Malta, Sicily, Sardinia, Corsica), while others are very small. Situated between the Middle East, Europe, and Africa, the Mediterranean Sea made possible a quicker means of trade between these three great landmasses. Cities of note in Scripture on or near the Mediterranean include Alexandria, Caesarea, Joppa, Tyre, Sidon, and Tarsus. The great city of Rome was twenty miles inland from the sea.

The Mediterranean Sea (known as the Great Sea, the Western Sea, and the Sea of the Philistines) plays a major role for Israel in both Testaments. It is noted as the Western boundary for the inheritance of Israel (Deut. 11:24; Josh. 1:4) and thus forms the border of Judah (Josh. 15:12, 47). Also, in Josh. 9:1 the Mediterranean coast is noted as the territory of the pagan kings before the conquest. Later in the same book, God gives to the Israelites the land of the nations that he has cut off, from the Jordan to the Mediterranean Sea (23:4). The prophet Joel declares that God will work in behalf of Israel; he will fight for it and push its enemies in all directions, including westward into the Mediterranean Sea (Joel 2:20).

In the NT, the Mediterranean Sea is mentioned in Acts, where Luke relates the story of Simon Peter staying with Simon the tanner in Joppa, which is "by the sea" (10:6, 32). And later in Acts, Luke chronicles the path of the ship taking Paul to Rome, a trip on the Mediterranean starting from Caesarea and passing through Myra, Cnidus, Crete, Malta (after shipwreck in a storm), Syracuse, Rhegium, Puteoli, and Three Taverns (the latter two are in Italy) before concluding in Rome (27:1–28:14).

THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA AT THE TIME OF PAUL'S JOURNEY TO ROME


N
Rome
ITALY
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MACEDONIA
THRACE
AEGEAN SEA
ASIA
GALATIA
CAPPADOCIA
SICILY
Rhegium
Syracuse
ACHAIA
MALTA
Storm
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
Cnidus
Myra
Tarsus
CRETE
Fair Havens
Lasea
Salmone
CYPRUS
Sidon
Tyre
Caesarea
Joppa
Jerusalem
Alexandria
Nile River
Paul's route
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MEDIUM A person who serves as a conduit for communicating with the dead (more commonly today called a "psychic"). In the OT, this term is almost always paired with "spiritist." The law delivered to the Israelites by Moses compares a patron of these practitioners to a prostitute (Lev. 20:6). The practice defiles patrons (Lev. 19:31), making them detestable to God (Deut. 18:11–12), and the law prescribes excommunication from the community (Lev. 20:6) and death by stoning (Lev. 20:27) as punishment for such acts. Such activity is considered characteristic of the other nations (Deut. 18:11–12; Isa. 19:3) and therefore inappropriate for the Israelites. The prophets mock mediums, asking, "Why consult the dead on behalf of the living?" (Isa. 8:19), and accuse them of delivering false prophecies (Jer. 27:9–10).

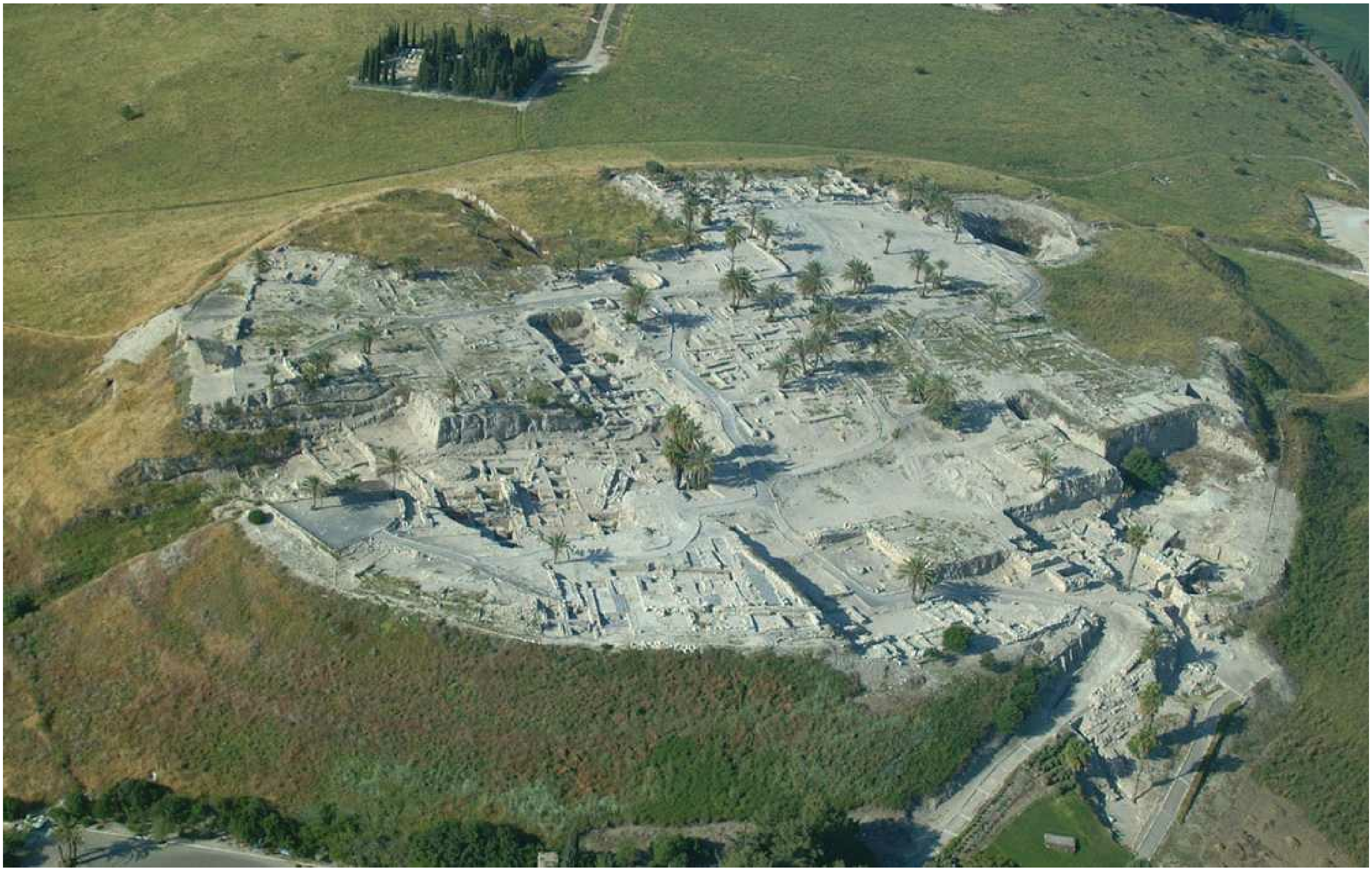
In accordance with this overriding negative attitude toward them, Saul expels the mediums and spiritists from Israel (1 Sam. 28:3). Nevertheless, when Saul seeks a prophetic word regarding his imminent encounter with the Philistines and is unable to receive one from God by the usual means, he asks for a medium (28:5–7). Disguising himself, he travels to Endor, where he asks the medium to consult the deceased prophet Samuel (28:8–11). Reluctantly, she raises Samuel, who delivers a word of judgment to Saul concerning his defeat and death at the hands of the Philistines (28:12–19). The medium then butchers a fattened calf, prepares a meal, and serves it to Saul and his men (28:24–25).

MEEKNESS The quality of placing the interests of others before oneself. Meekness is vulnerable to connotations of inferiority (1 Sam. 9:21). The term is often applied to the socially inferior (women, slaves, eunuchs, children), who took on a servile capacity in the home. The Greeks and the Romans knew from their mythology that pride (*hybris*) was a fundamental human flaw (see the myth of Daedalus and Icarus). But its opposite, meekness, was not especially praised, with most people pursuing a middle course. But God removed any sense of inferiority, and therefore a need for a middle course, by empowering the meekness of two great servants. This biblical virtue is attributed first to Moses (Num. 12:3) and then to Jesus (Matt. 11:28–30; 2 Cor. 10:1). Before redeeming Israel from slavery, God delivered Moses from obscurity in the wilderness. He stood in direct contrast to the arrogance of Pharaoh (Exod. 10:3). On several occasions, Moses put the interests of God's people before his own (e.g., Exod. 32:30–34; 33:12–14). Paul offers a similar narrative about God's Son, who took on the form of a slave; and after being mocked, he suffered the most humiliating of deaths, that on a cross. But God raised him from death and seated him at his right hand (Phil. 2:5–11). The apostle's readers would have made an immediate comparison with Nero, who presumed his own deification. The first followers of Jesus distinguished themselves by making humility central to Christian living (e.g., Phil. 2:1–5; 1 Thess. 2:6–8; James 1:21). Jesus pronounced blessing upon all who are meek, those who desire God's best for all people, even their enemies, and promised that they will inherit the land for which he and Moses toiled (Matt. 5:5; 7:12; cf. Deut. 8:2; Ps. 37:11). In context, meekness takes on the sense of controlled power. Through Isaiah, God promised a day set aside to humble the arrogant and raise the spirits of the humble (Isa. 2:11–12).

MEGIDDO A major city in the north of Israel that guards a strategic pass of the international highway known as the Via Maris, which connected Egypt and Mesopotamia. Its location explains why it was so large and the site of many ancient battles. It is identified with Tell el-Mutesellim and has been the object of archaeological excavations.

Archaeological research reveals that it was already a fortified city by the Early Bronze Age (3300–2200 BC), with signs of habitation back to the Neolithic period (7500–4000 BC). Historical sources mention the city for the first time in a fifteenth-century BC inscription of Pharaoh Thutmose III. Megiddo was part of a coalition of Canaanite cities that tried to eject Egyptian influence from the region.

Megiddo appears for the first time in the Bible when Josh. 12:21 mentions its king as one of the many defeated by the Israelites (presumably as part of the northern coalition). Joshua 17:11 says that it was part of Manasseh, though it was not conquered until later (Judg. 1:27). The Song of Deborah describes it as being near the location of a battle between Israel and the Canaanites (Judg. 5:19). We do not get the account of the Israelite takeover of Megiddo, but we know that Solomon (tenth century BC) controlled it and fortified it along with Hazor and Gezer. It is listed in the fifth administrative district of Solomon (1 Kings 4:12).



Tell el-Mutesellim, the site of ancient Megiddo

Jehu’s agents wounded King Ahaziah of Judah, who fled to Megiddo, where he died (2 Kings 9:27). The Assyrian king Tiglath-pileser III conquered parts of northern Israel in the middle of the eighth century BC and created a new province of his empire, Magiddu. In 609 BC, King Josiah of Judah died there trying to stop the Egyptians under Necho from reinforcing the Assyrians against Babylon (2 Kings 23:29; 2 Chron. 35:22).

The area around Megiddo began to be called “Har Megiddo” (“mountain of Megiddo”). In Greek this became “Armageddon,” and in Rev. 16:12–16 it is associated with the final future battle between the forces of God and the forces of evil.

MEGIDDON, VALLEY OF In the KJV, a name for the “plain of Megiddo” (NIV) in the Jezreel Valley (Zech. 12:11). *See also* Megiddo.

MEHETABEEL *See* Mehetabel.

MEHETABEL **(1)** The wife of King Hadad (Hadar) of Edom (Gen. 36:39; 1 Chron. 1:50). She was the daughter of Matred and a descendant of Me-Zahab. **(2)** An ancestor of the false prophet Shemaiah, who was a contemporary of Nehemiah (Neh. 6:10).

MEHIDA One of the ancestors of the temple servants (Nethinim) who returned to Jerusalem after the Babylonian captivity under the leadership of Zerubbabel in 539 BC or soon after (Ezra 2:52; Neh. 7:54). The fact that many of the names in the list are foreign has led to the belief that they were originally prisoners of war who were pressed into service to perform menial tasks as they assisted the Levites.

MEHIR A descendant of Judah, he was the son of Kelub and the father of Eshton (1 Chron. 4:11).

MEHOLAHITE An inhabitant of Meholah, attributed to Adriel, the husband of Saul’s daughter Merab (1 Sam. 18:19; 2 Sam. 21:8).

MEHUJAEL A descendant of Enoch and an ancestor of Lamech. He was the son of Irad and the father of Methushael (Gen. 4:18). Some scholars identify the name as a variant of “Mahalalel” (Gen. 5:12–17 [KJV: “Mahalaleel”]).

MEHUMAN One of the seven personal attendants of the Persian king Xerxes (Ahasuerus), whom he commanded to bring Queen Vashti to his banquet (Esther 1:10). Working with the harem, he was a eunuch.

MEHUNIM *See* Meunim.

MEHUNIMS *See* Meunites.

ME JARKON A stream (“waters of Yarkon”) in the territory of Dan (Josh. 19:46). The exact location is unknown, but the stream is likely along the banks of Nahr el-’Auja, four miles north of Joppa and between the Mediterranean and Aphek, the city near the headwaters, which is about nine miles from the coast.

MEKERATHITE An inhabitant of Mekerah. Hepher, one of David’s mighty warriors, is described as a Mekerathite (1 Chron. 11:36). The location of Mekerah is not known, but some scholars think that the name should rather be associated with Maakah (cf. 2 Sam. 23:34).

MEKONAH A city in the southern part of Judah between Ziklag and En Rimmon to which the exiles returned and resettled (Neh. 11:28).

MELATIAH A Gibeonite who worked on the reconstruction of the walls of Jerusalem with Nehemiah (Neh. 3:7).

MELCHI *See* Melki.

MELCHIAH *See* Malkijah.

MELCHISEDEC *See* Melchizedek.

MELCHISHUA *See* Malki-Shua.

MELCHIZEDEK A mysterious individual who is referenced twice in the OT and once in the NT.

His name and description also appear within the DSS. In Gen. 14:18–20 Melchizedek is a priest of El Elyon (God Most High), possibly a reference to the Canaanite god El but here used as a title for Yahweh. He is said to be from "Salem," which could be a shortened form of "Jerusalem." Melchizedek brings out bread and wine to Abram, blesses him, and receives one-tenth of Abram's spoils that Abram had acquired from his successful military campaign against the eastern kings. The royal oracle of Ps. 110 holds a declaration of the Davidic king as an eternal priest "in the order of Melchizedek" (v. 4). This phrase is later applied to Jesus by the writer of the book of Hebrews to emphasize the superiority of Jesus' priesthood over the Levitical priesthood. In Heb. 7:1–17 Melchizedek is described as the "king of righteousness" and the "king of peace" (v. 2); he is said to have been birthed "without father or mother" and is described as one who has existed eternally, thus resembling the Son of God (v. 3). This description draws not only on Gen. 14 and Ps. 110 but also on the description of Melchizedek as a heavenly figure that appears also in the DSS (11Q13). While Melchizedek's identity and function remain a mystery, all three biblical passages refer to him in order to proclaim the work of God.

MELEA An otherwise unknown ancestor of Jesus mentioned only in Luke 3:31 as the son of Menna and the father of Eliakim.

MELECH *See* Melek.

MELEK A descendant of Saul (1 Chron. 8:35; 9:41). He was a son of Micah, a grandson of Merib-Baal, and a great-grandson of Saul's son Jonathan.

MELICU *See* Malluk.

MELITA *See* Malta.

MELKI Two different otherwise unknown ancestors of Jesus. **(1)** The son of Jannai and the father of Levi (Luke 3:24). **(2)** The son of Addi and the father of Neri (Luke 3:28).

MELZAR In Dan. 1:11, 16 the KJV translates the Hebrew word *meltsar* as a proper name, "Melzar." Other early versions do likewise (Theodotian, Lucian, Syriac, Vulgate). However, modern translations take note of the definite article prefix and translate the Hebrew word accordingly as a common noun: "the guard" (NIV, NRSV), "the overseer" (NASB), "the steward" (RSV, ESV), "the warden" (NET).

MEMBERS A theologically significant concept for the apostle Paul. He used the Greek word *melos* ("member" or "body part") in two contexts. First, Paul identified Christians as members of Christ's body (Rom. 12:4–5; 1 Cor. 12:27; Eph. 5:30). Just as all the members of the human body are critical to its functioning, all Christians, whether apparently significant or not, are critical to the church's functioning (1 Cor. 12:12–27). Second, Paul spoke of members of the body as instruments that could be presented either for good or for evil (Rom. 6:13, 19; Col. 3:5). In the non-Christian, these members are home to the "sinful passions" (Rom. 7:5), and the "law of sin" within the members can hold prisoner even the Christian (7:23).

MEMORIAL In the Bible the word "memorial" is used in two primary senses. First, it can refer to something meant to provoke a worshiper's remembrance. The Israelites erected a monument of stones as a memorial to remind their descendants that God had stopped the flow of the Jordan River (Josh. 4:7). Similarly, the Passover feast was a memorial to the Israelites of God's deliverance (Exod. 12:14 KJV, NET). God could even speak of his name as a memorial (Exod. 3:15 KJV, NET).

Second, a memorial can be an act of worship whereby God favorably remembered a worshiper and his or her offering (Lev. 5:12; Acts 10:31). Memorial portions were burned before God in grain offerings (Lev. 2:1–2) and certain sin offerings (5:11–13); the remainder of these offerings was consumed by the priests. In the NT, God considered Cornelius's prayers and gifts to the poor to be a memorial offering (Acts 10:4).

MEMPHIS An Egyptian city, no longer in existence, located about fifteen miles southwest of Cairo. It was the site of the palaces of most of the pharaohs mentioned in the Bible. "Memphis" is the Greek name of the city, and, with the exception of Hos. 9:6 (*mōp*), the town goes by the name "Noph" (*nōp*) in the OT, although many modern translations use the Greek name throughout. Notably, both Jer. 46:14–19 andEzek. 30:13–19 prophesy against the city and predict its destruction. Historically, Egypt and Israel had a rather tumultuous relationship, but Jeremiah's and Ezekiel's particular invective may have concerned Memphis's refusal to join with the southern kingdom in its rebellion against the Babylonians. At least one of Jeremiah's prophecies after the destruction of Jerusalem is directed toward some Jews who have settled in Memphis (Jer. 44:1). Memphis was also the center of the Apis cult, which worshiped the image of a bull. Some scholars have tried to link the story of the golden calf in Exod. 32 to this particular cult, but the connections seem dubious.

MEMUCAN *See* Memukan.

MEMUKAN One of seven top-level officials under King Xerxes (Ahasuerus) who advised him to put away Queen Vashti because of her refusal of the king's command to appear before the banquet (Esther 1:14). Memukan served as the spokesperson for the group (Esther 1:16, 21).

MENAHEM The son of Gadi, he was the sixteenth king (r. 747–737 BC) of the northern kingdom, Israel. Menahem's rise to power was marked by violence and cruelty. His predecessor, Shallum son of Jabesh (also a usurper of the throne), had reigned only one month in Samaria when Menahem went up from Tirzah and killed him. Menahem then brutally attacked the city of Tiphsah, where "he ripped open all the pregnant women" (2 Kings 15:16).

Menahem's ten-year reign was "evil in the eyes of the LORD" (2 Kings 15:18). Having obtained the throne in the thirty-ninth year of Azariah of Judah (c. 747 BC), he followed in the sins of his predecessors. Tiglath-pileser III (Pul) of Assyria invaded Israel during Menahem's reign, but Menahem was able to avoid takeover and even "strengthen his own hold on the kingdom" by paying one thousand talents of silver to the Assyrian king (2 Kings 15:19), which he raised by taxing the wealthy men of Israel. Menahem died a natural death, and his son Pekahiah succeeded him as king. See 2 Kings 15:13–22.

MENAN *See* Menna.

MENE, MENE, TEKEL, PARSIN At King Belshazzar's feast in the book of Daniel an apparitional hand appeared and wrote a mysterious inscription on the wall. According to the Aramaic text, it read *mene' mene' teqel uparsin* (Dan. 5:25). Daniel alone was able to identify God as the source of the message, read the writing, and decipher its significance (Dan. 5:24–28). In the Old Greek version of Daniel, the inscription differs in wording (*mene* is not repeated), order (*mane phares thekel*), position (it comes at the beginning of the story), and interpretation.

As a result of this evidence from ancient versions and the intrinsic difficulty of the Aramaic text, the phrase is a subject of much debate. Scholars have noted that each of the words resembles a unit of weight (cf. the biblical mina and shekel). The Old Greek arranges these in descending order (a *prs* being a half-mina, and a *shekel* one-fiftieth of a mina). The phrase may originally have referred to a succession of kings of declining power (beginning with Nebuchadnezzar), in which case Daniel's interpretation in the biblical (Aramaic) text differs somewhat from the original sense of the riddle. In this scenario, the Aramaic text has changed the order of the terms so that *parsin*, which sounds like "Persians," comes last.

MENI A pagan deity (Heb. *meni*, meaning "allotment, portion, fate") worshiped along with the god Gad (Heb. *gad*, meaning "fortune") by the apostate Israelites (Isa. 65:11). The name of this god of fate is translated as "Destiny" by many modern versions, while the KJV translates the Hebrew word as "that number."

MENNA An otherwise unknown ancestor of Jesus mentioned only in Luke 3:31 as the son of Mattatha and the father of Melea.

MENORAH A lampstand, principally the seven-branched lampstand built initially for use in the tabernacle (Exod. 25:31–39) and placed in front of the inner curtain that shielded the ark of the covenant (27:21). The menorah has the decorations of an almond tree and, as a tree in the midst of the place where God makes his presence known to humans, is to remind Israel of the garden of Eden. The menorah was to stay lit twenty-four hours a day (Lev. 24:1–4). It is the central symbol of the Jewish festival of lights, Hanukkah.

Stone lintel featuring a menorah (synagogue at Eshtemoa, third–fourth century AD)

MENPLEASER In Eph. 6:6; Col. 3:22 the KJV translates the Greek word *anthrōpareskos* as "menpleaser," a person who seeks to please other people instead of God.

MENUHOTH Name of a clan descended from Judah or the place name of their dwelling (1 Chron. 2:52 NRSV, ESV). Some translations emend the text to equate this name with the Manahathites listed in 1 Chron. 2:54 (KJV, REB: "Manahethites").

MEONENIM, PLAIN OF In Judg. 9:37 the KJV renders *me'onenim*, a Hebrew word meaning "diviners" or "soothsayers" (Deut. 18:10, 14; Mic. 5:12), as a proper name, "Meonenim." The Hebrew lacks the word "plain" in this verse; rather, it has a kind of tree, *'elon* ("oak"). Many modern versions translate the phrase as "diviners' tree" (NIV), "Diviners' Oak" (ESV, RSV; cf. NASB), or "Oracle Oak" (MSG), while the NRSV transliterates the entire phrase as the name "Elon-meonenim." *See also* Diviners' Tree.

MEONOTHAI A descendant of Judah who was the son of Othniel and the father of Ophrah

(1 Chron. 4:13–14).

MEPHAATH A town between Ammon and Moab. Originally an Amorite city that was part of the territory of the tribe of Reuben (Josh. 13:18), it later was assigned to the Merarite Levites (Josh. 21:37; 1 Chron. 6:79). During the time of Jeremiah, the town was under Moabite jurisdiction (Jer. 48:21).

MEPHIBOSHETH **(1)** A son of Jonathan and a grandson of Saul, he became lame at the age of five when his nurse dropped him as she fled after hearing of the deaths of Saul and Jonathan (2 Sam. 4:4). His name is more correctly "Merib-Baal" (1 Chron. 8:34), but the books of Samuel usually change names compounded with *ba'al* ("master" [perhaps originally referring to Yahweh]) to *bosheth* ("shame"). Because of his covenant with Jonathan (1 Sam. 20:15), David arranged for Mephibosheth to live at the palace with him and restored his estates (2 Sam. 9). Later, he spared him from the execution of Saul's descendants (2 Sam. 21:7) when addressing the famine caused by Saul's killing of some Gibeonites.

During Absalom's rebellion, Mephibosheth's steward Ziba met David and gave him provisions, claiming that Mephibosheth believed that the rebellion would see the throne returned to him (16:1–4), resulting in David handing the estates across to Ziba. But Mephibosheth was among the first to meet David on his return, and he claimed that Ziba had deceived him (19:24–30). Samuel does not resolve their conflicting testimonies, perhaps to reflect the information available to David, who then divided the estates between them.

(2) A son of Saul, born to his concubine Rizpah, and one of seven descendants of Saul executed by David to avert famine because of Saul's actions against the Gibeonites (2 Sam. 21:8–9).

MERAB The older of Saul's two daughters (1 Sam. 14:49). When Saul offered her to David as his wife, David hesitated because his family and clan were undistinguished (1 Sam. 18:17). Merab married Adriel of Meholah. Saul's younger daughter, Michal, fell in love with David, and Saul offered her as wife to David in a bizarre plot to kill him off. Merab's sons with Adriel were given by David to be executed by the Gibeonites because Saul transgressed an agreement made between them and Joshua (2 Sam. 21:8; see Josh. 9).

MERAIAH A postexilic priest under the high priest Joiakim (Neh. 12:12). He was a contemporary of Ezra and Nehemiah (Neh. 12:26), and so his ministry can be dated to the mid-fifth century BC.

MERAIOTH **(1)** A priest who was an ancestor of Azariah, who served as chief priest in Solomon's temple (1 Chron. 6:6–10). He is also an ancestor of Ezra (Ezra 7:3). **(2)** A priest who was the son of Ahitub and the father of Zadok (1 Chron. 9:11; Neh. 11:11). **(3)** A priestly family of the second temple during the high priesthood of Joiakim in the fifth century BC (Neh. 12:15).

MERARI The youngest of Levi's three sons (Gen. 46:11). His descendants, along with the Gershonites and the Kohathites, became one of the three clans of Levites that held responsibility for transporting the tabernacle in the wilderness and caring for the temple.

MERARITES Descended from Merari son of Levi, the Merarites were one of the three major Levite clans. In the wilderness they guarded and transported the wooden frames and pillars of the tabernacle. Unlike the Kohathites, who carried the holy articles of the tabernacle on their backs, the Merarites were permitted to use wagons. They camped on the north side of the tabernacle (Num. 3:35). In Canaan they settled among the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the Zebulunites (Josh. 21:7). When David organized the three clans of Levi for temple service, the Merarites served with the Kohathites as both singers and gatekeepers (1 Chron. 6:44; 26:19). The Chronicler notes the involvement of Merarites in the religious reforms of both Hezekiah and Josiah (2 Chron. 29:12; 34:12), and the book of Ezra notes that a contingent of Merarites accompanied Ezra to Jerusalem (8:18–19).

MERATHAIM A figurative reference to Babylon in Jeremiah’s oracle against Babylon (Jer. 50:21). The name, which means “double rebellion,” is a pejorative reference to Babylon being twice as rebellious as the other rebellious nations. Parallel to Merathaim in this verse is the name “Pekod,” which means “punishment.” Both names for Babylon in Jer. 50:21 are rhetorical devices indicating the inevitable judgment on Babylon and thus almost certainly were not literal place names.

MERCHANTS Those who earn a profit by selling or trading. During the biblical period, this required extensive travel (Prov. 31:14). The Phoenicians were famous for their maritime trade (Ezek. 27:1; Pliny the Elder, *Nat.* 5.66–67). Trade, the primary engine of the Roman economy, was greatly facilitated by the construction of an extensive highway system and the curbing of piracy. Romans traded with the Chinese through the Silk Road. A particularly large industry was spice and aromatics (see Song 3:6). Nard, the fragrant oil that Mary pours over Jesus’ feet, is derived from a root that grows in the mountains of northern India (John 12:3). But somewhat paradoxically, mercantilism was not a highly respected profession. Members of the Roman senate and their families were not supposed to engage in trade (although many did so quietly). They were the “newly rich,” and they had a reputation for being ruthless and greedy. The prophet Hosea rebukes merchants who use dishonest scales (Hos. 12:7). James rebukes merchants for their presumption and arrogance about future travel and profit (James 4:13–16). Jesus’ treatment of merchants is therefore surprisingly neutral (Matt. 13:45).

MERCURIUS In Acts 14:12 the KJV uses “Mercurius,” the Roman name for the Greek messenger god Hermes, for whom Paul was mistaken when he and Barnabas preached in Lystra and Paul healed a lame man.

MERCY Behind the English translation “mercy” lie diverse biblical words in Hebrew (*khesed*, *khanan*, *rakham*) and in Greek (*charis*, *eleos*, *oiktirmos*, *splanchnon*). These words are also translated as “love,” “compassion,” “grace,” “favor,” “kindness,” “loving-kindness,” and so on, depending on context. Hence, a conceptual approach to the meaning of “mercy” is best.

GOD’S MERCY

Mercy as part of God’s character. Mercy is a distinguishing characteristic of the nature of God. God is called “the Father of mercies” (2 Cor. 1:3 NRSV [NIV: “Father of compassion”]). God is “rich in mercy” (Eph. 2:4; cf. 2 Sam. 24:14; Dan. 9:9). God’s mercy was demonstrated in his covenantal faithfulness to his people (1 Kings 8:23–24; Mic. 7:18–20). God redeemed the oppressed Israelites from slavery under Pharaoh because of his mercy, which was stirred when he heard their groaning and cry for help. Here, the rekindling of God’s mercy toward the Israelites was depicted in terms of remembering his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Exod. 2:23–25). Mercy is a manifestation of God's faithfulness to his covenant. Hence, God's mercy to his covenant people never ceases (Pss. 119:132; 103:17).

God has absolute sovereignty in electing the people to whom he wills to show mercy. A classic expression appears in Exod. 33:19: "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion." Paul quoted this to explain God's sovereignty in electing Jacob as the recipient of God's mercy (Rom. 9:13–15). God's mercy cannot be acquired by human effort or desire (Rom. 9:16). God even ordered the Israelites to show no mercy to the Canaanites because of their corruption and idolatry (Deut. 7:2).

Diverse images are used to describe God's mercy. God is compared to a loving father who has compassion on his children (Jer. 31:20; Mal. 3:17). "As a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear him; for he knows how we are formed, he remembers that we are dust" (Ps. 103:13–14). God's compassion is also compared to that of a nursing mother who feeds her baby at her breast (Isa. 49:15). The images of the loving father and the loving mother reflect closely the heart of God's mercy toward his chosen people. God is especially merciful to the needy, the weak, the afflicted, and the oppressed (Exod. 2:23–24; Ps. 123:2–3; Isa. 49:13; Heb. 4:16). God is called "a father to the fatherless" and "a defender of widows" (Ps. 68:5). Sinners appeal for God's mercy when they request forgiveness (Ps. 51:1). "Have mercy on me" is a common form of expression when the psalmist entreats God for his forgiveness (Pss. 41:4, 10; 51:1). God's mercy is also shown in his act of salvation and blessing (Exod. 15:13; Deut. 13:17–18; Judg. 2:18; Eph. 2:4–5).

God's mercy in redemptive history. Redemptive history is a successive demonstration of God's mercy toward his chosen people. It was because of God's mercy that he took the initiative to save fallen human beings (Gen. 3:15). Death was the due penalty for Adam and Eve (Gen. 2:17), but God preached the good news of mercy that the descendant of the woman would someday crush the head of the serpent. In Rev. 20:2 that ancient serpent in the garden of Eden is identified as "the devil, or Satan," whose head was crushed by Jesus Christ on the cross and is bound by the coming Messiah "for a thousand years" and will be "thrown into the lake of burning sulfur" (Rev. 20:2, 10). In spite of God's judgment on Cain, the first murderer, God showed mercy by putting a mark on him so that no one would kill him (Gen. 4:15). As the psalmist later confesses, God proves himself as the merciful God who "does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities" (Ps. 103:10).

Noah and his family were saved from the judgment of the flood because of God's special mercy toward them (Gen. 6:8). Immediately after God confused the languages of human beings because of their challenge to him (Gen. 11:1–9), God showed mercy on Abram, "a wandering Aramean" (Deut. 26:5), and designated him to be the father of his chosen people (Gen. 12:1–3). Jacob's election originated solely from God's mercy, as Paul pointed out by quoting Scripture: "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated" (Rom. 9:13). The exodus is also the clearest evidence of God's demonstration of mercy toward his chosen people (Exod. 2:23–25). They were saved not by their own righteousness but rather by God's mercy on the covenant people, who suffered under the bondage of Pharaoh's slavery. God's mercy reached its climax when he sent his only Son, Jesus Christ, to save sinners (Rom. 5:8). It is because of God's mercy that we are saved, not because of our righteousness (Titus 3:5).

CHRIST'S MERCY

Jesus Christ lived a life full of mercy. He is, in a sense, the bodily manifestation of God's mercy. Jesus expressed deep mercy whenever he saw the sick and the lost. The writers of the Gospels describe Jesus' demonstrations of mercy when he healed the blind, the lame, the deaf, the leprous, the demon-possessed, and the dead (Matt. 9:36; 14:14; 20:34; Mark 1:41; 5:19; 6:34; 8:2; Luke 7:13; John 11:33). Jesus especially had compassion on the crowds, who did not have a spiritual leader, and he compared them to "sheep without a shepherd" (Matt. 9:36).

Jesus' ministry of healing and evangelism was motivated by his deep mercy and compassion toward people in physical and spiritual need (Luke 4:16–21; cf. Isa. 61:1–2). Whenever the sick appealed to his mercy, Jesus never refused to dispense it to them (Matt. 15:22; 17:14–18). For example, he healed the two blind men who entreated his mercy (Matt. 20:30–34). When a leper, kneeling before him, entreated his mercy, Jesus touched him (risking his own uncleanness according to the law) and healed him (Matt. 8:2–3). When a centurion asked for Jesus' mercy on his sick servant, he was willing to go and heal the sick man (Matt. 8:5–13). Jesus' mercy was aroused especially when he saw people crying for the dead, and even he shed tears (John 11:33–35). When Jesus saw a widow crying for her dead son during a funeral procession, he comforted and had compassion on her and made her son alive (Luke 7:12–15).

According to Heb. 2:17–18, Jesus became "a merciful and faithful high priest" to make atonement for the sins of his people. He is also compared to the high priest who is able to sympathize with our weaknesses because he "has been tempted in every way, just as we are" (Heb. 4:15). His high priestly work on earth was highlighted in terms of his ministry of mercy toward his people. Like God's mercy, Jesus' mercy was shown in his actions of salvation (Luke 19:10; Eph. 5:2; 1 Tim. 1:14–16; Titus 3:4–7), of blessing (Mark 10:13–16), and of forgiveness (Mark 2:10; Luke 23:34). Paul's personal experience led him to confess, "He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy" (Titus 3:5). Jesus' character of mercy was most vividly manifested on the cross when he prayed for the forgiveness of the crucifying soldiers and the cursing crowds (Luke 23:33–37).

HUMAN RESPONSE TO GOD'S MERCY

What is the proper response to God's mercy and compassion? God expects believers to show the same kind of mercy toward other people. One of the best examples is the parable of the unmerciful servant (Matt. 18:23–35). The central focus of this parable is on the unmerciful servant, to whom a tremendous mercy is shown by the king, but who refuses to show a little mercy to his fellow servant. The parable concludes with the king's statement that no mercy will be shown to those who do not show mercy and forgiveness to others. Hence, a forgiving attitude is a must for believers, who have received immeasurable mercy from God when he forgave their sins at the time of repentance. The Lord's Prayer also includes the believer's forgiveness of others as being inseparably linked to the request for forgiveness from God (Matt. 6:12). Jesus affirms this idea in a subsequent statement: "For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins" (6:14–15).

Mercy is one of the eight blessings in the Beatitudes: "Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy" (Matt. 5:7). Jesus' response to the critical Pharisees reveals that our merciful life should precede our religious life (9:13). According to the parable of the good Samaritan (Luke 10:25–37), the true neighbor is the one who shows mercy to the afflicted. Its conclusion, "Go and do likewise" (10:37), requires believers to show mercy to their suffering neighbors. At the last judgment the righteous are characterized by their lives of showing mercy to the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, the unclothed, the sick, and the imprisoned (Matt. 25:37–40). In Luke 6:36, Jesus summarizes the law of mercy: "Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful." According to James, "judgment without mercy will be shown to anyone who has not been merciful"; however, "mercy triumphs over judgment" (James 2:12–13). And according to the prophets, a merciless life is characteristic of godless people (Isa. 13:18; Jer. 6:23; 21:7; 50:42; Amos 1:11–12).

It is by God's mercy that believers can persevere during the time of suffering (2 Cor. 4:1). Their prayer is the channel through which they draw God's mercy. Hence, the writer of Hebrews exhorts believers to "approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy" (Heb. 4:16).

MERCY SEAT The mercy seat, or "atonement cover" (NIV, NLT), was the cover on the ark of the covenant in the tabernacle and the place of atonement for Israel (Exod. 25:21). It was made of pure gold, forty-five inches long, and twenty-seven inches wide (25:17). Above the mercy seat were two cherubim made of gold, one at each end (25:18–20). There, God spoke with Moses (Num. 7:89). Upon entering the holiest place, the priest was required to burn incense over the mercy seat; otherwise, he would face judgment and die (Lev. 16:13). On the Day of Atonement the blood of the bull and the goat was sprinkled on the mercy seat.

In the NT, the Greek term *hilastērion* is used for the mercy seat itself (Heb. 9:5) and for the "sacrifice of atonement" or "propitiation" (Rom. 3:25), the blood of which was dripped onto the mercy seat. In Rom. 3:25 Christ himself is identified as the *hilastērion*, the sacrifice of atonement for our sins.

MERED A descendant of David and the second of Ezrah's four sons, he married Bithiah (a daughter of Pharaoh) and also a Judean woman (1 Chron. 4:17–18). Each wife bore him several children.

MEREMOTH **(1)** The son of Uriah, he was a priest during the time of Ezra and Nehemiah who weighed the silver, gold, and temple vessels returned after the exile (Ezra 8:33), assisted with rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem (Neh. 3:4, 21), and witnessed the covenant renewal (Neh. 10:5). **(2)** A priest who returned from the exile with Zerubbabel (Neh. 12:3). **(3)** An Israelite who sent away his foreign wife during the reforms of Ezra (Ezra 10:36).

MERES One of seven top-level officials under King Xerxes (Ahasuerus) who advised him to put away Queen Vashti because of her refusal of the king's command to appear before the banquet (Esther 1:14).

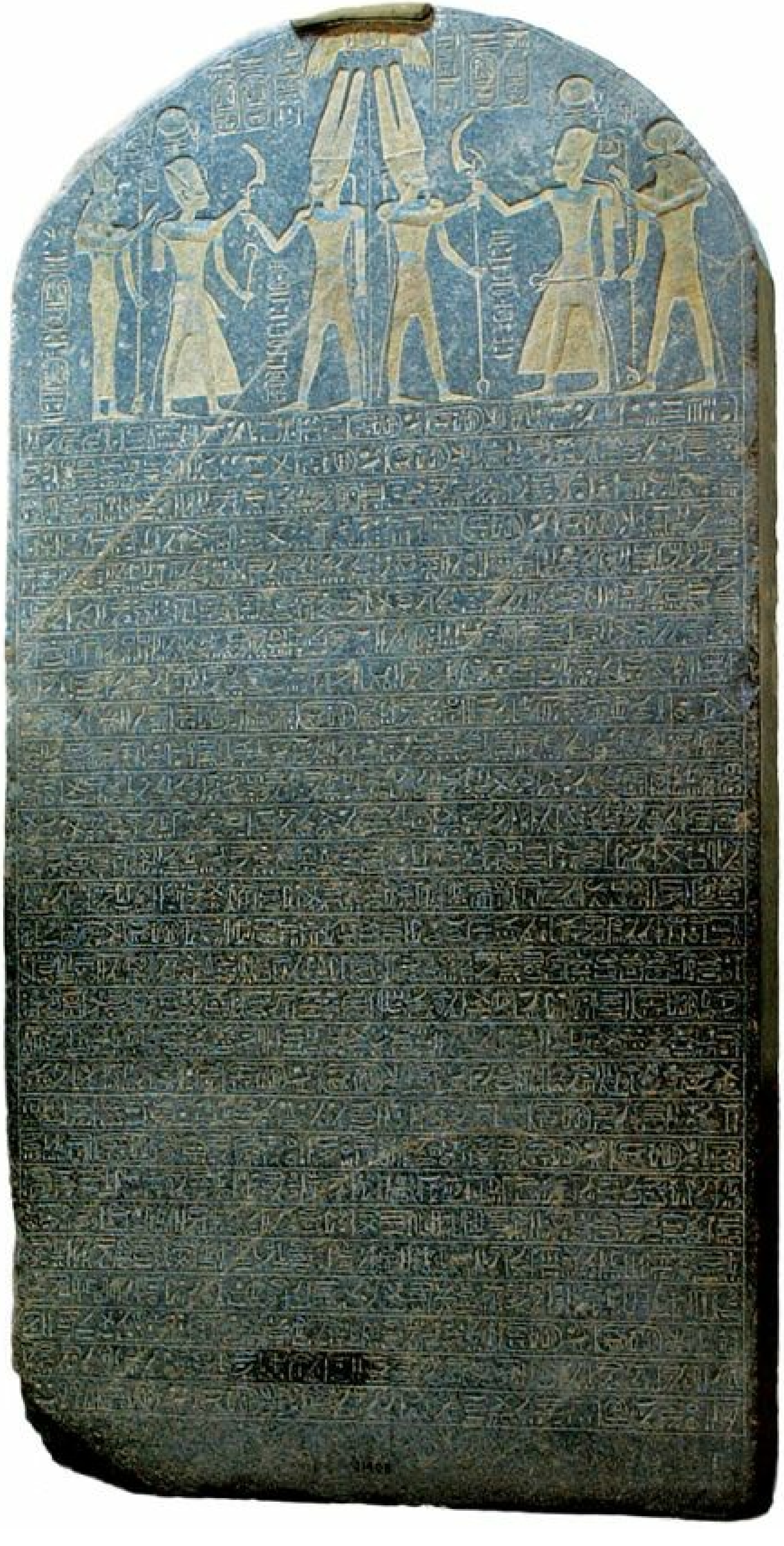
MERIBAH Meribah ("quarreling") is another name for Massah ("testing"), a location on the journey toward Mount Horeb (Sinai) where the Israelites grumbled against God because they had no water; Moses struck the rock at Horeb, and water flowed out (Exod. 17:7). Subsequent references to Meribah concern a similar incident in Kadesh after the Israelites had journeyed on from Horeb (Num. 20:13, 24; 27:14; Deut. 32:51; 33:8; Pss. 81:7; 95:8; 106:32). On this occasion Moses and Aaron, in getting water out of the rock, failed to honor God as holy, and for this they were denied entrance into Canaan. *See* also Massah; Meribah Kadesh.

MERIBAH KADESH In Ezek. 47:19 many modern versions translate the Hebrew words *meriboth qadesh* in the phrase *me meriboth qadesh* as a place name, as in the NIV: "waters of Meribah Kadesh" (NRSV: "waters of Meribath-kadesh"; TEV: "oasis of Kadesh Meribah"). The KJV translates the phrase as "waters of strife in Kadesh" (but cf. Num. 20:13; Deut. 32:51). The reference is to the town of Kadesh Barnea. *See also* Kadesh, Kadesh Barnea.

MERIBATH-KADESH *See* Meribah Kadesh.

MERIB-BAAL A son of Jonathan and a grandson of Saul (1 Chron. 8:34; 9:40). This name (with a disputed meaning that references the god Baal, possibly "contender of Baal") was later changed in 1–2 Samuel to "Mephibosheth" (possibly meaning "from the mouth of shame"). *See also* Mephibosheth.

MERNEPTAH This significant pharaoh of the Nineteenth Dynasty of Egypt is not mentioned in the Bible. However, he is very important because he erected a stela containing the first mention of the people "Israel" outside the Bible. Merneptah was the thirteenth son of Ramesses II (the late-date pharaoh of the exodus). Because of his father's great longevity, he came to the throne later in life and had to confront revolt on all sides. He first campaigned in Canaan against its cities (Ashkelon, Gezer, Yanoam, as well as against the people "Israel") around 1207 BC. He placed a relief depicting this campaign on the wall of the Karnak temple in Thebes (modern Luxor) and erected his stela that mentioned Israel by name within its inscription. This and other archaeological evidence of an Egyptian presence in Canaan in (what is often called) the period of the judges presents difficulties, but not insurmountable ones, for those interpreting an early-date exodus. The dating of the Merneptah Stela (c. 1207 BC) and Egyptian evidence in Canaan fit well for those holding to a late-date exodus (c. 1250 BC).



The Merneptah Stela

MERODACH *See* Marduk.

MERODACH-BALADAN *See* Marduk-Baladan.

MEROM The waters near the location of a surprise attack by Joshua on a large coalition of Canaanite kings under King Jabin of Hazor who had assembled to battle the Israelites (Josh. 11:1–7). The city is also mentioned in the annals of Thutmose III, Ramesses II, and Tiglath-pileser III. The traditional identification of the city with modern Meiron is disputed. Another possibility is the suggestion of the large Canaanite tell, Tell el-Khirbeh, which is east of Hazor.

MERONOTHITE A resident of Meronoth. This applied to Jehdeiah, herder of David's donkeys (1 Chron. 27:30), and Jadon, a postexilic rebuilder of Jerusalem's walls (Neh. 3:7). Apparently, it was associated with Mizpah.

MEROZ A town mentioned in the Song of Deborah (Judg. 5:23) whose inhabitants were condemned by the angel of the Lord for failing to participate in the battle, led by Deborah and Barak, against Sisera. There has been much speculation about its location. Some suggest Khirbet Marus, northwest of Hazor; Madon (Josh. 12:19); or (Shimron) Merom (Josh. 11:5; 12:20), but none of these sites are likely. The best that can be said is that it was located somewhere in or near the Jezreel Valley.

MESECH *See* Meshek.

MESHA **(1)** The king of Moab who, along with his father, Chemosh-yatti, was a vassal of the northern kingdom of Israel during the reigns of the northern Israelite kings Omri, Ahab, Ahaziah, and Joram (c. 885–840 BC). When Ahab died, Mesha rebelled against Ahab's son Ahaziah, withholding the annual tribute of one hundred thousand lambs and the wool of one hundred thousand rams (2 Kings 3:4–5). Ahaziah died after a brief reign and was replaced by his brother Joram, who enlisted King Jehoshaphat of Judah to help him attack Moab and restore it to servitude (2 Kings 3:7).

In the 2 Kings 3 account, Joram and Jehoshaphat attacked and utterly defeated Moab, but Mesha they besieged in the city of Kir Hareseth. Mesha could not escape, so he sacrificed his own son in plain view on the wall of the city to appease his god, Chemosh. This sacrifice disgusted the armies of Israel and Judah, and they left for home. Mesha considered this as Chemosh's divine deliverance due to his sacrifice, and he erected a stela, known as the Moabite Stone, with a Moabite inscription describing the occasion:

> I (am) Mesha, son of Chemosh—[. . .], king of Moab, the Dibonite—my father (had) reigned over Moab thirty years, and I reigned after my father,—(who) made this high place for Chemosh in Qarhoh [. . .] because he saved me from all the kings and caused me to triumph over all my adversaries. As for Omri, king of Israel, he humbled Moab many years (lit., days), for Chemosh was angry at his land. And his son followed him and he also said, "I will humble Moab." In my time he spoke (thus), but I have triumphed over him and over his house, while Israel hath perished for ever! (Now) Omri had occupied the land of Medeba, and (Israel) had dwelt there in his time and half the time of his son (Ahab), forty years; but Chemosh dwelt there in my time. (lines 1–9, translation by W. F. Albright in *ANET*)

(2) A leader in the tribe of Benjamin, he was the third of seven sons born in Moab to Shaharaim and his wife Hodesh, after Shaharaim had divorced Hushim and Baara (1 Chron. 8:9). **(3)** The firstborn son of Caleb and a great-grandson of Perez of the line of Judah (1 Chron. 2:42). **(4)** A place or region in northern Arabia. The sons of Joktan (great-great-grandson of Noah's son Shem) lived between Mesha and Sephar on the northern Arabian coast (Gen. 10:30).

MESHACH The Babylonian name given to Mishael by Nebuchadnezzar's chief official, Ashpenaz, as part of an attempt to turn him into a Babylonian official (Dan. 1:7). Along with Abednego and Shadrach, he is a Judahite companion of Daniel. The three companions later were appointed as administrators over the province of Babylon (2:49). After being accused of failing to worship Nebuchadnezzar's gods, they were cast into the fiery furnace. They were kept safe by a fourth "man," who looked like a "son of the gods" (3:25). Afterward, all three were promoted (3:8–30). The name "Meshach" likely means "who is what Aku [moon god] is," perhaps given to Mishael in an effort to mimic his Israelite name.

MESHA INSCRIPTION, MESHA STELA *See* Moabite Stone.

MESHECH *See* Meshek.

MESHEK **(1)** The sixth of Japheth's seven sons (Gen. 10:2; 1 Chron. 1:5). Listed in the Table of Nations, the descendants of Japheth inhabited Asia Minor, and Meshek's name is given to a region there. In Ps. 120:5 Meshek is placed in parallel with Kedar, perhaps bringing to mind a distant, warring people. Meshek and Tubal are linked together as trading partners (of slaves and copper vessels) with Tyre (Ezek. 27:13), and both are mentioned as part of the kingdom of Magog, ruled by Gog (38:2; 39:1). **(2)** A grandson of Shem, the eponymous ancestor of an Aramean tribe (1 Chron. 1:17). In Gen. 10:23, most Bible versions follow the Hebrew text in rendering his name as "Mash" (see NIV mg.). He is listed in the Table of Nations as the eponymous ancestor of a Syrian tribal group, possibly associated with Mount Masius (Tur Abdin), near the source of the Euphrates River in northern Mesopotamia, or with Akkadian Mashu, the Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon ranges of the Epic of Gilgamesh.

MESHELEMIAH A Korahite Levite who was a son of Kore and the father of Zechariah (1 Chron. 9:21; 26:1–2, 9). He was a tabernacle gatekeeper during the reign of David. His name may be equivalent with "Shelemiah" (1 Chron. 26:14; see NIV footnote) and "Shallum" (1 Chron. 9:17, 19, 31; Ezra 2:42; Neh. 7:45) and may refer to the same person.

MESHEZABEEL *See* Meshezabel.

MESHEZABEL **(1)** An ancestor of Meshullam, who made repairs in Jerusalem under the direction of Nehemiah (Neh. 3:4). **(2)** One of the "leaders of the people" (Neh. 10:14) who sealed the covenant with God following Ezra's public reading of the law (10:21). This may be the same person as the father of Pethahiah, the representative of the Judeans to the Persian king (11:24).

MESHILLEMITH *See* Meshillemoth.

MESHILLEMOTH **(1)** The father of Berekiah (2 Chron. 28:12), one of the Ephraimite leaders who confronted the Israelite army about enslaving the people of Judah and Jerusalem whom they had taken prisoner. **(2)** A priest who was the father of Meshullam and Ahzai and a son of Immer (1 Chron. 9:12 ["Meshillemith"]; Neh. 11:13).

MESHOBAB One the leaders of the tribe of Simeon who took the pastureland near Gedor by dispossessing the Hamites and the Meunites during the days of King Hezekiah (1 Chron. 4:34–41).

MESHULLAM **(1)** The father of Azaliah and grandfather of Shaphan, the secretary of King Josiah (2 Kings 22:3). **(2)** A son of Zerubbabel (1 Chron. 3:19). **(3)** The head of a clan in the tribe of Gad who resided in Bashan (1 Chron. 5:13). **(4)** A son of Elpaal, a Benjamite (1 Chron. 8:17). **(5)** The father of Sallu, a Benjamite clan leader who lived in Jerusalem after returning from the exile (1 Chron. 9:7; Neh. 11:7). **(6)** The son of Shephatiah, he was a Benjamite clan leader who lived in Jerusalem after returning from the exile (1 Chron. 9:8). **(7)** The father of Hilkiah, he was a member of the priestly line of Zadok (1 Chron. 9:11). **(8)** The father of Jahzerah and the son of Meshillemith, he was a member of the priestly Zadokite line (1 Chron. 9:12). **(9)** A descendant of Kohath appointed by King Josiah to oversee the temple repairs (2 Chron. 34:12).

(10) One of the leaders sent by Ezra to procure Levites to serve in the temple after the return from the exile (Ezra 8:16). He was one of the four men who opposed Ezra’s call to divorce foreign women (10:15) and probably also was the son of Bani listed as one of those who had married a foreign woman (10:29). **(11)** The son of Berekiah, he helped to repair the walls of Jerusalem (Neh. 3:4, 30). His daughter married Tobiah’s son Jehohanan (Neh. 6:18). **(12)** The son of Besodeiah, he helped to repair the Jeshanah Gate as part of Nehemiah’s rebuilding of Jerusalem (Neh. 3:6).

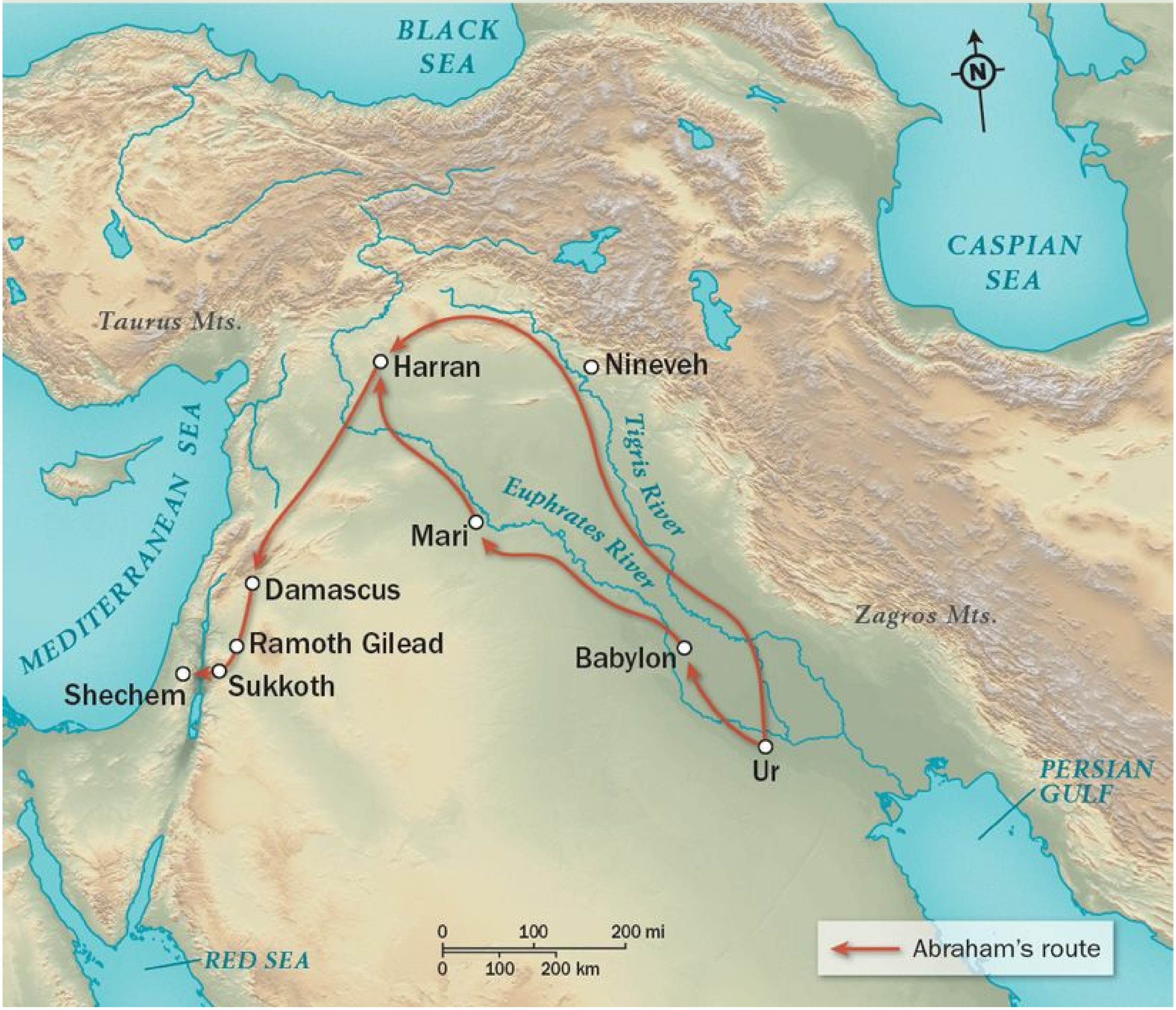
(13) One of the seven men who stood at Ezra’s left hand during the reading of the Book of the Law to the people of Jerusalem (Neh. 8:4). **(14)** A priest who, along with Nehemiah, other priests, and chiefs of the people, sealed the covenant renewal after the return from the exile (Neh. 10:7). **(15)** A chief of the people of Jerusalem who sealed the covenant renewal after the return from the exile (Neh. 10:20). **(16)** The head of the priestly house of Ezra during the time of the high priest Joiakim (Neh. 12:13). **(17)** The head of the priestly house of Ginnethon during the time of the high priest Joiakim (Neh. 12:16). **(18)** A gatekeeper who guarded the storerooms at the gates of Jerusalem in the time of high priest Joiakim (Neh. 12:25). **(19)** A leader of Judah who participated in the procession at the dedication ceremony for the rebuilt walls of Jerusalem (Neh. 12:33).

MESHULLEMETH The daughter of Haruz (from Jotbah), she was the wife of King Manasseh and the mother of Amon, who became king when he was twenty-two years old (2 Kings 21:19).

MESOBAITE *See* Mezobaite.

MESOPOTAMIA The fertile region of the Tigris and Euphrates valleys, bordered on the north by the Taurus Mountains and on the east by the Zagros Mountains (modern Iraq). The region extends from Turkey to the Persian Gulf. The northern part of this region is Aram Naharaim (“Aram of the two rivers”), often called “Mesopotamia” in some Bible translations (see Gen. 24:10; Deut. 23:4; Judg. 3:8; 1 Chron. 19:6 KJV, NASB, ESV). Abraham, Sarah, and their family were originally Arameans from Ur in southern Mesopotamia (Gen. 25:20; Deut. 26:5; cf. Acts 7:2). Later, Abraham and his family moved to the northern Mesopotamian city of Harran (Gen. 11:31). One boundary of the land that God promised to Abraham was the Euphrates River (Gen. 15:18). King David’s army fought against an Aramean army from Mesopotamia (1 Chron. 19:6; cf. Ps. 60:1 NKJV). Later, Judah was carried away into exile in Babylon, situated in Mesopotamia on the Euphrates River (2 Kings 24:14). Luke notes that residents of Mesopotamia were present on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:9).

ABRAHAM'S TRAVELS IN THE LAND OF MESOPOTAMIA


BLACK SEA
CASPIAN SEA
Taurus Mts.
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
Harran
Nineveh
Tigris River
Euphrates River
Mari
Damascus
Ramoth Gilead
Shechem
Sukkoth
Zagros Mts.
Babylon
Ur
PERSIAN GULF
RED SEA
N
0
100
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Abraham's route

MESSENGER The word "messenger" in Hebrew is *mal'ak*, and in Greek *angelos*. In both cases the word can signify either human messengers or divine beings called "angels." Angels are messengers from God. In 2 Cor. 12:7 Paul mentions a "messenger of Satan"; it is unclear whether this is an angel or a human being. Prophets can also be considered messengers from God (Hag. 1:13). In fact, the name of the prophet Malachi, author of the last book of the OT, means "my messenger." Paul calls Christians "messengers [NIV: "representatives"] of the churches" (2 Cor. 8:23). The word "evangelist" (Gk. *euangelistēs*) is built on two Greek terms, *eu* ("good") and *angellō* ("to announce"), and thus refers to a messenger who brings good news. Thus, any Christian who brings Christ's gospel is a human angel, on a mission from God.

MESSIAH The English word “messiah” derives from the Hebrew verb *mashakh*, which means “to anoint.” The Greek counterpart of the Hebrew word for “messiah” (*mashiakh*) is *christos*, which in English is “Christ.”

OLD TESTAMENT

In English translations of the Bible, the word “messiah” (“anointed one”) occurs rarely in the OT. In the OT, kings, prophets, and priests were “anointed” with oil as a means of consecrating or setting them apart for their respective offices. Prophets and priests anointed Israel’s kings (1 Sam. 16:1–13; 2 Sam. 2:4, 7). Samuel anointed Saul (1 Sam. 9:16; 10:1; 15:1) and David (1 Sam. 16:12–13). Later, Nathan the prophet and Zadok the priest anointed Solomon, the successor of King David (1 Kings 1:34). The word “anoint” occurs even earlier, in the book of Judges, in a parable about Abimelek becoming king (Judg. 9:7–15). In 1–2 Samuel and Psalms the king is sometimes called “the LORD’s anointed” (1 Sam. 16:6; 24:6; 26:9; Pss. 2:2; 18:50; 20:6). The anointing of priests occurs very early in Israelite tradition, in which Aaron and his sons are consecrated for their priestly service (Exod. 28:41; 30:30). In Num. 35:25 the high priest is anointed with “holy oil.” Sacred objects for use in the tabernacle also were anointed (Exod. 29:36; 30:26; Lev. 8:10–11). As for the anointing of prophets, God commanded Elijah to anoint Elisha as his successor (1 Kings 19:16). The prophet Isaiah also claimed to be anointed for his work of proclamation (Isa. 61:1–2).

The expectation for a “messiah,” or “anointed one,” arose from the promise given to David in the Davidic covenant (2 Sam. 7). David was promised that from his seed God would raise up a king who would reign forever on his throne. Hopes for such an ideal king began with Solomon and developed further during the decline (cf. Isa. 9:1–7) and especially after the collapse of the Davidic kingdom.

The harsh reality of exile prompted Israel to hope that God would rule in such a manner. A number of psalms reflect the desire that an ideal son of David would come and rule, delivering Israel from its current plight of oppression. Hence, in Ps. 2 God declares that his son (v. 7), who is the Lord’s anointed one (v. 2), will receive “the nations [as] your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession” (v. 8). God promises that “you will rule them with an iron scepter; you will dash them to pieces like pottery” (v. 9; see NIV footnote). In Ps. 89 the psalmist yearns for the establishment of David’s kingdom because God has been “very angry with your anointed one” (v. 38). Later, the psalmist pleads with God, “For the sake of your servant David, do not reject your anointed one” (Ps. 132:10). In the postexilic literature, Zerubbabel, for example, appears to be understood as a messianic figure. Speaking of Zerubbabel and Joshua, the angel says, “These are the two who are anointed to serve the Lord of all the earth” (Zech. 4:14).

APOCRYPHA AND PSEUDEPIGRAPHA

In some apocalyptic literature a messiah-like figure ushers in God’s kingdom, overthrowing the current evil powers that oppress God’s people. In *1 Enoch* the “son of man” (46.1–3) is an anointed figure (52.6) who will judge the kings and the mighty from his heavenly throne and will champion the cause of the faithful (46.4–8; 62.5). In *2 Baruch* “my anointed” (39.7; 40.1) will reign over the remnant in a place chosen by God (40.2). Finally, in a nonapocalyptic Jewish text, *Psalms of Solomon*, the author expects deliverance from the Roman oppressors and the corrupt Hasmonean dynasty by the “Lord Messiah” (18.7): “See, Lord, and raise up for them their king, the son of David, to rule over your servant Israel” (17.21). These texts confirm the diversity of first-century messianic expectations. Yet the most common hope centered on the “Davidic messiah,” the coming king from

David's line who would establish justice and righteousness and reign forever on David's throne.

NEW TESTAMENT

Jesus demonstrates great reticence in using the title "Messiah." In the Synoptic Gospels he almost never explicitly claims it. The two key Synoptic passages where Jesus accepts the title are themselves enigmatic. In Mark's version of Peter's confession (8:29), Jesus does not explicitly affirm Peter's claim, "You are the Messiah," but instead goes on to speak of the suffering of the Son of Man. Later, Jesus is asked by the high priest Caiaphas at his trial, "Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?" (Mark 14:60). In Mark 14:62, Jesus answers explicitly with "I am," while in Matt. 26:64, he uses the more enigmatic "You have said so." Jesus then goes on to describe himself as the exalted Son of Man who will sit at Yahweh's right hand.

Jesus no doubt avoided the title because it risked communicating an inadequate understanding of the kingdom and his messianic role. Although the Messiah was never a purely political figure in Judaism, he was widely expected to destroy Israel's enemies and secure its physical borders. *Psalms of Solomon* portrays the coming "son of David" as one who will "destroy the unrighteous rulers" and "purge Jerusalem from Gentiles who trample her to destruction" (*Pss. Sol.* 17.21–23). To distance himself from such thinking, Jesus never refers to himself as "son of David" and "king of Israel/the Jews" as other characters do in the Gospels (Matt. 12:23; 21:9, 15; Mark 10:47; 15:2; John 1:49; 12:13; 18:33). When Jesus was confronted by a group of Jews who wanted to make him into such a king, he resisted them (John 6:15).

In Mark 12:35–37, Jesus also redefines traditional understandings of the son of David in his short discussion on Ps. 110:1: he is something more than a mere human son of David. Combining Jesus' implicit affirmation that he is the Messiah in Mark 8:30 with his teaching about the Son of Man in 8:31, we see that Jesus is a Messiah who will "suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the teachers of the law" (8:31) and through whom redemption will come (10:45). Jesus came not to defeat the Roman legions, but to bring victory over Satan, sin, and death.

In the book of Acts, Peter reaffirms the messiahship of Jesus at the conclusion of his sermon: "Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah" (2:36 [cf. 5:42; 9:22]). Since it is now apparent that through suffering and death Jesus the Messiah would effect salvation, there is no risk of the Jews misunderstanding Christ's messiahship. However, he is still a deliverer and savior like the Lord's anointed of the OT, but he brings about this salvation through unexpected means (3:18–20). Further, Jesus is now the ascended and exalted messianic king in the style of Ps. 110:1 (cf. Acts 2:34–36), which he predicted during his earthly ministry (Mark 14:62). The reality of Jesus' exalted messianic status is so pervasive in early Christian thinking that the title *Christos* becomes a synonym for "Jesus" or is used in combination with "Jesus." And indeed, the earliest followers of Jesus after the resurrection become know as *Christianoi* (Acts 11:26).

MESSIANIC SECRET On several occasions Jesus commanded demons or individuals to refrain from announcing his identity or making known a miracle that he performed. These commands to keep silent are found in Luke and Matthew, but more frequently in Mark (1:25, 34, 44; 3:12; 5:43; 7:36; 8:26, 30; 9:9). Since Jesus came to reveal himself as Israel's true Messiah, these prohibitions against the public proclamation of his identity and certain miracles that he performed are puzzling. This feature in Mark's Gospel has been called the "messianic secret." Several examples are as follows:

Mark 1:24–25: Jesus silenced an evil spirit that identified him as the “Holy One of God.”

Mark 1:34: Jesus prohibited demons from speaking because they knew who he was (see also 3:12).

Mark 1:44: Jesus commanded a leper whom he healed not to tell anyone.

Mark 5:43: Jesus commanded those present at the healing of Jairus’s daughter not to tell anyone.

Mark 7:36: After healing a deaf and mute man, Jesus ordered those present not to tell anyone.

Mark 8:30: When Peter confessed Jesus to be the Christ, Jesus commanded him not to tell anyone.

Mark 9:9: After the transfiguration, Jesus commanded Peter, James, and John not to tell anyone what they saw until after his resurrection.

Several explanations have been proposed concerning the motive behind the so-called messianic secret and the commands to keep silent. One interpretation, proposed by William Wrede in 1901 in his book *The Messianic Secret*, attempted to explain why Jesus was not accepted as the Messiah during his earthly ministry. Wrede argued that Jesus never conceived of himself as the Messiah. Rather, the early church designated him as such after the resurrection. Thus Mark, writing for the church, fashioned his Gospel, inserting these passages to make it appear that Jesus privately taught the disciples that he really was the Messiah, even though he prohibited this proclamation in public. Others have proposed that Mark was actually attempting to soften Jesus’ claims to be the Messiah.

There are, however, better explanations of why Jesus sometimes instructed individuals not to broadcast his identity or tell of a miracle that he performed. In each case or context the reason for silence is probably slightly different. A frequent explanation is that Jesus did not want to encourage false messianic expectations. Many Jews imagined the Messiah to be a political and/or military figure who would deliver the nation from its Gentile oppressors. Most Jews did not expect or welcome a suffering Christ. From God’s perspective, hailing him as Messiah while rejecting or being ignorant of his redemptive plans would have been counterproductive to his purpose. In light of this, some interpreters maintain that the veil of secrecy was lifted as Jesus neared Passion Week (Mark 10:47–48; 12:6–7; 14:62).

A second reason for silence, regarding those cases where demons proclaimed his identity, was that God had sovereignly chosen men and women to be his witnesses, not wicked spirits. Even in the cases where demonic announcements concerning Jesus were accurate, their advertisement surely would skew the character of the message and hinder its reception.

Third, Jesus withheld further revelation of his identity and messianic power from those who were rejecting his claims (Matt. 13:16; Mark 4:24–25).

Fourth, miracles sometimes conjured up the wrong kind of faith. Multitudes sought miracles without embracing the Messiah (Mark 1:32–38; John 6:2, 14–15, 26).

Fifth, sometimes Jesus’ prohibitions against identifying him were disobeyed, and in most cases the command to silence did not hinder the amazement and wonder at what had taken place (Mark 1:27, 45; 5:42; 7:36–37). This inability to keep quiet regarding who Jesus was and what he did reinforced the uniqueness of his identity and emphasized how remarkable the Messiah and his miracles were.

Finally, an overly zealous response to Jesus endangered his purpose of completing his earthly ministry according to God’s timetable. This is most clearly stated in John’s Gospel (2:4; 7:6, 8, 30; 8:20; 12:23, 27; 13:1; 16:32; 17:1). Jesus needed to fully proclaim his message to the nation and prepare his disciples before his death (Mark 1:38). A premature arrest and trial would have defeated this purpose.

MESSIAS *See* Messiah.

METHEG AMMAH A term of uncertain meaning in 2 Sam. 8:1 describing David's conquest of the Philistines. Most translations simply transliterate the Hebrew term as "Metheg Ammah," perhaps suggesting that it was a place name. By contrast, the NASB ventures the translation of "chief city," as in "capital city." In 1 Chron. 18:1 "Gath" replaces "Metheg Ammah," which suggests that Gath had become the chief Philistine city. Literally, "Metheg Ammah" means something like "bridle of the mother," perhaps using a figure of a bridle as a tool for exacting submission.

METHUSELAH Dying at 969 years of age, he is the oldest human reported in the Bible. He lived before the flood and was the son of Enoch and the father of Lamech (Gen. 5:25–27). He is remembered later in Scripture in the opening genealogy of Chronicles (1 Chron. 1:3) and in Luke's genealogy of Jesus (Luke 3:37).

METHUSHAEL A descendant of Cain, he was the great-grandson of Enoch and the father of Lamech (Gen. 4:18 [KJV: "Methusael"). Some scholars consider "Methushael" to be a variant of "Methuselah," the son of Enoch and the father of Lamech in the lineage of Seth (Gen. 5:21, 25).

MEUNIM One of the men whose descendants are listed as temple servants after the return from exile in Babylon (Ezra 2:50 [KJV: "Mehunim"]; Neh. 7:52). *See also* Meunites.

MEUNITES A Transjordanian people who were destroyed and dispossessed by Israelite clans from the tribe of Simeon seeking pastureland for their flocks near the area of Gedor during the reign of Hezekiah (1 Chron. 4:41). The name may derive from the town name "Ma'an" (or "Maon"), which is about twelve miles southeast of Petra. The Meunites are also included in the list of peoples in Philistia that God helped King Uzziah to subdue (2 Chron. 26:7 [KJV: "Mehunims"]). The descendants of Meunim are listed as temple servants among those returning to Jerusalem after the exile (Ezra 2:50; Neh. 7:52). The designation here may refer to servants who perhaps were from the town of Maon or, alternatively, to descendants of Meunites who were taken captive.

ME-ZAHAB A grandparent of Mehetabel, the wife of King Hadad (Hadar) of Edom (Gen. 36:39; 1 Chron. 1:50). Alternatively, some consider the name to indicate a location (meaning "waters of gold") that was the home of Matred, a parent of Mehetabel. If "Me-Zahab" is a place name, it perhaps can be identified with Dizahab (Deut. 1:1).

MEZOBAITE Possibly a title of Jaasiel, one of David's mighty warriors (1 Chron. 11:47 [KJV: "Mesobaite"]). Some versions (REB, TEV) emend the text to agree with the reading in 1 Chron. 18:3: "from Zobah."

MEZUZAH Hebrew term for the side posts of a city gate or doorposts of a building (Judg. 16:3; 1 Sam. 1:9; 1 Kings 6:33). Blood from the Passover lamb was applied to the doorposts of each Israelite residence in Egypt (Exod. 12:7). The Israelites were commanded to write God's commands on their hearts and their doorposts (Deut. 6:1–9). Later, this command was taken literally, and God's commandments were attached to the doorposts. In later Jewish tradition the term refers to a small glass or metal box, affixed to the right-hand doorpost, that contains small parchment scrolls with the words of the Shema (Deut. 6:4–9; cf. 11:13–21) written on them. A mezuzah parchment was found at

Qumran.

שומר
דלתות
ישראל

A modern Jewish mezuzahv

MIAMIN *See* Mijamin.

MIBHAR The son of Hagri, he was one of David's thirty mighty warriors (1 Chron. 11:38). In 1 Chron. 11:38 the Hebrew is *mibkhar ben-hagri* ("Mibhar son of Hagri"); the parallel text, 2 Sam.

23:36, exhibits a copying error of the Hebrew: *mitsobah bani haggadi* ("from Zobah, Bani the Gadite").

MIBSAM **(1)** The fourth of the twelve sons of Ishmael, ancestors of Arab tribes (Gen. 25:13; 1 Chron. 1:29). **(2)** A member of the tribe of Simeon, he was the son of Shallum and the father of Mishma (1 Chron. 4:25).

MIBZAR **(1)** An Edomite chief and his clan (Gen. 36:42; 1 Chron. 1:53). **(2)** Mibzar may also be a place name, identified as the location Mabsara in northern Edom or Bozrah in Moab (Gen. 36:33; Amos 1:12). The name means "fortified city" (cf. Ps. 108:10).

MICA *See* Mika.

MICAH The name "Micah" is related to the names "Mica/Mika," "Micaiah," "Michael," and "Micayahu." The meaning of all these names pertains to the incomparability of Israel's God ("who is like Yahweh/God?"). **(1)** A man from the hill country of Ephraim during the period of the judges (Judg. 17–18), also called "Micayahu," in Hebrew (Judg. 17:1, 4). It is ironic in this story that a man whose name points to the incomparability of Yahweh is portrayed as a thief and as one who established an idolatrous cult shrine (Judg. 17:1–5). This story graphically illustrates how in the time of the judges "everyone did as they saw fit" (Judg. 17:6). **(2)** A son of Mephibosheth (Merib-Baal) and a great-grandson of Saul from the tribe of Benjamin (1 Chron. 8:34; 9:40), also called "Mika" (2 Sam. 9:12). **(3)** The firstborn son of Uzziel and a descendant of Kohath from the tribe of Levi (1 Chron. 23:20; 24:24–25). **(4)** The son of Shimei and the father of Reaiah from the tribe of Reuben (1 Chron. 5:5). **(5)** A prophet from Moresheth in the Judean Shephelah (Jer. 26:18; Mic. 1:1). A contemporary of Isaiah, he prophesied in the late eighth century BC during the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah. **(6)** The father of Abdon (Acbor), who was one of those sent to Huldah by King Josiah to inquire about the Book of the Law (2 Chron. 34:20). He is also called "Micaiah" (2 Kings 22:12).

MICAH, BOOK OF Micah, the sixth of the Minor Prophets, presents a powerful message of judgment and salvation. The book contains several memorable passages, including a dramatic call for justice, mercy, and humility (6:6–8).

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The superscription (1:1) situates the prophet's work during the reigns of Jotham (758–743 BC), Ahaz (733–727 BC), and Hezekiah (727–698 BC), kings of Judah. We do not know how far into Jotham's reign or how deeply into Hezekiah's reign the start and the finish of his ministry should be located. Jotham's father, Uzziah, had led Judah to heights of prosperity unseen since the time of Solomon, as had his northern counterpart, Jeroboam II. However, the outward success was accompanied by spiritual weakness, so both the north and the south began to unravel at different paces during Micah's ministry, though the reign of Hezekiah proved to be a spiritual shot in the arm for the ailing Judah.

Israel and Judah enjoyed expansion and prosperity in the mid-eighth century BC, due in part at least to the weakness of Assyria. All that changed with the rise of the powerful Tiglath-pileser III (r. 744–727 BC). He strengthened Assyria at home and then expanded his boundaries. Ahaz was the king who appealed to Tiglath-pileser III to aid him against his northern adversaries, Pekah of Israel and Rezin of Damascus. The end result was the incorporation of Syria into the Assyrian Empire and the subjugation of Israel and eventually Judah. Indeed, during Micah's life the Assyrians, under Shalmaneser V and Sargon II, took the northern kingdom, exiled its inhabitants, and incorporated it into their empire (722 BC). Judah remained independent but paid heavy tribute. During this period, Judah under Hezekiah almost lost its independence when another Assyrian king, Sennacherib, attacked Judah in 701 BC in response to the Judean king's alliance with Marduk-Baladan of Babylon. Due to Hezekiah's faith, God preserved Judah for the moment.

The superscription also names Micah as author of the oracles collected in the book. His name means "who is like Yahweh?" His hometown was Moresheth, about twenty-five miles southwest of Jerusalem. He is mentioned once outside this book, in Jer. 26:17–19. When King Jehoiakim wanted to put Jeremiah to death, a few elders evoked the memory of Micah, who preached hard things during the reign of Hezekiah. That king did not put Micah to death; he repented, and the kingdom was saved.

LITERARY CONSIDERATIONS AND OUTLINE

Micah is a collection of prophetic oracles of judgment and salvation. The structure is difficult to follow. Occasionally, the chronological setting of particular oracles can be inferred, but their order in the book is not according to chronology. It does appear, however, that the texts are grouped into two rounds of judgment followed by salvation oracles, which can be outlined roughly as follows:

I. Superscription (1:1)

II. First Round of Judgment and Salvation Oracles (1:2–5:15)
    A. God's judgment of apostasy and social sin in Samaria and Judah (1:2–3:12)
    B. God's word of hope in Israel (4:1–5:15)

III. Second Round of Judgment and Salvation Oracles (6:1–7:20)
    A. God's dispute with Israel (6:1–8)
    B. God's reproach for Israel's social sins (6:9–16)
    C. The prophet laments Israel's condition (7:1–7)
    D. Psalms of hope and praise (7:8–20)

Micah, like his better-known contemporary Isaiah, was a master of Hebrew poetry. He employed tight parallelisms, vivid images, and impressive wordplays (the oracle in 1:8–16 is a particularly compelling example).

THEOLOGICAL MESSAGE

Micah was commissioned to bring a message of judgment against his generation. They had sinned and deserved punishment. Legal language is found in Micah's oracles, as he was sent by God to press a case against those who had broken the law of the covenant (see 1:2; 6:1–5). He speaks against both civil (3:1–3) and religious (2:6–11; 3:11) leaders.

However, as with many prophets, Micah's message of judgment is followed with hope in the form of salvation oracles. Among these, 5:1–2 points out that the promises to David are not null and void but will be realized in the future.

NEW TESTAMENT CONNECTIONS

Micah addressed his message to his generation, but the NT authors recognized that it had continuing importance for their situation. For instance, Matt. 2:5–6 refers to Mic. 5:2 in reference to Jesus, who was a David-like ruler born in Bethlehem.

MICAIAH **(1)** The son of Imlah, he was a faithful prophet who contradicted the false prophets and predicted King Ahab's death, for which he was imprisoned (1 Kings 22; 2 Chron. 18). His commissioning and vision of God's throne room are similar to Isa. 6. **(2)** The father of Akbor (Abdon), who was one of those sent to Huldah by King Josiah to inquire about the Book of the Law (2 Kings 22:12). He is also called "Micah" (2 Chron. 34:20). **(3)** The mother of King Abijah of Judah (2 Chron. 13:2 NIV mg.), she is also called "Maakah" (1 Kings 15:2; 2 Chron. 11:20). **(4)** One of five officials sent by King Jehoshaphat to teach in the towns of Judah (2 Chron. 17:7). **(5)** An ancestor of the Asaphite musician Zechariah, who participated in the dedication of the Jerusalem wall (Neh. 12:35). **(6)** One of the priests who blew trumpets at the dedication of the Jerusalem wall (Neh. 12:41). **(7)** The son of Gemariah and grandson of Shaphan, he was an official of King Jehoiakim who reported Baruch's reading of Jeremiah's oracles to other officials of the king (Jer. 36:11–13).

MICE *See* Mouse.

MICHA *See* Micah; Micaiah; Mika.

MICHAEL **(1)** The father of Sethur, a leader of the tribe of Asher who was sent with eleven others to explore Canaan (Num. 13:13). **(2)** The head of a clan of the tribe of Gad (1 Chron. 5:13). **(3)** An ancestor of the Michael in 1 Chron. 5:13 (1 Chron. 5:14). **(4)** An ancestor of Asaph, a worship leader during the time of David (1 Chron. 6:40). **(5)** A son of Izrahiah who was a chief within the tribe of Issachar (1 Chron. 7:3). **(6)** A descendant of Benjamin through Beriah (1 Chron. 8:16). **(7)** A military leader of the tribe of Manasseh. He and his unit of one thousand men defected to David at Ziklag (1 Chron. 12:20). **(8)** The father of Omri, a military officer of the tribe of Issachar (1 Chron. 27:1). **(9)** A brother of King Jehoram of Judah whom Jehoram put to death after securing the throne (2 Chron. 21:1–4). **(10)** The father of Zebadiah, a man who accompanied Ezra to Jerusalem from Babylon (Ezra 8:8). **(11)** One of the few angelic beings whose names are identified in the Bible. Scripture refers to Michael as "one of the chief princes" (Dan. 10:13), a "great prince" (Dan. 12:1), and an "archangel" (Jude 1:9), indicating that Michael is a high-ranking leader of other angels (Rev. 12:7).

A medieval Christian depiction of the archangel Michael (Istanbul, Turkey)

MICHAH *See* Micah.

MICHAIAH *See* Micaiah.

MICHAL The younger daughter of Saul (1 Sam. 14:49) and a wife of David.

Saul used the offer of his daughters in marriage to try to kill his young rival David. Saul offered his older daughter, Merab, to David in exchange for his help in fighting the Philistines. Saul's hope was that David would die in battle against the Philistines. But David demurred, and Saul gave her to Adriel of Meholah. When Saul learned that his younger daughter, Michal, loved David, he offered her to him. When David said that he could not pay the bride-price, Saul substituted one hundred Philistine foreskins for money, hoping that David would lose his life in the attempt to get them. However, David succeeded and married Michal, thus establishing a link to the royal house, a relationship that helped him in the future in his bid to become king of the northern tribes (2 Sam. 3:13–16).

Michal loved David early in their relationship, even working on his behalf against her father (1 Sam. 19:11–17). But it is never clear that David loved her, and after David fled Saul's presence, Saul gave her to Paltiel (1 Sam. 25:44). When David became king of the north, she was forced to return to him (2 Sam. 3:13–16). She showed her contempt for David after he danced before the ark of the covenant (2 Sam. 6:16–23). For this, God did not allow her to bear children.

MICHMASH *See* Mikmash.

MICHMETHATH *See* Mikmethath.

MICHRI *See* Mikri.

MICHTAM *See* Miktam.

MICMASH *See* Mikmash.

MICMETHATH *See* Mikmethath.

MICRI *See* Mikri.

MIDDAY A general term for the middle segment of daylight hours; noontime. “Midday” occurs seven times in the OT (Deut. 28:29; 1 Kings 18:29; Ps. 91:6; Song 1:7; Isa. 59:10; Jer. 15:8; Zeph. 2:4). *See also* Noon.

MIDDIN A town in the desert area of the territory allotted to the tribe of Judah (Josh. 15:61). Codex Alexandrinus of the LXX reads “Madon.”

MIDDLE GATE A gate of Jerusalem mentioned in Jer. 39:3. The king of Babylon’s officials sat at this gate during the capture of Jerusalem. The gate was located probably on the original city wall of the City of David before the city expanded to the north. An Iron Age gate was excavated in the Ophel Hill excavations, perhaps the Middle Gate of Jeremiah. The incident at the gate references the earlier message that Jeremiah had for Zedekiah when he prophesied that the king of Babylon and the Chaldeans would gather in the center of the city (Jer. 21:4).

MIDDLE WALL *See* Wall, Dividing.

MIDIAN, MIDIANITES Midian was one of the sons of Abraham by his wife Keturah (Gen. 25:1–2). Just before dying, Abraham leaves everything to Isaac and sends Midian and his brothers away “to the land of the east” (25:5–6). The biblical narrative regards him as the progenitor of the Midianites, who inhabited what is now southern Jordan and northern Saudi Arabia. The relations between the Israelites and the Midianites over the next centuries are generally adversarial. Moses’ experience is the exception: After fleeing Egypt, Moses arrives in Midian, marries a Midianite woman, and has an amicable relationship with Jethro, her father (also named Reuel), who was also a priest (Exod. 2–3). Jethro even accompanies the Israelites during part of their wilderness wanderings and gives Moses advice on leading the people (Exod. 18).

The remaining references to the Midianites in the OT are largely antagonistic. In Genesis, the merchants who buy Joseph from his brothers and take him down to Egypt are Midianite (37:25–36). (The merchants are also referred to as Ishmaelites in the same narrative, and it may well be that the term “Ishmaelite” could both refer to Ishmaelites proper and serve to denote Arabic nomadic peoples in general; see also Judg. 8:22–24.) In Numbers, the Midianites join the Moabites in attempting to stop the Israelite advance through their territory, hiring Balaam to curse them (Num. 22–24). Although this attempt fails, because God will not allow Balaam to curse the Israelites, idolatrous sexual relations between the Israelites and the Midianites prompt God to put a plague on his own people (Num. 25). One of God’s last instructions to Moses before his death is to make war against the Midianites to exact revenge for their causing the Israelites to sin (Num. 31). On the other hand, when the Israelites continue their cycle of sin in the promised land, God delivers them to other nations, including the Midianites (Judg. 6–9). Israelite victories over Midian, given to them by God, are celebrated in various later passages in the OT (Ps. 83:9; Isa. 9:4; 10:26; Hab. 3:7).

MIDRASH Rabbinic commentary on the Hebrew Bible, either the text or a biblical event. “Midrash” (pl. “midrashim”) is a noun derived from the verb *darash*, meaning “to seek” or “to inquire.” “Midrash” can refer to the commentary on a single passage, such as a midrash on Gen. 1, or to a whole collection of midrashim, such as *Genesis Rabbah*. It may also refer to the process by which ancient rabbis interpreted Scripture. Rabbinic midrash seeks theological and halakic answers to contemporary concerns; thus, it is concerned with the application of Scripture to various aspects of life.

RABBINIC MIDRASH

Midrash uses Scripture to interpret Scripture and uses the Bible as a whole, unified book. Although context is not ignored altogether, midrash juxtaposes verses from throughout the Hebrew Bible in order to illuminate a given text or illustrate a point. Verses are strung together to elucidate a theme that the text suggests either implicitly or explicitly. Within this system of Scripture interpreting Scripture, the Pentateuch holds pride of place as the center of the biblical witness. In rabbinic midrash, often the Prophets and the Writings do not have independent voices separate from the Pentateuch but serve a supporting role.

At times, the juxtaposition of verses that occur in midrash seems arbitrary, but this is not the case. A set of midrashic rules, *middot*, governs how the verses of Scripture are to be used and how argumentation is to be formed. Over time, the rules became more elaborate, but their earliest statement is attributed to the pre–AD 70 rabbi Hillel in the Babylonian Talmud. He lists seven rules:

1. Argument from the less significant to more significant, and vice versa.
2. Argument by analogy when Scripture uses identical expressions.
3. A statement in one verse applies to all topically related verses.
4. Same as the principle in three, but derived from two verses, not just one.
5. Argument from general to particular, and vice versa.
6. Argument from a similar expression found in another passage.
7. Argument from context.

The rabbinic rules of scriptural interpretation are similar to rules for Hellenistic rhetoric and Roman legal argument and thus reflect Hellenistic and Roman influence.

Rabbinic midrash can be characterized broadly as halakic (developing rules for Sabbath observance, ritual purity, sacrifice, etc.) and haggadic (theological, ethical, and whatever does not fall under halakic). Some bodies of rabbinic midrash explore a book of the Bible more or less verse by verse, and others are topical. Some midrashic works are homiletical in nature; they preserve sermon material from synagogue services.

MIDRASH IN THE BIBLE

Although the large compilations of midrash are rabbinic and are later than the Bible, midrashic material is also found much earlier. Midrash has its origins in the Bible. The clearest example is Chronicles, which in many respects is a midrash on Samuel and Kings. At Qumran, we find literature that can be classified as rewritten Scripture, such as the *Temple Scroll*, the book of *Jubilees*, and the *Genesis Apocryphon*, which have midrashic features. The Qumran Pesharim are also midrashic, although of a less sophisticated nature than the later rabbinic midrash, and seem to employ the *middot*.

The NT contains examples of midrashic material. Jesus' teaching in the Gospels includes some midrashic material. In Luke 4:16–21, Jesus reads from the scroll of Isaiah and interprets the passage as applying to himself. Jesus is delivering a *petikhah*, a short exposition on a biblical text outside the main synagogue sermon. When debating with the Sadducees over the resurrection, Jesus gives midrashic comment to Exod. 3:6 (Luke 20:27–40). The apostle Paul engages in midrash even more explicitly: for example, he applies Deut. 25:4, concerning not muzzling an ox while it is threshing grain, to the idea that a minister is worthy of being paid for work (1 Cor. 9:9; 1 Tim. 5:18). Paul is arguing from the lesser to the greater in his application of Torah to his contemporary situation.

The most extended midrash in the NT is the book of Hebrews. For example, in Heb. 1–2 the writer applies numerous quotations from the Psalter to Jesus in order to show how he is greater than the angels. In Heb. 4 the writer, through an interpretation of Ps. 95:11, does a midrash on entering into God's rest, by which he applies God's resting from his work (Gen. 2:2) to Christians' entering that rest because of the unbelief of Israel in the wilderness. It appears that the author is forming an argument by analogy in relating Gen. 2:2 and Ps. 95:11.

It can be demonstrated that Jews employed midrashic techniques in their interpretation of Scriptures centuries before the earliest rabbinic midrash compilations were created. We see these techniques in Qumran Pesharim, Philo's writings, and in the NT. The rabbis made use of long-established interpretive techniques and made them more sophisticated. The difference between Qumranite, ancient Christian, and rabbinic interpretation of Scripture was one of emphasis. For the Qumranites, all Scripture had to speak of their community, which was the true, believing community in the end of days. For the Christians, all Scripture had to speak of Jesus and the salvation that he brought. For the rabbis, all Scripture upheld Torah and obedience to that Torah as the center of Jewish life.

MIDWIFE During childbirth a woman would squat on a birthstool, and a midwife often assisted the birthing process (*see also* Stool). Whether they were older female relatives or friends of the mother, their duties could include cutting the umbilical cord, cleansing the baby, rubbing it down with salt (purpose still unknown), and wrapping the baby in strips of cloth (Ezek. 16:4). A midwife assured Rachel of a safe delivery of her son (Gen. 35:17), and another determined the firstborn of twins by tying a scarlet cord on his hand (Gen. 38:27–30). Pharaoh instructed two midwives to kill all the male infants of the Hebrew women. They refused because of their fear of God and were rewarded with families of their own (Exod. 1:15–22).

MIGDAL EDER A location where Jacob camped after leaving Bethel and finally arriving home near Hebron. The name means “tower of the flock,” a phrase familiar from Mic. 4:8 (ESV, NASB). If the location is the same, the parallel line identifies it as the “stronghold of Daughter Zion,” and thus should be located more precisely near Jerusalem.

MIGDAL EL This fortified city, whose name means “tower of god/God,” was in the territory allotted to the tribe of Naphtali (Josh. 19:38). The location is probably in northern Galilee.

MIGDAL GAD This fortified city, whose name means “tower of Gad,” was in the Shephelah (lowland area) near Lachish and was part of the territory allotted to the tribe of Judah (Josh. 15:37).

MIGDOL This name is associated with several different places. The location of each of these sites is uncertain, and the possibility that some of them may refer to the same location cannot be ruled out. However, since the Hebrew word *migdol*, which means “tower” or “fortress,” became an Egyptian loanword used as a place name for several military stations on Egypt’s boundaries, it is likely that multiple locations are designated by this name. The correspondence found at Tell el-Amarna refers to Migdol, but not to its precise location.

(1) A town located on the route of the exodus. In Exod. 14:2; Num. 33:7 it is referred to as being near the place where the Israelites camped before they crossed the Red Sea. The biblical narrator mentions Migdol along with Baal Zephon to help locate Pi Hahiroth for the reader. However, the location of all these sites is debated, and the very route that the Israelites took out of Egypt is the subject of much controversy. Migdol must be in the eastern Nile Delta region, but the exact site is uncertain. For the location of this Migdol, scholars have proposed Tell el-Her, Tell el-Maskhuta, and the ancient fortress of Serapeum. However, Tell el-Her would be too far north to fit with the biblical exodus narratives (though it may be identified with the Migdol of either Jer. 44:1; 46:14; or Ezek. 29:10 [see below]), and Serapeum would be too far west.

(2) A main residential location of Israelites in Lower Egypt in the late seventh and early sixth centuries BC (Jer. 44:1; 46:14). Its location is uncertain, and it is possible that it is identical with the Migdol of Exod. 14:2; Num. 33:7. **(3)** A location in northern Egypt. Ezekiel 29:10 refers to it along with Syene (NIV: “Aswan”) as geographical extremes of Egypt’s boundaries, with Syene used for the southern point and Migdol for the opposite northern extreme. This Migdol may be the Magdolum mentioned in the *Antonini Itinerarium* (a third-century AD register of the stations and distances along roads of the Roman Empire), around twelve miles from Pelusium, but its identification is uncertain.

MIGHTY WARRIORS David’s elite warriors (2 Sam. 23:8–39; 1 Chron. 11:11–47). The list is textually difficult and may not be as neatly organized as the NIV’s division into “the Three” and “the Thirty” suggests. They may be arranged by rank, starting with “chief captain”; then “three,” an interim rank; and then “thirty.” This could explain the closing note that there were thirty-seven in all. The last warrior mentioned in Samuel is Uriah the Hittite.

MIGRON A town or region (1 Sam. 14:2; Isa. 10:28) in the territory of Benjamin. Saul and six hundred of his soldiers encamped here outside Gibeah, northeast of Jerusalem, when they went up against the Philistines. This area is described as being south of Mikmash. The town in Isaiah is described as being between Aiath and Mikmash, or north of Mikmash. If Migron indicates a region, the issue is resolved.

MIJAMIN **(1)** A priest contemporary with David who was assigned the sixth of twenty-four positions in the priestly order of service (1 Chron. 24:9). **(2)** A priest who returned from exile with Zerubbabel (Neh. 12:5). **(3)** One of the priests who signed the covenant renewal following Ezra's public reading of the law (Neh. 10:7). **(4)** One of the Israelites (not a priest or Levite) who agreed to divorce their foreign wives at Ezra's prompting (Ezra 10:25).

MIKA **(1)** A son of Saul's grandson Mephibosheth (2 Sam. 9:12), also called "Micah" (1 Chron. 8:34; 9:40). **(2)** The father of Mattaniah, a Levite (1 Chron. 9:15; Neh. 11:17; 11:22). **(3)** A Levite who sealed the covenant with God following Ezra's reading of the law (Neh. 10:11).

MIKLOTH **(1)** A Benjamite and a descendant of Jeiel who lived at Gibeon, he was the father of Shimeah/Shimeam (1 Chron. 8:32; 9:37–38). **(2)** The chief officer under Dodai in the second monthly division of David's army, he was responsible for a division of twenty-four thousand men (1 Chron. 27:4).

MIKMASH This city (modern Mukhmas) and its sister city, Geba, were located on one of the routes from the Jordan Valley to the central Benjamin plateau. Although a branch of the Wadi Qilt separates the two towns, there was a "pass" across the deep valley (1 Sam. 13:23). As Isaiah describes the advance of the Assyrians toward Jerusalem, this geographical feature emerges (Isa. 10:28–29). It is also evident in a narrative about the Philistine incursion deep into Israelite territory in the early days of Saul's monarchy. The Philistines held a forward outpost at Geba; Saul commanded the Israelite forces at Mikmash, across the pass to the northeast; and Jonathan was at Gibeah of Benjamin, south of Geba (1 Sam. 13:2–3). Saul did not attack the Philistines from Mikmash, since crossing the pass below Geba would have made his forces vulnerable. Instead, Jonathan's attack drove the Philistines out of Geba. They regrouped at Mikmash, however, dislodged the forces of Saul, and dispatched raiding parties (1 Sam. 13:16–18). In order to retake this critical location, Jonathan and his armor-bearer set out from Geba, descended into the wadi, climbed up the other side, and attacked, conquering the outpost and routing the Philistines (1 Sam. 14:1–23).

The area around Mikmash

MIKMETHATH The northernmost section of the boundary between Ephraim and Manasseh (Josh. 16:6; 17:7). It probably lay east of Shechem, but the exact location is disputed. It is also uncertain whether the name refers to a settlement or a geographical feature.

MIKNEIAH One of the Levitical musicians who accompanied the ark of the covenant when David brought it from the house of Obed-Edom to Jerusalem (1 Chron. 15:18, 21).

MIKRI A postexilic member of the tribe of Benjamin, an ancestor of Elah (1 Chron. 9:8).

MIKTAM A Hebrew title of uncertain meaning found in the superscription of six psalms ascribed to David (Pss. 16; 56–60). Previous suggestions connect the title with Hebrew words for “gold” and “atonement.” The LXX renders the title as “inscription” (Gk. *stēlographia*), suggesting that the Hebrew should read the same (cf. Isa. 38:9). These psalms may have been inscribed on stelae in the temple.

MILALAI A member of one of the choirs that Nehemiah organized to give thanks to God during the ceremony to dedicate the rebuilt wall of Jerusalem (Neh. 12:36). Milalai, one of the associates of Zedekiah, played a musical instrument during this procession, which was led by Ezra the scribe.

MILCAH *See* Milkah.

MILCOM *See* Milkom.

MILDEW In Lev. 13–14 the same Hebrew word, *tsara'at*, is used for both a skin disease and a growth of mildew on fabric or a house. When mildew was found, a priest performed a ritual involving quarantine (13:50; 14:38), the treatment or removal of the infected area (13:54–56; 14:40–42), and ritual cleansing (13:58; 14:49–53). However, if the mildew spread, the fabric or house had to be destroyed (13:52; 14:45).

MILE A Roman measure of a thousand paces (1,618 yards, not quite the 1,760 yards in the modern mile) and often expressed by milestones on highways (Matt. 5:41).

MILETUS A seaport on the southwest coast of Asia Minor (present-day Turkey), about thirty-five miles south of Ephesus. Paul and his companions sailed into Miletus on his third missionary journey (Acts 20:15). From Miletus he summoned the elders of the Ephesian church to say farewell to them before departing for Jerusalem (20:17–38). After a subsequent visit, Paul informed Timothy that he had left his ailing companion Trophimus in Miletus to convalesce (2 Tim. 4:20).

Ancient Miletus was colored by Cretan, Hittite, and Carian influence before its prominence as one of twelve Greek Ionian cities in the seventh and sixth centuries BC. Ancient Western philosophy has its roots in Miletus with the pre-Socratic philosophers of that age. Miletus twice came under Persian control in the following centuries, until Alexander the Great captured the city in 334 BC, and it became a thriving Hellenistic seaport. Miletus became part of the Roman province of Asia Minor in 133 BC. When Paul visited in AD 51, its four harbors had already begun to fill with silt, which would greatly diminish their use. Despite ongoing refurbishing efforts, it was useless as a harbor by the sixth century AD. Today Miletus is a well-preserved ruin of historical interest five miles inland, much like its companion city of Ephesus to the north.

MILK A staple of the Hebrew diet, milk is one of the things considered essential for life by Jesus ben Sira, a Jewish writer of the Second Temple period (Sir. 39:26). In the ancient Near East humans consumed the milk not just from cows but also from goats, sheep, and even camels (Gen. 32:15; Deut. 32:14; Isa. 7:21–22). Since there was no process of pasteurization or refrigeration, milk often was processed to create curds, cheese, butter, or slightly soured and fermented milk. The souring process was done inside an animal skin used to hold the liquid until it was needed (Judg. 4:19).

With the prominent place that milk held in the life of the people of Israel, it is no surprise that it appears in the Bible in many contexts. The land of Canaan is frequently described as a land "flowing with milk and honey," a metaphor for prosperity and a promise of abundant pasturelands (Exod. 3:8; Lev. 20:24; Num. 13:27; Deut. 6:3). Milk sometimes is associated with honey or wine, and it may have been consumed in such combinations (Gen. 49:12; Isa. 55:1; Joel 3:18). Milk (like wine and honey) is a heavy liquid that leaves a pleasant aftertaste, and it may suggest the pleasures of kissing in Song of Songs (see, e.g., Song 4:11). The OT law proclaims, "Do not cook a young goat in its mother's milk" (Exod. 23:19; Deut. 14:21). This mysterious prohibition probably refers to a Canaanite custom in which a young goat was cooked in its mother's milk as part of a pagan religious ritual. This prohibition was later interpreted by Jewish scholars to indicate a total prohibition on eating meat and dairy products together in the same meal, which is a major aspect of kosher regulations. In the NT, milk is used metaphorically for nourishing spiritual teaching (1 Pet. 2:2). Paul reworks this image to indicate that believers, like growing infants, must move beyond the mere milk of basic principles to mature spiritual instruction (1 Cor. 3:2; cf. Heb. 5:12–13).

MILKAH **(1)** The wife of Nahor, Abraham's brother (Gen. 11:29). She was the grandmother of Rebekah, wife of Isaac (Gen. 24:24). This ancestry of Rebekah is important to the narrative because it was necessary for the wife of Isaac to be not a Canaanite but rather one of Abraham's own relatives (Gen. 24:3–4). **(2)** One of the daughters of Zelophehad. After appealing to Moses, these daughters received their father's inheritance and established the precedent that in the absence of a son, a man's property goes to his daughters (Num. 27:7–8).

MILKOM The national god of the Ammonites, who appears both in the Bible and in Ammonite inscriptions, including the ninth-century BC Amman citadel inscription.

In the MT "Milkom" appears only three times (1 Kings 11:5, 33; 2 Kings 23:13), but the ancient Greek translations have it also in 2 Sam. 12:30; 1 Kings 11:7; 1 Chron. 20:2; Jer. 49:1, 3; Amos 1:15; Zeph. 1:5. This difference can be explained by the fact that the original Hebrew had no vowels, and the word *mlkm* could be vocalized either as *milkom*, the name of the Ammonite deity transliterated as "Milkom" (KJV, ESV, NRSV: "Milcom"), or *malkam*, meaning "their king." Determining the correct reading in each of these cases is difficult, but the presence of priests in Jer. 49:3 argues strongly that "Milkom" should be read there and in 49:1. This reading is also probable in Amos 1:15; Zeph. 1:5, and it is at least possible in 2 Sam. 12:30 (see NIV mg.); 1 Chron. 20:2.

Although the NIV uses "Molek" to refer to both Molek and Milkom, evidence suggests these are two deities with different worship sites (see 2 Kings 23:10, 13) and different cults. Only Molek was associated with child sacrifice. The worship of Milkom was introduced into Israel by Solomon and persisted until Josiah's reform.

MILL, MILLSTONE One of several different types of stone implements used to grind grain, usually by hand. This chore was often performed daily, so the sound of mills grinding grain became a symbol of normal life (Jer. 25:10; Rev. 18:22). Women (Matt. 24:41) or servants (Exod. 11:5) typically used mills, or prisoners, like Samson (Judg. 16:21), might be made to perform the mundane task.

Mills often were small enough for one person to use. Apparently, the oldest type of hand mill included a lower, concave stone made of basalt or other hard stone (Job 41:24). The person grinding rubbed a second, smaller, loaf-shaped upper millstone (Judg. 9:53) back and forth on the lower one to grind the grain. Later mills had two circular slabs, and the user rotated the upper stone by a wooden peg attached as a handle. Larger mills were also used in commercial operations. A large, well-carved double inverted cone was set on a cone-shaped lower stone. A pair of people or animals rotated the upper stone by pushing posts set into sockets. References to casting large millstones into the sea (Matt. 18:6; Rev. 18:21) probably refer to such a large upper millstone.

Millstones from ancient Israel

MILLENNIUM The millennium is a thousand-year period related to Christ's return described in Rev. 20. Yet difficulties in interpreting this passage, combined with questions about how this period fits with other events in redemptive history, have led to some very different views.

Premillennialists believe that Christ's return will be before the millennium, and postmillennialists believe that his return will be after the millennium. Amillennialism, taken literally, is the belief that there is no millennium, although it is more accurate to say that amillennialists deny the kind of literal millennium associated with either premillennialism or postmillennialism. All these views represent an attempt to organize the various relevant prophecies of Scripture into a coherent system, but each one does so in a different way. The central issue involves which approach does the best job and thus is most faithful to Scripture.

Premillennialism. The key distinctive of premillennialism is that Christ returns in order to establish his millennial kingdom. Since this millennium is a direct work of God, it is a golden age, totally different from anything experienced previously on earth. Very literally, "The wolf will live with the lamb, . . . and a little child will lead them" (Isa. 11:6). Dispensational premillennialism has become perhaps the leading view here, with its sharp distinction between Israel and the church. God was actively at work with Israel in the OT era but shifted his attention to the church in the church age. At Christ's return, God will shift his attention back again to a Jewish-oriented tribulation and millennium, fulfilling the remaining OT prophecies made to Israel. Historic premillennialists, on the other hand, do not share this sharp distinction between Israel and the church, but see themselves as being in continuity with the early church in their view of a future golden age inaugurated by Christ.

Postmillennialism. Postmillennialism has had a significant following throughout most of church history, but in more recent years it has become a minority view. Here the idea is that God will gradually build his church over a millennium prior to Christ's return. This approach is built on more than simply the idea of human progress; normally, there is a high view of the supernatural transforming power of the gospel whereby "the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea" (Isa. 11:9). The millennium here is a silver age involving unprecedented advances of the gospel throughout the world. Postmillennialists are divided over whether this is literally a thousand-year period and if it has already begun.

Amillennialism. Amillennialists believe in a different kind of millennium. There are two different kinds of amillennialists. Some believe that those reigning with Christ in Rev. 20 are believers in this present life who experience the intimacy of Christ's presence, as described in texts such as Rev. 3:20: "I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me." Other amillennialists believe that this thousand-year period of reigning with Christ specifically involves departed believers who are currently reigning with Christ in the intermediate state between death and Christ's return. Here, the millennium is not the golden age of the premillennialist, nor is it the silver age of the postmillennialist; it is spiritual life in the present.

Summary. Several factors orient people toward one view or another. Those who approach Scripture more literally tend to be premillennialists, while those who approach it with more openness to figurative language and symbolism tend to be postmillennialists and amillennialists. Those who give greater weight to potentially unfulfilled prophecies from the OT tend to be premillennialists, while those who give greater weight to the explicit teachings of Jesus and the apostles in the NT tend to be postmillennialists and amillennialists. However, the key deciding factor may well be one of personality, especially of how one looks ahead to the future. Those who are more pessimistic (things are getting worse and worse) tend to be premillennialists, while those who are more optimistic, especially in the sense of focusing on God's power to transform this present world, tend to be postmillennialists. Amillennialists focus on other issues, and they are neither unduly pessimistic nor optimistic.

In each of these different views there is undoubtedly at least a kernel of truth that must be considered and built into a proper understanding of God's work in this present world and in the kingdom to come. *See also* Revelation, Book of.

MILLET A small round grain suitable for human consumption and often prepared as flat bread (Ezek. 4:9) or combined with various other grains. It may also be used as fodder for livestock. Species of millet include *Panicum miliaceuem* and *Setaria italica*.

MILLO This name, meaning "fill" in Hebrew, refers to several places or structures in the OT. **(1)** A part of the defensive fortifications of Jerusalem, the construction of which apparently was begun after David conquered the city (2 Sam. 5:9; 1 Chron. 11:8 [NIV: "terraces," but see NIV mg.]). Its exact nature and location in Jerusalem are disputed. It has been proposed that it was a terraced structure upon which houses were built, or that it was a platform that connected the Temple Mount and David’s citadel by filling in the valley between them.

The completion or rebuilding of the Millo was one of Solomon’s building projects, although it is also possible that Solomon’s Millo was a separate structure altogether (1 Kings 9:15, 24; 11:27). Solomon put Jeroboam, who later became the first king of the northern kingdom, in charge of this project (1 Kings 11:27–28). In addition to repairing broken walls and building towers, Hezekiah included the strengthening of the Millo in his preparations for the siege of Sennacherib (2 Chron. 32:5).

(2) The house of Millo, where Joash of Judah was assassinated, may be a part of the structure in Jerusalem (2 Kings 12:20 [NIV: “Beth Millo”]), but this is not certain.

(3) Beth Millo (“house of Millo”) was a fortress or city near or a part of Shechem (Judg. 9:6, 20). Although the Hebrew name is almost identical to the one in 2 Kings 12:20, it is likely that they are distinct places.

MILLSTONE *See* Mill, Millstone.

MINA *See* Weights and Measures.

MIND The process or result of perception; one’s worldview, attitude, thought, and opinion (Luke 24:45; 1 Cor. 14:4; Phil. 4:7; Rev. 13:18; 17:9). The mind perceives, orders, and controls how we understand our place in the world. Embracing all the instruments of senses, memory, and intellect, the mind constitutes the inner person, the heart or sense of self, and is therefore partly contrastive with the body (1 Cor. 2:16). However, the Bible does not attempt to explain the relationship between mind and brain, which is a matter of current scientific, psychological, philosophical, and theological debate. As a force, the mind directs the body for good or evil.

At the beginning of his argument in Romans, Paul claims that God gave sinful human beings over to a corrupted mind, which enslaved them to debasing thoughts and behaviors (1:28–32). This corruption is not confined to the individual; it is a worldview hostile to God (12:2). But through faith and grace, God calls forgiven, redeemed human beings to be transformed by the renewing of their minds (12:2). Having rejected the mind or thinking of God, we rediscover it and live accordingly. Paul, however, is referring not just to the mind of individuals but also to the communal mind (way of thinking) of the body of Christ, the church (see 1 Cor. 1:10).

The mind, then, is not so much a soliloquy as it is a conversation. It is not autonomous but rather is sparked by either the thinking of God (Christ) or Satan (see, e.g., Eph. 2:1–3). These worldview shapers occupy two distinct (conflicting) spheres. God and Satan do not partner in our perception. Although our minds are not autonomous, we are able to exercise some control over our thoughts. This brings an element of human freedom into the process of sanctification. The gospel invites Christians to begin a conversation with the Spirit of Christ; over time, as an expression of discipleship, this conversation transforms how Christians make sense of reality.

MINERALS AND METALS The Bible contains many references to minerals and metals. Minerals can encompass a wide array of topics, thus the focus here is on valuable minerals such as ornamental stones as well as precious and useful metals. Gold is mentioned in the Bible as early as the garden of Eden (Gen. 2:11) and at the end is pictured as making up the streets of the new Jerusalem (Rev. 21:21). Among the metals mentioned in Scripture are gold, silver, bronze, copper, tin, lead, and iron. Precious stones and minerals also appear in Scripture, often used to adorn items, such as the high priest's breastpiece (Exod. 28:15–21). Here these materials will be discussed in chronological order of appearance.

COPPER

Copper was the first metal to be used for simple farm tools and weapons. It was used as early as the middle of the fourth millennium BC but was not in widespread use until approximately 3300 BC. Copper mines have been found on the Sinai Peninsula at places such as the Timna Valley and Faynan and also extensively on the island of Cyprus, which supplied copper to the Egyptian, Greek, and Roman empires.

References to copper within the Bible are few. Several passages discuss the basic origins of copper, such as the gathering of ore or the smelting process (Deut. 8:9; Job 28:2; Ezek. 22:18, 20; 24:11). Several NT passages acknowledge the presence of minted copper coins as currency (Matt. 10:9; Mark 12:42; Luke 21:2). Pure copper, however, was hard to use, although it could be combined with tin to make the alloy bronze.

BRONZE

The use of bronze, an alloy made of copper and tin, in biblical lands dates to about 2300 BC. Bronze, compared to pure copper, is easier to work with and has a longer life. It can be worked with hammer and anvil or poured into a mold. It has the same available applications as copper; thus it was used to make all the tools and weapons that were made of copper. Bronze was widely used during the second millennium BC, encompassing the biblical time period from Abraham to the judges, and its use continued as the raw materials were available. It was the metal of choice until the advanced technology of ironworking.

The first biblical reference to bronze is found in Gen. 4:22, in which we are told that Tubal-Cain forged tools out of bronze and iron. Next, bronze is mentioned in its use in the tabernacle built in the desert. Among the bronze items included were the many bronze clasps and bases for the tent construction (Exod. 26:11, 37; 27:10–11, 17–19). The altar and all its utensils were made of, or overlaid with, bronze (27:1–8). God also instructed Moses to make a bronze basin for washing (30:18). Moses also made a snake out of bronze and placed it on top of his staff when the Israelites were struck with an abundance of venomous snakes (Num. 21:9). Samson was bound with shackles of bronze (Judg. 16:21), and Goliath wore armor and carried weapons of bronze (1 Sam. 17:5–6). Solomon used an extensive amount of bronze in his building of the temple (2 Kings 25:16), and there was bronze in the statue that Daniel dreamed of (Dan. 2:32, 35). Many of the prophets used bronze as a way to discuss something that was to be strong or strengthened by God (Isa. 45:2; Jer. 1:18; Ezek. 40:3).

IRON AND STEEL

Iron originally was found in meteorites and thus was scarce and worked as a precious metal. After a permanent source of iron ore was found, iron began to be worked in a few areas around 1200 BC. It increased in popularity over time, and around 1000 BC, or roughly the time of the united monarchy, it was being extensively used. Phoenician traders were very active during this time, and they would have brought much iron from the mines of southern Spain. Around the tenth century BC the technology to work iron into steel through the quenching and carbonization of the metal became commonplace. A large number of iron-producing sites have not been found in Palestine, and no deposits of the raw material have been located. Iron deposits have been found between the Jordan and the Euphrates rivers, but whether the ancients were aware of these deposits is unknown.

Once the technology to turn iron into steel became known, both became highly valued. At the same time, it is possible that copper had become more difficult to obtain due to a change in international trading routes. The first steel implement to be unearthed in Palestine was a pick found in Upper Galilee dating to the eleventh century BC.

One of the earliest references to iron in Scripture is its use by the Canaanites to make chariots (Josh. 17:16, 18). This would have been an early use of the metal in the Iron Age I period (1200–1000 BC). Also, Goliath's spear, which was as big as a weaver's rod, is said to have had a head made of iron (1 Sam. 17:7). Elisha's miracle of making a borrowed ax head float (2 Kings 6:6) shows the continued value of the metal. In his latter days, David amassed iron among the goods to give Solomon to use in building the temple (1 Chron. 22:14; 29:2); Solomon later used these materials with the help of Huram-Abi (2 Chron. 2:13–14). Ezekiel discusses the economic value of iron in the context of trading (Ezek. 27:12, 19), and Daniel uses it as a metaphor for discussing strength (Dan. 2:40–41). The NT recognizes the strength of iron when discussing Christ's iron scepter (Rev. 2:27; 19:15).

TIN

Tin was initially used mainly to produce the copper alloy bronze. Tin was not used in its pure form until well into the Roman period, and even then seldom by itself. The sources of tin in the ancient world are currently debated. The tin from large deposits in Tarshish in southern Spain (Ezek. 27:12) was available through Phoenician traders. Tin is also found in large deposits in Anatolia, but it is currently unknown whether these deposits had been discovered and used during biblical times. A third option is modern-day Afghanistan. Archaeologists have discovered in modern Turkey the remains of a wrecked ship, dated to around 1350 BC, that was carrying ten tons of copper ingots and about one ton of tin ingots. These ingots possibly originated in the area of modern-day Afghanistan and were bound for the Mediterranean trade routes. Tin is mentioned only four times in Scripture, always within a list of other metals (Num. 31:22; Ezek. 22:18, 20; 27:12).

LEAD

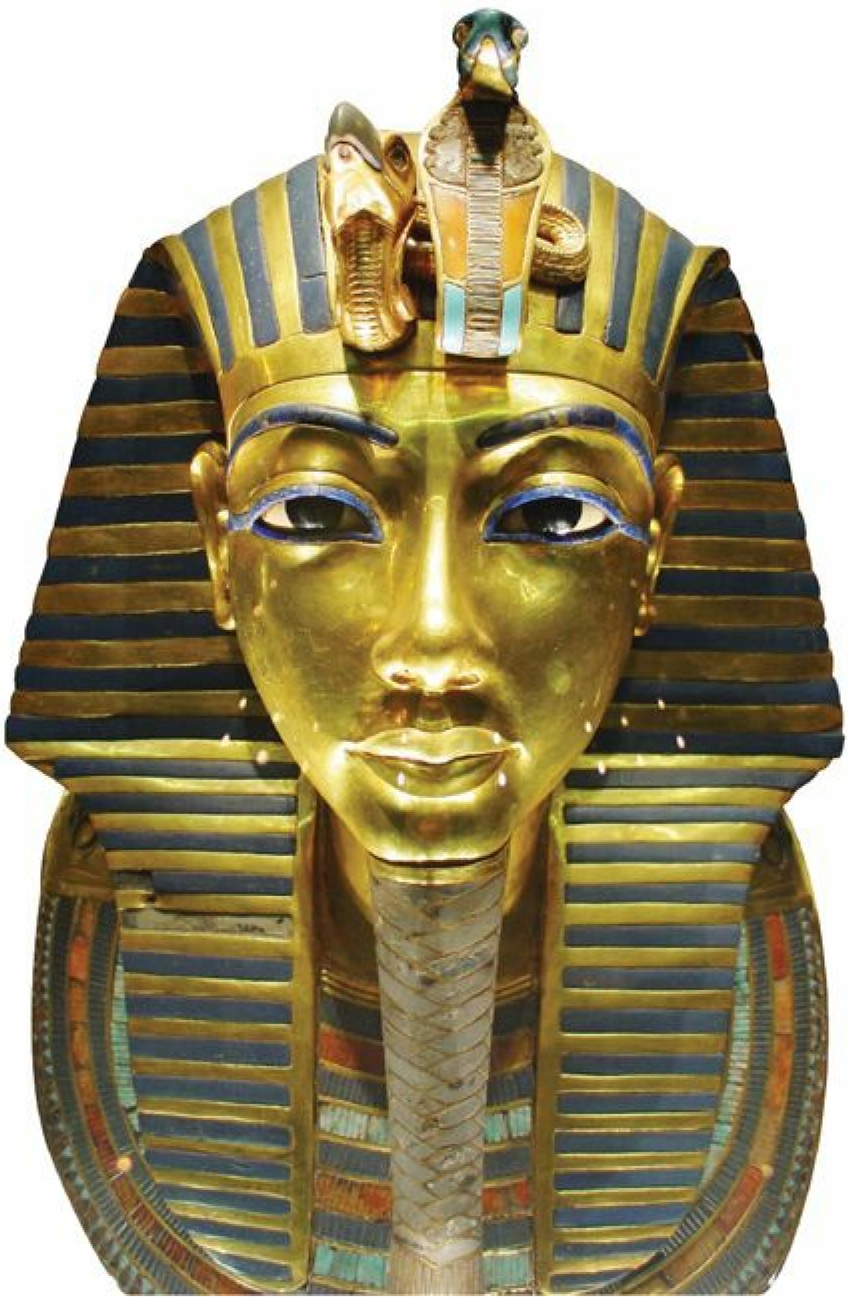
Lead was used early in human history, but its applications were few. It would have been mined with copper and silver ore and then extracted as a by-product. The Romans used it for various implements, most notably wine vessels. It is referenced nine times within Scripture, either in a list or in reference to its weight. The only two times it is referenced as an object is when Job mentions a lead writing implement (Job 19:24), and when Zechariah has the vision of a woman sitting in the basket with a lead cover (Zech. 5:7, 8).

GOLD AND SILVER

Sought after for much of human history, gold and silver have been worked by humans for their ornamental value. The practical uses of these metals within the biblical setting were constrained mainly to their economic and ornamental value. Gold and silver jewelry were used as a form of payment and were minted into coins during the Greco-Roman era. Gold objects are relatively scarce in archaeological finds, mainly because most gold items would have been part of a large treasury carried off as tribute or plunder. Silver appears in the archaeological record more frequently; a remarkable hoard of silver in lump form was found at Eshtemoa (see 1 Sam. 30:26–28). This silver has been dated to the time of the kingdom of Judah, after the northern kingdom of Israel had fallen. The silver in raw lump form was most likely used as a monetary payment, even though it had not yet been minted into coins.

Gold in the ancient world came largely from Egypt and northern Africa. The Bible mentions Havilah as a land of gold (Gen. 2:11), as well as Ophir (1 Kings 9:28), but the exact location of both places is unknown. Silver was mined in southern Spain, along with other metals, and brought to the area through sea trading. The Athenians of the Classical period were also known for their vast silver-mining operations.

Silver and gold are mentioned repeatedly in the OT in reference to their uses in trading and their economic value. Most notably, the Israelites asked their Egyptian neighbors to give them gold and silver items just before they left Egypt (Exod. 3:22). The tabernacle was highly ornamented with these two metals, as was the temple built by Solomon. It is said that Solomon made the nation so wealthy that silver was considered as plentiful as stone (1 Kings 10:27). Perhaps the most notorious articles of silver within Scripture are those paid to Judas for his betrayal of Jesus (Matt. 26:15).



The materials used to make this golden burial mask of the pharaoh Tutankhamen (fourteenth century BC) include solid gold, lapis lazuli, turquoise, carnelian, quartz, and obsidian.

PRECIOUS STONES

Stones of various origins were used in and around Palestine. The Bible makes few references to their use. Like gold and silver, they were used mainly for their ornamental value. Their scarcity made them highly prized. One notable exception is turquoise. The Egyptian pharaohs were fascinated with turquoise, and they mined extensively for it on the Sinai Peninsula. The remains of several turquoise mines have been found with Canaanite markings, indicating the presence of Canaanite slaves working the Egyptian mines. There was also a line of forts along the northern edge of the Egyptian Empire, used presumably to protect the pharaohs' turquoise interests. Precious stones were also found in Syria, where Phoenician traders would have been able to bring them from other parts of the known world.

Exodus 28:17–21 describes twelve stones set in the breastpiece worn by the Israelite high priest. Twelve stones likewise appear in the foundations of the new Jerusalem (Rev. 21:19–20). Ezekiel uses nine of these same twelve stones to discuss the adornment of the king of Tyre (Ezek. 28:13).

The Bible uses the blanket term “precious stones” to denote a hoard of riches, such as that owned by Solomon (1 Kings 10:10).

MINES AND MINING Given the vast amount of human history covered by the stories within Scripture, it is difficult to completely discuss the full history of mining. The techniques and the technology involved advanced extensively throughout the ages; thus it would be necessary to bring into the discussion a full history of metals and metalworking to be completely thorough. The discussion here will therefore necessarily be brief and focused.

BIBLICAL REFERENCES

There is only one clear reference to mining in the Bible, in Job 28:1–11: “Mortals put an end to the darkness; they search out the farthest recesses for ore in the blackest darkness. Far from human dwellings they cut a shaft, in places untouched by human feet; far from other people they dangle and sway” (vv. 3–4). This passage describes the typical form of tunneling often found in ancient mining. Included within the text of Job 28 are several types of metals and minerals that were mined, including iron, gold, silver, copper, and sapphires. Tin and bronze were also known, with tin most likely being the last to be used by itself, despite its use in the making of bronze. Most of the precious stones mentioned in Scripture appear in the breastpiece of the high priest and in the foundations of the new Jerusalem. There is also a list of precious stones mentioned in Ezek. 28:13, but these largely replicate those mentioned in the breastpiece of the high priest (Exod. 28:17–21).

METHODS

The ancients had two methods of mining ores. The first included finding ore close to the surface and following the shaft of deposits as far as possible. Copper mines of this fashion have been found in Egypt, specifically in the northern regions. The tools used were picks and hoes. The shafts themselves were comparable to a coffin in size, allowing for little movement. If the ore was too hard to break apart, fires were lit in the shaft in order to heat and cool the ore, making it more brittle. The shafts themselves extended up to two hundred feet. After being broken, the ore was passed in baskets to the surface, where it was crushed and separated. This job was done almost entirely by slaves who worked night and day until death took them, at which time other slaves replaced them. Remains of their huts have been found at Serabit el-Khadim on the Sinai Peninsula.

The most infamous mines were run by the Greeks. Laurium was a veritable concentration camp operated by the Athenians in order to slake their thirst for silver. Known from ancient writings, Laurium is said to be the death place of some thirty thousand slaves who were captured in the various wars and battles undertaken by the Greek city-state. These slaves were owned mostly by wealthy Greeks who rented them out to the owners of the mines. Young boys appear to have been favored miners due to their smaller size and thus their ability to fit within the shafts. The shafts were almost four hundred feet deep and roughly the width of a coffin. There is also evidence up through the fifth century AD of forced slavery in mines as a penal sentence. References concerning religious persecutions mention victims penalized by being sent to the mines. This would have happened throughout the Roman period and could have been the fate of some early Christians.

Panning for tin and gold is also evidenced from ancient times. Pans have been discovered in Troy and Asshur that appear to have had this function, although little else is known of this form of mining. Surface mining was undertaken by the Romans, but this method required large amounts of water to wash away the top layer and therefore was not used often. Iron ore was also extracted from meteorites, but because of its scarcity, it was considered a precious metal and seldom used.

SOURCES

Copper. The geographical location of ancient mines is not always easy to pinpoint. Several copper mines have been found on the Sinai Peninsula, which lies between Egypt and Palestine. Timna and Faynan are two of the most recent mines in this location to attract archaeological attention. These mines lay close to the borders of Israel: Faynan closer to the Dead Sea, and Timna closer to the Red Sea. It is clear that copper from these mines was mined during the late Iron Age I stage (1200–1000 BC), or the time of the judges. These mines are in Edomite territory; thus trade with the neighboring enemy was scattered at best, but it is possible that this copper went to the Assyrian Empire as a trade item or as tribute.

Entrance to a copper mine at Timna

The island of Cyprus has also been mined throughout history for its copper ore. Until recently, most of the mining was thought to have occurred under the empires of Greece and Rome. However, earlier mines and copper-smelting sites have been found on the island. These mines date to the Middle Bronze Age, or just before the time of the patriarchs. There is also written evidence found in Egypt of copper being traded between Cyprus and Egypt during the time when the Israelites are thought to have been in Egypt. In addition, research into trade routes and the technology of boats and seafaring vessels has increased understanding of the widespread trade within the Mediterranean region. For the Egyptians, the Nile served as a perfect harbor for connecting with other seaports, including those on

Cyprus and along the coast of Israel. Copper was the only metal used for tools and weapons throughout the third and fourth millennia BC. It was not until around 2300 BC that bronze began to appear in the region of Palestine, probably a result of Syrian influence. Copper, however, was still needed, as bronze is an alloy of copper and tin.

Tin. The location of tin mines is difficult to determine for the earlier period. There are large tin deposits in what is now Afghanistan, and some scholars argue that this is the source of early tin ore for the biblical region. This source would have depended upon a fairly large overland trade route in order to bring the ore to the Mediterranean. Such routes were not unheard of, and most likely it existed. A shipwreck discovered by archaeologists in modern-day Turkey also provides evidence for the marine trade of such minerals. The ship was carrying a large load of copper and tin ingots thought to be from modern-day Afghanistan. This shipment dates to about 1350 BC. Tin deposits have also been found in Anatolia, north of Israel; however, it is currently unknown whether these deposits were exploited by the ancients. The only other resource for tin was southern Spain, which was accessible through the trade routes of the Phoenicians.

Gold. Egypt and, more broadly, northern Africa have been known throughout history to have large deposits of gold that have been mined for millennia. Also, the Assyrian and Babylonian empires facilitated trade with parts of India, allowing gold from that region to be accessible in Israel. Gold was also mined in Arabia, and biblical references include Havilah (Gen. 2:11), Ophir (1 Kings 10:11), and Sheba (Ps. 72:15). Ophir is as of yet unfound; however, it was most likely located somewhere along the Red Sea, as indicated by Solomon’s sending a fleet to Tarshish by way of Ophir from Ezion Geber (1 Kings 9:26; 2 Chron. 9:21; 20:36). Ezion Geber sits on the Red Sea, which suggests that Solomon’s ships possibly circumnavigated Africa to reach Tarshish in southern Spain (Ezek. 27:12).

Iron and silver. There has been some discussion about the source of Deut. 8:9, in which Palestine is mentioned as being “a land where the rocks are iron.” Palestine itself has no legitimate source of ore to be mined. However, there is a possibility that Lebanon could be included in this description. Lebanon is known to have considerable iron deposits. Iron, however, was not used much until the twelfth to eleventh centuries BC. Earlier, iron was very expensive and hard to come by and thus was used mainly for jewelry and a limited number of weapons. However, once the technology to turn iron into steel became widely known, its uses increased dramatically. The earliest piece of steel found in Palestine dates from the eleventh century BC, but steel was not widely used until the tenth century BC, with the rise of the united monarchy.

Under the economic conditions of the monarchy, iron, steel, bronze, silver, and gold were all highly visible. Gold and silver articles, although mentioned often in the biblical narrative, have been few in number in archaeological finds. The large hoards of gold and silver in the temple probably were taken to Assyria or Babylon after these empires’ invasions. It does appear that silver, mainly in the form of ingots, was the preferred method of payment during this time. A large hoard of silver has been found in Eshtemoa, in the southern Hebron Hills, dating to this period.

As noted above, the Greeks mined silver at Laurium. It is also posited that as early as the period of the Phoenicians large amounts of silver were mined and traded out of southern Spain. Besides silver, southern Spain had large amounts of iron, lead, and tin.

Turquoise. Serabit el-Khadim has been identified as a location of Egyptian mining. Here archaeologists have found large mining operations for turquoise dating far earlier than the time of the patriarchs. These mines would have been in use during the period of the Israelites’ sojourn in Egypt, and inscriptions of letters from the Canaanite alphabet (as opposed to Egyptian hieroglyphs) have been found at the site. In addition, devices for copper smelting and molding devices have been found in this region, but it is suspected that the copper industry was devoted strictly to making the appropriate tools to mine the turquoise. Egyptians used and highly desired the turquoise for its bluish color. It is found in the earliest of Egyptian tombs, which lack other precious items such as gold or silver.

MINGLED PEOPLE Since the earliest stages of Israel's national history, the Israelites were a mixed people (cf. Exod. 12:37–38). Although intermarriage with non-Israelites was not strictly forbidden, it came with the condition that the non-Israelite spouse embrace Israel's God (cf. Ruth 1:16; Ezra 6:21). This stipulation was not always obeyed (Num. 11:4), and occasionally drastic measures were employed to correct Israel's mixed ethnic status (cf. Ezra 9:2; Neh. 13:3; Ps. 106:35). *See also* Mixed Multitude.

MINIAMIN **(1)** A Levite of Hezekiah's day (2 Chron. 31:15). **(2)** A family of priests in Nehemiah's time, during the high priesthood of Joiakim (Neh. 12:17). **(3)** A priest in the time of Nehemiah who participated in the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem (Neh. 12:41).

MINIMALISM A skeptical approach toward the historical value of the OT. Scholars who take this approach are often called "minimalists." Minimalists believe OT historical narratives are mostly fictional and inventions of Jewish novelists from the Persian or Hellenistic periods. According to this approach, the OT contains little valuable information about ancient history, so if an OT event is to be accepted as historical, it must be verified by extrabiblical evidence. Minimalists (though not archaeologists themselves) prefer archaeological material remains to textual evidence, supposing that it is somehow more objective. However, archaeological evidence, even more than textual evidence, involves subjective interpretation of its significance and meaning. Besides, it is unreasonable to limit the investigation of ancient history to archaeology when such limited material remains survive and our knowledge of the ancient past is heavily dependent on textual evidence. Most scholars avoid such radical positions, but minimalism has made its presence known in OT scholarship.

MINISTER, MINISTRY In the NT the most common word used for "minister" is *diakonos* (e.g., 2 Cor. 3:6), and for "ministry," *diakonia* (e.g., 1 Cor. 16:15 [NIV: "service"]). These words function as umbrella terms for NT writers to describe the whole range of ministries performed by the church. They can describe either a special ministry performed by an official functionary (1 Cor. 3:5) or one performed by any believer (Rev. 2:19). In the early church, ministry was based not on institutional hierarchies but on services performed (1 Tim. 3:1–13).

The ministry of Jesus. The church's mind-set flows out of the way in which Jesus understood his ministry. He described his ministry pattern as that of serving (Matt. 20:28; Mark 10:45; John 13:4–17). Thus, he called his disciples to follow a model of leadership in the new community that did not elevate them above others (Matt. 20:20–28; 23:8–12; cf. 1 Pet. 5:3).

Jesus' ministry provides the paradigm for the ministry of the church. The NT writers describe the threefold ministry of Jesus as preaching, teaching, and healing (Matt. 4:23; 9:35; Mark 1:14, 21–22, 39; Acts 10:36–38). The disciples carried on the earthly ministry of Jesus by the power of the Spirit. They too engaged in preaching, teaching, and healing (Matt. 10:7–8; 28:19–20).

The ministry of the church. The church, because it is the body of Christ, continues these ministry responsibilities. In 1 Pet. 4:10–11 is a summary of the overarching ministries of the church, which include speaking the words of God and serving. As a priesthood of believers (Exod. 19:4–6; 1 Pet. 2:5, 9; Rev. 1:5–6), individual members took responsibility for fulfilling the various tasks of service. Thus, all Christians are called to minister (Rom. 15:27; Philem. 13; 1 Pet. 2:16). Even when a member strayed, it was another believer's responsibility to confront that wayward person and, if necessary, involve others in the body to help (Matt. 18:15–20).

Although ministry was the responsibility of all believers, there were those with special expertise whom Christ and the church set apart for particular leadership roles (Eph. 4:11–12). Christ set apart Apollos and Paul for special ministries (1 Cor. 3:5; Eph. 3:7). The church called on special functionaries to carry out specific ministries. For example, the early church appointed seven individuals to serve tables (Acts 6:2). They appointed certain ones to carry the relief fund collected for the Jerusalem Christians (2 Cor. 8:19, 23). As special functionaries, Paul, Apollos, Timothy, Titus, the elders, as well as others accepted the responsibility of teaching and preaching and healing for the whole church.

All the ministries of the church, whether performed by believers in general or by some specially appointed functionary, were based on gifts received from God (Rom. 12:1–8; 1 Cor. 12:4–26). God gave individuals the abilities necessary to perform works of service (Acts 20:24; Eph. 4:11; Col. 4:17; 1 Tim. 1:12; 1 Pet. 4:11). The NT, however, makes it clear that when it comes to one's relationship and spiritual status before God, all Christians are equal. Yet in equality there is diversity of gifts and talents. Paul identifies some gifts given to individuals for special positions: apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers (Eph. 4:11). The description here is of special ministry roles that Christ calls certain individuals to fulfill based on the gifts given to them. The ones fulfilling these roles did not do all the ministry of the church but rather equipped the rest of the body to do ministry (Eph. 4:12–13). No one can boast in the gifts given to him or her because those gifts were given for ministry to others (1 Cor. 4:7). Thus, gifts lead to service, and in turn service results in leadership.

It becomes the responsibility of those who lead to equip others for ministry. When others are equipped for ministry, they in turn minister and edify the whole body (Eph. 4:15–16; 2 Tim. 2:1–2). The goal of all ministry, according to Paul, is to build up a community of believers until all reach maturity in Christ (Rom. 15:15–17; 1 Cor. 3:5–4:5; Eph. 4:12–16; 1 Thess. 2:19–20).

MINNI One of three nations (the others being Ararat and Ashkenaz) called by God to attack Babylon as God's judgment against it (Jer. 51:27). Most scholars identify Minni with the Manneans, a people located in the area south of Lake Urmia, northeast of the Tigris-Euphrates Valley.

MINNITH One of the twenty Ammonite cities conquered by Jephthah, perhaps marking the northern extent of his campaign (Judg. 11:33). According to Ezek. 27:17, Israel and Judah acquired wheat from Minnith to trade to Tyre. The church father Eusebius located Minnith in the central Transjordan between Rabbath-Ammon and Heshbon.

MINSTREL In 2 Kings 3:15 the KJV translates the Hebrew word *menaggen* as "minstrel," most likely a harpist, as in the NIV and other modern versions. When one such musician played for Elisha, he received a revelation from God (2 Kings 3:15–19). In Matt. 9:23 the KJV again uses the term to translate the Greek word *aulētēs*, which more-recent versions rightly render as "flute player" or "people playing pipes" (NIV). These musicians were hired as professional mourners at funerals.

MINT One of the herbs mentioned in Jesus' condemnation of the teachers of the law and the Pharisees for what they had failed to do (Matt. 23:23; Luke 11:42). Jesus pointed out how they had tithed their spices but neglected the more important matters of being in a right relationship with God, such as justice, mercy, and faithfulness.

MIPHKAD GATE *See* Inspection Gate.

MIRACLES Because Scripture sees all things as providentially arranged and sustained by God's sovereign power at all times (Heb. 1:3), miracles are not aberrations in an otherwise closed and mechanical universe. Nor are miracles raw demonstrations of divinity designed to overcome prejudice or unbelief and to convince people of the existence of God (Mark 8:11–12). Still less are they clever conjuring tricks involving some kind of deception that can be otherwise explained on a purely scientific basis. Rather, God in his infinite wisdom sometimes does unusual and extraordinary things to call attention to himself and his activity. Miracles are divinely ordained acts of God that dramatically alert us to the presence of his glory and power and advance his saving purposes in redemptive history.

TERMINOLOGY

The biblical writers describe miracles with various terms, such as "signs," "wonders," and "miracles" (or "powers"), which can carry various connotations. As the word "sign" suggests, divine miracles are significant and should cause us to think more deeply about God in a way that goes beyond mere amazement or curiosity (Exod. 4:30–31; John 2:11). Not all of God's signs are miraculous. Some are given as part of his ordering of the natural world (Gen. 1:14) or as an encouragement to faith that God will do as he has said (e.g., the rainbow in Gen. 9:8–17; the blood of the Passover lamb in Exod. 12:13). (*See also* Sign.)

Often coupled with signs are "wonders" (Jer. 32:21; John 4:48; 2 Cor. 12:12). If the depiction of miracles as "signs" indicates an appeal to the intellect, that of "wonders" points to the emotions. Miracles evoke astonishment and awe at the one who did them.

The NT word "miracle" carries the meaning of power and therefore points to the supernatural source of these events (Luke 10:13; Acts 8:13).

MIRACLES IN THE BIBLE

Old Testament. In the OT, miracles are not evenly distributed but rather are found in greater number during times of great redemptive significance, such as the exodus and the conquest of Canaan. Miracles were performed also during periods of apostasy, such as in the days of the ninth-century prophets Elijah and Elisha. Common to both of these eras is the powerful demonstration of the superiority of God over pagan deities (Exod. 7–12; 1 Kings 18:20–40).

New Testament. In the NT, miracles often are acts of compassion, but more significantly they attest the exalted status of Jesus of Nazareth (Acts 2:22) and the saving power of his word (Heb. 2:3–4). In the Synoptic Gospels, they reveal the coming of God's kingdom and the conquest of Satan's dominion (Matt. 8:16–17; 12:22–30; Mark 3:27). They point to the person of Jesus as the promised Messiah of OT Scripture (Matt. 4:23; 11:4–6). John shows a preference for the word "signs," and his Gospel is structured around them (John 20:30–31). According to John, the signs that Jesus performed were such that only the one who stood in a unique relationship to the Father as the Son of God could do them.

Miracles and faith. Just as entrenched skepticism is injurious to faith, so too is naive credulity, for although signs and wonders witness to God, false prophets also perform them "to deceive, if possible, even the elect" (Matt. 24:24). Christians are to exercise discernment and not be led astray by such impostors (Matt. 7:15–20).

The relationship between miracles and faith is not as straightforward as sometimes supposed. Miracles do not necessarily produce faith, nor does faith necessarily produce miracles. Miracles were intended to bring about the faith that leads to eternal life (John 20:31), but not all who witnessed them believed (John 10:32). Additionally, Jesus regarded a faith that rested only on the miracle itself as precarious (Mark 8:11–13; John 2:23–25; 4:48), though better than no faith at all (John 10:38). Faith that saves must ultimately find its grounding in the person of Jesus as the Son of God.

It is also clear that although Jesus always encouraged faith in those who came to him for help (Mark 9:23), and that he deliberately limited his miraculous powers in the presence of unbelief (Mark 6:5), many of his miracles were performed on those who did not or could not exercise faith (Matt. 12:22; Mark 1:23–28; 5:1–20; Luke 14:1–4).

The fact that Jesus performed miracles was never an issue; rather, his opponents disputed the source of his power (Mark 3:22). Arguments about his identity were to be settled by appeal not to miracles but to the word of God (Matt. 22:41–46).

The function of miracles. Miracle accounts function in a symbolic and prophetic manner. Hence, the cursing of the fig tree was prophetic of the coming judgment (Mark 11:12–21). The unusual two-stage healing of the blind man of Bethsaida symbolized Peter's incomplete understanding of Jesus' messiahship (Mark 8:22–33).

The miraculous element of Jesus' ministry carries an eschatological significance, pointing to the order of things in the age to come. For example, the nature miracles (Mark 4:35–41) look forward to the redemption of creation itself, which is presently subject to frustration and decay (Rom. 8:20–21); the healing miracles point to a day when disease and deformity will be abolished (Rev. 21:4); and miracles in which the dead are raised to life anticipate a time when death itself will be no more (Rev. 20:14; 21:4). From this perspective, the miracles are a gracious foretaste of a far more glorious future.

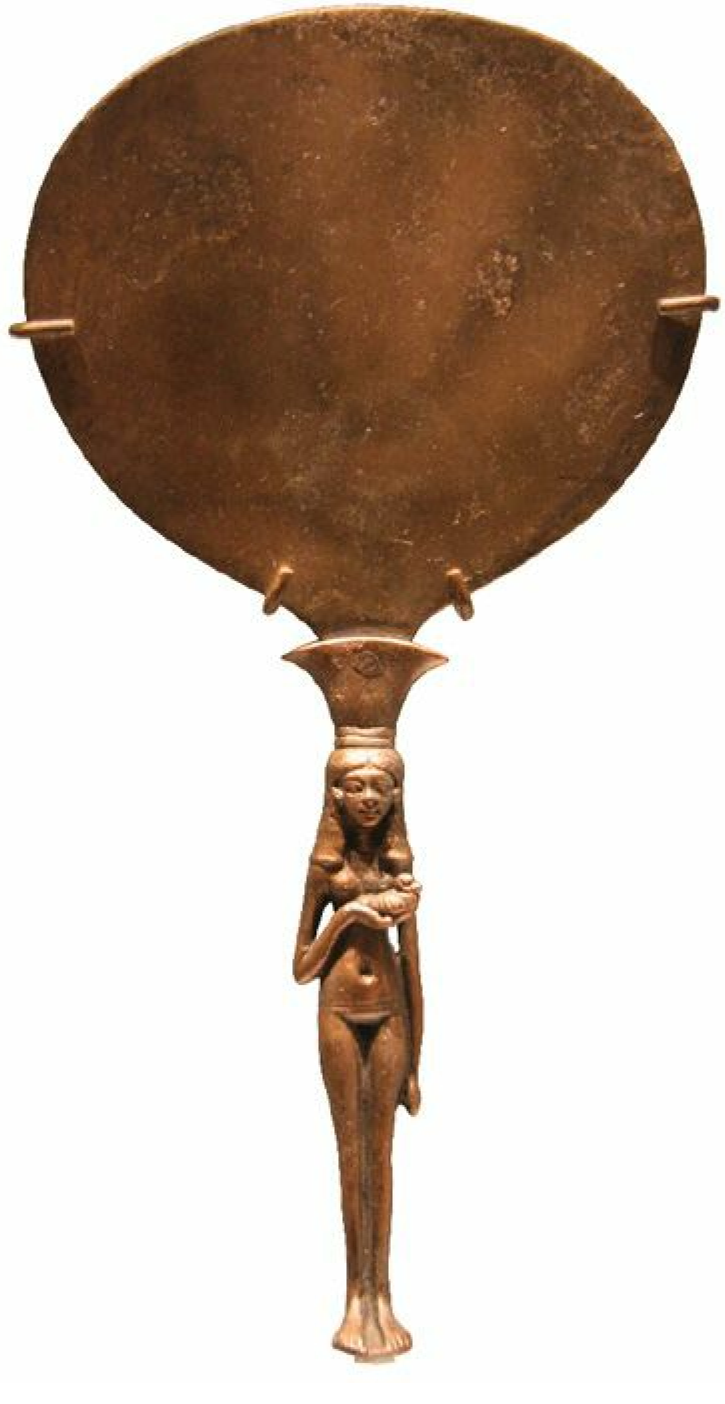
MIRIAM **(1)** The sister of Moses and Aaron, and the only known daughter of Amram and Jochebed (Num. 26:59). After Jochebed laid the infant Moses in a basket and placed it in the Nile River, Miriam followed the basket until Pharaoh's daughter discovered it, and she promptly volunteered her mother to assist in caring for the child (Exod. 2:4–10). Miriam, referred to as a "prophet" (Exod. 15:20), led the Israelite women in celebration and worship after the successful crossing of the Red Sea as the Israelites fled Egypt (15:20–21). She is remembered as a central figure in Moses' leadership team during the exodus (Mic. 6:4).

Along with Aaron, she came to oppose the leadership of Moses, apparently because of his interracial marriage to a Cushite woman (Num. 12:1). The end result was that God caused her to become leprous, for which she had to be cast out of the camp for seven days. She was healed because of Moses' interceding prayer. She died and was buried in Kadesh (Num. 20:1).

(2) A descendant of Ezrah in the line of Judah (1 Chron. 4:17).

MIRMAH A leader in the tribe of Benjamin, he was the last of seven sons born in Moab to Shaharaim and his wife Hodesh, after Shaharaim had divorced Hushim and Baara (1 Chron. 8:10).

MIRROR Both Paul and James refer to mirrors in discussing spiritual truths. Ancient mirrors were made of polished bronze rather than glass (see Job 37:18). Paul likened the imperfect view in such a mirror to the partial human knowing that will exist until “we shall see face to face” (1 Cor. 13:9–12). James compared a person who listens to God’s word but does not obey it to “someone who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like” (James 1:23–24).



A bronze mirror (Thebes, Egypt)

MISGAB A Hebrew term usually understood as “fortress” or “stronghold.” Some translations give it as a proper name in Jer. 48:1 (KJV, REB), listed parallel to two cities in Moab located approximately nine miles east of the northern end of the Dead Sea.

MISHAEL **(1)** A son of Uzziel and a cousin of Moses and Aaron, he carried out of the camp and buried his cousins Nadab and Abihu, who died when they offered unauthorized fire before God (Exod. 6:22; Lev. 10:4). **(2)** One of the leaders who accompanied Ezra as he read the law (Neh. 8:4). **(3)** The Hebrew name of one of Daniel's companions, also called by the Babylonian name "Meshach" (Dan. 1:6–7, 11, 19; 2:17).

MISHAL A Levitical city in the territory allotted to the tribe of Asher, located near the Carmel ridge (Josh. 19:26; 21:30). In 1 Chron. 6:74 it is called "Mashal."

MISHAM The second of Elpaal's three sons, of the tribe of Benjamin. They built "Ono and Lod with its surrounding villages" (1 Chron. 8:12).

MISHEAL *See* Mishal.

MISHMA **(1)** A son of Ishmael, the ancestor of an Arab tribe (Gen. 25:14; 1 Chron. 1:30). **(2)** The son of Mibsam, a descendant of Simeon (1 Chron. 4:25–26). The names "Mibsam" and "Mishma" occur in the lists of descendants of both Ishmael and Simeon, suggesting a prior relationship between the tribes, perhaps occurring as the territory of Simeon spread southward (1 Chron. 1:29–30; 4:25, 38–43).

MISHMANNAH One of David's mighty warriors, he was one of the men from Gad who joined forces with David at Ziklag (1 Chron. 12:10).

MISHNAH The Mishnah is a compilation of traditional Jewish oral law. It is both the culmination of prerabbinic Jewish tradition and the founding document of postbiblical rabbinic Judaism. It is written in a style of Hebrew that developed from biblical Hebrew, known as Mishnaic Hebrew. Rabbinic tradition attributes the formation of the Mishnah to Rabbi Judah the Patriarch around AD 200. He compiled it from previous oral tradition as well as tradition contemporary with him.

Mishnah is a Hebrew word, and it has been interpreted in various ways. It could mean "second," "teaching," or "instruction." Hence, it could stress the mode of instruction by which the students learned Mishnah, or it could be a reference to the fact that Mishnah is second to the Torah, the Pentateuch.

Oral Torah. The Mishnah is the nucleus of Oral Torah. Traditional rabbinic Judaism has a dual Torah. The first part of the dual Torah is the Pentateuch, and the second is rabbinic literature, especially the Mishnah and the Talmud, but also to a certain extent the Tosefta and rabbinic midrash (*see also* Midrash). Traditionally, rabbinic Judaism teaches that God gave two Torahs to Moses at Sinai: the written Torah (the Pentateuch) and the Oral Torah. Eventually, the Oral Torah was written down. Thus, the Mishnah and other early rabbinic literature came into existence. The Oral Torah can be viewed as parallel to the Pentateuch or as the authoritative interpretation of the Pentateuch. Whatever the case, it is as authoritative as the Pentateuch. We can see such an attitude toward the received tradition, "the tradition of the elders," in the Gospels, such as when the Pharisees ask Jesus why his disciples, eating with unwashed hands, do not follow the tradition of the elders (Mark 7:1–5).

Structure and historical context. The Mishnah is divided into six "orders," which in turn are divided into a number of subdivisions called "tractates," generally related in theme to the order to which they belong (see table 3). The longest of the orders is *Teharot*, comprising one-fourth of the Mishnah. This highlights the goal of the Mishnah, which is to promulgate a way of life by which all of Israel is pure. The other tractates spell out how every area of life is to be regulated with everything in its proper place. In the Mishnah, the holiness that characterized the temple and its service is applied to every aspect of the life of Israel. Heaven and earth are seen as brought into harmony through the carrying out of life by the laws of the Mishnah.

Table 3. Orders of the Mishnah

Order	Title	Translation of Title	Contents
I	*Zera'im*	Seeds	Laws dealing with agriculture
II	*Mo'ed*	Appointed days	Laws dealing with festivals according to the lunar calendar
III	*Nashim*	Women	Laws dealing with marriage contracts, women's vows, suspected adulteresses, divorce, engagement, and so forth
IV	*Neziqin*	Damages	Laws covering everyday social interaction, such as trade, real estate, and so forth, as well as penalties for damages by animals, other people, and so forth. It also discusses lawcourts and the penalties given for various offenses
V	*Qodashim*	Holy things	Laws dealing with sacrifices of various types, as well as the slaughter and consumption of animals not intended for sacrifice. Other topics involve the firstborn (of both animals and people), temple furnishings, the offerings of poor people, and so forth
VI	*Teharot*	Purities	Laws covering purities and impurities of all sorts

The Mishnah is a document that depicts an ahistorical ideal. It depicts Israelite life as it should be lived in relation to God. The Mishnah has no introduction that situates it in history. It simply begins by stating the judgments of various rabbis on a vast array of topics, and it abruptly ends when it is done. This serves to give the Mishnah a timeless quality.

Although the Mishnah depicts itself as timeless, it is most certainly a product of its times, about which one must have a general grasp in order to understand the necessity of the Mishnah for rabbinic Judaism. The Mishnah was necessitated by the aftermath of the Bar Kokhba Revolt, which took place in the second quarter of the second century AD. As punishment for the revolt, Emperor Hadrian expelled the Jews from Jerusalem and made it into a Gentile city. After this devastating blow, any realistic chance of rebuilding the temple was gone. This was a crisis of the highest enormity. How could Israel be a holy people before God with no temple and no hope of building one? The Mishnah asserts powerfully that Israel, through a totally sanctified existence in every sphere of life, can still be that holy people before God.

The Mishnah and the Bible. The Mishnah rarely quotes the Bible, and the material that contains biblical quotations is generally considered to be later additions. Although some of the sections of the Mishnah seem to be biblical paraphrase, this does not mean that the Mishnah is a body of biblical interpretation. In fact, much of its material seems to be independent of the Bible, and other material contradicts it.

The Mishnah is a compilation that includes much earlier traditional teaching, and as such, it contains material attributed to the Pharisees, with which the Mishnah is congenial. It would be a mistake to see rabbinic Judaism that began with the Mishnah as a continuation of the Pharisaic Judaism depicted in the NT. There is a decisive break between Pharisaic Judaism and later rabbinic

Judaism, either with the destruction of the temple in AD 70 or with the expulsion of the Jews from Judah after the Bar Kokhba Revolt, with the latter being more likely.

MISHRAITES A clan of descendants of Judah, from the family of Kiriath Jearim (1 Chron. 2:53), they were ancestors of the Zorathites and the Eshtaolites. The name indicates that they were residents of Mishra, but nothing is known of the location.

MISPAR One of the leaders who returned from the exile in Babylon with Zerubbabel (Ezra 2:2). In the parallel account the name is listed as "Mispereth" (Neh. 7:7).

MISPERETH *See* Mispar.

MISREPHOTH MAIM A boundary of the territory of the Sidonians (a location possibly on the modern border between Israel and Lebanon). Joshua pursued King Jabin of Hazor to this point when the Canaanite coalition had come out against the Israelites at the Waters of Merom (Josh. 11:8). Although still to be conquered at the end of Joshua's life, the area bounded by Misrephoth Maim was to be included in the inheritance of Israel (Josh. 13:6).

MISSION The word "mission" was coined by the Jesuits in the sixteenth century to refer to the sending of the Godhead into the world, reflecting a particular trinitarian formulation. The Jesuits used the term "mission" to describe the Father, who sends the Son, who sends the Holy Spirit, who sends the church into the world as an agent of redemption and reconciliation. Simply put, the Jesuits conceived of mission as sending. That biblical term "send" (e.g., Gk. *apostellō*) described the fundamental nature of the church as being sent by God into the world with a specific purpose, animated by the Holy Spirit to accomplish its task given by God, as a sign and instrument of God's kingdom. Initially, the Jesuits employed the term in the context of both the conversion of heathens (those who failed to recognize the God of the Bible) and the reconversion of Protestants to Roman Catholicism.

The biblical notion of mission affirms that God is a sending God (Lat., *missio Dei*), who loves the world so much that he sent his Son into the world to redeem it (e.g., John 3:16), and whose Son then sends the Holy Spirit as the Counselor (Gk. *paraklētos* [e.g., John 16:5–7]) and guide so that the church can fulfill its purpose. Mission (sending), therefore, expresses both the heart of God and the nature of the church in the world.

THE ROLE OF LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

Functionally, mission is the sharing of the good news of Jesus Christ in word and deed across cultural and linguistic boundaries, without granting any particular language or culture a superior position in the divine economy. The Bible tells the story of God's mission in offering human beings a covenantal relationship with himself. South African mission scholar David Bosch suggests that the missionary in the OT is God himself, whereas the NT presents several significant missionaries, with Jesus and his disciples being the most illustrative examples. Indeed, it can be said that the NT is itself a mission document, since it was written by people actively involved in mission (e.g., Paul, Luke). Biblically, the Christian mission implies a certain perspective on language and culture whereby all languages and cultures are relativized in the light of Christ, with no language or culture having privileged access to God, for God communicates through every particular language and culture. Thus, for instance, Koreans, Zulus, Cambodians, Quechuas, and Swedes have the same access to God through their own language and culture, and none of them are required to adopt another language or culture, such as Hebrew, Greek, or English, in order to know and worship God.

The importance of the parity of languages and cultures worldwide as vehicles of the gospel is exemplified biblically in the account of the Jerusalem council, where the apostle Paul confronted Jewish Christians who would have made Torah and circumcision the litmus test of authentic faith in Jesus Christ (Acts 15). Paul argued vigorously against those who sought to require new Christians to adopt Jewish ceremonial practices of the OT in order to join the body of Christ. The relativization of language and culture is so crucial to Christian mission that Scripture records Paul rebuking Peter for seeking to make Gentile Christians follow Jewish customs (Gal. 2:14). Requiring followers of Christ to adopt Jewish (or other) ceremonial traditions (e.g., circumcision) would render the grace of Christ useless, making a mockery of the cross (Gal. 2:21), since Christ liberates human beings within their own language and culture. Simply put, people were to become followers of Jesus Christ on the basis of their own language and culture (Greek or otherwise) rather than according to any other tradition. According to the biblical account, no language or culture is too profane to communicate the good news of Jesus Christ.

MISSION AS SENDING

Biblically, sending implies a sender, the one sent, and a message. The sender is the agent who initiates the deliverance of the message. The one sent has been given the authority to deliver in word and deed the message of the sender. The message refers to the content in word and deed that is shared by the agent (e.g., missionary) of the sender. The authority of the sender is invested in the messenger, so much so that the messenger (e.g., the missionary) represents the sender directly. More broadly, the biblical term "sending" appears in both Testaments, and it occurs in mundane contexts that are not concerned with God's mission (*missio Dei*) as well as in texts that are explicitly mission related. In the OT, the Hebrew term *shalakh*, which occurs in various forms over eight hundred times, refers to sending the intentions of an authority figure, often a king, judge, or other person of high status. An example would be God, as a demonstration of his authority, sending Adam out of the garden (Gen. 3:23). The act of sending expresses the intention of the sender. The mission of God as presented in the OT is communicated clearly in Gen. 12:1–3 (in what is known as the Abrahamic covenant), where God tells Abram to leave his country, guided by God, in order to be a blessing to the entire world. Following Israel's continual disobedience, God promises to send them a savior (Isa. 19:20), a statement that Christians interpret as foreshadowing the birth and ministry of Jesus Christ.

In the NT, the Greek terms for "send," and their variations, occur over two hundred times, appearing in texts such as "I am sending you out like sheep among wolves" (Matt. 10:16); "As the Father has sent me, I am sending you" (John 20:21); and "Jesus sent two of his disciples" (Mark 11:1). People often assume that there is one Great Commission text, Matt. 28:18–20, which summarizes the biblical warrant for mission. However, there are several "great commissions" in the Gospels, which might be better understood as "last commissions." Each Gospel writer records his own version of the last commission, reflecting his theological purposes within the particular contexts out of which he writes his account. The last commissions appear in Matt. 28:16–20; Mark 16:14–20; Luke 24:44–47; John 20:19–23.

The most responsible interpretive strategy with regard to these passages is to read them within the larger context of each Gospel narrative rather than as individual texts (i.e., proof texts) disconnected from their wider context. That is to say, a faithful theology of mission in part entails letting the text interpret itself through study of the entire Gospel account. Otherwise, one may fail to understand the biblical notion of mission in its entirety. For instance, Luke 24:47 announces that “repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his [Christ’s] name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem,” which emphasizes the need for confession, forgiveness, and redemption (vertical aspects of mission). Yet one could misinterpret Luke’s Gospel were one to understand mission solely through the words of Luke 24:44–47, the vertical (spiritual) aspect, while overlooking Luke 4:16–30, verses that announce Jesus’ mission to liberate captives and give sight to the blind, reflecting the horizontal (social) nature of mission. In Luke’s Gospel, mission is characterized as equally vertical (i.e., calling for repentance and forgiveness) and horizontal (i.e., seeking sociopolitical justice). According to Luke’s Gospel, then, both vertical and horizontal aspects must be present in mission.

Mission and Missions

It is worthwhile to note the difference between the terms “mission” (sg.) and “missions” (pl.). Whereas “mission” refers to the singular act of God, who sends his Son, who sends the Holy Spirit into the world, “missions” refers to the specific agencies and organizations in history and currently that have sought to carry out that mission of God. There is only one mission (*missio Dei*), with several missions aiming to accomplish that singular mission through time and space. Generally, missions are divided into denominational and faith missions. Denominational missions, such as those of Roman Catholic, Baptist, Methodist, Lutheran, or Presbyterian churches, send out missionaries financially supported by the denomination. Faith missions, such as Wycliffe Bible Translators, Operation Mobilization, or SIM (Serving in Mission, formally Sudan Interior Mission), require that missionaries serve in mission by faith, either by going where they are called by God without having prior financial support or by raising financial support from friends and churches prior to leaving for their intended region of service.

Conclusion

Finally, there are two important lessons from the biblical account of mission. First, Paul and the other disciples, while seeking to communicate the gospel of good news to particular people, sought to maintain the unity of the churches in the face of their diverse cultural and linguistic makeup (e.g., Eph. 4:4–7). This means that a biblical perspective on mission sees culture and language as channels rather than obstacles to the communication of the gospel. Second, Paul and the disciples never started missions but rather established churches. Since mission implies movement across cultural and linguistic frontiers, the earlier followers of Christ were on the move, with the conviction that the Holy Spirit would guide, direct, and protect them until Christ returned.

MIST The biblical writers use mist in a figurative sense to refer to something that fades away. Although God would sweep away the Israelites’ sins “like the morning mist” (Isa. 44:22), he also spoke of their fickle love as mist (Hos. 6:4). James described human life itself as a fleeting mist (James 4:14). The word also occurs in a literal sense to describe water that arose from the earth in the time of Eden (Gen. 2:6 KJV, NASB), and in one instance, “mist” depicts the nature of blindness (Acts 13:11).

MITANNI Located in northern Mesopotamia and Syria, this kingdom of confederated Hurrian city-states seems to have formed around 1550 BC and reached its zenith in the Amarna period, functioning as a crossroads for merchants and messengers from Egypt, the Hittites, the Assyrians, and others. It is not mentioned in the Bible and fell before 1245 BC. The capital, Washukanni, was perhaps located at Tell Fakhariyah. Hurrian culture is important for understanding ancient Canaan: some biblical personal names are thought to derive from Hurrian (e.g., “Shamgar”), and among Mitanni’s cities was Nuzi, where finds show notable cultural parallels with the patriarchal narratives.

MITHAN *See* Mithnite.

MITHCAH *See* Mithkah.

MITHKAH One of the Israelite encampments in the wilderness, between Terah and Hashmonah (Num. 33:28–29).

MITHNITE A resident of Mithan, describing Joshaphat, one of David’s mighty warriors (1 Chron. 11:43). The location of Joshaphat’s residence is unknown.

MITHRA, MITHRAISM A mystery religion of the Roman Empire, often popular with soldiers. The beliefs and practices of Mithraism, which was secretive by nature and had no body of writings, can only be pieced together from archaeological evidence and secondary sources. Most of the information about the cult is gleaned from the writings of outsiders commenting on the sect and its followers. Belief in the god Mithra originated in Persia, where he was revered in the Zoroastrian religion as a mediator for the god of light, Ahura Mazda. By the time the worship of Mithra spread throughout the Roman Empire, it occupied a niche that distinguished it from the worship of the typical Roman gods.

Whereas most gods had public temples and their worship was deeply integrated into civil society, the worship of Mithra took place in underground structures or caves (called *mithraeum*) and was undertaken for reasons of personal salvation, although its popularity among some soldiers probably encouraged other members of the military to participate. Each *mithraeum* contained a painting or sculpture of a specific image, the *tauroctony*, which showed Mithra on the back of a sacred bull, ready to plunge a knife into its neck. There were seven levels of initiation: *Corax* (raven), *Nymphus* (bridegroom), *Miles* (soldier), *Leo* (lion), *Perses* (Persian), *Heliodromus* (sun courier), and *Pater* (Father). In the past it was thought that women were barred from participation, but that is now somewhat disputed.

Roman statue of Mithra slaying the bull (second century AD)

Evidence of Mithraism appears in the first century AD and continues until the fourth century, when the ban on paganism by Theodosius I ended official practice in the military. This sent Mithraism into an irreversible decline. Historians have found the cult of Mithra particularly interesting because of some striking parallels to Christianity. Mithra was associated with the sun god, whose birth was celebrated on December 25, which Christians later adopted as the birthday of Christ. Adherents of Mithraism shared a sacred meal as a part of worship, similar to the love feasts of early Christianity, and both considered a sacrifice to be central to their theology. Early Christian leaders even accused Mithraism of malevolently imitating Christianity. While some superficial similarities do exist, it is unlikely that either group had any real influence on the other.

MITHREDATH **(1)** The treasurer of Persia at the time of Cyrus, he brokered the return of the temple vessels from Cyrus to Sheshbazzar, one of the key leaders of the return to Jerusalem after the exile (Ezra 1:8). **(2)** A Persian official (apparently located in Syria), but during the reign of Artaxerxes I (464–424 BC), he was part of a conspiracy that tried to block the rebuilding of the city of Jerusalem (Ezra 4:7).

MITRE Headwear worn by bishops in the Western church from the Middle Ages. The two points of this hat symbolize the tongues of flame from Pentecost, linking the bishop to apostolic authority. In the OT, the KJV refers to the turban worn by the high priest as a mitre (e.g., Exod. 28:4; Lev. 8:9). *See also* Turban.

MITYLENE An important harbor and resort city in Roman times (modern Mitilíni) on the eastern shore of the island of Lesbos, in the Aegean Sea off the northwestern coast of Asia Minor. Mitylene was a stop on the return leg of Paul’s third missionary campaign (Acts 20:14).

MIXED MULTITUDE This phrase translates the Hebrew term *’ereb* in Exod. 12:38 (KJV, NET, RSV [NIV: “other people”]), referring to various peoples of non-Israelite descent who accompanied the Israelites in the exodus from Egypt. There is some ambiguity in the biblical text as to the moral character of this group. Most translations render the term neutrally and see the passage as a reference to God’s redemption extending beyond ethnic boundaries. Others translate the term more pejoratively as “rabble” or “riffraff” and consider this group to be the same as the “rabble” in Num. 11:4. The term *’ereb* also occurs in Neh. 13:3, referring to people excluded from Israel on account of their “mixed ancestry” (NET [NIV: “foreign descent”]) as part of Nehemiah’s reforms. *See also* Mingled People.

MIZAR Mentioned only in Ps. 42:6, this mountain perhaps was in the foothills of Mount Hermon. Alternatively, the Hebrew word *mits’ar* could be understood as an adjective, so that the phrase here could also be translated as “little mountain.”

MIZPAH Meaning “watchtower,” this is the name of several sites in the Bible. In some Bible versions, the name also appears as “Mizpeh.” **(1)** Along with “Galeed,” a name given to the heap of stones that memorialized the covenant made between Jacob and Laban (Gen. 31:48–49). **(2)** A region near Mount Hermon that was occupied by the Hivites (Josh. 11:3). **(3)** One of the towns occupying the region of the Shephelah, or coastal plain, listed in Josh. 15:38–39.

(4) The place where the Israelites assembled in response to the military threat from Ammon and made Jephthah their leader (Judg. 10:17; 11:11). It may have been the home of Jephthah and may be the same place mentioned in Gen. 31:49. From Mizpah, Jephthah and Israel attacked the Ammonites. Mizpah became the place where Jephthah fulfilled his ill-conceived vow (Judg. 11:34). This location is most likely synonymous with the Ramath Mizpah in the territory of Gad (Josh. 13:26). **(5)** A site in Moab where David had his parents stay, with the permission of the king of Moab (1 Sam. 22:3).

(6) A city in the tribal allotment of Benjamin. It is listed between Beeroth and Kephirah and seems to have been close to Gibeon and Ramah (Josh. 18:26; 1 Kings 15:22; Neh. 3:7). Of the various places to bear the name “Mizpah,” the Benjamite location has the most biblical significance. The men of Israel gathered here to decide how to deal with the Benjamites’ behavior toward the Levite’s concubine (Judg. 20:1–3; 21:1–8). It was also here that Samuel called the people of Israel together to pray and renew their relationship with God after the ark of the covenant had been sent back by the

Philistines (1 Sam. 7:5–6). As a result, when the Philistines attacked, God caused them to panic, and Israel had the victory. Samuel regularly visited Mizpah to render judgment for the Israelites (1 Sam. 7:16). Also, Saul was presented to Israel as its king at Mizpah (1 Sam. 10:17).

Taken collectively, these references show the religious and civic importance of the site for the fledgling nation. After the division of the kingdom, Mizpah became part of the southern kingdom of Judah. King Asa of Judah fortified Mizpah against King Baasha of Israel with materials used from Baasha's fortification at Ramah (1 Kings 15:16–22). Mizpah became an important civic center once again after the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonians in 587/586 BC. Gedaliah, the Babylonian-appointed governor of the conquered region, set up his government center at Mizpah (2 Kings 25:23–25). The importance of Mizpah is commemorated by Judas Maccabeus in the intertestamental period (1 Macc. 3:46).

The location of the Benjamite Mizpah is debated today, with two possible sites being possible: Nebi-Samwil is approximately four and a half miles north of Jerusalem, and Tell en-Nasbeh, the more likely site, is approximately eight miles north of Jerusalem.

Tell en-Nasbeh, the likely location of Mizpah in Benjamin

MIZPAR *See* Mispar.

MIZPEH *See* Mizpah.

MIZRAIM The second of Ham's four sons and a grandson of Noah (Gen. 10:6; NIV: "Egypt"). Mizraim, like his brothers, Cush, Put, and Canaan, is named as the progenitor of people who lived in northern Africa or Palestine. As his descendants settled in Egypt, "Mizraim" became the common

Hebrew word for Egypt as a kingdom and for the Egyptians as a people. The relationship between Mizraim and Ham is reflected in the psalms, which sometimes refer to Egypt as the land or tents of Ham (Pss. 78:51; 105:23, 27; 106:22).

MIZZAH The youngest of the four sons of Reuel and a grandson of Esau and his wife Basemath, he and his brothers were early chiefs of Edom (Gen. 36:13, 17; 1 Chron. 1:37).

MNASON A man from Cyprus living in Jerusalem who was one of the earliest believers and hosted Paul and his travel companions at the end of Paul's third missionary campaign (Acts 21:16).

MOAB

THE GEOGRAPHY OF MOAB

Undisputed territory. Moab proper lies between the Arnon and the Zered valleys east of the Dead Sea. The Arnon is the deepest gorge in Jordan (seventeen hundred feet) and is two miles wide at the upper edge. It served as a natural northern boundary for geopolitical Moab, even though the nation frequently expanded its control farther north. The canyon eventually splits into four branches, "the wadis [NIV mg.: "ravines"] of the Arnon" (Num. 21:14–15 NASB). The Zered to the south is the only river in Jordan that constituted a permanent political border.

The average elevation of Moab is about thirty-two hundred feet, with some mountains nearing four thousand feet. Moab receives considerably more rain (sixteen inches per year) than do the eastern fringes of Israel, as moisture is picked up from the humid Jordan Valley and the Dead Sea by the prevailing westerly winds. The band of arable land is narrow because the terrain next to the Rift Valley is rugged. Cities in Moab were among places mentioned as suitable for livestock for the two and one-half tribes settling in Transjordan (Num. 32:1–4).

The plateau and plains of Moab. When *mishor* refers to the plateau of Moab, it always has the definite article in Hebrew (Deut. 3:10; 4:43; Josh. 13:9, 16, 17, 21; Jer. 48:8, 21). The plateau begins where the foothills of Gilead end and extends south to the Arnon Gorge. The desert boundary to the east fluctuates somewhat, depending on wet or dry years. The average elevation is about twenty-six hundred feet, with an average rainfall of fourteen to sixteen inches. In the biblical period, primary contenders for control of this region were Moabites and Israelites. The Moabites considered the plateau part of their territory, with their northern boundary reaching the foothills of Gilead.

The "plains [*'arebot*] of Moab" (Num. 22:1; 26:3; 31:12; 33:48–50; 36:13; Deut. 34:1; Josh. 13:32) could refer to the southeastern corner of the Jordan Valley below the plateau opposite Jericho. Nevertheless, because the Hebrew preposition *'al*, used repeatedly in the Numbers passages, can mean "above," it might refer to plains "above" the Jordan opposite Jericho—in other words, part of the plateau. This makes more sense in light of the events that unfolded while the Israelites were camped there. Both expressions are indicative that the name of Moab was attached to territories beyond the strictly political boundaries.

THE HISTORY OF MOAB IN THE BIBLE

Origins of the Moabites. After the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, Lot's daughters determined to carry on the family line by sleeping with their father (Gen. 19:30–38). The son of the elder daughter was named "Moab." According to an etymology in the LXX, the name in Hebrew means “from my father” (Gen. 19:37).

The exodus and the conquest. Moses’ song refers to leaders of Moab among those whom Israel would encounter (Exod. 15:15). As the Israelites made their way past Edom (Num. 20:14–21), they may also have given a wide berth to geopolitical Moab, moving instead along the desert highway to the east (Num. 21:10–20; Deut. 2:8–9; Judg. 11:18; but see also Deut. 2:29) until they arrived at the territory that Sihon, king of the Amorites, had previously captured from the Moabites (Num. 21:21–26). This is the plateau (Heb. *mishor*) north of the Arnon (Deut. 2:36) stretching to Ammon (Josh. 13:10). The capital city of Sihon was Heshbon on the plateau (*mishor*) (Josh. 13:21). After defeating the Amorites, the Israelites camped on the “plains of Moab” (Num. 22:1; 33:48–50), where they remained until crossing the Jordan River. Most likely they did not jeopardize their security by moving down into the Jordan Valley.

Frightened by this multitude, the king of Moab and the elders of Midian sent for Balaam to curse the Israelites (Num. 21–24). Instead, Balaam pronounced four sets of blessings on Israel, and in the final one Balaam spoke of a “star . . . out of Jacob” who would “crush the foreheads of Moab” (Num. 24:17). Because the Moabites refused to welcome the Israelites and hired Balaam, the Moabites, along with Ammonites, were excluded from the assembly of the Lord for ten generations (Deut. 23:3–6). The verse immediately prior to this passage excludes those born of forbidden marriages, which might be the reason for specifying Moab and Ammon.

The plateau (*mishor*) was allocated to the tribes of Reuben and Gad (Num. 32:34–38; Josh. 13:8–9). Their presence enabled the Israelites to maintain a hold in the region, a fact that would be significant some three centuries later (Judg. 11:26). As the Israelites prepared to enter the land, Moses restated the covenant on the plains of Moab (Num. 36:13; Deut. 29:1). When it came time for Moses to die, he climbed Mount Nebo from the plains of Moab to the top of Pisgah, and after his death the Israelites mourned him there for thirty days (Deut. 34:1–8).

The judges through the monarchy. During the period of the judges, the Moabites pushed north across the Arnon and as far as Jericho. When Ehud killed Eglon, the Moabites were driven back and subjected to Israel for eighty years (Judg. 3). The respite was temporary, however, due to repeated apostasy on the part of the Israelites. They turned to worship the gods of the peoples around them, among them the gods of the Moabites (Judg. 10:6). At some point during the period of the judges, relations between Israel and Moab were sufficiently friendly that the family of Elimelek could take refuge there during the famine in Judah (Ruth 1). When all the men of the family died, the Moabite Ruth converted to the worship of Yahweh (Ruth 1:16), which meant that she could indeed become part of the congregation of Israel, overcoming the restriction in Deut. 23:3–6.

Ruth’s son was Obed, the father of Jesse, the father of David (Ruth 4:21). This family link with Moab may explain why David sought refuge for his father and mother in Moab in the dark days when he was fleeing from Saul (1 Sam. 22:1–4). David was appealing to a national enemy in doing this since Saul had been fighting against the Moabites along with the Ammonites, the Edomites, and the Philistines since he became king (1 Sam. 14:47). The complexity created for David by this combination of family allegiances and ongoing national concerns is evident in his later actions as king. When he defeated the Moabites, he brutally subdued them, reducing them to a vassal kingdom (2 Sam. 8:2–12). The united kingdom continued to control the plateau of Moab, evident in the towns noted in David’s census; it reached through the tribe of Gad to the city of Aroer in the Arnon Gorge (2 Sam. 24:5).

Solomon built places of worship for the gods of his wives, among them Chemosh, “the vile god of Moab” (2 Kings 23:13). As a result, God removed all but the southern kingdom of Judah from the

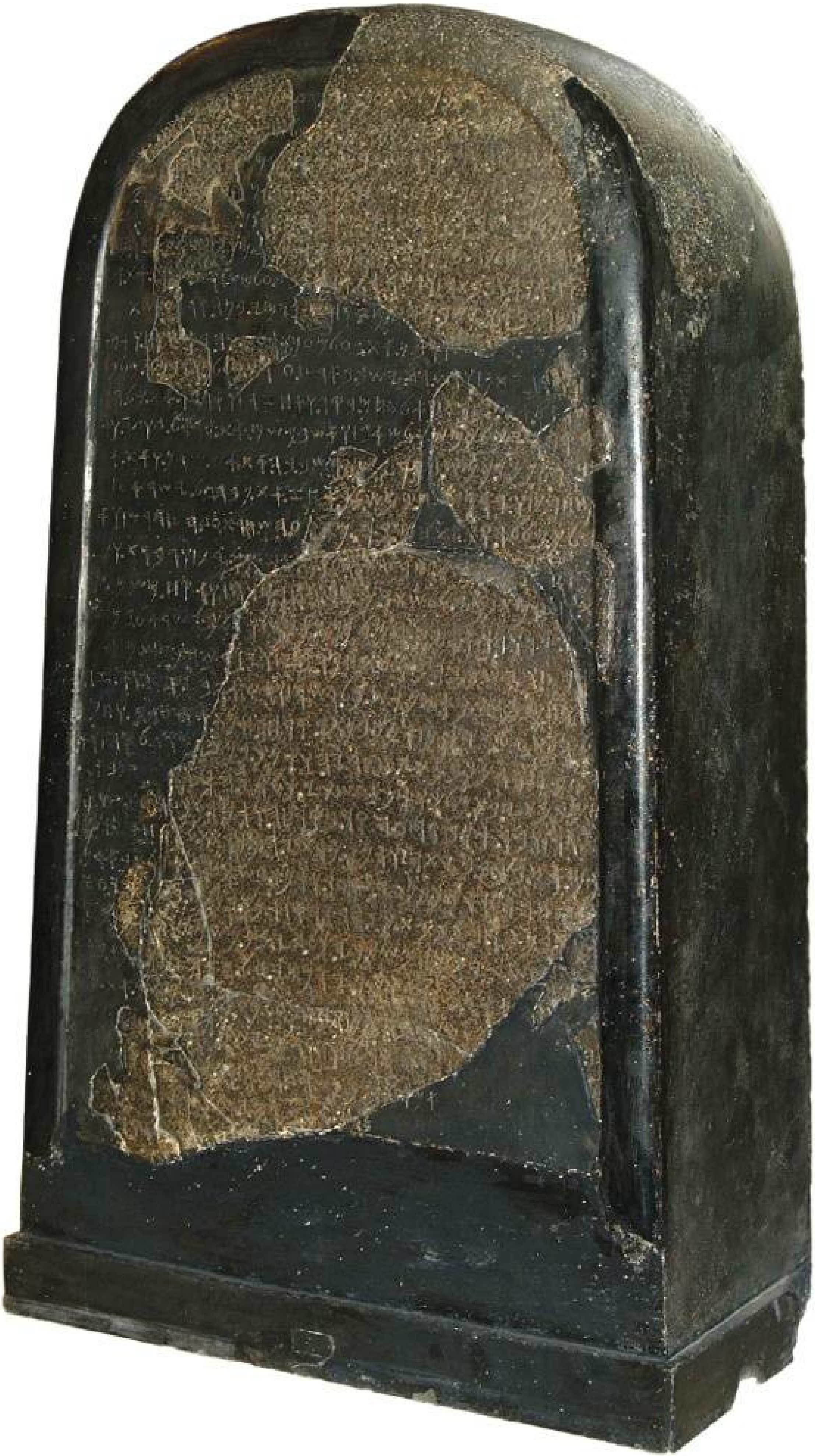
Davidic dynasty and the plateau of Moab came under the control of the northern kingdom for more than half a century. The Moabite Stone, discovered in the nineteenth century AD at Dibon, indicated that Omri, king of Israel, conquered the plateau of Medeba and reestablished connections with the tribe of Gad. This continued until near the end of Ahab's reign. Although the Moabite Stone indicates that Mesha revolted during the reign of Ahab, the biblical text puts it after Ahab's death. The revolt prompted an alliance between Joram and Jehoshaphat to subdue Moab (2 Kings 3:4–27).

The prophets and after the exile. Moab is the object of stinging rebuke from several prophets (Isa. 15–16; 25:10; Jer. 48; Ezek. 25:8–11; Amos 2:1–3). Moab's forthcoming judgment is described in grim terms, equating Moab's end to that of Sodom and Gomorrah (Zeph. 2:9). Even so, God declares, "I will restore the fortunes of Moab in days to come" (Jer. 48:47). Moab will be humbled along with Edom and the Philistines at the word of the Lord (Pss. 60:8; 108:9). After the return from exile, Moabites were among those with whom the Israelites intermarried (Ezra 9:1; Neh. 13:1; cf. Deut. 23:3–6).

MOABITE *See* Moab.

MOABITESS A woman from Moab. The term is used in some Bible translations primarily to describe Ruth, the daughter-in-law of Naomi and wife of Boaz (Ruth 2:2, 6, 21; 4:5, 10), but it also describes Shimrith the mother of Jehozabad (2 Chron. 24:26). *See also* Moab.

MOABITE STONE The Moabite Stone (also known as the Mesha Stela or Mesha Inscription) is a rather large (about 3.5 feet high, 2 feet wide, 14 inches thick) black basalt stela bearing a royal inscription from Mesha, a ninth-century BC king of Moab. This dedicatory inscription of thirty-four lines written in a script similar to ancient Hebrew praises Chemosh, Moab's chief deity, for several victories but primarily for deliverance from King Ahab of Israel about 849 BC. Because the stela cites other events later in Mesha's reign, it most likely was made between 840 and 830 BC. The inscription states that the stela was placed in Qarhoh at the "high place built for Chemosh."



Charles Clermont-Ganneau heard stories about this stela from local Arabs, but Rev. F. A. Klein, a Prussian working for the Church Missionary Society in Jerusalem, found it at Dhiban (approximately fifty miles south of Ammon) in August 1868. Realizing the importance of this discovery, Arab tribal leaders broke the stela apart, hoping to sell its pieces for more money. Apparently, some Arabs working for Clermont-Ganneau were able to make a papier-mâché squeeze of the inscription before it was damaged. Most of the pieces were later recovered and reassembled, and in 1873 the stela was transported to the Louvre Museum in Paris.

The inscription corroborates and supplements the account of the battle between Israel and Moab recorded in 2 Kings 3:4–27. However, in the biblical account it is not Chemosh who gives victory to Mesha, but Yahweh who gives victory to Joram, Ahab’s son. The Israelites ended the battle and returned home after Mesha offered up his oldest son to Chemosh on the city walls.

MOADIAH An ancestor of a clan of priests during the time of the high priest Joiakim (Neh. 12:17). Some identify the name with Maadiah (Neh. 12:5; e.g., NIV).

MODERATION Avoidance of excess or extremes (Eccles. 5:10; Ezek. 16:47). The Bible generally condemns excessive wealth and extreme asceticism (Prov. 30:8; 1 Tim. 5:21). Paul appropriates one of the four cardinal virtues of the Stoics, “propriety,” which relates to moderation in eating, drinking, sex, and exercise, leading to soundness of mind (1 Tim. 2:9, 15).

MOLADAH A city in the Negev near Beersheba. It was first allotted to Judah (Josh. 15:26) and is described as part of the land near the border of Edom. Later, it was allotted to Simeon as part of its inheritance that lay within the territory of Judah (Josh. 19:2). The city was reoccupied by Israelites returning from the exile (Neh. 11:26). The city is mentioned on an ostracon found at Horvat ’Uza, but its location is uncertain. Some identify Moladah with Malathah, the Edomite location that Herod Agrippa I used as a retreat. The two most frequently suggested sites are Tell el-Milh (southeast of Beersheba, between Arad and Beersheba) and Khirbet Kuseifeh (twelve miles east of Beersheba).

MOLDY In Josh. 9:5, 12 the NIV translates the Hebrew word *niqqudim* as “moldy,” describing the bread of the Gibeonites who made it seem as if they had traveled a far distance to meet the Israelites (Josh. 9:5, 12 [KJV: “mouldy”; NET: “hard”]).

MOLE Palestine has no true moles. In Isa. 2:20 the animal that some versions identify as a “mole” (NIV, KJV, NRSV, ESV, NASB) is more generically identified in others as a “rodent” (NET, NLT). This rodent, probably a mole-rat, along with the bat, lives in darkness, and both are symbols of the spiritually blind. In the KJV of Lev. 11:30, a mole (NIV: “chameleon”) is listed among unclean animals.

MOLECH *See* Molek.

MOLEK There are considerable questions about the identification of Molek. Generally, it has been believed that Molek was a god of the Ammonites (1 Kings 11:5). Molek has long been associated with the practice of child sacrifice, based on several references to the god within the Bible. For example, Leviticus associates child sacrifice with the worship of Molek and prescribes capital punishment for any practitioner of such (18:21; 20:2–5). Josiah is credited with destroying the altar (Topheth) to Molek in the Valley of Ben Hinnom, so that no one could sacrifice a child to Molek there (2 Kings 23:10–13).

The biblical text makes reference to the desecration of Topheth. It is not known exactly what Topheth was, but the Hebrew word likely means "to burn," which suggests that it was an incinerator or specially formed altar. Whether this incinerator was for religious purposes only or had other uses, such as a kiln for firing pottery, is unknown. Jeremiah 19 records that Jeremiah pronounced an oracle at the Potsherd Gate against Topheth and the Valley of Ben Hinnom. In this oracle the god being worshiped is Baal rather than Molek; however, the location is still associated with child sacrifice. The fact that the gate at which Jeremiah offers the oracle is called the "Potsherd Gate" suggests that this may have been the place where potters worked, in which case there would have been a need for a kiln close by to fire the pottery. Could this be Topheth? Jeremiah 7:31 offers more evidence that Topheth and the Valley of Ben Hinnom were used for child sacrifice.

There is some debate about the terminology of "pass through the fire" (KJV, NRSV, NET), which is a more literal translation of the Hebrew text than the NIV's "sacrifice" (see 2 Kings 16:3; 23:10). Some scholars attribute this phrase to Canaanite sources and question whether it refers to actually killing the sacrifice with fire or having the sacrifice symbolically burned by passing the child through the fire. It should be noted, however, that the terminology "pass through the fire" is not used exclusively in the Bible to refer to child sacrifice (see 2 Chron. 28:3).

Archaeology has proved that the Canaanites often performed child sacrifices, evidenced by large burial plots with many children near religious centers. Within the Canaanite pantheon the god Malik is fairly well attested. Malik was the god of fire and one that demanded human sacrifice. The names "Malik" and "Molek" have the same Semitic root, and it is possible that the OT has changed "Malik" to "Molek" to reflect its disgust by mixing the correct name with the Hebrew vocalization for "shame."

Several kings of Israel are accused not only of worshiping Molek, but also of participating in child sacrifice and being a patron of the god. Solomon is accused of worshiping Molek and building a high place for Molek (1 Kings 11:5–7, 33). This high place is perhaps the Topheth that Josiah desecrates (2 Kings 23:10). Ahaz is recorded as sacrificing one of his sons in the fire (2 Kings 16:3), as did Manasseh (2 Kings 21:6).

MOLID A descendant of Judah, he was the son of Abishur and Abihail (1 Chron. 2:29).

MOLOCH A variant spelling of the Canaanite deity name "Molek" (Amos 5:26 KJV; Acts 7:43 KJV, NASB, NRSV).

MOLTEN SEA The huge bronze basin that was placed in the courtyard of Solomon's temple (1 Kings 7:23–26; 2 Chron. 4:2–6 KJV, NRSV [NIV: "Sea of cast metal"]). It was approximately fifteen feet in diameter, seven and a half feet in height, and forty-five feet in circumference. There is a discrepancy in the biblical texts as to how much water it could contain, but it was probably anywhere from ten to fifteen thousand gallons. It rested on twelve cast bulls, three each facing north, west, east, and south. It was ornamented on the outside with figures of bulls and gourds. Scholars estimate that empty it would have weighed between twenty-five and thirty tons.

Functionally, the molten sea served as a basin for priests to wash in (2 Chron. 4:6), but most scholars are convinced that an even greater symbolic value was attached to it. Throughout the ancient Near East, gods were conceived of as having won great victories over the primeval waters. The God of Israel is portrayed this way as well in the OT, especially in the Psalter (Pss. 29:3, 10; 65:7; 74:13; 77:16; 89:9; 93:3–4; 104:7). The presence of the molten sea in the courtyard of the temple would have reminded worshipers of God’s sovereignty over the sea, the forces of nature, and over all the nations (see Ps. 65:7).

MONEY *See* Coins.

MONEY BELT In Matt. 10:9 the NASB renders the Greek word *zōnē* as “money belt,” referring to the container in which the disciples carried their money (KJV: “purse”; NIV: “belt”).

MONEY CHANGERS In the Gospels, those who exchange currency in the temple. Jewish males were required to pay the half-shekel temple tax with silver Tyrian coinage (see Exod. 30:13–16; Neh. 10:32; Matt. 17:24–27; Josephus, *Ant.* 18.312; Philo, *Embassy* 156; *Let. Aris.* 40; *m. Ber.* 8:7). Although the Tyrian coins bore the head of the pagan god Melqart (Gk. Herakles), their high silver content (90 to 92 percent) made them preferable over, for example, the Roman silver provincial tetradrachma, which was only 80 percent pure. The tax was equivalent to half a Tyrian stater. Therefore, it was convenient for two Jews to pay the tax with one stater (Matt. 17:27). Rabbinic literature records that the tables of the money changers were set up seasonally in the temple (as well as the provinces) for this purpose (*m. Sheqal.* 1:3). They were under the direct employment of the chief priests, who earned a considerable profit. Placing these actions in the court of the Gentiles was probably a recent innovation. An earlier Jewish visitor could claim concerning the cultic activities, “A general silence reigns. . . . Everything is carried out with reverence and in a manner befitting supreme divinity” (*Let. Aris.* 95–96). The money changers, along with those selling sacrifices, became the object of Jesus’ wrath. He overturned their tables, suggesting that they and the temple authorities behind them were stealing from the poor.

MONKEY In the list of luxuries that Solomon’s ships brought from Tarshish, the NIV translates the last word, *tukki*, as “baboon” (1 Kings 10:22; 2 Chron. 9:21). A possible alternative is “monkey” (NAB, GW), probably referring to the small, long-tailed vervet monkey sometimes kept as a pet in the ancient world. Some modern translations render the word as “peacock” (NET, NASB, NLT).

MOON The earth’s natural satellite. Its diameter is slightly more than one-quarter that of the earth. As a result of orbiting the earth, its appearance varies from a full moon (totally bright) to a new moon (totally dark) every 29.5 days. This cycle has influenced calendars throughout human history.

Cuneiform astronomical text recording observations of the new moon (Uruk, third–second century BC)

The ancient Jewish calendar was tied to the phases of the moon, with the months beginning with each new moon. The new moon was celebrated with multiple offerings (Num. 28:11–15). Festival days were calculated from the new moon.

The moon figures prominently in prophecy. At the day of the Lord, the sun and the moon will be darkened (e.g., Joel 2:10). While most ancient Near Eastern cultures worshiped the moon, Israel was forbidden such worship (Deut. 4:19).

The account of the moon’s creation recorded in Gen. 1:16 does not mention the moon by name. This is in keeping with the general tone of the creation story, wherein God, almost incidentally, creates the things that were worshiped by contemporary cultures.

MORAL DECLINE The moral course of the world is simultaneously moving in two directions. The morally innocent state in which God created humankind was lost at the fall (Gen. 3), and since then, sin, death, and corruption have reigned over all humanity (Rom. 5:12). In Noah’s time the world so declined morally that God had to wipe out nearly the entire human race (Gen. 6–8), and the Bible predicts that sin will come to a similar crescendo before Christ’s return (1 Tim. 4:1; 2 Pet. 3).

Despite this moral degeneration, the kingdom that Christ inaugurated in his first coming (Mark 1:15) will make continual progress in renewing creation until the consummation (Matt. 13:31–33). The new heavens and earth have already broken into the present age at the resurrection of Christ, who is now ruling at the right hand of the Father (Acts 2:33). Therefore, the age subject to death is passing away, but those in Christ are being renewed daily (1 Cor. 7:31; 2 Cor. 4:16). The Holy Spirit represents their down payment on the riches that await them at the final redemption (Eph. 1:14).

MORASTHITE A resident of Moresheth, referring to the prophet Micah (Jer. 26:18; Mic. 1:1 KJV). *See also* Moresheth, Moresheth Gath.

MORDECAI **(1)** Esther’s Benjamite cousin, he lived in the Persian province of Susa due to the Jewish deportation in the Babylonian exile (Esther 2:5–7). After Esther’s parents died, Mordecai assumed a fatherly role in raising the child, and in time he played an influential role in Esther’s initial rise to prominence and in the deliverance of the Jews from imminent death at the hand of Haman. Mordecai also alerted King Xerxes (Ahasuerus) to a potential threat on his life, resulting in his own exaltation. **(2)** One of the exiled Jews who returned home (Ezra 2:2; Neh. 7:7).

MOREH **(1)** A tree or plain that was a stopping point on Abraham’s journey from Harran (Gen. 12:6). If the Hebrew phrase in question (*’elon moreh*) is translated as “tree of Moreh,” the tree would be an oak or terebinth. At this tree, near the city of Shechem, Abraham built an altar to God (Gen. 12:7). Some translations, notably the KJV (likely following the LXX), translate this geographic location as the “plain of Moreh.” In Deut. 11:30 this geographic location is a marker to help locate the mountains Ebal and Gerizim. There are several other mentions of trees in the OT in proximity to Shechem, including the places where Jacob buried his idols (Gen. 35:4) and where Joshua set up a marker commemorating the history of the Israelites (Josh. 24:26). In Judg. 9 two different trees are mentioned in proximity to Shechem. **(2)** A hill near where Gideon attacked and defeated the Midianites (Judg. 7:1). The exact location of this hill is uncertain.

MORESHETH, MORESHETH GATH A town in the foothills southwest of Jerusalem, near Lachish and about halfway between Jerusalem and the Mediterranean. It is the birthplace of the eighth-century BC prophet Micah (Jer. 26:18; Mic. 1:1). In his lament over the towns of this region, Micah says that Lachish will give Moresheth “parting gifts” (Mic. 1:14; here the town is named “Moresheth Gath”), a metaphorical allusion to a fatherly Jerusalem giving wedding gifts to his daughter as she departs to live with her husband. There is a possible reference to Moresheth in the Tell-al-Amarna letters, and the most likely site is modern Tell Judeideh, where archaeological remains from this period have been found.

MORIAH The mountain to which God commanded Abraham to go and sacrifice Isaac (Gen. 22:2). The only other time a mountain of this name is mentioned is 2 Chron. 3:1, as the location of the future temple. There is some debate whether these two references indicate the same location. For instance, if Abraham was going to the well-wooded area around Jerusalem, why would he gather wood from Beersheba? Such questions lead some to suggest that they are two different places with the same name, while others suggest that 2 Chronicles draws a connection between the place of Abraham’s famous test of faith and the location of the temple for theological reasons. Questions also arise about the precise meaning of the name, but most believe that the name is connected to the Hebrew verb “to see” or “to provide,” thus suggesting a connection with the name Abraham gives to the location, “The Lord Will Provide” (Gen. 22:14).

MORNING The period of the day beginning at sunrise and often described as a time of great activity, such as embarking on a journey (Gen. 44:3), initiating a battle (Judg. 9:33), offering sacrifices (Amos 4:4), starting to work (Matt. 20:1), and meeting with God (Exod. 34:2–4; Mark 1:35; cf. Ps. 55:17). Morning is a time of joy (Ps. 30:5), though some may express this joy more loudly than others (Prov. 27:14).

MORNING STAR In the OT, “morning star” may indicate a star (Job 3:9) or celestial beings in general; for example, “morning stars” is parallel to “angels” (lit., “sons of God”; see NIV mg.) in Job 38:7. In a passage addressed to the king of Babylon, Isa. 14:12–13 describes him as the “morning star [ESV, NRSV: “Day Star”], son of the dawn” who spoke presumptuously and fell from heaven. The KJV instead translates the term as “Lucifer,” a name that has traditionally been applied to Satan (*see also* Lucifer). NT imagery associates the brilliant morning star with the dawn of the messianic kingdom of David fulfilled in Jesus (2 Pet. 1:19 [KJV: “day star”]; cf. Num. 24:17; Isa. 60:1–3), promising the morning star to those who overcome (Rev. 2:28). In Rev. 22:16, Jesus identifies himself as the “bright Morning Star.”

MORTAR **(1)** A hollowed-out receptacle resembling a bowl, usually made of stone or possibly clay. The mortar, along with a pestle, was used for grinding, crushing, or mixing substances in food preparation. The food was placed in the mortar and ground with the pestle. This is the tool that the Israelites used in the desert to process the manna (Num. 11:8). The mortar was a common household item required to prepare food for consumption, and its function was so well known that it was employed in biblical metaphors (Prov. 27:22). **(2)** A binding agent used in mud-brick construction (Exod. 1:14; Nah. 3:14). Raw mud was the most common mortar used in this construction, but tar is also attested (Gen. 11:3). *See also* Pestle.

MOSERAH, MOSEROTH An encampment location during the Israelites’ wandering in the wilderness route (Num. 33:30–31). It is the place where Aaron died and was buried (Deut. 10:6). The Hebrew singular (*moserah*) and plural (*moserot*) forms of the name, both of which are used in the Bible, result in the variant English spellings. Its location is unknown, but likely it was close to Mount Hor (Num. 33:38).

MOSES Moses played a leadership role in the founding of Israel as a “kingdom of priests and a holy nation” (Exod. 19:6). Indeed, the narrative of Exodus through Deuteronomy is the story of God using Moses to found the nation of Israel. It begins with an account of his birth (Exod. 2) and ends with an account of his death (Deut. 34). Moses’ influence and importance extend well beyond his lifetime, as later Scripture demonstrates.

ABRAHAM’S DESCENDANTS IN EGYPT

The book of Genesis prepares the way for the story of Moses and the founding of Israel. After recounting the creation of the world and the fall into sin, the book eventually describes God’s choice of Abraham as the one whose descendants he will make “a great nation” and bring a blessing to the world (Gen. 12:1–3). However, by the end of Genesis, Abraham’s descendants have gone to Egypt in order to survive a devastating famine. Although they are in a good relationship with the Egyptian government, the hope is expressed that God will eventually return them to the land of promise (Gen. 50:24–26).

Many years pass between the close of the book of Genesis and the beginning of Exodus. The Israelite population has grown from family size (about seventy people) to nation size. Out of fear, the Egyptians had begun to oppress them. Indeed, the size of the Israelite population so worried them that Pharaoh instituted a decree calling for the death of all male babies born to the Israelites.

MOSES’ LIFE BEFORE THE EXODUS

Moses was born in a dangerous time, and according to Pharaoh’s decree, he should not have survived long after his birth. He was born to Amram and Jochebed (Exod. 6:20). Circumventing Pharaoh's decree, Jochebed placed the infant Moses in a reed basket and floated him down the river. This act seems desperate, but there are similar stories from the Near East (the account of the birth of Sargon, an Akkadian king), and perhaps it was a way of placing the endangered child in the hands of God. God guided the basket down the river and into the presence of none other than Pharaoh's daughter (Exod. 2:5–6), who, at the urging of Moses' sister, hired Jochebed to take care of the child. When the infant grew older, Pharaoh's daughter gave him a Hebrew name, "Moses," which sounds like the Hebrew verb *mashah*, meaning "to draw out" (Exod. 2:10). This amazing story of Moses' survival at birth informs later Israel that their human savior was really provided by their divine savior.

Modern movie adaptations of this story dwell on Moses' upbringing in Pharaoh's household, but the Bible itself is essentially silent on this period of his life (apart from a reference to Moses' Egyptian education in Acts 7:22; cf. Heb. 11:24). The next major episode concerns his defense of an Israelite worker who was being beaten by an Egyptian (Exod. 2:11–25). In the process of rescuing the Israelite, Moses killed the Egyptian. Apparently, his relationship to the ruler's household would not save him from punishment, so when it became clear that he was known to be the killer, he fled Egypt and ended up in Midian, where he became a member of the family of a Midianite priest-chief, Jethro, by marrying his daughter Zipporah.

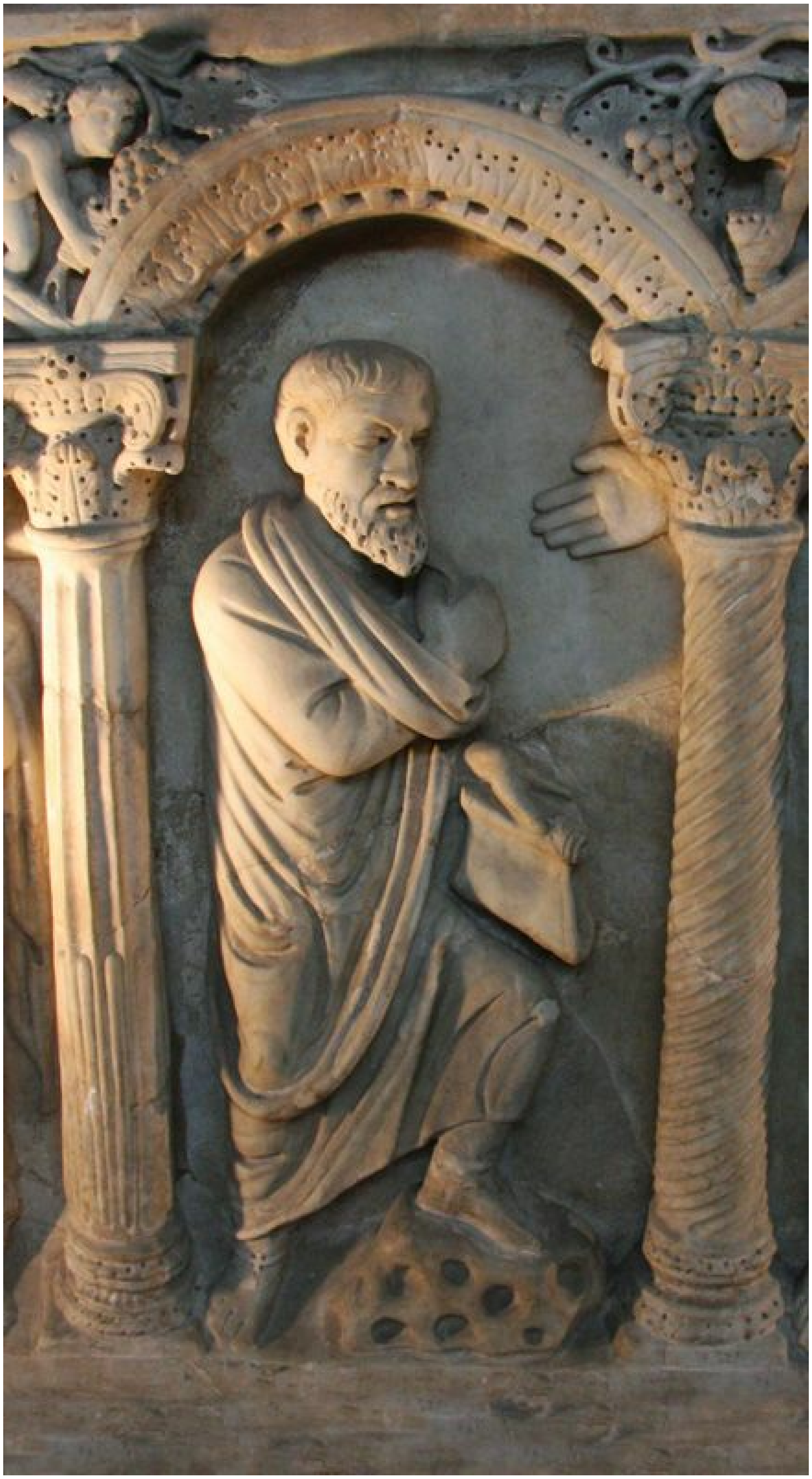
The territory of Midian is vaguely described in the Bible, perhaps because its people were nomadic sheepherders. They were often found around the Gulf of Aqaba and sometimes farther northeast of the Jordan River. The question is whether the tent of Jethro and Mount Sinai were on the Sinai Peninsula or on the eastern side of Aqaba in what is today Saudi Arabia.

Although Moses was not looking for a way back into Egypt, God had different plans. One day, while Moses was tending his sheep, God appeared to him in the form of a burning bush and commissioned him to go back to Egypt and lead his people to freedom. Moses expressed reluctance, and so God grudgingly enlisted his older brother, Aaron, to accompany him as his spokesperson.

THE EXODUS AND WILDERNESS WANDERING

Upon Moses' return to Egypt, Pharaoh stubbornly refused to allow the Israelites to leave Egypt. God directed Moses to announce a series of plagues that ultimately induced Pharaoh to allow the Israelites to depart. After they left, Pharaoh had a change of mind and cornered them on the shores of the Red Sea (Sea of Reeds). It was at the Red Sea that God demonstrated his great power by splitting the sea and allowing the Israelites to escape before closing it again in judgment on the Egyptians. Moses signaled the presence of God by lifting his rod high in the air (Exod. 14:16). This event was long remembered as the defining moment when God released Israel from Egyptian slavery (Pss. 77; 114), and it even became the paradigm for future divine rescues (Isa. 40:3–5; Hos. 2:14–15).

After the crossing of the Red Sea, Moses led Israel back to Mount Sinai, the location of his divine commissioning. At this time, Moses went up the mountain as a prophetic mediator for the people (Deut. 18:16). He received the Ten Commandments, the rest of the law, and instructions to build the tabernacle (Exod. 19–24). All these were part of a new covenantal arrangement that today we refer to as the Mosaic or Sinaitic covenant.



A relief depicting Moses receiving the law, from the sarcophagus of Agape and Crescentianus (AD 330–360)

However, as Moses came down the mountain with the law, he saw that the people, who had grown tired of waiting, were worshiping a false god that they had created in the form of a golden calf (Exod. 32). With the aid of the Levites, who that day assured their role as Israel’s priestly helpers, he brought God’s judgment against the offenders and also interceded in prayer with God to prevent the total destruction of Israel.

Thus began Israel's long story of rebellion against God. God was particularly upset with the lack of confidence that the Israelites had shown when the spies from the twelve tribes gave their report (Num. 13). They did not believe that God could handle the fearsome warriors who lived in the land, and so God doomed them to forty years of wandering in the wilderness, enough time for the first generation to die. Not even Moses escaped this fate, since he had shown anger against God and attributed a miracle to his own power and not to God when he struck a rock in order to get water (Num. 20:1–13).

Thus, Moses was not permitted to enter the land of promise, though he had led the Israelites to the very brink of entry on the plains of Moab. There he gave his last sermon, which we know as the book of Deuteronomy. The purpose of his sermon was to tell the second generation of Israelites who were going to enter the land that they must obey God's law or suffer the consequences. The form of the sermon was that of a covenant renewal, and so Israel on this occasion reaffirmed its loyalty to God.

After this, Moses went up on Mount Nebo, from which he could see the promised land, and died. Deuteronomy concludes with the following statements: "Since then, no prophet has risen in Israel like Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face. . . . For no one has ever shown the mighty power or performed the awesome deeds that Moses did in the sight of all Israel" (Deut. 34:10, 12).

LEGACY AND DATES

The NT honors Moses as God's servant but also makes the point that Jesus is one who far surpasses Moses as a mediator between God and people (Acts 3:17–26; Heb. 3).

The date of Moses is a matter of controversy because the biblical text does not name the pharaohs of the story. Many date him to the thirteenth century BC and associate him with Ramesses II, but others take 1 Kings 6:1 at face value and date him to the end of the fifteenth century BC, perhaps during the reign of Thutmose III.

MOSES, BOOKS OF *See* Pentateuch.

MOSES, LAW OF *See* Law; Pentateuch; Torah.

MOST HIGH A divine epithet, originally referring to El, the supreme god in the Canaanite pantheon, and later appropriated by Israel to refer to Yahweh. This term, which emphasizes divine transcendence, is often used by non-Israelites to refer to Israel's God (Num. 24:16; Dan. 3:36; Acts 16:17).

MOST HOLY PLACE *See* Holy of Holies.

MOTE In some older translations "mote" refers to a small piece of foreign matter that more-modern translations typically render as "splinter" or "speck." It appears three times each in the parallel accounts of Matt. 7:3–5; Luke 6:41–42. There, Jesus is warning followers to concentrate on dealing with their own major shortcomings ("planks" or "beams") before focusing on the lesser failings of others ("motes" or "specks").

MOTH The moth appears throughout the Bible as an agent of destruction (e.g., Ps. 39:11; Matt. 6:19), often of garments (Job 13:28; Isa. 50:9; 51:8), illustrating the transience of humanity and earthly things. In his judgment on Ephraim, God compares himself to a moth (Hos. 5:12). However, in one case the moth itself is the victim of destruction (Job 4:19), and in another its fragile “cocoon” suggests its frailty (Job 27:18).

MOTHER Although essentially characterized by bearing offspring, a mother is associated with much more in the Bible. Especially prominent are the characteristic ways in which a mother relates to her children: she tends to their needs (1 Thess. 2:7), looks after their welfare (1 Kings 3:16–27), comforts them (Ps. 131:2), and instructs them (Prov. 1:8; 31:1).

Motherhood is held in high regard. Bearing a child is an occasion for rejoicing (Gen. 4:1; Ps. 113:9). A virtuous and industrious mother is praised by her children and husband alike (Prov. 31:28). The Bible describes a mother both crowning a king (Song 3:11) and sitting beside his throne (1 Kings 2:19). The death of a mother brings extreme sorrow (Gen. 24:67; Ps. 35:14). Furthermore, God’s promises are often associated with the birth of a child (e.g., Gen. 3:15; 12:2–3; Judg. 13:3; Isa. 7:14). Mary is blessed among women as the mother of Jesus Christ (Luke 1:42–45). Finally, the Bible protects the dignity of a mother as it does that of the father. The law requires honor and reverence for both father and mother (Exod. 20:12; Lev. 19:3; Deut. 5:16) and condemns to death those who strike or curse either parent (Exod. 21:15, 17; Lev. 20:9).

There is also great concern that adult children look after the welfare of their parents as a means of honoring them. David makes provisions for his parents as he flees from Saul (1 Sam. 22:3–4). Jesus condemns the Pharisees and the scribes for taking the resources due their parents and offering them as a gift to God instead (Matt. 15:4–6). Even Jesus’ final act upon the cross is to ensure the welfare of his mother by defining her relationship with the Beloved Disciple as mother and son (John 19:26–27). On the other hand, Jesus makes clear that concern for one’s family is subordinate to discipleship to him (Matt. 10:37; Mark 3:35; Luke 14:26).

The word “mother” also carries symbolic or metaphorical senses. Sometimes the “mother” is a fitting example of other things or persons like it, such as Babylon the Great as the mother of prostitutes and earthly abominations (Rev. 17:5). In the extended analogy between Hosea’s marriage and God’s relationship to Israel, the nation is called a “mother,” and its inhabitants are her “children” (Hos. 2:4; 4:5; cf. Isa. 50:1; Jer. 50:12). The image of a mother may also refer to a large city (2 Sam. 20:19; Gal. 4:26).

MOTHER-IN-LAW The mother of an individual’s spouse. Isaac married Rebekah, Milkah’s daughter. Milkah is thus Isaac’s mother-in-law (Gen. 24:47). The most well-known biblical example is Naomi, Ruth’s mother-in-law (Ruth 1:3–4). Jesus healed Peter’s mother-in-law of a fever (Luke 4:38–39). The law forbade a man to have sexual intercourse with his mother-in-law (Deut. 27:23). Social chaos was often described as a breakdown of family relationships, including that between daughter-in-law and mother-in-law (Mic. 7:6; Luke 12:53).

MOUNTAIN Mountains, both literally and metaphorically, play a highly significant role in biblical history, religion, and theology. People are shaped by the geography of the location in which they live, and this was no less the case with the Israelites. Mountains, as permanent and immovable, form natural barriers and borders (Josh. 15), afford protection from invaders (Judg. 6:2; Ps. 125:2), serve as places of refuge (Gen. 14:10; 19:17; 1 Sam. 14:22), and provide bases from which to launch attacks (Judg. 4:14; 9:36). Often in the Bible, mountain imagery is used to describe God as eternal and a strong refuge (Pss. 36:6; 90:2; 121:1–2; 125:2).

But mountains are also places of mystery. In the religious world of the ancient Near East, gods were thought to either live or make their presence known on mountains—portals, as it were, between heaven and earth. The garden of Eden is regarded by Ezekiel as having been located on “the holy mount of God” (Ezek. 28:13–14). God mysteriously reveals himself in a flame of fire to Moses at Mount Horeb (Exod. 3), and then later from that same mountain God gives the law amid thunder, fire, and smoke; the people are not allowed to approach the mountain lest they die (Exod. 19). Moses has another theophany on the same mountain (Exod. 33:17–34:8), and Elijah has a very Moses-like encounter there with God as well (1 Kings 19).

Because of this association between gods and mountains, it was the norm to build temples for deities on mountaintops. Thus, the temple in Jerusalem is built on Mount Zion, which is also the place where Abraham had been ready to sacrifice Isaac (Gen. 22:2; 2 Chron. 3:1). Thus, this mountain is the “mountain of the LORD” (Gen. 22:14), the mountain of God’s “inheritance” (Exod. 15:17), his “holy mountain” (Ps. 48:1). Even the plans for the tabernacle and temples are given on mountaintops (Exod. 25:40; 26:30; 27:8; 2 Sam. 24:18–25; 1 Chron. 21:18–22:1; 28:11–12; Ezek. 40:1–2; Rev. 21:10). It should not escape notice that Israel’s legal tradition and liturgical tradition are both associated with mountains, Sinai and Zion (Jerusalem).

It is no wonder, then, that mountains play such a significant role in the NT and the life of Christ. On top of a high mountain, the devil tempts Jesus to worship him (Matt. 4:8–10). Jesus proclaims the law of the kingdom from a mountain (5:1). On a mountain, Jesus chooses to reveal to his disciples his true glory in the transfiguration (17:1). After his resurrection, Jesus has his disciples meet him at a mountain, from which he makes his declaration of authority and gives the Great Commission (28:16–20). But Jesus and the NT authors also “relocate” the place where people meet with God from any particular location, mountain or otherwise, to the human spirit and to the church (John 4:21–24; Heb. 12:22–23).

MOUNT BAAL HERMON The highest peak in the traditional territory of Israel, belonging by allotment to Manasseh (1 Chron. 5:23). *See also* Baal Hermon.

MOUNT CARMEL *See* Carmel, Mount.

MOUNT EPHRAIM *See* Ephraim, Hill Country of.

MOUNT HERES *See* Heres.

MOUNT HERMON *See* Hermon, Mount.

MOUNT HOR *See* Hor, Mount.

MOUNT NEBO *See* Nebo.

MOUNT OF ASSEMBLY In a prophetic taunt against the Babylonian king, he is said to presume that he will ascend to the “mount of assembly” (Isa. 14:13; cf. REB: “mountains where the gods assemble” [KJV: “mount of the congregation”]). The mount of the assembly is the sacred mountain where, according to Babylonian mythology, the gods congregate.

MOUNT OF BEATITUDES The site of Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5–7; cf. Luke 6:17–49). The mount is not specifically identified in the Gospels, but traditionally it is located at Karn

Hattin (its ancient name, “Eremos,” means “solitary” in Greek), a hill near Capernaum, on the northwest shore of the Sea of Galilee.

The Church of the Beatitudes, overlooking the traditional site of the Sermon on the Mount

MOUNT OF CORRUPTION *See* Corruption, Hill of.

MOUNT OF OLIVES A ridge of peaks about two miles long running north-south to the east of Jerusalem. It may also refer to the middle two of these peaks directly east of the temple. Kidron and Gethsemane lie at the foot of the mount. It was so named for the large number of olive trees there in ancient times.

David wept here because of Absalom’s betrayal (2 Sam. 15:30). Here the glory of the Lord rested after withdrawal from Jerusalem (Ezek. 11:23). The Lord will return to the Mount of Olives (Zech. 14:4).

Sometimes Jesus spent the night here (Luke 21:37). He customarily withdrew to Gethsemane at the foot of this mount (John 18:2). Thus, on the evening before his trial Jesus and the disciples went to the Mount of Olives (specifically Gethsemane) after leaving the upper room (Matt. 26:30), and it was there that the betrayal by Judas took place.

Jesus’ triumphal entry began on the Mount of Olives (Matt. 21:1), and he discoursed about the future there (Matt. 24:3). After his resurrection, Jesus gathered and instructed his disciples on the Mount of Olives before ascending to heaven (Acts 1:12).

MOUNT OF THE AMALEKITES A region of mountains in the territory allotted to the tribe of

Ephraim (Judg. 12:15 KJV [NIV: "hill country of the Amalekites"]).

MOUNT OF THE AMORITES A region of mountains into which the Israelites advanced after leaving Horeb (Deut. 1:7, 20 KJV [NIV: "hill country of the Amorites"]). This was part of the territory allotted to Judah and Ephraim.

MOUNT OF THE CONGREGATION *See* Mount of Assembly.

MOUNT OF THE VALLEY The uncertain location of Zereth Shahar, a Moabite town near Heshbon and Dibon in the Transjordan allotted to Reuben (Josh. 13:19; NIV: "the hill in the valley"). The term suggests a mountain in or near the Jordan Valley, perhaps on the eastern shore of the Dead Sea.

MOUNT SINAI *See* Sinai, Mount.

MOURN, MOURNER, MOURNING *See* Grief and Mourning.

MOUSE One Hebrew word, *'akbar*, includes rats, mice, and similar small rodents. These are unclean (Lev. 11:29; Isa. 66:17). The Philistines offered five gold rodents as a guilt offering during a rodent plague (1 Sam. 6).

MOUTH The word "mouth" has a variety of uses in the Bible. First, it is used in the literal sense of a human or animal mouth. Jeremiah says, "The LORD reached out his hand and touched my mouth" (Jer. 1:9). Numbers 22:28 refers to the literal mouth of a donkey, and likewise Ps. 22:21 refers to the mouth of a lion. In reference to eating, see Matt. 15:17. The word "mouth" is also used in an inanimate sense to refer to an opening of an object or geographical feature. Phrases such as "the mouth of his sack" (Gen. 42:27), "the mouth of the well" (Gen. 29:3), and "the mouth of the cave" (Josh. 10:18) are common in the Bible. The earth could also open its metaphorical mouth to swallow individuals, denoting divine punishment (Num. 16:30, 32).

The more common use of the word "mouth" occurs in phrases such as "I have put my words in your mouth" (Isa. 51:16; Jer. 1:9; cf. Exod. 4:15; Deut. 18:18). This phrase and similar ones, when speaking of God, refer to inspiration and the speech as belonging to God. Otherwise, putting words into one's mouth is akin to giving that person instructions (Deut. 31:19 NRSV, KJV).

MOZA **(1)** A descendant of Judah, he was the second of the three sons of Caleb and his concubine Ephah (1 Chron. 2:46). **(2)** A Benjamite who was a descendant of King Saul, he was the son of Zimri and the father of Binea (1 Chron. 8:36–37; 9:42–43).

MOZAH A city in the territory allotted to the tribe of Benjamin (Josh. 18:26). Pottery vessels bearing the name "Mozah" have been found at Jericho and other sites, suggesting that it was once a prolific center for pottery production. The location is modern Qaluniya, four miles northwest of Jerusalem.

MUFFLER In Isa. 3:19 the KJV translates the Hebrew word *re'alah* as "muffler," referring to a type of scarf (NRSV, ESV) or veil (NIV, NASB, NET, TEV), part of the finery flaunted by the haughty women of Zion whom Isaiah's prophecy rebukes.

MULE The hybrid of a female horse and a male donkey. Although usually sterile, mules were prized possessions in the biblical world for their versatility and prestige. As luxury items, they were the preferred mount for Israelite kings and princes during the early monarchy (2 Sam. 13:29; 18:9; 1 Kings 1:33, 38, 44; 18:5). The connection between mules and royalty is also attested for the kings of Mari in the eighteenth century BC.

It is unknown how the Israelites acquired mules. Crossbreeding is forbidden in Lev. 19:19. The presence of hybrids in ancient Israel may indicate either that the Israelites did not follow this law or that they acquired mules only from their neighbors via trade or tribute.

MUPPIM The eighth of Benjamin's ten sons (Gen. 46:21). In Num. 26:39 the name of this son is listed as "Shupham" (NIV, KJV, NET) or "Shephupham" (NRSV, NASB).

MURDER Murder is distinguishable in the Bible from the larger category of killing. Thus, the sixth commandment (Exod. 20:13) is appropriately translated by the NIV and other versions as "You shall not murder" rather than "You shall not kill." The taking of lives in warfare, for example, would not have been considered murder. The word used in Exod. 20:13, *ratsakh*, occurs approximately fifty times in the OT and never refers to killing in battle, in contrast to two other words for "kill" that together occur over three hundred times and quite often refer to battle contexts. Ezekiel 21:22 (21:27 MT) might appear to be an exception, but *ratsakh* (NIV: "slaughter") is probably used there to indicate the slaying of innocent people rather than military combatants.

Ratsakh, however, can also refer to unintentional killing or manslaughter (e.g., Num. 35:11); thus, the word does not necessarily mean "murder" but rather refers to the taking of any innocent life, whether intentionally or accidentally. The lone exception in Num. 35:30 is only apparently so; it is rather a statement of poetic justice: "the murderer shall be murdered."

The prohibition against murder is grounded in the image-bearing character of humankind. Human beings are made in the image of God; therefore, to kill an innocent person is equivalent to striking out against God (Gen. 9:6).

Significantly, Jesus viewed his own approaching death in Jerusalem as a murder in a long line of murders stretching from the murder of Abel by Cain, through the killing of the OT prophets, to himself (Matt. 21:33–46; 23:29–39; Luke 11:47–54; 20:9–20).

MURRAIN In Exod. 9:3 the KJV translates the Hebrew word *deber* as "murrain," referring to a disease (TEV), pestilence (NRSV), or plague (NIV, ESV) upon livestock. "Murrain" is derived from the French *morir*, "to die." The LXX renders the Hebrew word as "death" (*thanatos*). The Hebrew word usually describes human disease, and only here and in Ps. 78:50 is it applied to animals.

MUSHI A Levite, the second son of Merari (Exod. 6:19; Num. 3:20; 1 Chron. 6:19, 47; 23:21, 23; 24:26, 30), he is the ancestor of the Mushites, a Levitical family (Num. 3:33; 26:58).

MUSHITES *See* Mushi.

MUSIC, INSTRUMENTS, DANCING The Bible often refers to songs, music, musical sounds and instruments, and dancing. We can infer several details about the instruments from their descriptions in the Bible as well as from archaeological finds and other ancient texts. NT references to music are scant; the OT material may be supplemented by ancient Near Eastern resources from Egypt, Canaan/Israel, Ugarit, and Mesopotamia.

MUSIC

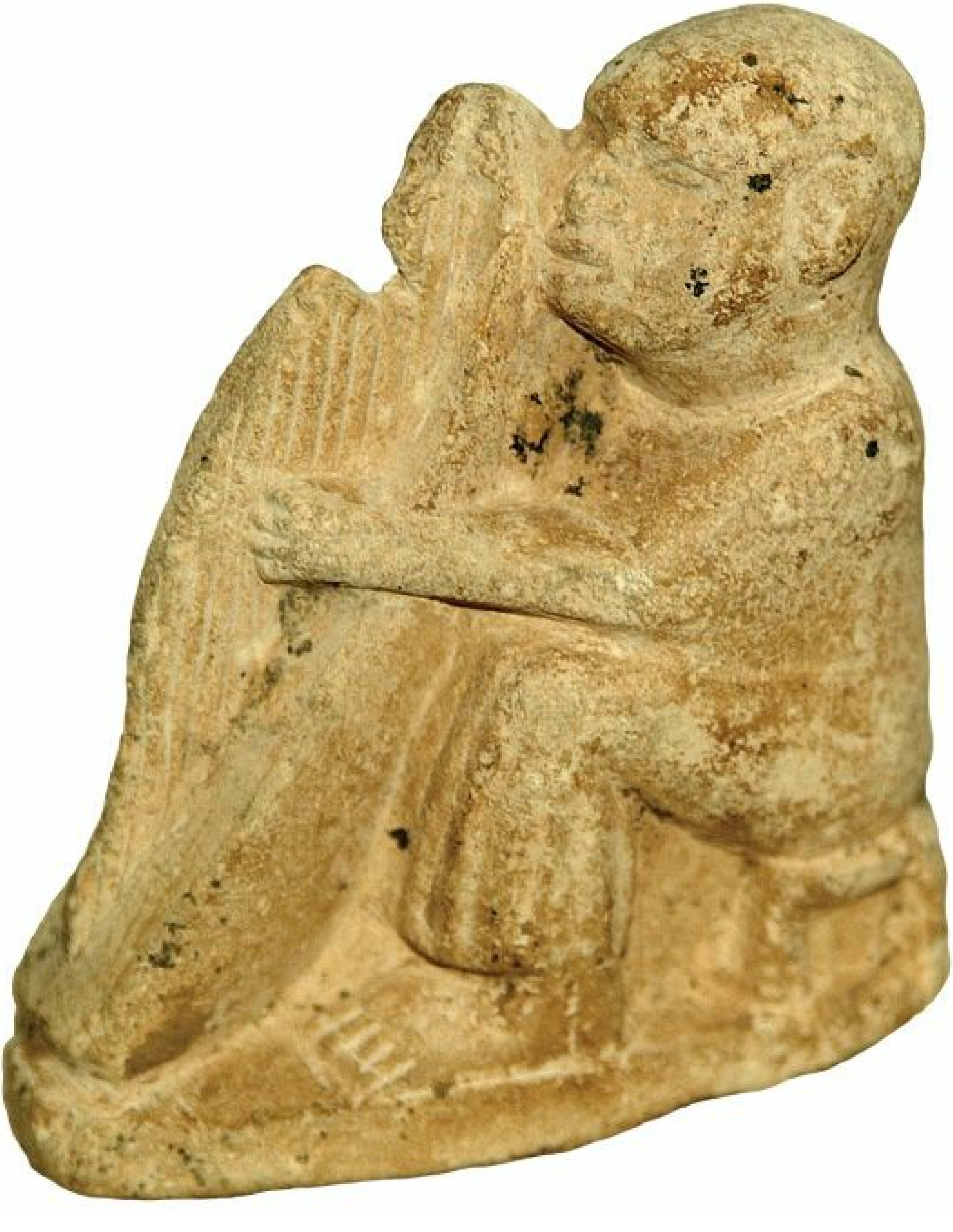
Style. In all likelihood, Israel's music sounded much like that of its neighbors. This conjecture is particularly strengthened by findings from Ugarit, a city on the Syrian coast across from Cyprus. These findings, roughly from the time of the judges, mention some of the same musical instruments found in the Bible, some of which have been uncovered by archaeologists. The style of the poetry is very similar to the Song of Deborah (Judg. 5). Lyrically, some of the descriptions and titles used by the Canaanites for Baal are applied by Israel to Yahweh, to assert that he is the true God who has these attributes. Given these similarities in text, poetic style, and instrumentation, it is most probable that Israel's music sounded much like that of its neighbors. Still, there is some evidence for regional styles. The direction to play psalms "according to *gittith*" (superscription to Pss. 8; 81; 84) may refer to the style of Gath, and similar regional interpretations are proposed for other directions in the psalms.

Lyrics. The lyric side of Israel's songs exhibits rhythm and deliberate structure. The most obvious planned structure is the alphabetic acrostic, where the poet or songwriter composes one or more verses to begin with successive letters of the Hebrew alphabet. But the psalms exhibit many other structures involving symmetries and balance, such as equal halves, centered lines, symmetrical patterns of stanza length, and other features. The lines themselves usually demonstrate balance among their parts, having similar numbers of beats or accented syllables. Several lament poems exhibit a particular pattern known as *qinah* meter, which presumably also fits a musical template.

Performance. The performance of the psalms was, on at least some occasions, accompanied by multiple instruments and performed in a choir to achieve the volume necessary for community gatherings, which had no amplification equipment. It is generally assumed, though not known, that all choir members sang melody rather than in parts. They may well have integrated solo performances and musical interludes. From the poetry of the psalms, we observe different speaking voices. That is, in some instances, we hear the voice of the king, or of the people generally, or an official who addresses the audience, or a priestly or prophetic speaking voice, even the words of God himself. This is very suggestive that public performance may have brought different singers to the foreground at different times. There are also poems that employ a repeated refrain, suggesting an antiphonal performance, and others in which the priests or people in Jerusalem take up parts different from those of the arriving worshipers. While the exact execution of these songs is speculative, these elements suggest a certain amount of pageantry, at least for community settings. David is responsible for setting up Israel's musical orders for the temple, with professional musicians with rotating responsibilities (1 Chron. 16; 25).

INSTRUMENTS

Strings. The most frequently mentioned instrument is the *kinnor*, a lyre, also often referred to as a harp. The sound box of the harp is at the base, from which a straight or curved neck rises at a sharp angle so that the strings going from the box to the neck are of different length. The lyre has two uprights and a crosspiece on top, from which the strings of similar length stretch down to the sound box. The *kinnor*-lyre had eight to ten strings (based on Akkadian and Ugaritic findings and Jewish descriptions) and could be played with a pick or by hand. David's "harp" was such a lyre. The "harp" mentioned in the NT (1 Cor. 14:7; Rev. 5:8; 14:2; 15:2) probably was also a lyre. Another OT lyre, or perhaps a harp, the *nebel*, complemented the *kinnor*-lyre. Jewish tradition about the strings implies that it produced a lower sound. The *nebel*-lyre is most often mentioned with other instruments, though occasionally alone. Another stringed instrument mentioned three times, the *'asor*, may have been a harp or a lyre with ten strings (Pss. 33:2; 92:3; 144:9). In Pss. 45:8; 150:4 there is mention of "the strings," which may refer to more than just the stringed instruments specifically mentioned in the Bible. The ancient world also had lutes, an instrument with a long, straight neck, fretted like a guitar or ukulele, proceeding from a small sound box.



Egyptian figurine playing the floor harp (1330 BC)

Percussion. Timbrels, cymbals, and castanets or rattles are percussion instruments mentioned in the Bible. The timbrel, also known from Egypt and Ugarit, was a hand drum, like a tambourine but without metal jingles. The timbrel accompanies dancing and may have been used by the dancers (Exod. 15:20; Judg. 11:34; 1 Sam. 18:6). Cymbals may have been paired or individual, but it is not certain whether these latter were suspended cymbals or finger cymbals, being four to six inches in diameter. In 2 Sam. 6:5 there is mention of another percussion instrument, *mena'an'im* (the root of this word means "to shake"), perhaps "sistrums" (NIV) or "castanets" (NASB) (although the KJV renders it as "cornets"). Egyptian sistrums were small, forked, metal instruments with three sliding crossbars that had hooked ends. Archaeologists have also found rattles made of pottery, with ceramic balls inside. Castanets were small hand-clappers joined with a string. Israel likely had all of these, though it is hard to know which is referred to in 2 Sam. 6:5. The cymbal is mentioned once in the NT (1 Cor. 13:1), though not as musically pleasing in that context.

Woodwinds and horns. The OT attests to both an animal horn, most frequently called a *shopar*, and a metal trumpet, the *khatsotserah* (Num. 10:2–10). The NT refers to a horn with a word used to translate both OT terms (*salpinx*). The ancient world had both flutes and shawms. Shawms have a bell-like flare at the end, while the shaft of a flute is straight to the end. What is likely a double-reed shawm is frequently translated "flute" (1 Sam. 10:5; 1 Kings 1:40; Isa. 5:12; 30:29; Jer. 48:36 [NIV: "pipes"]). It is unclear whether the instrument mentioned in Gen. 4:21; Ps. 150:4 commonly translated as "flute" is a woodwind or a stringed instrument. The NT also mentions a flute or reed instrument (Matt. 11:17; 9:23; 1 Cor. 14:7; Rev. 18:22) that could be played for dancing or mourning.

Simplicity and complexity. Instruments such as horns, trumpets, and some percussion instruments were not used only for making music. The blowing of the ram's horn or the trumpet might be used to sound the alarm, convene an assembly, or in preparation for an announcement. Aaron was to wear metal bells on the hem of his robe when entering the holy place (Exod. 28:33–35). Some of the percussion instruments may have been used to augment dance and keep rhythm more than to make music for singing. The strings were the primary instruments to accompany singing, though they were not necessarily accompanied by song.

A few Assyrian texts treat the tuning and playing of music with technical notations. From their string designations and tuning directions we can infer that their scales utilized seven notes as in the modern octave (seven notes plus one repeating). The notes for tuning stringed instruments suggest that the tunings produced different scales. Musical theory, then, was not completely absent. Many of the pictorial representations of musicians from Egypt and Mesopotamia include multiple instruments being played together (cf. Nebuchadnezzar's instructions in Dan. 3:5, 7, 10, 15 and David's celebration in 2 Sam. 6:5). These are not simply multiple kinds of noisemakers, although community gatherings would require volume. Rather, they exhibit a sense of understanding which instruments complemented each other well. While the singing of the ancient Near East no doubt included chanting, singing with multiple instruments suggests something more melodious than mere chanting interspersed with the strumming of a lute. This music could be styled to fit different moods, to soothe, to celebrate, to mourn, to worship. It is reasonable to suggest that the music accompanying the psalms reflected the wide range of emotions mentioned in the text.

DANCING

The dancing mentioned in the Bible is usually celebratory and positive and is combined with singing or the playing of musical instruments. Such dancing may occur at any happy occasion but is mentioned most often in connection with victory or worship (e.g., Exod. 15:20; Judg. 11:34; 1 Sam. 18:6). The women of Shiloh "join in the dancing" (Judg. 21:21) at an annual festival, which implies some manner of folk dancing. The dancing of Herodias's daughter probably was erotic (Matt. 14:6; Mark 6:22), and the dancing of the Israelites around the golden calf probably was laden with sensuality as well (Exod. 32:19).

MUSTARD A plant cultivated for its seeds (ground for spices and pressed for oil). The variety in Palestine, while fast-growing and able to reach ten feet in height, had the smallest seeds of plants then known. Jesus used the mustard plant in a parable to symbolize the growth of the kingdom of God (Matt. 13:31–32) and the seed to symbolize faith (17:20).

MUSTER GATE *See* Inspection Gate.

MUTENESS The inability or choice not to speak (Ps. 38:13; Isa. 56:10). Mosaic law claims that God either makes people mute or allows them to speak (Exod. 4:11). Muteness can be a divine judgment, as when Zechariah is unable to speak after he questions the message of the angel (Luke 1:20). The prophets anticipate a time of reversal, when “the mute tongue [will] shout for joy” (Isa. 35:6). Jesus heals at least two mute people (Matt. 9:32–34; 12:22–24). In both cases the condition is caused by demon possession. Ironically, as the Suffering Servant, one who bears God’s judgment, he becomes mute before his accusers (Isa. 53:7; Matt. 26:63; 27:12, 14; Acts 8:26–35). Paul claims that idols are “mute,” whereas God’s Spirit speaks through believers (1 Cor. 12:2–3).

MUTH-LABBEN A term in the superscription of Ps. 9. Some translations transliterate the Hebrew term (NRSV, NET, ESV, NASB, KJV), but others translate the phrase, “Death of the Son” (NIV, NLT). The term is probably a reference to a musical style or tune.

MUTTER To murmur, mumble, or whisper. According to Isaiah, when mediums and spiritists speak, they “whisper and mutter” (Isa. 8:19).

MUZZLE Placed over an animal’s mouth, a muzzle keeps the animal from biting or eating. The Mosaic code prohibited the muzzling of an ox while it was threshing grain, thus allowing it to eat both grain and straw (Deut. 25:4), which demonstrates humane care of animals within the law. Paul used the term metaphorically to illustrate that pastors/elders are worthy of being cared for by the church (1 Cor. 9:9; 1 Tim. 5:18).

MYRA The capital city (modern Dembre) of the Roman province of Lycia, on the southern coast of Asia Minor (with its port city Andriaca, modern Andraki). Paul changed ships here en route to Rome (Acts 27:5). The fourth-century bishop of Myra, Nicholas, later became revered as Santa Claus.

MYRIAD A word derived from the Greek *myrias*, meaning “ten thousand.” “Myriad” is sometimes used inexactly in Greek and English translations to refer to a very large number, often of angelic beings (e.g., Heb. 12:22; Rev. 5:11).

MYRRH The resin of the genus *Commiphora*, myrrh originates in southern Arabia and Somalia. The Israelites valued myrrh for its fragrant cosmetic and antiseptic properties, as a preservative, and for embalming (Gen. 37:25; Esther 2:12; Ps. 45:8; Prov. 7:17; Song 3:6). Upon Jesus’ birth, myrrh was a valuable gift from the magi (Matt. 2:11); at his death, myrrh mixed with wine was an undrinkable potion given to him as he hung on the cross (Mark 15:23).

MYRTLE TREE *See* Plants.

MYSIA A northern region of the Roman province of Asia in northwest Asia Minor, now Turkey.

Paul entered Mysia from Galatia on his second missionary journey. When the Holy Spirit prevented his access northward into Bithynia, he proceeded through Mysia to the port city of Troas, where a vision instructed him to sail to Macedonia (Acts 16:6–10). He returned to Troas (Acts 20:6; cf. 2 Cor. 2:12; 2 Tim. 4:13) and Assos, another port city of Mysia (Acts 20:13–14). Its third seaport, Adramyttium, was the origin of the ship used on the first leg of Paul's journey to Rome (Acts 27:2). The apostle John writes a letter to the church of Pergamum in Mysia, instructing them to repent from their adherence to false teaching (Rev. 1:11; 2:12–17).

MYSTERY A mystery entails knowledge that is disclosed to some but withheld from others. Nothing is mysterious to God (Heb. 4:13), and he alone understands the full purpose of his will (Job 38:1–40:24; Isa. 46:10), but he also condescends to reveal portions of his will to those whom he chooses (John 16:15).

One way that God reveals such mysteries in the OT is through dreams and their interpretation. This is the dynamic at work in Dan. 2, where God reveals secrets to King Nebuchadnezzar through cryptic imagery. The meaning of this imagery remains hidden, however, until the "mystery was revealed to Daniel in a vision" (v. 19). Once revealed, the dreams detail God's plans for the future of his kingdom.

Similarly, Jesus' parables make known the character and future of God's coming kingdom to his chosen servants, while also concealing it from those outside the circle (Matt. 13:18–23). Paul, by contrast, used "mystery" to refer to the disclosure of God's plan for the redemption of humanity, namely the inclusion of Gentiles within "Israel" (Rom. 11:25). This plan, foreshadowed in the OT but nevertheless hidden in essentials, had only recently been fully revealed in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ (Rom. 16:25; Eph. 1:9; 1 Tim. 3:16; cf. 1 Pet. 1:10–12). The gospel message is therefore the revelation of this mystery, the proclamation of the truth about Jesus Christ, now made public to the world (Eph. 3:3–9).

MYSTERY RELIGIONS Mystery religions were secret cults that became popular during the NT era by providing initiates with the opportunity to develop a close relationship with a divinity in hopes of securing a more blessed afterlife. The mysteries promised that the chosen deity would provide special protection and privileges for initiates. These religions were popular in the Greco-Roman world because they provided a more experiential religious encounter than that of the traditional religious cults of the Roman Empire. They also offered a more defined theology of salvation and provided hope in overcoming fate. Additionally, the mystery religions created close-knit social ties between the initiates. There were two primary types of mystery religions: Greek and Eastern (the following lists are representative, not exhaustive).

GREEK MYSTERIES

These mystery cults were native to Greece and foundational to all other mystery religions.

Eleusinian. The Eleusinian mysteries were among the oldest and most famous of the Greek mysteries. Initiates went to Eleusis, near Athens, to celebrate the fertility cult of Demeter (the Greek grain-goddess). Demeter was thought to provide abundant crops and a prosperous afterlife for her initiates.

Andanian. Andania was in the southwestern Peloponnese, and its mysteries were dedicated to Demeter, Hermes, Apollo, and others. The Rule of the Andanian Mysteries is an inscription outlining some of the public features of the religion, which included oath taking, wearing special clothing, chanting, singing, sacrifices, a processional, and a sacred banquet.

Cabiri. These deities were worshiped in several locations around the Aegean Sea. In general, the Cabiri were considered protective deities and were popular with sailors. Cabiri worship included ritual dances, animal sacrifices, and a unique rite of confession of sins.

Dionysiac (Bacchus). These were widespread mysteries found primarily in Asia Minor and the Greek islands. Their initiation ceremonies involved ecstatic activities with sexual promiscuity, the drinking of wine, and the eating of raw flesh from animals. The cult appealed especially to women, who played a major role in Dionysiac worship.

EASTERN MYSTERIES

These religions, which had their origins in the Near East, were developed in the Greek mysteries and became popular throughout the Roman Empire as people became increasingly fascinated with foreign and sometimes exotic religious traditions.

Osiris and Isis. These mysteries were imported from Egypt and became the most popular of the non-Greek deities during the NT era. Osiris was the lord of the realm of death and the brother/husband of Isis. Isis became known as Sarapis in the Greek world. Osiris was thought to be a savior god with healing powers and was often compared with Zeus. Isis was considered a mother goddess in the Hellenistic world and was sometimes identified with Demeter and Aphrodite. Apuleius's story about the initiate Lucius recounts a private ceremony in the mysteries of Isis and Osiris. In this narrative, after crossing the underworld, Lucius moves from darkness to light and is described as being "born again."

Attis. This mystery religion came from Phrygia in Asia Minor and focused on Cybele and her young lover, Attis. The religion became known for its flamboyant followers called "Galli," who castrated themselves in order to be eunuchs of the Great Mother (Cybele). The cult was also known for its ritual slaughter of a bull (this practice was known as the *taurobolium*) and the drenching of initiates in the blood of the bull.

A relief from an altar associated with the mystery religion of Cybele and Attis. The relief shows Cybele enthroned, with her hand resting on the shoulder of Attis.

Mithra. This mystery worshiped the Persian god Mithra (also called “Mithras”), who was a warrior of truth and justice. The cult focused on astrology and promised secret ways to control the celestial forces and thus control one’s fate. Mithraism may have been open only to men and was popular with sailors, soldiers, and government officials. The Mithraic rituals often included tests of courage. In fact, the Mithraic religion was symbolized by the slaying of a bull. The cult also included a meal in which initiates partook of bread and wine and recited certain formulas.

CHRISTIANITY AND EASTERN MYSTERIES

Christianity was similar to the mystery religions in several ways: (1) They maintained a doctrine of salvation through personal choice. (2) Their members participated in ceremonies of purification.

(3) They promoted egalitarianism and unity. (4) They incorporated a sacred meal into worship ceremonies. (5) They included resurrection imagery.

Christianity was different from the mystery religions in several ways: (1) Mystery initiation was highly secretive, whereas Christian initiation was a public event. (2) Mystery religions promised salvation from fate and the terrors of the afterlife, whereas Christianity promised salvation from sin through Christ. (3) The mysteries often promoted dying and rising as related to the cycle of nature, whereas Christianity promoted a true resurrection for its followers. (4) Mystery washings were for purification for initiation, whereas Christian baptism was the initiation itself. (5) The mysteries usually were expensive and thus only for the elite, whereas Christianity invited everyone to participate.

The popularity of the mystery religions during the NT era reveals that many people were frustrated with the traditional Roman religions. Their desire for a personal relationship with a benevolent deity who could provide salvation in the afterlife and lasting hope in the current life is telling. It is no surprise, therefore, that the message of Christianity was readily received and embraced by so many people during the first centuries of the Christian era. Christianity's proclamation of the "mystery of Christ" (Col. 4:3) was the greatest mystery of all.

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NAAM A son of Caleb the son of Jephunneh, he belonged to the tribe of Judah and was listed in Judah’s genealogy (1 Chron. 4:15).

NAAMAH **(1)** The daughter of Lamech and Zillah and the sister of Tubal-Cain, the bronze and ironworker mentioned in Cain’s genealogy (Gen. 4:22). **(2)** The mother of King Rehoboam of Judah and therefore one of Solomon’s many wives. The texts list her as an Ammonite (1 Kings 14:21, 31; 2 Chron. 12:13). **(3)** A town located in the lowlands of Judah near Lachish, it was in the allotment of the tribe of Judah (Josh. 15:41).

NAAMAN **(1)** A grandson of Benjamin and the founder of the Naamites (Num. 26:40; 1 Chron. 8:4; see Gen. 46:21). **(2)** A Syrian military commander healed of leprosy after reluctantly following Elisha’s command to dip himself seven times in the Jordan River (2 Kings 5). Jesus referred to Naaman as a model of faith (Luke 4:27). **(3)** A descendant of the Benjamite Ehud, he was a family head (1 Chron. 8:6–7).

Relief of a Syrian warrior (Hadatu, Syria, ninth century BC). Naaman was a Syrian military commander (2 Kings 5).

NAAMATHITE The tribal affiliation of Zophar, one of Job’s three friends (Job 2:11; 11:1; 20:1; 42:9), best identified with the Sabean tribe of the same name in southern Arabia.

NAAMITES A clan descended from Naaman from the tribe of Benjamin, present at the time of the second wilderness census (Num. 26:40).

NAARAH **(1)** One of the two wives of Asshur, the father of Tekoa; she bore him four sons (1 Chron. 4:5–6). **(2)** A city near Jericho, on the border of Ephraim (Josh. 16:7 [KJV: “Naarath”]), probably the same city as Naaran (1 Chron. 7:28). It is usually identified with Tel el-Jisr.

NAARAI One of David’s elite warriors, a son of Ezbal (1 Chron. 11:37). He is known as Paarai in 2 Sam. 23:35.

NAARAN, NAARATH *See* Naarah.

NAASHON *See* Nahshon.

NABAJOTH *See* Nebaioth.

NABAL A wealthy landowner in Carmel, Nabal, gruff and hard, was married to the beautiful and intelligent Abigail. Nabal treated David contemptuously, even though David had protected Nabal’s shepherds and possessions. Abigail interceded to keep David from avenging the insult. When Nabal heard, he apparently died of shock, so David took the virtuous Abigail as his wife (1 Sam. 25:2–42).

NABATEANS A Semitic people group inhabiting territory south of the Dead Sea, bordering Judea. The terrain and climate forced them to become experts in water control in agriculture. The probable first mention of this group is from 312 BC in conjunction with Antigonus, who oppressed the Nabatean capital, Petra. The book of 2 Maccabees chronicles the kings of the Nabateans (Arabians) and references Aretas I (2 Macc. 5:8). In 40 BC Herod the Great, whose mother was Nabatean, escaped to Petra because the Parthians attacked Jerusalem. Later, Herod Antipas married the daughter of Aretas IV but subsequently divorced her to marry Herodias. It is this Aretas IV whom Paul references when he describes his escape over the wall in a basket in Damascus (2 Cor. 11:32).

Coin of Aretas IV, king of the Nabateans (c. 9 BC–AD 40)

NABONIDUS The last king of Babylon (r. 555–539 BC), Nabonidus was a devoted worshiper of the moon god Sin, which angered the priests of Marduk, chief god of Babylon. He spent ten years in Teima, leaving his son Belshazzar as acting regent in Babylon. Nabonidus is not mentioned in the Bible.

NABOPOLASSAR Nabopolassar was a Chaldean who established the Neo-Babylonian Empire, which lasted until Babylon's fall in 539 BC. He began his revolt against Assyria in 626 BC. When the Medes attacked the Assyrian city Assur in 615 BC, Nabopolassar assisted at the end. A coalition continued over several years, defeating Assyria's capitals as it retreated west. Assyria turned to Egypt's Pharaoh Necho for help. Necho took Gaza, battled Josiah at Megiddo (2 Kings 23:29–30), and advanced to Carchemish. Nabopolassar's son, Nebuchadnezzar, defeated Egypt in 605 BC, the same year Nabopolassar died.

NABOTH A Jezreelite of Samaria, he owned a vineyard near the palace of King Ahab in Jezreel. Since Ahab desired to have this vineyard, he asked Naboth to sell or trade it. Naboth refused, in keeping with the law of inheritance (Lev. 25:23). The sullen Ahab reported this to his wife, Jezebel, who succeeded in having Naboth killed by the slander of false witnesses. After Naboth's death, Ahab took possession of the vineyard. The prophet Elijah predicted the judgment of Ahab and Jezebel for this action, the fulfillment of which came as Ahab's blood was licked by dogs in Jezreel, as Ahab's descendant Joram was left for dead in this same vineyard (2 Kings 9:22–26), and as Jezebel met a violent end so that the dogs licked her blood (2 Kings 9:33–37).

NACHON *See* Nakon.

NACHOR *See* Nahor.

NACON *See* Nakon.

NADAB **(1)** The firstborn son of Aaron (Exod. 6:23). He served in the priesthood with his father and his brother Abihu (Exod. 24:1). Leviticus 10 notes that Nadab and Abihu offered forbidden fire with the incense. God subsequently destroyed them with fire. Since Nadab and Abihu had no sons, Eleazar and Ithamar, the other two sons of Aaron, served in their stead (1 Chron. 24:1–2). **(2)** The son of Jeroboam, he became king of Israel upon his father's death in the second year of King Asa of Judah (1 Kings 14:20; 15:25). Nadab did evil, as did his father, in his two-year reign. Baasha of the tribe of Issachar assassinated him and reigned in his stead (1 Kings 15:25–28). **(3)** A son of Shammai and the father of Seled and Appaim (1 Chron. 2:28–30), from the tribe of Judah. **(4)** A son of Jeiel, his brother Ner was the grandfather of King Saul (1 Chron. 8:29–33).

NAGGAI An otherwise unknown postexilic ancestor of Jesus mentioned only in Luke 3:25 (KJV: "Nagge") as the son of Maath and the father of Esli.

NAG HAMMADI A town in Egypt near the location of a 1945 archaeological discovery in which numerous gnostic Christian texts were found, including works such as the *Gospel of Thomas*, the *Apocryphon of James*, the *Gospel of Truth*, the *Gospel of Philip*, the *Dialogue of the Savior*, the *Apocalypse of Peter*, and many others. Nag Hammadi is located over three hundred miles south of Cairo along the Nile River. A group of Egyptian peasants found thirteen papyrus manuscripts at the base of a cliff, and they contained a total of over fifty different works. Nearly all of these writings are gnostic Christian in nature, though a few, such as Plato's *Republic*, are not. The manuscripts, dated to the fourth century AD, are written in Coptic (an Egyptian language, written using an adapted Greek alphabet) and are in codex (book) form. They are currently housed in the Coptic Museum in Cairo.

GNOSTICISM

Commonly referred to as the Nag Hammadi Library, this group of texts has shed a great deal of light on the early Christian gnostic movements that were present during the second through fourth centuries AD and beyond. While some early church fathers provided commentary and criticism of gnosticism in their own works, the Nag Hammadi discovery has provided the opportunity to see firsthand the writings and thought of this movement, which was branded heretical by many of the earliest Christian leaders.

The term "gnosticism" derives from the Greek word for "knowledge" (*gnōsis*). Gnostics, then, were those who placed an emphasis on knowledge, often of a secret or hidden nature. Saving knowledge, according to gnostic belief systems, comes by revelation from a transcendent realm. This revelation typically is available through a revealer who comes to show people the true knowledge of God and self, the two of which are often intertwined, since gnostics consider the true self to be of divine origin. Salvation of the self includes returning to the divine world from which it came.

Therefore, in Christian versions of gnosticism Jesus is portrayed as the revealer of this hidden knowledge needed for salvation, the returning of the self to its divine origin. The gnostic movement was not confined to Christianity, as gnostics quite often adapted their myths to make them compatible with other religions with which they came into contact.

THE *GOSPEL OF THOMAS*

Among the writings found at Nag Hammadi, the *Gospel of Thomas* is the best known. It contains a collection of 114 sayings attributed to Jesus. Unlike the NT Gospels, the *Gospel of Thomas* contains no narrative material; Jesus performs no miracles or healings, none of his travels are described, and there is no passion or resurrection story. Instead, it contains only a list of Jesus' sayings, with the occasional reply or question from his disciples. This has led some to conclude that the *Gospel of Thomas* is similar in genre to the hypothetical Q document, which may have been a source for the Gospel of Matthew and the Gospel of Luke. However, even Q allegedly includes some narrative material (e.g., Matt. 4:1–11 // Luke 4:1–13; Matt. 8:5–13 // Luke 7:1–10).

Many of the sayings in the *Gospel of Thomas* have parallels in the NT Gospels, including the following:

> Jesus said, "Often you have desired to hear these sayings that I am speaking to you, and you have no one else from whom to hear them. There will be days when you will seek me and you will not find me." (*Gos. Thom.* 38; cf. John 7:32–36)
>
> Jesus said, "Whoever blasphemes against the Father will be forgiven, and whoever blasphemes against the Son will be forgiven, but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either on earth or in heaven." (*Gos. Thom.* 44; cf. Matt. 12:31–32; Mark 3:28–30; Luke 12:10)
>
> Jesus said, "Show me the stone which the builders have rejected. That one is the cornerstone." (*Gos. Thom.* 66; cf. Mark 12:10–11)

Because of these similarities, the question has arisen concerning the relationship between the *Gospel of Thomas* and the NT Gospels. Some have suggested that, in fact, the *Gospel of Thomas* is the earliest of all the Gospels. This claim has been rejected by the overwhelming majority of scholars, who have instead concluded that the *Gospel of Thomas* reflects a later development of the sayings of Jesus that have been largely shaped out of a desire to reflect gnostic ideas. The strong gnostic theology prevalent in the *Gospel of Thomas* is on display in, for example, sayings 83 and 84:

> Jesus said, "Images are visible to people, but the light within them is hidden in the image of the Father's light. He will be disclosed, but his image is hidden by his light."
>
> Jesus said, "When you see your likeness, you are happy. But when you see your images that came into being before you and that neither die nor become visible, how much you will have to bear!" (*Gos. Thom.* 83–84)

APOCRYPHAL GOSPELS AND APOCALYPSES

Other apocryphal Gospels are among the works found at Nag Hammadi. The *Gospel of Truth* is not of the Gospel genre per se, but rather its title reflects the text's claim to be telling the "good news" of the salvific work of Jesus, albeit from the perspective of early gnosticism. The *Gospel of Philip* is concerned primarily with the issue of sacraments within a gnostic understanding of human existence after physical death. In the *Gospel of Mary* there is a dialogue between the risen Jesus and his disciples, which is followed by Mary Magdalene receiving a special revelation from the Savior.

In addition to Gospels, the Nag Hammadi texts include several apocalypses, including the *Apocalypse of Paul*, the *First Apocalypse of James* and the *Second Apocalypse of James*, the

Apocalypse of Adam, and the *Apocalypse of Peter*. These generally purport to give an account of a revelation seen by a well-known figure, especially an apostle (e.g., Peter, James, Paul). None of these works are considered to be accounts of the actual apostles; rather, they were written pseudonymously.

NAHALAL A Levitical city, one of four given to the Levites from the tribal allotment of Zebulun (Josh. 21:35). Nahalal also appears in Josh. 19:15, where it is listed as a city located within Zebulun's allotted boundaries, and in Judg. 1:30, which states that Zebulun failed to remove the Canaanite occupants of the city. Possible site locations include Tell el-Beida, which sits on the Esdraelon Plain, and Tell en-Nahl, which is on the Acco Plain. Tell en-Nahl is generally the preferred location, although it is outside of Zebulun's traditional boundaries.

NAHALIEL One of Israel's stopping places across the Jordan prior to entering the promised land (Num. 21:19). Its name means "stream of El [God]" or "palm grove of El." It has been identified with Wadi Wala, which flows into the Arnon River from the north, or with Wadi Zarqa Ma'in, which flows into the Dead Sea.

NAHAM The brother of Hodiah's wife, in the tribe of Judah (1 Chron. 4:19).

NAHAMANI A leader of the Jews who returned to Judah with Zerubabbel after the exile (Neh. 7:7).

NAHARAI One of David's thirty mighty warriors, he is described as a Beerothite and the armor-bearer of Joab (2 Sam. 23:37; 1 Chron. 11:39), the commander of David's army.

NAHASH **(1)** The Ammonite king who attacked the Israelite city of Jabesh Gilead early in Saul's reign and was subsequently defeated by the new Israelite king (1 Sam. 11). Nahash (lit., "snake") advanced against Jabesh Gilead and demanded to humiliate Israel by gouging out the right eye of everyone in the city as a condition to end the siege. A copy of 1 Samuel from Qumran includes additional material also found in Josephus's *Antiquities*. These versions also state that Nahash had already gouged out the right eye of all the Israelites in the region except for the seven thousand men in Jabesh Gilead. Fortunately for them, as all versions attest, Saul responded by raising an army and defeating Nahash and the Ammonites. The Nahash who is in league with David in later texts (2 Sam. 10:2; 17:27) may well be the same king. **(2)** The father of Abigal and Zeruiah (2 Sam. 17:25), (half-?)sisters to David (1 Chron. 2:13–16). Apparently, he died, and his widow married David's father, Jesse.

NAHATH **(1)** A descendant of Esau through Reuel (Gen. 36:13; 1 Chron. 1:37). One of the clans of the Edomites derives its name from this Nahath (Gen. 36:17). **(2)** A Levite in the genealogy in 1 Chron. 6:26. He may be the same person as Toah (1 Chron. 6:34) and Tohu (1 Sam. 1:1). **(3)** A Levite overseer in the time of Hezekiah (2 Chron. 31:13).

NAHBI A spy from the tribe of Naphtali, one of twelve sent by Moses to reconnoiter the promised land (Num. 13:14).

NAHOR **(1)** A descendant of Shem, he was the son of Serug, father of Terah, and grandfather of

Abraham (Gen. 11:22–25). **(2)** The son of Terah and the brother of Abraham and Haran (Gen. 11:26). Nahor married Milkah, the daughter of his deceased brother, Haran (Gen. 11:28–32). When Abraham headed west for the land of Canaan (Gen. 12:1, 4), Nahor remained in the city of Harran. Through his wife, Milkah, Nahor fathered eight sons, and he fathered another four through his concubine, Reumah (Gen. 22:20–24). Bethuel, one of Nahor's sons through Milkah, fathered Rebekah, who became the wife of Isaac, Abraham's son (Gen. 24:15, 67). Relations between Nahor's eastern branch of the family and Abraham's western branch apparently ceased when Laban, Nahor's grandson, had a falling out with Jacob, Abraham's grandson, in which Laban called on the Lord (Abraham's God) and on Nahor's god to judge between the two parties (Gen. 31:53). **(3)** "The town of Nahor" is a town in northwest Mesopotamia, where Abraham's servant encounters Rebekah at the well (Gen. 24:10). "Nahor" may be the name of the town, or the text is simply referring to the town where Nahor once lived (so GNT, NLT).

NAHSHON The son of Amminadab, the father of Salmon, and an ancestor of David and Jesus (Ruth 4:20; 1 Chron. 2:10–11; Matt. 1:4; Luke 3:32). He was a tribal leader for Judah in the exodus (Num. 2:3; 7:12–17; 10:14), a brother-in-law to Aaron (Exod. 6:23 [KJV: "Naashon"]), and an assistant in the census conducted by Moses and Aaron (Num. 1:7).

NAHUM, BOOK OF The seventh of the Minor Prophets, Nahum is striking for its powerful poetry and its hard-hitting message. The prophet glories in God's coming judgment on Assyria. After all, Assyria's downfall will bring relief for Judah. Nahum's focus on divine judgment on Assyria has raised the question of its continuing relevance for modern readers (see "New Testament Connections" below).

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Nahum, like many prophetic books, opens with a superscription that includes an authorship attribution: "The book of the vision of Nahum the Elkoshite" (1:1b). Unfortunately, Nahum is unknown elsewhere in the Bible. Indeed, his hometown of Elkosh is not located with certainty and has been associated with sites in Mesopotamia near Nineveh, northern Israel, and Judah. The name "Nahum" in Hebrew means "compassion." Although his words carry little compassion on the surface, his excitement about Assyria's future defeat stems from the compassion that he feels for his own people.

Although little can be said about Nahum the person, more is known about the period in which he received his vision. The prophecy foresees the downfall of Assyria, in particular the city of Nineveh. Since Nineveh fell in 612 BC, the vision must be dated before that time. On the other side, 3:8–10 looks back on the fall of the Egyptian city of Thebes, which fell to the Assyrian king Ashurbanipal in 664 BC. Thus, the book comes from the time between 664 and 612 BC. If 1:12 is read as indicating that Assyria has not yet visibly weakened, then the book should be dated before 630 BC.

ANCIENT NEAR EASTERN HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The book speaks to events in the seventh century BC. Since at least the mid-eighth century BC, Assyria had been the dominant power in the Near East. Under the effective military leadership of Tiglath-pileser III (r. 744–727 BC), Shalmaneser V (r. 726–722), and Sargon II (r. 721–705 BC), the Assyrians incorporated Syria and the northern kingdom of Israel into their empire and subjected

Judah to tribute payments. This policy continued under Sennacherib (r. 704–681 BC), Esarhaddon (r. 680–669 BC), and Ashurbanipal (r. 668–627). However, Ashurbanipal, though starting in a powerful position, found the empire beginning to weaken toward the end of his reign. It was likely during Ashurbanipal's reign that Nahum wrote concerning Nineveh's fall.

The fulfillment of this expectation came in the form of a resurgent Babylon under the leadership of Nabopolassar, a Chaldean chief who assumed the kingship of Babylon. He began his insurgency in 626 BC, but it was not until 612 BC that he, with the strong support of the Medes, took the city of Nineveh. A small contingent of Assyrians survived and tried to regroup in Harran, but they were completely defeated in 609 BC at Carchemish, despite help from Pharaoh Necho of Egypt.

An Assyrian relief depicting the siege of Lachish. Nahum predicts judgment against Assyria for its destruction of Israel.

LITERARY CONSIDERATIONS

The superscription uses three terms that help describe the genre: “book,” “vision,” and “oracle.” That the prophecy is a “book” points to the literary rather than oral origins of the work. While many prophetic books begin as sermons, Nahum has all the earmarks of a literary composition. That the prophecy is a “vision” not only underlines the future orientation of its message but also highlights the use of the event-vision form that talks about future events as if they are happening in the present (e.g., 2:3–10). The word translated “oracle” also points to the book’s future orientation. Since it occurs elsewhere as well as here in contexts that envision God’s actions as a warrior against foreign nations, the word may more precisely point to the book’s character as a “war oracle” or “oracle against a foreign nation.”

OUTLINE

I. Superscription (1:1)

II. Hymn to God the Divine Warrior (1:2–8)

III. The Divine Warrior Judges and Saves His People (1:9–2:2)

IV. The Vision of the Fall of Nineveh (2:3–10)

V. The Lion Taunt (2:11–13)

VI. Woe-Oracle against Nineveh (3:1–3)

VII. The Sorceress-Harlot Taunt (3:4–7)

VIII. Historical Taunt against Nineveh (3:8–10)

IX. Further Insults against Nineveh (3:11–15c)

X. Locust Taunt (3:15d–17)

XI. Concluding Dirge (3:18–19)

THEOLOGICAL MESSAGE

Nahum prophetically anticipates the fall of Nineveh. Historically, the city was defeated by a coalition of Babylonians and Medes. Nahum, however, understands that the real cause of Nineveh’s demise and Judah’s relief is none other than God. The book begins with a hymn that praises God as warrior who “takes vengeance on his foes” (1:2–8). The remainder of the book specifies that the warrior is coming against Nineveh.

NEW TESTAMENT CONNECTIONS

Nahum is never directly cited in the NT. Indeed, at first it may be hard to see the relevance of a book that is concerned with the fall of an ancient city. However, the NT also describes God as a warrior who fights against the forces of evil. Jesus Christ takes the battle against the "powers and authorities," spiritual enemies. He wins this battle by dying on the cross (for an example of a text that uses military language in reference to the death of Christ, see Col. 2:13–15). Furthermore, the apocalyptic texts of the NT (see Rev. 19:11–21) anticipate the return of Christ as a warrior who will bring all evil to an end. The book of Nahum is a witness to God's warfare against evil, which continues to the final victory at the end of the ages.

NAIL Several different Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek biblical words are translated into English as "nail." First, there are the common fasteners that attach one item to another (Jer. 10:4), often made of iron to join pieces of wood (1 Chron. 22:3; Isa. 41:7), or even made of gold to overlay sheets of gold (2 Chron. 3:9). The writer of Ecclesiastes speaks metaphorically of wise sayings as "firmly embedded nails" (Eccles. 12:11). Roman soldiers fastened Jesus to the cross with nails (John 20:25). Second, there are pegs either driven into walls from which people hung items (Isa. 22:25; Ezek. 15:3) or used to anchor tents (Isa. 33:20). The tent pegs for the tabernacle were made of bronze (Exod. 27:19), and Jael used a tent peg to kill Sisera (Judg. 4:21–22). Isaiah speaks metaphorically of Eliakim as one whom God will drive "like a peg into a firm place" (Isa. 22:23). Finally, there are the nails of fingers (Dan. 4:33). Deuteronomy prescribes the trimming of nails as part of the purification process for Israelite men to marry captive women (Deut. 21:12).

NAIN Just north of Mount Moreh lies Nain; to the southwest was Shunem. When Jesus brought a widow's son back to life, the crowd declared that a prophet had arisen (Luke 7:11–17), remembering Elisha's restoration of the Shunammite woman's son (2 Kings 4).

NAIOTH A site in or near Ramah in the central hill country of Benjamin. The prophet Samuel lived in Ramah, approximately six miles north of Jerusalem. Samuel and David fled from Saul to "Naioth at Ramah," perhaps a section of the town or a house of instruction in Ramah, or even a shepherds' camp nearby where Samuel supervised a prophetic community (1 Sam. 19:18–20:1).

NAKED Refers to genitals and buttocks (Nah. 3:5) and, since Adam's sin, is synonymous with shame. The image of God, originally created good, was damaged by sin and death.

NAKON Located between Baalah of Judah (Kiriath Jearim) and Jerusalem, the "threshing floor of Nakon" is mentioned in the account of David's transport of the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem (2 Sam. 6:6). Here Uzzah reached out his hand to steady the ark and was struck dead by God for his irreverence. "Nakon" may be a place name or the name of the owner of the threshing floor. It is identified as the threshing floor of Kidon in the parallel account in Chronicles (1 Chron. 13:9).

NAMES OF GOD The names of God given in the Bible are an important means of revelation about his character and works. The names come from three sources: God himself, those who encounter him in the biblical record, and the biblical writers. This article is concerned mainly with the names that occur in the OT, though the NT will be referenced when helpful.

In the Bible the meaning of names is often significant and points to the character of the person so named. As might be expected, this is especially true for God. The names that he gives to himself always are a form of revelation; the names that humans give to God often are a form of testimony.

YAHWEH: THE LORD

Pronunciation. Unquestionably, for OT revelation the most important name is "(the) LORD." In English Bibles this represents the name declared by God to Moses at the burning bush ("I AM WHO I AM" [Exod. 3:13–15]) and the related term used elsewhere in the OT; in Hebrew this term consists of the four consonants YHWH and is therefore known as the Tetragrammaton ("four letters"). Hebrew does not count vowels as part of its alphabet; in biblical times one simply wrote the consonants of a word and the reader supplied the correct vowels by knowing the vocabulary, grammar, and context. However, to avoid violating the commandment in the Decalogue that prohibits the misuse of God's name (Exod. 20:7; Deut. 5:11), the Jews stopped pronouncing it. Consequently, no one today knows its correct original pronunciation, but the best evidence available suggests "Yahweh," which has become the conventional pronunciation (consider the Hebrew word "hallelujah," which actually is "hallelu-Yah," hence "praise the LORD"). In ancient Jewish tradition, "Adonai" ("my Lord") was substituted for "Yahweh." In fact, when Hebrew eventually developed a vowel notation system, instead of the vowels for "Yahweh," the vowels for "Adonai" were indicated whenever YHWH appeared in the biblical text, as a reminder. Combining the consonants YHWH with the vowels of "Adonai" yields something like "Yehowah," which is the origin of the familiar (but mistaken and nonexistent) "Jehovah." English Bibles typically use "LORD" (small capital letters) for "Yahweh," and "Lord" (regular letters) for "Adonai," which distinguishes the two.

Meaning. More vital than the matter of the pronunciation of YHWH is the question of its meaning. There seem to be two main opinions. One sees YHWH as denoting eternal self-existence, partly because it is suggested by the grammar of Exod. 3:14 (the words "I am" use a form of the Hebrew verb that suggests being without beginning or end) and partly because that is the meaning Jesus apparently ascribes to it in John 8:58. The other opinion, suggested by usage, is that YHWH indicates dynamic, active, divine presence: God's being present in a special way to act on someone's behalf (e.g., Gen. 26:28; 39:2–3; Josh. 6:27; 1 Sam. 18:12–14). This idea also appears in the episode of the burning bush (Exod. 3:12): when Moses protests his inadequacy to confront Pharaoh, God assures him of his presence, a reality noted with other prophets (1 Sam. 3:19; Jer. 1:8).

Perhaps the best points of reference for understanding the meaning of YHWH are God's own proclamations. In addition to Exod. 3:13–15, at least two other passages in Exodus give God's commentary (as it were) about the meaning of his name. An important one is Exod. 34:5–7. A key passage in the theology proper of ancient Israel, its themes echo in later OT Scripture (Num. 14:18–19; Ps. 103:7–12; Jon. 4:2). What is noteworthy about the texts cited is that all of them say something remarkable about the grace of God. This fits, for the revelation of Exod. 34:5–7 is given in the context of covenant renewal after the incident of the golden calf. Moses invokes God's name in the Numbers text to avoid catastrophic judgment when the Israelites refuse to enter the promised land. The psalm text picks up this theme and connects it with God's revelation of his ways to the chosen people. Jonah, remarkably, affirms that the same grace extends even toward a wicked Gentile city such as Nineveh.

Another such passage is Exod. 6:2–8. Here God reaffirms his redemptive purpose for captive Israel, despite the fact that Moses' first encounter with Pharaoh has not gone well. God assures the prophet that he has remembered his covenant with the patriarchs, whom he says did not know him as "Yahweh," which probably means that the patriarchs did not experience him in the way or character that their descendants would in the exodus event (though it is possible to translate the Hebrew here as a rhetorical question with an affirmative idea: "And indeed, by my name Yahweh did I not make myself known to them?"). God then proceeds to outline the redemptive experience in its fullness:

deliverance from bondage, reception into a covenant relationship, and possession of the land promised to their ancestors (vv. 6–8). The statement is bracketed with this declaration: “I am the LORD” (vv. 2, 8). One stated purpose of this redemptive work is that Israel might come to understand this (v. 7). This is important to note because a central theme of Exodus as a book is the identity of the God of Israel. This concern prompts Moses to ask for God’s name at the burning bush (3:13), and this contempt for the God of the enslaved Hebrews causes Pharaoh to be dismissive at his first meeting with Moses and Aaron (5:2). Moses asks with the concern of a seeker and receives one of the most profound declarations of God’s identity in the Bible. Pharaoh asks with the contempt of a scorner and receives one of the most powerful displays of God’s identity in the Bible (the plagues). The contrast is both striking and instructive. The meaning of God’s name, then, is revealed in works as well as words, and his purpose is that not just his people but all peoples may come to understand who he is. Yet another majestic statement in the book of Exodus (9:13–16) makes this abundantly clear.

Based on this pattern of usage, the name “Yahweh” seems to signify especially the active presence of God to bless, deliver, or otherwise aid his people. Where this presence is absent, there is no success, victory, protection, or peace (Num. 14:39–45; Josh. 7:10–12; Judg. 16:20; 1 Sam. 16:13–14). The message that God not only is but also is present to save and deliver may well be the most important truth communicated in the OT, and it is only natural to see its ultimate embodiment in the person and work of Christ (Isa. 7:14; cf. Matt. 1:21–23).

Name used in combination. The name “Yahweh” also is used in combination with other terms. After God grants a military victory to Israel over the Amalekites, Moses names a commemorative altar “Yahweh Nissi,” meaning “the LORD is my Banner” (Exod. 17:15). In Ezekiel’s temple vision Jerusalem is called “Yahweh Shammah,” meaning “THE LORD IS THERE” (Ezek. 48:35). A familiar expression is “the LORD of hosts,” which is generally comparable to the expression “commander in chief” used in American culture (cf. 1 Kings 22:19–23).

ELOHIM

This is the first term for God encountered in the Bible, right in the opening verse. It is a more generic term, denoting deity in contrast to humans or angels. “Elohim” is a plural form; the singular terms “El” and “Eloah” are used occasionally, particularly in poetic texts. “El” is a common term in the biblical world; in fact, it is the name for the father of Baal in the Canaanite religion. This may explain why the Bible commonly uses the plural form, to distinguish the one true God, the God of Israel, from his pagan rivals. Others explain the plural form as a “plural of majesty” or “plural of intensity,” though it is uncertain just what this would mean. Some see the foundation for NT revelation of the Trinity (Gen. 1:26–27; 11:6–7; cf. John 17:20–22), but this is unlikely. The plural form also can serve simply as a common noun, referring to pagan deities (Exod. 12:12), angels (Ps. 97:7, arguably), or even human authorities (Exod. 22:28, possibly).

“El” also occurs in combination with other descriptive terms. The best known is “El Shaddai,” meaning “God Almighty” (Gen. 17:1). The precise meaning of “Shaddai” is uncertain, but it seems to have the notion of “great/powerful one.” The distressed Hagar, caught, comforted, and counseled by the mysterious personage at a well, calls God “El Roi,” which means “the God who sees me” (Gen. 16:13). One of the most exalted expressions to describe God is “El Elyon,” meaning “God Most High.” This title seems to have particular reference to God as the owner and master of creation (Gen. 14:18–20).

ADONAI

As noted above, this common word meaning simply "(my) lord/master" is used regularly in place of the personal name of God revealed to Moses in Exod. 3:14. And in the OT of most English Bibles this is indicated by printing "Lord" as opposed to "LORD" (using small capital letters). However, "Adonai" is used of God in some noteworthy instances, such as Isaiah's lofty vision of God exalted in Isa. 6 and the prophecy of Immanuel in Isa. 7:14. In time, this became the preferred term for referring to God, and the LXX reflected this by using the Greek word *kyrios* ("lord") for Yahweh. This makes the ease with which NT writers transfer the use of the term to Jesus (e.g., 1 Cor. 12:3) a strong indication of their Christology.

NAMING The act of giving a specific term of identification to someone or something. Naming is a notable feature of biblical narrative. From the beginning, God orders and structures creation by naming the things that he makes, from the elements of nature to humankind (Gen. 1:5, 10; 5:2). As his ruling representative, Adam is granted the privilege of naming the animals (1:27–28; 2:19–20). He later names his wife, both as a being and as a person (2:23; 3:20). Eve, in turn, names Seth after losing Abel to the murderous rage of his brother Cain (4:25). With the naming of people, what is notable is that in each case the name clearly is chosen for a reason: the name has significance for the person, revealing something significant about character, role, or destiny.

The patriarchal narratives of Genesis are notable in this regard. In Gen. 17 both Abram and Sarai receive name changes, to the more familiar "Abraham" and "Sarah." No particular explanation is given in her case, but "Abraham" is explained in terms of God's promise of numerous descendants, "father of many" (17:5). Later in the conversation, God decrees that the name of the promised son will be "Isaac." The name means "he laughs," and it is chosen initially in response to Abraham's laughter at the idea of having a son in his old age (17:17, 19). When Isaac is born, Sarah describes it as the laughter of joyful surprise (21:6–7). But when Ishmael engages in some less innocent "laughing" about Isaac, it becomes the occasion of Ishmael's expulsion along with his mother (21:8–14). In the next generation, Esau is named for his red, hairy appearance—something that will be important on a later occasion (25:25; 27:5–23). His twin brother's name is both more symbolic and more suggestive of character, as Esau himself acknowledges (25:26; 27:34–36).

The NT also has its cases of notable naming. The apostles express appreciation for the edifying spirit of a believer named "Joseph" by calling him "Barnabas," which means "son of encouragement" (Acts 4:36). Likewise, Jesus marks Simon's recognition of his identity by naming him "Peter" (Aram. *Cepha*; Gk. *Petros*—both mean "rock"). Jesus himself is the supreme example of having been given a meaningful name (Matt. 1:20–21), though it should be noted that his Hebrew name, "Joshua" (*yehoshua'*, "Yahweh saves/is salvation"), was common in Jewish culture. This is why others usually referred to him by some descriptive phrase, such as "Jesus of Nazareth" or "Jesus, who is called Messiah."

Places also receive names, often as a result of some encounter with God. Jacob gives the name "Bethel" to the spot where God first spoke with him (Gen. 28:16–19). The names that Moses gives to some locations of the wilderness journey are tragically indicative of Israel's frequent disobedience during that time (Exod. 17:1–17; Num. 11:3–5, 18–20, 31–34).

NAOMI A woman of Judah whose family fortunes are the focus of the book of Ruth. Her name means "pleasant," though when her circumstances turned difficult, she asked to be called Mara ("bitter") instead. When her family lived in Moab for a time to escape a famine, she eventually became the mother-in-law of Ruth. She and Ruth returned to her hometown of Bethlehem after the deaths of her husband and sons. Naomi arranged for Ruth’s eventual marriage to Boaz, which provided redemption for her family property.

NAPHATH-DOR *See* Naphoth Dor.

NAPHISH A descendant of Ishmael, Abraham’s son through Hagar. He is listed in the genealogies of Gen. 25:15; 1 Chron. 1:31. His descendants were defeated by the eastern Israelite tribes prior to the conquest (1 Chron. 5:19).

NAPHOTH DOR This expression means “hills or heights of Dor.” It occurs in Josh. 11:2; 12:23; 1 Kings 4:11. Dor was an important city on the northern coastline of Israel, about fifty miles southwest of Hazor and just south of the Phoenician border. It fell within the tribal territory of western Manasseh (Josh. 17:11).

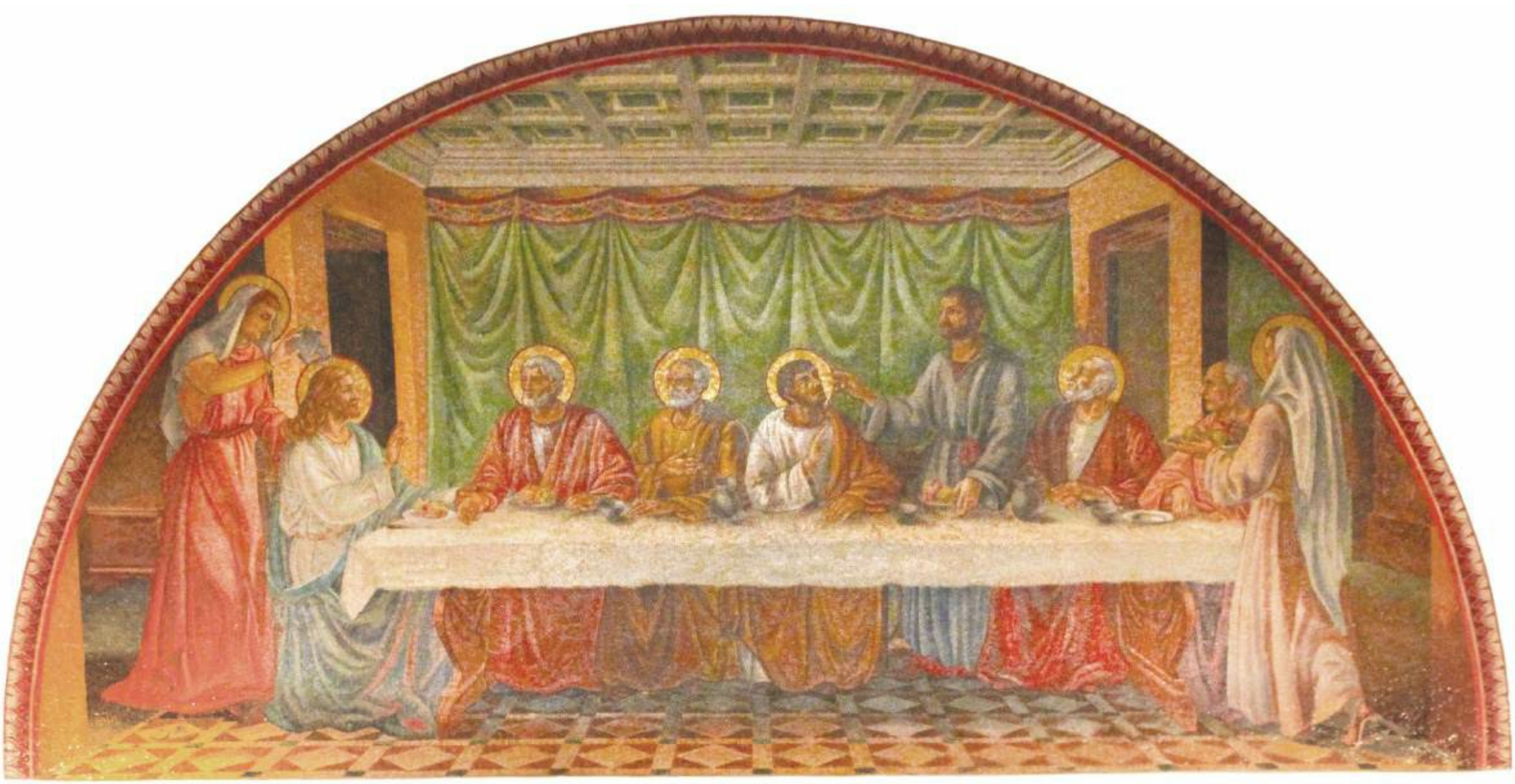
NAPHTALI The fourth son of Israel (Jacob) and the progenitor of the tribe that bears his name. He was the second surrogate son of Rachel through her maidservant Bilhah (Gen. 30:7–8).

NAPHTALI, TRIBE OF The tribe descended from Naphtali, son of Jacob and Bilhah. This tribe settled in northern Israel, east of Asher and south of Dan, not far from the Sea of Kinnereth (Sea of Galilee). It is noted that, like other tribes, it failed to completely drive out the Canaanites in its designated territory, which contributed to the difficulties that the nation experienced after the passing of Joshua’s generation (Judg. 1:33). Naphtali has a quiet history in Scripture but is mentioned in the prophecy of Isa. 9:1–7, which Matthew cites in connection with Jesus’ ministry in Galilee (Matt. 4:12–17). Ezekiel also describes an assigned land area for Naphtali in his temple vision (Ezek. 48:3–4).

NAPHTUHITES Descendants of Ham mentioned twice in the Bible, both in genealogies (Gen. 10:13; 1 Chron. 1:11). They are traced from Ham through “Mizraim,” which is the Hebrew word for “Egypt.” This seems to suggest an origin in northern Egypt (the Nile Delta). “Naphtuhite” may contain the name of the Egyptian god Ptah, whose sacred city was Memphis, in the Nile Delta area.

NARCISSUS The believers within the household of Narcissus are mentioned in Paul’s greetings in Rom. 16:11. The phrase “those in the household of Narcissus” refers to the slaves and freedmen or freedwomen of Narcissus, while the phrase “in the Lord” specifies those of them who were Christians. The servants of Narcissus’s household who became Christians formed a house church in Rome. Other house churches mentioned by Paul in these closing greetings include that of Priscilla and Aquila. Paul does not specify whether Narcissus himself was a Christian.

NARD A high-quality and fragrant ointment or perfume, also known as spikenard. Song of Songs includes nard among fragrant items used metaphorically by the lover to describe his beloved (Song 4:13–14). Mark 14:3 and John 12:3 refer to the same incident, the anointing of Jesus at Bethany a few days before the crucifixion, and emphasize the high monetary value of the nard.



Mosaic depicting the anointing of Jesus with nard, at the Church of Saint Lazarus in Bethany

NATHAN (1) The prophet Nathan was consulted by David when he contemplated building a temple to house the ark (2 Sam. 7). Without consulting God, Nathan encouraged David in this laudable project, suggesting that in the prophet's mind the project was so obviously right (acknowledging as it did God's supreme kingship over the nation) that there was no need to ask God. However, an unexpected divine refusal came that same night. A divine speech, long by biblical narrative standards (twelve verses), was required to explain the baffling divine refusal. The problem with the project was that the time was not ripe (2 Sam. 7:11; cf. 7:1), for David still had battles to fight.

Nathan reappears in biblical narrative in 2 Sam. 12, sent by God to rebuke David for taking Bathsheba (this confrontation is alluded to in the superscription of Ps. 51). These interventions of Nathan came at David's high point and low point. Nathan's parable about the "little ewe lamb" caused David to incriminate himself and pronounce his own sentence. David, on his immediate repentance, was forgiven (v. 13), but the rest of his reign was the working out of the punishment pronounced by Nathan: "The sword will never depart from your house" (v. 10). Nathan predicted the death of the son born from the illicit union (v. 14). Later, God sent word through Nathan that a second son, Solomon, was to be named "Jedidiah" ("loved by the LORD") (v. 25; see NIV footnote). Nathan, in collusion with Bathsheba, took Solomon's part in the competition for the throne (1 Kings 1). Nathan and the priest Zadok anointed Solomon king at Gihon (1 Kings 1:45). He also had a role in David's ordering of the Levites (2 Chron. 29:25). Nathan is the reputed author of a book of chronicles about David's reign (1 Chron. 29:29) and a history about Solomon's (2 Chron. 9:29).

Presumably, the Nathan of 1 Kings 4:5 is the prophet, whose son Azariah was in charge of Solomon's district officers. Zabud, another son, was a priest (here this refers to a chief officer) and personal adviser (cf. Hushai's role in 2 Sam. 15:37) under Solomon. There is mention of "the house of Nathan" as still prominent in the postexilic period (Zech. 12:12).

(2) A son of David, born in Jerusalem (2 Sam. 5:14; 1 Chron. 3:5; 14:4), he is in the genealogy of Jesus (Luke 3:31). **(3)** The father of Igal, one of David's thirty mighty warriors (2 Sam. 23:36). **(4)** A Judahite, the son of Attai and father of Zabad (1 Chron. 2:36). **(5)** The brother of Joel, one of David's mighty warriors (1 Chron. 11:38). **(6)** One of the leaders enlisted by Ezra to seek Levites willing to return to Jerusalem (Ezra 8:16). **(7)** One of the men who were guilty of taking a foreign wife during the time of Ezra (Ezra 10:39).

NATHANAEL One of Jesus' disciples, mentioned by name only in John 1:45–49; 21:2. He was from Cana in Galilee (21:2), where Jesus changed water into wine. Nathanael was initially skeptical of Philip's claims about Jesus because Jesus was from Nazareth (1:45–46), but his skepticism turned to belief when Jesus, who called Nathanael "truly . . . an Israelite in whom there is no deceit," demonstrated miraculous knowledge of where Nathanael had been sitting before he met Jesus (1:47–49). Nathanael quickly declared his faith in Jesus. As a result of Nathanael's ready faith, Jesus promised him that he would be witness to Jesus' salvific work and the miraculous transformation of the broken relationship between God and humankind (John 1:50). Nathanael was one of the first disciples to see the risen Jesus (John 21:1–4).

Nathanael was most likely the same person as Bartholomew (Matt. 10:3; Mark 3:18; Luke 6:14; Acts 1:13), given that John never mentions Bartholomew and the Synoptic Gospels never mention Nathanael, and that the Synoptic Gospels list Bartholomew's name directly after Philip's, while John connects Nathanael and Philip in his narrative.

NATHAN-MELECH *See* Nathan-Melek.

NATHAN-MELEK An official who lived in the Jerusalem temple and whose room was in close proximity to an object used for sun worship. King Josiah removed it from the temple during his reformation (2 Kings 23:11).

NATIONS *See* Gentiles.

NATIVE(S) As an adjective, "native" refers to being born or originating in a particular place (Gen. 24:7; 31:13; Num. 22:5). As a noun, it refers to those who were born in or are original inhabitants of a particular place. Several Bible versions refer to local people of Malta, where Paul stops on his journey to Rome, as "natives" (Acts 28:4 NASB, RSV, NRSV, NAB [Gk. *barbaroi*, meaning "barbarians, foreigners"]). Other versions use "islanders" (NIV), "local people" (HCSB), or "people of the island" (NLT).

NATIVITY OF CHRIST *See* Jesus Christ.

NATURAL When God completed his work at creation, all that he made he pronounced "very good" (Gen. 1:31). The world was functioning harmoniously, and most important, the humans God had created in his own image lived in a sinless relationship with him. In one sense this universe before the fall represents its "natural" state. Evil and suffering enter the creation as fundamentally alien elements. However, through Adam and Eve's disobedience (Gen. 3) what was unnatural has become natural. "Sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people, because all sinned" (Rom. 5:12). For this reason, God sent his Son to die on a cross and rise again, to redeem his people from their unnatural (against God's revealed will [cf. Rom. 1:20–27]) yet natural (inborn and pervasive [cf. Rom. 6:19]) state of sinfulness.

NAUM In Luke 3:25 the KJV rendering of the Greek name for Nahum (*Naoum*), an ancestor of Jesus.

NAVE Most commonly, the long central hall of a cross-shaped church where the congregation sits. Some Bible versions use the term to refer to the central hall of the Jerusalem temple between the vestibule and the most holy place (1 Kings 6:3, 5, 17, 33; 7:21; Ezek. 41:1–2 RSV, NASB, NRSV, NAB). The NIV has "main hall" in most of these passages. The KJV uses the word "naves" in 1 Kings 7:33 in an archaic sense, referring to the "rims" (NIV) of a wheel.

NAVEL One particular Hebrew word for "navel," *shor*, occurs three times in the OT. In Song 7:2 the male character lists his lover's navel among the physical attributes that he praises. In Prov. 3:8 *shor* (NIV: "body") is probably used figuratively to refer to the body receiving nourishment. In Ezek. 16:4 *shor* is used to refer to the umbilical cord (NRSV: "navel cord").

Another Hebrew word, *tabbur*, occurring in Ezek. 38:12 (also Judg. 9:37) and translated "center" in the NIV, might best be translated as "navel," thus connecting to an ancient Near Eastern tradition that views the mountain where a deity dwells as the "navel" or nexus between heaven and earth. In this verse, then, Mount Zion in Jerusalem, where God dwelt among his people, would be referred to as the "navel of the earth."

NAVY *See* Fleet; Ships, Sailors, and Navigation.

NAZARETH, NAZARENE In the first century, Nazareth was a small village in the extreme southerly part of lower Galilee, midway between the Sea of Galilee and the Mediterranean Sea. It was near Gath Hepher, the birthplace of Jonah the prophet to the Gentiles (2 Kings 14:25), and Sepphoris, one of the three largest cities in the region. Not far was the Via Maris, the great highway joining Mesopotamia to Egypt and ultimately the trading network that linked India, China, central Asia, the Near East, and the Mediterranean. The village was perched 1,150 feet above sea level, overlooking the Jezreel Valley, with several terraces for agriculture cut into the mountain. A Nazarene could look south across the grand Plain of Esdraelon, west to Mount Carmel on the Mediterranean coast, east to nearby Mount Tabor, and north to snowcapped Mount Hermon. The community, whose population may have averaged around five hundred, subsisted from agriculture. Capital resources included almonds, pomegranates, dates, oil, and wine. (Excavations have located vaulted cells for wine and oil storage, as well as wine presses and storage jar vessels.) Nazareth appears to have been uninhabited from the eighth to the second centuries BC, until it was resettled during the reign of John Hyrcanus (134–104 BC), probably by a Davidic clan of army veterans. The claim that Jesus' adoptive father, Joseph, was a descendant of David and a resident of Nazareth is therefore plausible (Matt. 1:20; Luke 2:4–5). Today, Nazareth is the largest Arab city in Israel.

Although Jesus' ministry was unsuccessful in Nazareth, he and his followers were called "Nazarenes" (Mark 1:24; 10:47; John 18:5, 7; Acts 2:22; 3:6; 24:5). Descendants of Jesus' family continued to live in the area for centuries. The epithet "Nazarene" probably was intended as a slur. Nathanael is unimpressed by Jesus' origin in Nazareth (John 1:46). The village is not mentioned in the OT. Some even doubted its existence, until 1962, when the place name "Nazareth" was discovered on a synagogue inscription in Caesarea Maritima.

NAZIRITE Both men and women could take the Nazirite vow (Num. 6:1–21), consecrating themselves to God and abstaining from all grapevine products, avoiding contact with corpses, and allowing their hair to grow long. The first two stipulations mandate separation from conditions reflective of decay and corruption, clearly an affront to God's holiness (cf. Amos 2:11–12). Long hair was the sign of the vow, symbolic of the power of God (Judg. 16:17).

Inadvertently touching a corpse interrupted the vow. Rededication necessitated shaving the head and sacrificing sin and burnt offerings, along with a guilt offering for having defiled something holy (Lev. 5:14–19). The vow could last one's entire life, as was intended for Samson (Judg. 13:7) and Samuel (1 Sam. 1:11), or it could simply be for a period of time (Acts 18:18; 21:24). In the latter case, the vow was terminated with the presentation of sin, burnt, and fellowship offerings and shaving and burning the hair at the tabernacle.

An individual could take the vow by personal volition, or it could be imposed by others. Most of the biblical examples fall into the latter category. The angel of the Lord declared that Samson would be a Nazirite for his entire life, although Samson despised the sanctity of the vow in just about every way (Judg. 13–16). Hannah dedicated Samuel for his life (1 Sam. 1:11). John the Baptist was also apparently given over to these conditions by the word of the angel Gabriel (Luke 1:15).

NEAH A town within the tribal boundaries of Zebulun (Josh. 19:13).

NEAPOLIS The harbor town for the larger city of Philippi, on the Aegean coast. Paul, after receiving a vision, set out with his companions to Macedonia. During the journey, they passed through Neapolis (Acts 16:11) before traveling approximately ten miles on to Philippi. Their arrival in Neapolis marks Paul's first entry into Europe.

NEARIAH **(1)** A leader of the tribe of Simeon during the reign of Hezekiah who helped drive the remaining Amalekites from Mount Seir (1 Chron. 4:42). **(2)** One of the four sons of Shemaiah, a descendant of David (1 Chron. 3:22).

NEBAI One of the leaders who sealed the covenant with God following Ezra's public reading of the law (Neh. 10:19).

NEBAIOTH **(1)** The name of the firstborn son of Ishmael (Gen. 25:13; 28:9; 36:3; 1 Chron. 1:29) and an Arabic tribe mentioned in cuneiform sources. **(2)** The place from where rams will be gathered, mentioned in the context of future blessing for Jerusalem (Isa. 60:7).

NEBAJOTH *See* Nebaioth.

NEBALLAT A town at the western end of the hill country of Ephraim that members of the tribe of Benjamin repopulated after the Babylonian exile (Neh. 11:34). The site is apparently identified with Beit Nabala (Horvat Nevallat), located approximately twenty-two miles northwest of Jerusalem and four miles northeast of Lod, near the edge of the coastal plain.

NEBAT The father of Jeroboam, the first king of the northern kingdom of Israel. His name appears only in the phrase "Jeroboam son of Nebat" and serves to distinguish him from Jeroboam II.

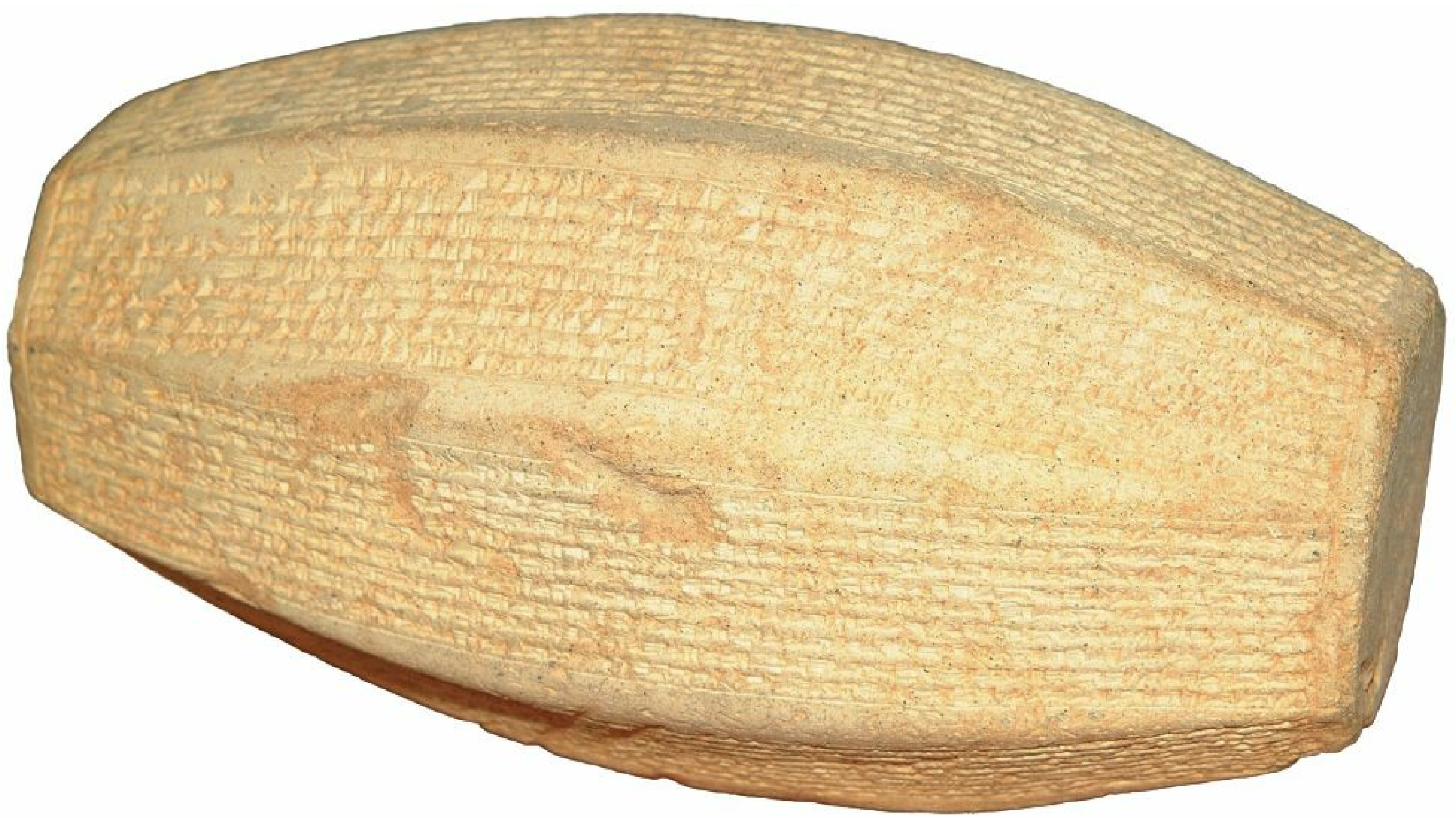
NEBO **(1)** Mount Nebo is located in Abarim, a mountain range in northwest Moab separating the Transjordan Plain from the Jordan Valley. Nebo is usually identified with a mountain of the same modern name that is five miles northwest of Madaba and is well over four thousand feet in elevation. This was the mountain that God commanded Moses to ascend to get a glimpse of the promised land before he died (Deut. 32:48–52; 34:1). On a clear day, it offers a spectacular view. In the period right after the entry into the land, the area was controlled by the Reubenites (Num. 32:3, 38). Later, it is mentioned as a prominent location in the land of Moab (Jer. 48:1, 22). (*See also* Abarim.) **(2)** The god Nebo was considered the son of the Babylonian chief god, Marduk, and was himself the god of wisdom and writing. He was thus the patron god of scribes (Isa. 46:1). **(3)** Nebo is listed as an ancestor of seven men who had married foreign women during the postexilic period (Ezra 10:43). **(4)** The hometown of fifty-two men returned from the Babylonian exile (Ezra 2:29).

NEBO-SARSEKIM A Babylonian official identified in Jer. 39:3. The division and significance of the names in the list is disputed. Some versions treat "Nebo" (Heb. *nebu*) as the second half of Samgar's name, and read this part of the list as "Nergal-sharezer, Samgar-nebo, Sarsechim the Rab-saris" (NRSV, HCSB; similarly, NASB). The NIV and others (see NLT, REB, NET) instead read the Hebrew as two names, with a place name and a title: "Nergal-Sharezer of Samgar, Nebo-Sarsekim a chief officer."

NEBUCHADNEZZAR The king of Babylon from 605 to 562 BC. Information about his life and reign comes from the Bible as well as ancient Babylonian sources. Nebuchadnezzar had many military and political accomplishments. The following material focuses mainly on those that illumine the biblical text.

Nebuchadnezzar's father, Nabopolassar, was a Chaldean (Aramaic-speaking) tribal chief from the extreme south of Babylon (near what is today the Persian Gulf). In 626 BC he rebelled against Assyria, which for many years had subjugated Babylon to vassal status. In 612 BC the Babylonians, along with the Medes, defeated the Assyrian capital, Nineveh. Remnants of the Assyrian army fled to the region around Harran in northern Syria under the leadership of Ashur-uballit. In 609 BC Pharaoh Necho of Egypt attempted to bolster the Assyrian army, but the Babylonians soundly defeated them at the battle of Carchemish. At this point, Babylon inherited what was the Assyrian Empire, which included Syria and the northern kingdom of Israel. In 605 BC Nabopolassar died of natural causes, and his son Nebuchadnezzar succeeded him as king.

In the same year, according to Dan. 1:1–3, Nebuchadnezzar "besieged" Jerusalem. The Hebrew verb (*tsur*) could indicate a military siege or simply a diplomatic coercion. In any case, the pro-Egyptian Judean king, Jehoiakim, had no recourse but to submit, turning over to the Babylonian king the temple vessels and also political hostages from the royal family, including Daniel and his three friends.



A cylindrical inscription of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon (605–560 BC)

In 597 BC Jehoiakim revolted against Nebuchadnezzar. By the time the Babylonian army mobilized and made the long march to Jerusalem, Jehoiakim had been replaced by his son Jehoiachin. The city of Jerusalem was then taken. Jehoiachin, along with many leaders, including the priest Ezekiel, were taken into exile in Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar then placed on the throne Jehoiachin's uncle, who took the name "Zedekiah."

Yet, in 586 BC even Zedekiah presumed to rebel against Nebuchadnezzar. This time Nebuchadnezzar defeated Jerusalem, and he killed Zedekiah's sons, gouged out his eyes, and carted him off to Babylon. He also destroyed much of the city, including the palace, walls, and temple. The book of Lamentations records the horrified reaction of the faithful to the destruction of the city. He exiled many of the leading citizens, but he left most of the people in the land under the leadership of Gedaliah, a Judean-born governor. Jeremiah records the account of later atrocities of an insurgent, Ishmael (Jer. 40:7–41:15). Ishmael's assassination of Gedaliah and murder of the Babylonian soldiers in Jerusalem led to yet another Babylonian incursion into Judah in 582 BC.

Nebuchadnezzar died in 562 BC. He was succeeded by his son Amel-Marduk (known in the Bible as Awel-Marduk [2 Kings 25:27]).

The most intimate portrait of Nebuchadnezzar comes from Dan. 1–4. After taking Daniel and the three friends into captivity, he trained them for royal service. Daniel became a trusted adviser to the king. In the end, it was Daniel who taught the king rather than the other way around. It is doubtful that Nebuchadnezzar ever worshiped the true God exclusively, but he came to recognize Yahweh's great power and wisdom.

NEBUCHADREZZAR *See* Nebuchadnezzar.

NEBUSHASBAN *See* Nebushazban.

NEBUSHAZBAN The chief officer of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon (r. 605–562 BC), he was one of several Babylonian officials who ordered Jeremiah's removal from the courtyard during the fall of Jerusalem in 586 BC (Jer. 39:13 [KJV: "Nebushasban"]).

NEBUZARADAN A Babylonian official, "the commander of the guard" (2 Kings 25:11), who appears in the biblical text at the fall of the city of Jerusalem in 586 BC. Nebuzaradan is credited with the complete razing of the temple, city structures, and defenses of Jerusalem (2 Kings 25:8–10). He also took many of the notable citizens into exile and left the poor behind (2 Kings 25:11–12). On instructions from Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuzaradan treated Jeremiah well (Jer. 39:11–14). Nebuzaradan returned to the land of Judah a few years later and took another 745 captives into exile (Jer. 52:30).

NECHO Necho II was the third pharaoh of the Twenty-sixth Dynasty of Egypt (r. 610–595 BC). In 609 BC Necho led the Egyptian army through Syria-Palestine to help support the crumbling Assyrian Empire at Harran against the encroaching Babylonians. Necho's goal was to consolidate Egyptian power over the region from Egypt to the Euphrates. While Necho was traveling through Israelite territory, King Josiah of Judah led his army to confront Necho and forced a battle near Megiddo (2 Kings 23:29–35; 2 Chron. 35:20–36:4; cf. Jer. 46:2). Necho had warned Josiah that he was only passing through, but the battle went forward, and Josiah was killed. Three months later, after the Egyptian and Assyrian armies were unsuccessful in battle, Necho summoned Josiah's son Jehoahaz to Riblah in Syria and deposed him, taking him into exile in Egypt. In his stead, Necho renamed Josiah's older son Eliakim, calling him "Jehoiakim," and placed him on the throne of Judah. This made Judah a vassal of Egypt, and Necho required a heavy tribute of gold and silver from Jehoiakim. Four years later, Necho again led the Egyptian army in battle against Babylon at Carchemish and shortly thereafter at Hamath, both serious defeats for Necho. Soon Nebuchadnezzar was campaigning in Palestine, and Jehoiakim switched his allegiance (and vassal loyalty) from Egypt to Babylon. Necho II was able to prevent Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonian army from invading Egypt, but he never came farther east than Gaza from that time forward.

NECHOH *See* Necho.

NECK In the Bible, the neck often is associated with a burden. In several places the Bible refers to oppression or servitude as a yoke around one's neck (Gen. 27:40; Deut. 28:48; Jer. 28:10–14). The apostle Peter even likened following the Mosaic law to bearing a yoke on one's neck (Acts 15:10). The neck was also associated with adornment. Having jewelry placed around one's neck was a sign of honor (Gen. 41:42; Dan. 5:16). Similarly, good instruction or moral character could be described as jewelry around one's neck (Prov. 1:8–9; 3:21–22).

NECKLACE A neck ornament, often of high value, used to enhance beauty (Song 1:10; 4:9; Ezek. 16:11). Occasionally, a necklace signifies high office (Gen. 41:42; Dan. 5:29). *See also* Jewels, Jewelry.

Syrian necklace (fourth or fifth century BC)

NECO *See* Necho.

NECROMANCY The divination practice of consulting with the dead. Along with other forms of divination, sorcery, and magic, necromancy is strictly prohibited in Deut. 18:9–13. An example of necromancy, however, is recorded in 1 Sam. 28, where King Saul, devoid of any word from God due to the king's repeated disobedience, persuades a "medium" to bring up Samuel from the dead to give guidance.

NEDABIAH One of the sons of King Jehoiachin (Jeconiah) of Judah, who was carried off into Babylonian exile (1 Chron. 3:18).

NEEDLE No biblical texts describe an ancient needle, but archaeologists have found needles made of bronze, bone, and ivory. The needle would have been sharp at one end, with an eye for thread at the other, similar at least in basic form to the modern needle. Simple sewing is the obvious use for needles, but they also played a larger role in embroidery, which was seen as a gift from God (Exod. 35:35; cf. 31:6; *see also* Needlework). The use of the needle is implied in certain contexts where sewing is present, such as Gen. 3:7.

The only mention of the word "needle" in the Bible is in the reference to the "eye of a needle" in the Synoptic Gospels (Matt. 19:24; Mark 10:25; Luke 18:25). The purpose here is to contrast one of the smallest openings common to the household with one of Palestine's largest animals. This comparison is an example of hyperbole, expressing the great difficulty that the rich would encounter in abandoning all to follow Christ.

NEEDLEWORK Also called “embroidery,” the interweaving of various colors of thread to form decorative patterns, as seen in the tabernacle curtains. A high degree of skill was involved, as is evident in descriptions of these curtains: “Make the tabernacle with ten curtains of finely twisted linen and blue, purple and scarlet yarn, with cherubim woven into them by a skilled worker” (Exod. 26:1). Needlework was viewed as a skill given by God (Exod. 35:35). Embroidered garments were a sign of luxury, worn by the affluent and the high priest (Exod. 28:39). They were a trade commodity (Ezek. 27:16) and a spoil of war, prized by many (Judg. 5:30).

NEESINGS In Job 41:18 the KJV translates the Hebrew *’atishah* as “neesings,” referring to the “snorting” (NIV) or “sneezing” (NRSV) in the description of Leviathan.

NEGEB *See* Negev.

NEGEV This arid region, whose name sometimes is translated as “the south,” extends from Judah to the Gulf of Aqaba and includes the Desert of Paran. Abraham and Isaac both lived in the northern part of the Negev (Gen. 20:1; 24:62). Part of Israel’s wilderness wanderings took place in the Negev (Num. 13:17), and they encountered the Amalekites there (Num. 13:29). Joshua conquered this region and allotted it to Judah and Simeon (Josh. 10:40; 15:21; 19:8). When David conducted raids against the Geshurites, the Girzites, and the Amalekites, he told the Philistines that he was attacking the Negev (1 Sam. 27:10). The Negev is also referenced in poetic and prophetic texts (Ps. 126:4; Isa. 21:1; 30:6; Jer. 13:19; 17:26; Zech. 7:7).

NEGINAH, NEGINOTH A transliteration of a Hebrew word (sg. and pl.) that appears in the superscription of a number of psalms (Pss. 4; 6; 54–55; 61; 67; 76). While the KJV transliterates the term in these psalm superscriptions as “Neginah, Neginoth” (but cf. Hab. 3:19 KJV), most modern versions, like the NIV, understand it to mean “stringed instruments.” In several other passages the Hebrew term refers to a mocking song or taunt (Job 30:9; Ps. 69:12; Lam. 3:14).

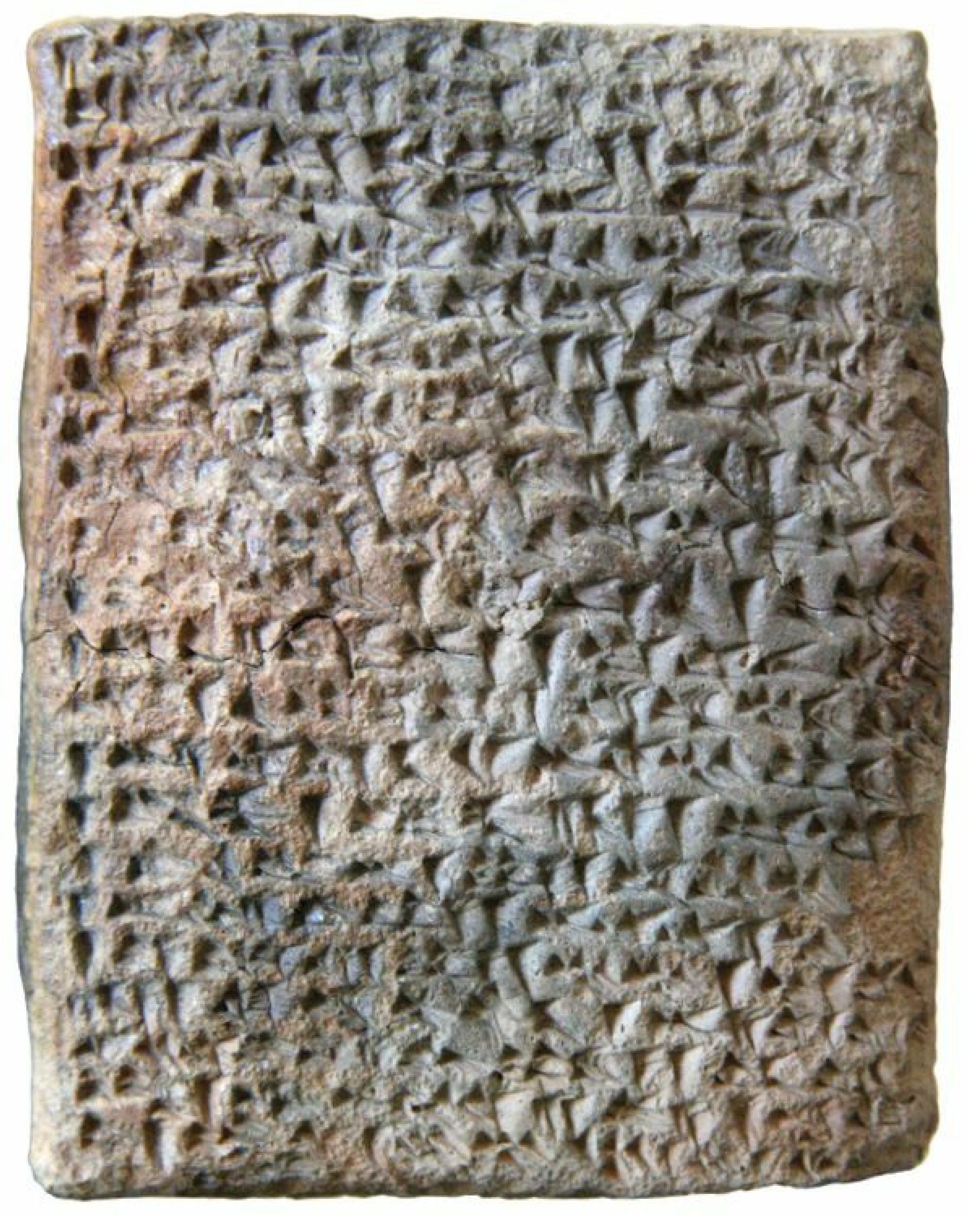
NEHELAM, NEHELAMITE This name is associated with Shemaiah, a false prophet in Babylon of Jeremiah’s day (Jer. 29:24–32). It is uncertain whether “Nehelam” is a family name or a place name. Shemaiah had sent a letter to the priest Zephaniah, criticizing him for not reprimanding Jeremiah for his negative prophecies. In response, Jeremiah pronounced judgment from God against Shemaiah and his descendants. *See also* Shemaiah.

NEHEMIAH **(1)** The son of Hakaliah, he was a prominent leader of the people of God in the late postexilic period (Neh. 1:1–7:73; 8:9–10; 10:1–13:31). He returned to Jerusalem from the Persian capital, Susa, in order to rebuild the wall of Jerusalem and to fortify the morale of its citizens.

Before his return to Jerusalem, Nehemiah worked as the cupbearer to the king of Persia, Artaxerxes. There are three kings by that name during the history of the Persian Empire, but scholars are generally agreed that Nehemiah worked for Artaxerxes I (r. 464–424 BC). The job of the cupbearer was an important one. The king needed to rely on a close confidante to serve him his drink, since poisoning was an occupational hazard for ancient kings.

Although he was in a powerful position in Persia, Nehemiah was deeply saddened to hear the condition of Jerusalem from his visiting brother Hanani. In particular, the city's walls were torn down and its gates were burned. While we might assume that the condition of the gates was the result of the Babylonian incursion into the city decades before (587/586 BC), it is possible, though not provable, that a more recent event was responsible.

In either case, Nehemiah could not hide his grief as he served Artaxerxes. Artaxerxes then granted him permission to return to Jerusalem and see to the restoration of the city. The king appointed Nehemiah governor of the Persian province of Yehud (Judah), and he returned to Jerusalem in the king's twentieth year (445 BC).



A contract from the time of Artaxerxes I, king of Persia during the time of Nehemiah

Even though Nehemiah had the support of the Persian king, the inhabitants of the land and its leaders, notably Sanballat, did everything they could to undermine his efforts. These people were Samaritans from the north who were the descendants of intermarriage between the people of the north and those whom the Assyrians forced to immigrate there after their defeat of the northern kingdom of Israel in 722 BC. In spite of this opposition, Nehemiah successfully led the people in their efforts to rebuild the walls. In doing so, he showed great leadership skills and courage.

Although they are not often mentioned together, Nehemiah's work in Jerusalem overlapped with that of Ezra. Both men were passionately concerned about the integrity and faithfulness of the people. Both of them at different times confronted Jewish men who divorced their wives and married pagan women. Nehemiah forcefully compelled them to divorce these foreign wives out of fear that the wives would lead their Jewish husbands to worship false gods.

Nehemiah worked hard, and God blessed him and his efforts in many ways. Even so, the account of Nehemiah's work ends on a note of continuing problems as the people continued sinning (Neh. 13).

(2) A man who returned to Jerusalem from Babylon along with Zerubbabel in 539 BC (Ezra 2:2).

(3) The son of Azbuk, ruler of a half-district of Beth Zur, he helped rebuild the walls and gates of Jerusalem under the direction of Nehemiah son of Hakaliah (Neh. 3:16).

NEHEMIAH, BOOK OF Nehemiah son of Hakaliah is one of the most colorful figures in OT history. He is passionate and aggressive; he works hard to achieve the goals that God has set for him. He does not tolerate the sins of others and fights his way through the obstacles that people set in his path. In many ways, he is a study in contrasts with Ezra, his near contemporary. When Ezra discovers sin among his fellow Judeans, he pulls his hair out. When Nehemiah encounters the same problem, he pulls out the hair of the sinners.

The books of Ezra and Nehemiah were originally a single composition, not broken into two parts until the Middle Ages. Thus, many issues, such as date and authorship, are discussed in the introduction to the article on the book of Ezra. Here, the conclusions will be stated for ease of reference, but the evidence is presented in the article on Ezra. The additional details to follow are particularly relevant to the study of Nehemiah.

LITERARY CONSIDERATIONS

Author and date. Ezra-Nehemiah is an anonymous composition that reached its present form sometime between 400 and 300 BC.

Genre and structure. Ezra-Nehemiah is a theological history, a book that intends to communicate what actually happened in space and time but is selective, with the purpose of showing how God was working among his people in the postexilic period. As a theological history in the OT, however, Ezra (and Nehemiah) are unique in that they contain the memoirs of Ezra and Nehemiah as detailed by the first outline below. The structure of the book of Ezra makes sense only when paired with the book of Nehemiah, again since they were originally a unit. The structure may be explained on the basis of its sources, as follows:

I. A Historical Review (Ezra 1–6)

II. Ezra's Memoirs, Part 1 (Ezra 7–10)

III. Nehemiah's Memoirs, Part 1 (Neh. 1–7)

IV. Ezra’s Memoirs, Part 2 (Neh. 8–10)

V. Nehemiah’s Memoirs, Part 2 (Neh. 11–13)

Or it may be explained on the basis of its content:

I. Zerubbabel and Sheshbazzar Lead the People in Rebuilding the Temple (Ezra 1–6)

II. Ezra Leads the People by Reestablishing the Law (Ezra 7–10)

III. Nehemiah Leads the People in Rebuilding the Wall of Jerusalem (Neh. 1:1–7:3)

IV. Renewal, Celebration, Remaining Problems (Neh. 7:4–13:31)

THEOLOGICAL MESSAGE

The book begins with Nehemiah serving as the cupbearer of King Artaxerxes of Persia. Nehemiah hears a distressing report from his ancestral homeland in Judah and feels called to return to Jerusalem. Receiving permission from Artaxerxes to go back to Judah, he arrives intent on building the walls of the city, thus completing the physical reconstruction of the city. In spite of the efforts of neighboring groups and provinces to block their efforts, the Jews under Nehemiah’s leadership are remarkably successful at accomplishing their task. In this, the postexilic people of God surely must have recognized that the prophecies of salvation in Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel were coming to fulfillment.

The book of Nehemiah also records Ezra’s leadership in guiding the people to reaffirm their commitment to Yahweh and his law. They confess their sin. One might think of the physical wall that Nehemiah built not only as protection but also as a means of physical separation from the Gentiles. Also, then, Ezra’s reestablishment of the law of God would serve as a spiritual separation from the lawless Gentiles.

Even with all the success, the book of Nehemiah ends in chapter 13 on a note of disappointment. Nehemiah recounts the strenuous efforts that the faithful under his leadership have made to get right with God, but many people persisted in their sin.

CONTEMPORARY SIGNIFICANCE

Ezra narrates two returns: first under Zerubbabel and Sheshbazzar to rebuild the temple, and second under Ezra to reestablish the law. In the first part, the book of Nehemiah focuses on a third return under Nehemiah to build the walls and thus complete the physical reconstruction of the city. Nehemiah’s leadership provides an alternative model of leadership to that of Ezra. Nehemiah is more assertive and demanding. It is not that one mode of leadership is right or wrong; the contemporary Christian leader looking to Ezra and Nehemiah for a model of leadership should read the situation to know what will best accomplish God’s purposes. Also, the purpose of building the walls was a matter of military defense, but it was also a matter of separation. True, Christ breaks down the wall of separation between Jews and Gentiles (Eph. 2:14–18), but the NT also recognizes that Christians (whether from a Jewish or a Gentile background) must lead holy and distinct lives.

Surprisingly, the book of Nehemiah does not end with a sense of completion, a feeling of mission accomplished. The last chapter finds Nehemiah in prayer for the continuing sin of the people, reminding contemporary readers that repentance is not a onetime act, but a lifestyle.

NEHILOTH The KJV transliteration of a word of uncertain meaning that occurs in the superscription of Ps. 5. Most modern versions render the word as “flutes” or “pipes” (NIV).

NEHUM A leader who returned with Zerubbabel from the Babylonian exile (Neh. 7:7). He may be the same person as the Rehum of Ezra 2:2.

NEHUSHTA The mother of King Jehoiachin (2 Kings 24:8). She was the daughter of Elnathan and from Jerusalem. She was taken to Babylonia with her son when Nebuchadnezzar conquered Jerusalem in 597 BC (2 Kings 24:15; Jer. 29:2). She is likely mentioned in Jer. 13:18.

NEHUSHTAN In 2 Kings 18:4 the name given to the bronze snake that Moses made during the wilderness journey. In one of many incidents in which the Israelites grumbled against Moses, God sent poisonous snakes against the people (Num. 21:4–9). When they confessed their sin and cried out to Moses for relief, God directed him to make the bronze snake and erect it on a pole. Anyone who looked at it would live. Apparently, this object was kept and preserved over the centuries, for it still existed in King Hezekiah’s time. Being a sacred relic, it had become an object of idolatry. The king destroyed it as part of his spiritual reforms.

NEIEL A town on the eastern border of the land allotted to Asher (Josh. 19:27). Most identify Neiel with Khirbet Yanin, located approximately nine miles west of Akko, near where the Plain of Akko gives way to the hills of Galilee.

NEIGH A cry characteristic of a horse (see Jer. 8:16). It is used in a figurative sense in Jer. 5:8 (cf. 13:27) to depict Judah’s lust.

NEIGHBOR In the OT, “neighbor” is derived from the verb “to associate with.” This is an important connection because relationships of various kinds are central to the issue of neighbor. Depending on the context, a neighbor can include a friend (2 Sam. 13:3), a rival (1 Sam. 28:17), a lover (Jer. 3:1), or a spouse (Jer. 3:20). However, “neighbor” essentially defines someone who lives and works nearby, those with shared ethical responsibilities, rather than a family member (Prov. 3:29). Eventually, “neighbor” acquired the more technical meaning of “covenant member” or “fellow Israelite” (= “brother” [Jer. 31:34]). The legal literature prohibits bearing false witness against a neighbor (Deut. 5:20) as well as coveting a neighbor’s house, animal, slave, or wife (Deut. 5:21). Fraud, stealing, or withholding from a neighbor are prohibited (Lev. 19:13; Ps. 15:3). These are the negative stipulations. The theological ethics that arise from Lev. 19 are climactic—ethically, politically, socially, and economically. Positively, Israelites are to judge their neighbors justly (Lev. 19:15), loving their neighbors as themselves (19:18). Even the resident alien is to be protected by these core moral virtues (Lev. 19:33–34; cf. Exod. 12:43–49).

When the NT addresses the topic, not surprisingly it is Lev. 19:18 that is routinely cited. Asked about the greatest commandment, Jesus quotes Lev. 19:18 as the horizontal counterpart to loving the Lord (Matt. 19:16–30). A lawyer’s question put to Jesus, “Who is my neighbor?” elicits the parable of the good Samaritan (Luke 10:29). Jesus teaches that extending mercy is more important than conveniently defining “neighbor.” A neighbor was anyone someone met in need—Jew, Gentile, or Samaritan (Luke 10:25–37). Jewish law came to define “neighbor” in purely legal terms within Judaism. Jesus addressed the limits of one’s responsibility, challenging the particularism of Judaism, denouncing prejudiced love, and including non-Jews. Beyond "in" or "out" groups, believers are now to pray for their enemies (Matt. 5:43–48). Mission work continues to expand social, political, and economic boundaries. The OT reality of relationships is still in force, but "neighbor" in the NT now prioritizes fellow believers (Rom. 13:8–10; 15:2; Gal. 6:10; Eph. 4:25; James 2:8).

NEKEB In Josh. 19:33 the KJV takes "Nekeb" as a place name in the description of the tribal allotment given to Naphtali: "from Allon to Zaanannim, and Adami, Nekeb, and Jabneel." Most modern versions treat "Adami" and "Nekeb" as two parts of one name: "Adami Nekeb" (NIV) or "Adami-nekeb" (NRSV, NLT). Adami Nekeb is identified as a city or town between the Sea of Galilee and Mount Tabor. Its precise location is uncertain.

NEKODA **(1)** One of the ancestors of the temple servants (Nethinim) who returned to Jerusalem after the Babylonian captivity under the leadership of Zerubbabel (Ezra 2:48; Neh. 7:50). The fact that many of the names in the list are foreign has led to the belief that they were originally prisoners of war who were pressed into service to perform menial tasks as they assisted the Levites. **(2)** The patronymic ancestor of a family that could not establish its Israelite background after the exile (Neh. 7:62).

NEMUEL **(1)** The first of the three sons of Eliab, a Reubenite. His brothers, Dathan and Abiram, rebelled against Moses and Aaron and died in the Korah rebellion (Num. 26:9). **(2)** A son of Simeon and the eponymous ancestor of the Nemuelites (Num. 26:12; 1 Chron. 4:24). In Gen. 46:10; Exod. 6:15 his name is "Jemuel."

NEMUELITES *See* Nemuel.

NEPHEG **(1)** A Levite, one of the three sons of Izhar, who was a brother of Amram, Moses' father (Exod. 6:21). **(2)** A son of David born to an unnamed wife during the time he reigned from Jerusalem (2 Sam. 5:15; 1 Chron. 3:7; 14:6).

NEPHESH *See* Naphish.

NEPHEW The son of one's brother or sister. Many modern versions use the term of Lot as Abraham's nephew (Gen. 12:5; 14:12) and in Ezra 8:19 of the nephews of Hashabiah, a descendant of the Levite Merari, returnees to Jerusalem. The KJV uses "nephew" in an archaic sense of a descendant, usually referring to grandson (Judg. 12:14; Job 18:19; Isa. 14:22; 1 Tim. 5:4).

NEPHILIM The Hebrew word *nepilim* occurs only in Gen. 6:4; Num. 13:33. Some translations render the word as "giants." Literally, it means "fallen ones." Some scholars have considered the Nephilim to be offspring from the unions between the "sons of God" and the "daughters of humans," but it is also possible that the writer was distinguishing between the Nephilim and the children of those unions who became the "heroes of old" and "men of renown" (Gen. 6:4). Descendants of the Nephilim were purported to have also lived after the flood (Deut. 2:10–11, 20–23; Josh. 14:15; 15:13–14; 2 Sam. 21:16–22; 1 Chron. 20:6–8). Since the entire human race, except for Noah and his family, was destroyed in the deluge, these descendants who lived in Canaan at the time of the exodus most likely descended through Ham, one of Noah's sons (Gen. 10:8–20).

NEPHISH *See* Naphish.

NEPHISHESIM, NEPHISIM *See* Nephusim.

NEPHTHALIM A variant spelling of “Naphtali” used in the KJV (Matt. 4:13, 15; Rev. 7:6). “Nephthalim” transliterates the Greek spelling of the Hebrew name.

NEPHTOAH A spring of water that formed part of the northern geographical boundary of the tribe of Judah (Josh. 15:9) and part of the southern geographical boundary of the tribe of Benjamin (18:15). The spring is a few miles northwest of Jerusalem.

NEPHUSHESIM *See* Nephusim.

NEPHUSIM A person listed among the returnees from the Babylonian captivity with Zerubbabel (Ezra 2:50; Neh. 7:52). In some English translations the name is spelled differently in Ezra and in Nehemiah (e.g., KJV, ESV, NRSV, NASB).

NEPHUSSIM *See* Nephusim.

NER **(1)** The father of Abner, Saul’s general and cousin (1 Sam. 14:50–51; 2 Sam. 2:8; 1 Chron. 26:28). **(2)** Saul’s grandfather (1 Chron. 8:33; 9:39).

NEREUS An individual greeted by the apostle Paul in Rom. 16:15. “Nereus and his sister” are named immediately after Philologus and Julia, and so they may have been son and daughter to this couple. All three names were common for slaves in Rome, especially for slaves in service to the emperor, so the family may have been either slaves or freedmen and freedwomen.

NERGAL A Sumerian deity of Kuthah, a city approximately twenty miles northeast of Babylon. A god of the underworld, Nergal is associated with famine, sudden death, and fire. Akkadian literature identifies Nergal with Erra and designates Ereshkigal, the sister of Inanna/Ishtar, as a consort. In the OT, the name of the deity appears as part of the name of a Babylonian official, Nergal-Sharezer, in Jer. 39:3, 13. Nergal is considered an idol imported into the northern kingdom through the people of Kuth (2 Kings 17:30).

NERGAL-SHAREZER A Hebrew rendering of the name of the Babylonian official Nergal-shar-usur (“may Nergal protect the king”), who sat in the Jerusalem gate (Jer. 39:3, 13), married the daughter of Nebuchadnezzar, and later assassinated his brother-in-law, assuming the Babylonian throne in the years 559–556 BC.

NERI An otherwise unknown ancestor of Jesus mentioned only in Luke 3:27 as the son of Melki and the father of Shealtiel.

NERIAH The father of two men who assisted the prophet Jeremiah. Seraiah was a staff officer of the king who accompanied King Zedekiah of Judah to Babylon to deliver an oracle from Jeremiah (Jer. 51:59–64). Baruch was Jeremiah’s scribe and personal assistant (Jer. 32:12, 16; 36:4, 8, 14, 32; 43:3, 6).

NERO The Roman emperor in the years AD 54–68, he is widely considered to be among the most ruthless emperors. Upon the death of the emperor Claudius in AD 54, Nero was crowned as ruler at the age of seventeen. In AD 59 he ordered that his mother be killed, a move that came as a result of her constant interference in political affairs. She would be one of many family members and close associates to be murdered by Nero.

NERO CLAVD CAESAR AVG GER P M TR P IMP P P

A Roman coin depicting the emperor Nero

A massive fire destroyed a significant portion of Rome in AD 64, and many citizens believed that the fire was ordered set by the emperor. Nero himself, however, blamed the fire on the Christians, and he pursued an agenda of persecution against them, executing many of them in extremely gruesome ways. Some early Christian tradition holds that the apostles Peter and Paul died in this wave of violence.

Due in large part to Nero's growing despotism, his own armies eventually revolted against him, and he committed suicide in AD 68. The rumor arose soon after Nero's death that he did not die but rather had fled to the Parthians, one of Rome's archenemies. Another rumor spread that in fact he had died but had been resurrected; this myth is known as *Nero redivivus*.

Although Nero does not appear explicitly in the NT, he looms large in its background. He was reigning when Paul, while on trial before the Roman governor Festus, made the request that his case be brought before the emperor (Acts 25). Whether Paul ever did have his appeal heard by Nero is unknown, as the ending of Acts leaves this question open (see Acts 28). The Letter of 1 Peter may have been written during or shortly after Nero's persecution of Christians in Rome, with the reference to the letter being written from "Babylon" (1 Pet. 5:13) likely functioning as a code for Rome. The memory of the Neronian persecution lies behind the book of Revelation, which contains several pieces of imagery and concepts alluding to Nero, the most notable of which appear in chapters 13 and 17. In Rev. 13 the *Nero redivivus* myth is echoed in the miraculous return to life of one of the heads of the beast, who then is given power to “make war” against Christians. Revelation 17 indicates that the beast symbolizes the Roman Empire, with its heads representing the emperors who demanded worship.

NEST The image of a bird’s nest implies God-given security (Deut. 32:11; Ps. 104:17; Ezek. 31:6), yet no “nest” made by human hands protects from God’s judgment (Jer. 49:16; Obad. 4; Hab. 2:9). Exiles exchange “nesting” places with the wilderness birds (Isa. 34:11; Jer. 48:28), but Jesus had no “nest” at all (Matt. 8:20).

NET Nets, probably manufactured from thread fiber made from the bark of trees and knotted together, are used in the OT mostly for warfare or hunting/trapping people (literally and figuratively) (Job 18:8; 19:6; Ps. 10:9; Prov. 29:5; Lam. 1:13; Ezek. 12:13; 17:20; 19:8; 32:3; Hos. 5:1; 7:12; Mic. 7:2) and for trapping wildlife and birds (Prov. 1:17; Isa. 51:20; Ezek. 13:20). The methods of entrapping prey, including humans, involved digging and covering a pit with a net into which prey would fall and be trapped (Pss. 9:15; 35:7; 57:6; 140:5; 141:10); thus, in Ps. 9:15, “The nations have fallen into the pit they have dug; their feet are caught in the net they have hidden.”

There is also reference to use of nets for fishing in the OT, though these are more limited (Eccles. 9:12; Isa. 19:8; Ezek. 47:10; Hab. 1:15–17). In Hab. 1:15–17 nets (*kherem*) and dragnets (*mikmeret*) become symbolic objects of idolatry as they supply the needs of the users who in turn offer sacrifices to them in gratitude.

In the NT, nets are mentioned only in connection with fishing (Matt. 4:18–21; 13:47; Mark 1:16–19; Luke 5:2, 4–9; John 21:6, 8, 11).

NETAIM A location, along with Gederah, where descendants of Judah’s son Shelah worked as pottery makers (1 Chron. 4:23). The KJV does not take it as a place name but rather translates the Hebrew as “among plants.”

NETHANEL There are at least seven and perhaps as many as ten different people with the name “Nethanel.” **(1)** The son of Zuar and head of the tribe of Issachar during the wandering in the wilderness, he was chosen to help Moses with the Israelite census (Num. 1:8; 2:5; 7:18, 23; 10:15). **(2)** King David’s older brother, the fourth son of Jesse (1 Chron. 2:14). **(3)** A Levite trumpeter who was part of the group that brought the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem (1 Chron. 15:24). **(4)** The father of the scribe Shemaiah, a Levite who recorded the names of the Levites (1 Chron. 24:6). He may be the same person as the Nethanel of 1 Chron. 15:24. **(5)** A Levite gatekeeper, a descendant of Asaph, the son of Obed-Edom (1 Chron. 26:4). He may be the same person as the Nethanel of 1 Chron. 15:24. **(6)** An official sent by King Jehoshaphat to teach people in Judah the Book of the Law (2 Chron. 7:17). **(7)** A Levite during Josiah’s reign who celebrated Passover with large offerings (2 Chron. 35:9). **(8)** A priest listed among those who had married a foreign wife (Ezra 10:22). **(9)** The head of a priestly family during Nehemiah’s governorship (Neh. 12:21). **(10)** A musician who played at the dedication of Jerusalem’s wall (Neh. 12:36). He may be the same person as the Nethanel of Neh. 12:21.

NETHANIAH **(1)** A musician from among the “sons of Asaph,” who performed on harps, lyres, and cymbals during the time of David (1 Chron. 25:2, 12). **(2)** A Levite sent by King Jehoshaphat during the third year of his reign, together with eight other Levites, five royal officials, and two priests, to teach the Book of the Law to the towns of Judah (2 Chron. 17:8). **(3)** The father of Jehudi (Jer. 36:14), who was sent by the princes of Judah as their liaison to the prophet Jeremiah. **(4)** The father of Ishmael, a military official who assassinated Gedaliah, the governor of Judea appointed by the Babylonians (2 Kings 25:23–25; Jer. 40:8, 14–16; 41:1).

NETHINIM One of five classes in Israel assigned to the task of temple service. They were designated as assistants to the Levites (Ezra 8:20). The name "Nethinim" (NIV: "temple servants"; KJV: "Nethinims") comes from a Hebrew word meaning "to give," likely signifying that they were given to the service of the temple.

All eighteen references to the Nethinim are postexilic, though Scripture traces their roots to the time of David (Ezra 8:20). Other attempts to associate their origins with Moses, Joshua, and the Babylonian exile lack textual evidence. In addition, their close association with the sons of Solomon's servants (Ezra 2:58; Neh. 7:60; 11:3), and the specific parenthetical clarification of their role as "workers at this house of God" (Ezra 7:24), coupled with their subsequent disappearance from the text, suggests that they were designated for a limited, temple-related purpose.

They inhabited Judah's houses and cities after the Babylonian exile (1 Chron. 9:2), appeared in the census list in Ezra 2, were requested by Ezra (Ezra 8:17–20), and assisted in the rebuilding of the wall (Neh. 3:26–31). They also responded to the reforms of Nehemiah (Neh. 7:46–56). They were assigned living arrangements near the temple while in active service (Neh. 3:26) and were exempt from taxes (Ezra 7:24).

The appearance of foreign names among their descendants suggests the possibility of foreign derivation. Moreover, Nehemiah specifically points out that they were not among those chosen to repopulate Jerusalem after the exile, but rather lived in the towns of Judah and had overseers appointed over them (Neh. 11:3, 21).

NETOPHAH A town and the surrounding region in the hill country of Judah. Netophah is associated with Bethlehem and probably was located nearby (1 Chron. 2:54; Neh. 7:26). Netophah usually is identified with modern Khirbet Bedd Faluh (three and a half miles southeast of Bethlehem), where a nearby spring, 'Ain en-Natuf, likely preserves the name. Two of King David's mighty warriors were from Netophah (2 Sam. 23:28–29). Several of those who returned from the exile were from Netophah (Ezra 2:22), and some of the Levites settled there (1 Chron. 9:16; Neh. 12:28).

NETOPHATHITES Descended from Caleb (1 Chron. 2:54), the Netophathites were residents of Netophah (Neh. 12:28; cf. 2 Sam. 23:28–29).

NETTLE A wild plant with serrated-edged leaves covered with fine hairs or spines that sting when touched. This and similar terms ("weed," "thorn," "thistle") are used in Scripture especially with reference to the desolation and neglect of formerly inhabited places following their judgment and destruction. Precisely identifying the meaning of Hebrew botanical terms in Scripture is difficult, and various Hebrew words are translated as "nettle" in different English versions. The NIV uses "nettle" only once, translating the Hebrew word *qimmos*, in association with the thorns and brambles that will overrun desolate Edom (Isa. 34:13). Another Hebrew word, *kharul*, is translated as "nettle" in several versions (NRSV, NASB, NET, NAB), though it is rendered as "undergrowth," "weed," or "thistle" in others (Job 30:7; Prov. 24:31; Zeph. 2:9 NIV, NLT, HCSB).

NEW "New" basically carries three senses in the Bible: (1) the beginning of a cycle of time such as the new moon, the beginning of the month; (2) fresh, pristine, or unused; (3) formerly unknown or recently coming into existence. Often, the latter two senses overlap and become difficult to distinguish. In certain cases the second sense is emphasized, and the actual age is not of primary concern: new grain (Lev. 23:16), new wine (Josh. 9:13), new ropes (Judg. 15:13), new cart (1 Sam. 6:7), new cloak (1 Kings 11:29), new bowl (2 Kings 2:20), and new tomb (Matt. 27:60). The third sense often is associated with the time of final restoration: God will do a new thing (Isa. 43:19), make a new covenant (Jer. 31:31), and create a new heavens and a new earth (Isa. 65:17).

The Bible places a high priority on the new works that God accomplishes, for there is little hope that people are capable of doing anything new (cf. Eccles. 1:9–10). These new works are contrasted with the old. There is continuity between them as the former establishes a foundation for the latter, but there is also discontinuity as the latter surpasses the former. Therefore, God will make a new (better) covenant (Jer. 31:31; Heb. 8:13), a new (better) heart (Ezek. 36:26), a new (better) creation (2 Cor. 5:17), and a new (better) heavens and earth (Isa. 65:17; Rev. 21:1).

NEW AGE *See* Age to Come.

NEW BIRTH One of the many pictures of salvation that the Bible uses is new birth. Peter praises God because "he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead" (1 Pet. 1:3). In his conversation with Nicodemus, Jesus states, "No one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again" (John 3:3). He goes on to explain further that this act of new birth is the work of the Spirit (John 3:5–8). What Jesus speaks of, God had promised in the OT (Ezek. 36:25–27). Paul uses similar language when he asserts that God "made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions" (Eph. 2:5). Because of our sinful rebellion against God, humanity is spiritually dead. God the Father makes alive those who are spiritually dead by the work of the Spirit through the resurrection of Jesus. This new birth is the starting point for the believer's moral transformation. *See also* Regeneration.

NEW COVENANT *See* Covenant.

NEW JERUSALEM Both Ezekiel and Revelation envision a new Jerusalem and use similar imagery to describe it and to emphasize God's presence in the city (Ezek. 48:30–35; Rev. 21:1–22:5). According to Revelation, the throne of God, the Lamb, and the river of life are present in the new Jerusalem, which comes down from heaven, is made of gold and glass, is adorned with jewels, and is in the shape of a cube. Only those with names in the Lamb's book of life will dwell in the city (Rev. 21:27). The city represents a new, spiritual order (Gal. 4:25–26; Heb. 12:22). *See also* Eschatology; Jerusalem.

NEW QUARTER The northern section of Jerusalem, also referred to as the Second District (HCSB) or Second Quarter (ESV, NRSV, NASB) (2 Kings 22:14; 2 Chron. 34:22; cf. Zeph. 1:10).

NEW TESTAMENT The collection of twenty-seven books and letters that along with the OT comprises the Christian Bible. The NT contains accounts of the life and ministry of Jesus Christ, the story of the expansion of the early church, and letters to Christian individuals and churches. The name "New Testament" is derived from the "new covenant" between God and humankind instituted by

Jesus Christ (Luke 22:20) through his atoning crucifixion and confirmed through his subsequent resurrection. In AD 397 the NT books were formally adopted by the third Council of Carthage. Prior to its official approval, the canonical list was suggested by Athanasius in his thirty-ninth Paschal letter, dated AD 367, though these same books had been in circulation in the early church for many years. *See also* Bible Formation and Canon.

NEW TESTAMENT USE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT The appropriation and adaptation of an OT text in the NT, often labeled "biblical intertextuality," "innerbiblical exegesis," or "biblical allusion," reflects the exegetical process whereby biblical writers deliberately appeal to the OT in order to elucidate, expand, or lend authority to NT revelation. This hermeneutical process finds its origins in the reuse of earlier OT texts by later OT writers. Later, the process was refined by the practices of scribal exegetes and rabbinical writers from the postexilic period well into the first century AD. This approach to interpretation recognized the dynamic character of Scripture and sought to contemporize its messages to address the issues facing changing audiences.

The biblical reader should keep in mind that as far as the NT writers were concerned, the OT texts comprised the authoritative corpus of material identified as the "Scriptures." Consequently, the NT authors appeal to the authority of these accepted texts as the basis upon which to build or expand their theological argument, to reinforce their credentials as God's spokesmen, and to appropriate and adapt OT revelation to address contemporary circumstances. The NT citation of an OT text assumes the familiarity of the audience with that earlier text, since the recollection of a specific Scripture by the NT writer in the formulation of his later message necessarily evokes in the minds of the audience a literary and logical connection. By drawing on the OT corpus, the NT author reinforces the continuity of God's message and forges the identification of the NT audience with the experiences and promises made to their Israelite ancestors.

The most frequently cited OT books in the NT are Deuteronomy, Psalms, and Isaiah, underscoring the significance and importance of these early Israelite texts to the reformulation, expansion, and elucidation of NT revelation. In addition, the numerous NT references to these books indicate that they must have played a key role in the memories of the NT audience, forming the foundation for developing faith and doctrine.

IDENTIFYING QUOTATIONS AND ALLUSIONS

One critical and often difficult task facing the reader centers on locating potential intertextual references in the NT, since not all scriptural citations and allusions are obvious, and the practice does not conform easily to an exacting scientific process. Familiarity with the OT increases the ability to recognize the borrowing of OT themes and passages by the NT. In addition, many NT writers understandably quoted from the LXX, the Greek translation of the OT, rather than from a Hebrew text tradition, since they themselves were writing in Greek. Consequently, some variations in wording based on the type of text tradition employed by the NT writer add complexity to the enterprise. In addition, NT writers often modeled the exegetical methods of their Jewish counterparts, which, though typical of their culture and environment, seem unorthodox to some scholars.

Richard Hays, in his 1989 book *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul*, presents seven criteria against which to evaluate the presence of biblical allusions: (1) availability (did the original author and readers have access to the source?); (2) volume (how extensive is the repetition of words from a previous text?); (3) recurrence (how often does the writer explicitly refer to the same passage?); (4) thematic coherence (does the quotation support the surrounding context?); (5) historical plausibility (could the writer have intended the alleged meaning?); (6) history of interpretation; and (7) satisfaction (does the citation illuminate the meaning of the surrounding text?). These principles provide a sufficient, if minimalistic, methodology for determining authentic instances of biblical intertextuality.

QUOTATIONS, ALLUSIONS, AND TYPOLOGY

The NT use of the OT generally falls into three broad categories: direct quotations (or citations), allusions, and typology.

Direct quotations. Quotations normally are identified by an introductory formula, such as “it is written” or “you have heard it said,” which serves to mark the upcoming quotation. In many instances the NT writer identifies the OT source, either by genre (e.g., “as it was spoken by the prophets”) or by the name of the author (“this was to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah”). Occasionally, the NT writer relates his scriptural quotation or teaching to an individual, as in the case of the treatise on divorce in Matt. 19, where the Gospel writer repeatedly mentions Moses. In some instances the NT author combines parts of two different citations derived from two separate sources, attributing the entire quotation to one author, sometimes the more obscure of the two. For example, in Matt. 27:9, a discussion of the betrayal of Judas and the thirty pieces of silver, Matthew conflates Zech. 11:12–13 and Jer. 19:1–13 or (18:2–12 or 32:6–9) but assigns the entire citation to Jeremiah. The absence of a formal marker does not negate the possibility of textual borrowing; however, the literary connection between a NT passage and an OT predecessor would have to be established on the basis of literary affinities, rare terminology or expressions, thematic similarities, and associative concepts connecting the OT and the NT contexts.

Allusions and echoes. In contrast, biblical allusion employs no introductory or formulaic introduction identifying or marking the OT reference. While all direct quotations may be classified as biblical allusions, not all biblical allusions include direct citation formulas. Both direct citation and biblical allusion denote the deliberate borrowing and recontextualizing, transformation, or reinterpretation of a specific text, which has been incorporated into the later text in order to accommodate the writer’s message to a contemporary audience. The contextual environment of the antecedent, or OT text, influences and informs the interpretation of the NT text. The NT author intentionally evokes in the minds of his knowledgeable audience a specific textual referent along with its contextual associations, reformulating them in an innovative manner.

In a biblical echo, words or images are employed by a biblical writer in order to evoke conscious memories associated with multiple texts or with general themes. For example, the formulaic expression “the living God, who made the heavens and the earth and the sea and everything in them” (Acts 14:15) recalls multiple OT texts (e.g., Ps. 96:5; Isa. 42:5; Jon. 1:9) connected to incomparability statements reinforcing the sovereignty of God. The echo in Acts 17:26 generally recalls the creation account in Genesis, without invoking a specific verse or phrase. Although a NT writer may draw on biblical echoes without necessarily invoking a specific context of an individual passage, echoes may consist of interconnected layers of meaning that arise from differing historical settings and circumstances, each of which contributes additional meaning to the echo.

Typology and analogy. The NT writers often sought to employ OT texts by means of typology, reinforcing links between an OT event or concept and the subsequent development and transformation of that “type” in the NT. A “type” is a divinely appointed person, place, thing, or institution that has significance in its original literary and historical context but also points toward someone or something in later biblical revelation. The “antitype” denotes that which is prefigured by the original type. By means of typology, and to some degree, analogy, the NT writers demonstrate later revelation as superseding or fulfilling OT prophecies, underscoring the continuity of the NT with the OT and emphasizing its role as theologically transformative and expansive. Some predominant examples include the Passover lamb as a type of Christ (1 Pet. 1:19; cf. Rev. 5:11–14), the Aaronic priesthood compared and contrasted as a precursor of Christ's priestly ministry (Heb. 5; 7–9), and the earthly tabernacle as a pattern for the heavenly tabernacle (Heb. 9).

The NT writers were also fond of analogy, delineating points of comparison between OT characters and accounts with NT teachings. For instance, Rom. 4 sets forth a lengthy discourse comparing Abraham's justification by faith and the new relationship experienced by believers who are justified by faith through Christ. Analogy and typology are not mutually exclusive, as in the case of Rom. 4. Closely related to these hermeneutical methods is the infrequent use of allegory by the NT writers, such as the allegory of Sarah and Hagar in Gal. 4:21–31. The distinction lies in the nature of allegorical approach, which focuses on symbolism, or a " 'this' really means 'that' " interpretational framework.

THE ROLES OF CONTEXT AND AUTHORIAL INTENT

Scholars continue to debate the extent to which the OT context influences and affects the NT message, particularly in the case of citations or allusions. Some suggest that biblical quotations are purely incidental and should be divorced from their original contextual moorings and evaluated independent of those contexts, while others understand the original context of an OT passage to contribute information that leads to correct NT interpretation. The question revolves around determining the degree of authorial intent. In other words, to what extent can today's reader, historically removed by time and culture, recover the original intention behind the biblical writer's calculated and deliberate use of an OT text as an interpretational tool? Current scholarship continues to debate the role of authorial intent in the innerbiblical exegetical process.

NEZIAH One of the ancestors of the temple servants (Nethinim) who returned to Jerusalem after the Babylonian captivity under the leadership of Zerubbabel in 539 BC or soon after (Ezra 2:54; Neh. 7:56). The fact that many of the names in the list are foreign has led to the belief that they were originally prisoners of war who were pressed into service to perform menial tasks as they assisted the Levites.

NEZIB A town, whose name means "garrison" or "post," located in the Shephelah (lowlands) of Judah, mentioned only in Josh. 15:43 in a list of towns in Judah's tribal allotment. It usually is identified with modern Khirbet Beit Nesib, approximately nine miles east of Lachish and seven miles northwest of Hebron.

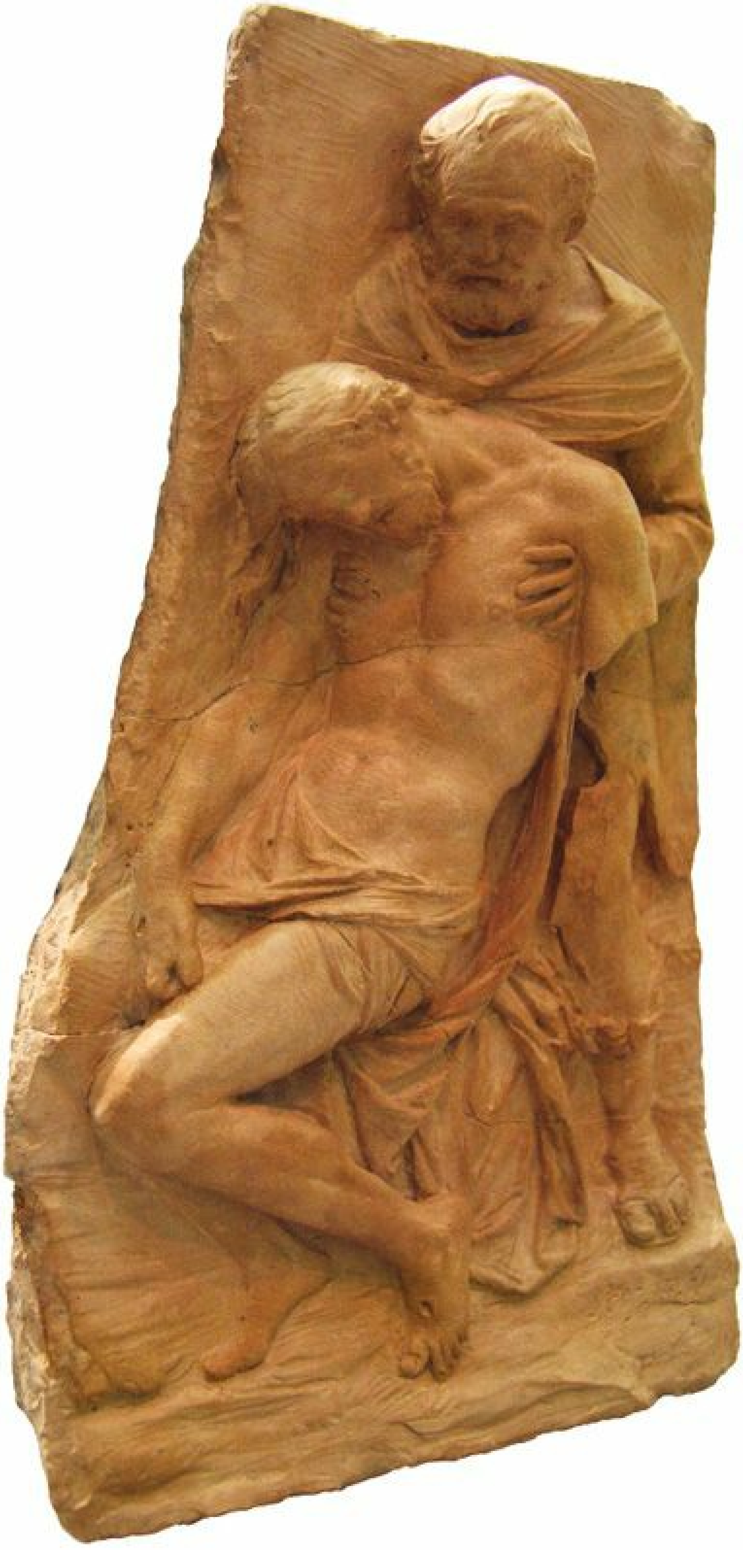
NIBHAZ The Hebrew name for the Elamite deity Ibnahaz. The Avvite deportees created an image of Nibhaz, along with another Elamite deity, Tartak, to worship in Samaria (2 Kings 17:31).

NIBSHAN One of six towns in the Judean wilderness allotted to the tribe of Judah (Josh. 15:62). Nibshan may be identified with Khirbet al-Maqari, located approximately six miles southwest of Qumran.

NICANOR One of the seven chosen to help distribute food to widows in the Jerusalem church

(Acts 6:1–6). In extrabiblical literature “Nicanor” was also the name of a military leader fighting against Judas Maccabeus (2 Macc. 8) and of a governor of Cyprus (2 Macc. 12:2).

NICODEMUS Nicodemus is mentioned by name five times in Scripture, only in the Gospel of John. He was a Pharisee and a member of the ruling council of the Jews (the Sanhedrin), and most of what we know about him comes from John 3. He came for discussion with Jesus at night, presumably to avoid being detected while having an amicable interaction with Jesus. Unlike his colleagues, Nicodemus recognized the authority of God in Jesus because of the miracles. Yet Nicodemus failed to understand the true nature of spiritual things (3:4–9) that Jesus subsequently explained to him (3:11–21). Jesus noted that since Nicodemus was a teacher in Israel, he should have understood such things (3:10).



Italian depiction of Nicodemus holding the body of Christ, by Stefano Maderno (seventeenth century AD)

Later, Nicodemus showed a sympathetic disposition toward Jesus when the rulers of the Pharisees aligned themselves against Jesus. Nicodemus noted that the law forbade condemnation before examination, and the other leaders reproached him for his defense of Jesus (John 7:50–52).

Then, after Jesus' crucifixion, Nicodemus helped Joseph of Arimathea with the preparation and entombment of the body of Jesus (John 19:38–42). The testimony of Nicodemus prior to this time had been silent or less overt in front of the council, and this more overt act at the burial may testify to his conversion to discipleship of Jesus.

NICOLAITANS The Nicolaitans are mentioned exclusively in Rev. 2:6, 15. In the first text, Christ commends the Ephesian church for hating the practices of the Nicolaitans as he does. In the second text, Christ calls the church in Pergamum to repent for tolerating some among them who hold to Nicolaitan teaching. There, he compares the Nicolaitans to the Balaam/Balak group, which urged people toward the unholy combination of eating meat sacrificed to idols and sexual immorality. We know little else about this group. Some early church fathers linked it to the perversion of teachings by Nicolas (Acts 6:5), but this is unproven.

NICOLAS One of seven Hellenistic Jewish Christians chosen to distribute food to the poor Hellenistic widows of the Jerusalem church in order to free up the twelve apostles to continue their ministry of teaching the word of God (Acts 6:1–6; ESV, NRSV: “Nicolaus”). Nicolas was a proselyte (convert) to Judaism from Antioch. Like the other six, Nicolas was chosen because he was “full of faith and of the Holy Spirit.” Some church traditions identify Nicolas with the heretical sect of the Nicolaitans, referred to in Rev. 2:6, 15 (Irenaeus, *Haer.* 1.26.3; Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 3.29.1–3). This connection is dubious, however, and may have arisen from the similarity of the names.

NICOLAUS *See* Nicolas.

NICOPOLIS The name of at least nine cities in the entire Mediterranean region and beyond, one of which is Emmaus, near Jerusalem and Bethphage in Judea. There is one mention of a city named “Nicopolis” in Scripture, probably a reference to the Nicopolis on the western coast of Greece. Paul noted to Titus that he intended to winter in Nicopolis, and he asked Titus to visit him there (Titus 3:12).

NIGER The second name of Simeon, a church leader at Antioch (Acts 13:1). Literally translated from Latin as “black,” it probably means that Simeon was of North African descent and designated “Niger” for his dark skin. People of dark skin were a common sight particularly in the North African portions of the Roman Empire. His inclusion as one of the “prophets and teachers” of the Antiochian church indicates that the church had a multinational and multiethnic identity. Perhaps the conscious awareness of the nations coming together in worship of Christ motivated their encouragement of Paul’s continued missionary activities. Some scholars have suggested that this individual and the Simon of Cyrene mentioned in Mark 15:21 are the same person.

NIGHT God created and named the darkness “night” (Gen. 1:5). OT writers associated night with aberrant behavior, fear, suffering, sorrow, and terror (Pss. 6:6; 30:5; 42:3; 77:2; 91:5), but they also knew that God worked throughout the night to deliver his people (Exod. 12:29–32; Deut. 16:1). Night is also associated with secrecy and danger, as seen in the Israelite exodus (Exod. 12:31) and the holy family’s flight to Egypt (Matt. 2:14). In OT times night was divided into three watches, but four in the NT Roman world. Night often was chosen to highlight divine activity (Matt. 2:12, 22; Acts 5:19; 12:6–7), but it also served to depict Judas’s betrayal of Jesus as a deed of spiritual darkness (John 13:30). Figuratively, night is used to refer to this present age (Rom. 13:12), and people of the world “belong to the night” (1 Thess. 5:5). There will be “no night” in the new heaven and earth (Rev.

21:25; 22:5).

NIGHT CREATURE, NIGHT MONSTER In Isa. 34:14 the meaning of the Hebrew word *lilit* (NASB: “night monster”; NRSV: “Lilith”; ESV: “night bird”; KJV: “screech owl”) is uncertain. The LXX translates the Hebrew word with *onokentauros*, a sort of centaur, while the Vulgate has *lamia* (“witch”). It appears to be related to the Hebrew word for “night” but likely is drawn from ancient Near Eastern mythology, in which a *lilith* was a type of female demon, sometimes connected with sexual activity (hence Lilith’s portrayal in the Babylonian Talmud: *Nid*. 24b; *B. Bat*. 73a; *Shabb*. 151b; ‘*Eruv*. 100b). In later Jewish folklore, Lilith is depicted as Adam’s first wife, but outside of this text from Isaiah the name appears nowhere in the Bible.

NIGHT WATCH For timekeeping, ancients divided the night into three (as in the OT) or four (as in the NT) “watches.” The NT mentions the second, third (Luke 12:38), and fourth (Matt. 14:25; Mark 6:48). The OT mentions watches (Pss. 63:6; 90:4; 119:148; Lam. 2:19), often in military contexts (Exod. 14:24; Judg. 7:19; 1 Sam. 11:11). The OT watches are not numbered but rather are referred to with terms such as “middle” or “last.” This system did not preclude the counting of hours during the night (Acts 23:23).

NILE The Nile River is the lifeblood of Egypt and was pivotal for the life and culture of the ancient Egyptians. Annual flooding began during late June or August, inundating the land with water, bringing in nutrient-rich silts, and washing away salts from the soil. The annual flooding made the Nile Valley a fertile region, especially suited for growing cereal grains. The Nile floods also replenished the marshes, an important habitat for fish and birds and another important resource to the ancient Egyptians. Because of the meager annual rainfall in the region, agriculture was virtually impossible outside the Nile floodplains. Therefore, Egyptian settlement patterns tended to cling close to the river. However, fluctuations in the Nile’s flood levels could bring devastation. An unusually low flood would mean poor crop yields for the year, and an unusually high flood could destroy homes, livestock, and property. Such variations in flood levels are alluded to as the cause for the seven years of famine foreboded in the pharaoh’s dream in Gen. 41:1–4, 17–21.

The Nile is fed by three main tributaries. The Blue Nile and the Atbara originate in Ethiopia, while the White Nile carries its waters from Lake Victoria in northern Tanzania. All three rivers converge before the fifth of six cataracts, or rapids, along the Nile. These cataracts, numbered from north to south, acted as a natural barrier against hostile incursions from the south.

The Nile River

The Nile flows from south to north, but a prevailing wind along the Nile flows from north to south. These two factors mean that transportation north of the cataracts, where the Nile is calm for about 530 miles, was possible in both directions. Travelers could float without a sail, using the current to bring them northward (downstream), or ride the prevailing winds by use of the sail in order to travel southward (upstream). In Egyptian hieroglyphics, northward travel was illustrated via a symbol of a boat with a folded sail and a steering oar, while southward travel was shown as a boat with its sail unfurled.

To the ancient Egyptians, the Nile Valley was thought of as two halves. “Upper Egypt” referred to the part of the Nile south of the Nile Delta, while “Lower Egypt” referred to the Nile Delta itself. The ancient Egyptians oriented their world with regard to the Nile, not, as moderns do, by compass directions.

The Nile is mentioned frequently within the Bible, especially concerning Joseph and Moses, but also within the prophecies of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Amos, and Zechariah. Apart from the aforementioned reference in Gen. 41, the Nile is also referenced as the river into which Pharaoh ordered the Israelite infant boys be thrown, which led to Moses’ fortuitous float into the arms of Pharaoh’s daughter (Exod. 1:22; 2:3, 5–6, 10; Acts 7:22). Several plagues are also associated with the Nile (Exod. 4:9; 7:15–24; 8:3–11, 20; 17:5; Ps. 78:44–45). In 2 Kings 19:24 Sennacherib brags that he dried up the streams of Egypt. Prophetic references to the Nile occur in Isa. 7:18; 19:5–8;

23:3, 10; Jer. 46:7–8; Ezek. 29:3–10; Amos 7:8; 9:5; Zech. 10:11.

NIMRAH *See* Beth Nimrah.

NIMRIM Waters that become “dried up” in the oracles against Moab in Isa. 15:6; Jer. 48:34. The location of the waters would be east of the Dead Sea, in the land of Moab. One possibility may be the stream of Wadi en-Numeira to the southeast, at which lie the ruins of the ancient city Numeira. However, Nimrim may be linked to the name of Tell Nimrin, an ancient city northeast of the Dead Sea and one mile southwest of Beth-nimrah.

NIMROD Nimrod is described in more detail than any other individual in the Table of Nations in Gen. 10. One of the sons of Cush, he was a warrior and proverbial as a “mighty hunter” (Gen. 10:8–9; 1 Chron. 1:10). He also founded eight cities in Babylonia and Assyria, regions that became Israel’s archenemies (Gen. 10:10–11). At the time of the exile, the Assyrians destroyed Israel, and the Babylonians destroyed Judah, but Micah promised redemption from Assyria and “the land of Nimrod” (Mic. 5:6).

Nimrod’s name probably comes from a Hebrew word meaning “to rebel.” Various attempts have been made to identify Nimrod with figures from other ancient Near Eastern sources, whether Mesopotamian (to maintain the Assyrian and Babylonian connection) or Egyptian (to maintain the connection with Cush and Africa). However, none of these is conclusive.

NIMSHI Apparently the grandfather of Jehu, the eleventh king of the northern kingdom of Israel. Jehu is called both “son of Nimshi” (1 Kings 19:16; 2 Kings 9:20) and “son of Jehoshaphat, the son of Nimshi” (2 Kings 9:2, 14). Perhaps Nimshi was better known than Jehoshaphat, making it easier to identify Jehu with his grandfather.

NINEVEH An Assyrian city near modern-day Mosul in Iraq, it is first mentioned in the Bible in Gen. 10:11–12. It became the capital of the Assyrian Empire during the reign of Sennacherib (705–681 BC). Because of Assyria’s threat during the late eighth and seventh centuries BC, Nineveh was the target of prophetic oracles that predicted its downfall (Nahum; Zeph. 2:13) and is the setting for the prophetic story of Jonah. The city was sacked and destroyed by the Medes and the Babylonians in 612 BC.

NINEVITES The inhabitants of the city of Nineveh. Their repentance in response to Jonah (Jon. 3:5) became emblematic of the proper response to Jesus’ preaching, and they are pictured at the final judgment as condemning the evil, sign-seeking generation of Jesus’ time (Matt. 12:39–42 // Luke 11:29–32).

NIPPUR The site of the ancient city of Nippur is approximately seventy miles south of Baghdad, on the banks of the Euphrates River. The site was first explored and excavated at the end of the nineteenth century under the sponsorship of the University of Pennsylvania. Through the years the site also has been explored by teams sponsored by the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago and the American Schools of Oriental Research.

Standing at the boundary between Sumer and Akkad, the city was considered by the Sumerians to be one of the most sacred cities. It was the site for the temple of Enlil (the Ekur), the chief deity of the Sumerian pantheon, from the fourth millennium. The temple of Inanna was also located at Nippur.

Although the city was never considered a capital, its religious prominence lent prestige to any ruler who would gain control of it. Furthermore, Nippur was a center for scribal activity. The site has yielded the majority of tablets inscribed with the Sumerian language. The types of texts witnessed include literary, legal, administrative, and economic documents.

The city experienced development in stages in its long history. Enmebaragesi, a Sumerian ruler, constructed the temple of Enlil in the fourth millennium. Under the Sargonid dynasty and the Third Dynasty of Ur in the latter half of the third millennium BC, the temple became the object of royal efforts in construction. Under the supervision of Ur-Nammu, a three-leveled structure (ziggurat) was added to the temple of Enlil. Despite the shift of focus in religious veneration to Marduk in the eighteenth century BC under the auspices of the Old Babylonian dynasty, Nippur remained a sacred site under care and development. Through the second millennium BC, the city passed through the hands of the Kassites, who built a palace there. The city and the palace were abandoned in the thirteenth century BC, most likely because of Elamite aggression. Under Assyrian control and the sponsorship of Ashurbanipal, a major restoration was accomplished in the seventh century BC. In the latter portion of the first millennium BC, the city continued to thrive under the control of first the Babylonians, then the Persians. In the period of Hellenistic hegemony, Nippur was the focus of activity in construction under the aegis of the Parthians; the city, including the ziggurat and the temple of Enlil, was fortified. Little is known of the city’s fortunes beyond the third century AD. Beyond the seventh century AD, in the period of Islamic expansion in the region, the site eventually was abandoned.

NISAN A Babylonian name by which postexilic Israelites referred to what was formerly called “Aviv,” the month of the exodus and Passover. It corresponds roughly to latter March to early April. *See also* Aviv.

NISROCH *See* Nisrok.

NISROK The god of King Sennacherib of Assyria (r. 704–681 BC), in whose temple Sennacherib was assassinated by two of his sons (2 Kings 19:37; Isa. 37:38). No such deity appears in Assyrian sources, making Nisrok’s identity highly problematic, with suggestions including Ninurta, Enlil, and Nusku.

NITER *See* Lye.

NO, NO-AMON The ancient name for the Egyptian city identified by the Greeks as “Thebes.” “No” means “city,” so the name means “City of [the god] Amon.” The full Hebrew name, “No-amon,” appears only at Nah. 3:8. Elsewhere the city is called “No” (Jer. 46:25; Ezek. 30:14–16). Most English versions translate the name as “Thebes” for all these occurrences, though at Nah. 3:8 the KJV has “populous No” (cf. NASB: “No-amon”; NKJV: “No Amon”).

Located on the Nile about four hundred miles south of the Mediterranean, Thebes rose to its greatest glory during the New Kingdom (1550–1070 BC) and the rise of Egypt’s Eighteenth Dynasty, which originated in Thebes. Magnificent royal tombs and temples were built throughout the city. After the death of Ramesses IX (c. 1070 BC), Thebes was no longer directly connected to the royal family, and its prominence diminished. A revival of the city’s prominence and considerable growth occurred during the Twenty-fifth Dynasty (760–656 BC), when Thebes was revered by the Amon-worshiping

Sudanese kings of the Kushite Dynasty.

Thebes was sacked by the Assyrian army in 663 BC and suffered raids by the Persians in 525 and 343 BC. The prophets Jeremiah (46:25), Ezekiel (30:14–16), and Nahum (3:8) pronounced judgment against Thebes, a city that epitomized Egypt's pride and defiance of God. *See also* Thebes.

NOADIAH **(1)** The son of Binnui, a Levite in Ezra's time, he was one of those responsible for counting out the gifts for the temple at the return of the Israelites under Ezra (Ezra 8:33). **(2)** A prophetess, she was one of those who tried to intimidate and discourage Nehemiah in his rebuilding efforts in Jerusalem (Neh. 6:14).

NOAH **(1)** The eighth descendant listed in the line of Seth and the grandson of Methuselah, Noah was used by God to preserve the human race through the flood. His name means "rest," chosen because his father, Lamech, believed that God would use his son to bring rest from the toil of life resulting from the fall (Gen. 5:29). Enoch was his great-grandfather, and like him, Noah is described as one who "walked faithfully with God" (Gen. 6:9; cf. 5:22, 24). He was the father of Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

His story is told mainly in Gen. 6–9. Because of its great wickedness, God resolved to destroy the human race. But Noah found grace in God's sight, so God instructed him to build a large boat as directed and to take aboard provisions for his family as well as selected representatives of animal life. Noah dutifully obeyed, and his family thus was preserved through the ensuing catastrophe. From them the earth was repopulated (Gen. 10), and Noah was the recipient of various directives for the governance of the postdiluvian world, often referred to as the Noahic covenant (Gen. 9:1–17). Noah's personal story ends with the curious episode of him getting drunk and subsequently cursing a son of Ham for some offense that Ham committed, the nature of which is described only as seeing "the nakedness of his father" (Gen. 9:22 ESV, NRSV, NASB). His age at the time of his death is given as 950.

Noah is mentioned two other times in the OT. God cites his promise that the "waters of Noah" never again would destroy the earth to affirm his covenant faithfulness to Israel (Isa. 54:9), and in another text groups Noah together with Job and Daniel as those who could deliver themselves by their righteousness, but not disobedient Israel (Ezek. 14:14, 20). In the NT, Jesus cites the conditions in Noah's day as being representative of conditions at the time of his coming (Matt. 24:37–38; Luke 17:26–27). Peter mentions Noah twice, once to refer to the spirits of those who perished in the flood (1 Pet. 3:20) and once to use Noah as an example of God's ability to deliver his people (2 Pet. 2:5). Hebrews 11:7 lists Noah as a hero of faith.

(2) One of the five daughters of Zelophehad. Their petition for a portion of their deceased father's property helped set a precedent for inheritance law in ancient Israel (Num. 27:1–11; cf. Josh. 17:1–6). When it came time for the daughters of Zelophehad to marry, a further decree was issued that inherited land must not pass from tribe to tribe (Num. 36).

NOB A village located a little over a mile north of Jerusalem, home mainly to priestly families. David stopped there briefly while on his initial flight from Saul and received some assistance from the senior priest there, Ahimelek. Unfortunately, one of Saul's herdsmen, Doeg the Edomite, observed this encounter and informed the king. Saul summoned Ahimelek's family, and when Ahimelek acknowledged his actions, the king ordered the execution of the priests. His own Israelite servants declined to do this, however, so Doeg carried out the killings. One young priest, Abiathar, escaped and found refuge with David (1 Sam. 21–22).

NOBAH **(1)** A descendant of Manasseh who conquered Kenath (Num. 32:42). **(2)** The city formerly named “Kenath” (modern Qanawat) named after its new conqueror (Num. 32:42). **(3)** A city located near Jogbehah, both of which were used as landmarks for indicating a nomadic route taken by Gideon (Judg. 8:11). This Nobah may be the same site as #2; otherwise, its identification is uncertain.

NOD After killing Abel, Cain is banished to the land of Nod, the name of which creates a pun on *nwd*, the Hebrew verb for “wander” (Gen. 4:16). Nod is more a fate than a location (cf. 4:12, 14). Like Adam before him (3:24), Cain is denied the security of place and is exiled “east of Eden”—a phrase symbolizing banishment from God. Israel understood land eviction to be the most severe punishment (cf. Lev. 26:27–32). The LXX mistakenly translates the name as “Naid,” a corruption of Hebrew letters.

NODAB One of four people groups against which three Israelite tribes wage war in 1 Chron. 5:19. Nodab is a tribe in the north Transjordan that may be related to the Ishmaelite tribe of Abdeel. This war, which 1 Chronicles places during Saul’s reign, pits Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh against the Hagrites, Jetur, Naphish, and Nodab.

NOE *See* Noah.

NOGAH A son of David born to an unnamed wife during the time he reigned from Jerusalem (1 Chron. 3:7; 14:6), though his absence from a similar and older list in 2 Sam. 5:13–16 raises questions of whether his name is the result of a textual mistake.

NOHAH According to 1 Chron. 8:2, the fourth son of Benjamin, though his name is missing from a list of Benjamin’s sons in Gen. 46:21.

NON *See* Nun.

NOON The middle of the day (1 Kings 18:26–27; 20:16; 2 Kings 4:20; Neh. 8:3; Job 5:14; Ps. 55:17; Isa. 16:3; Jer. 6:4; 20:16; Amos 8:9; Acts 10:9; 22:6; 26:13), at which point the sun is at or near its meridian and the midday meal is eaten (Gen. 43:16). *See also* Midday.

NOOSE A rope configured in a loop with a running knot that draws tighter as it is pulled. A sign of death, it is used for execution or as a snare (Job 18:10; Prov. 7:22).

NOPH The Hebrew name for Memphis, an important Egyptian city (Isa. 19:13; Jer. 2:16; 44:1; 46:14, 19; Ezek. 30:13, 16). *See also* Memphis.

NOPHAH A place included in a poem about the conquest of the Amorites by the Israelites in their travels on the eastern side of the Jordan (Num. 21:30). This site marked the boundary of the conquest. The location is certain to be in Moab, but exactly where is unknown. There is some discrepancy between the spellings of the name in different versions of the Hebrew Bible.

NORTH *See* Directions.

NORTHEASTER *See* Euroclydon.

NORTH GATE A gate of the temple mentioned by Ezekiel in his vision of Jerusalem (Ezek. 8:3, 14; 40:20, 23, 35, 44; 44:4; 46:9; 47:2). It is part of the inner court of the temple precinct. This gate is also mentioned in 1 Chron. 26:14 in the list of temple gatekeepers.

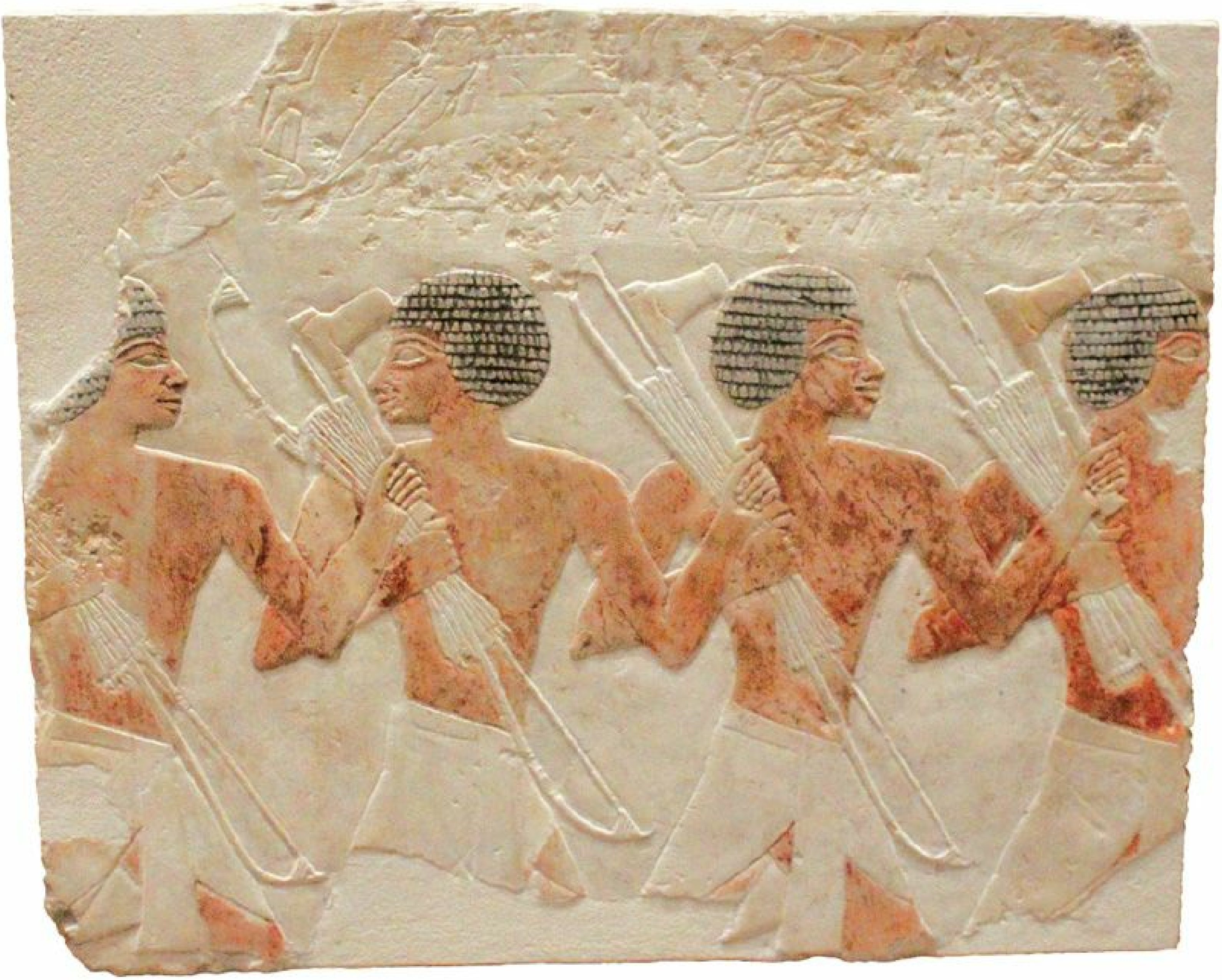
NOSE Mentioned only in the OT in most Bible versions (MSG uses "nose" in the NT as part of English idioms; e.g., Matt. 13:57; 21:32), the nose often is referred to in the context of jewelry, as nose rings for women were a fine adornment in ancient Hebrew culture (Gen. 24:47; Ezek. 16:12), in some cases indicative of extravagance (Isa. 3:16–24). Other times, a stronger party would direct a weaker party by means of a hook or a cord in their nose (2 Kings 19:28; 2 Chron. 33:11; Job 40:24).

The Hebrew word for nose, *'ap*, could be used metaphorically for anger, much as English speakers might say that an angry person "has steam coming out of his nose." Thus, the NIV's "[he] became angry" can translate the Hebrew phrase "[his] nose burned" (Gen. 30:2; Judg. 10:7). The same Hebrew term can also refer to nostrils. The NIV uses the translation "nostrils" several times in the OT, often in poetry, usually in connection with breath (Gen. 2:7; 7:22; 2 Sam. 22:16 [cf. Ps. 18:15]; Job 27:3) or as a source of smoke (2 Sam. 22:9 [cf. Ps. 18:8]; Job 41:20).

The Hebrews also used *'ap* to refer to the entire face, normally when a person was bowing facedown. In such instances, "bowed down with his face to the ground" translates the Hebrew phrase "bowed down with nostrils [*'appayim*] toward the ground" (Gen. 19:1; 1 Sam. 25:41).

NOSTRIL *See* Nose.

NUBIA The African kingdom just south of Egypt, along the Nile River above the fourth cataract. Although referred to as Cush throughout the Hebrew Bible, some historians refer to this region as Nubia, and a few English Bible versions follow the historians and occasionally use the term "Nubia" to designate the kingdom of Cush. *See also* Cush, Cushites.



Relief of Nubian mercenaries (Deir el-Bahari, 1470 BC)

NUCLEAR WEAPONS Although nuclear weapons are never spoken of as such in the Bible, the proliferation of such weapons after the Second World War—and especially during the Cold War era—led some biblical interpreters to speculate that their use is implicit in various prophetic passages, such as Ezek. 38–39; Mal. 4:1; Zech. 14:12; 2 Pet. 3:10; Rev. 8:7.

NUMBERS, BOOK OF Numbers gets its name from two pivotal chapters (1; 26), which give a census—more accurately, a military registration—of the Israelites as they travel through the wilderness. But there is much more to Numbers. It is part four of the five-part Torah and, like Exodus and Leviticus before it, presents law in the context of a narrative of the travels in the wilderness. It is in Numbers that we read the account of one of the most devastating of all events in the travel narrative, the episode of the spies sent to the promised land, but this story is just the apex of a theme of grumbling that seems a constant reaction from the people of Israel in the wilderness period.

AUTHOR AND DATE

See the discussion in the article on Genesis. The book of Numbers is part four of the Pentateuch, so the issues of author and date are the same as for Genesis (*see* Genesis, Book of; Pentateuch).

GENRE AND STRUCTURE

The book of Numbers is made up of several different types of literature. There are laws, historical accounts, prayers, prophecy, wilderness itineraries, and more. In large measure, however, the book may be described, similarly to Exodus and Leviticus, as law embedded in a narrative of theological history. The initial section, 1:1–10:11, concerns the first day of the second month of the wilderness wandering to the twentieth day of the second month of the second year and is set in the wilderness of Sinai. At this time and in this place, God establishes the community for its long trek. No exact dates are given for the material in 10:12–21:9, but it narrates the journey sometime within the forty years the people spent in the wilderness. Then 21:10–36:13 presents the five months during the fortieth and last year of the wandering, talks of final preparations for the move into the promised land, and geographically describes the trip from Kadesh to Moab.

However, the outline of the book that takes the reader to the heart of its theological message is based on the two military registrations found in chapters 1 and 26.

I. The Sin and Judgment of the First Generation (1:1–25:18)

II. The Hope of the Second Generation (26:1–36:13)

THEOLOGICAL MESSAGE

The book begins with a military registration of all the men of Israel who are twenty years of age and older. There is also a description of the wilderness camp, whose very structure resembles that of a war camp. The tabernacle, God’s symbolic home on earth, is placed in the middle of the camp, similar to the position of the war leader. The tabernacle, God’s tent, is immediately surrounded by his most loyal troops, the Levites, and then the rest of the army, the other tribes of Israel. The militaristic words that Moses speaks on the mornings of the march as the ark of the covenant takes the lead confirm that the wilderness wandering is envisioned as a long march into battle (Num. 10:35).

Although led by a column of smoke during the day and a pillar of fire at night, the Israelites continually rebel and doubt the power and concern of their God. Thus, the first part of the book (chaps. 1–25) is a story of sin and judgment. The people are constantly grumbling against God’s provision in the wilderness (e.g., chap. 11). Lay and priestly leaders rebel against Moses, God’s appointed leader (chaps. 12; 16–17). The apex of this rebellion is found in the spy story in chapters 13–14. Here, twelve spies, one from each tribe, are sent to the land in advance of the rest of the people. When they return, they come with good news and bad news. The good news is that the land is beautiful and rich in resources; the bad news is that it is populated by nations “stronger than we are” (13:31). The latter news sends the people into a panic, showing their doubt of God’s ability to give them the land in spite of this human obstacle. For this rebellion, God dooms them to forty years in the wilderness. Of that original generation, only Joshua and Caleb, the two faithful spies, will be allowed to enter the land, for even Moses on a different occasion has demonstrated his impatience with his divine master (20:1–13).

Forty years was long enough for the original generation to die off and the next generation to mature. The story of the second generation begins with the giving of their military registration in chapter 26.

From this point onward, preparations are under way for the entry into the land. Preliminary battles are met with victory, and laws anticipating the Israelites' entry into a new situation are proclaimed. With hope, however, come questions. Will this new generation really be more faithful than the previous one?

In Numbers the reader learns of God's continued involvement with his sinful people. God does not leave them to die there. Indeed, even after the transgression narrated in the spy episode, God remains faithful and protects his people from threats, including that from King Balak of Moab, who hires the prophet Balaam to curse them (chaps. 22–24).

CONTINUING SIGNIFICANCE

The book of Numbers continues the narrative of the wilderness wanderings. In spite of God's displays of power and protection, the people doubt his ability to keep them safe, and so they complain repeatedly and even rebel against him. As a result, God punishes them, condemning that generation (with the exception of the faithful Joshua and Caleb) to die in the wilderness and not enter the promised land. The book of Hebrews (3:1–4:13) reminds Christian readers of these events and draws a comparison between them and the wilderness generation. Christians, after all, are pilgrims in this land and are journeying toward the promised land, in this case heaven. The lesson of the book of Numbers is to trust God and not grumble and rebel as the Israelites did. This book, then, is an encouragement to rely on God in life's struggles. On the positive side, the book of Numbers also narrates the rise of the younger generation, the generation that would, under Joshua's leadership, enter into the land of promise.

NUMBER SYSTEMS AND NUMBER SYMBOLISM All numbers in the original languages of the Bible are written using words, not numerals. Neither the biblical Hebrew nor the Koine Greek writing system had distinct written numeral forms to represent numbers. Preexilic Hebrew inscriptions record numbers written either with words or in Egyptian hieratic number glyphs. During the exile, exposure to Aramaic resulted in the adoption of the Aramaic script to write Hebrew, but there are no clear indications that an Aramaic number system (as reflected in, e.g., the Elephantine inscriptions) was adopted. Hebrew later emulated Greek in assigning to the letters of the alphabet numerical values and so employing them to record numbers, although the practice of assigning numerical values to glyphs is also attested in pre-Hellenistic times. In Mesopotamia, for example, the practice of assigning numerical values to characters from their syllabic writing system seems to have existed at least as far back as the eighth century BC. The earliest evidence of this practice in Hebrew dates to no earlier than the middle of the second century BC, when it was used on Hasmonean coins.

The value and importance of numbers was widely recognized throughout the ancient world. Sophisticated mathematical texts are attested in both Mesopotamia and Egypt, although no such texts have been discovered originating in ancient Israel. The use of hieratic numbers in preexilic Israel suggests that mathematical knowledge may have been imported, particularly from Egypt. The Akkadian language adapted from Sumerian a hybrid sexagesimal number system, which used cuneiform symbols to represent numbers. Numbers were written in paired glyphs, one representing the values from 1 to 9, the second representing the multiples of 10 up to 50. For example, 59 was written by combining the glyph for 50 with that for 9. Larger numbers were then composed of sets of these paired glyphs. The impact of the sexagesimal system can still be seen in the division of hours and minutes into sixty parts. Most other Near Eastern cultures, including that of ancient Egypt and Israel, used a decimal system.

The decimal system was also used in the Greek-speaking world, and the Greek language, since before the NT era, had employed letters to represent numbers. The use of archaic letters that had otherwise disappeared from general usage by NT times gave the Greek alphabet twenty-seven letters, which provided the basis for representing ranges 1–9, 10–90, 100–900. Numbers were represented by adding letters together, so that the order of letters was unimportant.

When Hebrew started using letters to represent numbers, a similar scheme was adopted, although it necessarily stopped at 400 because the Hebrew alphabet has only twenty-two letters. For some, this suggests that Hebrew may have appropriated the system from Greek, but the same sequence of values in earlier counting indicates that the association of values 1–9, 10–90, 100–900 with the letters of the alphabet was itself not a Greek innovation.

NUMBER SYMBOLISM

Numbers often are used with symbolic significance in the Bible. Particularly prominent are the numbers 7 and 12, together with variations scaled by powers of 10. Other numbers occur frequently and also appear to have some symbolic significance, including 4, 40, and 1,000. A note of warning is pertinent, however, because there is a danger both of finding number symbolism where there is none and of overlooking the symbolic significance of numbers where it is appropriate.

Perhaps the most prominent symbolic association in the Bible occurs with the number seven. Broadly speaking, seven denotes completeness, perfection, or consummation. The number first appears in the creation account in association with the first Sabbath, in which it is tied to completion and rest. Linked to this are the working week, which concluded with a Sabbath, the sabbatical year for the land (Lev. 25:2–7), the duration of the major feasts over seven days (e.g., Passover [cf. Lev. 23:6, 34; Ezek. 45:21]), even the number of years Jacob worked for Leah and then Rachel (Gen. 29:15–30). God’s promise of comprehensive vengeance upon those who harm Cain is reflected in the use of seven (Gen. 4:15; cf. Pss. 12:6; 79:12; Prov. 6:31; Isa. 30:26). The idea that seven represents completeness can be seen in the seventy nations recorded in Gen. 10 and in the description of Yahweh as having seven eyes (Zech. 4:10). In the NT, the symbolic use of seven is expanded: it is used by Jesus in explaining unlimited forgiveness (Matt. 18:21–22) and most extensively by the author of Revelation, where reference is made to seven churches (1:4, 11, 20), spirits (1:4; 3:1; 5:6), golden lampstands (1:12; 2:1), stars (1:16; 2:1), seals (5:5; 6:1), eyes (5:6), angels (8:2, 6; 15:6, 7, 8; 16:1; 17:1; 21:9), trumpets (8:2, 6), thunderclaps (10:3, 4), crowns (12:3), heads (12:3; 13:1; 17:3, 7, 9), plagues (15:6, 8; 21:9), golden bowls (15:7; 16:1; 17:1), mountains (17:9), and kings (17:10).

Arising out of the observations relating to the symbolic use of the number seven are the manner in which its significance also applied to related numbers such as 7 × 7 = 49 (cf. Lev. 25:8–55) and 7 × 10 = 70 (cf. Exod. 24:1, 9; Jer. 25:12; 29:10; Dan. 9:2, 24; Luke 10:1–17).

The next most significant number with symbolic associations is twelve. In the OT, the primary association is with the tribes of Israel, and this association later develops to encompass God’s people in their entirety. It is likely that such an association is deliberately made in Jesus’ choice of twelve apostles.

The number ten is also associated with the practice of tithing, which was common throughout the ancient Near East. The number ten alone does not have a clear symbolic usage, although when a power of ten (e.g., 1,000 or 10,000) is used, these can represent any vast or unnumbered quantity (see “Large Numbers” below). Ten is also used in combination with other symbolic values to express the same symbolic notion emphatically; for example, 70 (7 × 10) or 77 (7 × 10 + 7) become emphatic affirmations of completeness, perfection, or consummation (e.g., Gen. 4:24; Matt. 18:22).

The number four appears to have some symbolic significance, perhaps due to the typical enumeration of the four cardinal directions, suggesting geographical or cosmological entirety (cf. Isa. 11:12; Jer. 49:36; Zech. 6:5). For example, four rivers leave Eden to water the entire land (Gen. 2:10–14).

The number forty appears frequently in association with long periods of endurance, such as Moses on the mountain (forty days [Exod. 24:18]), the time in the wilderness (forty years [Exod. 16:35]), Elijah’s journey to Horeb (forty days [1 Kings 19:8]), Jesus’ time in the wilderness (forty days/nights [Matt. 4:2; Mark 1:13; Luke 4:2]), and his time with his disciples following the resurrection (forty days [Acts 1:3]).

LARGE NUMBERS

Some scholars have argued that the large numbers in the OT present a particular problem in several places. Based on the figures in Num. 1, for example, there were 603,550 men of fighting age among those in the exodus, suggesting a total population of between one and three million (not counting livestock). Taken at face value, this number presents some difficulties: based on estimates of Egyptian population, it represents a very significant proportion of the entire population of that country; taken in conjunction with the number of firstborn recorded in Num. 3:43, it implies a very large average family size; it seems difficult to reconcile with the claim that the seven nations in the land of Canaan were greater than Israel (Deut. 4:38; 7:1; 9:1–2); and the logistics of moving that many people would pose significant problems.

However, if the observation made by Pharaoh in Exod. 1:9, that the Hebrews were more numerous than the Egyptians, was even approximately accurate, then a population of between one and two million would be appropriate. Nonetheless, various attempts have been made to mitigate the perceived difficulties by suggesting approaches that interpret the text in ways that result in significantly smaller population estimates for the Israelites.

The largest single-number word used in the OT is *rebabah*, which is used to represent large values greater than ten thousand but otherwise often lacks precision and is better understood to refer to a vast unnumbered multitude (e.g., Pss. 3:6; 91:7; Song 5:10). Similarly, the number one thousand can be used rhetorically without demanding mathematical precision (e.g., 2 Pet. 3:8, which should not be understood to provide a mathematical equation). It is this latter number that appears in the difficult passages in Numbers. The best solution to the problems lies in the meaning of the Hebrew term in question, *’elep* (“thousand”). Several scholars have suggested that *’elep* can also refer to a military unit or some other group (cf. Num. 1:16). Although the precise numbers in question are debated according to varying understandings of the sizes of the groups, the best solutions put the total number of Israelites in the exodus at around thirty thousand.

GEMATRIA

Gematria is a system for calculating numerical values for words by assigning specific values to the letters of an alphabet. As noted above, the practice was used for legitimate numerical notation in Greek and, in some periods, in Hebrew. Letters were assigned values based on their order within the alphabet, the first nine letters assigned values 1–9, the next nine assigned values 10–90, and the subsequent letters assigned multiples of 100.

Although numerology of various forms, and in particular gematria, has formed the basis of many misguided attempts to discover hidden meanings within the biblical text, there appear to be explicit uses of gematria in Rev. 13:18 and, some suggest, in John 21:11. If the number 666 is an actual example of gematria, no consensus has been reached over the identity of the referent.

Most of the other supposed examples of gematria within the pages of the Bible are unconvincing, largely because the texts wherein such examples are found make good sense without resorting to obscure and uncertain interpretations, and partly because it runs counter to the notion that God speaks to make his will known (e.g., Deut. 29:29).

NUN Descended from Ephraim, Nun was the father of Joshua, the successor of Moses (Exod. 33:11; Neh. 8:17).

NUNC DIMITTIS The Latin title given to the psalm of praise recited by Simeon in Luke 2:29–32. The phrase comes from the Vulgate translation of 2:29 and means, literally, “now you are dismissing” (NIV: “you may now dismiss”), which is the first part of Simeon’s thanksgiving in seeing the “consolation of Israel” (2:25).

NURSE In biblical times, high-status mothers employed nurses to feed and care for children (Exod. 2:7; 2 Sam. 4:4; 2 Kings 11:2). In contrast, women of lower status nursed their own children (1 Sam. 1:23; 1 Kings 3:21). Rebekah’s nurse, Deborah, remained with her into adulthood (cf. Gen. 24:15). The dignity of her burial suggests that she was a beloved household member (Gen. 35:8). Naomi cared for the child of her daughter-in-law, though this did not necessarily involve breast-feeding the child (Ruth 4:16), since grandparents may have played a large role in child rearing. Isaiah plays on the social dimension of nursing and child care when he declares to Israel, “You will . . . be nursed at royal breasts,” reversing the expected roles (Isa. 60:16; cf. 49:23).

NURTURE A type of training, generally referred to in the NIV as “discipline” (Prov. 3:11–12; 15:5; Heb. 12:5, 7, 10). For children, it encompasses the cultivation of the mind and morals, which includes essential corrections, reproofs, punishment, and restraint that exhibits godly character toward Christian growth (Eph. 6:4). For adults, Scripture has a role in this “training in righteousness” (2 Tim. 3:16). Even as earthly fathers discipline their children, God “disciplines the one he loves” (Heb. 12:6). Disciplinary sufferings are a demonstration of sonship (Heb. 12:5–11). Nurturing is also a type of care that can be shown to plants, akin to the proper care of children (Ps. 144:12).

NUZI A provincial and administrative center of the land known as Arraphe, during the late second millennium BC. The population of Nuzi seems to have been predominantly Hurrian, and the location was also ruled by the Mitanni for at least part of its existence. The site is located less than fifteen miles from modern-day Kirkuk in Iraq and is best known for the almost four thousand cuneiform tablets that have been unearthed there.

A Nuzi tablet listing barley rations given to Hurrians and their animals (1500–1400 BC)

The texts unearthed at Nuzi come from administrative and family archives, among the most important of which is that of Apil-Sin (1767–1749 BC). They are written in a Hurrian-influenced dialect of Akkadian and convey a great deal of information about the social structure of Nuzi, especially its political, economic, legal, and military components. From them we learn that the king of Arraphe was a vassal of Mitanni, and that he stood at the top of a social ladder that included the queen and concubines, landowners, businessmen with military obligations, wealthier private citizens, governmental officials, and a relatively large class of property owners and slaves (including prisoners of war and private citizens who were forced to sell themselves into slavery because of their poverty; on occasion, these “slaves” seem to have been able to amass considerable personal fortunes in spite of their social standing). Women seem to have held a somewhat higher social standing at Nuzi than in other locations across the ancient Near East. They were able to engage in real-estate transactions and sometimes were extended significant protections in legal documents. Other significant legal and economic information comes from the so-called tablet of sonship, tablet of lease, and tablet of brothership. These tablets created important legal fictions aimed at the acquisition of land by adoption, transaction, or inheritance among otherwise unrelated citizens. Along with these, marriage contracts have also been discovered, providing additional valuable information about those practices. For example, marriage contracts indicate that marriages were legally arranged by fathers or brothers, dowries were paid to brides, and bride-prices were paid to the families. Moreover, they indicate that husbands sometimes were forbidden from taking a second wife, and that if subsequent wives were permitted, the original bride's children remained the primary heirs of the husband.

Initially, the discovery of these texts generated a great deal of interest among biblical scholars because of the ways in which they seemed to confirm a number of different practices attested in the Hebrew Bible during the patriarchal period. Among these are the adoption of Eliezer of Damascus by the childless Abraham (Gen. 15:2), the series of negotiations over the marriage between Isaac and Rebekah (Gen. 24), and the practice of levirate marriage (book of Ruth). More recent research, however, has indicated that these customs are also clearly reflected throughout the ancient Near East during the second and first millennia BC, often with clearer parallels than the ones reflected at Nuzi. Thus, the evidence from Nuzi has not proved to be as clear-cut a case of direct influence as some had assumed. Nevertheless, it is not as if these subsequent findings have negated the apparent parallels with Nuzi, and a cautious reliance on the data as broadly suggestive of historical reliability is clearly the best course of action for the time being.

NYMPHA The host of a house church mentioned in Paul's closing greetings in Colossians, along with "the brothers and sisters at Laodicea" (Col. 4:15). Since Paul names the household as Nympha's, she most likely was a widow, but it is not impossible that she was single or married. Being the only one from her church personally addressed by Paul, she may have also been the head of her house church. The gender of Nympha has been debated, as some Greek manuscripts say that the house belongs to "her" (*autēs*), while others say that it is "his" (*autou*). However, the manuscript support for the feminine pronoun is generally considered better.

O

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OAK, DIVINERS’ *See* Diviners’ Tree.

OAK OF TABOR A recognizable landmark in the territory of Benjamin (NIV: “great tree of Tabor”; KJV: “plain of Tabor”). It was the second of three stops that Samuel instructed Saul to make on a journey to Gilgal confirming his selection by God as king of Israel (1 Sam. 10:1–8). There, Saul met three men traveling to Bethel, confirming Samuel’s prophecy.

OARSMEN People, often slaves, who helped to navigate a ship by rowing. Ezekiel refers to oarsmen in his lament for the city of Tyre (Ezek. 27:8).

An Assyrian warship from the time of Sennacherib (700–692 BC), whose builders and oarsmen were probably Phoenician

OATHS The obligations of relationships within ancient societies and between social groups were frequently reinforced by means of oaths, and the practice of oath making (by both God and people) is witnessed to in the pages of the Bible. The name of God was frequently invoked (Judg. 8:19; 2 Kings

2:2), but oaths were not to be made using the names of foreign deities (Ps. 16:4). For this reason, when an oath was broken, God's name was profaned (Lev. 19:12). To take an oath was to ask God to witness what was promised, and it invited him to act as avenger if the promise was broken (Gen. 31:50; 1 Sam. 12:3). This made oath taking a religious act, and so oaths often were made at sanctuaries and under the supervision of cultic officials (Num. 5:11–31; Judg. 11:11; Hos. 4:15).

The words of an oath were accompanied by various gestures, such as putting a hand "under the thigh" (near the genitals?) (Gen. 24:2; 47:29) or raising the right hand to heaven (Gen. 14:22; Deut. 32:40; Rev. 10:5–6). Daniel 12:7 depicts a particularly solemn oath, involving the raising of both hands. By invoking God's name, an oath invited God to punish the oath breaker, as in Ruth 1:17: "May the Lord deal with me, be it ever so severely" (for similar wording, see 1 Sam. 3:17; 14:44; 2 Sam. 3:9). Such a self-maledictory oath may have been accompanied by the gesture of a hand at the throat, signifying the death penalty for infringement. People brought a curse upon themselves if an oath was broken (e.g., Num. 5:22), either for doing what was wrong (Num. 5:22; 1 Sam. 19:6) or for not speaking the truth (e.g., Mark 14:71). Two Hebrew words are used in respect to oaths; the stronger one can actually mean a "curse." The more common word for swearing may relate to the number seven, due to the ceremonies that could accompany oath making. For example, Abraham set aside seven ewe lambs (Gen. 21:22–31).

In the Bible, God is portrayed as binding himself by oaths, most notably his sworn promises to Abraham (Gen. 22:16–18; 50:24). This fact is used by the author of Hebrews in an argument designed to assure readers that God meant what he said when he made promises to his people (Heb. 6:13–18). The coming of Jesus fulfilled the terms of that oath (Luke 1:73). So too the Davidic covenant was supported by a divine oath (Pss. 89:35, 49; 110:4; 132:11), and this was fulfilled by the enthronement of Christ at his resurrection and ascension (Acts 2:30–33).

Jesus' teaching on oaths (Matt. 5:33–37) does not necessarily contradict OT legislation (cf. Lev. 19:12; Num. 30:2; Deut. 23:21–23) but rather brings out the true heart of God behind the legislation. Oaths are unnecessary, Jesus said, for those who habitually tell the truth. An emphatic yes or no is all that is needed. The teaching of James 5:12 reflects what is found in Jesus' teaching on this subject. This may not outlaw all oath taking, and certainly the apostle Paul did not understand there to be a blanket prohibition of oaths, for in his letters he is on record as making oaths (Gal. 1:20; Phil. 1:8).

OBADIAH **(1)** The palace keeper for King Ahab of Israel. Obadiah hid one hundred prophets from persecution under Jezebel. In 1 Kings 18:1–16 he is caught in the middle of Ahab's hunt for Elijah when the prophet asks him to summon Ahab. **(2)** A descendant of David (1 Chron. 3:21). **(3)** A son of Izrahiah, he was a clan chief of the tribe of Issachar (1 Chron. 7:3). **(4)** A son of Azel and a descendant of King Saul (1 Chron. 8:38; 9:44). **(5)** A Levite, the son of Shemaiah, he was among the first to resettle in Judah after the Babylonian exile (1 Chron. 9:16). **(6)** One of the military elite from the tribe of Gad who aided David at his outpost in Ziklag (1 Chron. 12:9). **(7)** A Zebulunite whose son, Ishmaiah, was a tribal officer under King David (1 Chron. 27:19). **(8)** One of the members of a commission sent by King Jehoshaphat to travel across Judah teaching the law (2 Chron. 17:7–9). **(9)** A Levite from the Merari family who helped supervise the rebuilding of the temple during the reign of King Josiah (2 Chron. 34:12). **(10)** A son of Jehiel and a descendant of Joab who journeyed from Babylon to Jerusalem with Ezra (Ezra 8:9). **(11)** One of the leaders who joined Nehemiah in placing his seal on the covenant of national renewal (Neh. 10:5). He may be the same person as in Ezra 8:9. **(12)** A gatekeeper who guarded the storerooms in the days of Joiakim the priest (Neh. 12:25). **(13)** The fourth of the twelve Minor Prophets (Obad. 1:1).

OBADIAH, BOOK OF Obadiah is the shortest book in the OT (twenty-one verses). It is a prophecy against one of ancient Israel's most persistent enemies, the Edomites.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The superscription (1:1a) names Obadiah as the author of the book but adds nothing more. About a dozen people have the name "Obadiah" elsewhere in the OT, but we cannot be certain that any one of them can be identified with the prophet. His name means "servant of Yahweh."

The prophecy is totally directed toward Edom, a nation located south of Moab, in the area to the southeast of the Dead Sea. It is a region of rugged mountains and wadis, thus difficult to attack.

The Bible attributes the Edomites' origins to Esau, Jacob's brother, whose other name is Edom, or "Red" (see Gen. 36). Notice that by the time Jacob returned from his sojourn in Paddan Aram, Esau, having already amassed a significant fortune, was dwelling in the region of Seir (a common synonym for Edom [see Gen. 32]).

It is true that Edom, like Moab and Ammon, refused the Israelites passage during the wilderness wanderings (Num. 20:14–21), but they found another way, thus avoiding violent confrontation. Still, there were subsequent battles between Edom and Israel. Later, for instance, David is described as having taken Edom as a vassal (2 Sam. 8:14). Jehoshaphat had control over it (1 Kings 22:47). An Edomite monarchy came about during the time of Jehoram (2 Kings 8:20), at which time Edom rebelled against Judah and won its independence. Elath, an important seaport, was taken by the Edomites during the reign of Ahaz.

At the time of the Babylonian destruction of Jerusalem, Edom had taken advantage of the situation in some way. While not precisely described, this point can be established by reference to texts such as Ps. 137:7; Lam. 4:22; Ezek. 35:15.

The issue, then, is at what point in this long history the book of Obadiah is to be placed. One option is the mid-ninth century BC during the time of Jehoram (2 Kings 8:20–22; 2 Chron. 21:8–10). A much better setting for the book, however, is found in the early exilic period, described in the previous paragraph, thus dating the book to the sixth century BC.

The rugged mountainous region of Edom. Obadiah prophesied against the Edomites.

LITERARY CONSIDERATIONS

The superscription refers to the book of Obadiah as a "vision." It is a prophetic vision of the destruction of Edom for its sins against the people of God. It also presents a prophecy of encouragement to beleaguered Israel.

Obadiah may also be described as a prophetic oracle, specifically an oracle against a foreign nation. Such oracles are found in larger prophetic books as part of their overall collection (Isa. 13–23; Jer. 46–51; Ezek. 25–32; 35; Amos 1–2). Indeed, oracles against Edom are found in Isa. 34:5–15; Jer. 49:7–22; Ezek. 25:12–14; 35; Amos 1:11–12; Mal. 1:2–5. An especially close relationship exists between the Jeremiah passage and Obadiah, though the question of dependence of one on the other is debated and cannot be resolved with certainty.

OUTLINE

I. Judgment on Edom (vv. 1–16)

II. Salvation of Israel (vv. 17–21)

THEOLOGICAL MESSAGE

The book of Obadiah is a prophecy against Israel's enemy Edom. Many other oracles against Edom occur in the OT, but Obadiah is the only case where an entire book is dedicated to this purpose. Conflict between Edom and Israel goes back all the way to the patriarchal period, when their respective ancestors, the brothers Esau and Jacob, experienced conflict.

But ultimately, Obadiah is more than a book that is against Edom. The book proclaims that God is over all the nations, and though the enemies of God's people may have momentary moments of glory, ultimately they will give way to those whom God has chosen. Indeed, the book ends with the triumphant statement "And the kingdom will be the LORD's" (v. 21).

NEW TESTAMENT CONNECTIONS

The ancient rivalry between Jacob and Esau, Israel and Edom, has echoes in the NT. We see it when Herod the Great, an Idumean and a descendant of Edom, tries to kill the child Jesus, who represents everything that Israel was meant to be (Matt. 2:16).

Obadiah also provides a picture of the ultimate downfall of an oppressor of God's people. It is a lesson that those who try to take advantage of God's people may win the battle but will not win the war. Christians who read this are reminded of the book of Revelation, which functions similarly, informing God's people that while sometimes it appears that evil has the upper hand, Christ's return is certain and will result in the ultimate victory of righteousness.

OBAL One of the sons of Joktan, a descendant of Shem the son of Noah (Gen. 10:28). The name appears as "Ebal" in 1 Chron. 1:22 (see NIV mg.).

OBED **(1)** The son of Boaz and Ruth (Ruth 4:13–17), grandfather of King David, and ancestor of Jesus Christ (Matt. 1:5; Luke 3:32). **(2)** The son of Ephlal and the father of Jehu, he was a descendant of Judah through Perez (1 Chron. 2:37–38). **(3)** One of King David's mighty warriors (1 Chron. 11:47). **(4)** One of the Korahite gatekeepers in King Solomon's temple (1 Chron. 26:7). **(5)** The father of one of the military commanders of Jehoiada the priest (2 Chron. 23:1).

OBED-EDOM **(1)** "Obed-Edom the Gittite," in whose house David deposited the ark for three months after the death of Uzzah caused David to fear bringing it to Jerusalem. The blessing of Obed-Edom's household prompted David to reconsider (2 Sam. 6:10–12; 1 Chron. 13:13–14; 15:25). Some scholars suggest that he was one of the many Philistines in David's service (the Gittites in 2 Sam. 15:18–19 certainly are foreigners). "Gittite" is, however, a term for anyone from a village called Gath, and the hometown of Obed-Edom may not be Gath in Philistia (e.g., Gath Rimmon [Josh. 21:24–25]).

Neither 2 Sam. 6 nor 1 Chron. 13 says anything about him being a Levite, but he is assigned a Levitical pedigree elsewhere and designated a gatekeeper/doorkeeper (1 Chron. 15:18, 24; 16:38; 26:15) or a singer/harpist (1 Chron. 15:21; 16:5). Under the Levitical division of the gatekeepers, Obed-Edom is listed as having eight sons, "for God had blessed Obed-Edom" (1 Chron. 26:4–5), with divine blessing manifested in numerous progeny. This is a clear allusion to God's blessing of Obed-Edom's household for giving the ark a temporary home (1 Chron. 13:14).

(2) The official in charge of the temple vessels in the reign of Amaziah (2 Chron. 25:24).

OBEDIENCE A central concept in both Testaments for understanding the way in which God's people are to respond to him. God desires obedience from his people, in contrast to mere lip service (Isa. 29:13; Matt. 15:8; Mark 7:6) or conformity to religious ritual (Hos. 6:6; Mic. 6:6–8). When Saul disobeyed God by sacrificing some of the spoil from his victory over the Amalekites, Samuel the prophet responded, "To obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed is better than the fat of rams" (1 Sam. 15:22).

In the OT, obedience is often expressed in terms of keeping (Heb. *shamar* [e.g., Exod. 34:11]) or doing (Heb. *'asah* [e.g., Lev. 18:4]) God's commands; other times, obedience is expressed as listening (Heb. *shama'*) to the voice of God (Exod. 19:5 KJV, NASB), just as a student is obedient by listening to a teacher's voice (Prov. 5:13 KJV, NASB). When God established the Mosaic covenant with the Israelites, he commanded that they obey the laws set forth in the covenant. If they faithfully obeyed his laws, God would bless them (Deut. 28:1–13); if they were not faithful, he would curse them (Deut. 28:15–68). The subsequent history of Israel sadly chronicles the disobedience of God's chosen people and the ensuing destruction that they experienced (2 Kings 18:9–12; 2 Chron. 36:11–21), even though God repeatedly warned the people through his prophets that this destruction was coming if they did not turn from their wickedness (e.g., Isa. 1:19–20; Jer. 11:1–8).

In the NT, focus shifts from obedience to the Mosaic law to obedience to Jesus Christ. The Great Commission contains Jesus' instructions for his own disciples to make disciples, teaching them to "obey" (Gk. *tēreō*) that which Christ had commanded (Matt. 28:19–20). Jesus' disciples' love for him would lead them to obey his commands (John 14:15, 21–24; 1 John 5:3; 2 John 6), and the disciples' obedience, in turn, would cause them to remain in Jesus' love (John 15:10). Paul instructs children to obey their parents and slaves to "obey" (Gk. *hypakouō*) their masters in obedience to Christ (Eph. 6:1, 5–6; Col. 3:20, 22).

The NT also discusses Christ's perfect obedience to God the Father as a quality to imitate (Phil. 2:5–13) and as the basis for salvation (Rom. 5:19). Since it is only "those who obey the law who will be declared righteous" (Rom. 2:13), and all have sinned (Rom. 3:23), "God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God" (2 Cor. 5:21).

OBEISANCE Physical movement conveying deference, such as a bow, made to someone holding a position of higher authority. In the Bible, doing obeisance involves falling down and bowing one's face to the ground (1 Sam. 24:8; 28:14; 2 Sam. 1:2; 14:4; 1 Chron. 21:21). Such action is deemed appropriate when coming into the presence of a king or one holding royal authority (Gen. 43:28; Esther 3:2–5), and it may be performed when accepting a royal gift (2 Sam. 16:4) or acknowledging a granted request (2 Sam. 14:22). Kings may do obeisance in the presence of one of higher authority, as when Saul bows before Samuel (1 Sam. 28:14).

OBELISK A sacred or standing stone, also called a "pillar" (Heb. *matsebah*). These objects often are associated with cultic practice and covenant-making ceremonies. Jacob erected a pillar in commemoration of the site where God appeared to him in a theophany (Gen. 28:18–22; 35:14). When Jacob and Laban made a covenant, the pillar acted as a witness between them (Gen. 31:45–52). Likewise, when Moses descended from the mountain after the Sinai theophany, he erected twelve pillars along with an altar (Exod. 24:4–8). This is consistent with the archaeological picture from the Iron Age II period (1000–586 BC) at Arad, where a small temple was found with two pillars and incense altars.

These were also condemned objects in Israelite religion, associated with Asherah poles, images, and altars (Exod. 34:13; Lev. 26:1; Deut. 7:5; 12:3; 16:22). The erection of these by later kings is also cited as a cause of the exile, probably because some began to worship them (2 Kings 17:10).

OBESITY Average ancient Israelites were not obese, due to their daily diet and hard labor. Obesity, however, was not considered a health condition. It was a status symbol, a sign of opulence and nobility. Hence, in the Bible it was also a symbol of God's blessing of his people. The figure of fatness in Isa. 10:27, for instance, does not imply the Israelites' self-sufficiency but rather recalls how well God has fed them (cf. Isa. 5:27). But accumulation of fat may lead to a rebellious spirit. The people of Israel "grew fat" and "abandoned the God who made them" (Deut. 32:15; cf. Job 15:27; Jer. 5:28; Pss. 73:7; 119:70). The characterization of Moabite king Eglon as a fat man foreshadows his assassination in the narrative (Judg. 3:12–30). The symbol of his wealth and power made him vulnerable to the surprise attack of a left-handed assassin.

OBIL An Ishmaelite in charge of David's camels (1 Chron. 27:30).

OBLATION One KJV rendering (approximately thirty times) of the Hebrew word *qorban*, a very general and somewhat vague term for "offering" (which is another translation the KJV uses for *qorban*). In a few cases the KJV uses the term "oblation" to translate another Hebrew word that is usually translated in other versions as a "grain offering" (*minkhah*).

OBLIVION, LAND OF The grave or place of the afterlife. Nearing death, the psalmist asks whether God can be praised by the dead, and if God's wonders and deliverance can be known in the grave (Ps. 88:10–12).

OBOTH A site on the Israelites' journey toward Canaan, one of their last stops before reaching the Zered Valley on the border with Moab. Situated between Punon and Iye Abarim in the Transjordan (Num. 21:10–11; 33:43–44), its location has been lost.

OBSCENE OBJECT A specific contemporary translation (MSG) of two Hebrew terms (*tame'* and *sheqets*) otherwise rendered "unclean detestable thing" or something similar (e.g., *tame'* in Lev. 7:21 [NIV: "any unclean creature that moves along the ground"]; *sheqets* in Isa. 66:17). In this instance, it refers to unclean or nonkosher creatures that swim, fly, or swarm according to the descriptions in Lev. 11:10–23. More broadly, obscene objects may be understood to be things that are abominable before God, including idols in general (Deut. 29:17; 32:16; 2 Kings 23:13, 24; Ezra 9:1; Isa. 57:8, 10; Jer. 7:30; 16:18; 32:34; Dan. 11:31; 12:11), Asherah poles (1 Kings 15:13; 2 Kings 23:6; 2 Chron. 15:16), and pillars of Baal (2 Kings 3:2).

OBSERVER OF TIMES In Deut. 18:10, 14 the KJV translates the Hebrew word *me'onen* as "observer of times," referring to a soothsayer (NRSV) or one who practices sorcery (NIV).

OCCUPATIONS AND PROFESSIONS An occupation or profession is the usual work or business in which a person engages for the sake of earning a living. In biblical times, family or social standing most often determined occupation. This was particularly true for occupations tied to land, such as planting crops and raising animals, since land in ancient Israel was passed down within the tribe, normally from fathers to sons (Josh. 14:9; Ezek. 46:18). Sometimes daughters also received a share in the family inheritance (Josh. 17:6). Most people gained their livelihood from their family's land, and those who did not have land hired themselves out to work for wages (Deut. 24:14). A son normally learned his trade from his father (Gen. 47:3; 2 Kings 4:18; Matt. 4:21) and continued in that occupation unless called into God's service (1 Kings 19:19–21; Jer. 1:5; Matt. 4:22).

Cicero, writing around the time of the NT, considered occupations such as tax collector, laborer, and fisherman to be vulgar. Conversely, professions such as teacher, doctor, and wholesale trader were more honorable, with landowner being the most respectable and profitable profession (*Off.*

1.42).

AGRICULTURE AND FARMING

Farming is the earliest recorded occupation in the Bible, as the first man was called to work and keep the garden (Gen. 2:15). Even after the exile from Eden because of sin, Adam worked the ground for food, as did Cain, his firstborn son (Gen. 3:17–18; 4:2). The opening chapters of the Bible establish a fundamental link between "man" (*'adam*) and the "ground" (*'adamah*). After the flood, Noah established himself as a "man of the soil" (*'ish ha'adamah*) by planting a vineyard (Gen. 9:20). King Uzziah "loved the soil" (*'oheb 'adamah*) and so employed people to work in his fields and vineyards (2 Chron. 26:10).

God demonstrated his covenant commitment to Isaac by blessing him with an incredible harvest (Gen. 26:12), and he promised to prosper Israel's farms if the people obeyed him (Deut. 28:4) and to curse the fruit of their ground if they disobeyed (Deut. 28:18). The OT ideal was for everyone to live "under their own vine and under their own fig tree" (1 Kings 4:25; Mic. 4:4). According to Prov. 28:19, the diligent farmer would have abundant food.

Jesus' parables frequently employed agricultural imagery that would have been readily understandable in first-century Palestine, where many people were farmers (cf. Mark 4:1–9; 12:1–11) and some owned land (Acts 4:34). The people living around Jerusalem at this time engaged in agriculture, soil cultivation, and cattle raising (*Let. Aris.* 107–112).

HERDING AND HUNTING

Herding animals is the second-oldest occupation recorded in Scripture (after farming), and raising flocks and herds continued to be one of the most common and important professions throughout biblical times. Abel is the first "keeper of sheep" in the Bible (Gen. 4:2 NRSV). Several generations later, Jabal pioneered the nomadic herding lifestyle (Gen. 4:20). The patriarchs were shepherds (Gen. 47:3), as were Moses (Exod. 3:1), David (1 Sam. 17:34), and many others in the OT. Josephus acknowledged that "feeding of sheep was the employment of our forefathers in the most ancient ages" (*Ag. Ap.* 1.91). While men typically worked as shepherds and herdsmen, the occupation was also open to women, such as Rachel, whose fathers owned sheep (Gen. 29:9). Shepherds were present at Jesus' birth (Luke 2:8–20), and Jesus' teaching suggests that shepherding was a common occupation in Palestine (cf. Matt. 18:12; John 10:1–30).

Many people in biblical times hunted, either for food, sport, or protection. The first recorded hunter is Nimrod, "a mighty hunter before the LORD" (Gen. 10:9). Ishmael was "an expert with the bow" (Gen. 21:20 NRSV), while Esau was "a skillful hunter, a man of the open country" who brought back wild game for food (25:27–28). The name of Pokereth-Hazzebaim, included in the genealogy of Solomon's servants in Ezra 2:57, reflects his occupation as a "gazelle catcher" (cf. 1 Kings 4:23).

Hunting scene from Khorsabad (710–705 BC)

BUILDERS AND CRAFTSMEN

Cain was the first person in the Bible to build a city (Gen. 4:17), and his descendant Tubal-Cain was the first metalworker (4:22). Nimrod built a number of cities (10:11–12), and the beginning of Nimrod's kingdom was Babel (10:10), where the people gathered together to build a city with brick (11:3). Builders in Mesopotamia used baked brick and asphalt, while Israelite builders usually preferred the more readily available stone and mortar. After Joseph's death, Israel was conscripted into forced labor in Egypt, which involved building cities of brick and mortar (Exod. 1:11).

The role of craftsmen in the construction of the tabernacle was particularly significant. Bezalel and Oholiab were "skilled workers and designers" empowered by God for work on the tabernacle (Exod. 35:35). They engaged in "all kinds of crafts," including artistic metalworking, masonry, carpentry, and weaving (Exod. 31:4–5; 38:23).

Kings in Israel often commissioned important building projects (1 Kings 12:25; 15:22; 16:24; 2 Chron. 26:9; Josephus, *J.W.* 1.401–2). Carpenters and stonemasons worked on David's palace

(2 Sam. 5:11). Solomon conscripted laborers to build the temple and also employed carriers, stonecutters, craftsmen, and foremen to supervise the work (1 Kings 5:13–18). After the Babylonian exile, many Israelites were involved in rebuilding the temple and the wall of Jerusalem, which had been destroyed (Ezra 3:8; Neh. 4:16–18). These projects, directed by Zerubbabel and Nehemiah, utilized masons, carpenters, and other workers (Ezra 3:7).

Jesus is referred to as a *tektōn* (Mark 6:3) and as the son of a *tektōn* (Matt. 13:55), with *tektōn* usually translated "carpenter" by English versions. However, recent scholarship has demonstrated that Jesus was likely a builder, not a carpenter in the modern sense of the term. In the LXX, the word *tektōn* typically translates a Hebrew word, *kharash*, used broadly to refer to craftsmen working with stone, wood, or metal.

MUSICIANS

The first musician recorded in Scripture is Jubal, "the father of all who play the stringed instruments and pipes" (Gen. 4:21). Musicians performed a variety of roles in ancient society, as they do today. Singers and instrumentalists were employed to celebrate festive occasions, often to provide accompaniment for dancing (Gen. 31:27; Luke 15:25), to soothe the sick or distressed (1 Sam. 16:16), and to express lamentation (Job 30:31).

Musicians played an important role in leading God's people in worship. The "director of music" is mentioned in the headings of fifty-five psalms and Hab. 3:19. The most famous musician in Scripture is David, "the singer of Israel's psalms" (2 Sam. 23:1 GW), who played the harp (1 Sam. 16:18) and wrote or inspired at least seventy-three canonical psalms. Solomon was also a notable songwriter and lover of music (1 Kings 4:32). David appointed many Levites as singers and musicians to lead Israel in worship (1 Chron. 15:16; 23:5). The musicians played lyres, harps, cymbals, and trumpets (2 Chron. 5:12).

GOVERNMENT, POLITICS, AND MILITARY

Before the monarchy, there were no formal government offices. Under Moses, a group of seventy elders in Israel served as leaders and officials, and these men were to carry out Moses' decrees and judge the people on most matters (Exod. 18:20–22; Num. 11:16). After Joshua's death, God raised up judges to rescue Israel from foreign enemies and lead the people (Judg. 2:16) until the time of Samuel, when Saul was made king (1 Sam. 11:15).

Kings in Israel employed various officials. In 2 Sam. 8:16–18, Joab is listed first among David's officials, which suggests that the military commander was second in authority after the king. Under Solomon, the leader of the army is called "commander in chief" (1 Kings 4:4). The royal cabinet included a number of key advisers, including the recorder, the secretary, and the "confidant" of the king (cf. 2 Sam. 16:16). The OT does not specify the precise roles of these officials. The recorder was among the highest governmental positions and served as a royal counselor. In Hebrew, *mazkir* ("recorder") is a cognate noun to the verb *zkr* ("to remember"), which suggests that this official may have managed and preserved public records (2 Kings 18:18; Isa. 36:22). The main task of the king's secretary or scribe (*soper̲*) was to write down (*sapar*) official state documents (2 Sam. 8:17), and he advised the king and also provided financial oversight (2 Kings 12:10). Recorders and secretaries apparently were well educated and multilingual, as was the palace administrator (2 Kings 18:18, 26). Solomon's officials included supervisors of the palace and the forced labor, as well as governors who supplied provisions for the king's household (1 Kings 4:6–7). The OT mentions cupbearers in

Israel’s government and in other administrations (Gen. 40:1; 1 Kings 10:5; Neh. 1:11). The cupbearer served as the royal wine taster; he protected the king from being poisoned and had direct access to the monarch.

In the Roman Empire, the emperor was absolute ruler (1 Pet. 2:17), with the senate next in authority. Proconsuls held judicial and military authority over larger provinces (Acts 18:12), prefects (governors) administered smaller provinces (Matt. 27:2), with tetrarchs over one-fourth of a province (Luke 3:1).

Christians in NT times engaged in civil service. Erastus was a financial officer in Corinth (Rom. 16:23), and he may be the same Erastus commemorated in an inscription from this period who held the office of aedile. The proconsul Sergius Paulus (Acts 13:7); Manaen, a close friend of Herod Antipas (Acts 13:1); and members of Caesar’s household (Phil. 4:22) were also Christian public leaders.

TRADE AND ECONOMICS

From earliest times, people have exchanged goods and property. When Abraham purchased Ephron’s field, his silver was measured “according to the weight current among the merchants” (Gen. 23:16), which suggests that a recognized system of public trading was in place during the time of the patriarchs. Traders of commodities such as spices traveled along caravan routes between southern Arabia and Egypt, and these traders often acquired slaves along the way (Gen. 37:28). Solomon employed royal merchants to buy and sell goods (1 Kings 10:28).

In the first century, Jews were engaged broadly in economic life as landowners, artisans, merchants, traders, bankers, and slaves. Several of Jesus’ disciples were fishermen (Matt. 4:18). Luke was a physician, a well-educated and respectable professional (Col. 4:14). Lydia was a dealer in purple cloth (Acts 16:14). Paul, Aquila, and Priscilla worked as tentmakers (Acts 18:3). In the Roman Empire, commerce and pagan religion often intermingled. Merchants often formed trade guilds, where membership sometimes required religious and moral compromise. In Ephesus, silversmiths and craftsmen in related trades turned significant profit through their connections with the local Artemis cult (Acts 19:24–27).

Jesus frequently spent time with tax collectors, such as Levi (also called “Matthew”) (Matt. 9:9; Mark 2:14). Tax collectors were a despised group because often they became wealthy by taking advantage of the Roman taxation system, which allowed them to charge commission on taxes collected (Luke 19:2, 8). Jesus’ parable of the talents references bankers who offered interest on deposits collected (Matt. 25:27), and Rev. 3:17–18 alludes to the fact that Laodicea was a financial center with a significant banking system.

SERVANTS AND SLAVES

In the OT, *’ebed* most often designates a slave or servant, whose occupation involves work (*’abad*) as a subordinate. Some servants held very important positions in their master’s household (Gen. 24:2), while many others toiled in hard labor (Job 7:2). Israelites were not to enslave their kinfolk, but they could take slaves from other nations. Fellow Israelites who became poor could serve as hired workers, but they were to be released along with their children at the Jubilee because God had brought Israel out from Egyptian slavery and they belonged to God as his servants (Lev. 25:39–46).

Slaves in the Roman world were property like goods or cattle, possessed by another (Dio Chrysostom, *2 Serv. lib.* 24). Unlike modern slavery practices, race played no factor in the Roman institution of slavery. Slaves were kidnapped and sold in NT times (1 Tim. 1:10; Rev. 18:13), but the majority of slaves were so by birth. The most prominent slave in the NT is Onesimus, for whom Paul intercedes with his master, Philemon (Philem. 10, 16). Believing slaves were to obey their earthly masters “as slaves of Christ” (Eph. 6:5–6), but the NT stressed the equality of slave and free in Christ (Gal. 3:28). Paul called himself a “servant [*doulos*] of Christ Jesus” (Rom. 1:1).

RELIGIOUS SERVICE

Most Israelites engaged in professional religious service were Levites (Num. 3:12), including Moses, Aaron, and the priests in Aaron’s line (Exod. 6:19–20; 35:19). The priests offered sacrifices to God on behalf of the people (Heb. 5:1). Under the priests’ direction, the Levites were charged with caring for the tabernacle and its furnishings (Num. 1:49; 1 Chron. 23:32) and carrying the ark of the covenant (1 Chron. 15:2). They were set apart to serve in God’s presence (Deut. 18:7) and to lead the people in worship (2 Chron. 5:12). Further, priests often played an important advisory role to Israel’s kings (2 Sam. 8:17; 1 Kings 4:5; 2 Kings 12:2).

In Israel, people went to seers and prophets to inquire of God (1 Sam. 9:9), for they received and communicated God’s word (2 Sam. 24:11; Jer. 37:6). Sometimes individuals are mentioned as prophets, and other times the prophets are discussed as an organized group (1 Sam. 19:20; 1 Kings 22:6).

The NT references a number of ministerial offices (1 Cor. 12:28; Eph. 4:11; 1 Tim. 3:1–12). Not all ministers were paid, though teachers and preachers had a right to “receive their living from the gospel” (1 Cor. 9:14–15; cf. 1 Tim. 5:17). Apostles were those sent out by Jesus as his representatives. The term *apostolos* refers particularly to the twelve apostles who were with Jesus during his earthly ministry and who were witnesses of his resurrection (Acts 1:21–22). Paul referred to himself as an apostle (Gal. 1:1; 1 Cor. 1:1), and he calls Epaphroditus and others “messengers” (*apostoloi*) in the churches (2 Cor. 8:23; Phil. 2:25). Prophets have the spiritual gift of prophecy and speak to strengthen, encourage, and comfort the church (Acts 15:32; 1 Cor. 14:3). Overseers (also called “elders” or “pastors”) are qualified leaders who teach, shepherd, and exercise authority in the church (1 Tim. 3:1; 1 Pet. 5:2). Evangelists and missionaries proclaim the gospel and aim to win converts to Christ (Acts 21:8; 2 Tim. 4:5). Those ministers who are faithful to the gospel deserve support (3 John 8).

OCRAN *See* Okran.

ODED **(1)** The father of the prophet Azariah, who ministered to King Asa of Judah (2 Chron. 15:1). Oded is identified as the prophet in the Hebrew text of 2 Chron. 15:8, which apparently omitted Azariah’s name, but it is reinserted in some translations. **(2)** A prophet in the time of King Pekah of Israel and King Ahaz of Judah, he helped to persuade the army of Israel to return prisoners and plunder taken from Judah (2 Chron. 28:9–15).

ODOR Used in the phrase “pleasing odor” (NIV: “pleasing aroma”) as an anthropomorphic way to express God’s approval of a sacrifice (e.g., Lev. 1:9, 13, 17; Num. 15:3, 7, 10).

OFFAL The waste remains of an animal butchered for sacrificial offering (Exod. 29:14; Lev. 4:11; 8:17; 16:27; Num. 19:5; Mal. 2:3). Specifically in view are the stomach and/or intestinal contents. Thus, in some versions the underlying Hebrew word, *peresh*, is translated as “dung.”

OFFENSE Either a sin or wrongdoing (often in the NIV) or a cause of stumbling (usually in other versions). In the first category, sometimes “offense” and “sin” translate similar Hebrew words (Job 10:14; 13:23; Ps. 59:3). Those who break the law commit an offense (Deut. 19:15; 21:22; Acts 25:8), but the term can have a more relational sense (1 Sam. 25:28; Prov. 17:9; 19:11). In the second category are those offenses that “trip people up” by offending them; such offenses are often not intrinsically wrong. Thus, Jesus and his teaching were an offense (e.g., Matt. 13:57; 1 Pet. 2:8), and Christians can offend weaker brothers and sisters by engaging in activities that are allowed within Christian liberty (Rom. 14:20; 1 Cor. 10:32).

OFFERINGS *See* Sacrifice and Offering.

OFFICES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT These church offices are God-given positions of leadership within the early church designed to give it structure and direction. Some of these positions have ongoing application for today; others are important primarily for understanding the historical development of the church.

A definite structure for church leadership is God’s idea. Even though the equality of all believers is a biblical principle (the priesthood of all believers in 1 Pet. 2:5, 9), God has also chosen to give certain spiritual gifts of leadership (Rom. 12:8) or administration (1 Cor. 12:28) to a limited number within the church, not universally to everyone. Paul asks a series of rhetorical questions in 1 Cor. 12:29, “Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles?” where the expected answer in each case clearly is “No, not everyone has every gift.” Believers are also specifically instructed to “obey your leaders and submit to them” (Heb. 13:17 ESV, NRSV, NASB) and to respect those “who care for you in the Lord and who admonish you” (1 Thess. 5:12). God’s plan is clearly that there be specific leaders. At the same time, the NT does not always answer all our questions or spell out every detail in this area of church leadership. The more significant offices in the NT church include the following:

Apostle. Apostles formed the earliest and most important leadership structure. Jesus, early in his ministry, “called his disciples to him and chose twelve of them, whom he also designated apostles” (Luke 6:13). The word “disciple” (*mathētēs*) means “student” or “learner” and indicates the role of these original twelve during Jesus’ earthly ministry. Following Jesus’ death and resurrection, these same individuals (now minus Judas Iscariot) were typically called “apostles” (*apostolos* [lit., “sent-out one”), who were then entrusted with Christ’s power and authority as his official representatives. Paul describes the foundational role of this office in Eph. 2:20. Their power and authority were without parallel in the historical development of the church. Some other observations round out our understanding of this office. First, there are occasional (but limited) references to broader circles of apostles in the sense of other people being “sent out” by God for specific ministry. Thus, Barnabas is apparently described as an apostle alongside Paul (Acts 14:14), and James the brother of Jesus is described as an apostle (Gal. 1:19). However, Acts 1:21–22 spells out the usual qualifications for an apostle: “men who have been with us the whole time the Lord Jesus was living among us, beginning from John’s baptism to the time when Jesus was taken up from us.” Thus, the apostleship, especially understood in the strict sense, is limited to original eyewitnesses from among the first generation of believers, and this office has not continued.

Prophet. The office of prophet (*prophētēs*) is another foundational one at the time of the establishment of the church (Eph. 2:20). Agabus is described as a prophet (Acts 21:10), and Paul assumes that there were prophets in the church in Corinth (1 Cor. 12:29). Although this is a controversial topic, many believe that this office no longer continues today.

Elder/presbyter. The office of elder or presbyter (*presbyteros*) is one of the most common in the church. This office is based on the model of elders in the Jewish synagogue. Paul and Barnabas appointed elders in every church as early as their first missionary journey (Acts 14:23). James instructs the sick to call on the elders of the church to pray over them (James 5:14). The best job description for elders is 1 Tim. 5:17, where there are two major emphases: first, directing the affairs of the church, and second, preaching and teaching. Elders apparently always functioned in a plurality in Scripture, never as solo leaders.

Overseer/bishop. The office of overseer or bishop (*episkopos*) is mentioned in Phil. 1:1 as well as in 1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:7 in the lists of qualifications. Although by the second or third century the office of overseer/bishop had evolved into a singular office of one overseer presiding over a number of elders, this was not true in the NT, where these two titles apparently were different names for the same office. Several passages indicate this relationship. In Acts 20:17 Paul calls specifically for the “elders” of the church, yet in Acts 20:28 he refers to them as “overseers.” In similar fashion, in Titus 1:5–9 Paul tells Titus to “appoint elders in every town” but then apparently goes on to speak of them as “overseers.” Peter does the same thing in 1 Pet. 5:1–2, where he describes them first as “elders” and then as “overseers.” The key to understanding this relationship is to see that the term “elder” comes from their Jewish heritage and reflects the qualifications for this office (someone who is older and more mature), whereas the term “overseer” comes from a Greek background and refers more to their job description (they are to oversee and take responsibility for leadership).

Deacon. Deacons provide practical, hands-on ministry in the local church. Interestingly, the classic passage on this office, Acts 6:1–6, never uses the actual noun “deacon” (*diakonos*). Instead, other forms of this word are used: “to wait on tables” (*diakoneō* [v. 2]) and “the ministry [lit., ‘service’] of the word” (*diakonia* [v. 4]). This word group is used frequently to refer to nonreligious service, such as Martha’s meal preparation (Luke 10:40) or in reference to a servant or attendant in one of Jesus’ parables (e.g., Matt. 22:13). Originally, the term “deacon” simply meant “servant.” In the development of the NT church, it gradually became a technical term used to refer to a specific office, such as in Paul’s greeting in Phil. 1:1 and in the list of qualifications in 1 Tim. 3:8–13. The standard understanding of the deacons in the NT church structure is that they assisted the elders/overseers in practical ways (probably on the model of the seven men in Acts 6).

Pastor. Pastors, surprisingly, show up only a single time in most English translations, in Eph. 4:11, where Paul describes how Christ “gave . . . pastors and teachers.” “Pastor” (*poimēn*) means “shepherd,” and although the noun appears in this sense of a church leader only here, the verb “to shepherd” (*poimainō*) occurs also in Acts 20:28; 1 Pet. 5:2. This shepherding role is associated with the elders/overseers. We see this in Paul’s address to the Ephesian elders in Acts 20, where he calls them “elders” (v. 17) and “overseers” (v. 28) and tells them how they are to “be shepherds of the church of God” (v. 28). Peter does the same thing in 1 Pet. 5:1–2, where he calls them “elders” (v. 1) and then calls them “overseers” and tells them to “be shepherds of God’s flock” (v. 2).

Teacher. Teachers are mentioned among those with various spiritual gifts in 1 Cor. 12:28–29 and are connected with pastors in Eph. 4:11, apparently as a single combined office.

Evangelist. Evangelists are mentioned in the list of specially gifted individuals in Eph. 4:11, in relationship to Philip the evangelist in Acts 21:8, and as part of the job description for Timothy in 2 Tim. 4:5 (“do the work of an evangelist”).

OFFSCOURING In Lam. 3:45 the KJV translates the Hebrew word *sekhi* as “offscouring,” referring to the survivors of the destruction of Jerusalem. More-recent versions translate the term with similar words, such as “scum” (NIV) and “filth” (NRSV). In 1 Cor. 4:13 the KJV uses “offscouring” again to translate the Greek word *peripsēma* (NIV: “garbage”; NRSV: “dregs”), which Paul uses to describe how the world views Christians.

OG An Amorite king of Bashan, an area northeast of the Sea of Galilee (Deut. 4:47). Og was one of the last of the Rephaites, a gigantic people (Deut. 3:11; 4:47). As the Israelites prepared to enter the promised land, Og attacked them at Edrei, but the Israelites defeated him and seized his land (Num. 21:33–35), which ultimately was allotted to the half-tribe of Manasseh (Deut. 3:13). Israel’s defeats of Og and the neighboring Amorite king Sihon were cited as evidences of God’s faithfulness (Neh. 9:22; Ps. 136:19–20).

OHAD One of Simeon’s sons and Jacob’s grandsons who went into Egypt to live with Joseph (Gen. 46:10). He became the ancestor of a clan with his name (Exod. 6:15).

OHEL A distant descendant of David and a son or close descendant of Zerubbabel (1 Chron. 3:20).

OHOLAH AND OHOLIBAH Names that Ezekiel assigns to the northern kingdom of Israel (Oholah) and the southern kingdom of Judah (Oholibah) in his graphically sexual extended allegory about their unfaithfulness to God (Ezek. 23). The meanings of the names are related to the Hebrew word for “tent” (*ʾōhel*), but their precise import is unclear (“Ohalah” means “her tent,” and “Oholibah” means “my tent is in her,” referring to Jerusalem as the location of the temple). The metaphor involves two sisters, Oholah and Oholibah, who are married to Yahweh. But the sisters are repeatedly unfaithful, going after other gods and making political alliances. Oholah’s lover was Assyria, by whom she was condemned to defeat and exile.

OHOLIAB The son of Ahisamak, of the tribe of Dan, he was a craftsman extraordinaire. He is called an “engraver” who might work on wood or stone, a “designer,” and an “embroiderer” (Exod. 38:23). He was appointed by Moses to work with Bezalel in construction of the tabernacle (35:30–34).

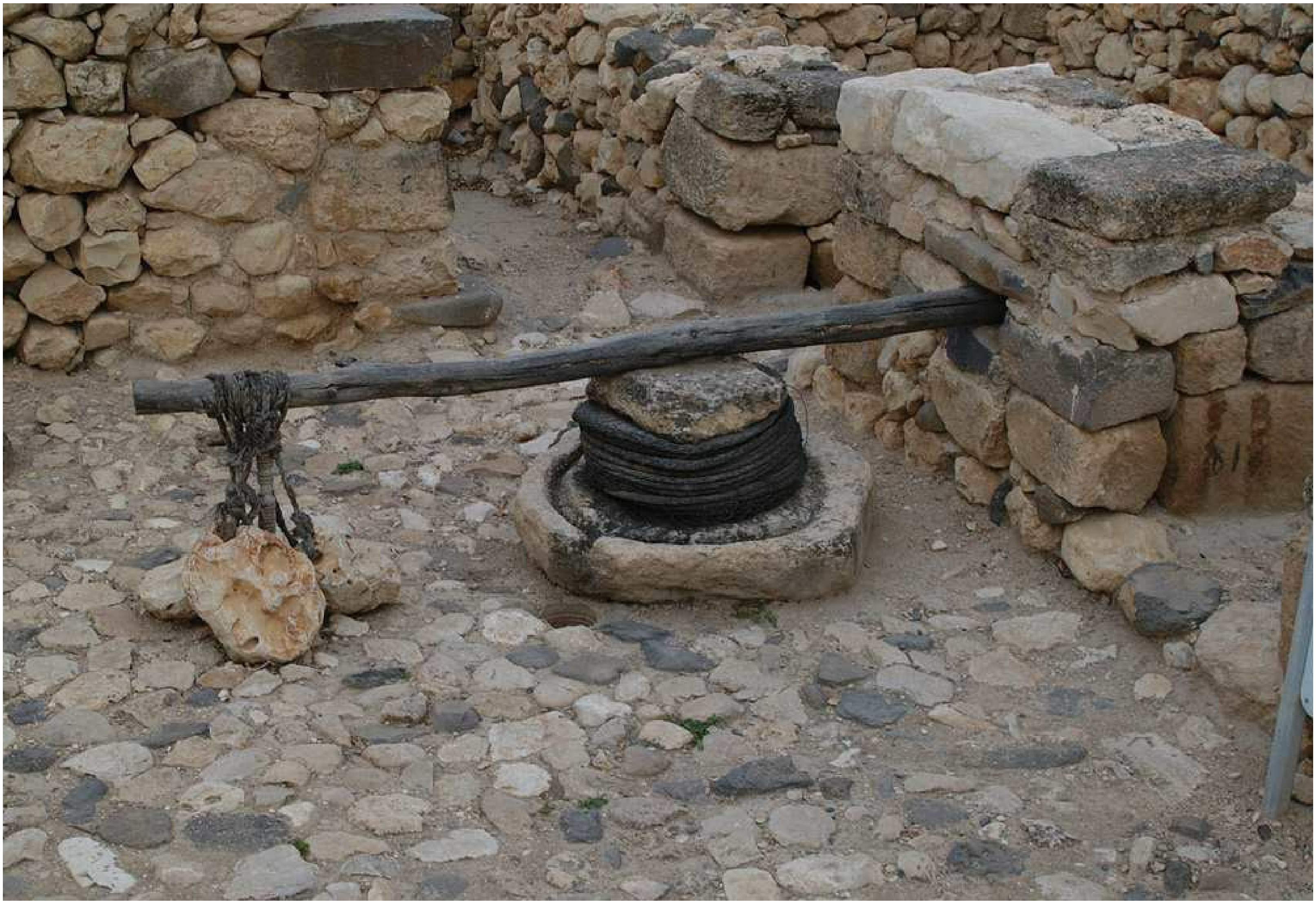
OHOLIBAH *See* Oholah and Oholibah.

OHOLIBAMAH **(1)** A wife of Esau. She was the daughter of Anah and granddaughter of Zibeon the Hivite (Gen. 36:2). She bore Esau three sons (36:5). **(2)** One of the chiefs of the Edomites (Gen. 36:41; 1 Chron. 1:52).

OIL Almost all the oil to which the Bible refers is olive oil. Oil was used primarily for cooking, but also for medicinal purposes, cosmetics, lighting, and religious ceremonies.

Olive oil was produced in several different ways, but there were some common characteristics of all the different production methods. Olive trees were numerous in Israel and often were cultivated and planted in groves. The Mount of Olives in Jerusalem was so named because of the large olive groves there (2 Sam. 15:30). Olives were harvested sometime in the fall by handpicking them or hitting the tree to make the olives fall (Deut. 24:20). Next, the olives were partially crushed so that the kernels (pits) could be removed without crushing them. Crushing the kernel would result in ruining the oil. Then the pits were removed by hand, and the pitted olives were crushed to procure the oil.

The olives could be crushed by foot (Mic. 6:15 NRSV), by beating them with a heavy stick, or by placing them in a shallow stone trench and rolling a stone wheel over them. Finally, the crushed olives were placed in a woven sieve to allow the oil to drain out. The remains of the olives were then soaked in water and pressed at least twice more. This produced more oil, though of much lower quality. As a result, oil was sold according to its quality level. By the time of the monarchy in Israel, there were several large mills that produced large quantities of oil both for use in the country and for export. The finest quality oil—the clear, pure oil drained off before pressing—was specially processed and suitable for ceremonial use.



Oil beam-press at Hazor

Oil was one of the major export products of Palestine, with huge economic impact on Israel and Judah. Oil often was used as currency for other needed materials (Deut. 7:13; Neh. 5:11; Luke 16:6). For example, Elisha preformed a miracle with oil to help a widow pay her debts (2 Kings 4:7). Oil was kept as part of the royal stores (2 Kings 20:13; 2 Chron. 32:28). There are dozens of ostraca that detail the trading, bartering, and selling of oil.

Oil was one of the main ingredients for cooking. A typical meal consisted of flour pressed together with oil and fried with oil on a griddle (1 Kings 17:12–16). This was also the typical way in which grain offerings were made at the tabernacle and temple (Lev. 2:1, 4–7). Oil was also used in lamps because it burned cleanly and produced bright light (2 Kings 4:10; Matt. 25:3–8). Lamps were used throughout the house. Small lamps, often no larger than a hand, were used to give people light when they were walking and traveling at night. In such instances, extra oil usually was carried as a reserve (Matt. 25:1–13). Both the tabernacle and the temple used olive oil to light their lamps. The finest oil was also used for sacrifices at the tabernacle (Exod. 27:20; 29:40; Lev. 24:2; Num. 28:5).

Oil was used cosmetically as well. For instance, oil was put in the hair for beauty (Eccles. 9:8). Oil was also the normal base for perfumes, mixed with a variety of spices (Esther 2:12). The tabernacle had special anointing oil that was mixed to make a perfume (Exod. 30:25). Oil was also used medicinally to help heal wounds, either by mixing it with other substances or by itself to help seal a wound (Luke 10:34). The elders of the church were commissioned to pray for and anoint the sick with oil (James 5:14).

OINTMENT A translation of various words in the Bible that describe the use of oil or other semisolid salves that are applied to the body and specifically not used for cooking. The NIV translators tend to prefer the words “oil,” “balm,” or “perfume” rather than “ointment,” but all these words can be used to describe the same substance.

VARIETIES AND VALUE

Almost all the ointments prepared and used in the ancient Near East had an olive oil base. Exceptions to an olive oil base include oils made from a myrrh plant, cinnamon, or aloe. Often an olive oil base, which could be used by itself, was mixed by a perfumer with other spices, herbs, aromatic or medicinal plants, and/or tree products (Exod. 30:23–25). Occasionally, animals, especially sea animals, might also be used to create ointments. The actual process followed for making ointments is not completely known, although boiling often was part of the process of scent extraction (Job 41:31). Usually the perfume or ointment was carefully stored in either alabaster or lead and placed in a cool place to preserve its aromatic and medicinal qualities. The job of perfuming was, at times, considered woman’s work, as is the case when Samuel told the Israelites not to ask for a king (1 Sam. 8:13). However, the Bible records at least one male perfumer, Hananiah, who helped Nehemiah repair part of Jerusalem’s wall (Neh. 3:8).

Ointments often were used as a trading commodity and generally were considered very valuable and a special luxury item (Song 3:6–7), the exception, perhaps, being plain olive oil. The traders who bought Joseph before taking him to Egypt were trading, among other things, ointments and perfume (Gen. 37:25). King Hezekiah included ointments in his display to the envoys from Babylon when they came to see his wealth (Isa. 39:2). The prophet Amos equated the use of oil (NIV: “lotions”) to being wealthy (Amos 6:6). Ecclesiastes 7:1 regards ointment as something to be treasured. When Mary anointed Jesus’ feet with ointment, Judas Iscariot complained about the money being wasted with this action (John 12:3–6). In Mark’s Gospel a similar anointing event is recorded, with the vial of perfume valued at over three hundred denarii (Mark 14:3–5). A single denarius was roughly the equivalent of a day’s wages. Thus, the NIV translates the price as being the equivalent to a year’s pay.

USES

There were numerous uses for ointment in the ancient Near East, including medicinal, cosmetic, religious, and burial preparation.

Probably the most common use for ointment was medicinal. Medicinal ointments were used to treat many ailments, including creating a barrier to protect wounds from infection and relieving minor skin irritations (see Isa. 1:6). The prophet Jeremiah metaphorically says that there will be no healing balm of Gilead for the people of Jerusalem after God has his way with them (Jer. 8:22; 46:11). Although it has not been confirmed in ancient documents or the archaeological record, the city of Gilead apparently was noted for its industry of making healing ointments.

Another common use for ointment was cosmetic. Esther, for example, was put on a regimen of ointment treatments (oil of myrrh) for six months and then perfume treatments for another six months (Esther 2:12). Ruth used perfume or ointment to prepare herself to see Boaz (Ruth 3:3). The use of ointment was not limited to women; men used it as well. For example, after David had finished mourning for his son, he put on ointment and resumed normal life (2 Sam. 12:20). In Eccles. 9:8 the writer advises, as part of enjoying life, “Always anoint your head with oil.”

Ointments also had many different uses within the religious life of the Israelites. For example, ointments had a special role in tabernacle worship. Exodus details the instructions for making the ointment to be used in consecration ceremonies when anointing the high priests and the furniture of the tabernacle (and later the temple). This ointment included 500 shekels of myrrh, 250 shekels of cinnamon, 250 shekels of cane, 500 shekels of cassia, and a hin of olive oil (Exod. 30:22–25). A shekel equaled somewhere between nine and sixteen ounces; thus 500 shekels was approximately 500 pounds. A hin was likely the equivalent of about one liquid gallon. The exact process for mixing the ingredients together is not given, but it must have followed a fairly standard method of preparation for it not to be detailed in the text. Interestingly, the perfumer also mixed the dry incense used in the tabernacle. Furthermore, the recipes for these special ointments were set aside and prohibited for general use by the population.

Throughout the book of Leviticus, the high priest is referred to as the “anointed priest,” which denotes the fact that the sacred ointment had been put on him and consecrated him for service to God (Lev. 4:16; 6:22; 8:12). The Hebrew term *meshiakh* (“messiah”) also indicates someone who has been anointed. This term, generally applied to kings, was not limited to Jewish kings; for example, Cyrus, king of the Medes and Persians, was considered anointed (Isa. 45:1). Prophets too were considered anointed by God (Ps. 105:15).

Ointments were also used in the preparation of a corpse for burial. Given the humid conditions of Palestine and the lack of sophisticated embalming methods, it was necessary to add ointments to the body in preparation for burial. This was also done to honor the deceased. For example, after Jesus died, the women who first discovered his resurrection had come to anoint his body with spices and ointment (Mark 16:1).

In the NT, anointing with oil took on symbolic meaning. The oil came to represent the Holy Spirit or the presence of God. For example, in Acts 10:38 it is said that “God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit” (cf. 4:27). James prescribes that church elders anoint the sick with oil when praying over them (James 5:14).

OKRAN The father of Pagiel, who was the tribal leader of Asher during the wilderness wanderings (Num. 1:13; 2:27; 7:72, 77; 10:26). *See also* Pagiel.

OLD GATE *See* Jeshanah Gate.

OLD TESTAMENT The collection of Jewish writings considered to be God’s word by both Jews and Christians. This collection of Hebrew Scriptures was mostly in evidence (with the exception of Esther) by the second century BC, as seen in the Qumran scrolls. The Jewish scrolls of the Hebrew Bible differ in order from the books of the later Christian OT. The Hebrew Bible is divided into the Law (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy), Prophets (Former Prophets: Joshua, Judges, 1–2 Samuel, 1–2 Kings; Latter Prophets: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the twelve Minor Prophets), and Writings (Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, 1–2 Chronicles). The Hebrew book order ends with a celebration in the books of Chronicles, looking back at the good and looking in hope toward the future. The Christian book order follows, though not exactly, the more chronological order of the LXX (the Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures).

OLD TESTAMENT QUOTATIONS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT *See* New Testament Use of the Old Testament.

OLIVES, MOUNT OF *See* Mount of Olives.

OLIVET DISCOURSE The Olivet Discourse is Jesus' sermon predicting the Jewish War, the destruction of the temple, the fall of Jerusalem in AD 70, and the coming of the Son of Man to judge and to save. It is found in the Synoptic Gospels (Matt. 24:1–25:46; Mark 13:1–37; Luke 21:5–36). The name derives from the Mount of Olives, overlooking Jerusalem and the temple, the place where Jesus taught his disciples this material.

All three Synoptics place the discourse following scenes of confrontation with the Jewish leadership. Matthew's account is the most dramatic. Jesus rebukes the scribes and Pharisees in Matt. 23, culminating with the accusation that they are responsible for "all the righteous blood that has been shed on the earth" (v. 35). He pauses to lament for Jerusalem, then declares the temple, which he calls "your" house, desolate. As he leaves, the disciples remark on the stones of the temple compound. Jesus then predicts the total destruction of the temple. This will indicate the Son of Man coming with power and great glory (Matt. 24:30) in judgment of apostate Israel.

Jesus uses apocalyptic language to describe coming events: earthquakes, famines, betrayal, signs in the sun, moon, and stars. These are all the birth pains. Christians will face persecution. They will be brought before the authorities, but they will be given what to say by the Holy Spirit. They will be put to death and hated by all nations. False prophets and false messiahs will emerge and attempt to lead the elect astray. Jesus' repeated command is for the disciples to be alert, as no one knows the time, not even the Son. It will be possible, though, to know when the time is approaching, just as the approach of summer can be predicted by observing the fig tree.

Matthew appends three parables to the end of the discourse concerning preparedness and reward: the ten virgins, the talents, and the sheep and the goats. The virgins were unprepared when the bridegroom arrived and were shut out of the banquet. The talents were entrusted to servants by a man going on a journey. When he returned, he rewarded those who had invested wisely. The last parable is an adaptation of Ezek. 34:11–31, a messianic passage where God will gather his scattered sheep. Jesus declares himself to be the one who judges between the sheep. In Ezekiel the sheep are judged for their sins: muddying the water, trampling the food, butting the weak sheep. In keeping with his extended ethical teaching in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus will judge even omissions of proper care of each other: not feeding strangers, not visiting those in prison. The message is clear: disciples must be prepared for the return of Jesus at any time, using their gifts wisely and treating the least among us with care.

Some say that Jesus is answering two questions from the disciples: “When will this (the destruction of the temple) happen?” and, a completely separate question, “What will be the sign of your (second) coming?” But Jesus is only recorded as speaking about the temple here, and following the rebuke of the Pharisees, it is clear that he speaks of judgment in connection with the Jewish leaders. Luke makes this clearer in his frank substitution: where Matthew (24:15) and Mark (13:14) record “when you see . . . the abomination of desolation,” Luke (21:20) writes, “when you see Jerusalem being surrounded by armies,” a clear reference to AD 70. Matthew (24:28) hints at the same idea: “Wherever the carcass is, there the eagles [perhaps from the Roman emblem] will be gathered together” (NKJV). None of the three accounts seem to contemplate answers to two separate questions.

OLYMPAS A believer whom Paul greets at the church in Rome (Rom. 16:15). The masculine name is otherwise unknown. Related words pertain to the dwelling of the Greek gods on Olympus or to the Olympic games.

OMAR A grandson of Esau through his son Eliphaz (Gen. 36:11; 1 Chron. 1:36). One of the clans of the Edomites derives its name from this Omar (Gen. 36:15).

OMEGA *See* Alpha and Omega.

OMEN A sign that is read or interpreted to ascertain a divine message, usually to avert some evil or predict the future. Reading omens was a very common practice in Mesopotamia and is known in different forms. One such practice was extispicy: reading the entrails of a sacrificial animal. Other forms included astrology, the observation of freak births (teratoscopy), and observing the behavior of water when poured onto oil (lecanomancy). Ezekiel 21:21 makes note of some of these practices. Generally, the biblical authors outlaw omen reading because God used the institution of the prophet to make his purposes known (Amos 3:7). While most were outlawed, some forms do seem to be present in the Bible. Jacob used the cup for divining (Gen. 44:5) and seems to have been practicing lecanomancy. The Urim and Thummim also had a similar purpose (1 Sam. 14:41).

Ancient Mesopotamian extispicy record on a clay tablet, showing a sheep intestine anomaly (second millennium BC)

OMER A measure of dry weight mentioned only in Exod. 16. An omer was one-tenth of an ephah (see v. 36) and was the amount of manna allowed for collection per person each day, except for the Sabbath, when each person's share was two omers.

OMNIPOTENCE An attribute of God related to his infinity, omnipotence is the attribute of having all power. This attribute is expressed every time Scripture notes God as "almighty" (Heb. *shadday*). In Scripture, God as omnipotent is related to God as eternal, God as the creator of all things, and God as the sustainer of all creation and life.

Nothing is beyond the power of God to act and perform, and what God does is in comformity with his own nature and will. In the NT, omnipotence is noted with the word "almighty" (*pantokratōr*) in 2 Cor. 6:18; Rev. 1:8; 4:8; 11:17; 15:3; 16:7, 14; 19:6, 15; 21:22. These contexts note God as sovereign and eternal, frequently noted with the Johannine expression of God as the one "who is, and who was, and who is to come" (Rev. 1:8).

OMNIPRESENCE The English word derives from the Latin *omnis* ("all") and *praesens* ("present"). Though not found in Scripture, the term accurately describes a divine perfection. God is always in his totality everywhere present, yet separate from his creation (Gen. 1; 1 Kings 8:27; Ps. 139:7–12; Jer. 23:23–24; Heb. 4:13). This attribute is to be distinguished from pantheism, which teaches that God is everything, that is, that God and the material world are one and the same. God's omnipresence is a great comfort for those who seek him but is disconcerting to those who may wish to avoid him (Job 34:21–22; Ps. 139:7; Amos 9:1–4; Jon. 1:3). Although at various times God chose to localize his presence for the purpose of revelation, he always remained transcendent (1 Kings 8:27). Although the lost are said to be removed from the presence of God (2 Thess. 1:9), even in the lake of fire they are in actuality separated from his mercy, grace, and forgiveness, not his essential presence (Job 26:6; Heb. 4:13; Rev. 14:10; 20:11–14).

OMNISCIENCE The English word derives from the Latin *omnis* ("all") and *sciens* ("knowing"). Though not found in Scripture, the term accurately describes an exclusively divine attribute. God has perfect infinite knowledge of himself and everything actual and possible (1 Sam. 23:8–13; Job 37:16; Pss. 33:13–15; 139:2–6, 11–12; 147:5; Prov. 15:3; Isa. 40:14; 46:10; Dan. 2:22; Matt. 11:21–23; John 21:17; Acts 15:18; 1 Cor. 2:10–11; Heb. 4:13; 1 John 3:20). God's omniscience is eternal, encompassing all things past, present, and future. It includes complete knowledge of all human choices, the occurrence of all events, and the outworking of all contingencies.

OMRI Omri's history is found in 1 Kings 16:16–17, 21–28. Not counting his rival Tibni (who never was king), Omri was the sixth king of Israel (r. 882–871 BC), making his son Ahab the seventh. Omri ruled for six years in Tirzah and then built the city of Samaria and moved the capital there. His kingdom was stable and prosperous. He married Ahab to Jezebel, a princess of Tyre, forging a marriage alliance with Phoenicia. Ahab in turn married his daughter to a king of Judah, cementing a long-lasting peace after years of warfare. Omri's dynasty lasted almost fifty years, after a succession of short-lived reigns. Ahab and his progeny are called "Omrides." Omri is mentioned on the Moabite Stone: "Omri was the king of Israel, and he oppressed Moab for many years" (line 5), and a century after his death the land of Israel was called by the Assyrians "Omri land." Nevertheless, 1 Kings dispatches him in a mere ten verses with the claim that he did more evil than all before him. He is charged with continuing the cult of Jeroboam. But perhaps the most sinful aspect of his reign was his son's marriage to Jezebel, a fanatical Baal worshiper. She was thus in a position to influence Israel away from exclusive worship of Yahweh. Thus, the Bible holds the Omrides chiefly responsible for state-sponsored Baal worship in Israel.

ON **(1)** The son of Peleth from the tribe of Reuben (Num. 16:1). He was one of the Israelite leaders who rebelled against Moses and Aaron by questioning their leadership role. Numbers 16 does not mention his name again even though the other rebels are mentioned repeatedly; thus it is not clear if he was consumed by fire (as a punishment from God) along with the other leaders who rebelled. Interestingly, in the genealogy of Reuben his name does not appear (Num. 26:5–9). **(2)** A city in Egypt near modern-day Cairo. "On," which is the Greek and Hebrew name of the city, more often goes by its other name, "Heliopolis." On is mentioned in connection with Joseph's wife, Asenath, who was the daughter of Potiphera, the priest of On (Gen. 41:45; 46:20). In a lament against Egypt, Ezekiel names On as one of the cities that will be taken into captivity (Ezek. 30:17).

ONAM **(1)** A son of Shobal and a grandson of Seir the Horite. The Horites inhabited Edom prior to the descendants of Esau (Gen. 36:23; 1 Chron. 1:40). **(2)** A descendant of Judah and Perez, a son of Jerahmeel, the father of Shammai and Jada (1 Chron. 2:26, 28).

ONAN One of the sons of the patriarch Judah. He was obligated to father a son through his brother's widow, Tamar, according to the custom of levirate marriage (Gen. 38:8). By practicing what appears to be a form of birth control, Onan refrained from impregnating Tamar by spilling "his semen on the ground," and so Yahweh put him to death for his failure to fulfill his obligation to his dead brother (Gen. 38:9–10).

ONESIMUS A runaway slave who belonged to the apostle Paul's friend and convert Philemon. A man of importance, Philemon hosted a church in his Colossian home. While possibly attempting to blend in with the large population of Rome, Onesimus connected with Paul during Paul's imprisonment and was converted to the faith (Philem. 10). Though he was helpful to Paul, the apostle sent him back to Philemon to make things right. Paul pleaded with Philemon to accept Onesimus back as a brother in Christ. Onesimus accompanied Tychicus to Colossae to deliver Paul's letter to that church (Col. 4:9) and to present himself and Paul's personal letter to Philemon. Though the outcome of this request is not known for certain, tradition suggests that Onesimus became a bishop in the early church.

ONESIPHORUS An early Christian disciple who, in the context of Paul's exhortation to Timothy not to be ashamed of the gospel or of his "chains" (2 Tim. 1:8, 16), is praised as an example worthy of imitation (1:16–18). Onesiphorus (his name means "profit bringer") is commended for diligently and courageously seeking out Paul in prison and for his many acts of kindness to Paul and the church at Ephesus. Paul's prayer for God's mercy is directed not to Onesiphorus but to his household, suggesting that he was not with them at the time of writing (1:16; 4:19).

ONLY BEGOTTEN John and the author of Hebrews call Jesus Christ the "only begotten," as traditionally translated (John 1:14, 18; 3:16, 18; 1 John 4:9; Heb. 11:17 KJV). The epithet, which is a single word in Greek (*monogenēs*), signifies being the only one of its kind within a specific relationship, and therefore, as we find in more recent translations, it may also be translated "one and only Son" (NIV) or "only son" (NRSV). Although the Bible claims that God has many human sons and daughters, in various senses he has but one "only begotten" Son, who must also be distinguished from the angels, who are also identified as sons of God (Heb. 1:1–14; see also Gen. 6:2, 4).

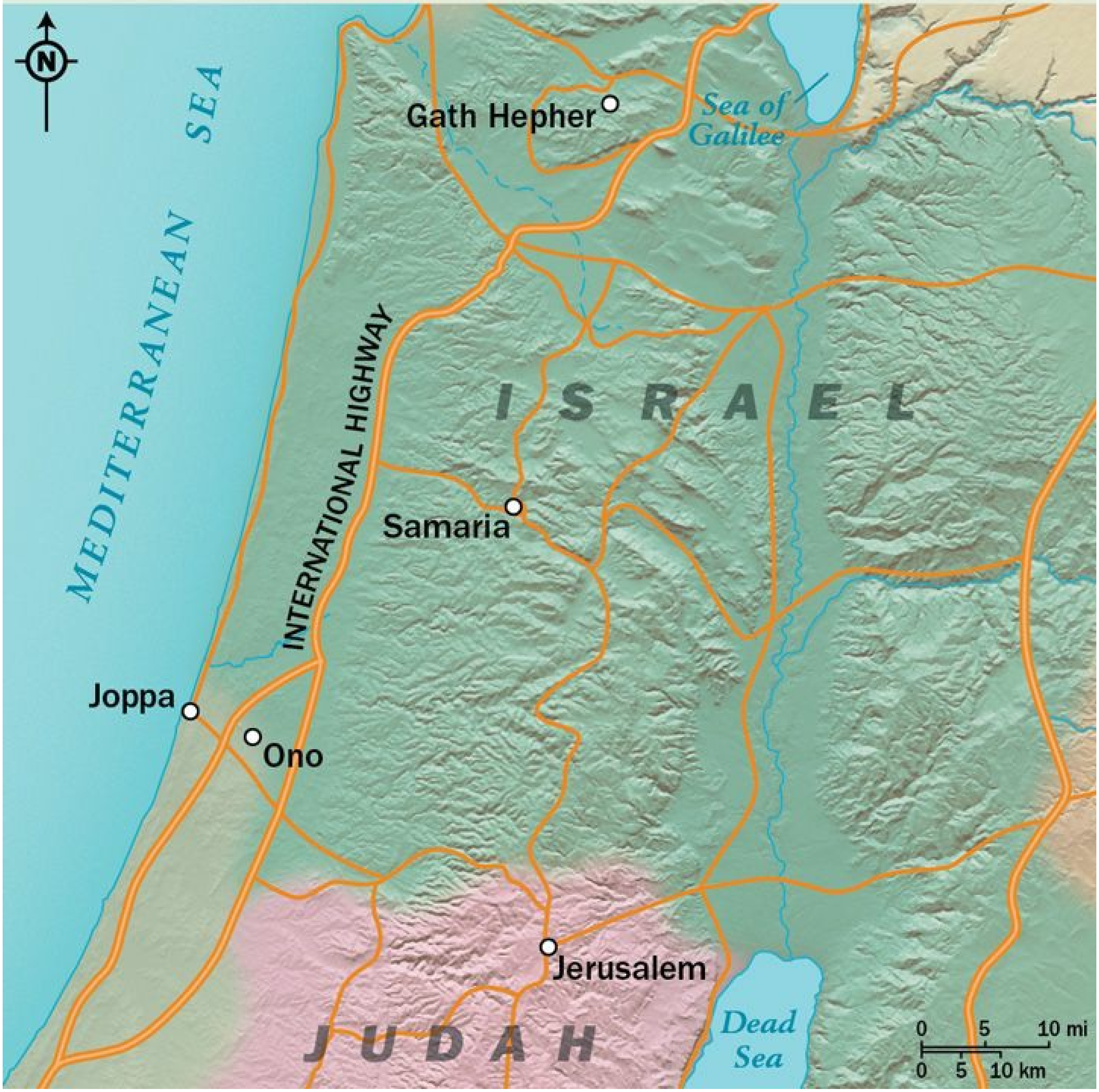
The author of Hebrews and Josephus, a first-century Jewish historian, present Isaac as Abraham's "only begotten son" (Heb. 11:17 KJV; Josephus, *Ant.* 1.222). But Abraham has two sons, the other one being Ishmael, as the biblical narrative and Paul make clear (Gen. 16:11–16; Gal. 4:22). The difference is that Isaac was the only begotten between Abraham and his wife, Sarah, and the one for whom God decided to perpetuate the covenant that he originally made with Abraham (Gen. 12:1–3; 15:1–6; 17:19). Isaac is presented by early Christians as a type of Christ, and for Paul, he is a type of all the children of the new covenant (Gal. 4:21–31). Nevertheless, through Jesus' fulfillment of God's covenant obligations, many, including the descendants of Ishmael, will be called "sons of God" (Gen.

17:20; Hos. 1:10, cited in Rom. 9:26; Matt. 5:9; Rom. 8:14, 19; Gal. 3:26; 4:6).

Without compromising the uniqueness of his position, the “one and only” Son is happy to share his status before God the Father through faith, by grace, which brings the believer into union with his body, the church (Gal. 2:19–20; Eph. 2:1–10; Heb. 2:10). The conviction that Christ cannot be compared to human children or angels, parts of God’s creation, contributed to the belief of comparing Christ only with God, the uncreated.

ONO A city within the coastal plain of Palestine, Ono lay approximately thirty miles northwest of Jerusalem at modern Kefr ’Ana. The city stood within the tribal allotment to Benjamin. According to 1 Chron. 8:12, Shemed, a descendant of Benjamin, built Ono, Lod, and the surrounding villages. Ezra and Nehemiah number the men who returned from exile to Lod, Hadid, and Ono at 725 and 721 respectively (Ezra 2:33; Neh. 7:37). Sanballat and Geshem, Nehemiah’s opponents, tried four times to lure Nehemiah to “one of the villages on the plain of Ono,” but Nehemiah recognized their plot to harm him and refused to go (Neh. 6:1–4).

THE LOCATION OF ONO


N
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
INTERNATIONAL HIGHWAY
Gath Hepher
Sea of Galilee
ISRAEL
Samaria
Joppa
Ono
Jerusalem
JUDAH
Dead Sea
0 5 10 mi
0 5 10 km

ONYCHA A claw-shaped closing flap found in certain sea snails of the phylum *Mollusca*, including the silver conch, valued for its pungent aroma when burned. Yahweh directed Moses to use onycha in making the incense for the tent of meeting (Exod. 30:34).

OPEN FIELDS *See* Suburbs.

OPENNESS THEOLOGY The view that God’s relationship to the world is open and dynamic as he adapts his will to the free will of humanity. Love is the most important attribute of God, which is expressed by his commitment to the freedom of humankind. God’s love may be rejected, but this is the risk that he takes to preserve free will. God is omniscient in that he exhaustively knows all that can be known, but this does not include the future acts of free creatures. The future is open, even for God.

Human will cooperates with God's will to guide history. God is not the ultimate explanation for everything that happens; human decisions and actions make an important contribution too. History is the combined result of what God and his creatures decide to do. Instead of perceiving the entire course of human history in one timeless moment, God comes to know events as they occur. God's own intentions are subject to revision based on his creatures' actions.

Opponents of open theology maintain that it contradicts classical definitions of God's immutability, omniscience, and omnipotence. Opponents also illustrate how predictive prophecy often found in Scripture negates open theology's claim that God's knowledge of the future does not exist.

OPHEL All or part of the City of David south of the temple location. In Hebrew, this name always appears with the definite article ("the Ophel"), generally in conjunction with a fortifying wall. Jotham built the wall of the Ophel (2 Chron. 27:3). When Manasseh rebuilt the outer wall of the City of David, west of the Gihon spring, it encircled the Ophel (2 Chron. 33:14). Temple servants living on the Ophel (Neh. 3:26; 11:21) repaired the wall opposite the Water Gate to the east and the projecting tower, and the men of Tekoa worked from the projecting tower to the wall of the Ophel (Neh. 3:27).

In the first century AD "the Ophel" meant a place near the temple (Josephus, *J.W.* 5.145). In contemporary parlance, Ophel is synonymous with the entire City of David, the spur that is bounded on the east by the Kidron Valley, to the north by the Temple Mount, and to the west by the Central or Tyropoeon Valley. It comes to a point in the south where the Kidron and Hinnom valleys meet.

OPHIR **(1)** Twice named when nations are listed with their etymological namesakes, he is a descendant of Shem (Gen. 10:29; 1 Chron. 1:23).

(2) The land named for the people descended from Ophir (#1), it is most often mentioned in regard to the economic enterprises of different kings, especially involving gold. Together, King Solomon and King Hiram of Tyre in Phoenicia sent ships from the Red Sea port of Ezion Geber to Ophir and brought back 420 (2 Chronicles reports 450 talents) talents of gold (1 Kings 9:26–28; 2 Chron. 8:18). The report about the Queen of Sheba's visit to Solomon says that Solomon and Hiram's ships brought gold from Ophir along with silver, ivory, apes, and peacocks every three years (1 Kings 10:11; 2 Chron. 9:10). Jehoshaphat also built a fleet of trading ships that he intended to send to Ophir, but they were wrecked in harbor and never set sail (1 Kings 22:48–49). David's contribution to the building of the temple (which his son Solomon was to build) included three thousand talents of gold from Ophir (1 Chron. 29:4).

Clearly, the most important product from Ophir was its gold. The book of Job twice refers to the gold of Ophir. Eliphaz the Temanite encourages Job to get rid of his gold of Ophir (which Eliphaz implies has a wrongful place in Job's heart) so that he can be right before God. Eliphaz says that God should be Job's only gold (Job 22:24). Job notes that wisdom cannot be bought with the gold of Ophir (28:16). Psalm 45 describes a wedding ceremony and feast where the bride is wearing the gold of Ophir (v. 9). In an oracle against Babylon, the prophet Isaiah says that God will make humans more rare than the gold of Ophir after God punishes them (Isa. 13:12).

There is no clear indication in the Bible of the location of Ophir. Many scholars place it somewhere in Arabia; however, there are few if any ports that could match the list of exports, especially the animal exports, in 1 Kings. There is both ancient support (Josephus) and more contemporary linguistic support to suggest that Ophir may have been on the west coast of India or Sri

Lanka, both of which had extensive trading centers during the tenth century BC.

OPHNI A city allocated to the tribe of Benjamin, mentioned only in Josh. 18:24. It is listed among the cities of Benjamin's eastern portion, between Kephar Ammoni and Geba. Ophni likely still survives as the modern Jifna, located two and a half miles northwest of Bethel. Josephus mentions the town under the name Gophna (*J.W.* 3.55).

OPHRAH **(1)** A descendant of Judah, fathered by Meonothai (1 Chron. 4:14). **(2)** A city in Benjamin (Josh. 18:23), later mentioned as a destination of Philistine raiders (1 Sam. 13:17). It is identified with modern-day Taybeh, about twenty-two miles north of Jerusalem. **(3)** A city in Manasseh allotted to the clan of Abiezer (Josh. 17:2). Gideon, son of Joash the Abiezrite, was under the terebinth in Ophrah when first called by the angel of the Lord, for whom he then built an altar (Judg. 6:11, 24). Gideon later placed in Ophrah the gold ephod that became a snare to him and his family; he was subsequently buried there (Judg. 8:27, 32). Ophrah is also the site of the murder of the seventy sons of Jerub-Baal (Gideon) by their ruthless half brother, Abimelek (Judg. 9:5). *See also* Beth Ophrah.

ORACLES Divine pronouncements given to humankind that are either unsolicited (Isa. 7:3–9; Hag. 1:2–11; Zech. 12:1) or a response to an inquiry (2 Kings 8:8). It was common practice throughout the ancient Near East to seek pronouncements from deities and to identify holy sites where sacred individuals could query the deities (e.g., the shrine of Apollo at Delphi). How much time elapsed between the transmission of an oracle and its inscription is uncertain. Inscriptions from the surrounding Near Eastern milieu attest that messages received from a deity often were transcribed immediately upon reception, with the prophet's name attached.

RECEPTION AND DELIVERY OF ORACLES

The Hebrew word *massa'* (derived from *nasa'*, "to lift, take, carry"), variously translated "oracle" (Isa. 17:1; 19:1; 21:1; 30:6), "burden" (Isa. 17:1 JPS, KJV), or "prophecy" (Prov. 30:1; 31:1 KJV), is used in this figurative sense primarily in prophetic speech (Prov. 30:1; 31:1 are the exceptions) to refer to threatening pronouncements against Israel (Hab. 1:1; Zech. 12:1; Mal. 1:1), its neighbors (Isa. 13:1; 14:28; 15:1; Nah. 1:1), or an individual (2 Kings 9:25; 2 Chron. 24:27). Although the word itself is used infrequently, the prophetic activity of delivering divine pronouncements was prevalent throughout Israel's history, rising in prominence during the monarchy and ceasing at the beginning of the intertestamental period.

Priests, judges (Deut. 17:9), and prophets (1 Sam. 9:9) could be the recipients and deliverers of divine oracles, although as the duties of these offices became more differentiated over time, delivery of oracles became more the province of the prophet (2 Kings 22:11–14; Jer. 21:2). A few oracles found in the OT are attributed to non-Israelites (Balaam [Num. 22–24]; Agur [Prov. 30:1]; King Lemuel [Prov. 31:1]). The Israelites were commanded to seek Yahweh (Isa. 55:6; Hos. 10:12), and they (Isa. 9:13) and their leaders (Jer. 10:21) were condemned both for failure to do so and for their dismissive response to a prophetic oracle once it had been delivered, whether solicited (Ezek. 33:30–32) or not (Zech. 7:12).

Prophets were often sought to inquire about obtaining an oracle (1 Sam. 9:9; 2 Kings 3:11; 22:13) during times of crisis or need. Such oracles were for the benefit of either an individual (Exod. 18:15; 2 Kings 8:8) or the nation (1 Kings 22:5; 2 Kings 3:11; 2 Chron. 18:6) and were sought by commoners (Gen. 25:22; Exod. 18:15; Ezek. 33:30), elders (Ezek. 14:1–3; 20:1; see also 8:1), royalty (1 Kings 14:5; 22:5–8; 2 Kings 22:18; 2 Chron. 26:5), army officials (Jer. 42:1–3), and foreigners (2 Kings 8:7; Isa. 14:32). Prophetic response to oracular inquiry was not automatic. Deliverance of an oracle after an inquiry could be immediate (Jer. 37:17), delayed for an extended period of time (Jer. 42:7 [ten days]), or the prophet could refuse to deliver an oracle (Jer. 23:33; Ezek. 14:1). A previous oracle could be superseded (Isa. 38 [compare v. 1 with vv. 4–6]). Various commodities could be used for payment, including silver (1 Sam. 9:7–8), food (1 Kings 14:3), and foreign goods (2 Kings 8:7–9).

Oracles could be pronounced publicly in various places, including the palace (2 Kings 20:4–5), the temple (Jer. 7:2; 26:2), the city gates (1 Kings 22:10; 2 Chron. 18:9), the roadside (1 Kings 20:38–43), or privately to individuals, including royalty (Jer. 37:17), officials (Isa. 22:15), and foreigners (Jer. 39:15–17). There are several mentions in Scripture of oracles that are not part of the canonical record (e.g., 2 Chron. 24:27).

Oracular pronouncements could be brief (1 Kings 17:1) or lengthy (the books of Nahum and Malachi), and they consisted of a variety of genres, including satire (Isa. 44:9–20), parable (2 Sam. 12:1–14), and lament (Jer. 9:20; Ezek. 19; Amos 5:1), to produce the desired rhetorical effect. The prophetic introductory or concluding oracular formulas “thus says the LORD” and “declares the LORD” echo the messenger terminology of the broader culture, in which a similar introductory “thus says X” was used by messengers delivering public proclamations on behalf of the one who commissioned them (2 Chron. 36:23). In this way, the prophet presented an oracle as God’s message to the people, not his own.

Nominal Israel was condemned for seeking pronouncements from false gods (2 Kings 1:3–4, 6, 16; 2 Chron. 25:15; Hos. 4:12), necromancy (Isa. 8:19), and failure to inquire of the true God of Israel (Zeph. 1:6). False prophets could also claim to have received communication from God (Deut. 13:1–11; 18:20; Ezek. 13), but they were indicted for delivering their own message without divine sanction (Jer. 23:34–39; 28; Lam. 2:14; Ezek. 13), turning the people away from the true God to worship false gods (Deut. 13:1–11) and delivering oracular pronouncements in order to enjoy personal pleasure (Mic. 2:11) and gain (Jer. 6:13–15; 8:10–12).

Often Scripture simply notes that a prophet received a “word of the LORD” (Jer. 1:2; Hos. 1:1; Joel 1:1; cf. Isa. 14:28; Hab. 1:1) without explicitly stating the means by which the divine pronouncement was received. The prophetic witness mentions both seeing (Isa. 1:1; 13:1; Amos 8:1; Hab. 1:1) and hearing (Ezek. 1:24–25, 28) divine communication, but what actually happened to the prophet is not easily determined. The references to the Spirit coming upon an individual (Num. 11:25; 24:2; 1 Sam. 10:6, 10; Ezek. 8:1; 11:5; 37:1) point to some sort of divine intervention that seized the prophet’s consciousness in such a way as to prepare the prophet for a revelation from God.

Prophets were known to have ecstatic or visionary experiences that marked them as operating under divine influence. In addition, several of the prophets (Isa. 20; Jer. 13:1–11; Ezek. 5:1–4) acted out demonstrations (sign-acts) as part of their oracular ministry. These ecstatic experiences and peculiar actions offended many of their contemporaries (2 Kings 9:11; Jer. 29:26; Hos. 9:7). These phenomena were concentrated around the two great crises faced by Israel: the demise of the northern kingdom in 722 BC and of the southern kingdom in 586 BC. Having been given warning that national judgment was imminent, these prophets were led to augment their preaching with dramatizations in order to convey more persuasively to the audience the urgency of heeding their message (Ezek. 12:8–11).

TYPES OF ORACLES

Form critics have identified three main types of prophetic oracles: oracles of salvation, judgment, and repentance. The first is further divided into subcategories: individual salvation oracles (1 Kings 17:8–16) and community salvation oracles (1 Sam. 7:3–15). The prophets, however, were not tightly bound to the traditional forms, and they demonstrated great creativity in modifying the forms to fit their personal style and the situation before them.

These various types of oracles were not arbitrary pronouncements; they were founded on Israel's covenantal relationship with Yahweh (Jer. 34:18). The prophets served as covenant prosecutors, and their oracles were part of the prosecution's case on behalf of Yahweh against the people. Behavior, whether an individual's or the nation's, was evaluated in light of the demands of the covenant. So too, Yahweh's response—judgment or salvation—was cast in terms of his faithfulness to the covenant(s) that he made with Israel.

Salvation oracles announced Yahweh's glorious deliverance and restoration, mostly in response to the catastrophe of 586 BC (Ezek. 11:16–21; 36:24–38; 37:15–28; Amos 9:11–15; Zeph. 3:14–20), and they could include in the salvific pronouncement the destruction of the enemy (Zeph. 3:19). They often open with the formulaic "in that day" (Amos 9:11; Mic. 4:6), focusing Israel's attention on a future time when all its enemies would be subdued and covenantal blessings would be established and enjoyed by the redeemed community.

Judgment oracles typically were introduced with an interjection, often translated into English as "woe," followed by a formal address and accusation accompanied by an announcement of the punishment to be inflicted (Isa. 1:4; 5:8, 11, 18, 20, 21, 22; Jer. 22:13; Ezek. 34:2). These oracles could take the form of a lawsuit. In Isa. 1:2 "heaven and earth" are summoned as witnesses, harking back to Deut. 30:19; 31:28; 32:1, where these elements of nature were invoked by Moses to be witnesses of God's covenant with Israel. Some oracles state explicitly that a case has been brought against the people (Isa. 3:13; Jer. 2:9; Hos. 4:1; 12:2; Mic. 6:1–2).

Repentance oracles specifically summon the addressee to repentance and a recommitment to the covenant in order to avoid destruction (Isa. 31:6; Jer. 4:1; Hos. 12:6).

MEANS OF ORACLES

Various objects were sanctioned for use in discerning God's will. Scripture is silent on many of the details regarding the manipulation of these objects, but the validity of their use for discerning the divine will is not questioned. The mysterious Urim and Thummim, two stonelike objects kept in the high priest's breastpiece, appear to have operated to give a "yes or no" response (Exod. 28:30; Lev. 8:8; Deut. 33:8; 1 Sam. 14:41), though sometimes there is no response at all (1 Sam. 28:6). The ephod, some sort of two-piece linen apron or loin cloth worn by priests under the breastpiece (Exod. 28:4, 6; 1 Sam. 23:9–12; 1 Sam. 30:7–8; but note that Samuel was wearing one as he assisted the high priest Eli [1 Sam. 2:18], and David, as he led the procession returning the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem [2 Sam. 6:14]), was also pressed into service for discerning God's will. Another method, the casting of lots, is shrouded in mystery. This method was used to determine the scapegoat on the Day of Atonement (Lev. 16:8–10), the guilty party in the loss at Ai (Josh. 7:14), land allotment in Canaan (Josh. 14–19; 21), priestly assignments in the temple (1 Chron. 24:5; 25:8; 26:13), residency in Jerusalem in the postexilic community (Neh. 11:1), the day to massacre the Jews in Persia as plotted by Haman (Esther 3:7; 9:24), and dividing the Messiah's clothing (Ps. 22:18; cf. John 19:24).

ORACLES AGAINST THE FOREIGN NATIONS

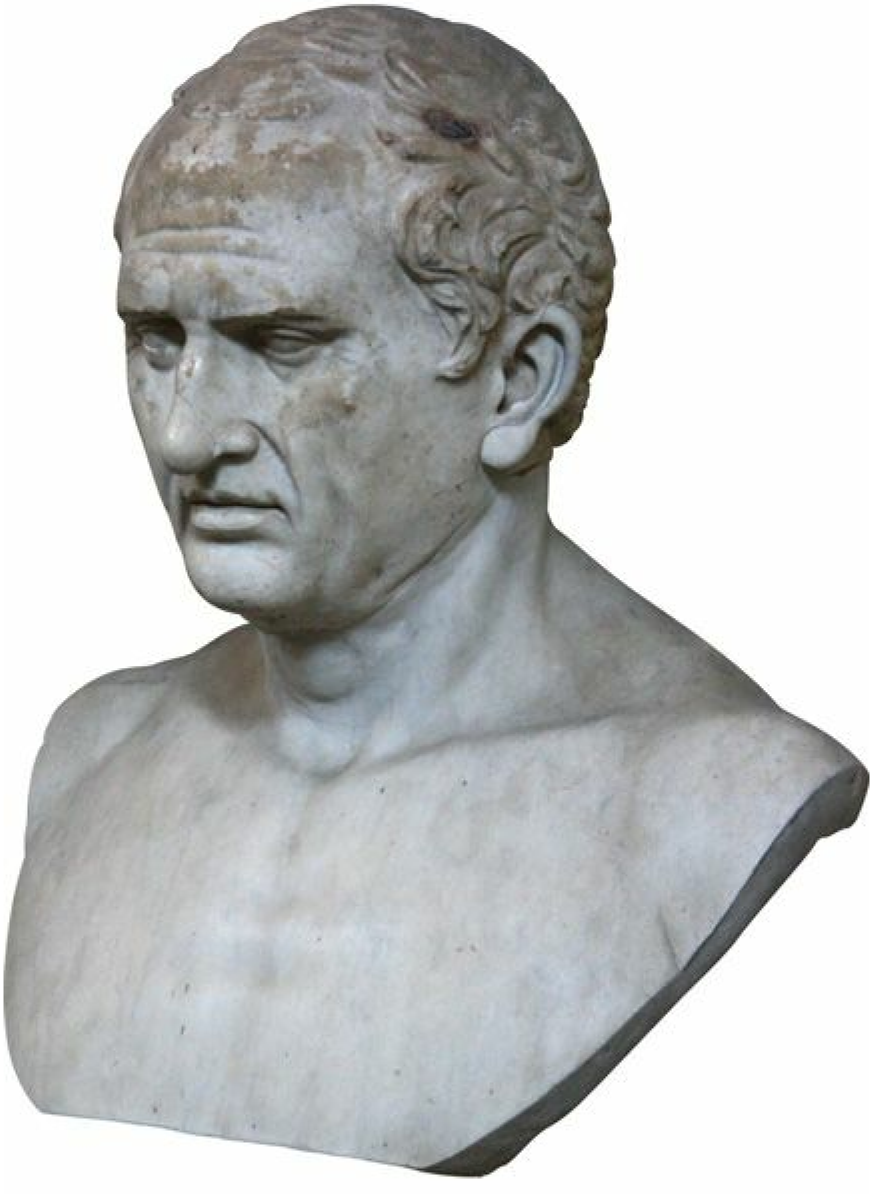
A special group of oracles are those addressed to Israel's historic enemies, commonly referred to as "oracles against the [foreign] nations." Blocks of these oracles are found in Amos 1–2; Isa. 13–23; Jer. 46–51; Ezek. 25–32 and the entire books of Nahum and Obadiah. These oracles were addressed to a specific foreign nation (the putative audience) but were heard by Israel. During a time when most people's conception of deity was tied to a specific land, these oracles maintained that Yahweh was sovereign over the whole earth, and that his purposes included all humankind. All the nations do his bidding. These oracles were to be understood against the backdrop of Israel's infidelity to Yahweh and its futile reliance on the support of foreign nations. The oracles demonstrated that Yahweh would bring down all that was haughty and would order events so that he alone would be high and exalted in the day of his coming. Those nations that cursed Israel would themselves be cursed (Gen. 12:1–3; 27:29).

NEW TESTAMENT USAGE

In the NT, "oracle" (Gk. *logion*) occurs four times, always in the plural (*logia* [NIV: "words"]). It refers to the Mosaic law (Acts 7:38) and unspecified portions of revelation (Rom. 3:2; Heb. 5:12; 1 Pet. 4:11).

ORATION, ORATOR An oration is a formal public speech; an orator is a person skilled in delivering an oration. Classical oratory flourished in fifth-century BC Athens, when itinerant intellectuals, known as Sophists, trained pupils in the art of persuasive speech. The Greek philosopher Plato disdained the Sophists as hucksters more concerned with making money and winning arguments than with presenting truth. He and his successor Aristotle extolled reason and virtue over mere persuasiveness in rhetoric. Greek oratory was admired and taught by the Romans to their young men, who needed to speak persuasively in lawcourts and public assemblies. The Roman orator Cicero stressed skills necessary for effective oration: proper word choice and sentence construction, practiced gestures and vocal modulation, appropriate emotion, wit, and charm, along with a prodigious memory and copious knowledge of history and law.

Skilled oration is particularly stressed in the Greek and Roman venues of the apostle Paul. But even in the OT the "eloquent orator" is part of Judah's support system (Isa. 3:3 KJV). Moses decries his inadequacy as God's spokesperson due to his lack of eloquence (Exod. 4:10). Before Paul's apostleship, the unschooled Peter becomes an effective orator of the gospel to his Jewish audiences (Acts 2:14–40; 3:12–26; 4:8–13), while the Greek Jew Stephen's oratorical defense of the Hebrew Scriptures' fulfillment in Christ so inflames the Sanhedrin that they stone him (Acts 7:2–57).



The Roman orator Cicero

Paul orates the gospel to the pagan Greek cultures of the Roman Empire. In Athens, his orations arouse the interest of philosophers (Acts 17:17–20). He quotes Greek poets in his oration at the Areopagus (17:22–31). In Ephesus, Paul’s orations about the kingdom of God (19:8–9) jeopardize the idol trade, antagonizing the local artisans. An oration by the city clerk calms and diffuses the resultant riotous mob (19:35–40). Paul uses oratory in his legal defense before the governor Felix (24:10–21) and in his attempt to persuade King Agrippa of the truth and reasonableness of the gospel (26:2–29). But Paul’s speaking skills are not admired by all (2 Cor. 10:10), and Paul himself disdains the so-called wisdom of those who value such eloquence (1 Cor. 1:18–22; 2 Cor. 10:5; 11:6). He stresses that his message is not a matter of clever and confident oratorical skills but is instead taught by the Holy Spirit and empowered by God (1 Cor. 2:1–4, 13; 4:20).

ORCHARD Behind “orchard,” used in various translations in Song 4:13; Eccles. 2:5; Neh. 2:8, is the Hebrew word *pardes* (a Persian loanword), from which the word “paradise” is derived. See Luke 23:43.

ORDINANCE A God-established observance, often given as a remembrance for generations, a memorial, always a commandment or an edict to be carried out, noted because God's people are a covenant people, a perpetual statement of how God wants his people to relate to him.

OLD TESTAMENT

In the OT the use of the word "ordinance" to translate certain Hebrew words varies among English translations. Since "ordinance" relates to the law, it is often mentioned with commandments and statutes, without a clear distinction of meaning (Deut. 7:11).

In the OT of the NIV, the word "ordinance" is the translation of these Hebrew words: (1) *khuqqah* ("statute, decree"), at least twenty-three times in Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Ezekiel; (2) *khoq* ("action, statute, decree"), twice in Exodus; and (3) *mishpat* ("judgment, justice"), at least five times in the historical books, Psalms, and Ezekiel.

The Hebrew term *khuqqah* is used in all but one instance with *'olam* to note a "lasting ordinance" in the NIV. This term refers to the Passover and the feast of Unleavened Bread (Exod. 12–13). The oil for the perpetual lampstand is referred to as a lasting ordinance (Exod. 27:21), as are also the directions for the Day of Atonement (Lev. 23:31) and the ceremonial cleanliness for the man working with the ashes of the red heifer (Num. 19:10). Other, more-specific laws are noted as lasting ordinances. These include, for example, the restriction from wine for the priests (Lev. 10:9), restriction of the Sabbath on the Day of Atonement (Lev. 16:31), and the grain offering (Ezek. 46:14).

The Hebrew term *khoq* is also used in conjunction with *'olam* in Exod. 12:24; 30:21, translated as "lasting ordinance" by the NIV. It notes the Passover as a lasting ordinance and the ritual cleansing of the priests as a lasting ordinance.

The Hebrew term *mishpat*, often translated "judgment," is also translated in the NIV as "ordinance." In these instances it notes edicts such as that of the equal division of spoils (1 Sam. 30:25) and the edicts of David (2 Chron. 8:14). The Levites state that Israel has sinned against God's *mishpatim* (Neh. 9:29), and the priests will judge according to God's ordinances (Ezek. 44:24).

NEW TESTAMENT

In the NT, the KJV (3x) and NASB (1x) translate *dikaiōma* ("regulation, requirement") as "ordinance," and both also once translate *diatagē* ("that which is commanded") as "ordinance"; additionally, the KJV translates *paradosis* ("tradition") and *ktisis* ("human authority") as "ordinance" once each. The ESV, NRSV, KJV, and NASB translate *dogma* ("ordinance, command") in Eph. 2:15 as "ordinance." These terms seem to refer to the edict of God for his people, his commandments that are to be obeyed. The NIV does not translate any noun as "ordinance" in the NT.

CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY

In Christian theology the use of the word "ordinance" is not dissimilar. It denotes a God-ordained observance given as a command for his people to fulfill as a covenant people.

Protestants generally recognize two ordinances in the NT: baptism and the Lord's Supper (Communion, Eucharist). The common characteristics identifying these relate to their ordination by Christ to picture his work in the life of believers and the church and their participation in him. (*See also* Sacrament.)

Baptism. The concept of baptism is found in five different Greek words, the nouns *baptisma* ("plunging, dipping"), *baptismos* ("washing, cleansing, plunging"), and *baptistēs* ("baptizer"), and the verbs *baptizō* (“to plunge, dip, wash”) and *baptō* (“to dip”). The meanings of these words have been discussed throughout church history, but all of them seem to denote an action of dipping or plunging.

Christian baptism certainly is rooted in the baptisms of John, Jesus, and the apostles. In the book of Acts the disciples simply continue to baptize those who repent, as they had done at the inception of Jesus’ ministry (John 4:2). There is no surprise expressed by the recipients of baptism; the expression seems a natural follow-up to their repentance. The connection to Judaism, however, is unclear. Judaism was saturated with rituals of purification with water and washings. These washings were similar to baptisms. While Jewish washings were perpetual, only the Jewish proselyte baptism was a onetime rite. It is unclear when proselyte baptism started or how it developed. It may already have been in place in the time of Jesus. The Talmud later speaks of it, but it is not mentioned in the OT and seems to be missing from Second Temple literature altogether. Just as there were cleansings in the OT rituals, so too the proselyte baptism was a preparatory cleansing of the proselyte candidate. Yet proselyte baptism before the time of Jesus has little extant evidence. Additionally, John would not seem to look to a ritual for Gentiles.

Others have proposed that John was in continuity with a practice of Qumran. The two were very similar (though the Qumran rite was perpetual). At Qumran, baptismal cleansing and repentance looks to the Messiah (Qumran was an eschatological community). Yet it may be that this, as well as the baptisms of John, Jesus, and the apostles, was derived from (common?) sources not now known.

For John, too, baptism is a sign of repentance and cleansing in preparation. John is the forerunner of the Messiah, and as such his focus is also eschatological. John brings an immediate focus on the Messiah, and he draws the Israelite community together to recognize, receive, listen to, and follow the Messiah. With this as the significance of John’s baptism, it is surprising to find Jesus coming to him for baptism. Although Jesus has no need for cleansing and preparation, he is baptized in solidarity with John’s message and his people. When Jesus is baptized, it apparently marks the inception of the kingdom as the Spirit comes upon him and the Father affirms him. Thereafter, Jesus notes the kingdom as being “at hand” in his presence.

Jesus baptizes at least some of the disciples (John 3:22), though the disciples are noted as those who regularly do the baptizing (John 4:2). No doubt this baptism referenced cleansing and preparation, as the Messiah was present. Apparently, the baptism of Jesus’ disciples subsided, since there is no further reference to it by the four evangelists.

On the day of Pentecost, repentance and baptism with regard to the Messiah are begun by the apostles postresurrection. This is according to the command of Jesus before the ascension to make disciples by way of baptism and instruction (Matt. 28:19–20). This baptism commanded by Jesus is to be done “in the name” of the three persons of the Trinity. The early baptismal creed was “Jesus is Lord,” and it may have included a threefold query of belief in the Father, the Son, and the Spirit. Postresurrection baptism symbolizes cleansing; the inundation in the water symbolizes this cleansing as effected in the death and resurrection of Christ, “buried with him through baptism into death” (Rom. 6:4).

Baptism is always assumed of a believer (Acts 2:38; 22:16; Rom. 6:3–4; 1 Pet. 3:21). It would have never occurred to the early church to dichotomize salvation and baptism as is often done today. The exception can be seen in Paul’s writings, where he emphasizes the kerygma over the act of baptism (1 Cor. 1:17). For Paul, the watershed is the preaching of the gospel to be received by faith, but he perpetually appeals to the baptism of his readers.

Some have overemphasized baptism by seeing it as the salvific entity. Acts 10:47 applies for

Cornelius and his family the permanent reception of the Spirit before baptism. This reception of the Spirit is later likened by Peter to the original gift of the Spirit at Pentecost (Acts 11:15). Although it would be unwise to infer doctrine from the mere sequence of narrative events, the passage in Acts 10 at least shows the nonnecessity of the sequence of baptism to come into union with Christ. This is enacted by the operation of the Spirit alone.

In every case in the NT, the candidates for baptism are those who have come to repentance, and they are always adults. There is no direct reference to infant baptism. Some in the church have assumed infant baptism in family contexts, thought to be especially effectual in dealing with original sin. But overall, the biblical testimony seems to indicate that baptism is for believers who have repented. Because it is usually NT authority figures who administer baptism, a general consensus arose that only the bishop of the church should administer baptism. Ignatius calls for the bishop only to minister both ordinances. The tradition that baptism be administered by an ordained officer of the church is largely maintained today, though there is no edict in the Scripture.

With regard to mode, the *Didache* calls for immersion in running water as the preferred method, with still water being the second choice. If water is not available for immersion, then a threefold pouring is allowed. In church history, those who prioritize the symbol of cleansing use sprinkling as the mode. In any event, when anything with regard to mode can be discerned from Scripture, it involves dipping into water (“he went up out of the water” [Matt. 3:16]; “they came up out of the water” [Acts 8:39]). (*See also* Baptism; Infant Baptism.)

The Lord’s Supper. The ordinance of the Lord’s Supper is also referred to as the Lord’s Table, Communion, and the Eucharist. The Lord’s Supper is a memorial of the death of Christ. In the partaking of the bread and the cup there is remembrance of the ground of salvation effected in the sacrifice of the cross. Most evangelical Christians consider the bread and the cup to symbolically represent the body and blood of Christ. Other Christian traditions claim that the bread and the cup are transformed into the real body and blood of Christ (transubstantiation) or that the real body and blood of Christ are present alongside the bread and the cup (consubstantiation).

The narrative of Jesus’ Last Supper is found in Matt. 26:26–29; Mark 14:22–25; Luke 22:15–20; 1 Cor. 11:23–26. This meal as recorded in the Gospels is the covenant meal celebrated in view of the ratification of the new covenant that would soon be accomplished (“this cup is the new covenant in my blood” [Luke 22:20]). Jesus instituted the supper on the night before the crucifixion. The Last Supper of Jesus with the apostles in the upper room also looks to the past redemption effected in the Passover on that fateful night in Egypt. It looks to the present work of Christ as the covenant meal. It anticipates the messianic meal in the eschaton. Just as the bread and the cup with Jesus in his Last Supper were connected with the Passover meal, so in the early church it was observed with the love feast. The fellowship of the church contained the love feast, with the bread given before or after the meal and the cup following the bread. But by the second century, the bread and the cup took on a more liturgical air, being separated from the love feast.

Much of what we know about the Lord’s Supper comes through discussion of problems in the Corinthian church. The very thing that the Lord’s Supper was to foster—unity around the cross of Jesus Christ—was denied. The exact abuse in Corinth is unknown, but it probably involved the rich oppressing the poor by exclusion or denial of food. The response of the apostle is that if they cannot eat in equal moderation with all socioeconomic strata in the body, they are to eat at home (“Don’t you have homes to eat and drink in?” [1 Cor. 11:22]). (*See also* Last Supper; Lord’s Supper.)

ORDINATION The act of election and appointment to positions of leadership and service within religious communities.

Old Testament. In the OT, parties receiving such appointment include kings and other leaders of the people (1 Sam. 9), the Aaronide priests (Exod. 29), and the Levites (Num. 8).

Divine initiative stands behind the choice of a king. God expresses favor for a candidate through prophets (1 Sam. 9:16; 1 Kings 11:30–38), who have a role in ceremonies expressive of such appointment. An essential component of the procedure is the anointment of the appointee with oil (1 Sam. 10:1; 1 Kings 19:16). A consequence of such election and installation is the reception of a spirit from God, leading, in one case, to acts of prophecy (1 Sam. 10:10–13).

Divine initiative also stands behind the appointment of individuals (Moses [Exod. 3:7–22], Joshua [Num. 27:15–23], the various judges [Judg. 3:15; 6:11–24]) for the leadership of Israel apart from the office of kingship. In such cases within the OT, God's communication may come directly (in the case of Moses) or through the agency of another human (Moses communicates divine intent to Joshua) or an angelic being (Judg. 6:11–24). In the case of Joshua, Moses lays his hands upon him as an expression of divine election (Num. 27:22); the action recognizes that a spirit from God has come upon Joshua (27:18).

Moses officiates at the ordination of the first priests (Aaron and his sons [Lev. 8:6–9:24]) of the Israelite sacrificial cult. Anointment with oil, the application of blood from a sanctified animal, and the donning of priestly vestments are part of the ritual of ordination.

The election of the Levites as assistants to the Aaronide priests, substitutes for the required offering of all firstborn males of Israel, comes from God (Num. 8:5–22). The laying on of hands by elders accompanies the consecration of the Levites (Num. 8:10), allowing them to handle the sanctified accoutrements of the sacrificial cult.

New Testament. In the NT, Jesus' initiative stands behind the appointment of the disciples (Matt. 10:1–8; Mark 3:13–19; Luke 6:12–16). The disciples and/or elders preside over the appointment of other parties to positions of leadership and service in the community of faith. Such narrated acts of ordination cover appointments to a variety of tasks within the NT. These tasks include that of choosing an apostle to replace Judas Iscariot (Acts 1:15–26), the distribution of food (6:1–6), and carrying the gospel to specific destinations (13:1–3).

The means for direction in election include prayer (Acts 13:1–3), along with the casting of lots (1:24–26). Furthermore, the combination of prayer and fasting within the context of worship may become the occasion for direction from the Holy Spirit (13:1–3). A summary statement concerning the selection of elders in Acts 14:23 concurs with 13:1–3, listing prayer and fasting as the means to discernment. Also witnessed is the judgment of the community in finding servants filled with the Holy Spirit and wisdom (6:1–6). Thus, the ability of the community to recognize specific qualifications is enlisted in the process of election.

The laying on of hands may mark the commissioning of individuals to specific tasks (Acts 13:3). Elsewhere, the same action, along with an act of prophecy, bestows "gifts" upon individuals (1 Tim. 4:14). The mention of "gifts" (healing, guidance, tongues, etc.), along with the specification of certain functions within the community of faith (prophets, apostles, teachers, etc.), occurs in Rom. 12:6–8; 1 Cor. 12:27–30; Eph. 4:11. These passages offer an expansion of the list of functions and tasks described in the narratives previously mentioned. All three passages exhort the community to recognize the diversity of talent within the community and to employ those gifts appropriately. These gifts include those of healing, miracles, guidance, and speech in strange tongues. The functions and offices mentioned include those of prophet, apostle, and teacher. The collocation of such gifts and functions in these passages suggests, of course, that the appropriate gift would accompany the ability to perform such functions in the appointment of an individual.

Summary. Although differences exist between the OT and the NT in the roles prescribed by appointment and their attendant abilities, continuity across both bodies of literature finds expression through the initiative of God, the bestowal of a spirit of empowerment, and the practice of the laying on of hands in acts of ordination.

OREB AND ZEEB Midianite leaders whom the Ephraimites killed. After Gideon and his three hundred soldiers had miraculously routed the Midianite army, Gideon directed the Ephraimites to cut off the fleeing Midianites at the Jordan River. The Ephraimites were successful and captured Oreb and Zeeb, whom they put to death at the rock of Oreb and the winepress of Zeeb respectively (Judg. 7:19–25). Gideon later claimed that the Ephraimites' killing of Oreb and Zeeb was greater than his own accomplishments in the battle (Judg. 8:1–3). See also Ps. 83:11; Isa. 10:26.

OREN A son of Jerahmeel, the firstborn son of Hezron, of the tribe of Judah (1 Chron. 2:25).

ORGAN **(1)** In older translations, various musical instruments (Gen. 4:21; Job 21:12; 30:31; Ps. 150:4 KJV). **(2)** A biologically differentiated structure within an organism that performs a specific task or activity (e.g., liver, kidney, stomach, bowel). The Pentateuch frequently gives explicit directions for the disposition or treatment of organs during sacrifices (e.g., Exod. 12:9; 29:13; Lev. 1:9, 13; 3:3; 7:3; 9:14; Deut. 18:3). In some NT translations, organs are included in the body metaphors for the church (1 Cor. 12:12, 18–19). **(3)** Female or male genitalia (Num. 5:21, 22, 27; Deut. 23:1; 25:11).

ORION The Greek name for a large constellation depicting a mighty armed warrior. The same constellation may have been seen as a heavenly adumbration of the god Osiris by the Egyptians. Scripture asserts that the Lord is the creator of all constellations, even the revered Orion (Job 9:9; 38:31; Amos 5:8).

ORNAN A variant name for "Araunah" found in the Hebrew of Chronicles (see 1 Chron. 21:15, 18, 20–25, 28; 2 Chron. 3:1) and rendered as such in the KJV, NKJV, NASB, and NRSV. Other versions (NIV, NLT) harmonize with "Araunah" as found in 2 Sam. 24:16–25. *See also* Araunah.

ORONTES RIVER The Orontes River (Nahr al-Asi) rises in the Al Biqa valley in Lebanon and flows through Syria into modern-day southern Turkey. Named after a Greek river god of Syria, the Orontes spans 250 miles. In antiquity the river was known for the trade routes that followed it. Among the cities in the Orontes Valley were Kadesh-on-the-Orontes, Riblah, Emessa, Hamath, Alalakh, and Antioch-on-the-Orontes. The valley often was used for military campaigns. The famous battle of Kadesh (c. 1274 BC) was fought along the Orontes.

Founded by Seleucus I (c. 300 BC), the city of Antioch was located sixteen miles from where the delta of the Orontes connects to the Mediterranean Sea. Its port, known as Seleucia Pieria, enabled cargo transport to and from Antioch. The apostle Paul used the Antiochian church as his home church during his three missionary journeys, frequently using its port for traveling (Acts 13:4; 14:26; 15:39–41).

ORPAH The widow of Kilion (see Ruth 4:10). Along with Ruth, she was a Moabite daughter-in-law of Naomi. After Naomi's husband and sons died, Naomi convinced Orpah to remain in Moab rather than return with her to Bethlehem. Orpah thus provides a foil to Ruth, who resolved to stay with Naomi.

ORPHANS *See* Fatherless; Poor, Orphan, Widow.

OSEE In Rom. 9:25 the KJV rendering of *Hōsēe*, the Greek name for the prophet Hosea.

OSHEA *See* Hoshea.

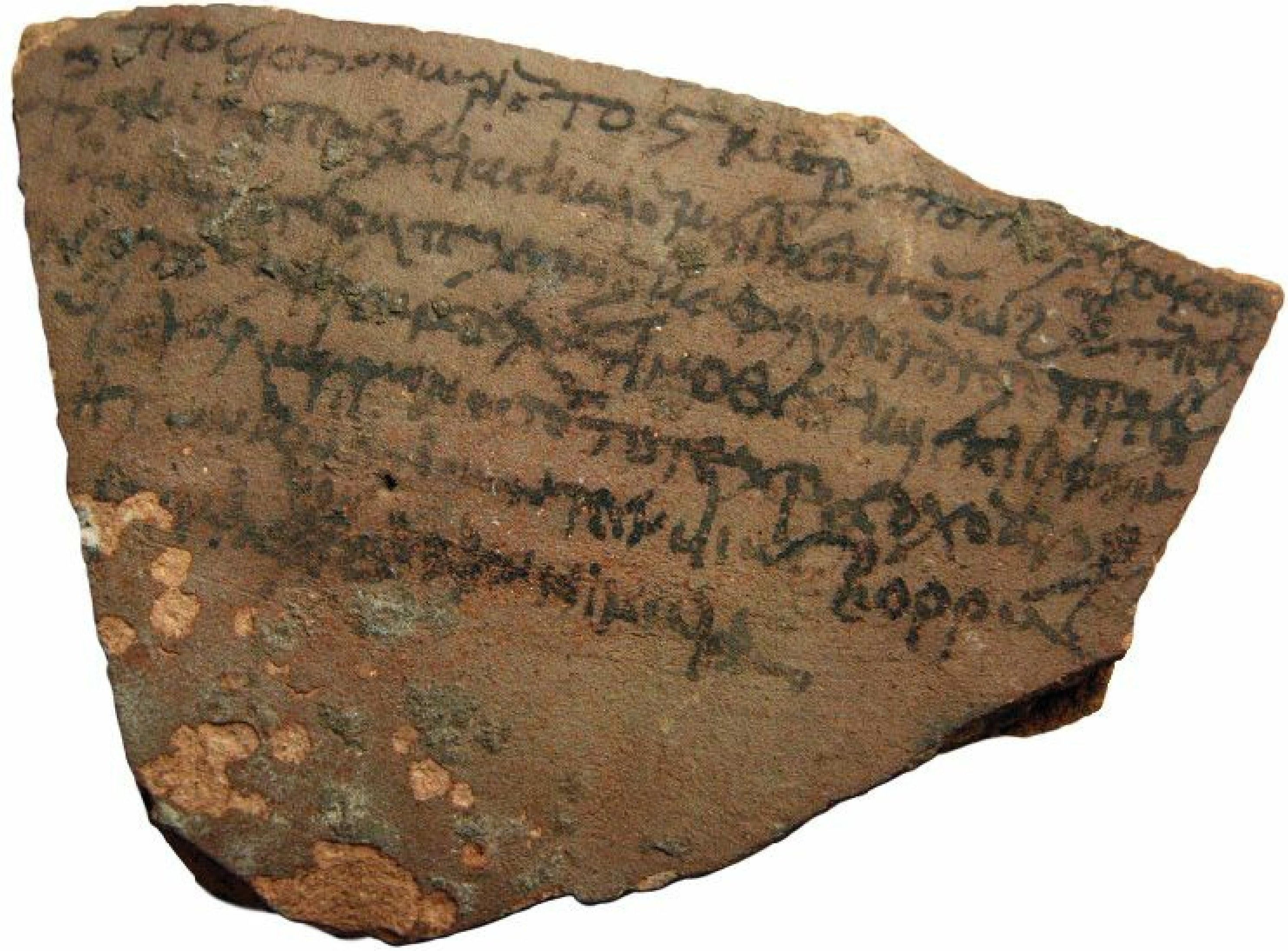
OSNAPPAR The Aramaic name of Ashurbanipal, who was the son of Esarhaddon, grandson of Sennacherib, and the last great king of Assyria (r. 668–627 BC). He is mentioned once in the Bible, in Ezra 4:10, which notes that he deported several people groups to Samaria and elsewhere in Trans-Euphrates. More notably, he created the great cuneiform library in Nineveh.

OSPREY A brown and white eagle with a shrill cry that dives feetfirst for fish in rivers, lakes, and the sea. The NIV identifies it with the Hebrew word *rakham* (Lev. 11:18; Deut. 14:17), but other translations, including the KJV, RSV, and ASV, use it to translate the Hebrew word *'ozniyah* (Lev. 11:13; Deut. 14:12). The meaning of these words is uncertain, but both occur in the lists of unclean birds.

OSSIFRAGE A term used in some older translations for an unclean bird of prey, listed along with the eagle and the osprey, all forbidden to the Israelites as food (Lev. 11:13; Deut. 14:12 KJV). The underlying and somewhat uncertain Hebrew term, *peres*, is more often rendered "vulture" in more recent translations.

OSTIA In antiquity, the ancient city of Ostia was situated at the mouth of the river Tiber, less than twenty miles southwest of Rome. It was a Roman seaport located on one of the greatest Roman highways. Ships unloading at Ostia delivered goods to its great warehouses. At the height of its commercial existence, the city was densely populated. In time, Ostia became the main harbor for imperial Rome. Its harbor, developed in the first century AD, tended to silt up so that it was a way station along the river rather than a viable port. The silt that rendered Ostia unusable as a port preserved it as an archaeological ruin, uncovered in the twentieth century.

OSTRACA Ostraca (the plural of *ostracon*) are potsherds with writing on them. Significant collections have been found in Samaria, Lachish, and Arad. They enhance appreciation for the cultural and historical contexts of the Israelite and late Judean monarchies.



An ancient Coptic inscription written on an ostracon

OSTRICH The ostrich is listed with other wild birds as unclean (Lev. 11:13–19; Deut. 14:11–18). It is unclear why they are considered unclean, but some eat dead flesh, and this may be part of the reason. Ostriches carry a symbolic value also, as can be seen in these lists by their association with the wild fowl of the desert; they connote desolation, uninhabited wilderness. Where the ostrich dwells, humans do not. Thus, the ostrich is found with the jackal, the hyena, and the owl. “Therefore wild animals shall live with hyenas in Babylon, and ostriches shall inhabit her; she shall never again be peopled, or inhabited for all generations” (Jer. 50:39 NRSV). God made the loveless and foolish wild ostrich (Job 39:13–18).

OTHNI One of the sons of Shemaiah, listed among the families of Levitical gatekeepers (1 Chron. 26:7).

OTHNIEL **(1)** The son of Kenaz and a nephew of Caleb (or possibly Caleb’s brother). At Caleb’s request, Othniel defeated the inhabitants of Kiriath Sepher, and as a result he received Caleb’s daughter Aksah as a bride (Josh. 15:16–19; Judg. 1:13–15). Othniel also served as the first judge of Israel, delivering the people from the hands of Cushan-Rishathaim, the king of Aram Naharaim (Judg. 3:7–11). Israel experienced peace for forty years, which ended with the death of Othniel. **(2)** A clan name in the genealogy of Heldai the Netophathite, a military officer (1 Chron. 27:15).

OUCHES In several places in Exodus, the KJV translates the Hebrew word *mishbetsah* as "ouch," referring to a gold filigree setting for precious stones on the high priest's ephod (Exod. 28:11, 13, 25; 39:6, 13, 16, 18).

OUTCAST In the OT, the concept of being an outcast typically refers to Israel (Jer. 30:17), its being scattered (Isa. 11:12; Ps. 147:2) and later gathered (Isa. 27:13; Mic. 4:6; Zeph. 3:19). Paul pictures outcast Israel as the branches broken off from the good olive tree (Rom. 11:17). Jesus' ministry is characterized as one to outcasts from society whereby the Messiah welcomed lepers and other socially marginalized people. Jesus himself is considered an outcast, having no residence of his own and being unwelcome in Jerusalem and his own hometown (cf. John 1:11).

OUTER SPACE In modern cosmology, "outer space" refers to the vast expanse of the universe that lies beyond the earth's atmosphere. Within the Bible, the sky and anything beyond it—including the space traversed by the sun, the moon, and the stars, as well as the cosmic region in which the divine court exists—are referred to by the term "heaven(s)" (Heb. *shamayim*; Gk. *ouranos* [sg.], *ouranoi* [pl.]). The abode of the sun, the moon, and the stars is most naturally equated with the modern concept of outer space, but the equation is somewhat artificial because the ancient conception of this region was comprehensively different from the modern understanding. For example, there is little indication that the Bible's ancient audience would have understood that the stars populating the heavens are significantly larger than the earth and are many light-years distant. Such ideas had no significant bearing on the more important information that the writers of the Bible sought to convey. By way of contrast, biblical authors wrote according to commonly held notions of the structure of the universe (without offering explicit judgment about their veracity) in order to make theological points clear to their audience.

By the time of the NT, there apparently were a variety of views of the structure of the heavens. Some held that there was just one heaven, others three, five, or seven. Typically, the highest heaven was the special abode of God.

No expression equivalent to "outer space" exists in the Bible, and the closest parallel lies in references not to space beyond the earth's atmosphere but to uninhabited wilderness (e.g., Ps. 55:7) or even to a place of judgment and punishment (Matt. 8:12). This highlights the difference between the conceptual worlds of the original settings of the biblical texts and those of their modern readers.

OUTLANDISH In Neh. 13:26 the KJV translates the Hebrew word *nokri* as "outlandish," referring to the "foreign" (NIV) women who made Solomon sin.

OVEN In biblical culture, a small cooking device cylindrical in shape and made of clay. Ovens were used for baking bread and other foods (Exod. 8:3; Lev. 2:4; 26:26; cf. "firepot" [Gen. 15:17; Jer. 36:22; Zech. 12:6]; "furnace" [Isa. 31:9; Mal. 4:1; Ps. 21:9]). The fire was built on a layer of pebbles on the oven floor. Bread was baked on the exterior surface of the oven or on the pebbles inside. Typical fuels were wood, dried grass (Matt. 6:30; Luke 12:28), and animal dung (Ezek. 4:15).

OVENS, TOWER OF THE A tower of the second wall of Jerusalem, it was repaired by Malkijah son of Harim and Hasshub son of Pahath-Moab during the time of Nehemiah (Neh. 3:11; 12:38 [KJV:

"tower of the furnaces"]). The tower was on the western portion of the wall and may have taken its name from its proximity to baking ovens on the "street of the bakers" (see Jer. 37:21).

OVERLIVE The KJV word for "outlive" in Josh. 24:31.

OVERPASS The KJV word for "pass by" in Ps. 57:1; Isa. 26:20. The word is also used in Jer. 5:28 KJV of the wicked "excelling" in evil deeds.

OVERSEER One who supervises. The term is used in the OT in a general sense to refer to a supervisor in a secular position (Prov. 6:7). In the NT, the term "overseer" (Gk. *episkopos*) is used in Phil. 1:1; 1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:7 to describe an officer of the church. The overseer is sometimes equated with the pastor and elder positions in the church, since they share similar responsibilities. *See also* Offices in the New Testament.

OVERSHADOW In the OT, overshadowing is associated with covering or protection. The directions for constructing the ark of the covenant include two gold cherubim, whose wings are to extend up and overshadow it in a posture of protection (Exod. 25:20; 37:9; 1 Kings 8:7). Tree branches are also described as overshadowing (Job 40:22; Ezek. 31:3).

In the NT, overshadowing is primarily employed figuratively and is associated with the presence of God. The Synoptic accounts of Jesus' transfiguration incorporate the presence of an overshadowing cloud from which the voice of God emerges, identifying Jesus as his Son and urging Peter, James, and John to listen to him (Matt. 17:5; Mark 9:7; Luke 9:34). The most intriguing overshadowing, however, occurs when Gabriel tells Mary that she will be overshadowed by the power of the Most High and thereby conceive Jesus, who will be the heir to the eternal throne of David (Luke 1:35). Two additional NT occurrences are more literal (Acts 5:15; Heb. 9:5).

OWL Several words are used in the OT for different kinds of owls. The "great owl" (Lev. 11:17; Deut. 14:16) is likely the Egyptian eagle owl. It is about two feet tall and frequently is found in the ruins of Egypt and Palestine. The "little owl" (Lev. 11:17; Deut. 14:16) or the "owl" (Ps. 102:6), most commonly found in Palestine, is nicknamed the "mother of ruins" by the Arabs. The identities of other "owls" are debated. The Hebrew word translated "owl" in the NIV of Isa. 34:15 (*qippoz*) is rendered as "tree snake" in the NASB. The Hebrew word *ya'anah*, translated in the NIV as "horned owl" (Lev. 11:16; Deut. 14:15), is translated elsewhere "ostrich" (NRSV). Other debated names include the "white owl" (Lev. 11:18), the "desert owl" (Lev. 11:18; Deut. 14:17; Ps. 102:6; Isa. 34:11; Zeph. 2:14), and the "screech owl" (Lev. 11:16; Deut. 14:15; Isa. 34:11; Zeph. 2:14).

Owls are listed among the unclean, inedible birds (Lev. 11:16–17; Deut. 14:16–17). The reason is not specified, but it seems to derive from their characteristic habits and the ancient association with evil spirits. Inhabiting caves and ruined temples and cities, owls are featured especially in descriptions of the desolation caused by God's judgment (Isa. 13:20–23; 34:11–15; Zeph. 2:13–15; cf. Ps. 102:6).

Owl

OWNERSHIP Both Testaments proclaim, “The earth is the LORD’s, and everything in it” (Ps. 24:1; 1 Cor. 10:26). Only the Lord and Creator of the universe can rightfully claim ownership over anything, be it physical, spiritual, or moral (Job 41:11). Thus, “every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights” (James 1:17). He even owns human beings themselves. In a biblical worldview, God alone exercises ownership. People, however, exercise stewardship over what he has given.

Scripture guides and regulates human relationships with respect to owning property. While people are ultimately only stewards, they must never wrongly take or desire what God has entrusted to others. Therefore God commands, “You shall not steal” (Exod. 20:15) and “You shall not covet” (20:17). The book of Proverbs explains how to wisely dispose of one’s goods (Prov. 3:9, 10; 11:25; 22:9), as does Jesus’ parable of the talents (Matt. 25:14–30). Numerous passages teach that human “ownership” should be earned through work, if possible (Jer. 29:5–7; 2 Thess. 3:10). People should acknowledge their possessions as gifts from God by giving to the poor (Eph. 4:28) and to God’s appointed leaders, both secular and Christian: “Give back to Caesar what is Caesar’s and to God what is God’s” (Mark 12:17 [cf. Rom. 13:6; 1 Tim. 5:18]).

In fact, the whole Bible can be read as the drama of the divine owner relating to his human stewards. At creation, God charges Adam and Eve “to work . . . and take care of” the garden (Gen. 2:15), thereby entrusting all creation to human care. In disobedience they abuse their stewardship, as will their offspring. In the fall, humankind forfeits God’s benefits in paradise (Gen. 3); he disowns his unfaithful stewards. The rest of Scripture relates how God redeems a people for himself, adopting the disinherited back into his household. He begins by promising Abraham that his offspring, Israel, will possess a land, Canaan (Gen. 17:8), which will be a kind of new paradise (Exod. 3:8). The Israelites conquer the territory, but over time they prove to be unfaithful stewards. After breaking God’s covenant, they lose the land in exile.

Jesus’ parable of the landowner in Matt. 21:33–44 is basically a capsule version of this grand biblical story. Both come to a climax when God sends his Son, Jesus Christ. He comes to “buy back” his people from their sins as the one faithful servant (Mark 10:45), even unto death on a cross (Phil. 2:8). Jesus pays for his elect’s adoption with his blood, so now believers partake in God’s ownership over all things. “All things are yours, whether . . . the world or life or death or the present or the future—all are yours, and you are of Christ, and Christ is of God” (1 Cor. 3:21–23).

OX A common beast of burden, mentioned mostly in the OT. The ox was particularly important in the biblical world, with its mostly agricultural economies. The Bible seems to mention two types, the domesticated ox and the wild ox. The former is mentioned commonly with other domesticated animals (sheep, donkeys) representative of property (Deut. 22:1, 10). Its main use was agricultural, whether for plowing the field, threshing grain, or pulling carts. The wild ox is mentioned largely in connection with its strength and fierce nature (Num. 24:8; Job 39:9).

OXGOAD *See* Goad.

OZEM **(1)** The sixth son of Jesse and a brother of David (1 Chron. 2:15). **(2)** A Judahite, one of the sons of Jerahmeel, the firstborn son of Hezron (1 Chron. 2:25).

OZIAS In Matt. 1:8–9 the KJV transliteration of the Greek name *Ozias*, referring to King Uzziah in the genealogy of Jesus.

OZNI The ancestor of the Oznites, a clan in the tribe of Gad counted in the second wilderness census (Num. 26:16).

OZNITES *See* Ozni.

P

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P *See* Documentary Hypothesis.

PAARAI One of David's thirty mighty warriors, his Egyptian name means "the Syrian," and he is called "the Arbite" (2 Sam. 23:35). The parallel in 1 Chron. 11:37 has *n* for *p* and *z* for *r*, producing "Naarai son of Ezbai."

PADDAN ARAM The "field" or "plain" of Aram was a region of northwestern Mesopotamia. In Genesis it is associated with Aram Naharaim (24:10 [meaning "Aram of the two rivers"]), "the town of Nahor" (24:10), Arameans (25:20), Harran (27:43), and "the land of the eastern peoples" (29:1). Paddan Aram was the home of Bethuel, his children Laban and Rebekah (Isaac's wife), and Laban's daughters Leah and Rachel (Jacob's wives), and it was the birthplace of all of Jacob's children except Benjamin (Gen. 25:20; 28:2–7; 35:26; 46:15).

PADDLE A rod with a broad, flat blade on one end. In the OT, "paddle" is an occasional English translation of various Hebrew words referring to hand tools. Specific occurrences include a digging implement or shovel (Deut. 23:13), threshing boards (2 Sam. 24:22; 1 Chron. 21:23), and a rod for striking the backs of fools (Prov. 26:3).

PADON One of the ancestors of the temple servants (Nethinim) who returned to Jerusalem after the Babylonian captivity under the leadership of Zerubbabel in 539 BC or soon after (Ezra 2:44; Neh. 7:47). The fact that many of the names in the list are foreign has led to the belief that they were originally prisoners of war who were pressed into service to perform menial tasks as they assisted the Levites. The name is also found on an ostracon from Arad.

PAGAN A pejorative term for those who follow deities other than the true God. The noun is used to describe people who practice undesirable behavior (Isa. 2:6; Matt. 6:7; 1 Cor. 10:20; 12:2) and who are held up as unlikely models to shame believers (Matt. 5:47; 1 Cor. 5:1). It is also used of people whom believers should point to God through their exemplary behavior (1 Pet. 2:12) or avoid completely (Matt. 18:17). The adjective is used to describe ungodly priests (2 Kings 23:5; Zeph 1:4), nations (Lam. 1:10; Amos 7:17), or behavior (1 Cor. 10:7).

PAGIEL The son of Okran, he was the tribal leader of Asher during the wilderness wanderings. He helps Moses during the taking of the military registration (Num. 1:13), and he leads Asher when the tribe departs from Sinai along with the rest of Israel (Num. 10:26). Pagiel is mentioned in the description of the layout of the camp (Num. 2:27), and he is the one who presents Simeon's offering for the sanctuary (Num. 7:72, 77).

PAHATH-MOAB The head of a clan that was part of the early return to Judah from Babylonian captivity sometime between 539 and 520 BC (Ezra 2:6; Neh. 7:11). The same clan sent Eliehoenai and two hundred men at the time of Ezra, around 458 BC (Ezra 8:4). Eight members of this clan were later found guilty of intermarriage with foreign women (Ezra 10:30). Pahath-Moab is also listed as one who sealed the covenant renewal led by Ezra (Neh. 10:14).

PAI The capital of Edom during the time of Hadad (1 Chron. 1:50), though the name of the city is given as “Pau” in Gen. 36:39. The NIV uses “Pau” in both verses. *See also* Pau.

PAINT An extremely fine black mineral powder used as a cosmetic around the eye to increase its apparent size. The practice of painting the eyes was intended to highlight beauty or to demonstrate status. In 2 Kings 9:30, Queen Jezebel “painted her eyes” (ESV) when she heard Jehu, the new king of Israel, was coming to her, probably as an attempt to assert her status as queen. From the narrator’s point of view, the makeup likely symbolizes Jezebel’s vacuous and fleeting authority. Jeremiah questions the harlot city Jerusalem, saying, “Why enlarge your eyes with paint?” (Jer. 4:30 ESV), and Ezekiel says to Judah-Israel, “For them you bathed yourself, painted your eyes, and adorned yourself with ornaments” as the adulteress prepares herself for her lover (Ezek. 23:40 ESV).

PALACE In the OT, many palaces are referenced, but the first of importance is that of Pharaoh as Abraham sojourned in Egypt (Gen. 12:15). When the children of Israel moved to Egypt because of the famine, they did not know that Joseph was in charge of the palace (Gen. 41:40; 45:16; Acts 7:10). Later, even the palace of Pharaoh was overrun by the plagues sent by God upon Egypt (Exod. 8:3, 24).

King Hiram of Tyre sent cedar logs and carpenters to David so that a house could be built for him (2 Sam. 5:11). It later vexed David that he himself lived in a palace while the ark of God was housed in a tent. This prompted David to prepare for building the temple after consulting with Nathan (2 Sam. 7:2–29).

Even more extensive discussion is given about the palace of Solomon. It took thirteen years to complete and was built with wood from the cedars of Lebanon. It was 150 feet long, 75 feet wide, and 45 feet high, with foundations of high-quality hewn stone, cedar columns, and beam supports. From foundation to roof the sides were trimmed with high-grade chiseled stone. There was a throne room lined with cedar from floor to ceiling. There were similarly designed living quarters for Solomon and for the daughter of Pharaoh (1 Kings 7:1–12). The account of the tremendous labor and cost for the palace and temple is given in 1 Kings 9:10–23. Later, Solomon decorated the inside of the palace extensively with gold (1 Kings 10:16–22). Eventually, the king of Babylon took these treasures from the royal palace and burned it down (2 Kings 24:13; 25:9).

In the NT, the Greek word *basileios* is used in reference to a palace once, when Jesus notes that in contrast to John the Baptist, those who wear soft clothing and have luxurious lifestyles live in royal palaces (Luke 7:25). The home of the Roman governor (*praitōrion*) is referred to as a palace in some translations (e.g., John 18:28, 33; 19:9 NIV). John explains that the Jews did not actually enter the praetorium, so as not to be defiled for the Passover feast (John 18:28). Other NT references note the palace of Herod where Paul was kept under guard (Acts 23:35) and that of Caesar where Paul may have been imprisoned in Rome (Phil. 1:13). The testimony of Paul was apparently well known there, and some of his guards became converts to Christianity (Phil. 1:13; 4:22).

A model of Herod’s palace in Jerusalem

PALACE OF THE FOREST OF LEBANON A building constructed by Solomon as part of the palace compound. It was a large, detached building that possibly served as a royal reception hall. The dimensions were twenty-five by fifty meters (1 Kings 7:2–5). The name derives from its cedar pillars, imported from Lebanon and constructed to resemble a forest. The Hebrew text records four rows with fifteen pillars, while the LXX records three rows.

PALAL The son of Uzai, he worked on rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem at the time of Nehemiah (Neh. 3:25).

PALANQUIN *See* Carriage.

PALESTINA In Exod. 15:14; Isa. 14:29, 31 the KJV translates the Hebrew word *peleshet* as “Palestina,” referring to Philistia.

PALESTINE

TERMINOLOGY

The word “Palestine” is derived from the name of one of the Sea Peoples (Heb. *pelishtim*) who migrated to the southern coastal region of the Fertile Crescent from one or more of the coastal regions of the Mediterranean (*see* Philistines).

The word “Palestine” has at times been used to refer to an area as small as this southwestern coastal region (functioning at times as a synonym for “Philistia”) and as large as the land on both sides of the Jordan River, including the Negev in the south.

Most English versions of the Bible do not mention “Palestine,” although in the KJV the Hebrew word *peleshet* (usually rendered “Philistia” or “Philistines”) is translated as “Palestina” in Exod. 15:14; Isa. 14:29, 31 and as “Palestine” in Joel 3:4.

Other designations of this region within the Scripture include “Canaan” (Gen. 10:19; Josh. 22:9), “the land” (Gen. 13:17; Josh. 2:1), “the land of Canaan” (Gen. 17:8; Num. 13:2), “the land of the Hebrews” (Gen. 40:15), “the land . . . promised on oath” (Gen. 50:24; Deut. 6:23), in various combinations and order “the land of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Hivites, Perizzites, Jebusites, and Girgashites” (Exod. 3:17; 13:5; 23:23), “the LORD’s land” (Josh. 22:19), “the land of Israel” (1 Sam. 13:19; Ezek. 47:18), and “Trans-Euphrates,” which was “beyond the river” from the perspective of those in Persia (Ezra 4:10; Neh. 2:7). Compare also “the tribes of Israel” (2 Sam. 24:2; Ezek. 47:13), “Israel and Judah” (2 Sam. 5:5; 2 Chron. 30:6), and “from Dan to Beersheba” (Judg. 20:1; 1 Kings 4:25).

In the NT, this territory is usually designated by reference to the provinces of Judea and Galilee (Matt. 2:22; John 7:1), which sometimes are mentioned with the Decapolis (Matt. 4:25) and Samaria (Acts 9:31; cf. Luke 3:1).

BOUNDARIES AND SIZE

Boundaries. Palestine is in the southwestern portion of the Fertile Crescent (i.e., western Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and Israel). It is located northeast of the Nile River basin and west-southwest of the basins of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers.

Generally speaking, it is bounded by Lebanon to the north, the Mediterranean Sea (= the Sea, the Great Sea, or the western sea) on the west, Wadi el-Arish (= the river of Egypt, the Wadi of Egypt) in the southwest, the Sinai Peninsula in the south, and the Transjordan in the east (Gen. 15:18; Num. 34:3–7, 11–12; Deut. 1:7; 11:24; 34:2; Josh. 1:4; 11:16; 2 Kings 24:7). When the Transjordan is considered part of Palestine (cf. Deut. 34:1), the eastern boundary is the Syrian (Syro-Arabian) Desert. In several biblical texts the northeast boundary of this region is “the great river, the Euphrates” (Gen. 15:18; Deut. 1:7; 11:24; Josh. 1:4; 1 Chron. 5:9; cf. 2 Sam. 8:3).

Size. Because of fluidity in the use of the term “Palestine,” it is difficult to speak precisely of the land area designated by it. Palestine west of the Jordan River is about six thousand square miles, similar to the land area of the state of Hawaii.

A description of “the whole land” viewed by Moses included both the Negev and Gilead, part of the Transjordan (Deut. 34:1–3). In the OT, the Negev is regularly included as one of the regions of the land on the west side of the Jordan (Deut. 1:7; Josh. 10:40; 11:16; Jer. 17:26). The unity of the land on both sides of the Jordan is reflected in texts that focus on Israel’s inheritance of land (Deut. 3:12–17), cities of refuge (Num. 35:14; Josh. 20:7–8), and military victories (Josh. 12:1–8; 24:8–13).

The land area of Palestine increases considerably if one includes these areas, for the Transjordan region is about 4,000 square miles, while the Negev is about 4,600 square miles.

TOPOGRAPHICAL REGIONS

Frequent seismic activity, the rising and falling of the landmass, and deposits from the inundation and withdrawal of seas produced seven topographical regions current in Palestine.

Coastal plain. The coastal plain is the fertile terrain bordering the Mediterranean, though the coastline itself consists of beaches, sand dunes, wetlands, and rock cliffs.

The southern portion of the coastal plain was once inhabited by the Philistines (with the coastal cities of Gaza, Ashkelon, and Ashdod). Moving north of the Yarkon River, we pass through the marshy Plain of Sharon and the Dor Plain. In the north, hills rise near Carmel and extend west to the central highlands. North of the Carmel range lie the Acco Plain, the Asher Plain, and the coastlands of Phoenicia (including Tyre and Sidon).

Hill country. The hill country is located between, and runs parallel to, the coastal plain on the west and the Jordan Valley on the east. The hills, ridges, plateaus, and valleys of the hill country are the setting for most of the OT narratives.

The hill country is bisected by the Jezreel Valley, which runs east-west from the Jordan Valley to the Bay of Acco (Haifa Bay), north of Carmel.

The hill country south of the Jezreel Valley is called "the central highlands," which consist of the rough and rocky hills of Samaria in the north (such as Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal) and the more arid (and, historically, less populated) Judean hill country in the south. The highest hills of this area exceed three thousand feet.

In Scripture the southern hill country (or portions of it) is called "the hill country of Judah/Judea" (Josh. 11:21; Luke 1:39) and "the hill country of Bethel" (Josh. 16:1; 1 Sam. 13:2), while the northern (Samarian) hill country (or portions of it) is called "the hill country of Israel" (Josh. 11:21), "the hill country of Naphtali" (Josh. 20:7), and, most frequently, "the hill country of Ephraim" (Josh. 17:15; Judg. 2:9; 1 Kings 4:8).

The hill country north of the Jezreel Valley consists of two parts, Lower and Upper Galilee, divided by the fault through which runs Wadi esh-Shaghur. Lower Galilee has fertile basins and hills about two thousand feet above sea level. Farther north is Upper Galilee, with hills averaging about three thousand feet. It forms a transition to the mountains of Lebanon, which lie to the north.

The Shephelah ("lowland" or "piedmont") is the region of gentle and rolling hills between five hundred and one thousand feet above sea level between the Judean hill country and the coastal plain. These hills formerly were covered with sycamore trees and provided Judeans with protection against an attack from the west.

Jezreel Valley. The Jezreel Valley is often equated with the Plain of Esdraelon, though some distinguish the fault basin (Esdraelon) from the rift valley (Jezreel).

On its west side, this fertile plain begins north of Carmel at the coast, moving east to the Jordan Valley. The central highlands lie to the north (Galilee) and south (Samaria) of this plain.

The fertile soil of this low-lying basin was valued for farming. Traders and armies regularly passed through this great plain, and it was often the place of military conflict (cf. Judg. 6:33; 1 Sam. 29:1, 11; Hos. 1:5).

Jordan Valley. The Jordan Valley (also known as the Jordan Rift Valley or the Dead Sea Rift) begins near the base of Mount Hermon in the north (9,232 feet). Moving south, the rift continues to the

Hula Valley, through which the Jordan River flows to the Sea of Galilee (Sea of Gennesaret, Lake Kinnereth). The Sea of Galilee is about twelve miles long and five miles wide, located within an area of hills and valleys.

The Jordan River meanders south, flowing through a deep gorge and falling three thousand feet before coming to the Dead Sea (also called "the Sea of the Arabah" [Deut. 4:49; Josh. 3:16] and "the Salt Sea" [Num. 34:3, 12; Josh. 15:2, 5 ESV, NASB]), the lowest place on earth. At its lowest point, the Dead Sea is more than 2,600 feet below sea level.

The Jordan Valley rises as one continues south from the Dead Sea (forty-eight miles long and eight miles wide) through the arid Arabah (cf. Isa. 33:9; Zech. 14:10) to the Gulf of Aqaba.

The term "Arabah" is generally used to refer to the extension of the rift south of the Dead Sea, though at one time in the history of ancient Israel it referred to a region that included the Jordan Valley between the Sea of Galilee and the Dead Sea, on both the east (Deut. 3:17; Josh. 12:1–3) and the west (Deut. 11:30; Josh. 11:2; Ezek. 47:8) sides of the Jordan River.

Transjordan. The Transjordan region is located east of the Jordan Valley and west of the Syrian (Syro-Arabian) Desert. Three major rivers run across this region, each moving from east to west. The Yarmouk (Yarmuk) and the Jabbok (Zarqa) rivers empty into the Jordan River, while the Arnon River (Wadi el-Mujib) flows into the Dead Sea.

In ancient Israel, regions of the Transjordan, from north to south, included Bashan (Karnaim), north of the Yarmuk River; Gilead, south of the Yarmuk; Ammon, the region of modern-day Amman, southeast of Gilead; Moab, south of the Arnon River; and Edom, south of Wadi el-Hesa (Zered River [cf. Num. 21:12; Deut. 2:13–14]).

The capture of the territory belonging to Sihon between the Jabbok and the Arnon rivers was a significant event in the history of ancient Israel (Num. 21:24; Josh. 12:1–2).

Although the Transjordan is often excluded from "Palestine," there were times in biblical history when the land on both sides of the Jordan was considered a unit. For example, "the other half of Manasseh, the Reubenites and the Gadites" received their tribal inheritance east of the Jordan (cf. Josh. 13:8–32). They inhabited Bashan, Gilead, and the land of the Amorites (cf. Deut. 3:12–17; 34:1; Judg. 20:1).

According to 2 Sam. 8, David established control over Moab (vv. 2, 12), the Beqaa Valley ("along the Euphrates River" [v. 3 GW]), Aram (v. 6; vv. 12–13 MT), Ammon and Amalek (v. 12), and Edom (v. 14; vv. 12–13 LXX, Syriac; cf. 1 Chron. 18:2–13).

In Scripture, the central Transjordan hill country is sometimes called "the hill country of Gilead" (Gen. 31:21, 23, 25; Deut. 3:12). The southern elevated region in Edom is called "the hill country of Seir" (Gen. 36:8–9; Deut. 2:5).

Negev. The Negev (Negeb) is shaped like an inverted triangle with its peak at the southern city of Eilat (Elath) near the biblical Ezion Geber (cf. 1 Kings 9:26). It is bounded on the north by the Judean hill country, on the west by Sinai, and on the east by the Arabah Valley (which lies along the rift south of the Dead Sea).

The Negev is an extremely dry area, with the most rain found in the northern (twelve inches annually) and western (ten inches annually) sections, and the least in the Arabah Valley (two inches annually). It is a place of sand dunes, rocky desert, and brown hills that increase in height as one moves toward Sinai.

Although the Negev is described as "a land of hardship and distress, of lions and lionesses, of adders and darting snakes" (Isa. 30:6), it was also a place of wells and springs, in addition to cities and towns such as Beersheba (Josh. 15:21–32; 2 Sam. 24:7).

Sinai peninsula. The Sinai peninsula is about twenty-three thousand square miles. It consists primarily of plains, plateaus, and hills (the highest of which is Jebel Yiallaq, at 3,656 feet), with a coastline along the Mediterranean of 145 miles.

The longest river in the region is the Wadi el-Arish, which runs 155 miles northward from central Sinai to the Mediterranean.

Israel's activities in the Desert of Sinai are often mentioned in the Pentateuch (e.g., Exod. 19:1–2; Num. 1:1; 9:5).

The Desert of Sinai is distinguished from the Desert of Sin (Exod. 16:1) and the Desert of Paran (Num. 10:12). Other arid areas within the Sinai Peninsula include the Desert of Zin (Num. 34:3), the Desert of Shur (Exod. 15:22), and the Desert of Etham (Num. 33:8).

CLIMATE

The climate of Palestine consists of a dry and hot season from June to August and a wet season from mid-October to mid-April. It is common for the wet season to consist of two distinct periods of heavy rain, one at the beginning and one toward the end of this period (cf. "spring and autumn rains" [Deut. 11:14; Joel 2:23; James 5:7]).

Two transitional seasons of about six weeks each bridge the wet and the dry seasons. One occurs between early September and the end of October, the other between early April and the middle of June.

Average temperatures throughout the region range from 46.5–55 degrees (Fahrenheit) in January (both the coldest and the wettest month in Palestine) to 71.5–93 degrees in August.

Most rainfall in Palestine occurs as cyclonic storm systems (about twenty-five each year) bring warm air from North Africa eastward over the Mediterranean, clashing with cooler air from Europe and Asia. As clouds move over the land, precipitation falls heaviest on the west side of the hills, leaving the east side of the hills with less rain.

Typically, rainfall is heaviest in the northern areas of Palestine, the regions closest to the Mediterranean, and in the Transjordan. The area around the Dead Sea is extremely dry, with evaporation exceeding precipitation. In contrast, the northern highlands have forty inches of annual rainfall.

In Palestine, precipitation can also take the form of both snow (cf. 2 Sam. 23:20; Prov. 25:13) and, in a significant way, dew (cf. Judg. 6:37–40; Song 5:2). Dew provides moisture for agriculture especially in the coastal plain, the central highlands, and the Jezreel Valley.

During the transitional seasons, desiccating winds (sometimes called sirocco winds) bring warm desert air from the east (and at times from the south), raising the temperature and lowering the relative humidity throughout Palestine. These winds often bring fine dust from the desert. The effects are most onerous in the Jordan Valley. References to an east wind in Scripture are common (Gen. 41:6; Hos. 13:15; Jon. 4:8; see also "south wind" in Job 37:17; Luke 12:55).

ROADS

Two major highways passed through Palestine: "the Way of the Sea," or Via Maris (cf. Isa. 9:1; Matt. 4:15), and "the King's Highway" (cf. Num. 20:17; 21:22).

The Way of the Sea moved north from Egypt through the coastal plain, heading east through the Jezreel Valley. From this point it branched out in three directions: northwest through Phoenicia, north toward Damascus, and east to join with the King's Highway.

The King’s Highway was a Transjordanian route passing from the Gulf of Aqaba in the south (cf. Deut. 2:8) through Edom, Moab, Gilead, and Bashan to Damascus in the north.

Merchants and armies used these highways to pass through Palestine, while local traffic often used east-west roads to move throughout the area.

PALLET *See* Mat.

PALLU The second son of Reuben (Gen. 46:9; Exod. 6:14; 1 Chron. 5:3), the father of Eliab (Num. 26:8), and the ancestor of the Palluites (Num. 26:5).

PALLUITES *See* Pallu.

PALMERWORM The palmerworm is a destructive hairy caterpillar or, in North America, the larva of a particular moth. Although several translations follow the KJV in using this word to translate *gazam* (Joel 1:4; 2:25; Amos 4:9), *gazam* is actually one of the many Hebrew words for the locust, possibly referring to a particular stage of development.

PALMS Many species are included under this general designation. The date palm tree often attains a height of eighty feet, but more commonly forty to fifty. It begins bearing fruit six to eight years after being planted and continues to be productive for a century. Its trunk is straight and tall and terminates in a crown of emerald green plumes. Its leaves are often about twenty feet long and whisper melodiously in the breeze. Jericho was the “City of Palms” (Judg. 1:16; 3:13 NIV mg.). The Greek word *phoinikē* (“Phoenicia” [Acts 11:19; 15:3]) probably is derived from the Greek word for “palm” (*phoinix*). In Ps. 92:12 the prosperity of the righteous is likened to the palm tree. The glorified saints will be dressed in white robes with palm branches in their hands as a sign of victory and peace (Rev. 7:9). *See also* Plants.

Palm tree

PALMS, CITY OF *See* Jericho.

PALSY The word “palsy” is a shorter form of “paralysis.” Jesus and the apostles cured many afflicted by paralysis (Matt. 4:24; 8:5–13; 9:2–7; Mark 2:3–11; Luke 5:18; 7:2–10; John 5:5–7; Acts 8:7; 9:34). Affecting the motor centers of the brain or spinal cord, paralysis is characterized by the extreme loss of the power of motion. It is always serious, usually irreversible, and generally sudden in onset.

PALTI A shortened form of the Hebrew name “Paltiel.” **(1)** The son of Raphu from Benjamin, he was one of the scouts who returned a negative report about the inhabitants of Canaan to Moses (Num. 13:9). **(2)** The son of Laish from Gallim who lost his wife Michal, whom Saul had given to him (1 Sam. 25:44 [NIV: “Paltiel”]), because of a previous marriage contract that Saul had made with David involving a bride-price of a hundred Philistine foreskins (2 Sam. 3:13–16).

PALTIEL **(1)** A tribal chief from Issachar involved in the division of the land (Num. 34:26). **(2)** The son of Laish, from Gallim, to whom Saul gave Michal when he took her from David (1 Sam. 25:44, here called “Palti” in some versions). He tearfully followed her when Ish-Bosheth returned her to David (2 Sam. 3:15–16).

PALTITE One of David’s elite warriors, Helez, is so designated (2 Sam. 23:26), though in 1 Chron. 11:27 the variant “Pelonite” occurs.

PAMPHYLIA A small Roman province on the south coast of central Asia Minor (modern Turkey). Pamphylia was a flat plain of approximately eighty by twenty miles. Jews from this region were present at Pentecost (Acts 2:10). Its capital city of Perga was Paul’s first entry into Asia Minor on his first missionary journey with Barnabas (13:13). After traveling northward to preach the gospel in the cities of Lycaonia, they returned to Pamphylia, preaching in Perga and sailing from the port city of Attalia (14:25). Paul and Barnabas split over their disagreement about John Mark, who had deserted them in Pamphylia (15:38). See also Acts 27:5.

PAN A cooking implement typically made from clay and, less frequently, of metal (Ezek. 4:3), it was used to cook grain offerings (Lev. 2:7; 7:9; 1 Sam. 2:14), serve bread (2 Sam. 13:9), boil holy offerings (2 Chron. 35:13), or cook meat (Mic. 3:3). One thousand silver pans taken by Nebuchadnezzar from Jerusalem were recovered from the Persian treasury and returned by Cyrus to Sheshbazzar, prince of Judah (Ezra 1:9).

PANNAG The meaning of the Hebrew term *pannag* is uncertain. It appears only in a list of items that Israel and Judah traded with Tyre (Ezek. 27:17). The KJV interprets it as a location, “Pannag.” More-recent translations have understood the term as some kind of grain or grain product (NRSV: “millet”) or perhaps a prepared food (NIV: “confections”; NASB: “cakes”).

PAPER *See* Writing Implements and Materials.

PAPHOS A Roman city rebuilt by Augustus and located on the southwest coast of the island of Cyprus. Paul and Barnabas traveled to the new Paphos, where they encountered the Jewish magician Elymas (Bar-Jesus) and converted the Roman official Sergius Paulus to faith in Jesus (Acts 13:6–13).

PAPS The KJV word for “breasts” (Ezek. 23:21; Luke 23:29) or “chest” (Rev. 1:13) (cf. Luke 11:27 [NIV: “who . . . nursed you”]).

PAPYRUS *See* Writing Implements and Materials.

PARABLES The word “parable” is used to speak of a particular literary form that communicates indirectly by means of comparative language, often for the purpose of challenging the listener to accept or reject a new way of thinking about a particular matter. Parables regularly incorporate concrete and accessible images from the daily life of the audience, and often they are terse and pointed, mentioning only the details relevant for an effective comparison. However, any attempt to define the term “parable” in a clear and concise way is complicated by the fact that both the Hebrew (*mashal*) and the Greek (*parabolē*) words regularly translated by the English word “parable” have much broader connotations. For instance, in the OT *mashal* can designate proverbs (Prov. 1:1), riddles (Ezek. 17:2), prophetic utterances (Num. 23:7, 18; 24:3, 15, 20, 21, 23), and sayings (1 Sam. 10:12); similarly, in the NT *parabolē* denotes proverbs (Luke 4:23), riddles (Mark 3:23), analogies (Mark 7:17), and more. Therefore, no comprehensive definition of parables is agreed upon by biblical scholars, and very little said about parables in general will apply to every parable.

PARABLES IN THE BIBLE

Although not designated with the Hebrew word *mashal*, the story of the trees (Judg. 9:7–15) and the story of the ewe lamb (2 Sam. 12:1–4) may be considered to be parables. Like many parables, the story about the ewe lamb told by Nathan prompts its audience, in this case David, to condemn the actions of a character in the parable before being confronted with the fact that the character and his conduct are symbolic of David himself. The parable is the vehicle used to bring about self-condemnation of its audience.

Although Jesus is not the only speaker of parables in the ancient world, the Gospels narrate a tremendous number of parables within his teaching. The major parables of Jesus are listed in table 4. The diversity of form represented in this list is striking. Some of the parables consist of short, relatively simple comparisons that lack the development of any significant story line. This is true, for instance, of the parables of the mustard seed, yeast, hidden treasure, and the pearl. Each of these offers a simple simile to explain some feature of the kingdom of God, a frequent topic in Jesus’ parables, and may include an additional sentence of clarification.

Table 4. Major Parables of Jesus

Wise and foolish builders	Matt. 7:24–27; Luke 6:46–49
Sower and the soils	Matt. 13:3–8, 18–23; Mark 4:3–8, 14–20; Luke 8:5–8, 11–15
Weeds	Matt. 13:24–30, 36–43
Mustard seed	Matt. 13:31–32; Mark 4:30–32; Luke 13:18–19
Yeast	Matt. 13:33; Luke 13:20–21
Hidden treasure	Matt. 13:44
Pearl	Matt. 13:45–46
Net	Matt. 13:47–50
Lost sheep	Matt. 18:12–14; Luke 15:4–7
Unmerciful servant	Matt. 18:23–35
Workers in the vineyard	Matt. 20:1–16
Two sons	Matt. 21:28–32
Wicked tenants	Matt. 21:33–44; Mark 12:1–11; Luke 20:9–18
Wedding banquet	Matt. 22:2–14

Faithful and wise servant	Matt. 24:45–51; Luke 12:42–48
Ten virgins	Matt. 25:1–13
Talents	Matt. 25:14–30; Luke 19:12–27
Sheep and goats	Matt. 25:31–46
Growing seed	Mark 4:26–29
Moneylender	Luke 7:41–47
Good Samaritan	Luke 10:30–37
Friend in need	Luke 11:5–8
Rich fool	Luke 12:16–21
Unfruitful fig tree	Luke 13:6–9
Lowest seat	Luke 14:7–14
Great banquet	Luke 14:16–24
Cost of discipleship	Luke 14:28–33
Lost coin	Luke 15:8–10
Lost (prodigal) son	Luke 15:11–32
Shrewd manager	Luke 16:1–8
Rich man and Lazarus	Luke 16:19–31
Persistent widow	Luke 18:2–8
Pharisee and tax collector	Luke 18:10–14

Parables such as the good Samaritan and the prodigal son, on the other hand, are significantly longer, contain developed plots, and present several central characters. Stories of this sort may use the characters as examples of behavior to be either emulated or avoided, as in the parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector. Such parables may remain open-ended in an attempt to force the listeners into a decision about what should happen (the unfruitful fig tree), or they may include a clear, concluding explanation that leaves no doubt as to how the audience should change their belief or behavior as a result of the parable's teaching (the moneylender). The degree to which each of these parables directly addresses the intended audience and the intended topic can vary greatly. For instance, although the parable of the rich fool directly addresses the subject matter of material wealth, the anonymity of the rich man in the story does not openly condemn any particular member of Jesus' audience. Alternatively, a parable may treat a subject that differs from the intended one and expect the listener to transfer the lesson to another topic. This is the case with the parable of the weeds, which speaks explicitly about farming. Nonetheless, when the disciples seek an explanation of this parable, Jesus indicates that it is to be understood as speaking about that feature of the kingdom of heaven whereby the sons of the kingdom and the sons of the evil one intermingle in the world until the end of the age, when the sons of the evil one will be separated to face a fiery judgment (Matt. 13:36–43).

Other parables, such as that of the lost sheep, revolve around a central question posed to the listeners. By asking "who among you" would behave in the way described, the parable anticipates a negative response that asserts that no one would act in the manner detailed in the parable. The NIV frequently inserts the phrase "suppose one of you" in places where the introductory question "who among you" appears in Greek.

PURPOSE OF JESUS' TEACHING IN PARABLES

It is quite clear that Jesus regularly employed parables in his teaching, but his reason for doing so is less evident. Jesus' own somewhat perplexing statement in Mark 4:10–12 indicates that his parables have the dual purpose of both revealing and concealing the secret of the kingdom, but one may wonder how it is that parables perform both functions simultaneously. If the goal of comparative language is to make clearer a concept or idea that is difficult, then certainly Jesus' parables function in this way. Through the simple, accessible, and concrete word pictures that are his parables, Jesus discloses many characteristics and features of the kingdom of God, which is at best something of an enigma to his audience. By speaking to the crowds, albeit at times in an exaggerated fashion, about the things that they know, such as farming, banquets, baking, and other elements of everyday life, Jesus expands their understanding of what they do not know. However, the indirect quality of parables simultaneously blocks spontaneous understanding and therefore requires the audience to engage in additional reflection to ensure that they have truly grasped what is being taught. Likewise, the ability to address an issue by slyly sneaking up on it from behind results in parables that initially conceal their true purpose of convincing the listeners of a new way of thinking or behaving such that the conviction they are meant to induce comes with a surprise kick at the end.

INTERPRETATION OF PARABLES

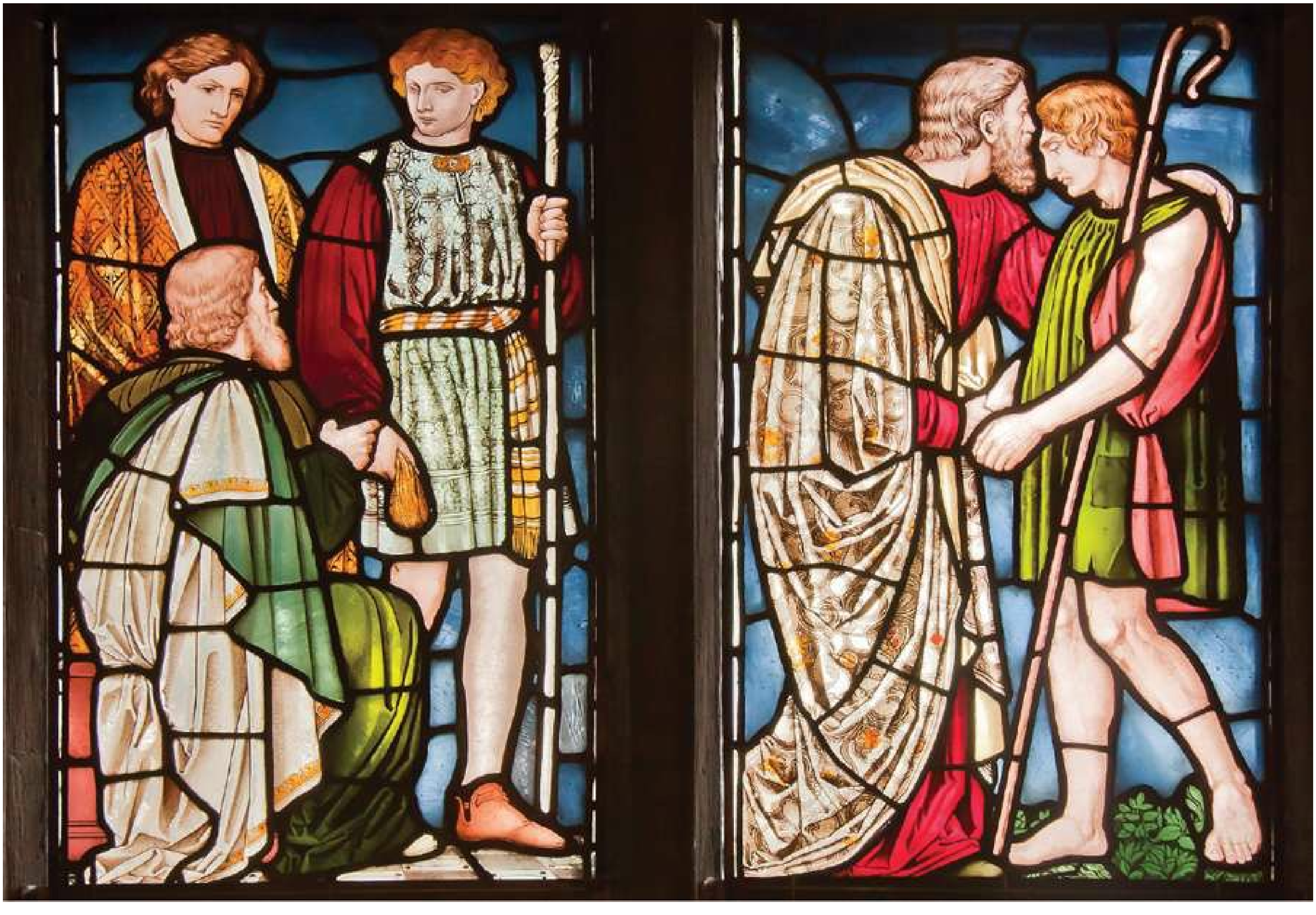
Interpretation over the centuries. Throughout church history until the nineteenth century, parables were widely interpreted by means of the allegorical method. That is, all the surface details of parables were identified as symbols of some deeper spiritual truth. A classic example of allegorizing is Augustine's interpretation of the parable of the good Samaritan, whereby he interpreted surface details of the text according to allegorical equations (see table 5). Allegorical interpretations of the same parable by other Christians, however, did not always result in the same interpretations of the symbols. For this reason, most scholars today reject the excessive allegorization of Augustine and others throughout church history. However, how many details in a parable, if any, are to be interpreted allegorically remains a central question in parable interpretation. For instance, in the parable of the mustard seed, are the mustard seed and the plant that it produces allegories for the unobtrusive beginnings yet manifest results of the kingdom? If so, what then of the man and the birds also mentioned in the parable? Are they symbols of a deeper spiritual truth such that the man is to be equated with God, or are they included only to augment the teaching of the parable such that the birds merely highlight the extreme size of the tree into which the seed has grown?

Table 5. Augustine's Allegorical Interpretation of the Good Samaritan

Details in the Parable	Allegorical Equivalent
The man	Adam
Jerusalem	The heavenly city
Jericho	The moon (a symbol of mortality)
The robbers	The devil
Beating the man	Persuading him to sin
Priest and Levite	The Old Testament priesthood
Samaritan	Christ
Binding of wounds	Restraint of sin

Oil	Comfort of hope
Animal	Incarnation
Inn	Church
Innkeeper	Apostle Paul

The work of the German scholar Adolf Jülicher at the end of the nineteenth century has widely affected parable interpretation since that time. Jülicher asserted that parables are not allegories and therefore should not be interpreted allegorically at all. Instead, he argued that parables have only one main point, normally a general, religious statement. Interpreters since Jülicher continue to debate how much of a parable is significant and how many points of correspondence are intended. More-recent views have posited that Jülicher went too far in maintaining a strict distinction between parable and allegory, and many interpreters believe that allegorical elements are present in parables, with perhaps the main characters in a parable being the most likely candidates for allegorical interpretation. This renewed openness to allegorical features in parables is due in part to the recognition that the Gospels record Jesus’ own tendency to offer allegorical interpretations of his parables when his disciples inquire as to their meaning. This is most clearly seen in the parable of the sower and the soils, which includes details such as seed, birds, the sun, and thorns. Jesus reveals that the seed is to be interpreted as the message about the kingdom, the birds stand for the evil one, the sun is representative of persecution because of the gospel, and the thorns indicate worries and wealth (Matt. 13:18–23).



Scenes from the parable of the prodigal son in stained-glass windows designed by Carl Almquist (Nikolai Church, Örebro, Sweden, nineteenth century AD)

Guidelines for interpreting parables. It is generally best to recognize that not all parables are identical, and that one should consider several possible interpretive strategies before determining which approach best fits any given parable. Nonetheless, some broad guidelines for the interpretation of parables include the following:

1. The characters and plots within parables are literary creations and are not historical. The parable of the lost sheep is not a historical record of a certain shepherd whose sheep went missing. No actual invitation was issued for the great banquet in the parable. Rather, in a parable the listener is brought into a narrative world controlled by the storyteller and by implication has no need for details that the speaker fails to provide. Therefore, it does not matter whether the shepherd himself was at fault in the loss of the sheep, and the choice of food set before the banquet guests is inconsequential.

2. Parables often follow the principle of end stress. Interpreters should carefully consider how the parable ends when determining the meaning the parable is intended to convey. At times an explanatory conclusion to the parable is included and may be helpful in directing the reader toward the topic that is really being addressed. This is the case in the parable of the two sons, in which Jesus' concluding explanation identifies tax collectors and prostitutes as those who are entering the kingdom ahead of those who have received John's prophetic message but failed to accept it.

Recent studies on parables that reflect issues raised by two fields of study respectively known as form criticism and redaction criticism are likely to question the accuracy of such concluding statements as well as any introductory comments to parables that may also be presented in the Gospel text. Many scholars ask if and to what extent the Gospel writers made changes to the parables that they record. They wonder whether it is possible to discern the original context and circumstance in which Jesus relayed his parables, or whether the details of the original context had been forgotten by the time that the evangelists wrote. Could it be that any introductory and concluding comments included with some parables are not authentic to Jesus' ministry but instead reflect issues that arose in the early church? In spite of the doubts of some, more-conservative scholars have presented arguments for the continued trustworthiness of the Gospel accounts about Jesus' teaching including introductory or concluding statements associated with his parables.

3. Look for the use of OT symbols in Jesus' parables. The parables of Jesus and the parables recorded in other rabbinical literature are replete with similar figures and images. Kings, banquets, weddings, farmers, debtors, and more appear with frequency; they perhaps developed into stock images to be used in stories in the ancient world. If such details appear in a parable, the interpreter should consider strongly whether some allegorical meaning is intended whereby a kingly figure represents God, a son represents the people of God, and a banquet indicates a time of coming judgment or reward.

4. Interpreters should exercise extreme caution regarding doctrinal teaching drawn from a parable, particularly if such doctrine cannot be confirmed by the theological teaching found in a nonparabolic portion of Scripture. For instance, in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, is one to conclude that conversations can occur between the dead who reside in hell and those who reside in heaven? Likewise, should one learn that it is possible for the deceased human to be sent back to the living with a message from God? These doctrinal issues seem to be outside the range of teaching intended by the

parable, and support for these ideas cannot be found in other biblical texts.

5. In recognition of the indirect nature of the communication in parables, some interpreters question whether a parable's meaning can be reproduced in propositional language. In other words, can the meaning of a parable be expressed in nonparabolic language, or is some necessary component lost when one changes the form? Similarly, is it possible for people who have heard the story of the good Samaritan repeatedly to be struck by the confrontational force that was central to its initial reception? Not only are the images of Samaritans and Levites foreign to the modern listener, but also the familiarity with the story that has resulted from its retelling over time has domesticated the parable such that the details that were meant to shock and surprise are now anticipated and predictable. In this way, are parables like jokes that have been repeated too many times until one becomes inoculated against the punch line? Because of these concerns about the inability of today's listeners to truly hear the parable as it was meant to be heard, some interpreters may wish to consider how it could be recast with images common to today's audience and retold in such a way that the listeners experience the surprising twist that the initial audiences felt.

PARACLETE Four times in John's Gospel (14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:7) Jesus refers to the Holy Spirit as the "Paraclete" (NIV, NRSV: "Advocate"; NASB: "Helper"; KJV: "Comforter"). The Greek word (*paraklētos*) is difficult to translate and has connotations of "comforter," "counselor," or "advocate." The Paraclete is sent by both the Father (14:26) and the Son (15:26; 16:7). Jesus indicates that the Holy Spirit is "another advocate" (14:16), implying that the Spirit in some way continues the work of Jesus. The Paraclete does this by doing three things for believers, all of which are necessary because Jesus is going to the Father (14:3): the Paraclete lives with and in the believer (14:16–17), teaches believers all things (14:26), and reminds believers of all that Jesus said (14:26). But the activity of the Paraclete is not limited to believers, for he also "prove[s] the world to be in the wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment" (16:8). As the Spirit of truth, the Paraclete reveals the sin of the world, its lack of righteousness, and its status as under God's judgment. The same Greek word is applied to Jesus in 1 John 2:1. When believers sin, "we have an advocate with the Father [*paraklētos*]—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One."

PARADISE Paradise is a place of blessing associated with God's presence. The word comes from an old Iranian root meaning a walled enclosure and came to refer to a garden setting. In the Bible the word "paradise" looks back to the garden of Eden when life was as God originally created it to be before it was marred by sin, and it looks ahead to how God will one day re-create it anew in the new heaven and the new earth. Jesus told the thief on the cross, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise" (Luke 23:43). Paul had a taste of this when he "was caught up to paradise" (2 Cor. 12:4). Jesus promises, "To the one who is victorious, I will give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God" (Rev. 2:7).

PARAH A site appearing only once in the Bible, in the list of towns allotted to the tribe of Benjamin (Josh. 18:23). Parah apparently is identified with Khirbet Abu Musarrah (Ein Fara), located approximately five miles northeast of Jerusalem, in the wilderness between the central hill country and the Rift Valley. The name "Parah" means "heifer" or "cow," perhaps suggesting that the site, blessed with a spring, was used to graze cattle.

PARALLELISM *See* Poetry.

PARALYSIS *See* Diseases and Physical Abnormalities; Palsy.

PARAMOUR A word used in some Bible versions (e.g., KJV, NKJV, NASB, RSV) to describe the illicit "lovers" of Judah in the allegory of Ezek. 23:20. The RSV also uses the term in Hos. 3:1 to refer to the lover of Hosea's wife (NIV: "another man").

PARAN The desert to which the Israelites journeyed after leaving the Desert of Sinai (Num. 10:11–12). The location is never explicitly mentioned, but it can be inferred from some of the descriptions of the Israelites' wilderness journey. It is a desert region south of Judah, west of Edom, and north of Sinai, within the region known as the Negev. This is the location from which Moses sent spies to explore the promised land (Num. 13:3). They subsequently returned to the Desert of Paran at Kadesh (Num. 13:26), giving us a geographical reference near Kadesh. Other references to the Desert of Paran confirm this location. Genesis 21:21 specifies the Desert of Paran as the place to which Abraham banished Ishmael, and specific references to Egypt and Beersheba clarify its location between them. See also 1 Kings 11:18.

The region of Paran

PARBAR The transliteration of a rare Hebrew term that refers to a colonnade. The Chronicler lists this as one of the locations where the temple gatekeepers were stationed (1 Chron. 26:18 [NIV: "court"]). The meaning and origin of the word have long been debated. Suggestions have ranged from a word of Persian origin meaning "open court" to an association with "forecourt" in 2 Kings 23:11 (NIV: "court"). One other suggestion is that it is a colonnaded porch located west of the temple.

PARCHED GRAIN Grain that was parched or roasted over fire and eaten or used as the primary part of the meal offering (Lev. 2:14). It appears often as a food (Lev. 23:14; Ruth 2:14; 1 Sam. 17:17; 25:18; 2 Sam. 17:28), suggesting that it served as a basic part of people's diet. Parched grain typically appears with other staples such as bread, beans, flour, and unroasted wheat and barley.

PARCHMENT *See* Writing Implements and Materials.

PARDON A term often synonymous with "forgive" (see Num. 14:19). Forgiveness, however, refers more to the disposition of the injured party, while pardon refers to the remission of legal consequences for the offender. Both people (e.g., 2 Chron. 30:18) and wrongs (e.g., Exod. 23:21) can be pardoned. In almost all biblical references to pardon, God is the source of pardon; in one notable instance, however, Saul asks Samuel for pardon after disobeying the word of the Lord through Samuel (1 Sam. 15:24–25). Frequently in the Bible, people request God's pardon (e.g., Exod. 34:9; 2 Kings 5:18; Amos 7:2). Given God's character, this is reasonable, "for [God] will freely pardon" (Isa. 55:7).

PARE Used in some English Bible versions in Deut. 21:12 to describe the cutting or trimming of fingernails (e.g., NRSV [NIV: "trim"]). In this circumstance, paring nails is included among the ritual mourning practices for a beautiful female captive of Israel, along with shaving her head and removing a lavish garment. She is given a month to grieve for her parents prior to being married to her captor.

PARENTS, PARENTING *See* Family.

PARLOUR A dated word used on three occasions in the KJV to refer to a room or area in a physical structure: the location of Eglon, the obese ruler of Moab, as he was relieving himself just prior to being impaled by Ehud (Judg. 3:20–25); the location on the high place to which Samuel brought Saul and his servant for a meal with about thirty invited guests (1 Sam. 9:22); a designated outer room or porch on the plans that David gave to Solomon for the Jerusalem temple (1 Chron. 28:11).

PARMASHTA One of Haman's ten sons, who were killed by the Jews during the reign of the Persian king Xerxes (Ahasuerus), who had granted them permission to "destroy, kill and annihilate" their enemies (Esther 8:11). At the request of Esther, the king ordered that the corpses of Parmashta and his brothers be hung in public display (9:7–14).

PARMENAS One of the seven men chosen to help distribute food to widows in the Jerusalem church (Acts 6:1–6). Tradition suggests he was one of the seventy disciples sent out by Jesus (cf. Luke 10:1), a bishop of Soli on Cyprus, and a martyr at Philippi.

PARNACH *See* Parnak.

PARNAK One of Zebulun's tribal leaders, his son was chosen to help allocate Canaanite lands prior to the conquest (Num. 34:25).

PAROSH The head of a clan that was part of the early return to Judah from Babylonian captivity sometime between 539 and 520 BC (Ezra 2:3; Neh. 7:8). The same clan sent Zechariah and 150 men at the time of Ezra around 458 BC (Ezra 8:3). Seven members of this clan were later found guilty of intermarriage with foreigners (Ezra 10:25). Parosh is also listed as one who sealed the covenant renewal led by Ezra (Neh. 10:14). He is also the father of Pedaiah, one of the wall builders (Neh. 3:25).

PAROUSIA The Greek word *parousia* is used frequently in the NT to refer to “the coming of the Lord,” when believers “will be caught up [or ‘raptured’] . . . to meet the Lord in the air” (1 Thess. 4:15, 17). Literally, *parousia* means “presence” or “arrival” and was used in reference to visiting dignitaries. *See also* Second Coming.

PARSHANDATHA One of Haman’s ten sons, who were killed by the Jews during the reign of the Persian king Xerxes (Ahasuerus), who had granted them permission to “destroy, kill and annihilate” their enemies (Esther 8:11). At the request of Esther, the king ordered that the corpses of Parshandatha and his brothers be hung in public display (9:7–14).

PARSIN *See* Mene, Mene, Tekel, Parsin.

PARTHIANS The descendants of the Parni tribe. They claimed independence from Seleucid dominance and rose to power under King Mithridates I (r. 171–138 BC). At its height, the Parthian Empire extended from the Euphrates River to the Indus Valley. Parthian horsemen were notorious for having forced out the remnants of Alexander’s empire from Persia and for having crushed the Roman army at Carrhae in 53 BC. One specific reason for the latter historical and humiliating defeat was the specific tactic used by the Parthian cavalry of feigning retreat and then using bows and arrows to deliver the famous “Parthian shot.” The Romans never conquered them, but the Sasanian Persians overthrew the Parthian Empire in AD 224. In Acts 2:9 Parthian Jews are mentioned as present in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost.

PARTIES, JEWISH *See* Jewish Parties.

PARTRIDGE Israel has several indigenous species of partridge corresponding to different habitats, including the rock partridge, the black francolin, and the sand partridge. They prefer running to flying, and when threatened, they often crouch motionless on the ground, well camouflaged. In ancient times they were a plentiful source of eggs and meat, so that David’s comparison of himself, fleeing from Saul, with a hunted partridge is easily understood (1 Sam. 26:20). However, Jeremiah’s comparison of the nesting habits of the partridge with “those who gain riches by unjust means” (Jer. 17:11) is more difficult. Partridges do not hatch eggs that they do not lay, and there is no independent evidence of an ancient belief that they did. One plausible suggestion is that this verse refers to partridges raising chicks that they did not hatch (so the ESV); a hen rock partridge sometimes cares for a large number of chicks from multiple broods, some of which will leave her when the growing flock splits up.

PARUAH The father of Jehoshaphat, who was one of the men in charge of providing the court of King Solomon with provisions for one month of the year (1 Kings 4:17).

PARVAIM The place that provided gold used to adorn Solomon’s temple (2 Chron. 3:6). The location, perhaps somewhere in Arabia, is unknown. One of the DSS (1QapGen ar 2:23) gives

Parvaim as the home of Enoch.

PARZITES *See* Perez.

PASACH *See* Pasak.

PASAK The first of the three sons of Japhlet of the tribe of Asher (1 Chron. 7:33).

PASCHAL Formed from “Pascha” (a Latinized version of *Pesach*, the Hebrew term for “Passover”), this adjective pertains to the Feast of Passover. Most commonly, the adjective is used in connection with the lamb offered as a sacrifice on the eve of the feast. The unblemished year-old male lamb is roasted (Exod. 12:5, 8–9; but see Deut. 16:7, where boiling is mentioned as an alternative) and eaten with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. The Feast of Passover, combined with that of Unleavened Bread, is set in place by divine initiative to commemorate God’s “passing over” Israelite households while smiting Egyptian firstborns, the final plague to secure the freedom of the Israelites from Egypt (Exod. 12:23–28).

Beyond the institution of the rite in Exod. 12:1–27 and its immediate environs, the OT refers to the feast in Num. 9:1–14 (allowance for a secondary observance of the festival for those unclean or away on a journey during the first); Josh. 5:10–12 (celebration at Gilgal); 2 Chron. 30:1–27 (Israel and Judah celebrate the festival at Hezekiah’s behest); 2 Kings 23:21–23 // 2 Chron. 35:1, 18–19 (reinstitution of the festival as part of religious reform under Josiah); Ezra 6:19–22 (Passover observance following dedication of the newly constructed temple by returnees from exile in Babylonia).

PAS DAMMIM The uncertain location of an Israelite victory over the Philistines. There Eleazar, one of David’s mighty warriors, took a stand to gain victory (1 Chron. 11:13; cf. 2 Sam. 23:9). Logically, Pas Dammim would have been located somewhere in the foothills between Judah and Philistia.

PASEAH **(1)** A Judahite man of Rekah, he was one of the three sons of Eshton (1 Chron. 4:12). **(2)** One of the ancestors of the temple servants (Nethinim) who returned to Jerusalem after the Babylonian captivity under the leadership of Zerubbabel in 539 BC or soon after (Ezra 2:49; Neh. 7:51). **(3)** The father of Joiada, who helped repair the Jeshanah Gate (Neh. 3:6).

PASHHUR **(1)** A priest, the son of Immer, during the time of Jeremiah. As the “official in charge of the temple,” he put the prophet in stocks (Jer. 20:1–6). Jeremiah delivered a prophecy against him and renamed him “Magor-Missabib” (“Terror on Every Side”). **(2)** Jeremiah also mentions a Pashhur son of Malkijah who is not identified as a priest when he is introduced in Jer. 21:1. He was sent by King Zedekiah to encourage the prophet to beseech God for help during the Babylonian siege. In Jer. 38:1 he is part of a group that gets Jeremiah arrested. **(3)** Jeremiah 38:1 also mentions Pashhur as the father of Gedaliah. Gedaliah is not the governor of the same name. Pashhur here could conceivably be one of the previous two men, but we are uncertain. **(4)** The ancestor of a family of priests (conceivably to be identified with one of the above), numbering 1,247, who returned from Babylon to Judah with Zerubabbel right after Cyrus the Persian king issued a decree allowing the exiles to return (Ezra 2:38; Neh. 7:41). Six men of his family were guilty of intermarriage with foreign women during the time of Ezra (Ezra 10:22). **(5)** A man, perhaps part of the family of the priest mentioned in Jer. 20:1–6, but not the original Pashhur, who signed the covenant renewal led by Ezra (Neh. 10:3).

PASSION A term used to refer to Jesus' suffering and death. References to the passion are attested in both canonical and extracanonical Christian writings. Most scholars agree that the first narrative about Jesus by the Christian community was a version of the passion narrative. The first extant references to this tradition are found in Paul's letters (1 Cor. 2:2; Gal. 3:1). Scholars postulate that a continuous passion narrative circulated in the early churches, predating the Gospel of Mark.

All four NT Gospels spend a large percentage of their text on the passion events. Some scholars speak of the Gospels as "passion narratives with a long introduction." The passion events commenced with the celebration of the Passover, the Last Supper. The new meaning of the Passover directed the focus toward the suffering and upcoming sacrifice of Jesus. Jesus' agonizing prayer in Gethsemane tied the Passover to his suffering (Mark 14:23–24, 36; John 18:11). His subsequent betrayal, arrest, trial, beatings, and mocking are narrated in detail in the Gospels. The passion finds its climax in the crucifixion. The Gospels record different details of the execution scene, depending on their intended audiences. However, all four depict the same execution charge (Matt. 27:37; Mark 15:26; Luke 23:38; John 19:19).

PASSOVER The celebration and commemoration of God's protection of the Israelite firstborn during the final plague on Egypt in Exod. 12:29–50. *See also* Festivals.

PASTOR Pastors provide spiritual oversight for God's people. The fact that the term "pastor" appears only a single time in most English translations (Eph. 4:11) has more to do with the peculiarities of the English language than anything else. In Greek, the same word, *poimēn*, is used for both "shepherd" and "pastor," so that all the references in Scripture to shepherds and sheep need to be studied together. Ultimately, Jesus is the "great Shepherd of the sheep" (Heb. 13:20) and the "Shepherd and Overseer of your souls" (1 Pet. 2:25), so everything from Ps. 23 to Jesus' story of the good shepherd (John 10) are relevant role models for being a pastor. In the NT, this responsibility was entrusted to called and gifted leaders. For example, Peter is called to "take care of" (Gk. *poimainō*, "to shepherd") Jesus' sheep (John 21:16). This responsibility is given to the Ephesian elders/overseers in Acts 20:17, 28 and to the elders/overseers in 1 Pet. 5:1–2. God warns of the curse of "shepherds who lack understanding" (Isa. 56:11), who "do not inquire of the LORD" (Jer. 10:21), and who scatter the sheep (Jer. 23:1). One of God's greatest blessings is giving his people shepherds (or pastors) after his own heart to lead them "with knowledge and understanding" (Jer. 3:15).

PASTORALS, PASTORAL LETTERS The letters of 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, and Titus are referred to as the Pastoral Letters (or Pastoral Epistles). This name reflects that these letters are directed to persons serving with pastoral responsibilities. They might be better called "missionary letters," since Timothy and Titus were serving in missionary settings. But the traditional name "Pastorals" has been used since the eighteenth century.

Authorship. Since the nineteenth century, many scholars have questioned the Pauline authorship of these letters for several reasons. First, critics of Pauline authorship stress the differences in vocabulary and style from the other Pauline Letters. Indeed, the Pastorals do include some terminology that separates them from the rest of the Paulines. However, arguments based upon vocabulary and style are somewhat subjective. Some who favor Pauline authorship suggest the possible use of a secretary as a reason for style differences in the Pastorals. Others suggest that the Pastorals are simply too short to make much of vocabulary or style studies.

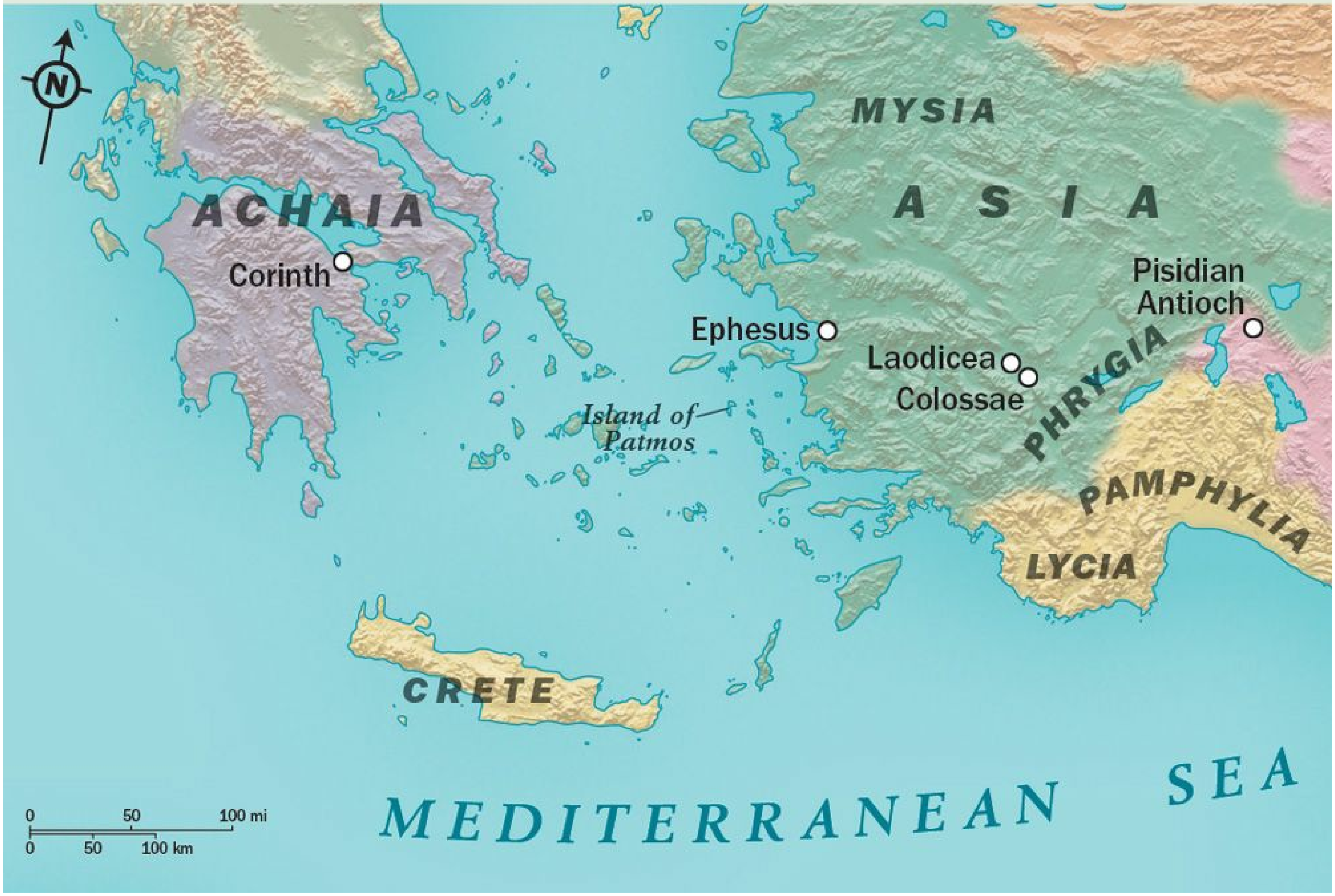
A second reason for questioning Pauline authorship has to do with the fact that the letters address elements not known until the second century. Critics suggest that the heresy refuted in the letters and the organizational features of the churches associated with the Pastorals better fit the second century than a time when Paul was alive. The heresy in the Pastorals has gnostic tendencies, and gnosticism is not known to have been fully developed until the second century. Thus, some have suggested the letters were not written in the first century. However, the problems in the Pastorals may reflect elements of gnosticism without implying that the heresy was fully developed. The arguments about church organization seem to miss the emphasis of these letters. Paul did write about church offices such as deacon and elder, but his focus seems to be on the gifts and character of the individuals in leadership positions of the church rather than on describing the function of the offices. The book of Acts demonstrates that the position of elder existed in at least some of the Pauline churches (14:23; 20:17). Therefore, Pauline authorship is not ruled out by these arguments.

Scholars also question the Pauline authorship of these letters because of proposed doctrinal differences. They allege that the Pastorals do not emphasize key Pauline doctrines. Also, at times in the Pastorals the author appears to argue for an existing body of teaching to be defended (1 Tim. 4:6), which, it is argued, reflects a later time frame. However, Paul’s arguments are often driven by the context of the audience to whom he is writing, and claiming to know what Paul would have written seems highly speculative.

Finally, the events of the Pastorals do not fit with Paul’s journeys described in Acts. Opponents of Pauline authorship of the Pastorals suggest that the discrepancy is related to a second-century writer. Those who defend Pauline authorship of these letters suggest that Paul was released from the Acts 28 imprisonment and later imprisoned again in Rome. Thus, references to Paul’s travels cannot be placed within the description of Paul’s life in Acts because they happened at a later date.

Scholars who oppose Pauline authorship of these letters argue for pseudonymous authorship, normally by an associate of Paul at some point in the second century. The early church, however, typically opposed the acceptance of pseudonymous writings into the NT. One need not appeal to pseudonymity when dealing with the Pastorals if Paul was released from his first Roman imprisonment and later imprisoned there again.

LOCATIONS OF EPHESUS AND CRETE


MYSIA
ASIA
ACHAIA
Corinth
Pisidian Antioch
Ephesus
Laodicea
Colossae
PHRYGIA
Island of Patmos
PAMPHYLIA
LYCIA
CRETE
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0 50 100 mi
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N

Audience. These letters are addressed to Paul’s companions Timothy and Titus while they were at Ephesus and Crete respectively. Paul encouraged Timothy to stop the false teaching in Ephesus (1 Tim. 1:3–4), and 1 Timothy is filled with encouragement for Timothy to instruct the people in Ephesus about right living and belief (3:14–15; 4:11; 6:2). The Second Letter to Timothy focuses more on Timothy and his ministry than does the first letter (2 Tim. 1:6–8, 13; 2:1; 4:1–2). Titus was written to help Paul’s companion as he appointed elders and set things right in Crete (Titus 1:5).

In each of the Pastorals, Paul encouraged and instructed his friends to be faithful in the ministry given to them.

PASTURE An open area where herders tended sheep, goats, or cattle (Joel 1:18) or where wild donkeys (Job 39:8) or deer (Lam. 1:6) grazed. The best pasture was open, quiet, and peaceful (1 Chron. 4:40), but it might be the result of God’s destruction (Isa. 32:14). Conversely, good pasture represented God’s restoration (Ezek. 34:14) or God himself (Jer. 50:7).

PATH A track worn by footsteps (Gen. 49:17; Num. 22:32; Neh. 9:19; Mark 4:4), often distinguished from a wider, smoother road (Num. 22:24; 2 Sam. 22:37; Matt. 7:13–14). The Bible exhorts the reader toward the “path of life” (Ps. 16:11; Prov. 15:24) in contrast to the way leading to death (Deut. 30:1–20; Prov. 14:12; Jer. 21:8; James 5:20). The good path is characterized by pursuing God's presence through obedience to his will (Deut. 11:28; Pss. 27:11; 44:18; 119:32). John the Baptist was called to prepare the path of the Messiah (Mark 1:3; cf. Isa. 40:3). Jesus presents himself as a path back to God (John 14:6). Early Christianity was called "the Way" (Acts 9:2; 19:9; 24:22). Paul exhorts Christians to walk in the humility and gentleness of Christ, which is worthy of God's calling (Eph. 4:1–2).

PATHROS A region associated with Mizraim (Egypt) in Isa. 11:11; Jer. 44:1, 15; Ezek. 29:14; 30:14. Most likely it is Upper Egypt (so the NIV), the region just south of Mizraim (Lower Egypt). The Egyptian name for the "south land" refers to the area between Memphis and Aswan and is philologically similar to "Pathros."

PATHRUSIM *See* Pathrusites.

PATHRUSITES Descendants of Ham and Mizraim and connected to the Philistines (Gen. 10:14; 1 Chron. 1:12).

PATIENCE Patience is a moral attribute that God possesses and that humans may possess. One who has patience allows time to pass while maintaining a positive disposition, often in the face of suffering (Hab. 3:16; 2 Tim. 3:10–11; James 5:10), as the KJV translation "longsuffering" implies (cf. Prov. 14:29 NASB: "slow to anger"). The Scriptures universally speak of patience as an admirable quality and associate patience with other virtues, such as inner peace (Ps. 37:7), wisdom (Prov. 19:11), persuasiveness (Prov. 25:15), humility (Eccles. 7:8), and kindness (Rom. 2:4; 1 Cor. 13:4).

Numerous passages praise God's patience. Humans try (Isa. 7:13) and show contempt for (Rom. 2:4) God's patience, sometimes by refusing to be patient with others even though they themselves have received mercy from God (Matt. 18:23–35). Nonetheless, God displays his patience by granting them eternal life through faith in Christ (1 Tim. 1:16). In fact, God has patiently delayed destroying the world because he is compassionate and wants all to come to repentance (2 Pet. 3:9). God's patience is evident even toward those who are destined for destruction (Rom. 9:22; 1 Pet. 3:20).

Just as God is patient, he imparts patience to the Christian through his Holy Spirit (Gal. 5:22). Like Abraham, the prophets, and any farmer, Christians are to exhibit patience, bearing with people both inside and outside the church (Eph. 4:2; 1 Thess. 5:14–15) as they wait eagerly for Christ's return (Heb. 6:12–15; James 5:7–10). Those in Christian leadership must model patience and encourage others with patience (2 Tim. 3:10; 4:2).

PATMOS A small island in the Aegean Sea, thirty-seven miles from Miletus. While under Roman rule, it was used as a place of political exile. Around AD 95–97 John the Seer was exiled to the island, where he wrote the book of Revelation: "I, John . . . was on the island of Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus" (Rev. 1:9). According to tradition, John communicated with God while in a cave, which exists until today and is called the "Holy Cave of Revelation."

PATRIARCH The male head of a family. The OT describes the Israelite nation as an extended family descended from a line of common ancestors, the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (also called "Israel" [see Gen. 32:28]). Each of Jacob's sons (or his grandsons Ephraim and Manasseh) traditionally gave his name to one of the tribes that made up the Israelite people. The NT applies the term “patriarch” to individuals of the generations from Abraham (Heb. 7:4) to his twelve great-grandsons (Acts 7:8) and, in one case, to the tenth-century king David (Acts 2:29). In the OT the term “patriarch” is not used, though the concept of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as national fathers is frequently expressed, as in Exod. 3:15, which refers to Israel’s God as “the LORD, the God of your fathers—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob.”

The Bible regards the patriarchs as the original recipients of God’s promises, as in Deut. 6:10, which speaks of “the land [God] swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, to give you.” Similarly, Rom. 15:8 speaks of the patriarchs as the recipients of God’s promises. The reference to David as a patriarch in Acts 2:29 also has in view his role as the recipient of a divine promise. The terminology of national fatherhood is applied particularly to the unnamed ancestors of the generation of the exodus (Josh. 24:6; 1 Kings 8:21) and to the line of Judahite and Israelite kings, as in 2 Chron. 25:28, where Amaziah is said to have been buried “with his fathers” (ESV, NASB) (i.e., his royal predecessors) in Jerusalem. In fact, the deaths of several kings are described as going to rest “with his fathers” (cf. Luke 16:22, where Lazarus is taken to Abraham when he dies).

The patriarchs are most significant in the Bible for explaining Israelite national origins (descent from the patriarchs), the Israelite position in the land of Canaan (the land promised to the patriarchs), the origins of Israelite religion (“the God of the fathers”), and the nature of death (going to be with the fathers).

THE PATRIARCHS AND HISTORY

The implied chronology of the Bible places Abraham in the mid-second millennium BC, in the Middle Bronze Age. A more precise date depends on the controversial matter of dating the exodus from Egypt. The traditional date of the exodus in the fifteenth century BC places the patriarchs in the final centuries of the third millennium BC, based on the tabulation of life spans reported in the Bible and anchored to the date of Solomon’s temple given in 1 Kings 6:1. One recent calculation dates the birth of Abraham to 2166 BC. A low date for the exodus (in the thirteenth century BC) in turn lowers the date of Abraham. Because they pertain to the story of a single family, it is difficult to date the patriarchal stories based on extrabiblical historical records and archaeological findings. When Abraham and his descendants interact with figures of international prominence, they are either unnamed (the unnamed pharaohs of Egypt), have generic royal names (Abimelek), or are otherwise unknown in extrabiblical historical records (the many kings named in Gen. 14:1–2). In contrast, the biblical history of the monarchic period of Israel and Judah names several Mesopotamian and Egyptian kings known from securely dated inscriptions.

In light of this methodological difficulty, some have examined the cultural world of the patriarchal narratives and attempted to correlate customs attested in the stories to those known from datable external sources. In particular, proponents of this approach have sought connections between the customs pertaining to marriage and family depicted in the Nuzi tablets (fifteenth century BC), thought to reflect earlier customs on the basis of their similarities to texts found at Mari (eighteenth century BC). Certain behaviors of the patriarchs, including their use of cultic practices known to have been condemned in first-millennium BC biblical texts, suggest that the patriarchal narratives are an authentic reflection of the early second millennium BC. On the other hand, the patriarchal narratives contain some information inconsistent with an early-second-millennium date, notably the presence of Philistines (Gen. 21:22–34), who did not appear in the region until the twelfth century BC. The cultural history of the patriarchal narratives remains disputed.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE PATRIARCHS

Apart from the historical questions treated above, one thing is clear: for Israelites of the first millennium BC who wrote, edited, and read the book of Genesis, the patriarchs held great interest and importance.

For the biblical authors, the God of Israel was the "God of the fathers," and the Israelite religion was understood as a special relationship between God and the nation that began with the famous ancestors. The patriarchal stories explained other social "facts" observable in Iron Age Israel. The relationship between the Israelites and the Edomites alternated between peace and hostility. Linguistically, culturally, and geographically, the two peoples were closely connected, so it is not surprising that the biblical stories about Jacob (or Israel) and Esau (or Edom) show a brotherly relationship that mirrored the later regional rivalry of their descendants. Similar observations can be made regarding the Ishmaelites (descended from the brother of Isaac), the Moabites and the Ammonites (both descended from Abraham's nephew Lot), and the Midianites (from Abraham through his wife Keturah). Other local groups, such as the Philistines, are not incorporated into the patriarchal extended family, accurately reflecting the origin of this population and its culture outside the land of Palestine. The patriarchal stories account for the founding of several important cultic sites. Thus, the patriarchal stories served to organize the social and geographical world of the Israelites, who cherished them as their national history.

Within Israel itself, the status and relationships of various tribes corresponded to the depiction of the eponymous patriarchal ancestors. The special prominence of the Levites, the Judahites, and the Ephraimites is explained by stories focusing on the exploits of Levi, Judah, and Joseph (the father of Ephraim). The presentation of the tribes as coming from twelve brothers of four different mothers reflects the complex political parity and disparity of the "twelve tribes." Apart from the twelve-tribe structure, other, less prominent Israelite groups are known from the Bible. "Makir" is a prominent group in Judg. 5:14 (one of the earliest biblical texts), where it is listed on an equal footing among the other tribes. In the usual twelve-tribe "patriarchal" depiction of Israel, however, Makir recedes in importance and is named as a son of Manasseh (a tribe not mentioned in the list of Judg. 5) in Gen. 50:23. Presumably, the two texts represent varying conceptions of which groups were most important in the Israelite society of their respective times. For the author of Judg. 5, Makir was one of the principal groups in Israel; for the author of Gen. 50:23, Makir was less important than Manasseh.

Outside Genesis, the names of Abraham and Isaac usually appear only in the formula "Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob." The name of Jacob or Israel, in contrast, is regularly used to denote the people of Israel, as are the names of Jacob's son Judah (for the southern part of the country) and his grandson Ephraim (for the northern part). The name of Isaac is used twice in Amos 7:9, 16 to refer to an apparently northern entity, the "high places of Isaac."

PATROBAS A believer whom Paul greets at the church in Rome (Rom. 16:14). The masculine name may be a shortened form of "Patrobios," which means "life of/from father."

PAU A city in Edom, it was the home of Hadad, the Edomite king who succeeded Baal-Hanan to the throne (Gen. 36:39; 1 Chron. 1:50). Its Greek name in the LXX is *Phogōr*, which also translates "Peor" (Num. 23:28; Deut. 3:29), but these are different places.

PAUL A Pharisee commissioned by Jesus Christ to preach the gospel to Gentiles. His Jewish name was "Saul" (Acts 9:4; 13:9), but he preferred using his Roman name, especially when he signed his letters. Actually, “Paul” was his last name. Roman citizens had three names; the last name was the family name, called the “cognomen.” We do not know Paul’s first and middle Roman name, but his last name is derived from the Latin *Paulus* (Sergius Paulus, the proconsul of Cyprus, had the same family name [13:7]). Most people were known and called by their last name because group identity was more important in the first-century Mediterranean world than individual recognition. For example, when speaking publicly, Paul did not use his favorite self-designations, “apostle to the Gentiles” or “slave of Christ Jesus”; instead, he identified himself as a Jew, a citizen of Tarsus, a student of Gamaliel (21:39; 22:3). His social identity was embedded in his ethnicity, his nativity, his religion. However, even those categories cannot adequately describe Paul. He was a Jew but also a Roman citizen. Tarsus was his home (11:25–26), but he claimed that he was brought up in Jerusalem. He spoke Aramaic but wrote Greek letters. He was once a Pharisee but then preached a circumcision-free gospel to Gentiles. In many respects, Paul is an enigma. Who was he? What did he believe? Why did he think he had to leave his previous life in Judaism to become the apostle to the Gentiles? Why is he one of the major contributors to the NT even though he was not a follower of the historical Jesus?

A Roman road in Tarsus, Paul’s hometown

PAUL’S LIFE

Paul as a converted Pharisee. Paul spent the first half of his life as a Pharisee. The Pharisees were a Jewish sect that emphasized obedience to the law of God as the means of maintaining holiness. Practically all Jews believed that they should obey the law, but what made the Pharisees unique was their emphasis on applying all commandments, even those intended only for Levites and priests, to all Jews. For example, priests were required to keep certain rituals of hand washing before they ate (Lev. 22:1–9; cf. Exod 30:19–21; 40:31–32). So the Pharisees extended these requirements to all Israel in order to show God how serious they were about obeying the law (Mark 7:3–4). Obedience was crucial to God's blessing; disobedience brought God's curse. Therefore, the Pharisees established many traditions, going beyond the letter of the law, to ensure compliance. To what extent the Jewish people followed the example of the Pharisees is debated, but certainly it appeared to the people that no one was more zealous for God and his law than the Pharisees—a zeal that would compel them to join in the stoning of obvious offenders (Lev. 24:14; Acts 7:58). As a Pharisee, Paul's zeal for the law led him to persecute Jewish Christians, not only in Jerusalem but also outside Israel, in places such as Damascus (Acts 8:3; 9:1–3; 22:4–5; Gal. 1:13–14; Phil. 3:6). Neither Paul nor Luke explains what the Pharisees found objectionable about this Jewish movement known as "the Way." In fact, Paul's teacher, Gamaliel, advised the Sanhedrin to ignore members of the Way and not make trouble for them (Acts 5:34–39)—advice obviously not taken by Paul. Perhaps it was Jesus' reputation as a lawbreaker or the fact that he had died a cursed death according to the law that convinced Paul to imprison Jesus' disciples (Deut. 21:23). Whatever the reason, Paul saw his role as persecutor of the church as the ultimate proof of his blamelessness under the law (Phil. 3:6).

After Christ appeared to Paul on the road to Damascus, everything changed: his life, his mission, his worldview (Acts 9:3–30). Paul left Pharisaism and immediately began preaching the gospel (Gal. 1:11–17). Those whom he persecuted were now friends. His zeal for the law was replaced by his zeal for Christ. It was a radical reversal. The rumor spread quickly: "The man who formerly persecuted us is now preaching the faith he once tried to destroy" (Gal. 1:23). Why the sudden change? Some think that it is what Paul saw—the glorified Messiah—that changed his perspective. The resurrection of Christ turned the curse of the cross into a blessing, death into life, shame into honor. The appearance of Christ (Christophany) was a revelation, an apocalypse, an end-of-the-world event for Paul. Old things passed away; everything became new (2 Cor. 5:17). What was divided under the old age of the law—Jews and Gentiles, male and female, slave and free—was united in Christ. Other scholars emphasize it is what Paul heard during the Christophany that changed the course of his life. Paul interpreted Christ's charge, "Go, preach to the Gentiles," as a prophetic calling, perhaps even fulfilling Isaiah's end-time vision of salvation of the whole world (Isa. 49:1–7; Gal. 1:15–16). Thus, Paul's westward push to take the gospel to the coastlands (Spain) was by divine design (Rom. 15:15–24). God commissioned Saul the Pharisee of the Jews to become Paul the apostle to the Gentiles because "the culmination of the ages has come" (1 Cor. 10:11).

Paul's ministry. By our best estimates, Paul spent about thirty years preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ (AD 34–67)—a ministry that can be divided roughly into three decades. The first decade of his ministry (AD 34–46) has been called the "silent years," as we have few details from Acts or the Pauline Epistles about his activities. For example, we know that he preached in Damascus for a while and spent some time in Arabia (a total of three years [Gal. 1:17–18]). He made a quick trip to Jerusalem to meet Peter and James the brother of Jesus. Then he returned home to Tarsus, evidently preaching there for several years, until Barnabas brought him to Antioch in Syria to help with the ministry of this mixed congregation of Jews and Gentiles (Acts 9:26–30; 11:25–26). In the second decade of his ministry (AD 46–59), Paul spent most of his life on the road, an itinerant ministry of preaching the gospel and planting churches from Cyprus to Corinth. For most of the third decade (AD 59–67), Paul ministered the gospel from prison, spending over two years imprisoned in Caesarea, another two to three years in a Roman prison (Acts ends here), released for a brief time (two years?) before his final arrest and imprisonment in Rome, where, according to church tradition, he was executed.

During his itinerant ministry, Paul traveled Roman roads that led him to free cities (Ephesus, Thessalonica, Athens) and Roman colonies (Pisidian Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, Derbe, Troas, Philippi, Corinth). Founding churches in urban centers afforded Paul more opportunities for ministry and for his work of making and repairing tents. Traveling within the borders of the Roman Empire also provided a better chance of protection as a citizen. At first, Paul and Barnabas covered familiar territory: Cyprus (Barnabas's home region) and Anatolia (Paul's home region). Then, with successive journeys Paul and other missionary companions branched out to Asia Minor, Macedonia, and Achaia. Some of the towns that Paul visited were small and provincial (Derbe, Lystra); others were major cities of great economic and intellectual commerce (Ephesus, Corinth, Athens). In the midst of such cultural diversity, Paul found receptive ears among a variety of ethnic groups: Gauls, Phrygians and Lycaonians, Greeks, Romans, and Jews. Previously, Paul's Gentile converts had worshiped many gods (local, ethnic, and imperial), offered sacrifices at many shrines and temples, and joined in all the religious festivals (often involving immoral and ungodly practices). After believing the gospel, Paul's predominantly Gentile churches turned from their idolatrous ways to serve "the living and true God" (1 Thess. 1:9). Their exclusive devotion to one God quickly led to economic and political problems, for both Paul's converts and the cities of their residence. No more offerings for patron gods, no more support for local synagogues or the imperial cult—Paul's converts were often persecuted for their newly found faith by local religious guilds (idol makers!) and civic leaders courting Roman favor (Acts 17:6–9; 19:23–41; Phil. 1:27–30; 1 Thess. 2:14–16). Indeed, Paul often was run out of town as a troublemaker who preached a message that threatened both the Jewish and the Roman ways of life (Acts 16:19–24; Phil. 3:17–4:1). It is no wonder that Paul's activities eventually landed him in a Roman prison. It was only a matter of time before his reputation as a "lawbreaker" caught up with him (Acts 21:21). But that did not stop Paul. Whether as a prisoner or a free man, Paul proclaimed the gospel of Jesus Christ until the day he died.

PAUL'S GOSPEL

The sources of Paul's gospel. Paul ministered his entire life without the benefit of literary Gospels. Most scholars think that the earliest Gospel, Mark, was written about the time that Paul was martyred. Since Paul was not a disciple of Jesus and probably never heard him speak or witnessed his earthly ministry, how did Paul know what to preach? Where did Paul get his gospel? Paul mentioned four sources. First, he received oral traditions about Jesus from other Christians (1 Cor. 15:1–7). For him, hearing what happened during the Lord's Supper from those who followed Jesus was the same as receiving it from the Lord (1 Cor. 11:23). Second, the Hebrew Scriptures were a major source of Paul's gospel (Acts 17:2). Illumined by the Holy Spirit, Paul saw the gospel proclaimed in the law (Rom. 10:6–8) and predicted by the prophets (15:12). Third, in addition to the Christophany on the road to Damascus, Paul experienced revelations of Christ as epiphanies of the gospel (Acts 18:9–10; 26:18). This gave Paul the authority to claim that he received his gospel preeminently from Christ (Gal. 1:1, 16; 2:2). Fourth, Paul saw life experiences as a resource for the gospel (2 Cor. 12:7–10). As Paul made sense of what happened to him, he shared these insights with his converts as proof that "Christ is speaking through me" (2 Cor. 13:3–4). Indeed, Paul's ways of doing the gospel were to be taught in all the churches as gospel truth (1 Cor. 4:17), because as far as Paul was concerned, the gospel of Jesus Christ was the gospel according to Paul.

The death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The center of Paul's gospel was the death and resurrection of Jesus. The essence of what he preached was "Jesus Christ and him crucified" (1 Cor. 2:2). Furthermore, the resurrection of Christ was indispensable to the gospel that Paul proclaimed.

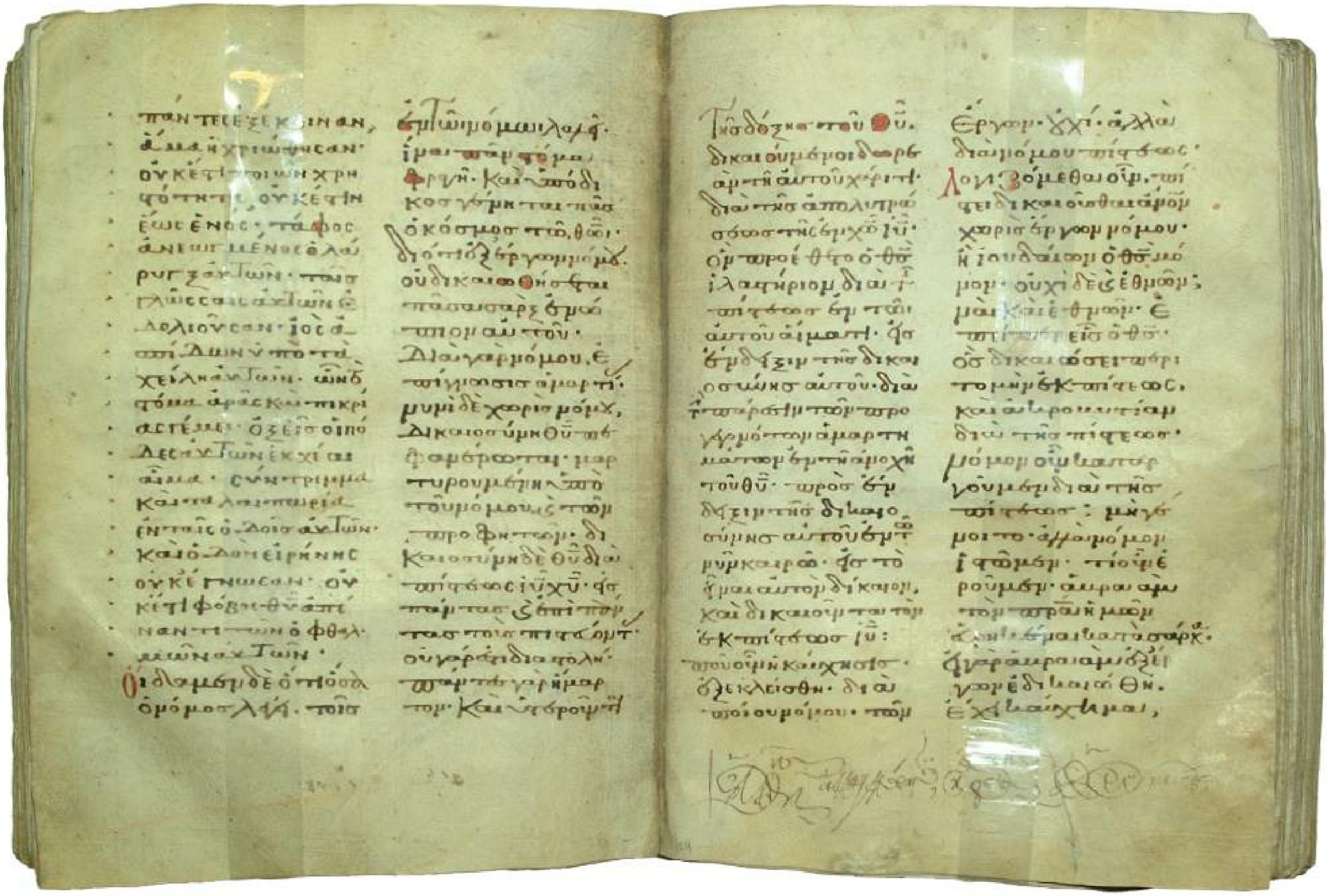
Without the resurrection, Paul argued, faith in Christ would be vain because believers would still be dead in their sins with no hope of life after death—the resurrection of their bodies (1 Cor. 15:13–19). Exploring the center, Paul used several metaphors drawn from everyday life to explain the significance of Christ's work on the cross. Paul used legal terms such as "justification"/"righteousness," "law," and "condemnation" when he explained how sinners are justified by faith in Christ. Paul described the implications of Christ's death in religious terms, using words such as "sacrifice," "sin," "propitiation"/"expiation" (NIV: "sacrifice of atonement"), and "temple," which would make sense to both Jews and Gentiles. He also borrowed words from the world of commerce, such as "redemption," "purchase," and "slave," especially when he emphasized the obedience of Christ, of Paul, of all believers. He even used military terms to describe how God turned enemies into friends through the cross: the "reconciliation" that came through the "victory" of Christ's death when he "disarmed" the "powers."

Paul also relied heavily on Jewish theology as he sorted out the work of God in Christ Jesus. Paul was a monotheist but attributed divine status to Jesus (Phil. 2:6). Paul believed that Israel was God's chosen people but maintained that his Gentile converts were the elect, calling them the "Israel of God" (Gal. 6:16). Paul affirmed the law was holy but argued that holiness came only through the indwelling Spirit (Rom. 7:12; 1 Thess. 4:7–8). Paul believed that the Messiah's appearance would bring about the end of the world but looked forward to Christ's *parousia* ("appearance") at the end of time. In other words, the person and work of Christ formed the lens through which Paul interpreted the Bible and made sense of the world. Indeed, Paul's gospel was built on a foundation of Jewish doctrine, Jesus tradition, and religious experience.

A way of life. For Paul, the gospel was more than a set of beliefs; it was a way of life. To believe in Christ Jesus not only entailed accepting his sacrificial death as atonement for sin but also meant following Christ by taking up his cross—a life of sacrifice. Paul believed that he experienced the cross of Christ every time he endured hardship, every time he was persecuted, every time he suffered loss (Phil. 3:7–11). And it was in the crucified life that Paul found resurrection power (3:12–21). The gospel was the divine paradigm for living. What happened to Christ is what happened to Paul, and what happened to Paul is what would happen to all his converts. "Follow my example," he wrote, "as I follow the example of Christ" (1 Cor. 11:1). In fact, Paul believed that all Christians were constantly being conformed to the image of God's Son (Rom. 8:29). He was convinced that God would finish what he had started: the perfecting of his converts until the day of Christ's return and the resurrection of every believer (Phil. 1:6; 3:21). The only thing that his converts needed to imitate Christ was the indwelling power of his Spirit (the Holy Spirit), the example of Paul's life, and a letter every now and then from their apostle.

PAUL'S LETTERS

Paul sent letters to churches and individuals to inform his converts of his situation, offer encouragement, answer questions, and address problems that developed while he was away. There are thirteen letters of Paul in the New Testament. Nine were written to churches or groups of churches (Romans; 1 and 2 Corinthians; Galatians; Ephesians; Philippians; Colossions; 1 and 2 Thessalonians) and four to individuals (1 and 2 Timothy; Titus; Philemon).



A Greek manuscript containing Paul’s letters, open to Romans 3 (c. AD 1107)

Paul the apostle. In most of his letters, Paul was on the defense: defending his apostleship, defending his itinerary, defending his gospel. Evidently, Paul’s opponents questioned whether Paul deserved to be called “apostle,” since he had not followed the historical Jesus and used to persecute the church (1 Cor. 15:8–9). According to Acts, when the first Christians decided to replace Judas Iscariot as one of the twelve apostles, they established the following criterion: the candidate must have been a follower of Jesus from his baptism to his ascension (Acts 1:21–22). Two men were qualified; one was chosen by divine lot, implying that there could be only twelve. Did the early church’s decision to recognize only twelve apostles define apostleship once and for all? Paul did not think so. He recognized the significance of the Twelve, but he believed that there were other apostles as well: Barnabas, James the brother of Jesus, and himself (1 Cor. 15:5–9; Gal. 2:8–9). Paul knew that there were false apostles causing trouble in the churches (2 Cor. 11:13), some even carrying “letters of recommendation” (2 Cor. 3:1). But only those who had seen the resurrected Christ and were commissioned by him to preach the gospel were legitimate apostles (1 Cor. 9:1–2). The signs of apostleship were evident when the commission was fulfilled: planting churches and dispensing the Spirit (2 Cor. 3:2; 12:12; Gal. 3:5). Of all people, Paul’s converts should have never questioned the authority of their apostle. They were the proof of his apostleship.

Although Paul never mentioned this, the fact that he sent letters is evidence of his apostleship. Paul believed that the obedience of Gentile converts was his responsibility, a confirmation of his calling (Rom. 15:18–19). So he sent letters to make sure that they were keeping the traditions that he had taught them (1 Cor. 11:2). Sometimes, all that his readers needed was a little encouragement to keep up the good work (most of 1 Thessalonians and 2 Timothy are exhortations to keep doing what they were doing) or a more detailed explanation of what they already knew (Ephesians, Philippians, 1 Timothy, Titus). Many times, Paul sent letters to correct major problems within his churches. For example, some of the Galatians were submitting to the law and being circumcised (Gal. 4:21; 5:2–7). Some of the Colossians were involved in strange practices of asceticism and angel worship (Col. 2:16–23). Some of the Thessalonians had quit working for a living (2 Thess. 3:6–15). And, worst of all, the Corinthians were plagued with all kinds of problems: factions, lawsuits, incest, prostitutes, idolatry. Some of the Corinthians were also espousing false theological ideas, such as denying the resurrection (1 Cor. 15:12). Other churches had problems sorting out Paul's theology as well. For example, the Thessalonians were confused about life after death, end times, and the return of Christ (1 Thess. 4:13–18; 2 Thess. 2:1–12), and the Romans needed, among other things, instruction about the role of Israel in the last days (Rom. 9:1–11:32). The fact that Paul felt obliged to send his lengthiest letter, loaded with some of his most sophisticated theological arguments, to the church in Rome, which he did not start and had not visited, says much about the way Paul saw the authority of his apostleship. Because he was the apostle to the Gentiles, Paul operated as if he were the mentor of all churches with Gentile members.

Church unity. Paul believed in the unity of the church. Indeed, he used several metaphors to help his readers see why it was important that one Lord and one faith should form one church. He described the church as a temple (1 Cor. 3:16–17), a family (Eph. 2:19), and a body—his favorite metaphor (1 Cor. 12:12–27). He warned of desecrating the temple with divisive teaching and immoral behavior (1 Cor. 3:1–6:20). He rebuked his children when they refused to obey him as their father (1 Cor. 3:14–21) or mother (Gal. 4:19–20). And, more than any other analogy, Paul likened the church to a human body that could be maimed by prejudice and threatened by sickness (1 Cor. 11:17–34). To him, a dismembered body was an unholy body; a segregated church meant that Christ was divided (1 Cor. 1:10–13). The ethnic, religious, social, political, geographical, and economic differences evident in one of the most diverse collections of people in the first-century Mediterranean world made Paul's vision of a unified church appear like an impossible dream. Yet the apostle to the Gentiles believed that the unity of the body of Christ was indispensable not only to his mission but also to the gospel of Jesus Christ (Eph. 4:1–6). So he collected a relief offering among his Gentile converts to help poor Jewish Christians in Jerusalem (Rom. 15:26–27). He taught masters to treat their slaves like siblings (Philem. 16). And he solicited Romans to fund his mission trip to Spain (Rom. 15:24). As far as Paul was concerned, the gospel brought down every wall that divides humanity because all people need salvation in Christ (Eph. 2:14–18).

CONCLUSION

Paul was a tentmaker, a missionary, a writer, a preacher, a teacher, a theologian, an evangelist, a mentor, a prophet, a miracle worker, a prisoner, and a martyr. His life story reads like the tale of three different men: a devout Pharisee, a tireless traveler, an ambitious writer. He knew the Scriptures better than did most people. He saw more of the world than did most merchants. He wrote some of the longest letters known at that time. To his converts, he was a faithful friend. To his opponents, he was an irrepressible troublemaker. But, according to Paul, he was nothing more or less than the man whom God had called through Jesus Christ to take the gospel to the ends of the earth.

PAULINE LETTERS *See* Paul.

PAULUS, SERGIUS *See* Sergius Paulus.

PAVILION A large tent or canopy or something that resembles such a covering; also, a separately identified section of a building, possibly partially detached. In English, the word "pavilion" conveys a sense of lavishness or grandeur, and it is used only twice by a significant number of translators: in Job 36:29 as a metaphor for the spread of clouds covering God, and in Jer. 43:10 to refer to a canopy for a royal throne. A few versions use "pavilion" to translate several different Hebrew words with the following meanings: booth (2 Sam. 22:12; 1 Kings 20:12, 16; Ps. 31:20; Isa. 4:6); tent (2 Sam. 6:17; Ps. 27:5; Dan. 11:45); high architectural structure (Ezek. 16:24, 25, 31, 39); cloth covering, sometimes specifically referring to a ceremonial Jewish wedding tent, or chuppah (Ps. 19:5; Isa. 4:5); the women's section of a tent (Num. 25:8); colonnade or courtyard (1 Chron. 26:18); covered way (2 Kings 16:18).

PEACE The word "peace" in both the OT (*shalom*) and the NT (*eirēnē*) primarily describes something sound and complete. It was a common form of greeting in both Testaments, and many word cognates from *shalom* are still in use among speakers of Semitic languages as daily greetings. Following the Hellenistic convention of letter writing, but with heightened appreciation for its distinctively Christian meaning, almost all letters in the NT include "peace" in their beginning or end sections.

The concept of peace in the Bible, however, goes far beyond the commonly held notions of peace as the absence of conflict and the existence of cooperation between parties. The Bible presents peace as the state of completion of God's plan, fulfillment of his promise for his people on earth. Although peace among individuals, people groups, and nations is not absent from the biblical concept, a clear emphasis is laid on peace between humans and God. In fact, attaining peace on an individual level is tied more closely to one's relationship with God than to one's inner psychological state.

Old Testament. The biblical worldview maintains that this world is a broken and flawed place, a state fallen from *shalom*, which must be reinstated to secure peace. In the OT, the primary context in which peace is reinstated is the sacrificial system. The "peace offering" (*shelamim*; NIV: "fellowship offering") requires animal slaughter and shedding of blood. Insomuch as the sacrifice of animals is painful and costly, so is the brokenness of the proper relationship between sinful humans and the holy God.

Another important dimension of restoring peace is through the coming Messiah. That the divinely appointed Messiah would someday come and institute peace in this troubled world is found in many OT prophets and is particularly vital to the theology of Isaiah. With much symbolic power, the messianic epithet in Isa. 9:6 ends with the "Prince of Peace." The promise that this messianic king will establish peace on earth was a centerpiece of the hope that Israel held through countless crises. In one of the most passionate and powerful passages in the OT, Isa. 53 says that a figure, often called the Suffering Servant, will emerge to take the sin and guilt of God's people upon himself and bring peace to them (vv. 5–6).

New Testament. For Christians, all these prophecies point to the person and office of Jesus Christ. Significant in their eschatological overtones, both Zechariah and Simeon mention peace in their pronouncements that the anticipated coming of the Messiah had just occurred right in their view (Luke 1:79; 2:29). At Jesus' birth, the angels proclaim the coming of the Prince of Peace (Luke 2:14). This resonates well with the assertion that Christ is our peace (Eph. 2:14–15).

It is important that the peace mediated by sacrifices in the OT is directly dispensed by Jesus in the Gospels, as in healing the sick and comforting the downtrodden. He even commands peace over natural disturbances (a storm). Jesus specifically indicates that he will give peace to those who follow him. He greets his disciples by invoking peace ("Peace to you"), echoing the Jewish custom at that time, but certainly with a far greater and more powerful reality in mind. In the end, however, the price of true peace was the life of Christ. The peace between God and humans was shattered due to rebellion on the part of humans and the ensuing divine wrath. Since the penalty of sin and separation from God is death (Rom. 6:23), mending the broken relationship would be very costly. In some of the most theologically charged passages (Rom. 5:8–11; 2 Cor. 5:18–21; Col. 1:20–22; Eph. 2:14–17), Paul argues that God, who was the offended party in this breach of relationship, took the initiative to restore the relationship by, shockingly enough, giving up his Son as the peace offering. Thus, the gospel ministry into which Paul and all disciples are called is the ministry of reconciliation—restoring peace.

The "theology of peace" explored above has immense implications for Christian life. In some real sense, peace is the capstone of the rich blessings bestowed on the believer. Peace is a divine gift (John 14:27; 16:33; Rom. 5:1). It is God's answer to prayer (Phil. 4:7). What armors Christians is the gospel of peace (Eph. 6:15). God is a God of peace (1 Thess. 5:23), and Christ is our peace (Eph. 2:14–15). Peace is what Christ left for his disciples (John 14:27; 16:33).

PEACEMAKERS Those who bring rest, harmony, and well-being into their environment. Jesus pronounces blessing upon peacemakers and promises that God will call them his children (Matt. 5:9; see also Rom. 14:19; Heb. 12:14). We are to make peace with God, other people, and the rest of creation. Within the context of the Sermon on the Mount, the vehicles for peace are love and forgiveness (Matt. 5:39).

PEACE OFFERING *See* Sacrifice and Offering.

PEACOCK "Peacock" is a traditional translation of the last item in the list of luxuries that Solomon's ships brought from Tarshish (1 Kings 10:22; 2 Chron. 9:21 [e.g., KJV, ESV, NLT]). However, a more probable translation of the Hebrew word *tukki* is "baboon" (NIV) or "monkey" (NAB). All the other items come from Africa, but peacocks come from Asia. The KJV also uses "peacock" to translate *renanim* in Job 39:13, but this is probably better translated as "ostrich," as in the NIV.

PEASANTRY A word of late medieval European origin referring to people of comparatively low social standing who inhabit agrarian regions and work the soil as farmers and laborers. In the OT, a few versions use "peasantry" to translate the Hebrew word *perazon*, for which others use "villagers," specifically meaning those who live in unwalled villages in the open country (Judg. 5:7, 11 NASB; cf. 1 Sam. 6:18).

PEDAHEL The son of Ammihud from the tribe of Naphtali (Num. 34:28), he was one of the leaders whom God told Moses to appoint for dividing the land of Canaan among the Israelites.

PEDAHZUR The father of Gamaliel, who was the tribal leader of Manasseh during the wilderness wanderings (Num. 1:10; 2:20; 7:54, 59; 10:23). *See also* Gamaliel.

PEDAIAH **(1)** The father of Joel, an officer over the half-tribe of Manasseh during the reign of David (1 Chron. 27:20). **(2)** The maternal grandfather of King Jehoiakim of Judah (2 Kings 23:36). **(3)** One of the sons of King Jehoiachin of Judah, who was carried off into Babylonian exile in 597 BC (1 Chron. 3:18). According to 1 Chron. 3:19, Pedaiah was the father of Zerubabbel, an important postexilic ruler. Other passages (Ezra 3:2, 8; Hag. 1:1) name Pedaiah's brother Shealtiel as Zerubabbel's father, perhaps suggesting a levirate marriage (Deut. 25:5–10). **(4)** The son of Parosh, he was a builder of the wall of Jerusalem at the time of Nehemiah (Neh. 3:25). This may be the same Pedaiah who stood on the platform with Ezra during his reading of the law (Neh. 8:4). **(5)** An ancestor of Sallu, a Benjamite who was relocated to Jerusalem during the time of Nehemiah (Neh. 11:7). **(6)** A Levite whom Nehemiah put in charge of the storerooms of the temple (Neh. 13:13).

PEDDLER One who sells for profit, either door-to-door or at a storefront. "Peddler" is used pejoratively in many translations of 2 Cor. 2:17 to describe those who seek compensation for sharing the word of God. *The Message* employs "peddling" for unsavory selling (Matt. 6:7; Rev. 21:8).

PEDIMENT In 2 Kings 16:17 the RSV and NRSV use "pediment" (Heb. *martsepet*) to describe the heavyweight base on which the temple's ritual cleansing basin was placed by King Ahaz in conjunction with his remodeling of the temple altar to resemble a pagan version in Damascus. More typically, a pediment is a triangular ornamental roofline centerpiece in classical architecture and also can refer to derivative decorative elements used elsewhere in furniture and construction.

PEER PRESSURE A force that influences one's actions and attitudes toward conformity with those exhibited by members of one's social circle. Peer pressure is depicted in the Bible as a reality of societal life, with the emphasis placed on which circles one chooses to imitate. Some passages herald the positive use of peer pressure (Prov. 27:17; 1 Cor. 4:16; Heb. 6:12), while others warn of its potential to misguide (Ps. 1; Prov. 1:10–19; Matt. 16:6). Although peer pressure might be offered as an excuse for a poor decision (e.g., Gen. 3:12; Exod. 32:21–24), this does not remove the responsibility to choose wisely (Josh. 24:14–15).

PEG A pin or stake meant to fit firmly into a tight hole. A common biblical use is the peg or stake that secures the ropes of a tent to the ground (Exod. 27:19; 35:18; 38:20, 31; 39:40; Num. 3:37; 4:32; Isa. 33:20; 54:2; Zech. 10:4). In one of the more graphic scenes of the OT, Jael drives a tent peg through the head of the sleeping enemy general Sisera and into the ground (Judg. 4:21, 22; 5:26). Other uses include a hanging pin, often wooden, driven into a wall (Isa. 22:23–25; Ezek. 15:3); a fastening fixture holding weaving to a loom (Judg. 16:13–14); metaphorically, a place of firmness and security (Ezra 9:8).

PEKAH The eighteenth king of Israel. He came to power by assassinating Pekahiah and was assassinated by Hoshea. Since he is assigned twenty years of rule (2 Kings 15:27), it is possible that he actually began ruling part of Israel as a rival to Menahem before consolidating his power by murdering Pekahiah, since his sole rule of Israel was from 735 to 733 BC.

After gaining power over all of Israel, Pekah formed a coalition with King Rezin of Syria, and they attacked Judah (2 Kings 15:37). Isaiah prophesied to Ahaz of Judah that the threat of Rezin and Pekah would be averted, and that both Syria and Israel (Ephraim) would be conquered by Assyria (Isa. 7). This was fulfilled when Tiglath-pileser III conquered Syria and invaded part of Israel (2 Kings 15:29).

PEKAHIAH King of Israel (r. 737–735 BC) after his father, Menahem, during the divided monarchy. He reigned over Israel for two years from Samaria beginning in the fiftieth year of the reign of King Azariah of Judah (2 Kings 15:22–23). Pekahiah is noted as having done evil in the eyes of the Lord in the pattern of Jeroboam (2 Kings 15:24). He was assassinated in the royal palace in Samaria by one of his chief officers, Pekah, who then reigned in his stead (2 Kings 15:25).

PEKOD An Aramean region near the mouth of the Tigris River in southern Babylon. It was one of the Babylonian regions used by God to bring judgment upon Jerusalem because of its sin, resulting in the destruction of Judah (Ezek. 23:23). Jeremiah had prophesied earlier that Pekod was appointed for attack and destruction due to its part in punishing God's people during this time (Jer. 50:21).

PELAIAH **(1)** One of the sevens sons of Elioenai (1 Chron. 3:24) in the line of Judah. He was a descendant of King David who lived after the exile. **(2)** A Levite who signed the covenant renewal with God after Ezra's reading of the law (Neh. 10:10). He was one of thirteen Levites who helped the people to understand Ezra's reading of the law, either by translating into Aramaic or by some other kind of exposition (Neh. 8:7).

PELATIAH **(1)** One of the leaders of the Simeonites who, during the reign of King Hezekiah, successfully attacked a settlement of Amalekites at Mount Seir (1 Chron. 4:42–43). **(2)** One of twenty-five men whom Ezekiel prophesied against because of their "plotting evil and giving wicked advice" in Jerusalem (Ezek. 11:1–13). Pelatiah died during Ezekiel's delivery of the prophecy. **(3)** A son of Hananiah and a grandson of Zerubbabel (1 Chron. 3:21). **(4)** One of the leaders who sealed a community covenant during Nehemiah's governance (Neh. 10:22).

PELEG A son of Eber, the brother of Joktan, and the father of Reu, he lived 239 years (Gen. 10:25; 11:16–19; 1 Chron. 1:19). He was a direct descendant of Noah through Shem and an ancestor of the patriarch Abraham (1 Chron. 1:25). He is included in the Lukan genealogy of Jesus (Luke 3:35).

It is noted that the earth was divided in Peleg's time (Gen. 10:25; 1 Chron. 1:19). The Hebrew word translated as "divided" is a play on the name "Peleg," both having the same Hebrew root. This interesting statement has been variously interpreted. It may be a reference to the division of languages at the tower of Babel (Gen. 11:1–9), the spreading of Noah's descendants after the flood ("from these the nations spread out over the earth after the flood" [Gen. 10:32]), or something else of unknown referent. This is probably a reference to the outcome of the tower of Babel, noted as a significant event in the Genesis record.

PELET **(1)** A Judahite, a son of Jahdai (1 Chron. 2:47). **(2)** A town in Judah (Beth Pelet) near the Edomite border (Josh. 15:27; Neh. 11:26). **(3)** A Benjamite kinsman of Saul who was one of David's mighty warriors at Ziklag (1 Chron. 12:3).

PELETH **(1)** A descendant of Reuben and the father of On, who is noted for his role in the rebellion against Moses (Num. 16:1). **(2)** A son of Jonathan son of Jada and a descendant of Judah through

Perez (1 Chron. 2:33).

PELETHITES A group, possibly of Philistine origin, that served as troops attached to David and separate from the main army (2 Sam. 20:7). They are always mentioned in company with the Kerethites. They may have originated in the band that David built around himself in Ziklag (1 Sam. 27:8), as they are associated with men from Gath in 2 Sam. 15:18. As a special unit, they were under the command of Benaiah (2 Sam. 8:18; 20:23). Their loyalty to David is evident from their service in putting down the rebellions of Absalom (2 Sam. 15:18) and Sheba (2 Sam. 20:7) and later in ensuring Solomon's succession to the throne (1 Kings 1:38, 44).

PELICAN The type of pelican most familiar in Israel, the white pelican, passes through for a few weeks in the autumn and always stays near water containing fish. This makes dubious the NASB translation of the Hebrew word *qa'at* as "pelican" in Ps. 102:6; Isa. 34:11; Zeph. 2:14, since these verses refer to a creature that inhabits deserts and ruins. The meaning of this Hebrew word is uncertain, but it may refer to some kind of owl (as in the NIV). It certainly is an unclean bird (Lev. 11:18; Deut. 14:17).

PELLA A city that during NT times was located in the Decapolis region of Syria, two miles east of the Jordan River in what is the modern nation of Jordan. Pella is not mentioned explicitly in the Gospels, but it was in close proximity to several of the other cities of the Decapolis where Jesus and his disciples traveled and ministered (Matt. 4:24–25; 8:28–34; Mark 5:1–20; 7:31–37; Luke 8:26–39). Some of these Gospel accounts emphasize the strong Gentile presence in the region, though Jews resided there as well. Eusebius and Epiphanius, two Christian authors of the fourth century AD, state that some of those from the Jewish Christian community at Jerusalem fled to Pella around the time of the Jewish war of AD 66–73.

Archaeological remains of a Byzantine church at Pella

PELONITE This word occurs in 1 Chron. 11:27, 36; 27:10 referring to a location connected to two individuals, Helez and Ahijah. The Hebrew word, *peloni*, is of uncertain meaning and likely refers to an individual's unknown tribal affiliation or an unknown location. Hence, in other contexts the same Hebrew word is translated as "certain" (1 Sam. 21:2), "such and such" (2 Kings 6:8), or "such a one" (Ruth 4:1 KJV [NIV: "my friend"]). The similar term "Paltite," used to describe Helez in 2 Sam. 23:26, probably is an attempt to correct this confusing term to the name of a known tribe.

PELUSIUM An important Egyptian fortress city mentioned in an oracle against Egypt in Ezek. 30:15–16. Pelusium was located in the northeast frontier of Egypt (modern Tell el-Farama) and was the common point of entry into Egypt, making its location strategic for defending against invaders. The city was known for its fine wine and military fortifications (Ezek. 30:15). According to the Greek historian Herodotus, Pelusium was where the Assyrian army under Sennacherib was defeated by an attack of field mice. The biblical accounts attribute Sennacherib's defeat to the angel of the Lord (2 Kings 19:35 // Isa. 37:36), but both mice and the angel of the Lord can refer to a plague in some instances (e.g., 2 Sam. 24:15–16), leading some to view both accounts as referring to the same historical event.

PEN, PENCIL *See* Writing Implements and Materials.

PENIEL *See* Penuel.

PENINNAH One of Elkanah's two wives (1 Sam. 1:2, 4). When the family went to God's house for the annual sacrifices, she provoked her rival, Hannah, who had no children. In her sadness, Hannah prayed for a son, and when "the LORD remembered her," Samuel was born (1 Sam. 1:1–20).

PENKNIFE Referred to in Jer. 36:23 (NIV: "scribe's knife") as the instrument used by the king to cut off pieces of Jeremiah's scroll so they could be cast into the fire. A scribe's knife would typically be used to sharpen a writing utensil, such as a stylus. *See also* Writing Implements and Materials.

PENTAPOLIS The five main Philistine cities of Gaza, Ashkelon, Ashdod, Ekron, and Gath, which were the locus for Philistine power and culture. These cities were located along the coast of the Mediterranean and slightly inland and controlled major trade routes.

PENTATEUCH The biblical corpus known as the Pentateuch consists of the first five books of the OT: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. The word "Pentateuch" comes from two Greek words (*penta* ["five"] and *teuchos* ["scroll case, book"]) and is a designation attested in the early church fathers. The collection is also commonly known as the "Five Books of Moses," "the Law of Moses," or simply the "Law," reflecting the traditional Jewish name "Torah," meaning "law" or "instruction." The Torah is the first of three major sections that comprise the Hebrew Bible (*Torah*, *Nebiim*, *Ketubim* [Law, Prophets, Writings]); thus for both Jewish and Christian traditions it represents the introduction to the Bible as a whole as well as its interpretive foundation.

The English names for the books of the Pentateuch came from the Latin Vulgate, based on the Greek Septuagint. These appellations are mainly descriptive of their content. Genesis derives from "generations" or "origin," Exodus means "going out," Leviticus represents priestly (Levitical) service, Numbers refers to the censuses taken in the book, and Deuteronomy indicates "second law" because of Moses' rehearsal of God's commands (see Deut. 17:18). The Hebrew designations derive from opening words in each book. *Bereshit* (Genesis) means "in the beginning"; *Shemot* (Exodus), "[these are] the names"; *Wayyiqra'* (Leviticus), "and he called"; *Bemidbar* (Numbers), "in the desert"; and *Debarim* (Deuteronomy), "[these are] the words."

Referring to the Pentateuch as "Torah" or the "Law" reflects the climactic reception of God's commands at Mount Sinai, which were to govern Israel's life and worship in the promised land, including their journey to get there. However, calling the Pentateuch the "Law" can be a bit misleading because there are relatively few passages that simply list a set of commands, and all law passages are set within a broad narrative. The Pentateuch is a grand story that begins on a universal scale with the creation of the cosmos and ends on the plains of Moab as the reader anticipates the fulfillment of God's plan to redeem a fallen world through his chosen people. The books offer distinct qualities and content, but they are also inherently dependent upon one another, as the narrative remains unbroken through the five volumes. Genesis ends with Jacob's family in Egypt, and, though many years have passed, this is where Exodus begins. Leviticus outlines cultic life at the tabernacle (constructed at the end of Exodus) and even begins without a clear subject ("And he called . . ."), which requires the reader to supply "the LORD" from the last verse of Exodus. Numbers begins with an account of Israel's fighting men as the nation prepares to leave Sinai, and Deuteronomy is Moses' farewell address to the nation on the cusp of the promised land.

AUTHORSHIP AND COMPOSITION

Although the Pentateuch is technically an anonymous work, Jewish and Christian tradition attributes its authorship to Moses, the main figure of the story from Exodus to Deuteronomy. The arguments for attributing the authorship of the Pentateuch to Moses come from internal evidence within both Testaments. That Moses is responsible for at least portions of the Pentateuch is suggested by references to his explicit literary activity reflected within the narrative itself (Exod. 17:14; 24:4; 34:28; Num. 33:2; Deut. 31:9, 22, 24), if not implied in various literary formulas such as “the LORD said to Moses” (e.g., Exod. 39:1, 7, 21; Lev. 4:1; 11:1; 13:1; Num. 1:1; 2:1). Mosaic authorship receives support from the historical books, which use terms such as “the Book of the Law of Moses” in various forms and references in the preexilic history (Josh. 8:30–35; 23:6; 2 Kings 14:6) as well as the postexilic history (e.g., 2 Chron. 25:4; Ezra 6:18; Neh. 13:1). The same titles are used by NT authors (e.g., Mark 12:26; Luke 24:44; John 1:45), even referring to the Pentateuch simply by the name “Moses” at various points (e.g., Luke 16:29; 24:27; 2 Cor. 3:15).

Even with these examples, nowhere does the text explicitly state that Moses is responsible for the entire compilation of the Pentateuch or that he penned it with his own hand. Rather, a number of factors point to a later hand at work: Moses’ death and burial are referenced (Deut. 34), the conquest of Canaan is referred to as past (Deut. 2:12), and there is evidence that the names of people and places were updated and explained for later generations (e.g., “Dan” in Gen. 14:14; cf. Josh. 19:47; Judg. 18:28b–29). Based on these factors, it is reasonable to believe that the Pentateuch underwent editorial alteration as it was preserved within Jewish life and took its final shape after Moses’ lifetime.

Handwritten Torah scroll (Ramhal Synagogue, Acre, Israel, c. AD 1740)

Over the last century, the Documentary Hypothesis has dominated academic discussion of the Pentateuch’s composition. This theory was crystallized by Julius Wellhausen in his *Prolegomena to the History of Israel* in the late nineteenth century and posits that the Pentateuch originated from a variety of ancient sources derived from distinct authors and time periods that have been transmitted and joined through a long and complex process. Traditionally these documents are identified as J, E, D, and P. The J source is a document authored by the "Yahwist" (German, *Jahwist*) in Judah around 840 BC and is so called because the name "Yahweh" is used frequently in its text. The E source stands for "Elohist" because of its preference for the divine title "Elohim" and was composed in Israel around 700 BC. The D source stands for "Deuteronomy" because it reflects material found in that book; it was composed sometime around Josiah's reform in 621 BC. The P document reflects material that priests would be concerned with in the postexilic time period, approximately 500 BC. This theory and its related forms stem from the scholarly concern over various literary characteristics such as the use of divine names; doublets and duplications in the text; observable patterns of style, terminology, and themes; and alleged discrepancies in facts, descriptions, and geographic or historical perspective.

Various documentary theories of composition have flourished over the last century of pentateuchal scholarship and still have many adherents. However, lack of scholarly agreement about the dating and character of the sources and the rise of other literary approaches to the text have many conservative and liberal scholars calling into question the accuracy and even interpretive benefit of the source theories. Moreover, if the literary observations used to create source distinctions can be explained in other ways, then the Documentary Hypothesis is significantly undermined.

In its canonical form, the pentateuchal narrative combines artistic prose, poetry, and law to tell a dramatic history spanning thousands of years. One could divide the story into six major sections: primeval history (Gen. 1–11), the patriarchs (Gen. 12–50), liberation from Egypt (Exod. 1–18), Sinai (Exod. 19:1–Num. 10:10), wilderness journey (Num. 10:11–36:13), and Moses' farewell (Deuteronomy).

PRIMEVAL HISTORY (GEN. 1–11)

It is possible to divide Genesis into two parts based upon subject matter: the origin of creation and humankind's call, fall, and punishment (chaps 1–11), and the origin of a family that would become God's conduit of salvation and blessing for the world (chaps. 12–50).

The primeval history comprises essentially the first eleven chapters of Genesis, ending with the genealogy of Abraham in 11:26. Strictly speaking, 11:27 begins the patriarchal section with the sixth instance of the *toledot* formula found in Genesis, referencing Abraham's father, Terah. The Hebrew phrase *'elleh toledot* ("these are the generations of") occurs in eleven places in Genesis and reflects a deliberate structural marker that one may use to divide the book into distinct episodes (2:4; 5:1; 6:9; 10:1; 11:10; 11:27; 25:12; 25:19; 36:1; 36:9; 37:2).

Genesis as we know it exhibits two distinct creation accounts in its first two chapters. Although critical scholars contend that the differing accounts reflect contradictory stories and different authors, it is just as convenient to recognize that the two stories vary in style and some content because they attempt to accomplish different aims. The first account, 1:1–2:3, is an artistic, poetic, symmetrical, and "heavenly" view of creation by a transcendent God, who spoke creation into being. In the second account, 2:4–25, God is immanently involved with creation as he is present in a garden, breathes life into Adam's nostrils, dialogues and problem-solves, fashions Eve from Adam's side, and bestows warnings and commands. Both perspectives are foundational for providing an accurate view of God's interaction with creation in the rest of Scripture.

As one progresses through chapters 1–11, the story quickly changes from what God has established as "very good" to discord, sin, and shame. Chapter 3 reflects the "fall" of humanity as Adam and Eve sin in eating from the forbidden tree in direct disobedience to God. The serpent shrewdly deceives the first couple, and thus all three incur God's curses, which extend to unlimited generations. Sin that breaks the vertical relationship between God and humanity intrinsically leads to horizontal strife between humans. Sin and disunity on the earth only intensify as one moves from the murder story of Cain and Abel in chapter 4 to the flood in chapters 5–9. Violence, evil, and disorder have so pervaded the earth that God sends a deluge to wipe out all living things, save one righteous man and his family, along with an ark full of animals. God makes the first covenant recorded in the biblical narrative with Noah (6:18), promising to save him from the flood as he commands Noah to build an ark and gather food for survival. Noah fulfills all that God has commanded (6:22; 7:5), and God remembers his promise (8:1). This is the prototypical salvation story for the rest of Scripture.

Chapter 9 reflects a new start for humanity and all living things as the creation mandate to "be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it," first introduced in 1:28, is restated along with the reminder that humankind is made in God's image (1:27). Bearing the image involves new responsibilities and stipulations in the postdiluvian era (9:2–6). There will be enmity between humans and animals, animals are now appropriate food, and yet lifeblood will be specially revered. God still requires accountability for just and discriminate shedding of blood and orderly relationships, as he has proved in the deluge, but now he relinquishes this responsibility to humankind. In return, God promises never to destroy all flesh again, and he will set the rainbow in the sky as a personal reminder. Like the covenant with Noah in 6:18, the postdiluvian covenant involves humankind fulfilling commands (9:1–7) and God remembering his covenant (9:8–17), specially termed "everlasting" (9:16).

The primeval commentary on humankind's unabating sinful condition (e.g., 6:5; 8:21) proves true as Noah becomes drunk and naked and his son Ham (father of Canaan) shames him by failing to conceal his father's negligence. Instead of multiplying, filling, and subduing the earth as God has intended, humankind collaborates to make a name for itself by building a sort of stairway to heaven within a special city (11:4). God foils such haughty plans by scattering the people across the earth and confusing their language. Expressed in an orderly chiastic structure, the story of the tower of Babel demonstrates that God condescends (11:5) to set things straight with humanity.

PATRIARCHS (GEN. 12–50)

Although the primeval history is foundational for understanding the rest of the Bible, more space in Genesis is devoted to the patriarchal figures Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph. In general, the Abrahamic narrative spans chapters 12–25, the story of Isaac serves as a transition to the Jacob cycle of chapters 25–37, and the Joseph narrative finishes the book of Genesis in chapters 37–50.

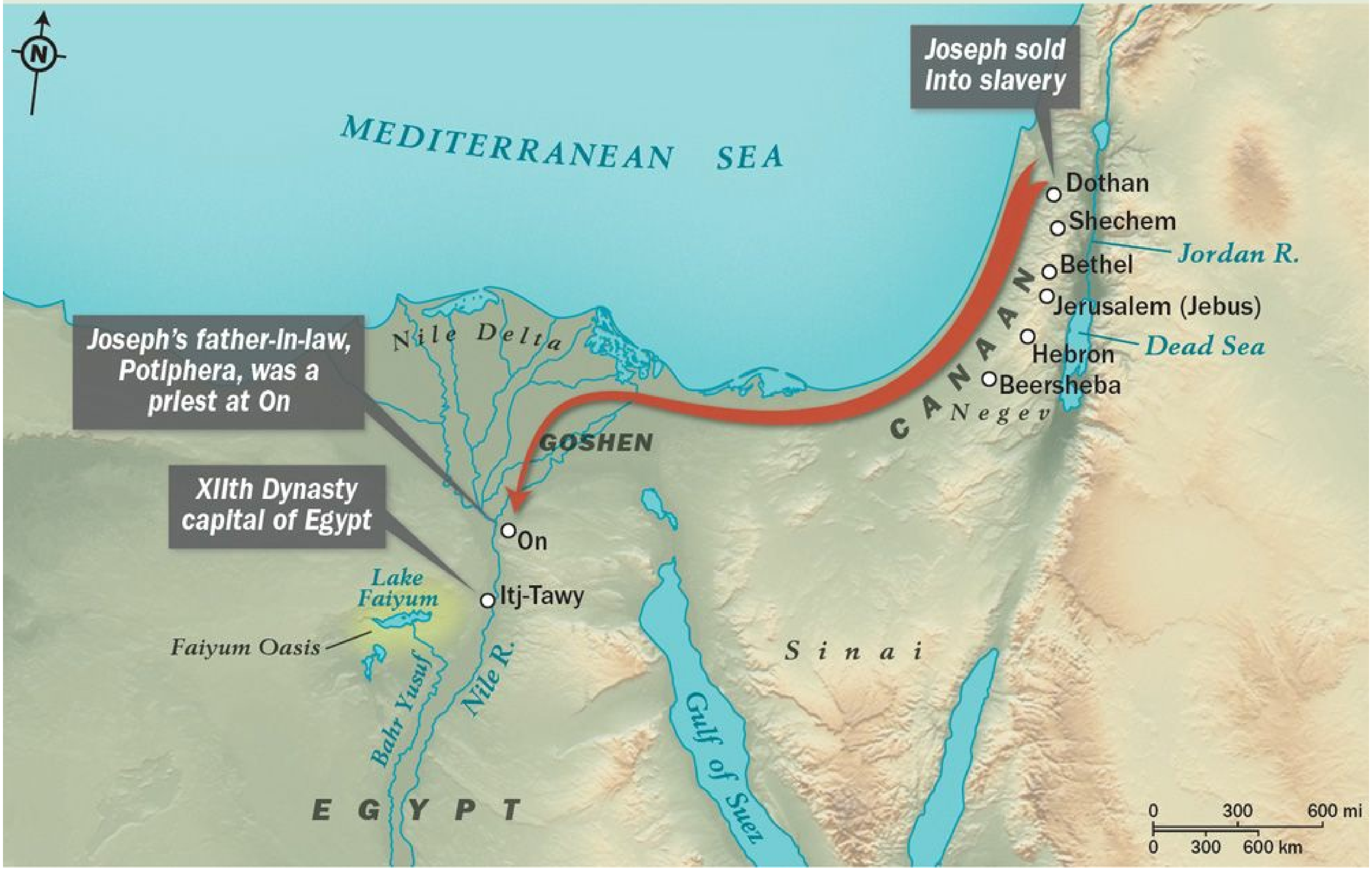
The transition from the primeval history to the patriarchs (11:27–32) reveals how Abraham, the father of Israel, moves from the east and settles in Harran as the family ventures to settle in Canaan. In Harran, Abraham receives the call of God's redemptive plan, which reverberates through Scripture. God will bless him with land, make him a great nation, grant him special favor, and use him as a conduit of blessings to the world (12:1–3). In 11:30 is the indication that the barrenness of Abraham's wife (Sarah) relates to the essence of God's magnificent promises. How one becomes great in name and number, secures enemy territory, and is to bless all peoples without a descendant becomes the compelling question of the Abrahamic narrative. The interchange between Abraham's faith in God and his attempts to contrive covenant fulfillment colors the entire narrative leading up to chapter 22. It is there that Abraham's faith is ultimately put to the test as God asks him to sacrifice the promised son, Isaac. Abraham passes God's faith test, and a ram is provided to take Isaac's place. This everlasting covenant that was previously sealed by the sign of circumcision is climactically procured for future generations through Abraham’s exemplary obedience (22:16–18; cf. 15:1–21; 17:1–27).

The patriarchal stories that follow show that the Abrahamic promises are renewed with subsequent generations (see 26:3–4; 28:13–14) and survive various threats to fulfillment. The story of Isaac serves mainly as a bridge to the Jacob cycle, as he exists primarily as a passive character in relation to Abraham and Jacob.

Deception, struggle, rivalry, and favoritism characterize the Jacob narrative, as first exemplified in the jostling of twin boys in Rebekah’s womb (25:22). Jacob supplants his twin brother, Esau, for the firstborn’s blessing and birthright. He flees to Paddan Aram (northern Mesopotamia), marries two sisters, takes their maidservants as concubines, and has eleven children, followed by a falling-out with his father-in-law. Jacob’s struggle for God’s blessing that began with Esau comes to a head in his wrestling encounter with God at Peniel. Ultimately, Jacob emerges victorious and receives God’s blessing and a name change, “Israel” (“one who struggles with God”). Throughout the Jacob story, God demonstrates his faithfulness to the Abrahamic covenant and reiterates the promises to Jacob, most notably at Bethel (chaps. 28; 35). The interpersonal strife of Jacob’s life is thus enveloped within a message of reconciliation not just with Esau (chap. 33) but ultimately with God. The reader learns from the episodes in Jacob’s life that although God works through the lives of weak and failing people, his promises for Israel remain secure.

Although Jacob and his family are already living in Canaan, God intends for them to move to Egypt and grow into a powerful nation before fulfilling their conquest of the promised land (see 15:13–16). The story of Joseph explains how the family ends up in Egypt at the close of Genesis. Joseph is specially loved by his father, which elicits significant jealousy from his brothers, who sell him off to some nomads and fabricate the alibi that he has been killed by a wild beast. Joseph winds up in Pharaoh’s household and eventually becomes his top official. When famine strikes Canaan years later, Joseph’s brothers go to Egypt to purchase food from the royal court, and Joseph reveals his identity to them in an emotional reunion. Jacob’s entire family moves to Egypt to live for a time in prosperity under Joseph’s care. The Joseph story illustrates the mysterious relationship of human decision and divine sovereignty (50:20).

JOSEPH'S ROUTE TO EGYPT


N
Joseph sold into slavery
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
Dothan
Shechem
Jordan R.
Bethel
Jerusalem (Jebus)
Dead Sea
Hebron
Beersheba
CANAAN
Negev
Joseph's father-in-law, Potiphera, was a priest at On
Nile Delta
GOSHEN
XIIth Dynasty capital of Egypt
On
Lake Faiyum
Itj-Tawy
Faiyum Oasis
Bahr Yusuf
Nile R.
Sinai
Gulf of Suez
EGYPT
0 300 600 mi
0 300 600 km

Liberation from Egypt (Exod. 1–18)

Genesis shows how Abraham develops into a large family. Exodus shows how this family becomes a nation—enslaved, freed, and then taught the ways of God. Although it appears that Exodus continues a riveting story of God's chosen people, it is actually the identity and power of God that take center stage.

Many years have passed since Joseph's family arrived in Egypt. The Hebrews' good standing in Egypt has also diminished as their multiplication and fruitfulness during the intervening period—just as God had promised Abraham (Gen. 17:4–8)—became a national threat to the Egyptians. Abraham's family will spend time in Egyptian slavery before being liberated with many possessions in hand (cf. Gen. 15:13–14).

In the book of Exodus the drama of suffering and salvation serves as the vehicle for God's self-disclosure to a single man, Moses. Moses is an Israelite of destiny even from birth, as he providentially avoids infant death and rises to power and influence in Pharaoh's household. Moses never loses his passion for his own people, and he kills an Egyptian who was beating a fellow Hebrew. Moses flees to obscurity in the desert, where he meets God and his call to lead his people out of Egypt and to the promised land (3:7–8; 6:8). Like the days of Noah's salvation, God has remembered his covenant with the patriarchs and responded to the groans of his people in Egypt (2:24; 6:4–5; cf. Gen. 8:1). God reveals himself, and his personal name "Yahweh" ("I AM"), to Moses in the great theophany of the burning bush at Mount Horeb (Sinai), the same place where later he will receive God’s law. Moses doubts his own ability to carry out the task of confronting Pharaoh and leading the exodus, but God foretells that many amazing signs and wonders not only will make the escape possible but also will ultimately reveal the mighty nature of God to the Hebrews, Egypt, and presumably the world (6:7; 7:5).

This promise of creating a nation of his people through deliverance is succinctly conveyed in the classic covenant formula that finds significance in the rest of the OT: “I will take you as my own people, and I will be your God” (6:7). Wielding great power over nature and at times even human decision, God “hardens” Pharaoh’s heart and sends ten plagues to demonstrate his favor for his own people and wrath against their enemy nation. The tenth plague on the firstborn of all in Egypt provides the context for the Passover as God spares the firstborn of Israel in response to the placement of sacrificial blood on the doorposts of their homes. Pharaoh persists in the attempt to overtake the Israelites in the desert, where the power of God climaxes in parting the Red Sea (or Sea of Reeds). The Israelites successfully pass through, but the Egyptian army drowns in pursuit. This is the great salvation event of the OT.

The song of praise for God’s deliverance (15:1–21) quickly turns to cries of groaning in the seventy days following the exodus as the people of the nation, grumbling about their circumstances in the desert, quickly demonstrate their fleeting trust in the one who has saved them (Exod. 15:22–18:27). When a shortage of water and food confronts the people, their faith in God’s care proves shallow, and they turn on Moses. Even though the special marks of God’s protection have been evident in the wilderness through the pillars of cloud and fire, the angel of God, the provision of manna and quail, water from the rock, and the leadership of Moses, the nation continually fails God’s tests of trust and obedience (16:4; cf. 17:2; 20:20). Yet God continues to endure with his people through the leadership of Moses.

SINAI (EXOD. 19:1–NUM. 10:10)

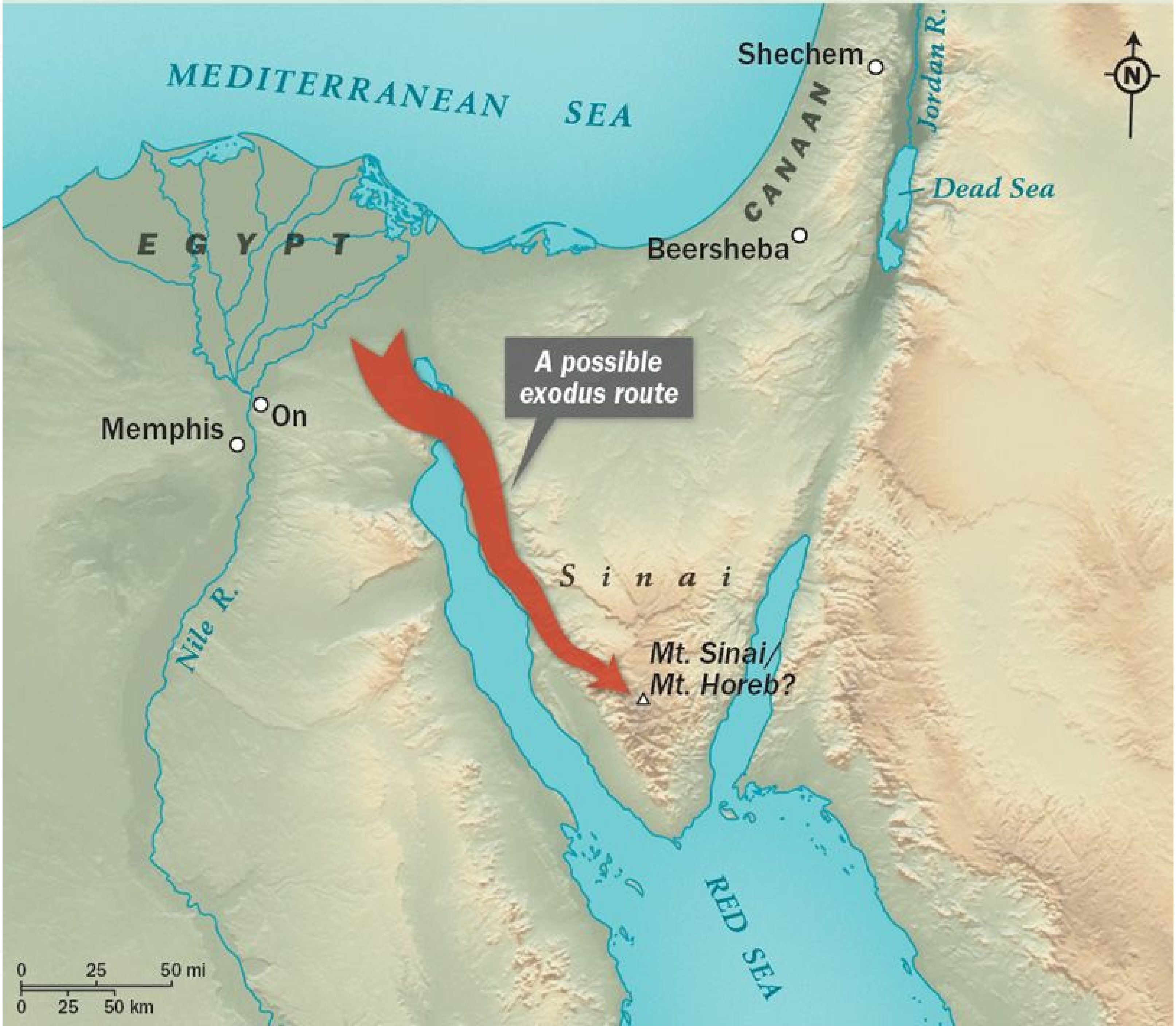
Most of the pentateuchal narrative takes place at Mount Sinai. It is there that Israel receives national legislation and prescriptions for the tabernacle, the priesthood, feasts and festivals, and other covenantal demands for living as God’s chosen people. The eleven-month stay at Sinai takes the biblical reader through the center of the Pentateuch, covering approximately the last half of Exodus, all of Leviticus, and the first third of Numbers, before the nation leaves this sacred site and sojourns in the wilderness. Several key sections of the Pentateuch fall within the Sinai story: the Decalogue (Exod. 20:1–17), the Book of the Covenant (Exod. 20:22–23:33), the tabernacle prescriptions (Exod. 25–31), the tabernacle construction (Exod. 35–40), the manual on ritual worship (Lev. 1–7), and the Holiness Code (Lev. 17–27).

The events and instruction at Sinai are central to the Israelite religious experience and reflect the third eternal covenant that God establishes in the Pentateuch—this time with Israel, whereby the Sabbath is the sign (Exod. 31:16; cf. Noahic/rainbow covenant [Gen. 9:16] and the Abrahamic/circumcision covenant [Gen. 17:7, 13, 19]). The offices of prophet and priest develop into clear view in this portion of the Pentateuch. Moses exemplifies the dual prophetic function of representing the people when speaking with God and, in turn, God when speaking to the people. The priesthood is bestowed upon Aaron and his descendants in Exodus and inaugurated within one of the few narrative sections of Leviticus (Lev. 8–10). The giving of the law, the ark, the tabernacle, the priesthood, and the Sabbath are all a part of God’s making himself “known” to Israel and the world, which is a constant theme in Exodus (see, e.g., 25:22; 29:43, 46; 31:13).

The Israelites’ stay at Sinai opens with one of the greatest theophanies of the Bible: God speaks aloud to the people (Exod. 19–20) and then is envisioned as a consuming fire (Exod. 24). After communicating the Ten Commandments ("ten words") directly to the people (Exod. 34:28; Deut. 4:13; 10:4), Moses mediates the rest of the detailed obligations that will govern the future life of the nation. The covenant is ratified in ceremonial fashion (Exod. 24), and the Israelites vow to fulfill all that has been spoken. God expects Israel to be a holy nation (Exod. 19:6) with whom he may dwell, but Moses descends Sinai only to find that the Israelites have already violated the essence of the Decalogue by fashioning a golden calf to worship as that which delivered them from Egypt (Exod. 32). This places Israel's future and calling in jeopardy, but Moses intercedes for his people, and God graciously promises to preserve the nation and abide with it in his mercy, even while punishing the guilty. This becomes prototypical of God's relationship with his people in the future (Exod. 34:6–7).

Exodus ends with the consecration of the tabernacle and the descent of God's presence there. With the tent of worship in order, the priesthood and its rituals can be officially established. Leviticus reflects divine instructions for how a sinful people may live safely in close proximity to God. Holy living involves dealing with sin and minimizing the need for atonement, purification, and restitution. The sacrificial and worship system established in Leviticus is based on a worldview of order, perfection, and purity, which should characterize a people who are commanded, "Be holy because I, the LORD your God, am holy' (Lev. 19:2; cf. 11:44–45; 20:26). With these rules in place, the Israelites can make final preparations to depart Sinai and move forward on their journey. Numbers 1–10 spans a nineteen-day period of such activities as the Israelites begin to focus on dispossessing their enemies. These chapters reflect a census of fighting men, the priority of purity, the dedication of the tabernacle, and the observance of the Passover before commencing the quest to Canaan.

ISRAEL'S ROUTE OUT OF EGYPT


MEDITERRANEAN SEA
Shechem
CANAAN
Jordan R.
N
Dead Sea
Beersheba
EGYPT
A possible exodus route
On
Memphis
Sinai
Nile R.
Mt. Sinai/ Mt. Horeb?
RED SEA
0 25 50 mi
0 25 50 km

WILDERNESS JOURNEY (NUM. 10:11–36:13)

The rest of the book of Numbers covers the remainder of a forty-year stretch of great peaks and valleys in the faith and future of the nation. Chapters 11–25 recount the various events that show the exodus generation's lack of trust in God. Chapters 26–36 reveal a more positive section whereby a new generation prepares for the conquest. With the third section of Numbers framed by episodes involving the inheritance rights of Zelophehad's daughters (27:1–11; 36:1–13), it is clear that the story has turned to the future possession of the land.

After the departure from Sinai, the narrative consists of a number of Israelite complaints in the desert. The Israelites have grown tired of manna and ironically crave the food of Egypt, which they recall as free fish, fruits, and vegetables. Having forgotten the hardship of life in slavery, about which they had cried out to God, now the nation is crying out for a lifestyle of old. Moses becomes so overwhelmed with the complaints of the people that God provides seventy elders, who, to help shoulder the leadership burden, will receive the same prophetic spirit given to Moses.

In chapters 13–14 twelve spies are sent out from Kadesh Barnea to peruse Canaan, but the people's lack of faith to procure the land from the mighty people there proves costly. This final example of distrust moves God to punish and purify the nation. The unbelieving generation will die in the wilderness during a forty-year period of wandering.

The discontent in the desert involves not only food and water but also leadership status. Moses' own brother and sister resent his special relationship with God and challenge his exclusive authority. Later, Aaron's special high priesthood is threatened as another Levitical family (Korah) vies for preeminence. Through a sequence of signs and wonders, God makes it clear that Moses and Aaron have exclusive roles in God's economy. Due to the deaths related to Korah's rebellion and the fruitless staffs that represent the tribes of Israel, the nation's concern about sudden extinction in the presence of a holy God is appeased through the eternal covenant of priesthood granted to Aaron's family (chap. 18). He and the Levites, at the potential expense of their own lives and as part of their priestly service, will be held accountable for keeping the tabernacle pure of encroachers.

Even after the people's significant rebellion and punishment, God continues to prove his faithfulness to his word. Hope is restored for the nation as the Abrahamic promises of blessing are rehearsed from the mouth of Balaam, a Mesopotamian seer. The Israelites will indeed one day be numerous (23:10), enjoy the presence of God (23:21), be blessed and protected (24:9), and have a kingly leader (24:17). This wonderful mountaintop experience of hope for the exodus generation is tragically countered by an even greater event of apostasy in the subsequent scene. Reminiscent of the incident of the golden calf, when pagan revelry in the camp had foiled Moses' interaction with God on Sinai, apostasy at the tabernacle undermines Balaam's oracles of covenant fulfillment. Fornication with Moabite women not only joins the nation to a foreign god but also betrays God's holiness at his place of dwelling. If not for the zeal of Aaron's grandson Phinehas, who puts an end to the sin, the ensuing plague could have finished the nation. For his righteous action, Phinehas is awarded an eternal priesthood and ensures a future for the nation and Aaron's priestly lineage.

In chapter 26 a second census of fighting men indicates that the old, unbelieving exodus generation has officially died off (except for Joshua and Caleb), and God is proceeding with a new people. God dispossesses the enemies of the new generation; reinstates the tribal boundaries of the land; reinstates rules concerning worship, service, and bloodshed; and places Joshua at the helm of leadership. Chapters 26–36 mention no deaths or rebellions as the nation optimistically ends its journey in Moab, just east of the promised land.

MOSES' FAREWELL (DEUTERONOMY)

Although one could reasonably move into the historical books at the end of Numbers, much would be lost in overstepping Deuteronomy. Deuteronomy presents Moses' farewell speeches as his final words to a nation on the verge of Caanan. Moses' speeches are best viewed as sermons motivating his people to embrace the Sinai covenant, love their God, and choose life over death and blessings over cursings (30:19). Moses reviews the desert experience since Mount Horeb/Sinai (chaps. 1–4) and recapitulates God's expectations for lawful living in the land (chaps. 5–26). The covenant code is recorded on a scroll, is designated the "Book of the Law" (31:24–26), and is to be read and revered by the future king. Finally, Moses leads the nation in covenant renewal (chaps. 29–32) before the book finishes with an account of his death (chaps. 33–34), including tributes such as “since then, no prophet has risen in Israel like Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face” (34:10).

Deuteronomy reflects that true covenant faithfulness is achieved from a right heart for God. If there were any previous doubts about the essence of covenant keeping, Moses eliminates such in Deuteronomy with the frequent use of emotive terms. Loving God involves committing to him alone and spurning idols and foreign gods. The Ten Commandments (chap. 5) are not a list of stale requirements; they reflect the great Shema with the words “Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts” (6:5–6). God desires an unrivaled love from the nation, not cold and superficial religiosity.

Obedience by the Israelites will incur material and spiritual blessing, whereas disobedience ends in the loss of both. Although Moses strongly commends covenant obedience, and the nation participates in a covenant-renewal ceremony (chap. 27), it is clear that in the future the Israelites will fail to uphold their covenant obligations and will suffer the consequences (29:23; 30:1–4; 31:16–17). Yet Moses looks to a day when the command for circumcised hearts (10:16) will be fulfilled by the power of God himself (30:6). In the future a new king will arise from the nation (17:14–20) as well as a prophet like Moses (18:15–22). Deuteronomy thus underscores the extent of God’s own devotion to his patriarchal promises despite the sinful nature of his people.

For much of the middle and end of the twentieth century, Deuteronomy has received a significant amount of attention for its apparent resemblance in structure and content to ancient Hittite and Assyrian treaties. Scholars debate the extent of similarity, but it is possible that Deuteronomy reflects a suzerain-vassal treaty form between Israel and God much like the common format between nations in the ancient Near East. Although comparative investigation of this type can be profitable for interpretation, it is prudent to be conservative when outlining direct parallels, since Deuteronomy is not a legal document but rather a dramatic narrative of God’s redemptive interaction with the world.

PENTATEUCH, SAMARITAN *See* Samaritan Pentateuch.

PENTECOST Greek parlance for the OT Festival of Weeks described in Lev. 23:15–22. It gets this name because it is celebrated fifty days after the Passover (Gk. *pentēkostē* means “fiftieth”). The Festival of Weeks was an important pilgrimage feast commemorating the end of the grain harvest. Usually the harvest season began the week of Passover and continued for fifty days until the Festival of Weeks. There are several nonbiblical references to Pentecost, all of which allude to the Festival of Weeks, suggesting that this was a common word in Greek (see Tob. 2:1; 2 Macc. 12:32; Josephus, *Ant.* 3.252; *J.W.* 2.42). The first NT use of the word occurs in Acts 2:1. There is little doubt that Luke’s use of “Pentecost” refers to the Festival of Weeks. Paul mentions in 1 Cor. 16:8 that he intends to stay in Ephesus until Pentecost but gives no explanation of what he means by “Pentecost.” This early Pauline document suggests that for Christians, Pentecost was an established date that needed no explanation.

How often and to what extent the Festival of Weeks was celebrated in the first centuries is open for considerable debate. The Festival of Weeks gradually lost much of its agricultural meaning and developed more religious significance, especially as people in the city were less dependent on the agricultural cycle for their food. For the author of Acts, chapter 2 is likely tied to the harvest motif of Joel. Based on Luke’s quoting of Peter, who uses Joel extensively in his explanation of the giving of the Spirit, it seems that in Acts, Luke wanted to tie the events of Pentecost to the beginning of the “day of the Lord” or the beginning of the eschaton. This would coincide with the festival’s harvest motif especially because it was commemorating the beginning of the end of the harvest. Contemporary Jews still celebrate Pentecost by commemorating the giving of the law at Sinai and the beginning of the Israelite community.

PENUEL **(1)** A place, and later a town, on the Jabbok River about eight miles west of the Jordan. The name “Penuel” (NIV: “Peniel”), meaning “face of God,” was given to this place by Jacob after he wrestled there with “a man” and then said that he had seen God “face to face” (Gen. 32:22–32). When Gideon was pursuing the Midianites, the people of Penuel refused to provide food for his men, and so when he returned, he destroyed their tower and killed the men (Judg. 8:8–9, 17). The fortifying of this town was one of Jeroboam’s first acts as king of Israel (1 Kings 12:25). **(2)** A descendant of Judah and the father of Gedor (1 Chron. 4:4). **(3)** A descendant of Benjamin and one of the sons of Shashak (1 Chron. 8:25). **(4)** The otherwise unknown father of the prophet Anna from the tribe of Asher, mentioned only in Luke 2:36 (many versions render the name as “Phanuel”).

PEOPLE OF GOD The concept of a people of God in the Bible may be traced to its origins in Gen. 12. Following the dispersion of humanity by divine design in the previous chapter, God elects Abraham as ancestor of a nation. God grants to Abraham promises of protection, growth in the number of offspring, and a homeland for his descendants and envisions a flow of blessing to the nations through the seed of Abraham.

The promise of numerous offspring comes to fruition in Exod. 1, to the point that the Israelites are perceived to be a threat by the Egyptians. In Exodus, God begins to refer to the descendants of Abraham as his people (3:7; 6:7; 7:16; 18:1). They are to be a “kingdom of priests” and a “holy nation” (19:5–6), set apart from other nations. The gathering of the people at Sinai, in the view of Moses, is an important moment in the establishment of the community, a moment marked by the conclusion of a covenant (Deut. 5:2; 9:10–11).

The Former Prophets, however, tell a story of deterioration in the relationship. Israel and its kings consistently turn to the worship of other deities (Judg. 2:11–23; 1 Kings 11:1–8), rejecting God as king and overlord (1 Sam. 8:19). After the reign of Solomon and because of Solomon’s acts of idolatry, the nation is torn in two (1 Kings 11:1–13). Ultimately, both political entities, because of their persistence in apostasy, suffer demise (2 Kings 23:24–27).

In response to Israel’s apostasy, the Latter Prophets envision a distinction between the national entity that is Israel and a “true people of God,” one abiding in covenantal faithfulness (e.g., Isa. 11:11, 16; Amos 5:15; Hos. 1:10–11). The prophets, therefore, see within the nation a remnant that receives forgiveness and becomes the object of national restoration in the postexilic period (Hag. 1:2–15; Zech. 8:1–23). The covenantal faithfulness of the remnant is marked by a passion for righteousness and justice for the poor and oppressed (Isa. 11:1–5; Amos 5:11–15).

The spirit of restoration and redemption carries over into the NT (Rom. 11:1–10). The Gospels present Jesus as one gathering a lost people (Matt. 15:24; Luke 2:25; John 1:31), redirecting them in the correct way (1 Pet. 2:10). Employing a series of metaphors (the body of Christ, a bride, the house of God, God’s flock) to describe God’s people, the church, the concept of a faithful remnant (the true Israel) persists. Thus, Paul speaks of a “circumcision of the heart” (not just of the flesh) that marks one as a true descendant of Abraham (Rom. 2:25–29; 4:1–25). Similar to how the remnant is understood in the Latter Prophets, the church of Jesus Christ will be characterized by its concern for covenantal faithfulness (Heb. 8:7–13), righteousness, and the pursuit of justice for the poor (James

2:1–7).

PEOPLE OF THE EAST *See* Kadmonites.

PEOPLE OF THE LAND This phrase (Heb. *’am ha’arets*) occurs approximately fifty times in the OT in the singular and about fifteen times in the plural (“peoples of the land”). On the surface, the phrase appears to simply refer to the inhabitants of any particular geographical location. However, in the last few decades there has been much discussion as to whether the phrase might have a more limited or technical meaning. Some of the suggestions are that the phrase refers to (1) a ruling national council; (2) the elite, aristocratic, influential, upper class; (3) the poorer, landless segments of society; (4) the common people, as opposed to the ruling elite, though these could still be landed; (5) free, property-owning citizens; (6) unsophisticated country dwellers versus refined city dwellers; (7) those who are ritually impure and less pious.

While there is some justification for some of these proposals, especially for the plural (“peoples”), they are perhaps, for the most part, overly pressed. Inasmuch as ancient Near Eastern societies were patriarchal and largely male dominated, it seems safe to suggest that in those contexts where decision making, judging, and/or military activity is predicated of the “people of the land,” a free, male, and land-owning group is in view. When Abraham negotiates with Ephron the Hittite for a burial plot for his deceased wife, Sarah, in front of the “people of the land” (Gen. 23), we may assume the group was comprised of citizenry who regularly witnessed such transactions. Various coup attempts or struggles for power seem to presuppose that the “people of the land” were those capable of bearing arms (2 Kings 11:13–20; 21:24; 23:30; 25:19). In 2 Kings 24:14; 25:12 reference is made to the “poorest people of the land,” and the use of the adjective indicates that the phrase “people of the land” was in itself insufficient to denote the poorer classes. In Jer. 1:18; 37:2; 44:21 the “people of the land” may be separate groups from the officials mentioned in those passages. Other than these passages, all preexilic uses of the phrase seem to refer simply to inhabitants in general.

The postexilic books Ezra and Nehemiah, as well as the apocryphal book 1 Esdras, with one exception (Ezra 4:4), use the plural, “peoples of the land” (the NIV variously translates as the “people around us,” “peoples around you”). In these instances the phrase is used to indicate the various non-Judaic peoples in the Judean province who proved, on various occasions, to be hostile to the Jews returning from exile in Babylon. Some of the returning Jews also intermarried with these groups, something that Ezra and Nehemiah considered an abomination because it might lead to idolatry. It is probably out of this postexilic situation that the later pejorative use of the phrase “people of the land” was employed by the Pharisees to refer, not to Gentiles, but to Jews whom they considered, by their standards, to be ritually impure and thus ignorant of the Mosaic law. It is possible that there was a virtual equation made between “people of the land” and “sinners.” The phrase does not occur in the NT, but the attitude toward those whom the Pharisees considered to be ritually impure is evidenced on numerous occasions (e.g., John 7:49).

PEOR A mountain in Moab, in the area of Mount Nebo. This location is derived from Num. 24:2, which mentions that the view from Peor affords a glimpse of the plains of Moab. No precise location has been identified. In Num. 23 Peor is the site of Balaam’s pronouncements of blessing upon Israel, inspired by God. Elsewhere (Num. 23:3, 5, 18; Ps. 106:28), Peor is associated with apostasy and illicit religious practice (the worship of Baal of Peor).

PERATH The place where Jeremiah was commanded to bury his belt and let it become ruined, as a metaphor for the uselessness of Jerusalem (Jer. 13:3–7). Although the location is uncertain, several Bible translations identify it with the river Euphrates, while others see it as much closer to Jerusalem (associated with the city of Parah in Josh. 18:23).

PERAZIM *See* Baal Perazim.

PERDITION The Greek word translated in some versions as “perdition” (*apōleia*) generally means “destruction” (as it is translated in the NIV). Occasionally, however, it is associated with Sheol as a place for the dead. In fact, where the Hebrew texts of Proverbs and Job read “Sheol” and “Abaddon,” the Greek translation reads “Hades” (*hadēs*) and “Destruction” (*apōleia*) (e.g., Prov. 15:11; 27:20; Job 26:6; cf. Job 28:22). Furthermore, the author of Revelation eventually personifies the place *apōleia* as the person Apollyon, king over the Abyss (9:11). Often, wicked people are said to be “characterized by” and consequently “bound for” perdition. For example, in the Greek text of Isaiah the inhabitants of Edom are called “people of perdition” and the ungodly leaders of Israel “children of perdition” (34:5; cf. *Pss. Sol.* 2.31; 3.11). Similarly, Paul considers hardened individuals to be vessels of divine wrath, “prepared for destruction” (Rom. 9:22), and Peter assures his audience that the destruction hanging over the false prophets has not fallen asleep (2 Pet. 2:3). Two figures in particular are referred to traditionally as a “son of perdition”: Judas, who betrayed the Christ (John 17:12; NIV: “the one doomed to destruction”), and the man of lawlessness (2 Thess. 2:3; NIV: “the man doomed to destruction”), often identified as the antichrist. Moreover, in Revelation the beast upon which the whore of Babylon sits is said to ascend from the bottomless pit only ultimately to proceed to destruction (17:8, 11). In popular usage today, “perdition” most often signifies either the eternal damnation of the wicked or the final place of destruction for them.

PEREA The Greek name for the region east of the Jordan River and Samaria, south of the Decapolis (modern Jordan). In the NT it is referred to as *peran tou Iordanou* (“beyond the Jordan” or “the region across the Jordan”) (Matt. 4:25; 19:1; Mark 3:8; 10:1). Galilean Jews often detoured through Perea when traveling to Judea in order to avoid Samaria (John 4:3–4, 9). It was part of the kingdom of Herod the Great, apportioned to his son Herod Antipas, who also ruled Galilee as a client king of the Roman Empire in Jesus’ time. Herod’s fortress in Machaerus (southern Perea) is the probable location of John the Baptist’s imprisonment and beheading (Mark 6:17–28). Jesus traveled through Perea (Matt. 19–20) to arrive in Jerusalem for his Passion Week.

PERESH Makir’s son with his wife, Maakah; he was from the tribe of Manasseh (1 Chron. 7:16).

PEREZ A grandson of Jacob, a son of Judah by Tamar, and the father of Hezron listed in the ancestry of David and Jesus (Gen. 46:12; Ruth 4:18; 1 Chron. 2:4–5; 4:1; Matt. 1:3; Luke 3:33). His was a key ancestral touchstone name (Num. 26:20–21; Ruth 4:12; 1 Chron. 9:4; 27:3; Neh. 11:4–6), meaning “breach” or “breaking out,” as he broke out of the womb ahead of his firstborn twin brother, Zerah (Gen. 38:29).

PEREZITES *See* Perez.

PEREZ UZZAH Meaning “outbreak against Uzzah,” a place along the road between Kiriath Jearim and Jerusalem. While David was bringing the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem, the worshiping procession was brought to a standstill after Uzzah reached out his hand to steady the ark when the oxen pulling it in a cart stumbled and God struck him dead for his impropriety (2 Sam. 6:8; 1 Chron. 13:11). God's outbreak occasioned the site's name.

PERFECT The word "perfect" is used to translate Hebrew and Greek terms for ritual and moral wholeness. In the biblical text the terms "whole," "complete," and "mature" are related to "perfect." Often, "perfect" conveys the sense of something reaching its end and therefore its "completion" or "perfection."

The OT describes an animal or crop intended for sacrificial offering as "unblemished," "whole," or "perfect" (Heb. *tamim*). Though not translated "perfect" in the NIV, the term *tamim* frequently appears in cultic contexts of Israel's worship (e.g., Exod. 12:5; Lev. 1:3, 10; 3:1, 6; 4:3). Neither imperfect animals nor priests with physical defects were considered fit for service in the temple because of their lack of wholeness (Lev. 21:16–23; 22:17–25). Wholeness itself reflected God's holiness through physical wholeness (see Lev. 10:3).

Figuratively, the term *tamim* (or *tam*) refers to wholeness of heart and is applied to human action or conduct, where it describes walking blamelessly before God (Noah [Gen. 6:9]; Abraham [Gen. 17:1; cf. Deut. 18:13]; Job [Job 1:1]). God's way is described as "perfect" (2 Sam. 22:31), as is his knowledge (Job 37:16), and Ps. 19:7 recounts how the "law of the LORD is perfect, refreshing the soul." Thus, God's perfection or holiness must be reflected in God's people: "Speak to the entire assembly of Israel and say to them: 'Be holy because I, the LORD your God, am holy'" (Lev. 19:2).

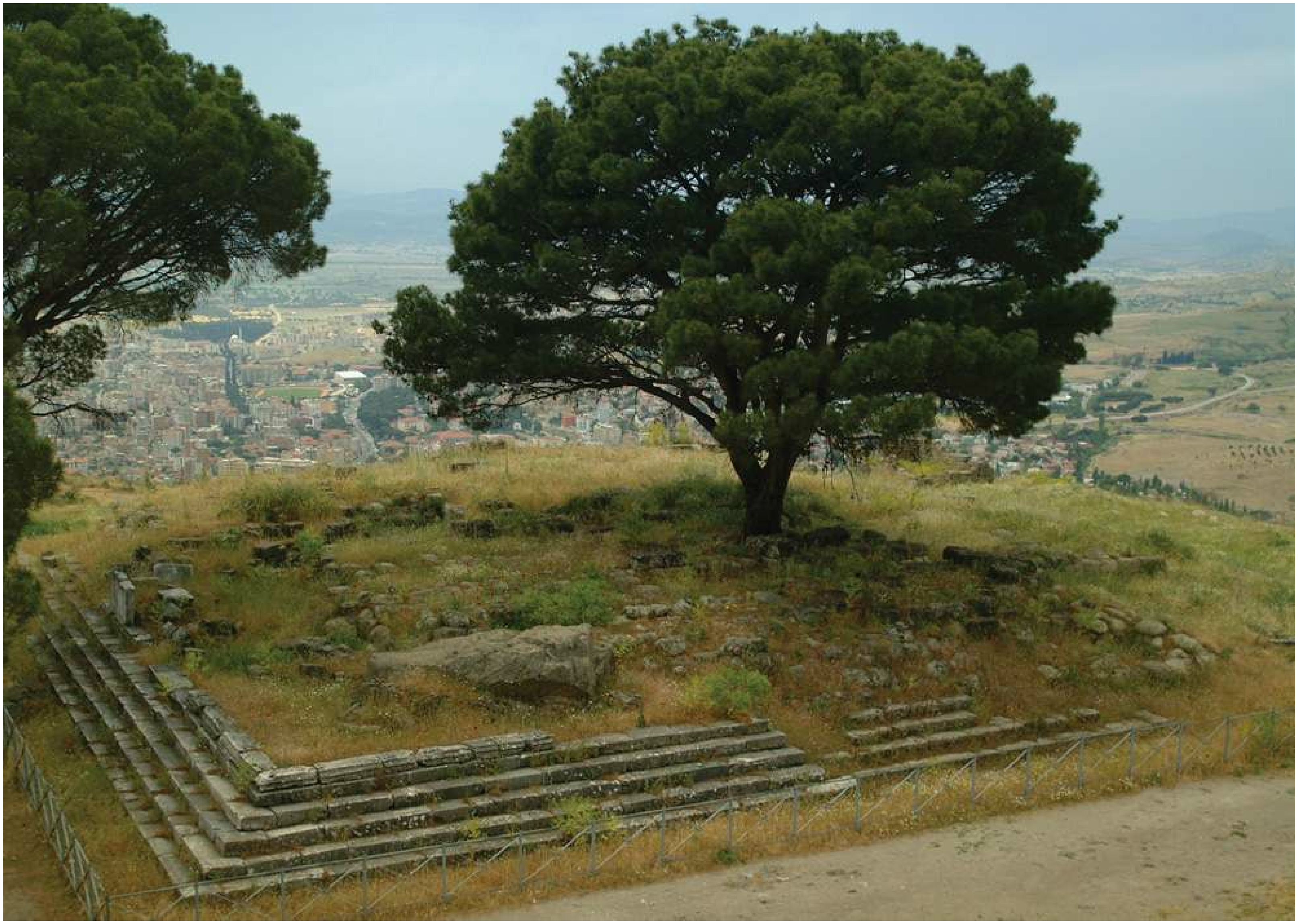
In the NT, "perfect" can refer to something of the highest standard (James 1:17, 25) or to a fully "mature" adult (Eph. 4:13). "To make perfect" often appears with cultic overtones. In Hebrews, Christ, our high priest, is "perfected" through suffering (2:10) and made eternally "perfect" (7:28). God's love reaches "perfection" when believers obey God's word: "If anyone obeys his word, love for God is truly made complete in them" (1 John 2:5). When "perfect" appears in the NT letters as applied to humans, the idea is not of ethical perfection by degrees, but rather it conveys a sense of undivided wholeness of heart before God. The notion of "perfection" in contemporary English conveys the idea of "sinlessness," but the biblical idea refers more to something that is "whole" or "complete." For something to be "perfect" means that it fulfills its intended design: a house is "perfect" if it has four walls and a roof and can provide shelter.

PERFUME, PERFUMER Sweet-scented perfumes were used as anointing oil (Exod. 30:22–33), incense (Exod. 30:34–38), lovemaking aids (Esther 2:12; Prov. 7:17; Song 1:12–14; 5:5), to scent clothing and soften skin (Ruth 3:3; Ps. 45:8; Ezek. 16:9), and at burials (2 Chron. 16:14; John 12:7). Perfumed oil was poured on the feet or the head of banquet guests (Matt. 26:7; Luke 7:38; Mark 14:8; John 12:3). Found among those in the exodus (Exod. 30:25, 35), commissioned perfumers made sanctuary oil and incense (Exod. 37:29; 1 Chron. 9:30). One such perfumer, Hananiah, is named in Neh. 3:8.

PERGA A chief Greco-Roman city of Pamphylia eight miles from the southern coast of Asia Minor near the Cestrus River, with a port city of Attalia. Surviving architectural ruins testify to Perga's beauty and wealth. Its patron deity was Artemis (Diana). On his first missionary campaign, Paul passed through Perga on his way out (Acts 13:13–14 [at which time John Mark left the party]) and preached there on the return leg (14:25).

PERGAMOS *See* Pergamum.

PERGAMUM The third of the seven churches of Revelation, Pergamum is commended for its faithfulness and rebuked for tolerating egregious sin in its midst (2:12–17). Pergamum was called “Satan’s throne” because of the prominent altar to Zeus on the acropolis.



Archaeological remains of the altar of Zeus at Pergamum

PERIDA *See* Peruda.

PERISHABLE Things that are liable to decay or that break down over time or from exposure to the elements of weather. Another term, used in KJV, is “corruptible.” In the NT, things that are perishable are contrasted with the things of God, which are eternal and holy (1 Cor. 15:42, 50–54; 1 Pet. 1:18, 23).

PERIZZITES One of the Canaanite nations at the time of Abraham whose land Yahweh promised to Abraham’s descendants (Gen. 13:7; 15:20). They were included in the northern coalition against the Israelites during the conquest (Josh. 11:3), and although they were listed as defeated (Josh. 12:8), they persisted in Palestine (Judg. 3:5; 1 Kings 9:20) even to the postexilic period (Ezra 9:1).

PERJURY A crime whereby someone makes an oath with the intent to deceive. It can refer to swearing by false gods (Jer. 7:9) or making a false oath (Zech. 8:17). It becomes a double crime, including the initial lie coupled with taking the oath, which amplifies the lie. An oath is often used to affirm testimony related to other crimes and to dealings with property and was meant to get at the heart of the truth. Perjury has been considered a very serious crime since the earliest civilizations and is condemned in the Bible (Prov. 19:9; Mal. 3:5; 1 Tim. 1:10).

PERSECUTION The words “persecute” and “persecution” refer to the act of pursuing and wrongly afflicting someone. The terms occur mostly in the NT, where typically they refer to persecution of Jesus’ followers. Their persecution takes varying forms, such as false legal accusations, imprisonment, or execution.

Persecution throughout the Bible. Within the NT, the English words “persecute” and “persecution” are, with few exceptions, translations of the Greek verb *diōkō* or the related noun *diōgmos*. However, *diōkō* can also mean simply “to pursue, follow after,” such as when the object of pursuit is righteousness or peace (Rom. 9:30; 1 Tim. 6:11; 2 Tim. 2:22; 1 Pet. 3:11). The term is used in this same sense in the LXX (Gen. 14:15; Deut. 16:20; 19:6; 2 Sam. 22:38). The Greek words were translated into English as “persecute” or “persecution” when the translators thought that the context also showed wrongful affliction. The corresponding Hebrew word *radap* shares this meaning.

In this sense of wrongful affliction, persecution occurs throughout the Bible. The Egyptian army pursues the people of Israel to the Red Sea (Exod. 14:8; Neh. 9:11). On two occasions, the people want to stone the prophet Moses to death (Exod. 17:3–4; Num. 14:10). Saul hunts David (1 Sam. 23:25; 24:14; 26:18). Saul wrongly slays the Gibeonites out of a sense of patriotism (1 Sam. 21:1–2). Jezebel kills God’s prophets (1 Kings 18:13). The prophet Uriah is slain (Jer. 26:23), and the prophet Jeremiah is incarcerated (Jer. 38:6–9). Isaiah, Ezekiel, and other prophets are strongly opposed, suggesting persecution (2 Chron. 36:16; Isa. 1:2–6; Ezek. 2:3–4; 3:7–9; Acts 7:52). Daniel is cast to the lions (Dan. 6:16). A king’s decree allows execution of all Jews for holding the laws of God above the king’s commands, indicating pagan religious hostility (Esther 3). Pagan hostility is shown by the later deaths of many Jews in the religious persecution described in 1 Maccabees and in the first-century uprisings in Egypt described by the Jewish philosopher Philo of Alexandria.

Persecution in the New Testament. In the NT, persecution begins with the imprisonment and beheading of John the Baptist (Mark 6:16–18; Josephus, *Ant.* 18.116–19). Jesus is accused by the religious authorities and eventually is tried and executed by Pilate. The religious authorities later flog Jesus’ apostles for teaching about him (Acts 5:40). The disciple Stephen is soon accused by false witnesses, tried, and executed by stoning (7:59–60). At this time, Saul (Paul) of Tarsus drags men and women from the Jerusalem church off to prison by authority from the chief priests. Saul has them beaten, and at their execution he casts votes against them (8:3; 22:4, 5, 19; 26:10). After this, Herod executes Jesus’ disciple James (12:2). Saul (Paul) converts, and then he suffers threats, beatings, stoning, and prison (Acts 13:50; 14:5, 19; 16:22–35; 24:27; 2 Cor. 11:23–25). Disciples in Macedonia and Achaia suffer; some Hebrew-speaking disciples suffer imprisonment and property seizure; and some disciples in Asia Minor die as martyrs (2 Cor. 1:6; 1 Thess. 1:6–7; Heb. 10:34; Rev. 2:8–13). Pagan persecution of Christians continued for nearly three centuries, sometimes far more severely, according to records compiled by Eusebius (*Hist. eccl.* 2.25; 3.17–19, 32–33; 4.8, 13, 15; 5.1–2; 6.1, 4, 41–42; 8.2–3, 7–13). Persecution was sporadic, often beginning with slander or legal accusations. It occurred in many regions, with leaders especially suffering. Records of persecution survived haphazardly.

Jesus says that we are to love and do good to our enemies and pray for our persecutors (Matt. 5:44; Luke 6:27). While being crucified, Jesus accordingly prays, “Father, forgive them” (Luke 23:34; cf. Acts 7:60). Preparing for arrest, Jesus warns his disciples to pray to avoid temptation, and he himself prays (Matt. 26:41). Both Jesus and Paul say that believers will be persecuted (Matt. 24:9; 1 Thess. 3:4; 2 Tim. 3:12), but God gives strength in persecution (Acts 14:22; 2 Cor. 12:10).

PERSEVERANCE The state of remaining faithful to God in light of the revelation given to persons at their particular stage of redemptive history. Perseverance has always required a continued trust in God, obedience to his commands, and reliance upon his merciful provision.

Old Testament. In the OT, perseverance is related to the covenantal relationship that God had with his people. Abraham was the quintessential model of perseverance, as he was faithful in waiting for God to provide him with the heir that had been promised him. Israel had to persevere by remaining faithful to its covenant with God, which meant being obedient to his commandments and decrees. In the subsequent history of Israel, however, the nation lacked perseverance and fidelity and often turned away from God to worship the gods of other nations. Indeed, the sweep of Israel’s history, according to the prophets, was that Israel had failed miserably at persevering in the covenantal promises and thus had incurred God’s judgment (e.g., Neh. 9:6–37; Ezek. 20:1–39; Dan. 9:4–19).

New Testament. In the Gospels, Jesus is the ultimate example of the faithful Israelite and also provides many exhortations about perseverance in light of the dawning kingdom of God. Jesus perseveres when tested by Satan in the wilderness (Matt. 4:1–11; Mark 1:12–13; Luke 4:1–13). The parables of growth warn about those who do not persevere in their reception of the word (e.g., Luke 8:15). Endurance under the duress of eschatological trials is also the means by which one gains one’s life (Matt. 10:22; 24:13; Mark 13:13; Luke 21:19). In his farewell speech in the Gospel of John, Jesus exhorts his disciples to abide in him as branches stay rooted in a vine or else risk being cut off (John 15:1–11).

In the course of his letters, Paul has much to say about persevering in faith in Christ. Paul considers “endurance” (*hypomonē*) to be among the cardinal qualities of a believer (Rom. 5:3–4; 1 Thess. 1:3; 2 Thess. 1:4; 8:25; 1 Tim. 6:11; Titus 2:2). There is a sense in which God himself gives endurance to the believer (Rom. 15:5; Col. 1:11; 2 Thess. 3:5). Paul offers some stern warnings about apostasy and falling away (Rom. 11:21–22; 1 Cor. 10:1–12; Gal. 5:4), but he also adds that Christians experience a sense of assurance because God is “faithful” and will keep believers “blameless” on the day of Christ Jesus (1 Cor. 1:8–9; Phil. 1:10; 1 Thess. 3:13; 5:23). Paul also writes that nothing in creation can separate a believer from the love of God in Jesus Christ (Rom. 8:31–39).

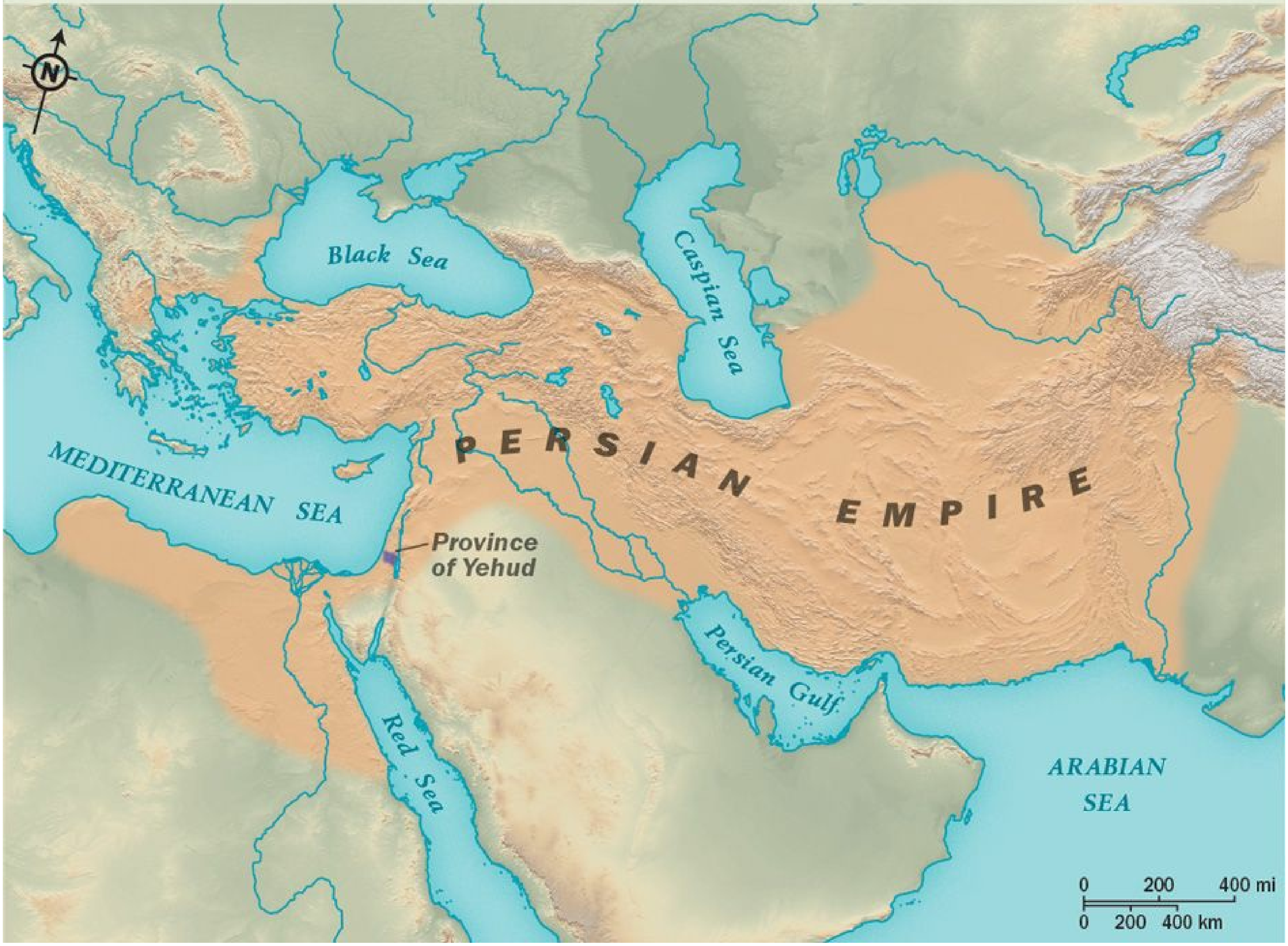
The General Epistles provide further teaching about perseverance. James commends the virtue of perseverance that leads to maturity (1:3–4) and urges his audience to endure just as Job endured sufferings (5:11). Jude writes that believers should endeavor to “keep yourselves in God’s love” while also acknowledging that God himself will “keep you from falling” (vv. 21, 24). The book of Hebrews is built around the theme of perseverance and endurance, with key statements about not “drift[ing] away” (2:1) and the exhortation to “run with perseverance the race marked out for us” (12:1).

The book of Revelation focuses strongly on persevering in light of persecution and hardship. In the letters to the seven churches there is the repeated promise of the blessings that await those who “overcome,” which means enduring in the faith (2:7, 11, 17, 26; 3:5, 12, 21; cf. 21:7). The churches of Asia Minor corporately are admonished to remain faithful to the point of death (2:10) and in light of the coming judgment (14:12). Three times calls for patient endurance are made (1:9; 13:10; 14:12). In Revelation, perseverance means holding to the testimony of Jesus (12:17; 17:6; 19:10; 20:4).

Summary. The biblical teaching on perseverance attempts to balance divine sovereignty and human responsibility. The warnings of apostasy and the promises of assurance are interwoven in such a way so as not to compromise the grace and justice of God.

PERSIA Prior to the rise of the Achaemenid Persian Empire in the mid-sixth century BC, the Persian homeland (Fars) lay to the east of Mesopotamia, in and beyond the Zagros Mountains. The history of the Persians and their rulers prior to their emergence in biblical, Greek, and Mesopotamian history remains poorly understood, but probably they had come to the Iranian plateau from central Asia around 1000 BC, roughly the time of the emergence of monarchic Israel in the Levant. The first Persian accounts of their own history date to the Achaemenid period (the Behistun Inscription), when the Persians adapted Mesopotamian (Semitic) cuneiform writing for their own Indo-European language. Even with the Old Persian inscriptions, the Greek histories of the Greco-Persian wars (preeminently that of Herodotus) remain the richest literary source of information about the Persians. The first known references to the Persians (and to the closely related Medes) in cuneiform sources date to the reign of the Assyrian king Shalmaneser III (mid-ninth century BC). Although the terms “Persia” and “Persian” continued to be used in various senses (political, ethnic, linguistic) from this period to the present, this article focuses on the Achaemenid Empire, which overlapped with the exilic and postexilic periods of biblical history.

THE PERSIAN EMPIRE



CYRUS THE GREAT

As a political entity, the Persians appear in ancient Near Eastern history around 550 BC, when the Persian leader Cyrus II (“the Great”) defeated the Medes (another Iranian people to whom the Persians had been subject) and seized their capital at Ecbatana, along with their royal treasure. Cyrus claimed descent from a line of Achaemenid kings going back to the second half of the seventh century BC and founded by Cyrus I (“of Anshan”). The term “Achaemenid” refers to a yet more distant, and possibly legendary, ancestor Achaemenes, who putatively lived around 700 BC. Cyrus then turned toward the territory of the Lydian (Greek) king Croesus in modern western Turkey, which he conquered with the fall of Sardis and the defeat of Croesus around 546 BC. Cyrus’s territorial gains in Anatolia would remain a part of the Persian Empire until the time of Alexander the Great.

Following this western campaign, which would set the stage for two centuries of Greco-Persian rivalry, Cyrus returned to Mesopotamia, where he marched against the Neo-Babylonian Empire of Nabonidus, taking advantage of a falling out between Nabonidus and the inhabitants of Babylon (Nabonidus had controversially removed images of Marduk from their rightful place in Babylon). It is at this point that the history of the Persian Empire intersects dramatically with biblical history, for Cyrus's capture of the capital Babylon in the fall of 539 BC came only half a century after the Neo-Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar II had sacked Jerusalem and exiled the elite inhabitants of the southern kingdom of Judah to Mesopotamia, including a group that was brought to Babylon itself. Like the priests of Marduk (the chief Babylonian deity), who in the Cyrus Cylinder inscription lauded Cyrus for delivering them from the impious Nabonidus and restoring the proper worship of Marduk in Babylon, the Hebrew Bible speaks fondly of Cyrus as the restorer of the Jewish people from exile. It was Cyrus, according to 2 Chron. 36:23; Ezra 1:2–4, who mandated that a group of Judeans return to their homeland and reestablish their capital Jerusalem and the temple of their deity, Yahweh. Isaiah 45:1 speaks of Cyrus as Yahweh's "anointed" and suggests a personal and intimate relationship between the king and the God of Israel. In terms of the biblical periodization of Israelite history, the edict of Cyrus marked the end of the exilic period and the beginning of what modern scholars term the "Persian period" of Israelite and Jewish history.

Based on the evidence of the Bible and the Cyrus Cylinder, the role of Cyrus as a champion of "human rights" and "religious toleration" has at times been overplayed by modern readers who have anachronistically attributed modern values to the ancient monarch. Cyrus may have acted in both cases with motivations that were more propagandistic than pious. The strong presence of friendly forces in Yehud (Judah) served Cyrus's ambitions in Egypt, which his son Cambyses proceeded to conquer in the 520s BC. In the course of this campaign Cambyses showed as much respect for local Egyptian religion as Cyrus showed toward Judean Yahwism. Cambyses' successor, Darius, commissioned the Egyptian scholar Udjahorresnet to return to his land and revive its cultural and religious institutions; this mission has often been compared to that of Ezra in Yehud. In sum, Persian policies toward Judeans and their religion, though perceived as enlightened by biblical authors, are probably best understood as having been applied across the board to various peoples, especially when doing so furthered the imperial interests of the Persians.

DARIUS THE GREAT AND HIS SUCCESSORS

As mentioned above, Cyrus was succeeded by his son Cambyses II, who conquered Egypt before his death in 522 BC. Darius succeeded Cambyses through a palace intrigue in which he emerged over Cyrus's son Bardiya (also known as Smerdis or Gaumata). The circumstances of Darius's succession remain unclear in several respects. He was not in the royal line, yet in his own monuments he insists that it was his rivals who were usurpers and that he was the rightful claimant of the throne. Under Darius ("the Great"), the Achaemenid Empire reached its greatest geographical extent. He organized the empire into twenty-two administrative districts, or "satrapies," and built up a vast network of roads and cities. The lands of biblical Israel fell into a large satrapy known as "Beyond the River," or "Trans-Euphrates" (see, e.g., Ezra 4:10). Darius is remembered in the Bible as renewing Cyrus's order for the rebuilding of the Jerusalem temple. The decree of Darius is represented in Ezra 6:1–15. As a result of his attention to the matter, the temple was completed during his reign, in 515 BC (Ezra 6:15). Daniel 5:31 portrays Darius ("the Mede," not "the Persian"; see also Dan. 9:1, which reaffirms Darius's Median ethnicity while making him the son, not the father, of Ahasuerus/Xerxes), not Cyrus, as the conqueror of Babylon (though it is Belshazzar, not Nabonidus, who loses his kingdom).

Darius was succeeded by his son Xerxes, who in 481 BC led a vast army across the Bosphorus into Greece. He was turned back by a series of defeats and was assassinated in 465 BC. Neither Xerxes nor his successors managed to expand the empire beyond the achievement of Darius. The

Bible mentions Xerxes (Ahasuerus) at Ezra 4:5–6 and alludes to him at Dan. 11:2. Artaxerxes appears in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah (e.g., Ezra 4:7; Neh. 2:1); however, the identification of this figure is controversial, whether he is Artaxerxes I (r. 464–424 BC), Artaxerxes II (r. 405–359 BC), or even Artaxerxes III (r. 359–338 BC). Moreover, it is debated whether Ezra and Nehemiah were contemporaries (i.e., living under the same king Artaxerxes), and which one of them preceded the other in his mission. Moreover, it is unclear from ancient versions whether the king in the book of Esther is meant to be Xerxes (Ahasuerus) or Artaxerxes I (so the LXX).

The Achaemenid Empire fell in 330 BC, during the reign of Darius III, whom Alexander the Great defeated decisively at Gaugamela in 331 BC.

PERSIS A woman listed among those whom Paul greets in Rom. 16 (v. 12). Paul describes her as beloved (NIV: "my dear friend"), probably referring to widespread affection for her because of her hard work in the Lord.

PERSONALITY *See* Anthropology; Humanity; Mind.

PERSON OF CHRIST *See* Christ and Christology; Jesus Christ.

PERUDA An ancestor of a family that belonged to the "servants of Solomon" (Ezra 2:55; Neh. 7:57 [there spelled "Perida"]) and returned with Zerubbabel around 539 BC. Little is known about this group except that it likely performed menial functions at the temple, as it is grouped with the "temple servants" (*see* Nethinim). The name of the group suggests that it was formed during the period of Solomon, though it could have been so named because Solomon built the first temple.

PERVERSE An English synonym of "wicked," "perverse" serves as a translation of various Hebrew and Greek words that describe something or someone who deviates from that which is good, just, or upright. In Proverbs, where "perverse" occurs most frequently, perversity is linked to wickedness (2:12), crookedness (8:8), evil (8:13), and deceit (17:20). Conversely, it is contrasted with uprightness (3:32), justice (8:8), righteousness (10:31–32), and blamelessness/integrity (11:20; 19:1; 28:6). "Perverse" was a moral adjective that did not describe merely individuals. A heart could be perverse (Ps. 101:4), as could a tongue and its speech (Prov. 10:31–32; Acts 20:30 NASB). Both Testaments can even speak of a "perverse generation" (Deut. 32:20; Matt. 17:17; Acts 2:40 NASB).

PESHITTA A Syriac translation of the Bible and one of the earliest versions of the Bible in existence. The term *peshitta* means "simple" and likely refers to the fact that this was a common translation and not intended for scholarly use. This Bible was the official Bible of the Syriac church, and in accordance with the Syriac canon it did not contain 2 Peter, 2–3 John, Jude, and Revelation.

PESTILENCE A widespread plague or epidemic bringing death. In most cases, pestilence is presented as divine judgment. One of the ten plagues was a pestilence on livestock; all the Egyptian livestock in the fields died, but none of Israel's (Exod. 9:1–7). After David numbered the people, he had the choice of three punishments; seventy thousand people died in three days of pestilence (1 Chron. 21:12). In Ps. 91:3, 6, God protects from pestilence, even though "a thousand may fall at your side, ten thousand at your right hand" (91:7). At the temple dedication Solomon prayed that God will hear those who pray humbly, even in times of pestilence. Eighteen times in the OT the term occurs in the triad of sword, famine, and pestilence; this triad appears in conjunction with one of the horsemen of Revelation (6:8).

PESTLE Used with a mortar, a rounded implement of wood or stone used for grinding or powdering a substance (Prov. 27:22). *See also* Mortar.

PETER Simon Peter is the best-known and the most colorful of Jesus' twelve disciples. The name "Peter" means "rock" in Greek. In some biblical texts, he is also called "Cephas," which is the Aramaic word for "rock" (see esp. John 1:42). Despite the ups and downs of Peter's spiritual life, God was able to use him as the foundational apostle for the establishment of the NT church. Peter first met Jesus immediately after Jesus' baptism, when Peter's brother, Andrew, heard John the Baptist's identification of Jesus as the Lamb of God (John 1:35). In classic missionary style, "the first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon and tell him, 'We have found the Messiah' " (John 1:41). Peter's official call to ministry took place later, when he was fishing on the Sea of Galilee and Jesus issued the well-known invitation "Come, follow me, . . . and I will send you out to fish for people" (Matt. 4:19).

Peter was the chief spokesman for the disciples at Caesarea Philippi when Jesus asked them, "Who do people say the Son of Man is?" (Matt. 16:13). Peter responded, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God," an insight given him by God the Father (16:16–17). Jesus promised him, "I tell you that you are Peter [*petros*], and on this rock [*petra*] I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it" (16:18). Yet Peter almost immediately became a "stumbling block" to Jesus when he chided Jesus for saying that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things and be killed (16:21–22). Another major failure by Peter came with his threefold denial of Jesus after Jesus had warned him, "This very night, before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times" (Matt. 26:34). Fortunately, there were tears of repentance, and Peter was forgiven and restored after Jesus' threefold question ("Do you love me?" [John 21:15–19]).

Jesus' death and resurrection, as well as the giving of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, had stabilizing effects on Peter. After Jesus' ascension, Peter exercised primary leadership among the other disciples during the upper room prayer meetings and the choosing of the replacement for Judas (Acts 1). Peter clearly was the public spokesman for the apostles on the day of Pentecost and a key player in the establishment of the church in Jerusalem (Acts 2–5), in receiving the first Samaritan converts (Acts 8:14–25), and in receiving Cornelius as the first Gentile convert (Acts 10–11). Following Peter's miraculous deliverance from prison in Acts 12, he essentially disappears from recorded history. By the time of the Jerusalem council (Acts 15), Peter reappeared briefly, but by this time he had been replaced by James as the leader of the Jerusalem church. Peter apparently continued to live as a missionary (1 Cor. 9:5), specifically "to the circumcised" (Gal. 2:7–8), for the rest of his life. Yet Peter was still human, and on one occasion Paul gave him a stinging rebuke (Gal. 2:11–21).

During his travels, Peter undoubtedly visited the recipients of his later letter 1 Peter (and possibly 2 Peter) in north central Asia Minor (the regions of "Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia" [1 Pet. 1:1]), possibly Corinth (1 Cor. 1:12; 3:22), and, at least by the end of his life, Rome itself. According to tradition, he was put to death by Nero between AD 64 and 68, apparently by being crucified upside down (cf. John 21:18–19). Peter's life is a vivid illustration of the Christian's fight for faith, God's gracious provision, and Jesus' intercession on his behalf ("I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail" [Luke 22:32]).

PETER, FIRST LETTER OF First Peter is a concise handbook designed to prepare the Christian community to live faithfully and wisely as a minority facing an increasingly hostile community and government.

OUTLINE

I. Greetings (1:1–2)

II. Who We Are in Christ (1:3–2:10)

III. How We Should Behave to Be Like Christ (2:11–3:12)

IV. How We Should Handle a Hostile Community (3:13–5:11)

V. Farewell (5:12–14)

AUTHORSHIP

The letter is written by Peter, apostle and leader of the original twelve disciples of Jesus, who were with Jesus throughout his ministry from his baptism until his ascension (Acts 1:21–22).

The style of the author's Greek is very well developed for a Galilean fisherman. Early on, Peter had astonished hearers who could not explain his eloquence, given that he had had no formal rabbinic training (Acts 4:13; cf. Luke 2:46–47). Examples of tinkers (John Bunyan), cobblers (William Carey), and teenagers (C. H. Spurgeon), not to mention authors excelling in their third language (Joseph Conrad), who write in polished styles suffice to reassure any doubts concerning Peter's ability.

The author describes himself as a "fellow elder" and "witness of Christ's sufferings" (5:1), speaking in the first-person singular (2:11; 5:1, 12–13). He is with John Mark (5:13), and the letter is written "with the help of" Silvanus/Silas (5:12), who may have served as Peter's scribe, or amanuensis.

A number of second-century authorities report that Peter ministered in Rome, on and off, for up to twenty-five years prior to his execution by Nero in AD 65. Peter's readers were suffering various trials and abuse (5:9), although no mention is made of any such threat to the church in Rome. It is therefore difficult to date 1 Peter, although it must have been written between AD 50 and 64. If 2 Pet. 3:1 indicates a subsequent letter to the same community, as seems probable, a date closer to AD 64 would be more likely.

DESTINATION

The letter is addressed to "God's elect, exiles scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia" (1:1). "Scattered" is a term used by the LXX to refer to the dispersion of the Jews originating with the Babylonian exile and is taken up as such in the NT (John 11:52; James 1:1). "Exiles" (KJV: "strangers") was the word used to designate people who were not Roman citizens (1 Pet. 2:11).

Scholars have differed as to whether Peter was addressing a predominantly Jewish or Gentile community. The extensive allusions to the OT throughout the letter—with particular reference to the exodus, Passover, the Suffering Servant of Isaiah, Ps. 34, and Proverbs—assume that the readers have a good knowledge of all three sections of the OT. On the other hand, Peter also speaks of their former "ignorance" (1:14), of the "empty way of life handed down to you from your ancestors" (1:18), and of pagans thinking it strange that they do not continue in their former pagan lifestyle (4:3–4). All his citations are from the Greek OT.

The five areas listed were located in what is today central and northern Turkey. The order may reflect the courier's route. Paul had ministered in some of these regions (Galatia and Asia), and Jews from Cappadocia, Pontus, and Asia were in Jerusalem earlier when Peter preached his Pentecost sermon (Acts 2:9).

Statue of Peter in Capernaum

The emperor Claudius (r. AD 41–54) established Roman colonies in these five areas. It was Roman policy to extend the empire by establishing cities as centers of Roman culture, government, and trade. This often involved forced deportation of whole communities. In AD 49 Claudius expelled the Jews from Rome because “the Jews constantly made disturbances at the instigation of Chrestus” (Suetonius, *Claud.* 25.14–15). There is good reason to think that this may indicate the kind of disturbances also seen over the next few years in Philippi (Acts 16:20–21), Thessalonica (Acts 17:1–9), Corinth (Acts 18:12–17), and Ephesus (Acts 19).

Peter does not name any member of the community to which he is writing, nor is there any indication that he had ever been there. These regions were populated by Romans as part of a program of Roman colonization. As such, Christians who were not Roman citizens were in a very vulnerable position. The threat here comes from Gentiles, not other Jews (2:12). There is no mention of false teachers or other internal divisions.

Peter writes from “Babylon” (5:13), probably a code word for “Rome” (cf. Rev. 17:5, 9). The references to Babylon here and the Diaspora in 1:1 act as bookends designed to draw the parallel between the church’s present experience and that of the Jews during the exile (“fiery ordeal” [4:12]; cf. Dan. 1–6).

MAIN THEMES

Peter states that it is all about grace (5:12). The Christian’s identity is grounded in the person and work of Jesus (1:2). His sufferings are a model of what Christians are expected to endure (1:11, 19; 2:21–25; 3:1–18; 4:12–17; 5:1), so his readers should see this as normal. This suffering is also a refining and testing process (1:6–7; 5:8–10). It fulfills God’s plan as revealed in the Scriptures (1:10–12, 23–25); thus one can be sure that behind all such experiences stand the purposes of God (1:2–3, 20–21; 3:18–22; 4:19; 5:6–7). Things are not out of control but rather are leading to the accomplishment of salvation for many (1:5, 9). Jesus has triumphed over all powers and authorities that might be fearfully ranged against his people (3:18–22) (*see* Descent into Hades). Like Noah and those on the ark, Christ’s people will be delivered through all events to an outcome of joy (1:6, 8).

A knowledge of the Scriptures (1:10–12, 23–25) equips those who are being sanctified to rightly understand what is happening and so fear God, whose judgment approaches (1:17; 3:6; 5:5, 7), rather than people. The believer should look first to God’s approval while being aware of the watching eye of those who would seek a basis for a charge (2:12; 3:1, 17; 4:14–19). This involves putting off the pagan lifestyle (2:1, 11) and putting on obedience (1:2, 14–16; 3:1–17). Peter surveys the behaviors most in need of attention: self-control, particularly in the way Christians speak when provoked (2:22–23; 3:4, 9–11), and family life, particularly when a woman is married to a threatening, unbelieving husband (3:1–6). Christian husbands are admonished to set a counterexample by knowing and honoring their wives (3:7). It is especially important that believers are seen to be submissive to government authorities (2:13–17) and to their masters (2:18–20). Within the church, sound leadership (5:1–4) supported by a new generation of respectful young men (5:5) is essential. Throughout all of this, Peter points the reader to the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit (1:2).

Peter strongly argues that the appropriate response to injustice and persecution is grace given as received from Jesus. The Christian’s defense is the gospel. Like Job, the believer’s mode of resistance is to present the integrity of a holy, redeemed, priestly lifestyle (3:15–16). One endures through informed belief in the gospel and through faithfulness to the triune God, who keeps his promises (1:9; cf. Hab. 2:4). The outcome is left in God’s hands (5:6–7).

PETER, SECOND LETTER OF Second Peter is a model of the Christian approach to those who are tempted to follow another gospel.

OUTLINE

I. Greetings (1:1–2)

II. Put God's Grace to Work (1:3–11)

III. Remember the Basis for Your Faith (1:12–21)

IV. Reject False Teachers (2:1–22)

V. On This Basis, Look to the Future (3:1–18)

AUTHORSHIP AND DATE

The author is identified as "Simeon" Peter, using the Hebrew spelling of the name (1:1 ESV, NRSV; cf. Acts 15:14). He is "a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ" (1:1; cf. Rom. 1:1; Titus 1:1; James 1:1; Jude 1) and an eyewitness of his transfiguration (1:16–18; cf. Mark 9:2). He speaks affectionately of Paul as a colleague (3:15). He bases his argument against false teachers on the Scriptures and his own testimony as well as that of the other eyewitnesses (1:16; cf. 1 Pet. 5:1) of Jesus' work. He refers (3:1) to an earlier letter that he wrote to the same people, probably a reference to 1 Peter.

A number of second-century authorities report that Peter ministered in Rome, on and off, for up to twenty-five years prior to his execution by Nero in AD 65. Here he speaks of his own imminent execution, recalling Jesus' words to him (1:14; cf. John 21:19). He speaks of having taken steps to ensure that his testimony will be available after his death, which may be an allusion to Mark's Gospel, as later Christian writers tell us.

Toward the end of the second century some doubted the authenticity of 2 Peter. A number of works had appeared in the second century claiming to be by Peter. The early church was well aware of the use of forgeries written in the names of the apostles to spread false teaching (even during their lifetimes [cf. 2 Thess. 2:2]). It appears that 2 Peter was not as widely known or used as 1 Peter, but the early church affirmed and defended the authenticity of both letters.

DESTINATION

The letter gives no indication of its destination other than the reference to a former letter in 3:1. If this former letter was 1 Peter, then 2 Peter would have been sent to the same communities (Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia [so 1 Pet. 1:1]). This possibility is supported by the similar use of traditions concerning Noah and Enoch in both letters. However, 1 Peter gives no indication that Peter had any personal acquaintance with his addressees, whereas 2 Peter does (1:16). Given the extensive allusions to Jewish traditions not found in the OT, we can conclude that Peter was writing to Jewish Christians to whom these traditions had a strong appeal.

RELATIONSHIP TO THE EPISTLE OF JUDE

Second Peter 2 and Jude 4–21 are extraordinarily similar not only in content and wording but also in their order. Scholars have speculated as to which author used the work of the other or whether both used a common source. We have no evidence that would settle the question. What we do know is that both letters interact heavily with the traditions associated with *1 Enoch*.

These Enochic traditions differ from the teachings of the Pharisees and the Sadducees. They were accepted as authentic and authoritative at least by the Qumran community/Essenes (cf. CD-A 6:1–6; *Jub.* 1.1–9; 4.17–19). Whereas Jude (14–15) cites *1 En.* 1.9 directly, 2 Peter only speaks about these stories.

According to the Enochic traditions, salvation was for ethnically pure Israel, observing rigorously the specifications for worship and lifestyle laid down in these pseudepigraphical revelations. While this tradition expected a day of judgment similar to that set forth in the Scriptures, it differed with the Christian gospel in its understanding of the origins of sin and evil (people are initially victims, not perpetrators) and of the way of salvation (rigorously keeping the Enochic rules). The Son of Man (of Dan. 7:13–14) is Enoch (*1 En.* 71), not Jesus. There is no place here for a crucified Messiah whose death would atone for sin, for the abandonment of OT food laws and sacrifices, or the acceptance of uncircumcised Gentiles into the assembly.

Second Peter and Jude deal in the strongest terms with false teachers who profess to base their teaching on fraudulent revelations (2 Pet. 1:16; Jude 1:8) and who deny Jesus as Lord. This tradition focused heavily on the Zadokite priesthood and the need to restore a pure temple. Peter and Jude's polemic makes extensive connections between false teaching and all manner of corruption and uncleanness that would disqualify such a priesthood (2 Pet. 2:2, 10, 13, 15, 19, 22; cf. 1 Pet. 2:1–10; Jude 8, 11–13, 16).

The similarities between the two letters probably are the result of the two authors conferring together in some way. We know that Peter and his family traveled on missionary work, as did the brothers of Jesus (1 Cor. 9:5). We do not know where Jude was when either of these letters was written. The urgency that provoked Jude's letter is also reflected in 2 Peter. The church was facing physical persecution in Rome as well as these false teachers who sought to lead Jewish believers away from Jesus. Meanwhile, Roman control of Judea was crumbling.

MAIN THEMES

Second Peter focuses first on the work of God in Christ, which saves those who believe in Jesus (1:3). This faith is based on the knowledge of God and of Jesus (1:2) and is a response to the gospel call. God has given to the believer everything needed to live in a godly way, to endure, and to discern truth from error so as to die assured of not having been deceived (1:4).

Peter grounds that assurance in the Scriptures (1:19–21), in the testimony of the eyewitnesses of Jesus (1:12–16), including himself, and in the writings of the apostle Paul, to whom Jesus had given wisdom for this purpose (3:15–16). One develops certainty in the faith not only by referring to these sources but also by putting the faith into practice (1:5, 10, 15). The faith then is rooted in history, not in "cleverly invented stories" (1:16). Consequently, Peter expresses his passion to see that his eyewitness account will be accessible to the next generation (1:14–15).

He speaks plainly of "Scripture" as an identifiable body of texts written at the instigation of the Holy Spirit (1:20–21) and places the writings of Paul on the same level (3:16). By this, Peter implies that his letter is to be received as carrying the same authority and usefulness.

False teachers are a permanent challenge to God's people. Doctrine and behavior are products of each other (2:1–3).

Peter is particularly concerned that his readers not think that Jesus' delay in appearing is proof that the apostolic witnesses were wrong (3:3–4). Jesus has not returned because were he to do so, it would end all opportunity for unbelievers to hear the gospel and be saved (3:9). God is gracious and long-suffering and is calling his people to reflect his character by giving people the opportunity to be saved. His patience is salvation (3:15). The gospel mission, then, provides the second motivation for the believer to practice the faith (3:11–16) and not waver.

Second Peter ends by challenging believers to constantly grow in the knowledge and grace of Christ (3:17–18).

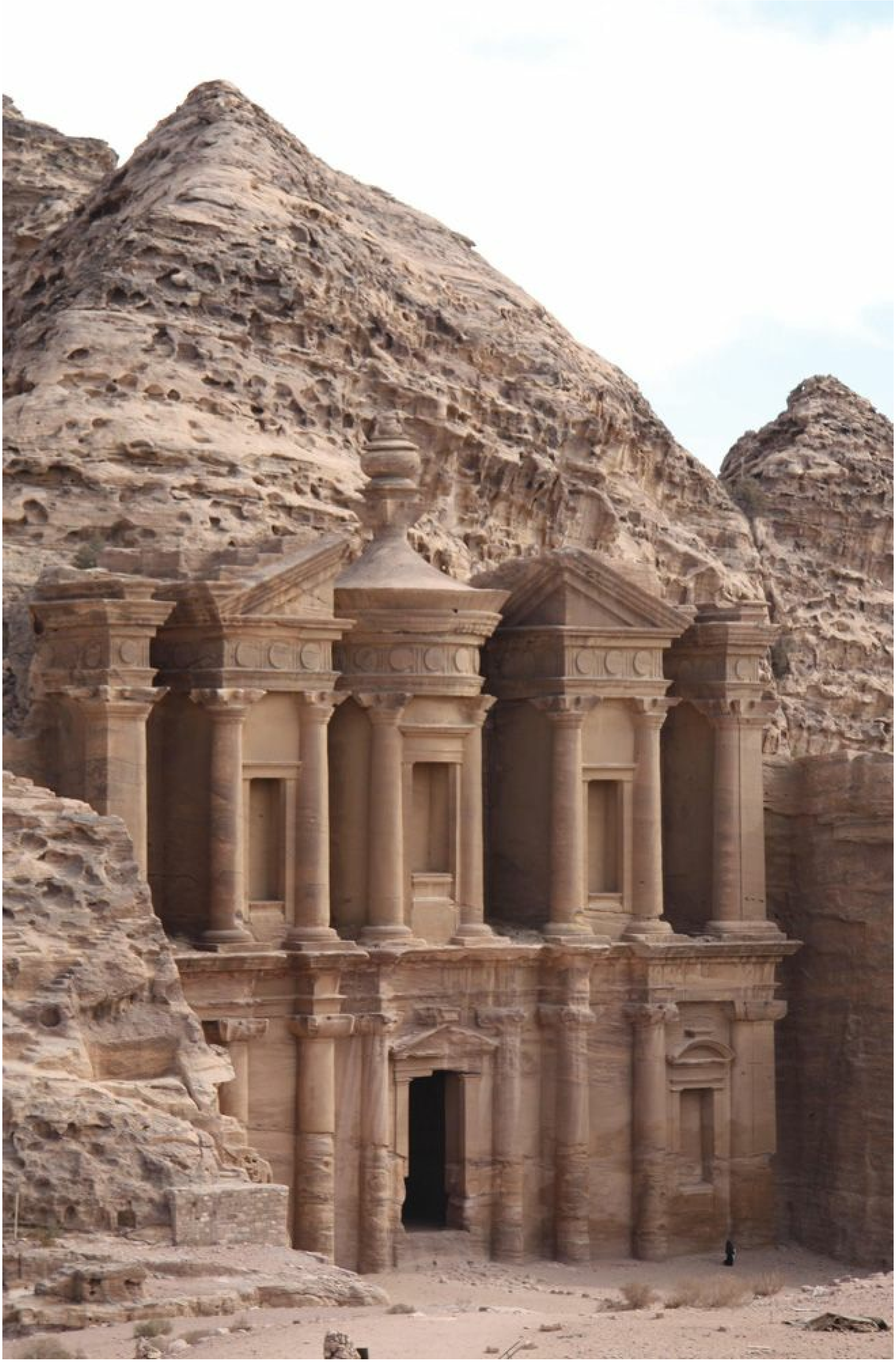
PETHAHIAH **(1)** The leader of the nineteenth of twenty-four priestly divisions during the reign of David (1 Chron. 24:16). **(2)** A Levite who renounced his foreign wife concurrent with Ezra's persuasion (Ezra 10:23). In addition, he is likely the same Levite who participated in the ratification of the covenant (Neh. 9:5, 38). **(3)** The son of Meshezabel in the line of Judah, he functioned as an intermediary between the king of Persia and the people in Jerusalem (Neh. 11:24).

PETHOR The home of Balaam the seer, hired by Balak king of Moab to curse the Israelites (Num. 22:5; Deut. 23:4). Pethor is located in upper Mesopotamia on the western shore of the Euphrates, possibly to be identified with Tell Ahmar, eighteen miles south of Carchemish.

PETHUEL The father of Joel the prophet according to the superscription in Joel 1:1. The name possibly means "opening of God" or "young man of God." In the LXX it is "Bathouel."

PETITION *See* Prayer.

PETRA A large city located about fifty miles south of the Dead Sea. The "Rose-Red City" lies at the bottom of a natural basin surrounded by steep cliffs. The usual entrance is through the Siq, a twisting, narrow fissure in the mountains. Petra is considered one of the wonders of the world for its beauty, Hellenistic architecture, buildings carved into mountains, and hydraulic engineering. Petra may have been the Edomite stronghold Sela (2 Kings 14:7), but by the first century it was the capital of the Nabatean kingdom, which rivaled the Hasmoneans and Herod.



The ruins at Petra

PEULLETHAI A gatekeeper and the eighth son of Obed-Edom, who had been blessed by God for housing the ark of the covenant. With his brothers, Peullethai was stationed at the storehouse by the South Gate of Jerusalem (1 Chron. 26:5, 15).

PEULTHAI *See* Peullethai.

PHALEC *See* Peleg.

PHALLU *See* Pallu.

PHALTI *See* Palti.

PHALTIEL *See* Paltiel.

PHANUEL *See* Penuel.

PHARAOH From an Egyptian term meaning “great house,” “Pharaoh” refers to Egypt’s supreme leader. The Pentateuch refers to the pharaohs by title only. (The omission of the personal name of the pharaoh may reflect the Egyptian practice of not naming their enemies.) Abraham lied to the pharaoh of his day about his marital status out of fear for his life (Gen. 12:10–20). Joseph helped the pharaoh survive and thrive during a famine; in return, the pharaoh exalted Joseph and provided for his family (Gen. 40–47). A pharaoh oppressed the Israelites in Egypt (Exod. 1); from the next pharaoh, Moses and Aaron requested and ultimately won permission to free the Israelites from their bondage (Exod. 1–15).

Beyond the Pentateuch, six other pharaohs are mentioned, some by name. **(1)** Solomon married the daughter of a pharaoh who led him to betray God (1 Kings 3:1). **(2)** Jeroboam rebelled against Solomon and received sanctuary from Pharaoh Shishak, who later raided Judah under Rehoboam (1 Kings 11:18, 40). **(3)** Hoshea, the last king of the northern kingdom, sought help from Pharaoh So (Osorkon), bringing on him the wrath of King Shalmaneser of Assyria (2 Kings 17:4). **(4)** The Assyrian king Sennacherib sent an envoy to Jerusalem who chided Hezekiah for depending on an unnamed and unreliable pharaoh (2 Kings 18:21; Isa. 36:6). **(5)** Pharaoh Necho meddled in the affairs of Judah when he killed Josiah and deposed his son Jehoahaz, replacing him with Jehoiakim (2 Kings 23:29–35). **(6)** Pharaoh Hophra was the Egyptian leader upon whom Zedekiah vainly depended against the Babylonians (Jer. 44:30).

PHARES, PHAREZ *See* Perez.

PHARISEES The Pharisees were a religious and political group in ancient Judaism that emerged in the Hasmonean period. In the NT, they generally are adversarial toward Jesus, mostly due to his different approach to ritual purity and Sabbath observance. They had an oral tradition that continued in rabbinic Judaism. *See also* Jewish Parties.

PHAROSH *See* Parosh.

PHARPAR A river in the region of Damascus mentioned by the Syrian general Naaman as being superior to the Jordan River (2 Kings 5:12). Its exact identity is uncertain, but often it is identified with the Wadi el-Awaj, which flows just south of Damascus.

PHARZITES *See* Perez.

PHASEAH *See* Paseah.

PHEBE *See* Phoebe.

PHENICE **(1)** In the KJV, an alternate spelling for "Phoenicia" (NIV), delineating the coastal people group that settled along the Mediterranean from Syria to northern Palestine (Acts 11:19; 15:3). *See* Phoenicia. **(2)** In the KJV, an alternate spelling for "Phoenix" (NIV), a harbor in southern Crete (Acts 27:12). *See* Phoenix.

PHIBESETH *See* Bubastis.

PHICHOL *See* Phicol.

PHICOL The commander of Abimelek's army, referred to in conjunction with the establishment of covenants with Abraham (Gen. 21:22, 32) and Isaac (Gen. 26:26). The two accounts are possibly discussing two different people, since sixty to seventy years separate the events. Therefore, this may be a reference to a family title, which could serve to connect them.

PHILADELPHIA The city of the sixth of the seven churches in Rev. 2–3. The church in Philadelphia is commended for its deeds and faithfulness (Rev. 3:7–13). A city of commercial importance, it was founded in 189 BC by Eumenes II of Pergamum, who named it for his loyal brother and successor, Attalus II, called "Philadelphos." *See also* Asia Minor, Cities of.

PHILEMON The leader of a house church that met at his home, likely in Colossae. He received a letter from Paul about a slave, Onesimus. The letter is addressed not only to Philemon but also to Apphia and Archippus (Apphia may be Philemon's wife, and Archippus his son [cf. Col. 4:17]) and to his house church (Philem. 2). Paul writes asking Philemon to receive Onesimus back (the punishment for a runaway slave often was death). Paul uses strong rhetoric to try to convince Philemon, appealing to his love of Paul and reminding Philemon that Onesimus is now a Christian brother. Paul also offers to make restitution to Philemon, while reminding him of Paul's own chains as a prisoner.

PHILEMON, LETTER TO Late in life, while in prison, Paul wrote this letter to the slave owner Philemon concerning his runaway slave Onesimus. The main purpose of the letter was to straighten out problems between Philemon and Onesimus. Besides an implicit theology describing the relationships that fellow Christians have with one another, the book focuses on the changed relationship that a Christian slave had with his Christian master.

OUTLINE

I. Opening Greeting (vv. 1–3)

II. Thanksgiving and Prayer (vv. 4–7)

III. Appeal for Onesimus (vv. 8–22)

IV. Final Greetings and Benediction (vv. 23–25)

PAUL'S APPEAL FOR ONESIMUS

Somehow Onesimus (whose name means "useful") had become "useless" to Philemon (v. 11), having wronged his master and incurred a debt (v. 18). Subsequently, Onesimus had become a Christian due to Paul's ministry in prison, whereby the apostle sends Onesimus back to Philemon with this letter, asking him to receive his slave as a brother in Christ (v. 16). Paul even requests that Philemon return Onesimus to him because the slave has proved "useful" to the imprisoned Paul (vv. 12–14). Paul offers to pay the debt owed by Onesimus, perhaps even hinting at his manumission (vv. 15–21). (It was customary at that time for masters to free their slaves at the age of thirty. Some slaves were required to purchase their freedom; others received it as a gift from their masters.)

We are not told how Onesimus had come into contact with Paul, but it appears that Onesimus has worked with Paul for some time (cf. Col. 4:9). Was Onesimus a runaway slave who happened to meet Paul in prison? Or did Onesimus seek out Paul, hoping that the apostle would act as mediator in regard to a grievance between him and his master? If the former is true, then Paul sends his letter in order to encourage Philemon not to punish the slave as a runaway—a crime punishable by death. If the latter is the case, then Onesimus is taking advantage of a Roman law that allowed slaves to appeal to a friend of their master when they had a grievance against the slave owner. Both scenarios are possible, but the latter seems more likely because Paul sends the letter to the entire congregation that meets in Philemon's house, hoping to add social pressure to Philemon's decision. Either way, Paul is convinced that Onesimus's conversion has changed everything, turning a master, a slave, and an apostle into equal brothers in Christ.

RELATIONSHIP TO COLOSSIANS

It is most likely that Philemon lived in Colossae, since both Onesimus (Col. 4:9; Philem. 10) and Archippus (Col. 4:17; Philem. 2) are mentioned in Paul's letter to the Colossians as well. It is possible that Paul's letter to Philemon was composed at the same time as his letter to the Colossians, and that Onesimus delivered both letters, one to his master Philemon and one to the church that met in Philemon's house.

PHILETUS A false teacher condemned by Paul who, along with Hymenaeus, led believers astray by claiming that the resurrection had already taken place (2 Tim. 2:17).

PHILIP **(1)** The tetrarch of Iturea and Traconitis, regions northeast of Palestine, at the time when John the Baptist's public ministry began (Luke 3:1). **(2)** One of Jesus' twelve apostles (Matt. 10:3; Mark 3:18; Luke 6:14; John 1:43). Philip, like Andrew and Peter, was from Bethsaida (John 1:44). It was Philip who introduced Nathanael to Jesus (John 1:45–48). John's Gospel mentions Philip three times subsequent to chapter 1 (6:5–7; 12:20–22; 14:6–10), in the last instance recording Philip's shortsighted request for Jesus to show the Father to the apostles. The gnostic *Gospel of Philip* was named for Philip the apostle, based on a short comment in the text attributed to Philip (*Gos. Phil.*

73:8). **(3)** One of seven men selected by the Jerusalem church to care for the distribution of food to its widows (Acts 6:1–6). This man, also known as Philip the evangelist (21:8), shared the message of Jesus Christ in a city of Samaria, performing great miracles (8:5–13). Philip later explained the good news of Jesus to an Ethiopian eunuch whom he encountered (8:26–38). After Philip baptized the eunuch, "the Spirit of the Lord suddenly took Philip away" (8:39). Philip then preached in several towns, finally arriving at Caesarea, where he settled (8:40). Years later, Paul stayed in Caesarea with Philip and his four prophesying daughters (21:8–9).

PHILIP, HEROD *See* Herod.

PHILIPPI A city in northeastern Macedonia, approximately ten miles from the Aegean coast. The city had its share of trade, being on the Via Egnatia, the main east-west route from the Adriatic through Thrace. The city lay on the plain between the mountains in the north and the sea to the south.

The city derived its name from its founder, Philip II of Macedon (father of Alexander the Great), who took the territory in 356 BC (formerly Crenides). As a through route between the mountains and the sea, Philippi was important for trade and military strategy. Those who held the area had at their disposal the rich resources of the sea and the mountains, including gold and silver mines.

The important battle of Philippi in 42 BC set the armies of Antony and Octavian against those of Brutus and Cassius on the plain outside Philippi. Eventually Brutus and Cassius were defeated, and Octavian came to power. Later the emperor made the city a Roman colony, and many military personnel settled there. It became a significant military outpost, and its citizens were bestowed with Roman citizenship (cf. Phil. 3:20, where Paul appeals to the issue of citizenship).

The ruins of the agora at Philippi

Luke identifies Philippi as the chief city of its division in Macedonia and as a Roman colony (Acts 16:12). Paul arrived in Philippi around AD 50–52 after receiving a divine injunction to spread the gospel there (16:9–10). There was a small Jewish population, but not enough for a synagogue (16:13), so the Jewish women of the city would go to a place beside the river to worship Yahweh. Paul brought the gospel to them there, and the first convert was a God-fearing woman, Lydia (16:14). The church established there was predominantly Gentile.

Paul came through the city again on his third missionary journey (Acts 20:6). As far as we know, this was the last time he saw the church, though he wrote back with thanks and instruction in his letter to the Philippian church.

Today there are some remains of the ancient city, but the modern city itself is quite small.

PHILIPPIANS, LETTER TO THE One of the “prison epistles” of Paul (along with Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon). These are traditionally viewed as having been written during Paul’s first Roman imprisonment (AD 60–62), though some maintain that they were written either from Caesarea or Ephesus at an earlier date. In Philippians, Paul is writing to the church that he established on his second missionary journey (likely between AD 49 and 52), probably the first Christian church founded in Europe.

We read of Paul’s visit to Philippi in Acts 16:12–40. Paul, Silas, and (presumably) Luke first baptized Lydia, who sold purple cloth. Later they freed a slave girl from the spirit by which she predicted the future. When the owners of the slave girl became angry at their loss of income, Paul and Silas were thrown in jail. A miraculous earthquake freed them from the jail, but they did not flee. This was a powerful witness to the jailer, who believed and was baptized, along with his family. In the morning, Paul and Silas were ordered released. When Paul protested his treatment, citing his Roman citizenship, they were escorted from the prison. Paul visited the church at least once more, when he left Macedonia from Philippi (Acts 20:6; see also 1 Cor. 16:5).

THEMES

The broad occasion for the letter is the return of Epaphroditus, a member of the Philippian church who had brought a financial gift to Paul (2:25–30). Epaphroditus had fallen ill while in Paul’s service, and the news had reached Philippi. Paul sends him home to be reunited with his loved ones and sends this letter along with him. Paul lauds the work of Epaphroditus in the ministry (2:29–30) and thanks the Philippians for their generous gift (4:10–20) and their partnership in his ministry for the gospel (1:5).

Paul also takes this opportunity to reassure his friends about his circumstances in prison. His imprisonment is serving to advance the gospel (1:12–14), both among the palace guard, whom Paul evangelizes, and among other Christians who are emboldened by Paul’s courage. It is the pastoral spirit in Paul that moves him to comfort his audience, though it is he who is in distress (1:19). Paul is not fearful for his future, whether it holds eventual freedom or death; either is acceptable to him (1:21–24).

Paul then tells his readers that the most important thing is to live their lives in a way worthy of the gospel (1:27). This will be evidenced by their standing firmly together as one, unafraid of any opposition. Whatever suffering comes their way is a gift from God, as is also the gift of belief in

Christ (1:29).

The report from Epaphroditus must have reflected some troubles brewing in the church at Philippi. A quarrel between two women was spreading throughout the church (4:2), and Judaizers (Jewish Christian missionaries) were at work there, insisting that Gentile Christians must be circumcised (3:2).

Paul addresses the first concern with the beloved “Christ hymn” (2:1–11). From the Christian’s unity with Christ should flow unity with one another. Every believer should adopt the humble, unassuming attitude of Jesus, who emptied himself first of his divine prerogatives, then of his human dignity, then of his life. Rather than taking their salvation for granted, Christians must consider their position before God with fear and trembling (2:12).

Concerning the Judaizers, Paul gives a threefold warning: “Watch out for those dogs, those evildoers, those mutilators of the flesh” (3:2). These three insults are deliberately ironic. The Judaizers considered themselves defenders of the traditions of Moses and the Scriptures, yet Paul calls them “dogs,” an animal associated with uncleanness and Gentiles. They promote the “good work” of circumcision, but they are actually promoting the harmful work of confidence in worldly acts. “Mutilators of the flesh” refers to the insistence that Gentile Christians be circumcised. Paul mocks this idea, as circumcision is irrelevant in the new covenant. In fact, it is Christians, not Judaizers, who are the true circumcision—that is, the people of God.

The real problem with the Judaizers is that they put their confidence in the flesh—that is, in the tangible elements of religion, such as circumcision. But Paul explains that he has more reason than most to trust in these religious credentials. His are flawless: he had been circumcised on the eighth day, a learned Hebrew, even a Pharisee. Yet this “advantage” he disdains, knowing that Christ is worth far more. He rejects his previous religious standing, counting it as “garbage” or “dung” for the righteousness that comes from God based on faith (3:7–9). Paul offers himself as a model for the Philippians to follow (3:17).

To correct the contentious atmosphere in their church, the Philippians should focus on the positive aspects of their fellow believers: things they see that are noble, right, pure, lovely, and admirable. This and practicing their faith as they have learned from Paul will guarantee them peace from God.

THE “CHRIST HYMN”

The context for this hymn begins in 1:27. Paul pleads with the Philippians to live as citizens of heaven, worthy of the gospel, standing firm in one Spirit, working closely together in the faith. Their gift is not only belief in Christ but also suffering for him, as they see Paul is doing.

Paul appeals to the Philippians to resolve their differences on four grounds. Are they encouraged by their own unification with Christ? Do they receive comfort from the love of Christ? Do they have some fellowship with each other in the Holy Spirit? Do they have any tenderness and compassion for their church family, whether they are in agreement or not? If any of these things are true, then Paul requests that they favor him personally by growing that unity, both spiritually and intellectually, until they find themselves “one in spirit” and “of one mind” (2:2).

This goal will be accomplished by the Philippians abandoning their own interests in favor of one another’s needs, valuing others above themselves. The supreme example of this is Christ Jesus, who had this attitude himself.

The hymn itself is found in 2:6–11. It is quite likely that this hymn was not written by Paul himself, but was an existing liturgical piece. Here is found some of the most profound Christology in the NT, describing Christ’s preexistence, humiliation, and subsequent exaltation. Some have analyzed the structure as three stanzas; some see it as six stanzas. Regardless, there is a clear chiastic shape to the hymn: Christ begins in an elevated position, then descends lower and lower in the middle, and then returns to exaltation by God.

The hymn provides rich theological content. Before the incarnation, Christ already existed in the form of God. He was willing to empty himself of this equality, so that the Creator could become a creature. He became a servant in human form. In this human form, he further humbled himself and accepted an imposed death, and this in the harshest, most cruel mode: crucifixion.

It is because of his ultimate submission that Christ is now elevated to the highest place, above every being in heaven and on earth. All will acknowledge his supremacy with worship and praise.

THE PHILIPPIAN CHURCH

Paul demonstrates great warmth toward his offspring church. His greeting is longer and more effusive than in any of his other letters. He thanks God and prays for them every time he thinks of the Philippians. They have been Paul’s partners in the gospel from the founding of the church; they share in God’s grace with Paul. He longs for them and prays that their love will grow even more. Paul expresses his affection in the way he addresses his audience: “God’s holy people” (1:1); “I have you in my heart” (1:7); “brothers and sisters” (1:12; 3:1, 13, 17; 4:1, 8); “my dear friends” (2:12).

The church seems to have organized at an early stage. Paul sends his letter to the church at large, as well as to “the overseers and deacons” (1:1). The Philippians have always been faithful—while Paul was with them, and even more so without him (2:12). From the beginning of the church, when no other church contributed, they had helped Paul financially, even when he was in nearby Thessalonica (4:16). Now, Epaphroditus has returned with yet another gift, which Paul calls “a fragrant offering, . . . pleasing to God” (4:18).

As soon as Paul learns his fate in prison, he plans to send his number one assistant, Timothy, who is like a son to him, to help them with the problems in their church (2:19). Paul has at least one vital colleague already in the church. He refers to his “true companion” to help reconcile Euodia and Syntyche, the two women who seem to be at the heart of a disagreement within the church (4:3).

OUTLINE

I. Opening Greetings (1:1–11)

II. Paul’s Imprisonment Serves the Cause of Christ (1:12–30)

III. Living with the Attitude of Christ (2:1–18)

IV. Praise for Timothy and Epaphroditus (2:19–30)

V. Cautions about Judaizers and Their View of the Christian Faith (3:1–21)

VI. Living in the Peace of God (4:1–9)

VII. Paul Thanks the Philippians for Their Financial Support (4:10–19)

VIII. Closing Greetings (4:20–23)

PHILISTIA The land of the Philistines in the southern coastal plain along the Mediterranean. The borders extend south toward Egypt, north to Ekron near the Sorek River, and east to the Shephelah.

The Pentapolis, which included the cities Gaza, Ekron, Ashkelon, Ashdod, and Gath, ruled Philistia. A major international trade route, the Via Maris, cut through Philistia (Exod. 13:17).

The Philistine coast

PHILISTINES The Philistines inhabited the southern coastal plain of Palestine as early as the time of Abraham (Gen. 21:32, 34; 26:1, 8, 14–15, 18) and of Moses (Exod. 13:17; 15:14; 23:31), and as late as the exilic (Ezek. 16:27, 57; 25:15–16) and postexilic (Zech. 9:6) periods.

HISTORY AND CULTURE

The geographical origin(s) of the Philistines cannot be stated with certainty, though it appears likely that at least some of the Philistines came from the vicinity of the Aegean Sea. The Philistines were descendants of the Kasluhites (Gen. 10:14; cf. 1 Chron. 1:12), a group whose identity is uncertain. Since the Kasluhites are descendants of Ham listed among other peoples from Egypt (Gen. 10:6, 13–14), perhaps the Philistines migrated from the Nile Delta to one of the Mediterranean islands before moving to Canaan.

There was apparently a close association between the Kasluhites and the Caphtorites (cf. Gen. 10:14), for Amos 9:7 suggests that the Philistines were from Caphtor (cf. Deut. 2:23; Jer. 47:4), a region usually identified with Crete. The connection with Crete is seen with greater clarity in Ezek. 25:16; Zeph. 2:5–6, for both prophets refer to the Philistines and the Kerethites (= Cretans) in parallel phrases. Caution leads us to note that the authors of Samuel and Kings, though frequently referring to the Philistines, did not clearly equate the Philistines and the Kerethites (cf. 1 Sam. 30:14; 2 Sam. 8:18; 15:18; 20:7, 23; 1 Kings 1:38, 44; 1 Chron. 18:17).

The material culture of the Philistines between about 1150 and 1000 BC shows similarities to, and likely influence from, what is found in the islands of the Aegean Sea, Mycenae (southern Greece), Crete, Anatolia (south-central Turkey), Cyprus (cf. Num. 24:24), Egypt, and Canaan.

Philistine pottery of this time resembles what has been found in Mycenae (bowls, jars, and cups), Crete (cups), Cyprus (bottles, vessels, and a hollow pottery ring), and Egypt (jugs and cups). The spear and defensive gear of Goliath (1 Sam. 17:5–7) were similar to the equipment of Aegean warriors. The hearths found at Tel Miqne (Ekron) and Tell Qasile were designed like those in Anatolia and the Aegean region. Philistine mud-brick altars were likely fashioned in light of Aegean, Cyprian, and Canaanite influence. The Ashdoda (a throne representing a female deity) reflects Mycenaean, Cyprian, and Canaanite inspiration. This archaeological evidence suggests that at least some of the Philistine inhabitants of the southern coastal plain of Palestine came from Mycenae (southern Greece) and the islands of the Aegean Sea in the late thirteenth or early twelfth centuries BC, passing through Cyprus and Crete (and perhaps Anatolia and/or Egypt) en route.

The Philistines adopted Canaanite gods (cf. 1 Sam. 17:43), including Dagon (Judg. 16:23; 1 Sam. 5:2–7), Ashtoreth (1 Sam. 31:10; cf. Judg. 10:6; 1 Sam. 7:3–4), and Baal-Zebub (“lord of flies,” probably a cynical distortion of Baal-Zebul, “lord of the [heavenly] dwelling”), the god of Ekron (2 Kings 1:2–6, 16).

The Philistine Pentapolis consisted of three cities on or near the Mediterranean coast (Ashkelon, Ashdod, and Gaza) and two inland cities (Ekron and Gath) under the authority of five rulers (cf. Josh. 13:3; Judg. 3:3; 1 Sam. 6:4, 16, 18).

Papyrus Harris I describes the defeat of the Philistines and other Sea Peoples by Ramesses III (1198–1166 BC), while the Egyptian Onomasticon of Amenope (late twelfth or early eleventh century BC) refers to the Philistines as one of the ethnic groups that settled in Palestine.

PHILISTINES IN THE BIBLE

The mention of Philistines in Gen. 21 and 26 refers either to early inhabitants of the territory that later would be inhabited by Philistines or to peoples who later would become part of the Philistine nation. The Philistines mentioned in the Bible may constitute diverse peoples who migrated by land or by sea to the southern coastal region of Palestine over several centuries.

Prior to the influx of at least some of the Philistines from eastern Mediterranean islands, the southern coastal region was, at various times, inhabited by Canaanites (Num. 13:29; Deut. 1:7; Josh. 5:1; cf. Josh. 13:4); Anakites, who fled to Gaza, Gath, and Ashdod after being defeated by Joshua (Josh. 11:21–22); and Avvites, who were replaced by the victorious Caphtorites (Deut. 2:23; Josh. 13:3).

The migration of Judah and other tribes of Israel into Canaan resulted in several centuries of hostility with the Philistines. Judah’s allotment of land included the cities and surrounding areas of Ekron, Ashdod, and Gaza, as well as “the coastline of the Mediterranean Sea” (Josh. 15:45–47). The soldiers of Judah subsequently conquered at least part of this area (Judg. 1:18).

During the time of the judges, Shamgar “struck down six hundred Philistines with an oxgoad” (Judg. 3:31). Samson burned the grain, vineyards, and olive groves of the Philistines when he fastened torches to the tails of foxes (15:4–5). He killed a thousand Philistines with the jawbone of a donkey (15:15) and, after they had gouged out his eyes, killed many Philistine leaders when he pushed over the pillars supporting one of their temples (16:21, 29–30).

In one of their many victories over Israel (cf. Judg. 10:7; 13:1; 15:11; 1 Sam. 4:2, 10; 12:9), the Philistines captured the ark of God and placed it in the temple of Dagon in Ashdod (5:1). The next day the god was found lying on his face before the ark of God.

Saul's reign as Israel's king was characterized by war with the Philistines (1 Sam. 9:16; 14:52; cf. 7:13) and included both defeat (13:6–7; 23:27; 31:1) and victory (14:13, 22, 31, 47; 17:52–53; 24:1).

The military dominance of the Philistines over Israel during the time of Saul is attributed to their control of blacksmithing and ironwork (1 Sam. 13:19–22). This superiority in weapons allowed the Philistines to extend their influence beyond the region of the five cities into Judean territory (1 Sam. 4:1; 7:7; 10:5; 13:3, 16–18, 23; 17:1; 29:1, 11; 31:7–8, 10; 2 Sam. 5:18, 22; 23:14).

Saul became jealous of David after his defeat of the Philistine champion Goliath (1 Sam. 17:4, 50; 18:7–9). To win the hand of Saul's daughter Michal, David and his men killed two hundred Philistines and presented their foreskins to Saul (18:27). When Saul later attempted to kill David, David sought refuge with the Philistines and lived with them for sixteen months (27:1, 7).

When the Philistines gathered to fight against Israel, David's host, Achish, invited him to participate in the battle against his enemy Saul (1 Sam. 28:1). David was spared the dilemma of fighting against his own people when, fearing his betrayal, the other Philistine rulers refused to let David accompany them (29:4). In the ensuing battle between Israel and the Philistines, Saul's sons were killed, and Saul took his own life after being critically injured by a Philistine archer (31:2–4).

David's early success in battle against the Philistines (1 Sam. 17:50; 19:8; 23:5) continued upon his accession to kingship after the death of Saul (2 Sam. 5:20, 25; 8:1, 12), though in his old age David was too tired to fight well against the Philistines (2 Sam. 21:15).

Later battles between Judah and the Philistines took place during the reigns of Jehoram (2 Chron. 21:16–17), Uzziah (2 Chron. 26:6–7), Ahaz (2 Chron. 28:18), and Hezekiah (2 Kings 18:8). Jehoshaphat received tribute from the Philistines (2 Chron. 17:11).

PHILO JUDAEUS Also known as Philo of Alexandria, a Jewish leader in Alexandria, Egypt. Due to violence against Jews in Alexandria, around AD 40 Philo was sent to the Roman emperor Gaius (Caligula) to seek relief, as described in Philo's *Embassy to Gaius* and *Against Flaccus*. Philo's writings are otherwise mostly philosophical commentaries on the Pentateuch or its ideas. He is mentioned in the first century by Josephus (*Ant.* 18.259), and Eusebius lists many of Philo's works (*Hist. eccl.* 2.18). Philo's writings show accepted Jewish thought and biblical interpretation at the time of Jesus, all expressed in the Greek language. A monotheist, Philo nevertheless refers to God's word (*logos*) as "the second deity" (*QG* 2.62).

PHILOLOGUS A believer in the church of Rome greeted by Paul (Rom. 16:15). He is mentioned along with Julia, Nereus, and Olympas the sister of Nereus. In inscriptions the name, which means "lover of words," is associated with slaves or freedmen.

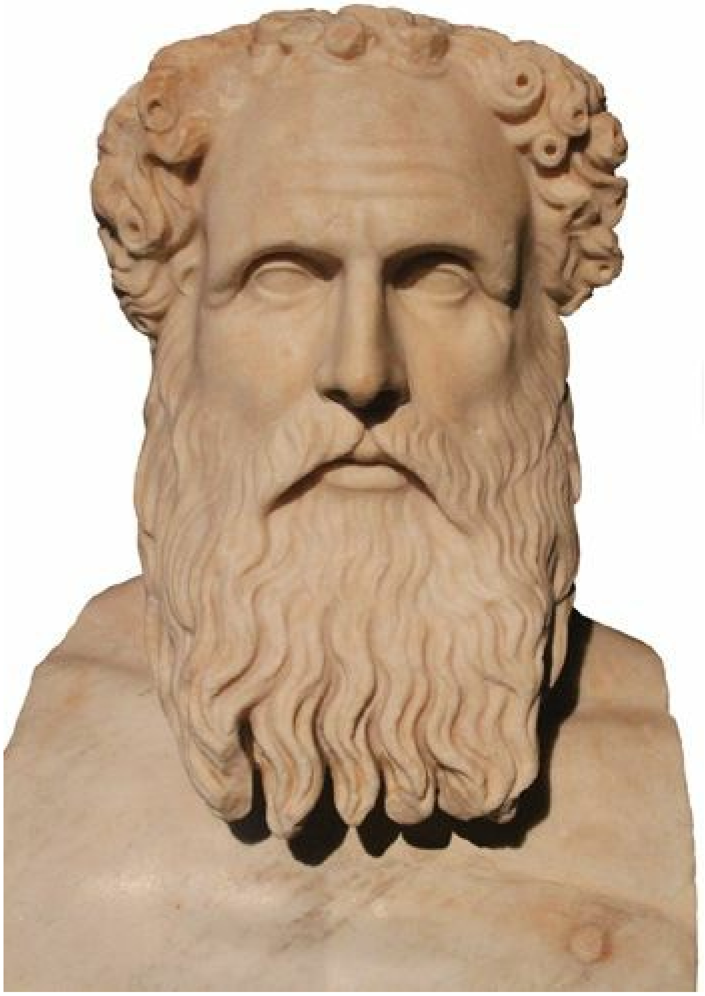
PHILOSOPHY IN THE NEW TESTAMENT The philosophy ("love of wisdom") most familiar to the writers of the NT began in Ionia, among those who attempted to determine the fundamental substance of the universe without recourse to superstition and myth (the pre-Socratics). Platonists, Peripatetics (Aristotelians), Stoics, and Epicureans—all began in Athens, extending the work of Socrates (c. 469–399 BC), who was executed for challenging the status quo and "corrupting the minds of the youth." But by the first century BC, Hellenistic philosophy had permeated the

Mediterranean world. The ontological quest for the nature of being, however, had joined itself to ethics: What is the good life? Therefore, philosophy and the gospel, which also made claims about the “is” and “ought” of the universe, would compete for the hearts of the people. Acts relates that Paul debated with Epicureans and Stoics (17:18).

Epicureanism. Epicurus (c. 341–270 BC) founded a school in his garden. His followers believed that he was divine, possessing answers for all of life’s questions. The founder wrote didactic letters to disseminate his philosophy. By coining maxims and slogans for illiterate people to memorize and pattern their lives by, he became perhaps the first popular philosopher (perhaps the equivalent of a modern “self-help guru”). His disciples were evangelistic, traversing the Roman Empire to win converts. They carefully memorized his teachings and, after his death, preserved his writings, which often were cited in an unchanging canon.

Epicurus preached a “common sense” gospel. The goal of life is personal happiness. The greatest obstacle to happiness is anxiety. He proposed a four-part “cure,” an intellectual appropriation of these truth claims: (1) there are no divine beings who threaten us; (2) there is no next life; (3) what we truly need is easy to get; (4) what makes us suffer is easy to put up with. A fundamental Epicurean conviction is that life on this earth comes with no strings attached. The implicit atheism and selfishness of the system were largely unappealing to Jews and pious pagans.

Stoicism. More influential were the Stoics, who had many leaders and no single source of authority. Zeno (c. 336–264 BC) founded the school, which took its name from the “painted porch” (*stoa*) on the north side of the Athenian market where he lectured. Like the Epicureans, the Stoics saw the goal of life to be personal happiness, but they embraced providence, the ordering of all things for the best. Therefore, happiness is living virtuously according to nature, which involves a two-part process: (1) we conform our lives to the rational principle guiding the universe, what they called the “Logos,” or “Word”; (2) we resign ourselves completely and without complaint to whatever providence may send us. This is living a life of reason.



The Stoic philosopher Zeno

The impersonal nature of the Logos and seeming coldness to the human condition made Stoicism difficult for most people to embrace. Perhaps through the mediating reflection of the Jewish philosopher Philo (c. 20 BC–AD 50), who attempted to synthesize Scripture and philosophy, the apostle John interpreted the mystery of the incarnation, in part, by presenting Jesus as the Logos/Word (John 1:1–18; see also Col. 1:15–20).

Other forms of philosophy. Also prominent were Cynics, who embraced the defiance of Socrates, and Neo-Pythagoreans, who extended asceticism to the rejection of wine, marriage, eating meat (and for some, beans), sacrifice, shoes, all clothing except that made of linen, shaving, and dancing. The singular reference to philosophy in the Bible is negative (Col. 2:8; cf. Acts 17:18–21). The context suggests that Paul’s opponents were influenced by Neo-Pythagoreans (Col. 2:6–23; see also 1 Tim. 4:1–5; 5:23).

The early church did not embrace a singular position on philosophy. Tertullian (c. AD 160–240) famously asks, “What is there in common between Athens and Jerusalem? What between the Academy and the Church?” (*Praescr.* 7). But Clement of Alexandria (c. AD 150–215) claims, “For God is the source of all good things. . . . Thus philosophy was a preparation, paving the way towards perfection in Christ” (*Strom.* 1.5.28). The church fathers appropriated the precision of philosophical vocabulary in their attempt to rationalize the mysteries of the Christian faith.

PHINEHAS **(1)** The son of Eleazar and a grandson of Aaron the high priest. At Baal Peor Phinehas killed Zimri and a Midianite woman for their idolatry and sexual immorality. Because of Phinehas's zeal, God ended the plague and granted him the high priesthood (Num. 25:1–13). Phinehas defeated the Midianites and killed Balaam (Num. 31:1–12). Phinehas averted war against the eastern tribes by listening to their explanation for building an altar (Josh. 22:1–34). Phinehas's zeal is cited to justify the Maccabean revolt and high priesthood (1 Macc. 2:54). **(2)** One of the two sons of Eli the high priest at Shiloh. Phinehas and his brother, Hophni, were corrupt priests (1 Sam. 2:12–17, 22). Their judgment was announced in 1 Sam. 2:27–36, which was fulfilled when they were killed by the Philistines and lost the ark of the covenant (4:17). In addition, Phinehas's wife died in childbirth (4:19–22).

PHLEGON A second-century Roman historian who wrote of an earthquake and solar eclipse that occurred around AD 32. Later, Christians understood this as a reference to those events described in the Gospels as accompanying Jesus' crucifixion.

PHOEBE A woman whom Paul commends to the church in Rome in the final greetings of his letter to the Romans (16:1). The church is told to welcome her in the Lord and to assist her, since she has served as a benefactor to Paul and others. She is identified as a *diakonos* of the church in Cenchreae (near Corinth), which may mean "deacon," "minister," or "servant." It is not clear whether this is a leadership position or a general description of her service. In either case, Phoebe appears to have served as the courier for the letter.

PHOENICIA The name "Phoenicia" probably comes from the Greek word *phoinix*, meaning "purple red." This name derived from the famous purple red dye made from the murex snail that was produced in this region. The evidence shows that the Phoenicians were primarily sea traders and artists.

The geographical and chronological boundaries for Phoenicia are imprecise, in part because the term "Phoenician" is not mentioned before Homer. In Homer the inhabitants of Sidon are called "Phoenicians," but it is possible that the term may first occur in Mycenaean Linear B texts of the thirteenth century BC. Based on the written records, it is safe to assume that the heartland of Phoenicia was along the coastal regions of modern-day Lebanon, extending to parts of Syria and Israel.

In OT times the territory occupied by the Phoenicians was called "Canaan" by the Israelites (Isa. 23:11), "Canaanite" (Heb. *kena'an* means "merchant") being the name applied by the inhabitants to themselves (Gen. 10:18). It is important to note that this self-designation is found as late as the second century BC on coins minted in Beirut ("Laodicea, which is in Canaan"). However, since Phoenicia was usually formed of independent city-states, it was common practice in all periods to refer to Phoenicia by the name of one of its principal cities (Gubla/Byblos, Tyre, Sidon).

The origin of the Phoenicians is obscure, but the earliest archaeological evidence for their presence comes from the "proto-Phoenician" finds at Byblos (ancient Gubla/Gebel [see Ezek. 27:9]) dated to around 3000 BC. There is also plenty of evidence of trade and correspondence with Egypt during the Bronze Age periods.

By the time of David, Tyre was ruled by Hiram I, whose reign began a golden age. Phoenicia became allied commercially with David (2 Sam. 5:11; 1 Kings 5:1), and Hiram supplied Solomon with wood, stone, and craftsmen for the construction of the temple and Solomon's palace (1 Kings 5:1–12; 2 Chron. 2:3–16). Ships and navigators from Phoenicia were sent to assist the Judean fleet and to develop the port of Ezion Geber as a base for commerce (1 Kings 9:27). Phoenicia, itself long influenced by Egyptian art, motifs, and methods, was now in a position to influence Israelite art.

During the ninth and eighth centuries BC, the Phoenicians expanded into the western Mediterranean and founded colonies in Sardinia, Sicily, North Africa, and Iberia. Alexander the Great captured Tyre in the fourth century BC, and the slaughter and destruction were extreme, but the city recovered and, like Sidon, was still prosperous in Hellenistic and Roman times (see, e.g., Matt. 11:21–22; Acts 12:20).

Phoenician religion had a pantheon that differed from city to city and from one age to the next. Nature and fertility deities predominated. The following were their chief deities: Baal, Astarte, Eshmun, Adonis, Melqart, and Tanit (more popular in North Africa). Baal, the chief god of Tyre and Sidon, was at times the leading rival to Yahweh worship in Israel (1 Kings 16:29–22:18), and his consort was Astarte.

The Phoenicians spoke a Northwest Semitic language closely related to Hebrew and Aramaic, and according to Herodotus, the Phoenicians introduced the alphabet to Greece. The Phoenician alphabetic script is similar to early Hebrew and Aramaic scripts from the first millennium BC.

PHOENIX A safe harbor on the southern shore of western Crete proposed as a winter port for the ship transporting Paul to Rome (Acts 27:12). In Greek, the name designates date palms and a mythical bird from Egypt. Modern Loutro is a candidate for the location, but it is disputed whether this fits the description in Acts: “facing both southwest and northwest.” Finikas Bay, about one mile west of Loutro, is another candidate.

PHRYGIA An inland territory in west-central Anatolia (modern-day Turkey). Biblical mention of Phrygia occurs primarily in the book of Acts. Such occurrences include the presence of Phrygian Jews in Jerusalem at the first Pentecost (2:10), the evangelism of Paul and Barnabas at the Phrygian cities of Pisidian Antioch and Iconium (13:14–14:4), the passing through Phrygia by Paul, Silas, and Timothy on their way west through Asia Minor (16:6), and the travels of Paul through “the region of Galatia and Phrygia” (18:23). Other biblical accounts include Col. 1:7; 4:12–13, which cites the work of Epaphras in three Phrygian cities, and Rev. 1:11; 3:14–22, which addresses the Phrygian church at Laodicea as one of the seven churches of Asia.

PHURAH *See* Purah.

PHUT *See* Put.

PHUVAH *See* Puvah.

PHYGELUS A man who “turned away from” Paul (2 Tim. 1:15 NASB) in the latter years of Paul’s life. Phygelus and Hermogenes were two of many people from the province of Asia who deserted Paul. The apostle also names Demas in the same letter as a deserter (2 Tim. 4:10).

PHYLACTERY *See* Frontlets.

PHYSICIAN *See* Diseases and Physical Abnormalities.

PI-BESETH *See* Bubastis.

PICTURE In some translations, an image or carving in wood or stone, as in bas-relief (Num. 33:52; Prov. 25:11; Isa. 2:16 KJV). Also, as a noun meaning "image" or verb meaning "to imagine," it is used as vernacular in contemporary versions such as *The Message* (e.g., 1 Sam. 16:12; Jer. 38:22; Mark 4:30).

PIECE OF MONEY, GOLD, SILVER "Piece of money" translates the Hebrew word *qesitah* in the NRSV of Gen. 33:19; Josh. 24:32; Job 42:11 (NIV: "piece of silver"), a currency of unknown value, as well as the Greek word *statēr* in the KJV of Matt. 17:27 (NIV: "four-drachma coin"). Although gold is rarely mentioned as currency (2 Kings 5:5; Ps. 119:72), silver is common (e.g., Gen. 20:16; Zech. 11:13), continuing into the NT period (Matt. 26:15). *See also* Coins.

PIETY Performing the necessary duties for the divine (Lat. *pietas*), "godliness" (1 Tim. 2:2, 10; 3:16; 4:7–8; 6:3, 5–6, 11; 2 Tim. 3:12; Titus 2:12; 2 Pet. 1:3; 3:11; cf. 1 Tim. 1:9; 3:4, 8, 11; 5:4; 2 Tim. 2:16; Titus 2:2, 7). Piety overlaps with fearing God in Job (4:6; 15:4; 22:4). In the Greco-Roman world, the term signifies either personal devotion in response to awe of the divine or, in broader practice, showing cultural respect for the deities. There is also an intellectual component to piety, having "right opinions" or knowledge about the gods, as Epictetus claims (*Ench.* 31). Luke equates piety with the biblical concepts of fear and righteousness (Acts 10:2, 22).

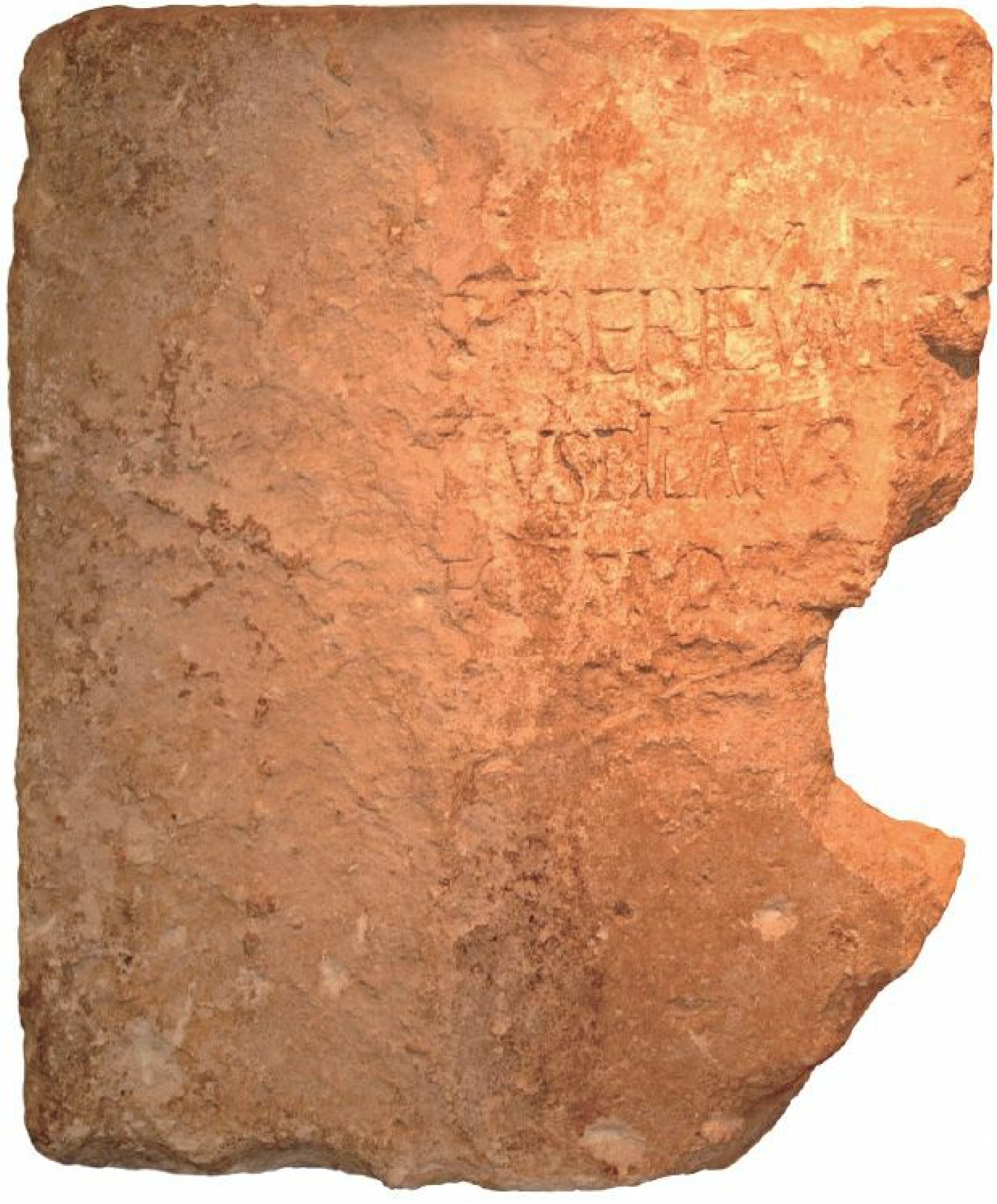
PIG *See* Swine.

PIGEON Pigeons, along with doves, were offered as sacrifices (Lev. 1:14). Abram was instructed to bring both a pigeon and a dove as part of the offering in a covenant ceremony (Gen. 15:9). Poor people could substitute two pigeons or doves for larger animals (Lev. 5:7; 12:8; 14:22). Elsewhere, pigeons or doves were offered following periods of ritual impurity, such as that resulting from childbirth or leprosy (Lev. 12:6; 14:30; 15:14, 29; Num. 6:10). After the birth of Jesus, his parents made the offering of two birds for Mary's purification as prescribed in Lev. 12:7–8 (Luke 2:24).

While larger animals were slaughtered and cut into pieces, pigeons and doves were killed by wringing off their heads and then torn open, although not divided completely (Lev. 1:15–17). Similarly, Abram did not cut up the birds that he offered along with larger animals (Gen. 15:10).

PI HAHIROTH A site where God instructed the Israelites to camp after they departed from Egypt (Exod. 14:2). This is the location where Pharaoh and his army overtook them and from which they crossed the sea (Exod. 14:9; Num. 33:7–8). Pi Hahiroth is described as being between Migdol and the Red Sea and near Baal Zephon. This places the site on the eastern border of Lower Egypt. The site is unknown to modern archaeology.

PILATE, PONTIUS Pontius Pilate was the fifth Roman governor of Judea. He presided at the trial of Jesus, ultimately sentencing him to death. Based on the account of Josephus, he was appointed to his post in AD 26 or 27 and was removed from it ten years later (c. AD 37) by the governor of the neighboring province of Syria after he mishandled a confrontation with a group of religious fanatics in Samaria. Several previous debacles involving Pilate are known from Josephus and Philo, possibly including the event mentioned in Luke 13:1, where Jesus is told about "the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices." In one instance, Pilate offended the Judeans by introducing to Jerusalem military standards with images of the emperor. On another occasion, Pilate affronted the population when he built an aqueduct to supply water to Jerusalem, either because he took money from the temple to finance the project or because the aqueduct ran through a cemetery, rendering its water ritually unclean according to Jewish law. While Josephus's intention is to present the rule of Pilate as tumultuous, and the Gospels are concerned to downplay his role in Jesus' trial relative to that of the Jewish leaders, his lengthy tenure suggests that he was generally a successful governor and that his term was one of relative quiet governing what was at times a volatile population in Judea.



A building dedication mentioning Pontius Pilate

Pilate's role in the trial of Jesus is mentioned in all four Gospels. As the governor of Judea, he possessed the power to execute criminals, a power denied to the Jewish authorities who arrested and initiated the charges against Jesus. The Gospels present Pilate as interrogating Jesus primarily about his political activities, reflecting the fact that Pilate's interest in the trial was not religious or theological, but instead was based on his concern for maintaining order in his province. The general tendency of the Gospel accounts is to minimize the culpability of Pilate in the death of Jesus. According to Matthew's Gospel, Pilate's wife told him that Jesus was an innocent man (27:19), and Pilate later disclaimed responsibility for the death of Jesus and publicly washed his hands to signify his own innocence (27:24). According to Luke 23:4, 14, 22; John 19:6, Pilate declared that he had found no charge against Jesus. Eventually, Pilate capitulated because the crowd was growing violent (Matt. 27:24) and because they implicitly threatened to slander Pilate by saying that he was not maintaining the order of the Roman Empire: "If you let this man go, you are no friend of Caesar" (John 19:12). Luke 23:12 reports that Pilate befriended Herod Antipas as a result of having referred the case to him on the basis of Jesus being a Galilean and therefore Herod's subject.

Pilate is mentioned in 1 Tim. 6:13 as the audience of a "good confession" made by Jesus. This verse suggests that the trial of Jesus before Pilate was seen by the early church as the model for later confrontations between Christians and the governing authorities, a situation previously predicted by Jesus himself (Matt. 10:18).

Pilate is known not only from the NT, but also from Josephus, Philo, the Roman historian Tacitus, and from an inscription discovered in 1961 in Caesarea identifying Pilate as "prefect" of Judea. This technical term has connotations of military authority and is more specific than the NT's broader term "governor" (Gk. *hēgemōn*).

PILDASH One of eight sons born to Abraham's brother Nahor by Nahor's wife and niece Milkah (Gen. 22:20–22). He was a nephew of Abraham and a brother of Bethuel, the father of Rebekah.

PILEHA *See* Pilha.

PILFER To steal in small quantities so as to avoid detection. Such theft may have been a particular temptation of slaves (see Titus 2:9–10).

PILGRIMAGE A journey to a religious site. In biblical times, Jerusalem was a prominent destination of pilgrimage, as implied in the law of cultic centralization in Deut. 12:13–14. Several of the prophets envision a future age in which the nations travel to Jerusalem for instruction (e.g., Isa. 2; Mic. 4).

Jesus made several pilgrimages to Jerusalem in connection with major Jewish feasts. His parents took him to Jerusalem for the Passover, as was their custom (Luke 2:41–42). As an adult, Jesus continued to make this journey. The three journeys of Jesus to Jerusalem recorded in the Gospel of John are the chief evidence for the tradition that his ministry lasted three years (John 2:13; 5:1; 12:1). Jesus also traveled to Jerusalem for the Feast of Booths (John 7:10) and the Feast of Dedication (John 10:22).

Paul's final journey to Jerusalem, which eventuated in his arrest, was for the purpose of attending the Jewish Feast of Pentecost there (Acts 20:16). This festival was also responsible for the presence of many foreigners in Jerusalem in the days of the early church (Acts 2:1).

In a broader sense, and especially in some older English translations, pilgrimage can refer to a period of residence outside one's proper homeland (sojourning). This usage recalls the prominent biblical theme of sojourning, which pertains to the patriarchs (Gen. 47:9), Moses (Acts 7:29), the

Israelites (Deut. 10:19), as well as several other biblical figures. In the NT, this aspect of the Israelite experience (see Heb. 11:13) is applied to Jesus (Matt. 8:20; Luke 9:58) and, in a figurative sense, to Christian communities (Phil. 3:20; 1 Pet. 2:11).

PILHA One of the signatories of the agreement made by the Israelites in response to Ezra's public reading of the law (Neh. 10:24).

PILLAR In ancient Israel and surrounding cultures, pillars were used in every kind of architectural construction, from simple houses (Prov. 9:1) to palaces (Ps. 144:12) and temples (Judg. 16:29; 1 Kings 7:15–22). One of the distinctive features of Israelite domestic architecture was the division of the ground floor of the house into two, three, or four rooms divided by rows of pillars. Such pillars rested on stone foundations that often survived even when the rest of the building had been destroyed, thus allowing modern archaeologists to identify many remains of pillared houses.

Stone pillars were used in religious worship in ancient Israel, such as those erected by Jacob (Gen. 28:18, 22; 35:14). A pillar could also commemorate a covenant (Gen. 31:45; Exod. 24:4; Josh. 24:26; 2 Chron. 34:31) or a tomb (Gen. 35:20). In later stories, pillars are viewed negatively, as in 2 Kings 18:4, where Hezekiah is credited with destroying Asherah pillars as part of a broad religious reform (see also Jer. 43:13). Archaeologists have discovered cultic pillars in the temple at Tell Arad, among other places.

The temple of Solomon at Jerusalem incorporated two highly decorated pillars, Jakin and Boaz (1 Kings 7:21), made of bronze and reported to be 18 cubits (27 feet) high and 12 cubits (18 feet) in circumference, with an additional height of 5 cubits (7.5 feet) including the capital (1 Kings 7:16; cf. 2 Kings 25:17). When Jerusalem fell to the Babylonians in 586 BC, the bronze pillars were destroyed, and their bronze was taken to Babylon (2 Kings 25:13).

In ancient cosmology, the earth and the heavens were thought to be supported by pillars (Job 9:6; 26:11; Ps. 75:3).

In the NT, the pillar is used as a metaphor for leaders in the church (Gal. 2:9) or the church itself (1 Tim. 3:15).

PILLAR OF FIRE AND CLOUD As Moses and the Israelites traveled through the desert, God guided them by going ahead of them, appearing as a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night (Exod. 13:21–22). Prior to the miraculous crossing of the Red Sea, the pillar of cloud separated the Israelites from the Egyptian army, protecting them and giving them light (Exod. 14:19–20). The pillar lit the way for the Israelites (Neh. 9:12).

When the tabernacle was set up, the pillar of cloud or fire settled upon it (Exod. 40:34–38), so that the pillar was always in the sight of the Israelites. The Israelites moved whenever the cloud moved from above the tabernacle (Exod. 40:36–37; Num. 9:17). While Moses was meeting with God, the cloud stayed at the entrance to the tent of meeting (Exod. 33:9; Num. 12:5; Deut. 31:15; see also Ps. 99:7).

PILLAR OF SALT When Lot's wife looked back while fleeing from the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, thus failing to obey the instructions of the angels, she became a pillar of salt (Gen. 19:17, 26). This story has long been associated in local lore with natural salt formations in the environs of the Dead Sea.

PILLOW Jacob laid his head upon a stone while he slept (Gen. 28:11). The use of a hard object as a pillow recalls carved wooden pillows known from Egypt. Michal used an article made of goat hair to disguise an idol as a sleeping person (1 Sam. 19:13). Although in 1 Sam. 19:13 some versions translate the Hebrew word *kebir* as "pillow," it probably refers to a net over the head of a sleeping person. Some older English translations use "pillow" to render a Hebrew word (*mera'ashah*) that probably refers simply to the place where the head is laid (1 Sam. 26:7; 1 Kings 19:6). Other obscure passages perhaps refer to pillows (Prov. 7:16; Amos 3:12).

Jesus slept on a pillow or cushion in a boat (Mark 4:38). Elsewhere, the Gospels state that he did not have a "place to lay his head" (Matt. 8:20; Luke 9:58). *See also* Bed.

PILOT A mariner who directed a ship, especially in shallow waters. The pilot of the ship carrying Paul to Rome influenced the decision to sail from Fair Havens for Phoenix, contrary to Paul's warning (Acts 27:11). James 3:4 refers to the pilot's power to steer a large ship with a small rudder. Some English translations read "pilot" in Ezek. 27:8, 27–29, but since the relevant Hebrew term (*khobel*) refers elsewhere to a sailor in general (Jon. 1:6), it may not denote the rather specialized task of piloting in this text.

PILTAI The head of Moadiah's priestly family (Neh. 12:17). Moadiah returned to Judea with Zerubbabel (12:5), and Piltai lived in Judea in the subsequent generation.

PIM *See* Weights and Measures.

PIN *See* Peg.

PINE TREE *See* Plants.

PINNACLE An architectural feature of the temple in Jerusalem. The word is found in some translations of Isa. 54:12 (NIV: "battlements"), in the fantastic description of a city built of gemstones. The Hebrew word here is derived from the word for "sun" (*shemesh*), suggesting that what is in view is the highest part of the wall, the part that would glitter in the sunshine. In the NT, in the story of Jesus' temptation by the devil, the devil sets Jesus on the pinnacle of the temple (Matt. 4:5; Luke 4:9 [NIV: "highest point"]) and tempts him to throw himself from it. This refers probably not to the rooftop of Herod's temple but to the southeast corner of the outer court, a point that stands high above the Kidron Valley below.

PINON One of the eleven Edomite chiefs, descendants of Esau, listed in Gen. 36:41; 1 Chron. 1:52.

PIONEER Hebrews uses the word *archēgos* in highlighting Jesus as the "pioneer" of salvation and faith (Heb. 2:10; 12:2; NASB: "author"). The same Greek term is used in the phrase "author of life" in Acts 3:15 and is translated as "Prince" in Acts 5:31. *See also* Author, Author of Life.

PIPE *See* Music, Instruments, Dancing.

PIRAM The king of Jarmuth (Josh. 10:3), he was one of five Amorite kings enlisted by Adoni-Zedek of Jerusalem to attack the Gibeonites, who were allies of the Israelites. Joshua came to their aid, killing Piram and the others at Makkedah.

PIRATHON, PIRATHONITE Pirathon is a town located in Ephraim, in an area also associated with the Amalekites (Judg. 12:15), about six miles southwest of Shechem (modern Nablus). It has been identified with modern Farata. Two Pirathonites are mentioned in the Bible: the judge Abdon (Judg. 12:13–15) and Benaiah, one of David's mighty warriors (2 Sam. 23:20; 1 Chron. 11:31; 27:14). Pirathon may also appear in a list of fortified cities in 1 Macc. 9:50.

PISGAH A mountain or ridge northeast of the Dead Sea. The region across the river from Jericho is described as being "below the slopes of Pisgah" (Deut. 3:17; 32:49; Josh. 12:3). Pisgah refers to the same location as Mount Nebo. In Deut. 34:1 Moses "climbed Mount Nebo from the plains of Moab to the top of Pisgah," from which he was able to survey the entire promised land before his death.

Pisgah was one of three mountains upon which Balaam and Balak sought a divine revelation, in the "field of Zophim" (Num. 23:14). Throughout the Bible, mountaintops serve as the setting for worship, divine revelation, and divination: in the OT, Sinai, Gerizim, Zion, Carmel; in the NT, the mountains where Jesus teaches, is transfigured, and is worshiped (Matt. 5:1–2; Mark 9:2; Matt. 28:16–17), and where John the Seer envisions the new Jerusalem (Rev. 21:10).

PISHON One of four rivers (with Gihon, Tigris, and Euphrates) that branched off from the river flowing from Eden (Gen. 2:10–11). The Pishon flowed through Havilah. Neither name can be identified with a location known today. However, Pishon may have referred to a river known to the Israelites, since the context contains names of several other identifiable places.

PISIDIA A mountainous region in central Asia Minor (modern Turkey). Paul passed through Pisidia on his first missionary journey, on his way to Pisidian Antioch (Acts 13:14). This Antioch was not actually in Pisidia, but was so named because of its proximity and to distinguish it from other cities of the same name. Paul passed again through Pisidia on the return leg of his first journey (Acts 14:24). Because of its mountainous terrain, the limited extent to which the region had been Hellenized and later Romanized, and the reputation of the inhabitants in antiquity for robbery, many commentators have suggested that Paul is referring to his travels in Pisidia in 2 Cor. 11:26, where he says, "I have been in danger from rivers, in danger from bandits."

PISON *See* Pishon.

PISPAH A descendant of Asher and the son of Jether (1 Chron. 7:38 [NRSV: "Pispa"]), he is among the latest descendants of Asher listed by the Chronicler.

PIT Pits were used in ancient Israel for storing water or grain (e.g., Lev. 11:36; Deut. 6:11). Such structures are known to modern archaeologists. In some cases, they are lined with stones (Isa. 14:19). Pits were also used to press wine (Mark 12:1), to trap animals (1 Chron. 11:22), as hiding places (1 Sam. 13:6; 2 Sam. 17:9), or as prisons (Gen. 37:20; 41:14; Isa. 24:22), especially waterless cisterns (Jer. 38:6; Zech. 9:11). In biblical poetry the pit is a prominent metaphor for death (Ps. 28:1; Prov. 28:17; Isa. 14:15) and calamity (Isa. 24:17–18; Lam. 3:47). Exodus 21:33 warns against leaving a pit uncovered, lest a person or animal fall into it. Jesus also used this image in his teaching (Matt. 12:11; 15:14).

PITCH A viscous substance used for waterproofing vessels, such as Noah's wooden ark (Gen. 6:14) and the papyrus basket containing the infant Moses (Exod. 2:3). Pitch may have been a softer form of bitumen or asphalt, resinous substances made by distilling organic matter. The image of burning pitch describes divine judgment on Edom in Isa. 34:9.

PITCHER A vessel especially for pouring out liquid. The Israelite tabernacle and temple contained golden pitchers for pouring out drink offerings (Exod. 25:29; 37:16; Num. 4:7). The corresponding pitchers in the temple were made according to David's instructions (1 Chron. 28:17).

PITFALL A pit dug in the ground to trap animals. In several places in the Bible, the pitfall is used figuratively to describe the attempts of enemies to harm the biblical speaker by setting a metaphorical trap (Pss. 57:6; 119:85; Jer. 18:22).

PITHOM AND RAMESES Supply cities built by the Israelites during their Egyptian enslavement (Exod. 1:11). Several archaeological sites in the Nile Delta have been proposed. Rameses is identified as an Israelite settlement (Gen. 47:11) or starting point of the exodus from Egypt (Num. 33:3).

PITHON Listed twice in genealogies of Saul (1 Chron. 8:35; 9:41), a great-great-grandson of Saul through Saul's son Jonathan.

PITY To pity someone is to feel or express compassion toward that person. Of the two main Hebrew verbs translated "pity," *khus* describes an attitude of merciful kindness toward a person (Deut. 25:12), and *khamal* refers to sparing someone from something negative (Lam. 2:2). When *khus* and *khamal* occur in the same sentence, the NIV generally translates them "pity" and "spare" respectively (e.g., Deut. 13:8; Ezek. 7:4). The Greek *eleeō* can also be translated "to have mercy" (Luke 17:13 NASB), while *splanchnizomai* graphically depicts compassion (Luke 10:33), as *splanchna*, from which *splanchnizomai* is derived, is the Greek word for "intestines" (compare English: "My heart goes out to you").

Most often, when "pity" occurs in the Bible, lack of pity is under discussion. The Israelites were to show no pity to the Canaanites (Deut. 7:16), nor were they to pity those who violated the Mosaic law (Deut. 19:21; 25:11–12). God repeatedly warned the Israelites that he would show them no pity when he judged them (Isa. 9:17; Jer. 13:14; Ezek. 7:4). However, God does express pity (Ezek. 16:5–6; Zech. 8:14–15), particularly through Jesus Christ (Matt. 18:27; Mark 9:22; Luke 17:13–14) and Christians (1 John 3:17).

PLAGUES The plagues unleashed against Egypt (Exod. 7:1–11:10) demonstrated to Pharaoh (Exod. 9:14), to the Israelites (Exod. 10:2), and to "all the earth" (Exod. 9:16; Rom. 9:17) God's sovereign control over nature on behalf of his covenant people. Both the timing and the intensity of the plagues indicate that these were not random natural phenomena. The unfolding of the whole series of plagues would have taken at least nine months.

Many of the plagues attacked the multiplicity of Egyptian deities (Exod. 12:12). All the water turned bloodred (Exod. 7:17–21 [for the idiom, see Joel 2:31]), and there was death in the Nile, ironically considered the lifeblood of Osiris, god of the underworld. Hapi was god of the Nile, responsible for the flooding that deposited rich soil on the farmlands. Frogs challenged Heqet, a fertility deity, making their way into Pharaoh's bedroom. Cattle were sacred; Hathor was represented as a cow with the solar disk between her horns. Boils on humans and animals meant that the Egyptian magicians could not stand before Moses, possibly an attack on priests, who were to be unblemished. Deep darkness covered all Egypt (Exod. 10:21–22), a direct affront to Re, the sun god. Darkness and the death of the firstborn were especially sharp attacks because the sun was the primary deity, and Pharaoh was its earthly representative. There are echoes in Scripture of these plagues as God used natural phenomena to bring chastisement to his erring people, and they foreshadow the eschatological devastations in Revelation.

PLAISTER *See* Plaster.

PLANE TREE The rendering of the Hebrew word *'ermon*, in most modern English versions (KJV: “chesnut”; NKJV: “chestnut”) . The plane tree typically grows alongside rivers, and it often has flaking bark. The Assyrian Empire is likened to a plane tree because of its strength and beauty (Ezek. 31:8), and Jacob uses its branches in his deception with Laban’s flocks (Gen. 30:37). *See also* Chesnut; Plants.

PLANKS In the OT, a translation synonymous with “boards” used for construction (Exod. 27:8; 38:7; 1 Kings 6:9, 15; Song 8:9; Ezek. 27:5, 6; 41:25–26), and in the NT, an alternative translation to “log” or wooden “beam” used by Jesus in comparison with a speck of dust (Matt. 7:3–5; Luke 6:41–42). The debris from Paul’s shipwreck on which he and his shipmates floated to safety in Malta included planks (Acts 27:44).

PLANTS Plants appear in the Bible from the creation account in Genesis to Revelation. God commanded the land to produce plants of various types, and the earth “produced vegetation: plants bearing seed according to their kinds and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds” (Gen. 1:11–12).

The books of Genesis and Isaiah have the most references to plants. Only eight of the sixty-six books of the Bible make no reference to plants of some kind (Lamentations, Philippians, Colossians, 1–2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, Jude). The Pentateuch has the most references, followed by the twelve historical books. The Major Prophets have a large number, but the twelve Minor Prophets have few. In the NT, Matthew and Luke have the greatest number of references to plants.

The biblical writers often used general names for plants. Sometimes these names are not more specific than “tree,” “grass,” or “grain.” In other instances a specific name, such as “corn,” refer to a broad spectrum, such as all kinds of grains. In translations, biblical plants may bear the names of plants native to different parts of the world today, but that does not mean they are necessarily the same kind of plant. Moreover, plants found in Palestine today were not necessarily present in biblical times. Thus, we cannot study biblical plants merely on the basis of botanical life in Palestine today. These factors lead to a variety of English translations for certain plants and trees in the Bible.

FLOWERS

Flowers are the seed-bearing part of a plant containing the reproductive organs. In Palestine, flowers grew mostly in open fields during springtime. The warm spring temperatures and the winter rains joined to produce beautiful flowers. Flowers could bear different names in different places. (*See also* Flowers.)

Flax. The flax plant was grown by the Egyptians (Exod. 9:31) and by the Canaanites (Josh. 2:6). The fibers from the flax stem were used to make linen (Prov. 31:13). Its fine fibers were used for lighting (Isa. 42:3). The Hebrew plural *pishtim* is used in several passages for linen or linen garments (Lev. 13:47–48; Jer. 13:1; Ezek. 40:3; cf. Rev. 15:6).

Lily. The Hebrew word translated “lily” covers a wide range of flowers. The water lily was a favorite flower in Egypt and was used for decoration in the temple of Solomon (1 Kings 7:19, 22, 26). In the NT the Greek word *krinon*, which some translations render “lily,” is likely a general term referring to beautiful wild flowers (Matt. 6:28; Luke 12:27 [NIV: “flowers,” “wild flowers”]). Here Jesus used the way the lilies of the field grow to teach a spiritual lesson about anxiety (Matt. 6:28; Luke 12:27).

Rose. The same Hebrew word is translated as “crocus” in Isa. 35:1 and “rose” in Song 2:1. There were several types of roses in Palestine. Crocus was probably the family name of this flower. It was a spring flower with long yellow floral tubes shaded with purple spots.

REEDS

Papyrus, bulrush. The same Hebrew term is translated “papyrus” (Exod. 2:3; Job 8:11; Isa. 18:2; 35:7) in the NIV and “bulrush” in the ESV (Exod. 2:3). The bulrush, or papyrus, was a tall, slender plant that grew along the banks of the river Nile to a height of as much as thirteen feet. It provided the earliest known material for making paper and covering the frames of boats (Isa. 18:2). This material was also used for making the basket in which Moses was placed on the Nile (Exod. 2:3).

Reed. Various Hebrew words are translated “reed.” Pens were made from reed stalks. Reeds were used by the soldiers who beat and mocked Jesus (Matt. 27:29; Mark 15:19). It was with a long reed that the sponge soaked with vinegar was offered to Jesus on the cross (Matt. 27:48). The Hebrew term for the spice calamus, which comes from a reed, is also sometimes translated “reed” (Isa. 19:6; 35:7).

THORNS

Various Hebrew words are translated “bramble,” “briar,” or “thorns” (Isa. 55:13; Ezek. 28:24; Mic. 7:4). In the NT, two words are translated “thorns” or “brambles” (*akantha; skolops*). All these terms generally refer to shrubs with sharp spines, runners, and a tangled mass of vegetation (Judg. 9:8–15; Luke 6:44). Thorns could grow up and choke cultivated crops (Luke 8:7). After the fall, God cursed the ground to produce thorns, brambles, and briars (Gen. 3:18). “Thorn” or “thorns” are used figuratively for judgment in the OT (Gen. 3:18; Exod. 22:6; Num. 33:55; Josh. 23:13; Judg. 2:3; Job 5:5; Ps. 58:9; Isa. 7:23). A crown of “thorns” was placed on Jesus’ head during his trial to ridicule his claim to being a king (Matt. 27:29). Paul was given a “thorn” in the flesh from God—perhaps some physical ailment—to keep him from becoming conceited (2 Cor. 12:7).

TREES

Acacia. The acacia tree, which is readily available in the Sinai, has a hard wood known for its durability. Acacia wood was used in the construction of the ark of the covenant (Exod. 25:10), the poles for moving the ark (25:13), portions of the tabernacle (26:15–37), and parts of the altar of burnt offering (38:1, 6).

Almond. The almond tree was common in Palestine at the time when Jacob sent for food from Egypt. Joseph’s brothers took its fruit to him as a gift (Gen. 43:11), which may imply that it was not common in Egypt. Aaron’s staff bore ripe almonds (Num. 17:8). The almond tree was used by the Israelites as a template for engravers to decorate the cups of the golden lampstand (Exod. 25:33;

37:19–20). The tree is used figuratively to describe old age (Eccles. 12:5), since from a distance its white blossoms have the appearance of white hair.

Almond trees

Apple. The apple tree affords good shade, sweet fruit, beauty, and fragrance (Song 7:8; 8:5; Joel 1:12). It was used figuratively of handsomeness and love shared between lovers (Song 2:3, 5). The "apples of gold" in Prov. 25:11 possibly refers to citrons, quinces, oranges, or apricots with golden and silver leaves or to artistic representations of fruit in gold on columns.

Broom tree/bush. Although translated in the KJV as "juniper," the Hebrew word *rotem* (Job 30:4; Ps. 120:4) is rendered in most versions as "broom tree" (ESV) or "broom bush" (NIV). The word probably refers to a kind of shrub that grew in the Arabian deserts. Elijah rested under this tree as he fled from Jezebel (1 Kings 19:4–5).

Cedar. Cedar trees grew on the western slope of Lebanon (2 Kings 19:23; Isa. 2:13; 37:24). Cedar is an aromatic wood with a distinct scent and taste. It was valued as a building material (Ezra 3:7), used for ritual cleansing (Lev. 14:4; Num. 19:6), and spoken of figuratively as a symbol of strength (Ps. 92:12).

Cypress. The NIV and NRSV identify the wood used for Noah's ark as cypress (Gen. 6:14), although some other versions (e.g., ESV) identify it as gopher wood. Along with other types of trees, cypress is symbolic of fertile land (Isa. 41:19), and it is associated with both Lebanon (Isa. 60:13) and Cyprus (Ezek. 27:6).

Ebony. Ebony is a heavy black wood derived from various species of trees. Its sapwood is white and of less value, but the trunks are sufficiently large to leave blocks of black heartwood two feet in diameter and ten or more feet long. Ebony was one of the products that Dedan traded with Tyre (Ezek. 27:15).

Fig. The fig tree appears first in Gen. 3:7, where Adam and Eve covered their nakedness with fig leaves. The fig tree is highly valued for its sweet fruit (Judg. 9:11), and the Israelites complained about not having figs in the wilderness (Num. 20:5). Figs were among the things that the Israelite spies brought back to the people from the promised land to show that the land was good (Num. 13:23; cf. Deut. 8:8). A symbol of dwelling in peace and safety was for each person to own a fig tree (1 Kings 4:25; 2 Kings 18:31; Isa. 36:16; Mic. 4:4; Zech. 3:10). The plundering, fruitlessness, and withering of the fig tree were symbolic of judgment (Ps. 105:33; Jer. 5:17; 8:13; Hos. 2:12; Amos 4:9). The favor and judgment of God are spoken of figuratively as good figs and bad figs respectively (Jer. 24:1–3, 5, 8; 29:17). The fig tree was also used figuratively of Israel as a nation (Hos. 9:10). Figs were used medicinally as a poultice (2 Kings 20:7; Isa. 38:21). Jesus cursed a fig tree because it was fruitless (Matt. 21:19–21; Mark 11:13), and his parable of the fruitless fig tree shows the importance of cultivating and fertilizing the land where figs were planted (Luke 13:6–9).

Fir. This evergreen is occasionally mentioned alongside the cypress and the juniper (Isa. 41:19), particularly as one of the trees of Lebanon (60:13). The KJV uses the term “fir” for the tree that the NIV translates as “juniper” (e.g., Hos. 14:8).

Juniper. This coniferous evergreen (Hos. 14:8) is described as one of the principal trees of Lebanon (Isa. 60:13; cf. 41:19; 55:13). It supplied boards and timber for doors and frames (1 Kings 6:15, 34), and its timbers were used for beams and rafters of houses (1 Kings 5:8; 2 Chron. 2:8) and for shipbuilding (Ezek. 27:5). While the NIV uses the term “juniper” in these verses, the KJV uses “fir,” and some other versions use “cypress” (ESV) or “pine” (GW).

Myrtle. This was a common and choice indigenous shrub in Palestine (Isa. 41:19; 55:13). It grew to considerable height (Zech. 1:8, 10) and was one of the trees used in the Feast of Tabernacles (Neh. 8:15). Myrtles have fragrant, dark green leaves with starry white flowers and edible dark berries.

Oak. Several Hebrew words are commonly translated “oak” or “terebinth.” These usually indicate large, strong trees, reflected in the NIV rendering “great tree.” The word *ʾelon* is used with reference to the oak of Moreh to which Abraham traveled (Gen. 12:6), the oaks of Mamre where Abraham settled and God appeared to him (Gen. 13:18; 14:13; 18:1), the oak of Zaanannim under which Heber pitched his tent (Josh. 19:33; Judg. 4:11), the diviners’ oak (Judg. 9:37), and the oak of Tabor (1 Sam. 10:3). Other words for “oak” or “terebinth” include *ʾelah* (Gen. 35:4), *ʾellah* (Josh. 24:26), *ʾayil* (Isa. 1:29), and *ʾallon* (Gen. 35:8).

Olive. Olive trees are small, round orchard trees with slim gray-green leaves and small cream-colored flowers that bloom in May. Olives are eaten as fruit, but the bulk of the crop in biblical times was used for olive oil. The olive tree is first mentioned in Gen. 8:11, which describes a dove bringing an olive leaf back to Noah on the ark. The olive tree was one of the blessings of the promised land (Deut. 6:11; 8:8). It grew on the mountainsides wherever there was sufficient soil. Olive roots spread widely to gain nourishment on rocky hillsides, hence the trees were often well spaced and yielded fruit only after about forty to fifty years. Olive wood was used for the posts and doors of the temple as well as the cherubim, and olive oil was used for the lamp that was lighted before the tabernacle (Exod. 27:20; Lev. 24:2). The oil was also medicinal (Mark 6:13; Luke 10:34; James 5:14). Paul identifies Gentiles as a “wild olive shoot” that has been grafted into the cultivated olive tree, the Jews (Rom. 11:17–18, 24).

Palm. The palm of the Bible is the date palm, the only palm that produced fruit in biblical times. It is described as flourishing (Ps. 92:12) and tall (Song 7:7). The best species of this tree grew at Jericho (Deut. 34:3), En Gedi, and along the banks of the Jordan River. Branches of the palm tree were carried at the Feast of Tabernacles (Lev. 23:40). The crowds used palm branches to welcome Jesus at his triumphal entry into Jerusalem (Matt. 21:8; John 12:13). The saints will lift up its branches as a symbol of victory at the end of the age (Rev. 7:9).

Pine. An evergreen tree that appears in the NIV only in Isa. 44:14. It occurs more often in other translations, but the NIV typically renders these occurrences as “juniper” or “fir.”

Plane. The plane tree (KJV: “chestnut”) is referred to twice in the Bible. In Gen. 30:37, Jacob uses branches from the plane tree, along with poplar and almond tree branches, to create a mottled flock. In Ezek. 31:8, plane trees are compared with the cedars of Lebanon, a metaphor for Assyria.

Pomegranate. This is a small tree, the fruit of which has a thick shell, many seeds, and red pulp. It is part of the myrtle family. Its fruit was used to produce spiced wine (Song 8:2). The Israelite spies brought back pomegranates to show that the promised land was fruitful and good (Num. 13:23; Deut. 8:8). The withering of this tree, and others, was a mark of judgment (Joel 1:12).

Poplar. Poplars grew beside running waters (Job 40:22; Isa. 15:7; 44:4; KJV, ESV: “willows”). The exiled Jews, too sad to sing, hung their lyres on poplars (Ps. 137:2). In 2 Sam. 5:23–24; 1 Chron. 14:14–15, the Hebrew term *baka’* is variously translated as “poplar tree” (NIV), “balsam tree” (NET, NASB, RSV, NRSV, NLT), “mulberry tree” (KJV, NKJV, ASV), “mastic tree” (NAB), “aspen” (NEB, REB), and “spice-tree” (BBE); the exact type of tree or plant is uncertain.

Sycamore. The sycamore-fig tree is one of the finest lowland trees of Palestine. It was once abundant (1 Kings 10:27; 2 Chron. 1:15). This tree, which cannot withstand frost (Ps. 78:47), produces small, round figs that have little flavor. The prophet Amos was a dresser of sycamore-fig trees (Amos 7:14). This tree commonly attains a height of about fifty feet and has an enormous trunk that produced valued timber (1 Kings 10:27; Isa. 9:10). The sycamore-fig was commonly planted by the roadways for its shade (Luke 19:4).

Tree of the knowledge of good and evil. This tree is so called because it could make humans know good and evil (Gen. 3:5), but not according to the fear of the Lord (Prov. 1:7). It was good for food (Gen. 2:9). The nature of the tree is unknown.

Willow. Like poplars, willows grew beside running waters (Ezek. 17:5). Their branches were used to make the booths for the Feast of Tabernacles (Lev. 23:40).

VINES

There are three Hebrew words for vines. (1) The word *gepen* is used for the cultivated grapevines. Under the cultivated vine is *gepen hayyayin*, literally, “vine of wine” (Num. 6:4; Judg. 13:14), translated as “grapevine” (NIV, ESV, NET); *gepen sadeh*, “wild vine” (2 Kings 4:39); and *gepen sedom*, “vine of Sodom” (Deut. 32:32). (2) The word *soreq* is translated “choice vine” (Isa. 5:2; Jer. 2:21) and “choicest branch” (Gen. 49:11). It may indicate a valued, bright red species of grape. According to rabbinic tradition, these grapes were sweet and almost seedless. (3) The word *nazir* (Lev. 25:5, 11) is translated variously as “undressed vine” (ESV, NET, RSV, KJV), “untended vine” (NIV, NKJV), “unpruned vine” (NLT), “untrimmed vine” (NASB), and “uncared-for vine” (BBE). The unpruned vine may have referred to the uncut locks of a Nazirite.

The Greek word for grapevine is *ampelos* (Mark 14:25; Luke 22:18; Rev. 14:18). Jesus called himself the “true vine” (John 15:1), and at the final supper he said he would not drink of “this fruit of the vine” until the coming age (Matt. 26:29). The Greek word *staphylē*, translated “grape” (Matt. 7:16; Luke 6:44; Rev. 14:18), refers to the grapes of the vine. There will be clusters from the vine of the earth harvested at the end of the age (Rev. 14:18).

The OT testifies to how much Palestine counted upon the vine and its produce for life. People rejoiced in wine produced from its grapes (Judg. 9:13; Ps. 104:15). The Israelites missed it in the wilderness (Num. 20:5), though they were heading to a land with vines that they did not plant (Deut. 6:11; 8:8; Josh. 24:13). Nazirites were not to eat of the vine, “not even the seeds or skins” (Num. 6:4; cf. Judg. 13:14). The blessing of Judah by Jacob included a special part of the land with many vines (Gen. 49:11).

Even the poorest land could be cultivated for vines (2 Kings 25:12; Jer. 52:16). Vineyards were planted with great care and required much attention. Thus, the vineyard of a lazy person could be easily identified (Prov. 24:30–31). Vineyards were fenced and watered regularly (Isa. 5:2; 27:2–3; Matt. 21:33). In the early spring the plants were to be trimmed by cutting the dead and fruitless branches (Lev. 25:3–4; Isa. 5:6), which were assembled and burned (John 15:6). As the grapes ripened, they were guarded against foxes (Song 2:15) and wild boars (Ps. 80:12–13). The vine-harvesting season was a joyful time (Isa. 16:10), and gleanings were left for the poor (Lev. 19:10; Judg. 8:2; Isa. 17:6).

Grapes

Figuratively, "for everyone to be under their own vine" meant national safety, security, and peace (1 Kings 4:25; Mic. 4:4; Zech. 3:10). Planting vines and living to eat of their produce meant a long and settled peaceful habitation on the land (2 Kings 19:29; Ps. 107:37; Isa. 65:21; Ezek. 28:26). On the contrary, to plant a vine and not eat of its produce was a tragedy and could be a sign of God's disapproval (Deut. 20:6; 28:30; Amos 5:11). The failure of the vine was a sign of God's anger (Ps. 78:47; Joel 1:7; Hab. 3:17). Jesus used the vine in some of his parables: an unfruitful fig tree in a vineyard (Luke 13:6–9), laborers in the vineyard (Matt. 20:1–16), and new wine in old wineskins (Matt. 9:17). Particularly significant was Jesus' designation of himself as the true vine and his Father as the vinedresser (John 15:1). All believers are in a bond with Jesus the true vine if they abide in him (John 15:4). At the Last Supper the fruit of the vine symbolized Christ's atoning blood (Matt. 26:27–28), and it has become the sacramental wine of the Christian communion service (1 Cor. 11:25). Christ will only drink again of the fruit of the vine with all believers in the kingdom to come (Matt. 26:29).

VEGETABLES, HERBS, AND FRAGRANT PLANTS

Balm. This resin (Heb. *tsori*), having a distinct smell, was brought from Gilead by the Ishmaelites on their way to Egypt (Gen. 37:25). It was likely medicinal, as Jeremiah refers figuratively to its medicinal properties as a sedative when applied on a wound (Jer. 8:22; 46:11; 51:8). It was sold to travelers in small tin boxes as the "Balm of Gilead" (cf. Ezek. 27:17).

Beans. Common and valuable for food, beans were cooked while green in the pods or after being dried. Dry beans were threshed and winnowed like cereals and other grains. Beans are mentioned twice in the NIV (2 Sam. 17:28; Ezek. 4:9).

Calamus. A sweet-smelling spice (Heb. *qaneh*) made from a reed of the same name but commonly known as "sweet flag." The Hebrew term is variously translated in the NIV as "reed" (Isa. 19:6; 35:7), "calamus" (Song 4:14; Ezek. 27:19), "stalk" (Gen. 41:5, 22), "fragrant calamus" (Isa. 43:24), and "sweet calamus" (Jer. 6:20). The ESV sometimes translates it as "sweet cane" (Isa. 43:24). Its leaves have a distinct sweet smell. When crumpled, they give a delightful ginger smell. Calamus was imported for use in worship (Jer. 6:20).

Caraway. The Hebrew word *qetsakh* (Isa. 28:25, 27) is also translated "dill" (NASB, ESV, RSV), "fitch" (KJV, ASV), and "black cumin" (NLT, NKJV). As Isa. 28:25–27 describes, the plant was gently beaten to release the seeds, which were used as a condiment.

Cassia. The bark, buds, and leaves of this tree produce a fragrant ingredient used for the holy anointing oil (Exod. 30:24). Cassia was one of the wares that Danites and Greeks exchanged with Tyre (Ezek. 27:19).

Cinnamon. This spice was used along with others for making the anointing oil (Exod. 30:23). It was a precious spice (Song 4:14) used as perfume (Prov. 7:17). In Revelation it is one of the lucrative products of Babylon the Great (18:13).

Coriander. An herb with a fragrant smell, coriander originated around the Mediterranean and was extensively cultivated. The manna in the wilderness was like coriander seed (Exod. 16:31; Num. 11:7).

Cucumber. Grown in Egypt, cucumbers (Heb. *qishuah*) were one of the foods for which the Israelites longed while they were in the wilderness (Num. 11:5). Fields of cucumber, or perhaps melon (Heb. *miqshah*), are referred to in Isa. 1:8; Jer. 10:5.

Cumin. Cumin refers to the seed of the herb *Cuminum cyminum*, which was planted and threshed

(Isa. 28:25, 27). Its aromatic seeds were used for flavoring. The Pharisees tithed cumin (Matt. 23:23).

Dill. The Greek word *anēthon* occurs once in the NT (Matt. 23:23) and is translated as “dill” (NIV, NRSV, ESV, NET) or “anise” (KJV, NKJV). Dill is a perennial herb grown in a small garden crop. The scribes and the Pharisees tithed with dill (Matt. 23:23). The law did call for the tithing of “all that your fields produced each year” (Deut. 14:22), but the Pharisees, while insisting on the details of this law, ignored more important matters.

Gall. This bitter plant was associated with poison (Deut. 29:18; Jer. 9:15 KJV). It is used figuratively to describe suffering (Lam. 3:5, 19) and the judgment of God (Jer. 8:14 KJV). In Matt. 27:34, gall is mixed in with the wine offered to Jesus on the cross.

Henna blossom. This is an inflorescent woody plant with short stems, smaller than a tree. Its blossoms point upward, and it has sweet-smelling whitish flowers that grow in thick clusters (Song 1:14; 4:13). Its flowers were used to dye hair, nails, and fingers. It was also used to make pleasant aromatic perfumes.

Melon. A large fruit of the gourd family, melon (Heb. *’abattiakh*) is mentioned once in the Bible as one of the things that the Israelites longed for from Egypt while wandering in the wilderness (Num. 11:5).

Mint. A fragrant plant with dense white or pink flowers, it is used to flavor food. The Jews scattered it on the floors of houses and synagogues for its pleasant smell. Jesus said that the Pharisees tithed everything, including mint, but ignored the weightier matters of the law (Matt. 23:23; Luke 11:42).

Saffron. In ancient times the segments of the corolla of the saffron flower were used to perfume banquet halls. The type mentioned in Song 4:14 probably was imported to Palestine from India.

Wormwood. The meaning of the Hebrew word *la’anah*, traditionally translated as “wormwood,” is unclear, but it likely refers to a bitter substance (Deut. 29:18; Prov. 5:4; Jer. 9:15; 23:15; Lam. 3:15, 19; Amos 5:7; 6:12; cf. Gk. *apsinthos* in Rev. 8:11). It could be identified with various species of herbs in Palestine that have a bitter taste.

GRAIN

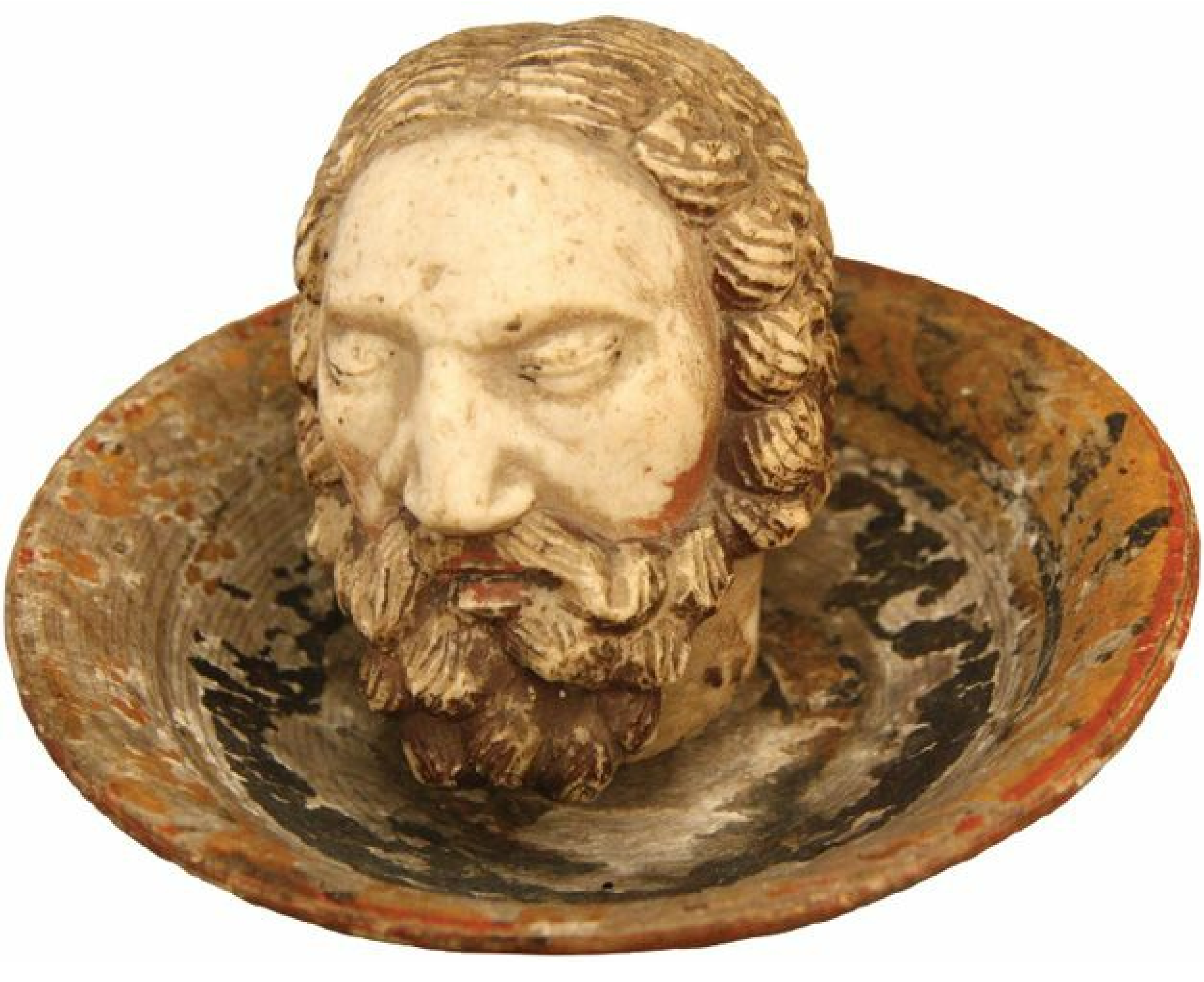
Barley. This grain was commonly grown by the Jews (Lev. 27:16; Ruth 2:17) and was one of the blessings of the promised land (Deut. 8:8). It was used for baking bread, chiefly among the poor (Judg. 7:13; 2 Kings 4:42). Ruth came to Jerusalem during the barley harvest (Ruth 1:22; 2:23). It was with barley loaves and two fishes that Jesus fed the five thousand (John 6:9, 10).

Wheat. The most common Hebrew word for “wheat” is *khittah* (Gen. 30:14; Exod. 9:32; Ruth 2:23; Job 31:40; Ps. 147:14; Song 7:2). The Hebrew word *bar* sometimes is translated as “wheat” (Jer. 23:28 NRSV) but more commonly is rendered as “grain” (Ps. 72:16; Prov. 11:26; Joel 2:24; Amos 5:11). The Greek word for “wheat” is *sitos*. Wheat is an annual plant that grows about three feet tall. Its grains are hard when dried and easy to store in barns (Gen. 41:49; Matt. 3:12). Although the grain was used for food, it was important to retain some for sowing (Gen. 47:24). Palestine produced wheat of fine quality and in large quantities (Pss. 81:16; 147:14). Tares (Gk. *zizanion*) closely resembled wheat but were really weeds. When harvesttime was close, workers carefully weeded out tares from among the wheat (Matt. 13:25–40).

PLASTER In the ancient Near East, plaster was used to make a surface (typically a wall or floor) smooth, protected, appealing, or waterproof (Lev. 14:42; Dan. 5:5). Plaster could be made from clay, which was applied wet and left to bake in the sun. It could also be made from crushed and heated limestone or gypsum.

PLATE **(1)** A shallow vessel for holding food. **(2)** A small metal plaque engraved with the words "Holy to the LORD" and affixed to the front of the high priest's turban as a reminder of the holiness required by God (Exod. 28:36). **(3)** Metal sheets that Eleazar had fashioned from the censers of 250 men in the Korah rebellion who were consumed by fire from God. The sheets were overlaid on the altar as a sign warning the Israelites that only descendants of Aaron could burn incense before God (Num. 16:35–40).

PLATTER A large plate for serving food. The head of John the Baptist was placed on a platter and presented to the daughter of Herod's wife Herodias (Mark 6:25, 28). Jesus compared the Pharisees to a dirty platter (Luke 11:39 [NIV: "dish"]).



Depiction of John the Baptist's head on a platter (fifteenth century AD)

PLAY *See* Games.

PLEDGE The practice of giving and taking pledges as securities on loans was common in the ancient Near East, including Israel. One notable example is that of Judah, who gave the pledge of his seal and cord as well as his staff to Tamar until he could return and pay a goat from his flock (Gen. 38:17–20). Taking a pledge was acknowledged as an alternative to exacting interest from debtors (Exod. 22:25–26). The poor likely did not have the means to pay interest, and it was illegal to exact it from the poor or from one's kin (Lev. 25:35–38; Deut. 23:19). The giving of a pledge allowed the poor the opportunity to borrow. The practice was highly regulated in an attempt to protect the penurious of society. Some things were not to be taken as pledges because they were necessary for life. For example, an upper millstone could not be taken in pledge because of its necessity in food processing (Deut. 24:6). Some garments were acceptable as a pledge, but the widow's was exempt (Deut. 24:12–13, 17), and transgressors of this rule were condemned by the prophets (Ezek. 18:7, 12; Amos 2:8). To give a pledge or to be guarantor of a debt on behalf of someone else was not always considered wise and might result in loss unless immediate action was taken (Prov. 6:1–5; 22:26).

PLEIADES The Pleiades (the Seven Sisters) form a constellation of seven stars that the Bible always lists together with Orion, another star cluster that appears in close proximity in the night sky. Job 9:9 and Amos 5:8 mention the Pleiades and Orion as products of God's craftsmanship and evidence of his creative power. Job 38:31 adds the interesting detail that they are "bound" together by him. In Greek myth, Orion chased after seven sisters (the Pleiades) for five years, and Zeus turned both Orion and the daughters into stars just before he caught them.

PLOW An instrument and process used by farmers to break up ground in preparation for planting (Isa. 28:24; Hos. 10:11). The plow was made of wood (1 Kings 19:21), and the point was covered with a metal plowshare (Isa. 2:4; Joel 3:10) that required occasional sharpening (1 Sam. 13:20–21). Usually, plowmen used pairs of oxen (1 Kings 19:19; Job 1:14) to pull the plow, although one might harness single animals or other animals such as donkeys (Deut. 22:10), depending on the situation and resources. The busy time of plowing at the beginning of the rainy season (around November) required hard work (Exod. 34:21; Prov. 20:4) and commitment (Luke 9:62). One also finds the term "plow" used figuratively for creating or doing something (making trouble [Job 4:8]), often with the negative ideas of destruction (Jer. 26:18) or punishment (Ps. 129:3).

PLUMB LINE A cord with a weight attached to one end, to measure verticality, used in ancient construction. Appearing in five OT passages, a plumb line measures righteousness and signals God's commitment for renewal. In Amos 7:7–9 a plumb line in the hand of God communicates his judgment. In Zech. 4:10 a plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel brings rejoicing (NIV: "capstone"). A plumb line signals God's act of washing in 2 Kings 21:13. A plumb line in Isa. 28:17; 34:11 is righteousness and justice as well as desolation and chaos. While signaling an end, a plumb line also indicates a new beginning.

PLUNDER Property or persons taken by individuals after winning a battle. Plunder could include people or anything of value to the captors. Spoils are sometimes differentiated from plunder in that spoils are taken by the victorious nation as a right of conquest, whereas plunder is taken by individual soldiers. *See also* Spoils.

POCHERETH-HAZZEBAIM *See* Pokereth-Hazzebaim.

PODS Seed casings used as pig feed (Luke 15:16). The NIV provides the only other use of pods in

2 Kings 6:25, where most English versions read “dove’s dung.” The context suggests that whatever is in view has rising value during a famine. Thus, “dove’s dung” probably was a popular name for a plant normally considered inedible or at least distasteful.

POET Works from two Greek poets (Acts 17:28) provide Paul with expressions for this speech in Acts 17:24–31 at Athens. Opening words of the *Phaenomena* by Aratus and a paraphrase of the *Hymn to Zeus* by Cleanthes allude to a true and lofty note of spiritual devotion. Paul takes this praise and devotion offered by the Greek poets to their unknown or fictitious gods and bestows it upon the one true God, whom he declares to the people of Athens as creator, sustainer, ruler, father, and judge.

POETRY About a third of the OT is poetic. Poetry is a more elevated way of speaking and writing than prose. It is a departure from normal patterns of speech and exhibits a high degree of attention to literary artifice. In poetry, how something is said is as important as what is said. Poetry employs various poetic devices and conventions that are less frequent in or completely absent from ordinary speech. Among these are acrostic, inclusion, chiasm, succinctness, parallelism, and the heightened use of imagery (*see also* Acrostic).

Hebrew poetry also employs the full range of figures of speech, including metaphor, simile, synecdoche (substituting part for whole or vice versa, such as “set sail” or “lying in wait for blood”), anthimeria (substituting one part of speech for another, such as “let the dry appear”), merism (the whole expressed with two opposites, such as “day and night”), anthropomorphism, personification (“let the rivers clap their hands” [Ps. 98:8]), and so on.

INCLUSION AND CHIASM

Inclusion (or inclusio) is a structuring device whereby a unit of text begins and ends with the same or a very similar word or phrase. Thus the included material is bounded and defined as a unit of text. For example, Song 2:8–17 begins, “Listen! My beloved! Look! Here he comes, leaping across the mountains, bounding over the hills. My beloved is like a gazelle or a young stag,” and it ends, “Until the day breaks and the shadows flee, turn, my beloved, and be like a gazelle or like a young stag on the rugged hills.” This opening and closing with the same metaphor bounds the enclosed material as a unit of text. Another example is the way Prov. 1:2–7 (NRSV) begins and ends with the words “wisdom,” “instruction,” and “understanding/knowledge,” which delineates these verses as a block of text.

Chiasm (or chiasmus) is a way of organizing material whereby the second half of a text is a mirror image of the first half. “The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath” (Mark 2:27 pars.) can be diagrammed as A/B/B**I**/A**I**. More and more elaborate chiasms have been proposed for various parts of Scripture, with many elements on each side. The flood narrative, the Abraham cycle, the book of Ruth, and so on may be written to a chiastic structure.

SUCCINCTNESS AND IMAGERY

One of the characteristics of Hebrew poetry is its succinctness; it says a lot with a few words. One way this is accomplished is through the use of imagery. “The LORD is my rock” (Ps. 18:2) compresses volumes of theology into a single image, thus requiring far less verbosity than if the concept had been stated without imagery. However, the trade-off is that more is required of the reader. The reader must ask, “How is the LORD like a rock?” and fill in the blank. This is true also of other ways that poetry is succinct—for example, its tendency to leave out particles and connectives. For example, “The LORD is my shepherd, / I lack nothing" (Ps. 23:1) leaves out a needed conjunction between the two phrases, which the reader must supply. Is it "The LORD is my shepherd, *sooner or later* I shall need nothing"? "The LORD is my shepherd, *even so* I shall need nothing"? Or "The LORD is my shepherd, *therefore* I shall need nothing." The reader must decide the correct association between the two lines because the conjunction is purposely left out of the verse. Thus poetry engages the reader and must be read slowly and carefully.

PARALLELISM

The most recognizable feature of biblical poetry is the phenomenon of parallelism. This is the counterweight to succinctness. While poetry is designed to say much with few words, these words occur in line pairs, the second of which takes the thought further. For example, "Why do the nations conspire / and the peoples plot in vain?" (Ps. 2:1). Obviously, "nations" is parallel with "peoples," and "conspire" with "plot in vain." Line A and line B state in essence the same thought with different words, and they state it in the same way. This is called *synonymous* parallelism. "Lazy hands make for poverty, / but diligent hands bring wealth" (Prov. 10:4). In this verse, the parallel elements are opposites: lazy and diligent, poverty and wealth. This is called *antithetical* parallelism.

Sometimes, the second line completes the thought of the first line, forming *complementary* parallelism: "Israel, put your hope in the LORD / both now and forevermore" (Ps. 131:3). When a symbol is set in parallel with the thing symbolized, this is *emblematic* parallelism: "As the deer pants for streams of water, / so my soul pants for you, my God" (Ps. 42:1). Sometimes line B follows line A in time, forming *sequential* parallelism: "I call out to the LORD, / and he answers me from his holy mountain" (Ps. 3:4). When line B follows logically from line A, this is *consequential* parallelism: "In peace I will lie down and sleep, / for you alone, LORD, make me dwell in safety" (Ps. 4:8). Traditionally, when the relation between the lines does not fit into any defined category, the parallelism is called *synthetic*.

POISON Poisons in the OT generally derived from reptiles, insects, or other animals and caused inflammation, fever, and frequently death. Various poisonous snakes were found in Palestine (Num. 21:6; Deut. 8:15; 32:24, 33; Job 20:14, 16; Pss. 58:4; 140:3; Prov. 23:32; Isa. 14:29; Jer. 8:17; Mark 16:18; cf. Acts 28:1–6 [on Malta]). Several plants were known to be poisonous, though few are mentioned in Scripture (Deut. 29:18; Hos. 10:4). Job 6:4 refers to the use of poison-tipped arrows to increase potency of the weapon, probably used both in hunting and combat.

POKERETH-HAZZEBAIM An ancestor of a family that belonged to the "servants of Solomon" (Ezra 2:57; Neh. 7:59) and returned to Jerusalem and Judah from Babylon with Zerubbabel and others around 539 BC. Little is known about this group except that they likely performed menial functions at the temple, as they are grouped with the "temple servants" (*see* Nethinim). The name of the group suggests that they were formed during the period of Solomon, though they could have been so named because Solomon built the first temple.

POLL In the KJV, an archaic verb meaning "to shear hair," often done as a sign of mourning (2 Sam. 14:26; Ezek. 44:20; Mic. 1:16), or a noun referring to numbered heads (Num. 1:2, 18, 20, 22; 1 Chron. 23:3, 24). More recent translations (e.g., NIV) prefer "to trim" or "to make bald" and to list "one by one."

POLL TAX A "head" tax levied by a government, often following a census (see 2 Sam. 24:1–17; 1 Chron. 21:1–17). Taxes were levied against conquered peoples (2 Kings 15:19–20; 23:35). The Romans demanded tribute from every head (*tributum capitis*) annually (see Mark 12:13–17 pars.). The procurator (e.g., Pontius Pilate) or regional head (e.g., Herod Antipas) was responsible for collecting these taxes. Around the time of Jesus' birth, many Jews rebelled against the census and tax (Acts 5:37). According to Luke 2:1, Joseph and Mary came to Bethlehem near the time of Jesus' birth because of a census for tax purposes decreed by Caesar Augustus.

POLLUTION Oral, ceremonial, or physical defilement, desecration, corruption, contamination; to make morally, ceremonially, or physically unclean or impure; to make filthy (Num. 35:33; 2 Chron. 36:14; Ezra 2:62; Neh. 7:64; Ps. 106:38; Prov. 25:26; Isa. 24:5; Jer. 3:1, 2, 9; 16:18; Ezek. 23:30; Zeph. 3:1, 4; Mal. 1:7, 12; Acts 15:20; 2 Pet. 2:10, 20). The choice of "pollution/pollute" rather than a synonym is a translation decision. The word occurs many other places in certain versions.

Pollution in modern secular usage generally refers to the dirtying of environmental spaces as a result of human activity, for example, air and water pollution. Proverbs 25:26 employs this understanding. More generally, the stewardship mandate given to humanity by God in Gen. 2:15 provides biblical support for the importance of caring for the environment. This would include reducing or eliminating known polluting activities and cleaning up previously polluted spaces. *See also* Clean, Cleanness.

POLLUX One of the twin sons of the god Zeus, the other being Castor, who adorned the figurehead of the ship that conveyed Paul to Rome (Acts 28:11).

POLYGAMY *See* Marriage.

POMEGRANATE A fruit-bearing tree found in Palestine. Representations of pomegranates adorned Aaron's garments (Exod. 28:33–34) and the temple of Solomon (1 Kings 7:18–20). *See also* Flowers; Plants.

Pomegranate tree with fruit

POMMELS In 2 Chron. 4:13 the KJV translates the Hebrew word *gullah* as "pommel," referring to the “bowl-shaped capitals” (NIV) on top of the pillars at the temple.

POND A small body of still water. Ponds were collections of stagnant water, but they could also be reservoirs for storing water (Exod. 7:19; 8:5). In James 3:12 the “pond” (ESV [NIV: “spring”]) of freshwater contrasting salty water pictures how the human tongue should not contradict itself by praising God while cursing people. The term “pool” is also used of natural ponds (Ps. 107:35). *See also* Pool.

PONTIUS PILATE *See* Pilate, Pontius.

PONTUS The eastern half of the dual Roman province of Pontus and Bithynia. Pontus was the northeast region of Asia Minor (modern Turkey), north of the province of Galatia, on the south shore of the Black Sea. Its Persian dynasty under Mithridates VI ended with the Roman conquest by Pompey in 63 BC. Christianity spread to Pontus early: Jews from Pontus were present at Pentecost (Acts 2:9); Peter’s first letter addresses believers in Pontus (1 Pet. 1:1). Paul worked and traveled with Aquila (husband of Priscilla), a native of Pontus (Acts 18:2). The location and terrain of Pontus favored its prosperous trade economy.

POOL In the OT, “pool” has three basic meanings: (1) a reservoir for containing and conserving water for a community; typically rectangular or round, and if constructed, either hewn from rock or created by damming a dry streambed; it may be fed by an aqueduct (2 Sam. 2:13; 4:12; 1 Kings 22:38; 2 Kings 3:16; 18:17; 20:20; Neh. 2:14; 3:15–16; Eccles. 2:6; Song 7:4; Isa. 7:3; 22:9, 11; 36:2; Nah. 2:8); (2) a naturally occurring pond, lake, lagoon, or marsh characterized by still or slow-moving water and the presence of reeds and other water plants (Exod. 7:19; 8:5; Pss. 107:35; 114:8; Isa. 14:23; 35:7; 41:18; 42:15); (3) a ditch filled with water (2 Kings 3:16). Elsewhere in the OT, some English translators use “pool” in rendering a metaphor or phrase that could be expressed another way (Deut. 8:7; Ps. 84:6; Song 5:12; Jer. 41:12).

In the NT, “pool” occurs only in John’s Gospel, where it refers to two constructed reservoirs or bathing places in Jerusalem: the Pool of Bethesda (once associated with an *asclepeion*, or pagan healing temple) and the rock-cut Pool of Siloam. Jesus performed healing miracles in both places (John 5:2, 7; 9:7, 11). *See also* Bethesda; King’s Pool; Siloam.

POOR, ORPHAN, WIDOW Taken together “poor,” “orphan,” and “widow” are mentioned in the NIV 280 times, evidence of God’s particular concern for those in need. “Poor” is an umbrella term for those who are physically impoverished or of diminished spirit. In biblical terms, “poor” would include most orphans and widows, though not every poor person was an orphan or widow. With over 170 references to the “poor” in the NIV, the biblical writers emphasize God’s concern for the poor. This is best summarized in Deuteronomy: “There will always be poor people in the land. Therefore I command you to be openhanded toward your fellow Israelites who are poor and needy in your land” (15:11).

THE POOR

Old Testament. All sections of the OT (including the Torah, Major Prophets, Minor Prophets, and wisdom literature) contain both instructions and warnings regarding the treatment of the poor. Portions of the tithes and offerings were to be set aside for the needs of the poor (Deut. 14:28–29;

26:12–13). The law made specific provisions that allowed the poor in the land to glean from fields that they had not planted or tended (Lev. 19:9–10; 23:22). Boaz's allowance of Ruth's gleanings is an example (Ruth 2:7–8, 15, 23).

Favor was given to those who were kind to the poor (Job 29:12; 30:25; 31:16; Ps. 112:9; Prov. 19:17; 22:9; 28:8, 27; Isa. 58:5–7; Jer. 22:16). Inversely, those who did not care for the poor were strongly warned (Prov. 21:13; Ezek. 16:49; Amos 8:4–9). The OT often warns against oppression of the poor, with the added emphasis that God is their defender (2 Sam. 12:3–4; Job 20:19; Pss. 109:16; 140:12; Prov. 14:31; 23:11; Isa. 3:14). If a poor person made a vow, specific regulations were provided to prevent a pledge of unfair amount and to prevent the pledge from being kept overlong (Lev. 27:8; Deut. 24:12). Israelites who were hired as workers because they were impoverished were to be treated fairly and not as slaves (Lev. 25:39–42; Deut. 24:14–15). The poor were to be judged fairly, being shown neither favoritism nor oppression because of their situation (Exod. 23:3, 6; 30:15; Lev. 19:15; Job 34:19; Ps. 49:2; Isa. 10:2).

In addition, the poor were not to be disregarded in the Sabbath Year or Jubilee Year. During the Sabbath Year, the poor and the needy of the land were permitted to gather food from the land, including the fields, olive groves, and vineyards (Exod. 23:11). If a man became poor and was forced to sell his land, and if it was not redeemed by a family member, the land would be returned to the man during the Jubilee Year (Lev. 25:25–30). Also, if a man was forced to submit himself to being a hired worker, he would be redeemed in the Jubilee Year (Lev. 25:47–54).

New Testament. The NT advances the atmosphere of kindness and nonoppression toward the poor and those in need found in the OT. The NT church was marked by such a real and selfless generosity that its members sold their own possessions and gave to "anyone who had need" (Acts 2:45). The poor were to be treated with generosity, and needs were to be addressed whenever they were discovered (Matt. 19:21; Luke 3:11; 11:41; 12:33; 14:13; 19:8; Acts 6:1; 9:36; Rom. 15:26; Gal. 2:10).

Kindness to the poor was regarded as a natural manifestation of the love of God. Several NT writers considered a lack of concern and kindness toward the poor in a believer's life cause to question the authenticity of that person's faith (James 2:15–16; 1 John 3:17–18).

Furthermore, because of the incarnation of Christ, in which the almighty God chose to dwell with humanity, distinctions between believers on the basis of material wealth and, more specifically, favoritism toward the rich were expressly forbidden by the NT writers (1 Cor. 11:20–22; Phil. 2:1–8; James 2:1–4).

ORPHANS

Other specific biblical instructions regarding people in need concern those without parents and especially those without a father. Such individuals are referred to as "fatherless." As with the provisions made for the poor, oppression of orphans or the fatherless was strictly forbidden (Exod. 22:22; Deut. 24:17; 27:19; Isa. 1:17; 10:1–2; Zech. 7:10). Furthermore, God is often referred to as the provider and helper of the orphan or fatherless (Deut. 10:18; Pss. 10:14, 18; 68:5; 146:9; Jer. 49:11). Jesus promised not to leave his followers as "orphans," implying that he would not leave them unprotected (John 14:18). In one of the clearest statements of how Christian belief is to manifest itself, James states, "Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world" (James 1:27). (*See also* Fatherless.)

WIDOWS

Since widows are bereft of their husbands and thus similar to orphans in vulnerability and need, they are the beneficiaries of special provisions in both Testaments. Oppression was forbidden (Exod. 22:22), provisions were to be given in similar fashion to that of the poor and orphans (Deut. 24:19–21), and ample warnings were given to those who would deny justice to widows (Deut. 27:19). Jesus raised a widow's son from death (Luke 7:14–15), a miracle especially needed because she lacked provision after her only son's death. The apostle Paul gave specific rules to Timothy regarding who should be placed on the list of widows to receive daily food: they must be over sixty years old and must have been faithful to their husbands (1 Tim. 5:9). In the book of Revelation, a desolate city without inhabitants is aptly described as a "widow" (18:7). (*See also* Widow.)

POOR IN SPIRIT In the Bible, the "poor" may also be understood as "beggars," describing those in an extreme state of deprivation, destitute, completely dependent on others for survival (Exod. 23:11; Isa. 14:30; Luke 16:20). Jesus pronounces blessing upon the "poor in spirit" and claims that they possess the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 5:3; cf. Luke 6:20). The qualifier "in spirit" invites disciples to see God as their merciful provider and, in turn, to extend that mercy to others (Matt. 6:1–4).

PORATHA One of Haman's ten sons, who were killed by the Jews during the reign of the Persian king Xerxes (Ahasuerus), who had granted them permission to "destroy, kill and annihilate" their enemies (Esther 8:11). At the request of Esther, the king ordered that the corpses of Poratha and his brothers be hung in public display (9:7–14).

PORCH In the OT, a covered area in front of the entrance to a building. "Porch" is but one translation for a Hebrew word (*'elam*) that can also refer to the portico of classical architecture, often featuring a colonnade. It may also indicate a vestibule, lobby, hall, or passage between the outer and inner entrances of a building. Depending upon the preference of the translator, these English words are used somewhat interchangeably (see 1 Kings 6:3; 7:6–8, 12, 19, 21; 1 Chron. 28:11; 2 Chron. 3:4; 8:12; 15:8; 29:7, 17; Ezek. 8:16; 40; 44:3; 46:2, 8; Joel 2:17). In the NT, "porch" (*stoa*) is used four times in certain translations as a specific reference to a portico or colonnade (John 5:2; 10:23; Acts 3:11; 5:12 [NIV: "colonnade"]). In other places, it is more generally synonymous with an entrance, gateway, or forecourt (Matt. 26:71 [*pylōn*]; Mark 14:68 [*proaulion*]).

PORCIUS FESTUS *See* Festus.

PORCUPINE The Hebrew word *qippod* is sometimes translated as "porcupine" (e.g., Isa. 14:23 NLT; Isa. 34:11 ESV; Zeph. 2:14 ASV). The crested porcupine, a large rodent with long, sharp, defensive quills on its back, is indigenous to the Middle East. However, the other creatures mentioned in these verses are birds. The KJV translates the Hebrew word as "bittern," but more likely it refers to some kind of owl (as in the NIV).

PORPHYRY **(1)** A third-century philosopher and strong opponent of Christianity. His anti-Christian writings influenced later critics of Christianity but have survived only in fragments. **(2)** A red or purple stone. In Esther 1:6 it constitutes part of the mosaic pavement upon which Xerxes (Ahasuerus) set "couches of gold and silver" during his propagandistic seven-day feast.

PORPOISE *See* Leather.

PORTER In older versions of the Bible, the translation for words meaning “gatekeeper” (e.g., 2 Sam. 18:26; 2 Kings 7:10–11; 1 Chron. 9:17–18; Ezra 2:42; John 10:3); also “doorkeeper” (Mark 13:34 [NIV: “the one at the door”]).

PORTICO *See* Arch.

PORTION The word “portion” is used to translate several Hebrew words that denote a given share in a variety of things, such as sacrificial meat (Exod. 29:26), delicacies (Esther 2:9), food (Prov. 31:15), booty (Gen. 14:24), and land (Josh. 14:4). Also, it is often used figuratively. God’s chosen people are identified as God’s portion (Deut. 32:9; Ps. 119:57). For the Levites, who did not receive an inheritance, God is their portion (Num. 18:20). To say that someone has a portion in or with another person is an idiomatic expression for membership in that person’s community. Sheba said in rebellion, “We have no portion in David” (2 Sam. 20:1 NRSV). The Transjordanian tribes built an altar as a witness to their faith because they worried that the Cisjordan tribes might later say, “You have no portion in the LORD” (Josh. 22:27 NRSV). When Peter refused to allow Jesus to wash his feet, Jesus said to him, “Unless I wash you, you have no part with me” (John 13:8). Wisdom literature often designates one’s lot in life as one’s portion (Job 20:29; Ps. 17:14; Eccles. 3:22; 5:18; 9:9; Wis. 2:9).

POSSESSION, DEMON *See* Demonic Possession.

POSTEXILIC This term means “after the exile.” The postexilic period began with the decree of the Persian emperor Cyrus in 539 BC allowing the Jews to return to their land from the Babylonian captivity (Ezra 1:1–4). The returnees are referred to as the postexilic community and the period as the Second Temple period, for it was at this time that the temple was rebuilt.

POTENTATE One possessing great power and authority. The term is used of God in the KJV of 1 Tim. 6:15, and the same Greek word, *dynastēs*, is used of human beings in positions of power or authority (Luke 1:52; Acts 8:27).

POTIPHAR The royal official of Pharaoh who purchased Joseph as a slave from Ishmaelite traders (Gen. 37:36). When Potiphar saw that God was giving Joseph great success in his endeavors, he entrusted Joseph with managing all his possessions. Potiphar’s wife took advantage of Joseph’s independence and made repeated sexual advances toward him, but Joseph remained faithful to his master, even to the point of running away from Potiphar’s wife (Gen. 39:12). Potiphar threw Joseph into prison when his wife lied and said that it was Joseph, not she, who had been the aggressor (Gen. 39:16–20).

POTIPHERA A priest in the Egyptian city of On (better known as Heliopolis, “city of the sun” [cf. Jer. 43:13]), his name means “he whom Re [the sun god] has given.” He became Joseph’s father-in-law when his daughter, Asenath, was given in marriage to Joseph by Pharaoh (Gen. 41:45), and then he was the grandfather of their sons, Manasseh and Ephraim (Gen. 41:45; 46:20).

POTSHERD A broken piece of pottery that is essentially useless. Because of the easy availability and cheap cost of pottery in the ancient Near East and pottery's relative fragility, broken pottery was common. Potsherds are mentioned a few times in the Bible. Job used a potsherd to scrape his skin when he was infected with skin sores (Job 2:8). The gate near the Valley of Ben Hinnom was called the "Potsherd Gate" (Jer. 19:2). It is at this place that Jeremiah smashed a clay pot into potsherds to warn the people of God's wrath.

Although potsherds were rubbish in the ancient Near East, today their archaeological significance is immense. Because of the profusion of pottery in the ancient Near East, potsherds are extant at every level of an archaeological dig. Pottery now provides the best and easiest way to date a particular level of an archaeological site, and because it is rare to find intact vessels, most dating in archaeology is based on potsherds. With today's sophisticated system of dating pottery, potsherds can help date any ancient Near Eastern site usually to within fifty to a hundred years.

Potsherds also often functioned as an easy surface on which to write. This writing was accomplished by scratching the surface of the broken pottery. This practice contributes to the wealth of archaeological information gained from potsherds. Potsherds that have writing on them are called "ostraca," and these are the most common form of writing found at archaeological digs. Because they often only contain a couple of words or at most a couple of sentences, they often are difficult to translate due to the lack of context. Some of the most interesting and famous ostraca are the "Lachish letters," written by a military officer named Hoshaiah to his superior, Joash, who was stationed at Lachish shortly before its conquest by the Babylonians in 587/586 BC. *See also* Pottery.

POTTAGE This term is used in the KJV to refer to a vegetable porridge usually made with lentils, beans, and peas. Esau relinquished his birthright for this humble and common meal prepared by Jacob (Gen. 25:29–34). Elisha converted a bad stew into a wholesome meal, serving it to the sons of the prophets (2 Kings 4:38–41). In Haggai, pottage is one of the things used in an illustration about holiness versus defilement (Hag. 2:12).

POTTER'S FIELD A burial ground for foreigners outside Jerusalem. The land was purchased with the thirty pieces of silver that Judas received for betraying Jesus (Matt. 27:3–10; Acts 1:18–19), though it is unclear whether it was the priests or Judas who made the purchase. The silver was "blood money" because it had been used to arrange for Jesus' death, and so it could not go back into the temple treasury. Therefore, it was used to purchase the plot of land, most likely from a potter. It is identified with the "Field of Blood" (Matt. 27:8; Acts 1:19 [Aram. "Akeldama"]).

POTTERY

POTTERY IN THE BIBLE

The Bible contains numerous references to pottery, pottery making, and potters. Clay pottery was the most common and easiest way to cook food and to carry liquids throughout biblical times. Only pots used for very special occasions and locations (such as the temple) were made out of a material (usually some metal) other than clay (Exod. 38:3). Clay was the preferable material because it was freely obtained, easy to manipulate, and required little technology to make. The downside of pottery is that it is easily broken and thus rendered useless. Evidence of the abundance and affordability of pottery is seen in the instructions to break ceremonially unclean pottery rather than wash it (Lev. 15:12). Although cooking was the primary purpose for pottery, it could be used for a variety of applications, including storing items, carrying water, making lamps, and forming idols.

Pottery and the manufacture of pottery occasionally took on symbolic connotations in the Bible. For example, in the psalms broken pottery symbolizes the life of the psalmist as he cries to God for help (Ps. 31:12). In another psalm the psalmist envisions God destroying the nations that plot against God like someone who shatters pottery (2:9). Isaiah likens Egypt's strength, in which Judah trusts more than in God, to pottery ready to be shattered (Isa. 30:14). Similarly, Jeremiah says that the leaders of Judah will be punished and will "fall and be shattered like fine pottery" (Jer. 25:34 NIV mg.). Isaiah also uses several other metaphors related to pottery. He says that God treads on rulers like a potter treads on clay, getting it soft and prepared for making pottery (Isa. 41:25). Isaiah also likens those who complain to God to pieces of broken pottery trying to tell the potter how to make pots (45:9).

Both Isaiah and Jeremiah liken people to clay in God's hand. Isaiah says, "We are the clay, you are the potter; we are all the work of your hand" (Isa. 64:8). Jeremiah says essentially the same thing, but instead of using Isaiah's positive tone, he sees the human molding process to be a difficult and dangerous one that can result in the potter rejecting the creation (Jer. 18:1–10). Jeremiah buys a pot, takes it to a gate in the city, the Potsherd Gate (a potsherd is a broken and useless piece of pottery), and smashes the pot symbolically to demonstrate how God feels about Judah (Jer. 19). Jeremiah's choice of the Potsherd Gate was also part of the symbolism, as it is likely that most of the pottery in Jerusalem was made near or at the Potsherd Gate. The apostle Paul creates a similar metaphor, describing how a potter is able to take the same lump of clay and make different kinds of pots, some of which have special uses, and others common uses. Paul implies that God has the right to determine how and for what purpose he creates humans because he is like the potter with the clay (Rom. 9:21). Paul also refers to humans as clay jars with treasure in them (2 Cor. 4:7).

In another example, after the destruction of Jerusalem the people in captivity lament that they are simply like earthen pots before God (Lam. 4:2), suggesting that they are ready to receive the punishment that God has chosen for them to endure. Job also wonders if God has molded him like clay only then to turn him back into dust (Job 10:9).

A pottery juglet from the ancient site of Ai (3500–2000 BC)

MANUFACTURE OF POTTERY

Preparing the clay. Before any pottery can be made, the clay must be gathered and prepared for use. Clay collected from different geographical areas will have different levels of pure clay and other earthen materials. Pure clay is very difficult to work with, but it produces some of the smoothest and strongest pots. Most of the clay used in Palestine was not of superior quality, and so most often imperfections developed in the pots as they were being made. We also know that during the time of the late monarchy, potters in Israel tended to mix clay with different kinds of sand to produce better results. With today’s advanced forensic technology, it often can be determined where the clay used to make a pot was harvested. Because it was generally impractical to transport clay any long distance, this sort of analysis can also be helpful in determining the origin of the pot. Once the clay was harvested, depending on its quality and use, it was often necessary to prepare the clay by kneading or treading it. This process was vital for removing any impurities in the clay as well as making it malleable.

Shaping. Historically, the first pottery molded was made by hand and dried in the sun. Nothing is known about the role of these early potters and whether they were highly regarded in society. Many scholars believe that early pottery was made by women, to be used for very practical purposes such as cooking and carrying water. It is fairly easy to determine the gender of the potter by measuring the natural hand and finger marks left in the clay and comparing their size in relationship to the average size of both men's and women's hands. These rudimentary pots usually were made by laying coils of clay one upon another.

Although it is not certain, the profession of being a potter likely did not develop until the invention of the potter's wheel. The potter's wheel allowed the potter to create more-sophisticated pottery and also gave the potter the ability to mass-produce pots. Several examples of potter's wheels have been excavated dating to around 3500–3000 BC in Sumer and Ur. Most potter's wheels during biblical times consisted of two wheels. A larger and heavier wheel was placed close to the ground, with a pole in the center of this wheel going up to a second, smaller, and lighter wheel supported by a table. The potter used his or her foot to move the larger wheel, which turned the smaller wheel. It is also possible that an apprentice turned the larger wheel. As the technology developed, sometimes two potter's wheels were connected to one larger wheel so that two pots could be created at the same time.

Another method for making clay items was the use of press molds. Press molds were used to fashion clay by pushing the clay into the mold and then allowing it to dry. As the clay dried, it shrank and pulled away from the mold and could easily be removed from the mold. This method was used for molding figurines (most often used as household idols) and small oil lamps, which often were made of two molded pieces fused together.

Decorating and firing. Once a pot was finished being shaped, either on a wheel or in a mold, it often was decorated. The pot often was painted with pigment made from earth. Different painting styles can help in identifying a pot's place of origin. Another common decoration method was to imprint the pot with different seals, symbols, or patterns. This was done by using a wooden or metal tool and pressing it into the wet clay. Examples of this method include several pots found at Gibeon stamped with what appear to be royal seals, which likely indicate that the pots and their contents belonged to the king. Much of the pottery from in and around Jerusalem has a red burnish applied to seal the pot and to add a smooth finish to the outside. By the time of the monarchy, potters were very sophisticated in their choice of materials and often had some of the materials, such as special sands, imported from a considerable distance. These sands added to the smoothness of the fired pot by creating a glaze on it.

Once the decoration of the pot was finished, the pot was dried in order to reveal any imperfections. If any imperfections were observed during drying, the pot was discarded. If no imperfections were seen, the pot was then fired. Depending on the potter's resources and the technology the potter knew, the firing process could be as simple as placing the pot in a hot fire or could include the use of sophisticated kilns capable of producing extremely high and even heat. Firing a pot was extremely difficult, because ideally the heat is kept at a constant temperature throughout the process, which was not an easy task when using an open flame for the heating source. Because the process of firing pots was a well-guarded trade secret, we know few details of how pots were fired during biblical times.

TYPES OF POTTERY

There are several general categories of pottery, which are based on their characteristics and intended uses. Of course, for some extant examples of pottery from archaeological digs, their usage cannot be determined. Tableware included cups, plates, bowls, and jugs. These items tended to be more decorated than other pottery, much like tableware today tends to be more decorative than cooking pots. Cooking pots included pots with small, narrow rims and flat, open pans for frying and uncovered cooking. Storage vessels came in all sizes: pithoi, jars (two-handled), jugs (one-handled), smaller jugs (with no handles), and very small vessels for perfumes and other valuable liquids. Also, it is not unusual to find various sizes of lamps.

IMPORTANCE OF POTTERY FOR ARCHAEOLOGY

Pottery has become an important dating tool for archaeologists. While written texts do provide more archaeological data than pottery and religious or cultural artifacts can be more visually interesting, it is pottery that helps the archaeologist piece all the information together.

History of dating pottery. While doing archaeological work in Egypt, Flinders Petrie noticed that for different time periods of Egyptian history there were different kinds of pottery, with very distinct and identifiable characteristics. These identifiable pottery characteristics included things such as the thickness of the wall of the pot, the type of rim or lip on the pot, the pot's handles, and any special decorative elements. These characteristics, Petrie discovered, could be used to date sites that had no other dating information. Petrie carefully logged each piece of pottery found at each site and over time developed an extensive catalog of pottery types and their respective dating. Later, while digging at Tell el-Hesi in Palestine, Petrie noticed that each layer, or stratum, of the tell (archaeological mound) had a different type of pottery, much like the different kinds of pottery he had noticed in Egypt. Because of his careful and painstaking work in Egypt, Petrie also noticed that the different types of pottery in Palestine were similar to those that he had uncovered in Egypt. As a result, Petrie was able to develop a chronology of pottery that could be used to date different archaeological digs and strata in the entire ancient Near East. Later, W. F. Albright expanded on Petrie's work by adding several sublayers and further refining the dating of each time period of pottery.

To help explain this significant discovery, L. E. Stager uses the example of how bottles for soft drinks have changed over the years. For example, he notes that when soda bottles were first mass-marketed, the writing on the bottle was part of the glass with raised letters. Over time the bottle changed and evolved; different types of writing were used on glass bottles until ultimately the bottles were smooth and the words were painted on them. In more recent years soda bottles have been made of plastic. This evolution of the soda bottle can roughly illustrate the changes in pottery over time. Because this method of dating depends on a catalog of documented pottery, it requires that all pottery found, no matter how insignificant, be cataloged and recorded so that others can compare the pottery finds from one place with those in other places.

Time periods. In the dating of ancient Near Eastern pottery, history is divided into broad time periods that are then further subdivided. The Middle Bronze Age (c. 2200–1550 BC) encompasses the time of the earliest biblical stories, including perhaps the stories of the patriarchs. During this period and the Early Bronze Age (c. 3300–2200 BC), the artisanship evident in the pottery was limited, and pots had little or no decoration; however, the skill applied to the vessels had improved dramatically from the prior period, the Chalcolithic (4500–3300 BC). These vessels show thin walls and evidence of mass production.

The Late Bronze Age (c. 1550–1200 BC), which likely includes the time of Moses and perhaps Joshua, shows an unusual and dramatic decrease in the quality of local Canaanite pottery. There is no known explanation for this deterioration, but it is evident. At the same time, pottery from other coastal regions, especially Mycenaean Greece and Crete, is very common, and pots from these locations are quite sophisticated and highly decorated. This indicates that during this time there was a strong cultural influence from these areas. Some have suggested that this is due to the colonization of parts of

Palestine by the Sea Peoples, who perhaps are the Philistines of biblical history.

The Iron Age (c. 1200–586 BC), which encompasses the time period from the Israelite conquest and settlement through the monarchy, demonstrates more low-quality pottery, especially early in this period. In contrast with the examples of pottery manufactured locally at Israelite sites, Philistine pottery is quite sophisticated, highly decorated with red and black duotones in geometric patterns. The later pottery of the monarchy shows much more skill and sophistication.

The Persian (539–332 BC), Hellenistic (332–63 BC), and Roman periods (after 63 BC) conclude the biblical periods. Each of these periods is dominated by the aesthetics and quality of the invading countries' pottery. By this time, trade routes were strongly established, and so the invaders, it appears, flooded the markets with their pottery, often to the detriment of the local potters.

POVERTY *See* Poor, Orphan, Widow.

POWER A synonym of "strength." "Power" often translates the Hebrew words *koakh* or *'az* or the Greek word *dynamis*, all of which denote strength or might. The Hebrew word *yad* ("hand") may also denote power when it is used to speak of the dominion of a ruler (e.g., 2 Kings 17:7 [NASB: "hand of Pharaoh"; NIV: "power of Pharaoh"]).

Although humans have a degree of power, God is omnipotent, all-powerful (Jer. 32:17). He utilized his great power in creating the world (Jer. 51:15; Rom. 1:20; Rev. 4:11). He has also displayed his power through other mighty acts, such as delivering the Israelites from Egypt (Exod. 14:31; Deut. 9:26). The wisdom literature extols God's power (Job 9:4; Pss. 20:6; 66:3; 147:5), as do the prophets (Isa. 40:10; Jer. 27:5; Dan. 2:20; Nah. 1:3) and the letters of the NT (1 Cor. 6:14; Eph. 1:18–21; Col. 2:10). God continues to display his power through the gospel (Rom. 1:16), not only in rescuing believers from their sins (1 Cor. 1:24–25) but also in empowering them to live holy lives (2 Cor. 4:7).

The Holy Spirit has acted and continues to act as the agent of God's power (Judg. 14:6; 1 Sam. 16:13; Acts 1:8). Just as the Holy Spirit has done many powerful signs and wonders through Jesus and the apostles (Acts 10:38; Rom. 15:18–19), he gives rebirth to each Christian through his power (Gal. 4:29). The Holy Spirit also strengthens Christians with power "so that Christ may dwell in [their] hearts through faith" (Eph. 3:17).

PRAETORIAN GUARD The elite bodyguard maintained at Rome by the emperors, starting with Augustus. Beginning with nine cohorts of approximately five hundred men each, they grew to sixteen cohorts of one thousand men under Vitellius. Domitian maintained ten cohorts, or approximately ten thousand men, which then became the standard. Each cohort was led by a tribune and divided into six centuries, each led by a centurion. The guard was abolished in AD 312 after Constantine defeated Maxentius.

During the Julio-Claudian age (AD 27–68), the guard's duties were primarily ceremonial; they served as a guard for the emperor at his palace in Rome and also on state occasions. The praetorian guard served shorter terms than the soldiers of the Roman army, the legionaries (sixteen versus twenty-five years), and enjoyed greater pay and more splendid uniforms.

When Paul was placed under house arrest in Rome after having appealed to Caesar, he had a soldier guarding him (Acts 28:16). It was often the praetorians who were given the duty of guarding prisoners. Paul relates in the Letter to the Philippians that because of his imprisonment, the cause of Christ had become known throughout "the whole praetorian guard" (Phil. 1:13 NASB [NIV: "palace guard”]).

PRAETORIUM The official residence of a Roman governor, military commander, or official. In the Gospel accounts, the praetorium of Pontius Pilate in Jerusalem is the location of some of the beatings, mockings, and trials of Jesus (Matt. 27:27–31; Mark 15:16–20; John 18:28–19:15). The precise location of the Jerusalem praetorium is uncertain. Some identify it as the Antonia Fortress, on the northern edge of the temple area, while others have concluded that it was the palace of Herod the Great in the western part of the city. Paul was held in the praetorium in Caesarea for two years while awaiting trial (Acts 23:33–26:32). The term could also be used of the praetorian guard, Caesar’s personal troops. This seems to be the meaning in Phil. 1:12–13, where Paul (probably writing from imprisonment in Rome) says, “It has become clear throughout the whole palace guard [*praitōrion*] and to everyone else that I am in chains for Christ.”

PRAISE It is hard to offer a simple definition of praise because multiple words are used in the Bible to describe praise and its many different forms. The physical aspects of praise include bowing (1 Chron. 29:20), kneeling (Ps. 95:6), singing (Ps. 96:2), being quiet (Ps. 131:2), making noise (Luke 19:37), opening hands (1 Kings 8:54), lifting hands (Ps. 134:2), meditating (Ps. 145:5), exulting (Ps. 21:13), and living an obedient life before God (Rom. 15:7). The emotive aspects of praise include adoration (Ps. 9:1), prayer (Ps. 66:20), thanksgiving (Ps. 69:30), and joy (Ps. 71:23). Furthermore, praise can be given in any location and at any time. Finally, God is to be praised because of his creation, his good works, his love, and the life, death, and resurrection of his Son.

Generally, praise acknowledges and thanks God for all the good things in life. The Bible is full of examples of such praise; best known are the numerous psalms of praise in the Psalter. The Hebrew expression *hallelu yah* literally means “praise the Lord” and is used in both Testaments (Gk. *hallēlouia*). In the OT, God is portrayed as jealous for the praise of his people (Isa. 42:8); God is supposed to be the only object of praise. Conversely, Jesus cautions his followers to seek praise from God rather than from other humans (Matt. 6:1–4).

Not only are humans to be active in giving praise to God, but also all creation, including the sun, the moon, and the stars (Pss. 19:1–3; 148), takes part. The final psalm in the Psalter encourages “everything that has breath [to] praise the LORD” (Ps. 150:6). Throughout the OT praise was an important part of the tabernacle and temple worship, with specific people being assigned the duty of making music and singing praises to God (1 Chron. 6:31–32). Moses and Miriam broke into spontaneous praise after the Israelites had crossed the Red Sea and seen the Egyptians drowned (Exod. 15:1–21). David praised God not only in words but also in dance (2 Sam. 6:14). The angels praised God during the announcement of Jesus’ birth (Luke 2:13). Both James and Peter encouraged Christians to praise God in spite of their external circumstances (James 5:13; 1 Pet. 4:16). Revelation records the praising of God forever as one of the final eschatological events (19:1–10).

PRAYER A distinction needs to be made between the various occurrences of the words “pray” and “prayer” in most translations of the Bible and the modern connotation of the same words. In the OT, the main Hebrew words translated as “to pray” and “prayer” (*palal* and *tepillah*) refer to the act of bringing a petition or request before God. They do not normally, if ever, refer to the other elements that we today think of as being included in the act of praying, such as praise or thanksgiving. The same is the case in the NT, where the main Greek words translated “to pray” and “prayer” (*proseuchomai* and *proseuchē*) also specifically denote making a petition or request to God. But other words and constructions in both Testaments are also translated "to pray" and "prayer," and this article will deal with the larger concept, including praise, thanksgiving, petition, and confession, as opposed to the narrower meaning of the particular Hebrew and Greek terms (*see also* Praise; Thanksgiving; Worship).

Sumerian statue of a worshiper in prayer (c. 2400 BC)

Old Testament

In the OT there is no language or understanding comparable to modern ways of talking about prayer as conversational or dialogical. Prayer does not involve mutuality. Prayer is something that humans offer to God, and the situation is never reversed; God does not pray to humans. Understanding this preserves the proper distinction between the sovereign God and the praying subject. Therefore, prayers in the OT are reverential. Some OT prayers have extended introductions, such as that found in Neh. 1:5, that seem to pile up names for God. These should be seen as instances not of stiltedness or ostentation, but rather as setting up a kind of "buffer zone" in recognition of the distance between the Creator and the creature. In the NT, compare the same phenomenon in Eph. 1:17.

Many of the prayers in the OT are explicitly set in a covenantal context. God owes nothing to his creatures, but God has sworn to be faithful to those with whom he has entered into covenant. Thus, many OT prayers specifically appeal to the covenant as a motivation for both those praying and God's answering (1 Kings 8:23–25; Neh. 1:5–11; 9:32; Pss. 25:10–11; 44:17–26; 74:20; 89:39–49). In postexilic books such as Ezra, Nehemiah, and Daniel, an important feature in the recorded prayers is the use of prior Scripture, praying God's words (many times covenantal) back to him (in the NT, see Acts 4:24–30). Also, the closeness engendered by the covenant relationship between God and his people was unique in the ancient Near Eastern context. So Moses can marvel, "What other nation is so great as to have their gods near them the way the LORD our God is near us whenever we pray to him?" (Deut. 4:7).

Prayer must be made from a heart that is right toward God. There is no guarantee that God will hear every prayer (Ps. 66:18; Prov. 1:28; Isa. 1:15; 59:2). For the most part, the "rightness" that God requires in prayer is "a broken and contrite heart" (Ps. 51:17; cf. Isa. 66:2).

Although several passages talk about prayer in the context of sacrifice (e.g., Gen. 13:4), there is surprisingly little emphasis on prayer in the legal texts about sacrifice in the Pentateuch, no prescriptions for the kinds of prayer or the words that are to be said in connection with the sacrifices. Interestingly, however, in later, perhaps postexilic contexts, where there is no temple and therefore no sacrifice, we find texts such as Ps. 141:2, where the petitioner asks God to accept prayer as if it were an offering of incense and the evening sacrifice (cf. Prov. 15:8; in the NT, see Rev. 5:8).

A presupposition of prayer in the OT is that God hears prayer and may indeed answer and effect the change being requested. Prayer is not primarily about changing the psychological state or the heart of the one praying, but rather about God changing the circumstances of the one praying.

There is a striking honesty, some would even say brashness, evident in many OT prayers. Jeremiah laments that God has deceived both the people (Jer. 4:10) and Jeremiah himself (20:7) and complains about God's justice (12:1–4). Job stands, as it were, in God's face and demands that the Almighty answer his questions (Job 31:35–37). The psalmist accuses God of having broken his covenant promises (Ps. 89:39). While it is true that God does, to some extent, rebuke Jeremiah and Job (Jer. 12:5; Job 38–42), he does not ignore them or cast them aside. This would seem, ultimately, to encourage such honesty and boldness on the part of those who pray.

Literarily, accounts of prayers in narratives serve to provide characterizations of the ones praying. The recorded prayers of people such as Abraham, Moses, Hannah, Ezra, and Nehemiah demonstrate their true piety and humility before God. By contrast, the prayer of Jonah recorded in Jon. 2, in its narrative context, betrays a certain hypocrisy on the part of the reluctant prophet.

NEW TESTAMENT

The depiction of prayer in the NT is largely consistent with that of the OT, but there are important developments.

Jesus tells his disciples to address God as "Father" (Matt. 6:9; cf. Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:6). Although recent scholarship has demonstrated that "Abba" is not the equivalent of our "daddy," it expresses a certain intimacy that goes beyond what was prevalent at the time, but retains an element of reverence as well. God is not just "Father," but "our Father in heaven" (Matt. 6:9). Even Jesus addresses God as “Holy Father” (John 17:11), “Righteous Father” (John 17:25), and “Father, Lord of heaven and earth” (Matt. 11:25). And Paul, as mentioned earlier, uses a buffer zone, rarely in his epistles using the word “Father” by itself, but instead referring to “God our Father” (e.g., Rom. 1:7) and frequently using the phrase “the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ” (Rom. 15:6; 2 Cor. 1:3; 11:31; Eph. 1:3; cf. Eph. 1:17; Col. 1:3). God is our Father, but still he is a Father before whom one reverently kneels (Eph. 3:14).

Prayer to God is now to be made in the name of Jesus (Matt. 18:19–20; John 14:13; 15:16; 16:23–26). While there is some debate as to the exact nuance of this idea, it seems clear that, at the very least, prayers in Jesus’ name need to be ones that Jesus would affirm and are in accordance with his holy character and expressed will. It is, in essence, saying to God that the prayer being offered is one that Jesus would approve.

Prayer can also be made to Jesus (John 14:14), and such devotion to him in the early church is evidence of his being regarded as deity. The instances of this in the NT are rare, however, and generally either exclamatory or rhetorical (Acts 7:59; 1 Cor. 16:22; Rev. 22:20). The norm would still seem to be that prayer is to be made to the Father, through Jesus’ name.

Unlike anything prior in the OT, Jesus tells his followers to pray for their enemies (Matt. 5:44). Jesus and his followers serve as examples (Luke 23:34; Acts 7:60).

The Holy Spirit plays a vital role in prayers. It is by him that we are able to call out, “Abba, Father” (Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:6). The Spirit himself intercedes for us (Rom. 8:26). Our praying is to be done in the Spirit (Eph. 6:18; Jude 20; possibly 1 Cor. 14:15).

Jesus encourages fervent and even continual or repeated prayer (Luke 18:1–8), but not showy or repetitive prayer (Matt. 6:5–8).

Jesus becomes the model of prayer. He prays before important decisions (Luke 6:12–13) and in connection with significant crisis points (Matt. 14:23; 26:36–44; Luke 3:21; 9:29; John 12:27). He offers prayers that are not answered (Luke 22:41–44) and prayers that are (Heb. 5:7). Even as he tells his disciples to always pray and not give up (Luke 18:1 [which is also the meaning of the sometimes overly literalized “pray without ceasing” in 1 Thess. 5:17 NRSV]), so he himself wrestles in prayer (Luke 22:41–44; Heb. 5:7). He has prayed for his disciples (John 17; Luke 22:32), and even now, in heaven, he still intercedes for us (Heb. 7:25). Indeed, our intercession before God’s throne is valid because his is (Heb. 4:14–16).

PREACHING In the early church, preaching often took place in a missionary context (e.g., Acts 10:34–43). An impressive variety of words is used to describe preaching to unbelievers, including the following: “evangelize” (*euangelizomai* [Acts 8:4, 12, 25, 35, 40]), “announce” (*anangello* [Acts 20:20]), “proclaim” (*kēryssō* [Acts 8:5]), and “persuade” (*peithō* [Acts 19:8, 26]). Preaching to believers also took place, in a worship context. This article highlights the latter context.

INFLUENCES ON PREACHING

From its inception, a core component of Christian worship was the public proclamation of a word from God. What form early Christian preaching took in the worship assembly is unclear. However, three elements seem most influential in its development: the practice of prophesying, the practices of the synagogue, and the tradition of Greco-Roman rhetoric.

Prophesying. The practice of prophesying in the public assembly appears to be an early form of preaching. Paul makes reference to prophets speaking in the church in Corinth (1 Cor. 11–14). Prophecy was that form of communication in which a word of God, a revelation, was shared and the church was edified (1 Cor. 11:4–5; 14:1, 3–5, 26, 29–31, 39). Others in the worship community tested the prophetic message to verify its truthfulness (1 Cor. 14:29; cf. 1 Thess. 5:19–22; 1 John 4:1–3).

A couple of indications lead to the conclusion that prophecy was more closely related to preaching than to speaking in tongues. For one, worshipers could comprehend the former but needed an interpreter for the latter. For another, the function of prophecy was exhortation (*parakaleō* [1 Cor. 14:4–5]). "Exhortation" (*paraklēsis*) is Paul's most comprehensive term for public proclamation (e.g., 1 Thess. 2:3–4). That is why Paul admonishes worshipers not to interrupt one another in the process of prophesying (1 Cor. 14:29–31). The practice of prophecy influenced the shape that early Christian preaching took.

Synagogue. Another element influencing early Christian preaching was the synagogue. It seems quite likely that early Christian preaching flowed out of the practice found in Jewish synagogues. In the synagogue, the pattern was the reading of Scripture followed by commentary (Luke 4:14–30; Acts 13:15–41).

These two components—prophecy and the reading and exposition of Scripture in the synagogue—play the largest role in influencing the shape of early Christian preaching. How they did so remains uncertain. The early believers may have merged the two practices in Christian worship. Jewish Christians, who had attended the synagogue, took the practice of reading and interpreting Scripture and adopted it into the context of worship in house churches, along with the Jewish tradition of prophesying. Thus, the practice of prophesying merged with the practice of reading and expounding on Scripture to create a more systematic form of proclamation.

The exposition of Scripture may also have assisted in judging the validity of a particular prophecy. However, the criteria for verifying the truth of a prophecy were broader than Scripture alone; it was also measured against one's lifestyle (Matt. 7:15–20, 21–23) and how the prophecy aligned with established doctrines of the church (1 Cor. 14:29, 37; 1 John 4:1–3).

Greco-Roman rhetoric. A third component influencing early Christian preaching was the classical rhetoric of the Greeks and the Romans. The teachings of rhetoric saturated the culture and education of the day. However, the degree to which it penetrated first-century Christian culture remains uncertain. Paul's letters display a familiarity with Greco-Roman rhetoric, and from that, one can assume that its influence affected the practice of preaching to some extent.

SERMONS AND THEIR CONTENT

The NT contains no fully developed sermon in the context of a public worship. Scholars do believe, however, that Paul's sermon to the elders in Ephesus is a good representation of his preaching because it contains a theology and vocabulary that echo his teaching in his letters to various churches (Acts 20:17–35). Paul's letters also likely indicate what he preached to believers. His letters have an oral quality about them and were read in the assemblies (Col. 4:16; 1 Thess. 5:27). Thus, Paul's letters offer a flavor of early Christian preaching.

Synagogue excavated at Gamla, Israel (first century AD). Scriptural commentary in the synagogues influenced Christian preaching.

Another important issue related to early Christian preaching involves the content of what was preached and whether a sharp distinction should be made between *kerygma* and *didachē*. C. H. Dodd has defined early Christian preaching as proclamation to nonbelievers. The term he uses to describe it is *kerygma*. For him, preaching was an evangelistic message about the gospel of God proclaimed to non-Christians. Teaching, *didachē*, remained distinct and was an ethical admonition (*paraklēsis*) delivered to Christians. However, Paul's letters contain no such distinction between the two. Paul links his preaching the gospel of God with his appeal (*paraklēsis*) to the church (cf. 1 Thess. 2:2–3 with 2 Cor. 5:19–20). That is, Paul continues to announce the good news to the churches along with exhortations to incarnate that good news in the lives of the recipients. Both *kerygma* and *didachē* embodied the content of early Christian preaching.

PRECIOUS STONES *See* Jewels, Jewelry; Minerals and Metals.

PREDESTINATION The term "predestination" means "to determine or decide something beforehand." Some form of the Greek verb *proorizō* ("to determine beforehand") occurs six times in the NT (Acts 4:28; Rom. 8:29, 30; 1 Cor. 2:7; Eph. 1:5, 11). It is practically synonymous with the concept of foreordination and is closely related to divine foreknowledge (Acts 2:23; Rom. 8:29; 1 Pet. 1:1–2, 20). Various Scriptures indicate that God the Father is the one who predestines (John 17:6–10; Rom. 8:29; Eph. 1:3–5; 1 Pet. 1:2).

The specific objects of predestination are humans, angels, and the Messiah. These divine predeterminations occurred before the creation of the world and were motivated by the love of God (Eph. 1:4–5). In regard to humans, this means that in eternity past, God determined that some individuals would be the recipients of his salvation. However, this determination does not rule out the necessity of human choice, responsibility, and faith. The decision to predestine some individuals for salvation was based not upon anything good or bad in the recipients, but solely on God's good pleasure and according to his holy, wise, and eternal purpose (Isa. 46:10; Acts 13:48; Rom. 11:33).

PREDESTINATION AS PART OF GOD'S LARGER PLAN

The scope of God's plan. Predestination is a part of God's all-encompassing eternal plan (Isa. 40:13–14; Rom. 11:34; Eph. 1:11). Several terms express God's plan. Among these are his "decree" (Ps. 2:7), "eternal purpose" (Eph. 3:11), "foreknowledge" (Acts 2:23), and "will" (Eph. 1:9, 11). God's plan involves all things that come to pass, including major and insignificant events, direct and indirect causes, things appointed and things permitted. It therefore encompasses both good and evil (Ps. 139:16; Prov. 16:4; Isa. 14:24–27; 22:11; 37:26–27; 46:9–10; Acts 2:23; 4:27–28; Eph. 1:11; 2:10).

The inclusion of evil in the plan of God does not mean that he condones, authorizes, or commits moral evil. The apostle John stresses that God is light and that there is no darkness in him at all (1 John 1:5). He is absolutely holy and cannot be charged with the commission of sin (Hab. 1:13). When addressing the topic of God's plan and purpose, the biblical authors are careful to distinguish between divine causation and human responsibility. Both fall under the purview of God's plan. There is divine certainty about what will happen, but moral agents are never under compulsion to commit evil (see Acts 4:28; Rom. 9:11; 1 Cor. 2:7; 11:2; Heb. 2:5, 10–16; 1 Pet. 1:2, 20; 2 Pet. 3:17). For example, when Luke refers to the greatest miscarriage of justice in the history of the world, the crucifixion of Christ, he indicates that it was predestined by God, but the moral turpitude of the act is attributed to "wicked men" (Acts 2:23). The dual nature of such events is aptly reflected in Joseph's statement to his brothers who sold him into slavery: "You meant evil against me, but God meant it for good" (Gen. 50:20 NASB).

Whereas the all-encompassing plan of God relates to his sovereign control over all things, predestination appears to be restricted primarily to certain divine decisions affecting humans, angels, and the Messiah (Isa. 42:1–7; Acts 2:23; 1 Tim. 5:21; 1 Pet. 1:20; 2:4). With reference to humans, Paul states, "In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will" (Eph. 1:11). Some scholars limit predestination to those things "in him," thus linking this work of God to his purpose in salvation. Others argue that the following phrase, "who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will," demonstrates that all things fall under the purview of God's controlling and guiding purpose (Eph. 1:11). It seems best to see the phrase "in him" as indicating the sphere in which believers are chosen and the term "predestinated" as one crucial aspect of the greater plan of God.

Divine foreknowledge and election. Some theologians argue that election and predestination are merely based upon God's foreknowledge of those who will believe in him. Although God surely knows all those who will believe, the term "foreknowledge" connotes much more than simply knowing ahead of time who will come to faith. It means that God has sovereignly chosen to know some individuals in such an intimate way that it moved him to predestine them to eternal life (Rom. 8:29). Whereas the term "election" refers to God's sovereign choice of those individuals, "predestination" looks forward toward the goal of that selection. Both predestination and election occur in eternity past (Eph. 1:4–5).

The purpose of predestination. Whereas election refers to God’s choice of individuals, predestination looks toward the purpose and goal of that choice. NT believers are designated as chosen by God and appointed to eternal life (Acts 13:48; Eph. 1:4). The express purpose is that they be adopted as his children (Eph. 1:5) and, as beloved children, become “conformed to the image of his Son” (Rom. 8:29). The idea is that those whom God has chosen are predestined in view of the purpose that he desires to fulfill in them, that of becoming his children who are conformed to the image of his Son. The ultimate purpose behind this plan is to bring glory to God (Eph. 1:5–6, 11–12).

PREDESTINATION AND REPROBATION

In his plan, God has chosen some individuals, nations, groups, and angels to fulfill special purposes, implying that other individuals, nations, groups, and angels have not been selected for those same purposes (2 Thess. 2:13; 2 Tim. 2:10; 1 Pet. 1:2). With regard to God’s choice in salvation, this has led some theologians to argue that those not chosen for salvation are by default chosen for eternal damnation. They maintain that predestination applies not only to individuals whom God plans to save, but also to those whom he does not plan to save (Prov. 16:4; Matt. 26:23–24; Rom. 9:10–13, 17–18, 21–22; 2 Tim. 2:20; 1 Pet. 2:8; 2 Pet. 2:3, 9; Jude 4; Rev. 13:8; 20:15). This is sometimes called “reprobation.” The belief in the combined concepts of election and reprobation has been called “double predestination.”

While some scholars in the history of the church have argued that God is just as active in determining the reprobate as he is the elect, others have pointed out that God’s condemnation of the nonelect is based solely upon their sin and unbelief. A real distinction exists in the level of divine involvement with regard to the destiny of one class as compared with the other. God does not appear to have the same relationship to every event or thing in his creation. The degree of divine causation in each case differs. Scripture recognizes a difference between God’s direct working and his permissive will. In this view, God directly chooses some to be saved; however, he does not choose the others to be damned but rather passes them by, allowing them to continue on their own way and eventually suffer the just punishment that their sins deserve.

Whichever view one takes, it seems that the Scripture does not teach reprobation in the same way it teaches predestination leading to eternal life. Whereas the assignment to eternal death is a judicial act taking into account a person’s sin, predestination unto eternal life is purely an act of God’s sovereign grace and mercy not taking into account any actions by those chosen. Carrying the teaching of reprobation to the extreme threatens to view God as capricious, which clearly is not scriptural (1 John 1:5).

PREDESTINATION AND HUMAN RESPONSIBILITY

God was in no way obligated or morally impelled to choose or predestine anyone to eternal life. His determination not to choose everyone in no way impinges upon his holy and righteous character (Rom. 9:13). On the contrary, justice would demand that all receive the punishment that they have rightly earned for their sins (Rom. 3:23; 6:23). Therefore, the predestination of some to become like his Son required that God exercise grace and mercy in providing for the cleansing of their sin, which he accomplished through the sacrifice of his beloved Son, Jesus Christ (Acts 2:23).

God’s predetermined plan does not force individuals to respond in predetermined ways, either to accept him or to reject him. In the one case, the sinner is drawn by God to himself but must also choose to place trust in Christ (John 6:37, 44). Even in the radical intervention of God in the life of Saul on the road to Damascus, where the divine call was indeed overpowering, Saul was given opportunity to respond either positively or negatively. In the case of those who are headed for eternal judgment, God's working is not fatalistic or mechanistic in the sense that a person may want to choose God but God's predetermined plan will not allow such a response. To the contrary, all are invited to come to Christ (Matt. 11:28; John 3:16). The apostle John clarifies, "Whoever comes to me I will never drive away" (John 6:37 [cf. Matt. 11:28]). Those who do not come to God refuse to do so by their own volition (Matt. 23:37; John 5:40). They are not merely unable to come to God but unwilling to do so (John 5:40; 6:65; Rom. 3:11). The NT teaches that Christ died for their sins (John 3:16), pleadingly warns them to repent, and cites their transgressions as the reason for their condemnation (1 Pet. 2:8; 2 Pet. 2:21–22; Jude 8–16). When all aspects of the issue are considered, there is indeed a mystery that lies outside the boundaries of our comprehension regarding God's sovereign working and human choice.

PREEXILIC This adjective denotes Israel's history prior to the Babylonian exile (587/586 BC), especially the prophets and the events of the ninth, eighth, and seventh centuries BC.

PREEXISTENCE OF SOULS Historically, Christian theology has struggled to explain the origin of the soul of the individual human. The problem is complicated by the influence of Greek philosophy (Plato, for instance, expressed a preference for the soul's preexistence), a lack of unanimity or even explicit interest in the biblical materials, and the influence on this question of other theological topics, such as theological anthropology (addressing the difficult issue of the definition of the soul) and the doctrine of sin.

Some have claimed that human souls were created by God at some point in the distant past, and that they are infused into the body of each individual at the time of conception. This view may be contrasted with creationism, here meaning in a limited sense the theory that God creates the soul of the individual at the time when that individual's body comes into existence (i.e., conception or thereafter), and with traducianism, the view that the individual's human parents propagate the soul of their child just as they propagate his or her body.

Important advocates of the preexistence of the soul include Origen (second to third century AD), Johannes Scotus Eriugena (ninth century AD), and Julius Müller (nineteenth century AD). However, the theory has never gained strong support in the major Christian traditions, which typically have viewed it as being unduly shaped by non-Christian notions of dualism and have favored either creationism or traducianism.

PREMARITAL AND EXTRAMARITAL SEX In contrast to ascetics who view the physical as inferior to the "spiritual" and self-serving hedonists who reduce sex to a physical commodity, Scripture has a high view of the sex act. Yet the sex act was created as an act of intimacy between a man and a woman within a marital relationship (Gen. 2:24). Marriage involves giving one's whole person—body, soul, and spirit—to another person (of the opposite sex) through a formal covenant ratified by God. Nakedness symbolizes complete vulnerability and transparency. Covenant creates the conditions for trust and intimacy to grow. Sex is an act whereby the two celebrate this spiritual union through physical union.

While in certain cultural contexts God has at times condescended to allow variations on monogamy, including polygamy and the taking of concubines (secondary wives; e.g., Gen. 30:3–6, 18), these were never God’s created standard for sexual relations, which is a monogamous heterosexual relationship between one man and one woman (Gen. 2:24).

Paul informs the unmarried that it is better to marry than to burn with sexual desire (1 Cor. 7:8–9). By implication, marriage is the appropriate context for fulfilling one’s sexual desire. To have sex outside the context of marriage is sexual immorality, since one has not given total allegiance—emotionally, socially, economically, and personally—to one’s partner. God’s will is that each one honors him by avoiding sexual immorality and exercising self-control over one’s body. Unrepentant sexual immorality brings divine judgment (1 Thess. 4:3–7; Heb. 13:4). *See also* Sex, Sexuality.

PREPARATION DAY All four Gospels refer to Preparation Day (*paraskeuē*) as the day of Jesus’ crucifixion. According to Mark 15:42, Preparation Day was “the day before the Sabbath,” meaning Friday (cf. Luke 23:54). By the end of the first century, *paraskeuē* had become a technical term meaning “Friday” (*Did.* 8.1; cf. *Mart. Pol.* 7.1). The precise referent of Preparation Day in John 19:14 is disputed, as the Greek phrase *paraskeuē tou pascha* has been translated as “the day of Preparation of the Passover” (NIV, ESV). John 19:31 states that Preparation Day was immediately followed by the Sabbath, which would place Jesus’ crucifixion on Friday and his final supper (John 13:2) on Passover Thursday (cf. Matt. 26:18). However, John 18:28 states that the Jewish leaders “wanted to be able to eat the Passover,” suggesting that Jesus was crucified on Passover. In this verse, “the Passover” (*pascha*) may refer to the continuing Feast of Unleavened Bread, or it may be that the Jews had prepared but not eaten the Passover by early the next morning. Regardless, the Gospels clearly record that Jesus was crucified on Friday, Preparation Day.

Ivory bookbinding plate depicting Christ’s crucifixion (tenth century AD), which occurred on Preparation Day

PRESBYTER, PRESBYTERY *See* Elder.

PRESENCE OF GOD The presence of God is one of the most significant themes in the Bible. At the very heart of worshiping God and having a relationship with him is experiencing his presence. Related themes such as God’s power and glory are also inextricably interconnected to his presence.

OLD TESTAMENT

The biblical story begins with humankind experiencing and enjoying God’s presence in a very personal way, as God walks with Adam and Eve in the garden. Adam and Eve, however, soon disobey God and are thus driven out of the garden and away from the close, intimate presence of God (Gen. 3:22–24). Throughout the rest of Scripture, God unfolds his plan to restore this lost relationship, a relationship that centers on his presence.

Although God makes his presence known to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in Genesis, it is in Exodus that the presence of God becomes even more central to the story. When God first calls Moses, he promises his powerful presence, declaring, “I will be with you” (Exod. 3:12). The power of God’s presence is revealed as God guides and protects the fleeing Israelites in the form of a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night (13:21–22). The presence of God also plays a critical role in the formal covenant relationship that God makes with Israel at Mount Sinai (Exod. 19). At the heart of the covenant is a threefold statement by God: “I will be your God”; “you will be my people”; “I will dwell in your midst” (cf. Exod. 6:7; Lev. 26:11–12). Following up on his promise to dwell in their midst, God next gives the people explicit instructions on how to build the tabernacle, the place where he will dwell (Exod. 25:8–9). Throughout the latter chapters of Exodus, God’s glory is clearly associated with his presence (33:12–23; 40:34–38); in fact, God’s presence and glory are nearly synonymous.

God’s presence resides in the tabernacle until Solomon builds the temple in Jerusalem (1 Kings 6–7). At that time, the presence and glory of God then fill the holy place of the temple and dwell there. Over the next four hundred years, however, Israel and Judah repeatedly abandon God and turn to worshiping idols. The people repeatedly refuse to repent and to listen to God’s prophets. Eventually, therefore, their idolatrous sin and terrible social injustices drive God out of their midst. Ezekiel 8–10 describes this somber, momentous event as the glory and presence of God depart from the temple. Before long, as the prophets warned, the Babylonians capture Jerusalem and destroy both the city and the empty temple. It is significant to remember that when the temple is later rebuilt during the time of Ezra and Nehemiah, the presence and glory of God do not come back to fill the new temple. Thus, from the departure of God in Ezek. 10 until the arrival of Jesus Christ, the Jews live without the powerful presence of God dwelling in their midst.

Although the prophets had warned Israel and Judah that they would lose the presence of God as part of the imminent judgment, they also promised a powerful and glorious restoration of God’s presence in the messianic future. Furthermore, both Ezekiel and Joel promise that God will actually put his Spirit directly within his people (Ezek. 36:26–28; Joel 2:28). No longer limited to the holy of holies in the temple, under the new covenant the presence of God will actually indwell each of his people.

NEW TESTAMENT

In the NT, the coming of Jesus is clearly identified as the new manifestation of God’s presence that was foretold in the prophets (Matt. 1:22–23; John 1:14). Jesus’ entry into the temple is highly significant, therefore, because it signals a return of the presence of God to the temple after an absence of over six hundred years (Matt. 21:12–17; John 2:12–24). Ironically, in the temple Jesus encounters only hostility and hypocritical worship; the presence of God is rejected once again.

After the death and resurrection of Jesus, the Holy Spirit falls on his followers, filling them with God’s powerful presence (Acts 2:1–13), thus fulfilling the prophecies of Ezekiel and Joel. This new presence of God does not come to dwell in the temple; rather, it comes upon believers to dwell within them in a much more personal and relational way.

As the biblical story reaches its culmination at the end of the book of Revelation, God declares, “God’s dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God” (21:3). The story has gone full circle: God has returned his people to the garden and come to dwell in their midst so that they can enjoy his wonderful presence eternally.

PRESERVATION OF THE SAINTS *See* Perseverance; Security of the Believer.

PRESUMPTION *See* Pride.

PRICK *See* Goad.

PRIDE Human pride removes God from the center of life and exalts self, attributing to self the honor due God. Thus, pride is an act of rebellion against God. Several lists of vices include pride (Prov. 6:16–19; Mark 7:20–22; Rom. 1:28–31; 2 Tim. 3:2–4 KJV). Both James and Peter, in admonishing Christians to approach God and one another in humility, quote this proverb: “God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble” (James 4:6; 1 Pet. 5:5; cf. Prov. 3:34).

Pride destroys both individuals and nations. It destroyed individuals such as the kings Uzziah (2 Chron. 26:16), Hezekiah (2 Chron. 32:25–26), and Herod (Acts 12:21–23). Pride also destroys nations. It brought down Israel (Jer. 13:17; Hos. 7:10; Amos 6:1–3, 8). Isaiah gives a classic description of Israel’s pride (Isa. 2:6–22). God destroyed Assyria because of its pride (Isa. 10:12–19). Pride was the downfall of other nations as well, such as Babylon (Jer. 50:29–32), Egypt (Ezek. 31:10–12; 32:12), and Moab (Jer. 48:29). God abhors pride (Prov. 16:5; cf. Ezek. 16:50) and responds by striking it down (Prov. 15:25; 16:18; Job 22:29).

PRIEST, HIGH *See* High Priest; Priests.

PRIESTHOOD OF BELIEVERS In the most basic sense, a priest is mediator between God and humanity. Although there are hints in Gen. 1–2 that Adam and Eve performed a priestly role in the garden, when the OT speaks of the priesthood, it most frequently refers to those involved in the service of the tabernacle or temple under the Mosaic covenant. But before the formal institution of the Mosaic covenant, God commanded Moses to tell the people of Israel, “If you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation” (Exod. 19:5–6). God intends all Israel to be a conduit of his presence to a lost and rebellious world. The rest of the Pentateuch indicates that Israel was to do this in three ways: (1) practice the law of God as an example of his holiness; (2) proclaim the mighty deeds of God as a testimony to his power; (3) preserve the word of God as a demonstration of his faithfulness. This, then, was the responsibility of each Israelite individually and corporately as a people.

As the OT unfolds, Israel clearly fails to live up to this lofty calling. But the prophet Isaiah looks forward to a day when God’s redeemed people “will be called priests of the LORD, you will be named ministers of our God” (Isa. 61:6). This will happen as a result of the Spirit-anointed figure who brings good news to the poor and the year of God’s favor (Isa. 61:1–4). Jesus claims that his life, ministry, and death are the fulfillment of this promise (Luke 4:16–21), which suggests that now is the time that God's people can rightly be said to be "priests of the LORD."

This conclusion is confirmed in 1 Pet. 2:4–10. In the midst of several quotations of and allusions to OT passages, Peter takes up the language of Exod. 19:6 when he says to believers, "You are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light" (v. 9). What Israel failed to be because of its persistent rebellion against God, believers are. But believers are not a royal priesthood because they are somehow better than Israel; they are a royal priesthood because they are united to Jesus Christ. Peter emphasizes this when earlier in the passage he refers to believers as living stones "being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ" (v. 5). Because Jesus is the great high priest who offered his own blood for the sins of his people (Heb. 9:11–14), believers must "continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise—the fruit of lips that openly profess his name. And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased" (Heb. 13:15–16).

There are at least three practical ramifications of the priesthood of believers. First, each believer is to be a channel through which God's presence and character are made known in this world. Second, everything that the believer does, even down to eating and drinking, should be done to reflect the character and glory of God (1 Cor. 10:31; Col. 3:17). Third, each believer has a role to play in the advancement of God's kingdom.

PRIESTHOOD OF CHRIST The priesthood of Christ is one of his threefold offices. Jesus exercises his priestly office by offering himself up to God as a sacrifice (e.g., Heb. 2:17; 9:14–28) and by making continual intercession for the saints (John 17:6–24; Rom. 8:34; Heb. 7:25; 9:24). The priestly work of Christ figures prominently in the theology of the Epistle to the Hebrews based largely upon reflection of Ps. 110.

PRIESTS A priest is a minister of sacred things who represents God to the people and the people to God. The OT identifies priests of Yahweh and priests of other gods and idols. The only pagan priest that the NT mentions is the priest of Zeus from Lystra who wanted to offer sacrifices to Paul and Barnabas, whom the crowd mistook for deities (Acts 14:13). All other NT references build upon OT teaching about priests of Yahweh.

OLD TESTAMENT

Early biblical history records clan heads offering sacrifices for their families (Gen. 12:7–8; 13:18; 22; 31:54; 46:1). Although the patriarchs performed these duties, they are never called "priests"; the only priests mentioned from this time are foreigners such as Melchizedek, the Egyptian priest of On, and Moses' father-in-law Jethro (Gen. 14:18; 41:45, 50; 46:20; Exod. 3:1; 18:1). Whereas all Israelites could be called "a kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (Exod. 19:6), a distinctive priesthood came to light when God instructed Moses to prepare special priestly clothes for Aaron and his sons (Exod. 28). The high priest was distinguished from the others by more magnificent clothes. By failing to wear their special clothes while serving at the tabernacle, the priests would incur guilt and die (Exod. 28:43).

Statue of Aaron, the first high priest, by Nicolas Cordier (Chapel of the Basilica di Santa Maria Maggiore, seventeenth century AD)

By being anointed, the priests became holy like the tabernacle and its furnishings and thus were distinguished from their compatriots (Lev. 8–9). Their holy status was to be scrupulously maintained, as it was essential for serving the congregation and ensured that they would not die due to their close contact with God. Their prime role was to minister before God by offering sacrifices so that the holy place and the people could be purified. They were also to live holy lives as an example to others, assess and treat uncleanness among the people, discern God's will through the Urim and Thummim, pronounce God's blessings, and teach God's precepts and laws (Lev. 10:10–11; Num. 6:22–27; Deut. 33:8–11).

Like other Levites, the priests received no land in Canaan, since God was their inheritance. In payment for their services, the priests received a portion of the sacrifices and a tithe of the tithe given by the Israelites for the Levites' support.

The Bible consistently states that priests were to come from the tribe of Levi, but it is not always clear whether all Levites or only Aaron's descendants could serve as priests. Some texts (particularly Exodus through Numbers) indicate that only those of Aaron's line qualified to be priests (Ezek. 40:46 narrows this to Zadok's descendants), and that all other Levites, though more holy than the other tribes, did not. Other passages indicate that Levites at times served as priests, even though some contexts indicate that this service was inappropriate. For instance, a Levite served as priest to Micah and then the Danites (Judg. 17:7–13; 18:19–20). Viewed more positively, Samuel, a Levite from Ephraim (1 Chron. 6:16, 27) who served Eli while young, also acted as priest.

After the division of the kingdom, Jeroboam I rejected specific biblical instructions about the priesthood by erecting shrines to calf idols at Dan and Bethel and enlisted non-Levites as priests (1 Kings 12:31; 13:33; 2 Chron. 11:15). Political concerns apparently led him to cut off the northern kingdom from worship at the temple in Jerusalem. As a result, many Levites and priests relocated to Jerusalem.

Ezra records that 341 Levites and 4,289 priests returned to Jerusalem after the exile (Ezra 2:36–42). In line with earlier practice, the priests offered sacrifices to God and were joined by the Levites in rebuilding the wall and teaching the law to the people. Isaiah has a broader understanding of the priesthood, as he anticipates Israel bringing peoples of other nations as an offering to God and indicates that some of them would serve as priests and Levites (Isa. 66:19–21).

NEW TESTAMENT

In NT times many priests exerted religious and civil power as leaders of the Sadducees and the Essenes. Some priests, such as Zechariah, were portrayed as righteous men (Luke 1:5–6). Others were said to have come to faith in Jesus (Acts 6:7). Supporting the role assigned by Moses, Jesus regularly required those whom he healed to show themselves to the priest. Even so, most Gospel references to priests underscore their opposition to Jesus' ministry and the role they played in his trial and crucifixion. This opposition continued after the resurrection, as priests challenged the witness of the apostles. When Peter and John proclaimed that a crippled beggar had been healed by Jesus' power, the priests and others jailed, interrogated, and forbade them from speaking in Jesus' name (Acts 4:1–20). The Sanhedrin questioned Stephen about charges of blasphemy and speaking against the temple and the Mosaic law (6:11–7:1). Saul (Paul) received a letter of authority from the high priest to arrest Christians (9:1–2). Later, as a follower of Jesus, he stood trial before Ananias, who charged him before Felix (24:1), and a wider group of chief priests who charged him before Festus (25:1–3).

Hebrews uniquely highlights how the priesthood of Jesus surpassed the OT priesthood. The OT priests presented sin offerings, but their sacrifices needed to be repeated regularly, whereas Jesus, the faithful and merciful high priest, offered a sacrifice that never needed repeating and was available to everyone at all times. Jesus also surpassed the Aaronic priests because they first needed to offer sacrifices for their own sins, but he never sinned. Furthermore, since he offered the perfect sacrifice of himself, all people, not just priests, could draw near to God.

The NT develops the idea of a priesthood of all believers by taking the concept that Israel would be a kingdom of priests and transferring it to the church (1 Pet. 2:4–9; cf. Exod. 19:6). Reflecting the general biblical view of priesthood, believers offer spiritual sacrifices to God, represent God to the world by revealing his works of salvation, and represent the world to God through prayer. In the NT, the priesthood of believers is corporate; a priestly office in the church is never expressly mentioned.

PRINCE In the OT, many Hebrew words are translated as "prince," all of which can also be rendered as, for example, "chieftain," "captain," "leader," "ruler." These words generally carry connotations of dominion, leadership, and nobility and do not necessarily indicate the direct male descendants of a sitting king or queen. Thus, Zeph. 1:8 distinguishes between princes and king's sons. In the NT, the Greek word *archōn* corresponds to "prince" but is also translated as "ruler." The same word and concept used with human authorities extend to the supernatural realm. Thus, Michael, the angelic protector of Israel in Daniel's vision, is a "prince" (Dan. 12:1). In the Gospels, Satan is called the "prince of this world" (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11) and also the "prince of demons" (Matt. 9:34; 12:24; see also Eph. 2:2). Isaiah calls the messiah "Prince of Peace" (Isa. 9:6), and Jesus is called a "Prince and Savior" (Acts 5:31). God is called the "Prince of princes" in Dan. 8:25.

PRINCE OF LIFE *See* Author, Author of Life.

PRINCESS The Hebrew word *sarah* and the Hebrew construct *bat-melek* are translated as "princess." The word *sarah* ("princess, royal lady, queen"), the feminine form of *sar* ("prince"), occurs five times in the OT; it refers to ladies of the court (Judg. 5:29; 1 Kings 11:3; Esther 1:18; Isa. 49:23) or is used metaphorically of Jerusalem (Lam. 1:1). Solomon's seven hundred wives were princesses (1 Kings 11:3). The expression *bat-melek* (lit., "daughter of a king") is applied to a king's daughter (Dan. 11:6; Ps. 45:9), a king's wife (Ps. 45:13), and the leading women of Judah (Jer. 43:6).

PRINCIPALITIES One of the names given to spiritual realities that were created by God in Christ but are now corrupted. Paul says that it is these "principalities" (Gk. *archē*), not "flesh and blood," that form the real opposition for Christians (Eph. 6:12 KJV). Synonyms that appear in various Bible translations are "rulers," "authorities," "powers," "spiritual forces," "thrones" (Rom. 8:38; Eph. 3:10; 6:12; Col. 1:16).

PRISCA, PRISCILLA *See* Aquila and Priscilla.

PRISON, PRISONER

IMPRISONMENT OF CRIMINALS

In comparing modern society to that of biblical times, it is important to acknowledge what is distinctive about prisons in many modern societies. Prisons serve multiple functions, including imposing incarceration as punishment for crimes committed, segregating dangerous criminals from the larger population, deterring crime by imposing a negative incentive, and rehabilitating offenders so that they can eventually return to society. In many cases where modern law imposes incarceration as the penalty for crime, ancient and biblical law imposed economic penalties (such as fines), corporal punishment (beatings), and capital punishment (death). In addition, many of the biblical references to prisons and prisoners involve what in modern society would be considered political rather than criminal incarceration.

The story of Joseph prominently features an Egyptian prison. Joseph was falsely put in prison for the crime of molesting his master's wife (Gen. 39:19–20), while his companions were imprisoned for the otherwise unspecified crime of causing offense to the king (40:1). As this story illustrates, the sentences were not of a predetermined duration, and release depended on the goodwill of the king (Gen. 40:13), a situation in which Paul also found himself hundreds of years later during Roman times (Acts 24:27). When Joseph imprisoned his brothers, it was on a presumption of guilt for the crime of espionage (Gen. 42:16). In Roman times, in contrast, certain prisoners had a right to be put on trial eventually, if not quickly (Acts 25:27; see also 16:37). Imprisonment could also be imposed for failure to pay a debt (Matt. 18:30). Joseph kept Simeon in prison as a guarantee that his brothers would fulfill a prior agreement (Gen. 42:19, 24). In addition to specialized dungeons, prisoners could also be confined in houses (Jer. 37:15; Acts 28:16) and pits (Zech. 9:11).

Political Imprisonment

In a number of biblical stories individuals are imprisoned for what we would today describe as political or ideological reasons. Samson was imprisoned by the Philistines in retaliation for the havoc that he had wreaked in their land and probably to prevent further incidents (Judg. 16:21). While in prison, Samson was enslaved. Several Israelite and Judean kings were imprisoned by their Mesopotamian overlords for offenses ranging from failure to pay taxes to revolt, including Hoshea (2 Kings 17:4), Jehoiachin (2 Kings 25:27–29), Manasseh (2 Chron. 33:11), and Zedekiah (Jer. 52:11). In some cases, the imprisonment of such elites was brutal and involved torture (2 Chron. 33:11; Jer. 52:11), though Jehoiachin was later released from prison and allowed to live out his captivity in some comfort (2 Kings 25:27–29).

In the NT, individuals were also imprisoned for such crimes. Barabbas was imprisoned by the Roman government of Judea for participating in an insurrection (Mark 15:7). Saul of Tarsus imprisoned a number of Christians, apparently without what we would today recognize as any criminal offense (Acts 8:3). Peter was imprisoned by Herod for political gain (Acts 12:4). Paul and Silas were imprisoned for disturbing the peace of Philippi (Acts 16:23).

Imprisonment of Prophets

A special case of political incarceration is the imprisonment of prophets. From the point of view of the biblical writers, prophets were imprisoned for speaking the truth to a powerful person who did not want to hear it. From the point of view of those in power, imprisoning dissenters was an important way of suppressing opinions that could undermine the regime. In some cases, the imprisonment of dissenters or troublemakers was a prelude to execution (John the Baptist and Jesus). The practice of imprisonment instead of immediate execution may reflect the ambivalent attitude of rulers toward controversial prophets: they could not be allowed to move about freely in society, but they had some status or right as prophet that prevented their execution. In some cases, prophets managed to confront a king without being punished, suggesting that there was a certain level of tolerance for them even when they were not supportive of royal power, a tolerance that might have contributed to the use of imprisonment instead of execution.

Ahab imprisoned Micaiah son of Imlah after he delivered an unfavorable oracle (1 Kings 22:27). Similarly, Asa imprisoned Hanani the seer (2 Chron. 16:10). These kings may have hoped that such treatment would coerce better news in the future. Jeremiah (Jer. 37:15) and John the Baptist (Mark

6:17) were also imprisoned for delivering unwelcome messages to those in power.

THEOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE

In both Testaments, release from prison is a symbol of God’s salvation. The theme is prominent in the psalms, as in Ps. 146:7: “The LORD sets prisoners free” (see also Pss. 68:6; 107:10; 142:7). In Acts 12:7 Peter is freed from prison by a divinely sent messenger. Paul wrote a number of letters from prison and identified himself as a prisoner of Christ (Eph. 3:1; Col. 4:10; 2 Tim. 1:8; Philem. 1). Some texts refer in mythological terms to a prison that confines spirits or Satan (1 Pet. 3:19; Rev. 20:7).

PRISON GATE *See* Gate of the Guard.

PRISON LETTERS, PRISON EPISTLES Paul’s prison letters include Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon. Traditionally they have been considered to have been written by Paul during his first Roman imprisonment (c. AD 60–62), though some scholars think they may have been written during a time of incarceration in Caesarea, Ephesus, or elsewhere. *See also* Paul.

PRIZE An award to the victor in the Greek games. The judge who assigned the prize at the games gave a literal crown, a garland of bay, olive, or pine. These perishable wreaths, coveted by the athletes of Greece and Rome (1 Cor. 9:24–25), stand in contrast to Paul’s use of “prize” (Gk. *brabeion*) as a metaphor for the imperishable heavenly reward for Christian character (Phil. 3:14). Another Greek word sometimes rendered as “prize” (*harpagmos*) refers to “a thing to be grasped” (Phil. 2:6 ESV, NASB). Christ did not deem it an act of usurpation to claim equality with God, for such equality was his inherent right. Christ did not regard equality with God as a thing to be clutched greedily, but waived his rights.

Cameo showing the emperor Claudius wearing a laurel wreath, which was given as a prize to celebrate victories

PROCHORUS One of the seven men chosen to help with food distribution in the Jerusalem church (Acts 6:1–6). Tradition suggests that he was among the seventy disciples whom Jesus sent out (cf. Luke 10:1), John’s scribe in writing the Fourth Gospel, a bishop of Nicomedia, and a martyr at Antioch.

PROCLAMATION *See* Kerygma; Preaching.

PROCONSUL The senate-appointed governor of a Roman province (KJV: “deputy”). The proconsul oversaw civil, judicial, and military affairs in the province. Sergius Paulus was proconsul of Cyprus (Acts 13:7), and Gallio of Achaia (Acts 18:12). The city clerk in Ephesus calmed a disturbance before it escalated to the jurisdiction of the court and the proconsul (Acts 19:38).

PROCORUS *See* Prochorus.

PROCURATOR The governor of a Roman imperial province, also called “prefect.” The prefect or procurator collected taxes, oversaw judicial matters, and commanded auxiliary military troops. Pontius Pilate was prefect of the province of Judea from about AD 26 to 36 (Matt. 27:2). The title was changed to “procurator” in the mid-first century. Paul was imprisoned in Caesarea under Felix, procurator of Judea in AD 52–60 (Acts 23:24–24:26). Felix was succeeded by Porcius Festus (Acts 24:27), who approved Paul’s request to appeal to Caesar (25:12).

PRODIGAL SON The parable of the prodigal (or “wasteful”) son is told by Jesus following the parables of the lost sheep and the lost coin, in which the owner figure loses something of value and rejoices upon finding it again (Luke 15). Similarly, the parable of the prodigal son is focused primarily upon the mercy and forgiveness of the father. In this parable, the younger of two sons requests his share of what the father will leave them as an inheritance. The father grants it, and the son, after relocating to a distant country, squanders it on the pleasures of this world. With his inheritance exhausted and the land suffering a severe famine, the son’s livelihood becomes dependent upon his new job, feeding pigs. In despair at being in this lowly position, the son decides to come home and face his father, who, in an amazing turn of events, is overjoyed at the return of his lost son. During the feast celebrating his return, however, the older brother becomes envious because he has been faithful yet has never received such an honor.

The parable is an allegory about Jesus’ ministry, with the father representing God himself, the younger brother representing the sinners and tax collectors to whom Jesus is ministering, and the older brother representing the religious leaders who are rejecting God’s offer of free grace to sinners who will repent and return to God. It is significant that the parable is open ended, with no response recorded from the older brother. The father states his love for both sons and affirms to the older one that “everything I have is yours.” It remains to be seen whether he will now choose to welcome the prodigal and join in the feast in the kingdom of God. God’s offer of salvation remains an open invitation.

PROFANE The opposite of sacred. Something that is profane becomes unholy, defiled, and ritually useless (Ezek. 22:26). *See also* Clean, Cleanness.

PROMISE A technical term for "promise" does not appear in the OT, but its concept is present throughout Scripture. God unfolds the history of redemption by employing the idea of promises. The writers of the NT repeatedly assert that Jesus Christ has fulfilled God's promises in the OT (e.g., Luke 24:44–48; 1 Cor. 15:3–8).

OLD TESTAMENT

The promises in the OT are closely related to the history of salvation. At each stage of redemptive history, God delivered a new message about redemption, usually in the form of a covenant. Immediately after the fall of humankind, God first revealed his plan of salvation: the promise that the seed of the woman would ultimately crush the head of the serpent (Gen. 3:15). After the flood, God made a covenant with Noah, promising never again to destroy the earth with a flood (Gen. 8:21–9:17).

Most remarkable is the promise that God made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Gen. 12:1–3; 13:14–17; 17:4–8; 22:17–18; 26:1–5; 28:13–15). God called Abraham in order to give him three specific blessings: the land, descendants, and the channel of blessing among the nations. As a sign of his promise, God made a covenant of circumcision with Abraham and his descendants (17:10–14). With Isaac (26:1–5) and Jacob (28:13–15), God repeatedly reconfirmed the promise made to Abraham. At the time of the exodus and later the settlement in Canaan, God's promise to Abraham was partially fulfilled by multiplying his descendants into millions and by giving them the promised land.

At Mount Sinai, God made another covenant with the Israelites. In this covenant, God promised that they would be his "treasured possession" among the nations if they would obey him and keep his covenant (Exod. 19:5). God's special blessings were pronounced for them to be "a kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (19:6). For this purpose, God gave them the Ten Commandments, which became the religious and ethical standard for his covenant people (20:1–17). In the book of Deuteronomy, moreover, God's promises were made in the form of blessings to the obedient and of curses to the disobedient (Deut. 28). Later these became the criteria by which the kings of Israel were judged to determine whether they had lived an obedient life.

According to 2 Sam. 7:11–16, God made an eternal covenant with David, promising the permanence of David's house, kingdom, and throne. In this covenant it was also promised that his offspring would build the house of the Lord. The Davidic covenant was partially fulfilled at the time of Solomon, who as king built the house of the Lord, the first temple in Jerusalem (1 Kings 8:15–25). Later, in the period of the classical prophets, when the hope for the Davidic throne was endangered, the permanence of the Davidic throne and kingdom reappeared in the form of messianic prophecy (Jer. 23:5–8; Ezek. 37:24–28). This promise was ultimately fulfilled by the coming of Jesus Christ from the line of David (Matt. 1:1–17).

The history of Israel shows that although the nation repeatedly broke God's covenants, he remained faithful to them. According to Num. 23:19, God's promises are absolutely trustworthy: "God is not human, that he should lie, not a human being, that he should change his mind. Does he speak and then not act? Does he promise and not fulfill?" The trustworthiness of God's promises results from his unchanging character (Ps. 110:4; Mal. 3:6–7). The almighty God has the power to fulfill his promises (Isa. 55:11). When Joshua finished conquering the land of Canaan, he confessed that God was faithful in keeping all his promises to his ancestors (Josh. 21:45; 23:14–15). Joshua himself witnessed that trusting God's promises is a life-and-death issue. Those who had not trusted his promise to give them the land of Canaan perished in the wilderness, but those who had trusted his promise were allowed to enter it (Num. 14:1–35).

NEW TESTAMENT

The central message of the NT is that God's promises in the OT are fulfilled with the coming of Jesus Christ. Matthew's numerous citation formulas are evidence of this theme. In Luke 4:16–21 Jesus pronounces the fulfillment of Isaiah's promise (about the Messiah's ministry [Isa. 61:1–3]) in his own life. The book of Acts specifically states that Jesus' suffering and resurrection and the coming of the Holy Spirit are the fulfillment of the OT promises (2:29–31; 13:32–34). Jesus' identity both as the descendant of David (Acts 13:23) and as the prophet like Moses (Acts 3:21–26; cf. Deut. 18:15–18) is also regarded as the fulfillment of the OT.

Paul's view of God's promises is summarized in this statement: "For no matter how many promises God has made, they are 'Yes' in Christ" (2 Cor. 1:20). According to Rom. 1:2–3, Paul regards the gospel as the message that God "promised beforehand through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures regarding his Son." In Rom. 4 Abraham's faith is described in terms of his trust in God's promises, which leads to his righteousness. He is presented as our model of faith in God's promises. The famous phrase "according to the Scriptures" in 1 Cor. 15:3–4 is, in a sense, understood by Paul as the fulfillment of God's promises regarding Christ's death and resurrection.

In the book of Hebrews, the concept of promise plays an important role. In Heb. 6 Abraham is presented as the exemplary man who trusted in God's promise. The author exhorts the Hebrew Christians to follow Abraham's model of trust in God's promise (6:12–20). The author also asserts that Jesus' new covenant is superior to the old one because his ministry "is established on better promises" (8:6). In Heb. 11 the faith of the great OT saints is acclaimed in terms of their faith in God's promises.

In the NT, God makes new promises based on the work of Christ, including the final resurrection and the second coming of Christ (John 5:29; 11:25–26; 1 Cor. 15:48–57; 2 Cor. 4:14; 1 Thess. 4:13–18). Furthermore, the message of the gospel is presented as multiple promises, including eternal life, the fullness of life in Christ, the forgiveness of sins, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, the peace of God, the knowledge of God, and the joy of God (Matt. 28:18–20; John 3:16; 10:10; 14:16, 27; 16:20–24; 17:25–26; Phil. 4:4–9; 1 John 1:9).

HUMAN PROMISES

The Scriptures contain many cases of people making promises to other people. For example, Abraham made promises to the king of Sodom and to Abimelek (Gen. 14:22–24; 21:22–24). The Israelite spies made a promise to Rahab (Josh. 2:12–21). People also make promises to God: Jacob, Jephthah, Hannah, and the returning exiles (Gen. 28:20–21; Judg. 11:29–40; 1 Sam. 1:11–20; Neh. 10:28–29). Human promises usually are accompanied by the taking of an oath (Gen. 14:22; 21:24; Deut. 6:13; Josh. 2:12–14) or the declaration of a curse in case of its breach (Ruth 1:17; 1 Sam. 14:24; 2 Sam. 3:35; 1 Kings 2:23). It is imperative to keep the promise that one makes to a human being or to God (Num. 30:1–2; Ps. 50:14). In Mal. 2:14–16, divorce is regarded as a breaking of the oath between husband and wife. In OT times, people were afraid of curses falling upon them when they broke a promise. The Bible warns of the danger of making false promises, as doing so will bring about sin and judgment (Lev. 19:12; Deut. 23:21; Zech. 8:17). It is an axiom of the wisdom literature that one should not make promises rashly or lightly (Prov. 20:25; Eccles. 5:1–7), and Jesus prohibits the taking of any oath because of the possibility of its breach (Matt. 5:33–37).

PROPERTY *See* Inheritance; Ownership.

PROPHECY, PROPHETS

THE PHENOMENON OF PROPHECY

A prophet is a messenger of God, a person to whom God entrusts his message to an individual or to a nation. Indeed, the last book in the OT is named "Malachi," which means "my messenger." Isaiah heard God ask, "Whom shall I send?" and he cried out, "Send me!" (Isa. 6:8). A good template for understanding the phenomenon is Moses and Aaron. Moses was to tell Aaron what to say, and Aaron would say it. "Then the LORD said to Moses, 'See, I have made you like God to Pharaoh, and your brother Aaron will be your prophet' " (Exod. 7:1).

Prophets such as Isaiah were privy to what transpires in heaven, where decisions were being made that control the course of human history. Micaiah describes how he has seen God in the company of the heavenly host deliberating on how to entice Ahab to his death (1 Kings 22:13–23). All the other "prophets" in Ahab's court were false, since they did not have knowledge of the events beyond human ken, as only true prophets can. Only one who has encountered God in this way can speak as an agent of the heavenly court.

For every true prophet in Israel, there were many false prophets. Moses set guidelines for distinguishing them. True prophets prophesy in accordance with revealed religion. If a prophet contradicts the law, for example, and calls Israel to worship another god, this is not a true prophet (Deut. 18:20). Also, if a prophet predicts something that does not come to pass, that is also a false prophet (Deut. 18:21–22). These criteria are not mechanical and automatic, however. Sometimes a prophet may appear to contradict prior revelation (Jer. 26:11), and sometimes the predicted judgment is staved off by national repentance (Jon. 4). Also, sometimes God may test the people with a false prophet who makes a true prediction (Deut. 13:1–3).

True prophets occasionally exhibited bizarre behavior. Saul, while pursuing David, was suddenly possessed by the Spirit of God and lay naked day and night, prophesying. This caused the people to ask if Saul was now one of the prophets (1 Sam. 19:24). Even in the ancient world, prophets were considered a bit crazy (2 Kings 9:11; Jer. 23:9; 29:26; Hos. 9:7). The phenomenon he experienced is referred to as "ecstasy." The practice of tongues in the NT church also seems to have been ecstatic behavior. Paul notes that observers would call practitioners "out of your mind" (1 Cor. 14:23). At Pentecost, some observers thought that the apostles were drunk. Peter replied that they were not drunk but rather had the Spirit upon them (Acts 2:15–21).

The word "prophet" refers to one who foretells the future. Of course, many people cannot accept the notion of real prophecy and thus regard all prophecy as an illusion. Either the text was written after the fact, or it was couched in such general terms that it is no miracle that it came true, or else it was a lucky guess. The text itself, however, wants to be read as real prophecy, and Christians before the modern age read it as such. After all, to reject the supernatural elements in the Bible ultimately leads to rejecting the resurrection of Christ.

However, the modern Christian should not focus on the predictive part of the prophets' message to such an extent that the "forthtelling" element is neglected. Forthtelling is the prophets' chief ministry—calling the people to mercy and justice, to obedience to the law and fidelity to God. Christians who believe the Bible should take seriously the predictions about the future, but even more so the challenges about the present.

THE BOOKS OF PROPHECY IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

The OT of Catholic and Protestant Bibles is roughly organized around the Greek translation of the OT, the Septuagint. Thus, Daniel is considered a prophetic book, and the prophets are separated from the historical books by the poetical books. However, the Hebrew Bible has a different organization. It has only eight "books" of prophecy, divided into the Former Prophets and the Latter Prophets. The Former Prophets are Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings. Traditionally, Samuel wrote Judges. The books of 1 Samuel and 2 Samuel form one scroll, as do 1 Kings and 2 Kings. The book of Samuel bears the name of the prophet, and Kings is substantially about Elijah and Elisha. The four Former Prophets witness to the outworking of the covenant sanctions, from the Israelites' entry into the promised land to their expulsion from it.

Usually, when Christians speak of the prophets, they are referring to the Latter Prophets, plus Daniel. In Catholic and Protestant Bibles there are four Major Prophets: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel; and twelve Minor Prophets: Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. Many other prophets ministered in Israel but have no scroll that bears their name. Thus, the ones listed above can be called the "writing prophets."

Isaiah. The book of Isaiah preserves the sermons from the prophet who ministered during the time when Hezekiah was king of Judah, the southern kingdom. Isaiah saw Jerusalem surrounded by the Assyrian army and assured the king that God would deliver his people. That message of salvation is the overall theme of the book, a salvation universal in scope and focused on the figure of the Suffering Servant. Isaiah claims that this servant of God would be wounded and "cut off from the land of the living" (Isa. 53:8) and through this would bring healing and salvation to his people. He would see this and make many righteous (Isa. 53).

The NT refers to Isaiah more often than any other prophet, always to demonstrate that the truths of the gospel of Jesus Christ were revealed in advance by the prophet. For example, Paul cites Isa. 1:9 in his argument as to why the Jews had rejected the gospel (Rom. 9:29). When Jesus withdrew to the area of Zebulun and Naphtali, Matthew says that this act fulfilled Isa. 9:1–2 (Matt. 4:15–16). Jesus himself cites Isa. 53:12, "[he] was numbered with the transgressors," and claims that it was written about him (Luke 22:37). He does the same with Isa. 61:1–2 (Luke 4:18–21).

Jeremiah. The book of Jeremiah puts in writing the words of the prophet Jeremiah, who ministered at the very end of the kingdom of Judah and lived through the destruction of Jerusalem, with its temple and the people of God being taken away to forced exile and captivity. He sees the weakness and powerlessness of the covenant that God had made with his people to stir up love and fidelity in their hearts to him. According to Jeremiah, what the people chiefly need is a new covenant altogether, one that is not external and written on tablets of stone, but internal, written on their hearts. They need a change of personality to become a different sort of people altogether. This is what Jeremiah predicts will happen in the coming age after their time of captivity is over (Jer. 31:31–40). The NT identifies this new covenant with the gospel of Jesus (Heb. 8:8–12), secured by his blood (Heb. 10:16–17). This is the new covenant that Jesus announces to his disciples when he eats the Last Supper with them (Luke 22:20).

Ezekiel. The book of Ezekiel picks up where Jeremiah leaves off and continues from the destruction of Jerusalem into the early years of the Babylonian captivity. Like Jeremiah, Ezekiel sees the failure of the old covenant. He likens Israel to a married woman who violates her marriage covenant at every turn (Ezek. 16). The prophet also foresees a future character transformation of

God’s people. “I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws” (Ezek. 36:26–27). This is graphically illustrated in Ezek. 37, where the prophet is told to prophesy to a valley of dry bones, and through the preaching of the word of God the company of the dead come to life and become a vast army—not of skeletons, but of vitally alive warriors. This is a vision of what will happen when God makes an everlasting covenant with them and will dwell with them forever (Ezek. 37:26–27). Paul cites this in 2 Cor. 6:16 and argues, “We are the temple of the living God.” The last part of Ezekiel describes a great, larger-than-life temple that Paul interprets to be the church. Thus, Ezekiel anticipates the preaching of the gospel, bringing spiritual life to a vast company of believers, among whom God himself will dwell.

Daniel. The book of Daniel is not a prophetic book by genre, but much of it is devoted to predicting the future, so in Catholic and Protestant Bibles it is placed between Ezekiel and the Minor Prophets. Prophecy calls the people to repentance and threatens judgment on them due to their sin. Daniel does the opposite: it calls them to persevere as saints, while the evil nations oppress them, until the end of time, when they will be vindicated. Daniel comforts the faithful who are suffering due to the sins of the nations.

Statues of the prophets Daniel, Ezekiel, Jeremiah, and Isaiah (Skara Domkyrka, Sweden)

The Twelve. The twelve Minor Prophets follow a roughly chronological sequence (with some notable exceptions). Hosea, Amos, and Micah date from the rise of Assyria as the great power that threatened Israel and Judah. Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah date from near the end of Assyrian dominance and the rise of Babylon. The Babylonian exile is skipped, and the last three—Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi—were written after the Jews' restoration to the land of Judah. Joel, Obadiah, and Jonah are difficult to date with certainty.

Read as one book, the Minor Prophets tell a story of God's constancy and fidelity even though everything else in the world changes. They begin with all twelve tribes intact and enjoying prosperity in the land. In Judah, there is a king on the throne of David. But by the end, most of the tribes are lost, the monarchy is no more, Jerusalem and the temple have been destroyed, and the Jews are under the heel of foreign powers. After all of that, God says to them, almost as the moral of the whole history of the OT, "I the LORD do not change. So you, the descendants of Jacob, are not destroyed. Ever since the time of your ancestors you have turned away from my decrees and have not kept them. Return to me, and I will return to you" (Mal. 3:6–7). Deeply explored in the Minor Prophets is the day of the Lord, the climax and denouement of history, in which all the words of the prophets will finally be fulfilled (see Joel and Zephaniah). The reader is given, as a picture of this day, a view of the repentance of one generation of Ninevites at the preaching of Jonah and of the final judgment to fall on that city as described by Nahum.

The NT cites the Minor Prophets much more often than any book of prophecy except Isaiah. Peter draws upon Joel 2:28–32 to explain the pouring out of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:17–21). James cites Amos 9:11–12 to demonstrate that salvation was always intended for the Gentiles as well as the Jews (Acts 15:16–17). Paul quotes Hab. 2:4 to argue that righteousness before God comes through faith (Rom. 1:17; Gal. 3:11). Jesus says that like Jonah, he will return to the land of the living after three days (Matt. 12:38–41).

PROPHECY IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

In the NT period there were a number of prophets. John the Baptist could point to Jesus and proclaim him to be the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world (John 1:29). Agabus the prophet predicted a famine and, later, Paul's arrest (Acts 11:28; 21:10–11).

Paul lists "gifts of the Spirit" (1 Cor. 12:4–11), including prophecy and various phenomena reminiscent of the OT prophets' ecstatic state. Paul warns the Corinthians not to overdo this sort of thing and so to be mature (1 Cor. 14:19–20). Near the end of his life, in one of his last letters, he speaks of prophecy as normative in the church, particularly in establishing an authoritative body of elders to rule and especially to preach the gospel (1 Tim. 1:18; 4:14). Peter draws a connection between the ministry of the OT prophets and the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ (1 Pet. 1:10–12). Evangelism seems to be the normative mode for prophecy today: forthtelling by calling people to turn from their sins to Jesus, and foretelling by speaking of his return and the final judgment.

Thus, all Christians hold the office of prophet, even if they never participate in the ecstatic state experienced by the Corinthians. The greatness of a prophet is in how clearly the prophet points to Jesus. John the Baptist was the greatest of the OT prophets by that measure, but any Christian on this side of the cross and resurrection can proclaim the gospel even more clearly. Thus, the prophetic ministry of any Christian is greater than John's (Matt. 11:11).

PROPHETESS Five prophetesses are mentioned in the OT: Miriam (Exod. 15:20), Deborah (Judg. 4–5), Huldah (2 Kings 22:14–20; 2 Chron. 34:22–28), Isaiah's wife (Isa. 8:3), and Noadiah (Neh. 6:14). Their exercise of the role seems to have been entirely legitimate. Miriam's fault was not prophesying, but rather, like Aaron, being jealous of Moses (Num. 12). Deborah was both a prophetess and a judge (Judg. 4:4), and although the narrative suggests that it was incongruous for her to be engaged in violent warfare, there is no criticism of the fact that she prophesied. The accounts of Huldah treat her like any other prophet, while the problem with Noadiah in Neh. 6:14 was not that she was a woman, but rather that she, along with some male prophets, was a liar. Women who prophesy falsely are condemned (Ezek. 13:17), but Joel promises that in the last days, when God pours out his Spirit, both men and women will prophesy truly (Joel 2:28–29).

Similarly in the NT, Peter recognizes God's promise through Joel being fulfilled in the gift of prophetic speech to women as well as men at Pentecost (Acts 2:18); and Paul, acknowledging that women prophesy publicly in the congregation, is concerned only with the manner of their doing so (1 Cor. 11:5). The prophetess Anna proclaims the baby Jesus as the Messiah (Luke 2:36–38), Luke reports that the four unmarried daughters of Philip the evangelist also prophesy (Acts 21:8–9). The only false prophetess in the NT is the apocalyptic figure of Jezebel in Rev. 2:20.

PROPITIATION *See* Expiation.

PROSELYTE A Gentile convert to the religion of the Jews. Proselytism is the process whereby a Gentile assented to Jewish monotheism, concurred with Jewish criticism of pagan ethics and idolatry, accepted the obligations of the Mosaic law, and entered the nation of Israel. In the LXX the Greek word *prosēlytos* translates the Hebrew word *ger* ("foreigner") seventy-seven times. The word can denote resident aliens (Lev. 19:10; 24:16) and even Israelites (Exod. 22:21; Lev. 19:34; Deut. 10:19). It is common to translate *prosēlytos* as "convert" because by the first century AD it did by and large have that meaning in inscriptions, in the NT (Matt. 23:15; Acts 2:11; 6:5; 13:43), Philo (*Dreams* 2.273; *Spec. Laws* 1.51, 308; *QE* 2.2), and the LXX (e.g., Exod. 12:48–49; Deut. 1:16; Pss. 93:6; 145:9; Jer. 7:6; Ezek. 14:7; Zech. 7:10; Mal. 3:5).

In later rabbinic regulations converts were required to make a sacrifice and to undergo baptism and circumcision. But this was not necessarily uniform in the Judaism of the Second Temple period or even in the rabbinic era. For instance, Philo asserts that what constitutes a proselyte is not circumcision but rather submission to God, "because the proselyte is one who circumcises not his uncircumcision but his desires and sensual pleasures and the other passions of the soul" (*QE* 2.2). Similarly, Josephus narrates a story about the conversion of King Izates of Adiabene, who is given two different views as to whether he needs to be circumcised in order to worship the God of Israel or to be "assuredly Jewish" (*Ant.* 20.34–48). It is quite likely that many of the converts to Christianity came from proselyte and God-fearer ranks. They were attracted to Christianity because they could worship the God of Israel through faith in Jesus Christ without adopting the religion and nationality of Judea.

PROSTITUTION The rendering of sexual services for payment. The biblical references to prostitution are perhaps best organized under three headings: common or secular prostitution, cultic or sacred prostitution, and prostitution as metaphor.

COMMON OR SECULAR PROSTITUTION

This type of prostitution is referred to in the OT by the Hebrew word *zonah* and its derivatives (though some argue that on occasion the word might refer to sexual infidelity in general) and in the NT by the Greek term *pornē*. Among the well-known prostitutes in the Bible are Rahab (Josh. 2:1–21), Jephthah's mother (Judg. 11:1), Delilah (Judg. 16:1), and the two women in Solomon's court (1 Kings 3:16–28). (Although tradition often identifies Mary Magdalene as a prostitute, she is not referred to this way in the Bible.)

Although there is no explicit, absolute prohibition of prostitution in the pentateuchal laws, there are major restrictions. No father should cause or allow his daughter to become a prostitute (Lev. 19:29). Priests were not permitted to marry prostitutes (Lev. 21:7, 14), though this seems to imply a less stringent standard for the general populace. A priest's daughter who became a prostitute was to be burned in the fire (Lev. 21:9), but no such statement is made for Israelites in general. Earnings from prostitution could not be used for payment of vows (Deut. 23:18).

While prostitution was not absolutely banned, it was the object of severe disapproval and contempt in Israelite society (Gen. 34:31; Judg. 11:1–2). The book of Proverbs sternly warns young men against turning to prostitutes (Prov. 6:26; 7:10; 23:27; 29:3), but these warnings also give evidence that prostitution, however contemptible, was tolerated in some measure. This attitude toward prostitution accords with that in the larger ancient Near Eastern context, though law codes from other Mesopotamian civilizations restricted and regulated prostitution rather than banning it outright. In the NT, Paul particularly refers to the spiritual problem involved in a sexual relationship with prostitutes (1 Cor. 6:15–16). Strikingly, however, Jesus includes repentant prostitutes among the citizens of the kingdom of God (Matt. 21:31–32).

SACRED OR CULTIC PROSTITUTION

The NIV in several places has the term "shrine prostitute" (Gen. 38:21–22; Deut. 23:17; 1 Kings 14:24; 15:12; 22:46; 2 Kings 23:7; Hos. 4:14). This is a translation of the Hebrew words *qadesh* (masc.) and *qedeshah* (fem.), which come from the word *qadosh*, which means "holy." Traditionally, this has been understood to refer to male and female prostitutes who performed their services in connection with a temple or shrine. The payments went into the temple treasuries, and the sexual acts were intended to motivate the gods and goddesses to imitate them, assuring in turn the fertility of the land and fruitful crops. This was understood as being in accord with the practices of ancient Eastern fertility cults. In recent scholarship, this traditional understanding has been challenged on two points. First, a number of scholars have found little or no evidence that prostitution in the service of the temple was envisioned as stimulating similar activity among the gods, whether in Israel or in the larger Near Eastern world. Second, while *qedeshah* certainly refers to a female prostitute in the service of the temple, it is less certain that *qadesh* refers to a male prostitute; it may simply refer to male cultic personnel with no reference to sexual activity. Whatever the outcome of the discussion, the pentateuchal laws absolutely prohibit prostitution in connection with the temple or a shrine. Deuteronomy 23:17–18 seems to indicate that one of the motivations for women to offer sexual favors in the service of the temple was to pay off a vow, but clearly it condemns the practice.

PROSTITUTION AS METAPHOR

Already in the pentateuchal legal texts, the sin of forsaking Yahweh, the God of Israel, to serve and worship other gods was analogized to prostitution (Exod. 34:15; Lev. 17:7; 20:5–6; Num. 15:39; Deut. 31:16). But the analogy becomes especially pronounced in the books of the prophets, which contain over half of the OT references to prostitution. Speaking through Jeremiah, God says to Israel, “Under every spreading tree you lay down as a prostitute (Jer. 2:20). In idolatry, Israel does not even “blush with shame” but instead has the “brazen look of a prostitute” (Jer. 3:1–3). Ezekiel portrays Israel and Judah as prostitutes who “lavished” their favors on any gods who passed by (Ezek. 16:15). Indeed, God complains that Israel acted even worse than a prostitute, for “you scorned payment. . . . All prostitutes receive gifts, but you give gifts to all your lovers” (Ezek. 16:31–34). Hosea, who was commanded by God to marry an adulterous woman in an extravagant act of love, mirroring God’s own love for the Israelites, buys and redeems his wife from her prostitution (Hos. 3:1–5). At times, other nations are also metaphorically identified as prostitutes, such as Tyre (Isa. 23:15–17), Nineveh (Nah. 3:4), and Babylon (Rev. 17:1, 15–16; 19:2).

PROVERBS, BOOK OF

Purpose

The preface to the book of Proverbs (1:1–7) introduces its intent to make its reader wise. Although the discourses of the book (chaps. 1–9) are the instructions of a father to his son, the preface widens the audience to include both the “simple” (1:4) and the “wise” (1:5). The preface also informs the reader that wisdom begins with the fear of the Lord, thus indicating that wisdom is more than practical advice. Wisdom is a theological truth.

Historical Background

The first verse of Proverbs associates the book with “Solomon son of David, king of Israel” (1:1). Solomon was the king of a united Israel in the tenth century BC, and his association with wisdom is well known from the historical books (1 Kings 3; 4:29–34; 10:1–13; 2 Chron. 1; 9:1–12).

Although Proverbs clearly attributes large sections of the book to Solomon (particularly 10:1–22:16; 25:1–29:27), it also recognizes other hands in the production of the book. First, 25:1, while associating Solomon with the following proverbs, also mentions the scribal activity of “the men of Hezekiah,” a Judean king from the late eighth and early seventh centuries BC. Second, 22:17–24:34 is connected to a group known as “the wise” (see 22:17; 24:23). Below, we will see that this section bears comparison with ancient Egyptian proverbial literature. Finally, there are sayings of two foreign kings, Agur (30:1) and Lemuel respectively (31:1).

In summary, Solomon is the fountainhead of the book of Proverbs. He created and collected proverbs, thus initiating the collection. After Solomon, other proverbs were added to the collection, including some of his own (25:1). We do not know precisely when the book came to a final form, though it was before the canon of the OT was closed.

Ancient Near Eastern Background

In 1 Kings 4:29–30 Solomon’s wisdom is said to surpass that of the “people of the East” as well as “the wisdom of Egypt.” Such a statement can be a compliment only if the wisdom of the broader ancient Near East had some measure of validity. Once the merit of ancient Near Eastern wisdom is recognized, we may not be surprised to see some measure of similarity between certain proverbs and wisdom from outside Israel.

The most famous comparison is between the thirty “sayings of the wise” in Prov. 22:17–24:22 and the thirty chapters of the Egyptian Instructions of Amenemope. The latter is dated before the time of

Solomon and contains instructions similar to Proverbs. One example is the instruction “Do not move an ancient boundary stone” in Prov. 23:10 and the similar admonition in Amenemope 7.12.

More recently, the connections between Proverbs and ancient Near Eastern proverbs have been broadened to include not only other ancient Egyptian instruction texts but also Sumerian and especially Aramaic proverbial literature (particularly *Ahiqar*).

It appears that the faithful in Israel recognized that even observant pagans could stumble across truths about how God’s creation works. Even so, the faithful in Israel would not recognize their Egyptian counterparts as “wise” even when they were perhaps inspired by their insights into the workings of the world. After all, they did not have “fear of the LORD” and did not embrace Wisdom (see below).

SOCIAL SETTING

The proverbs of the biblical book seem to come from different sectors of Israelite society. It is not surprising, considering the role of Solomon and the “men of Hezekiah,” that a number of proverbs originated and have their primary usage in the royal court (23:1–3). Even so, other proverbs originate in village life of agrarian society (10:5). When the latter are found in parts of the book attributed to Solomon, he might be the collector rather than the creator.

TEXT

The Greek translation of Proverbs has significant differences from the main Hebrew texts, particularly in its outline. While some scholars see this as evidence of two different editions of the book, others more plausibly argue that the Greek text is a very free translation that reflects Stoic philosophy and Jewish midrashic thinking. Modern English translations, thus, are based on the ancient Hebrew texts.

Sumerian cuneiform tablet containing the instructions of Shurrupak to his son Ziusudra, part of a Sumerian proverb collection from 2400 BC

LITERARY CONSIDERATIONS

Structure. The book of Proverbs can be outlined in more than one way. As noted above, the book contains rubrics indicating different authors, and on that basis the book may be divided in the following way:

1:1 Solomon, for the whole book

10:1 Solomon, for 10:1–22:16

22:17 The wise (see also 24:23), for 22:17–24:34

30:1 Agur, for 30:1–33

31:1 Lemuel, for 31:1–9

Recognizing that 1:1 is a superscription for the entire book, and that 1:1–7 is a preamble certainly added late in the process of collection to describe the purpose of the whole book, we find the following structure:

Superscription (1:1)
Preamble (Stating the Purpose) (1:2–7)
Solomonic Proverbs (10:1–22:16; 25:1–29:27)
Sayings of the Wise (22:17–24:34)
Sayings of Lemuel (30:1–33)
Poem to the Virtuous Woman (31:10–31)

On a large scale, the most interesting structural insight is that chapters 1–9 contain extended discourses, while chapters 10–31 contain the proverbs per se (see "Genre" below). The discourses in the first nine chapters have the following outline:

The preamble (1:1–7)
Avoid evil associations (1:8–19)
Do not resist Wisdom (1:20–33)
The benefits of the way of wisdom (2:1–22)
Trust in Yahweh (3:1–12)
Praising wisdom (3:13–20)
The integrity of wisdom (3:21–35)
Embrace wisdom (4:1–9)
Stay on the right path (4:10–19)
Guard your heart (4:20–27)
Avoid promiscuous women (part 1) (5:1–23)
Wisdom admonitions: loans, laziness, lying, and other topics (6:1–19)
The danger of adultery (6:20–35)
Avoid promiscuous women (part 2) (7:1–27)
Wisdom's autobiography (8:1–36)
Miscellaneous wisdom sayings (9:7–12)

The second part of the book (chaps. 10–31) seems more randomly structured, with the individual proverbs moving from one topic (laziness, parental authority, wealth and poverty, speech, etc.) to another in no apparent order. Some recent commentators have tried to discover a deep structure to the material, but they have failed to convince a wide audience. As we will see below ("Theological Message"), the fact that the discourses precede the proverbs has important theological significance.

Genre. Proverbs is a book of wisdom. On the surface, biblical wisdom appears to be practical advice about how to live life. How does one navigate difficulties in order to achieve success, defined as a happy, prosperous, productive life? In many ways it is similar to the modern concept of emotional intelligence. It is not so much a matter of knowing facts as it is a skill of living, saying the right thing and doing the right thing at the right time.

But careful reading of the book demonstrates that wisdom is deeper than practical lessons in living. Wisdom from the start involves a theological dimension. As explained more fully below, one cannot be wise unless one has a proper relationship with God. After all, "the fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge" (1:7).

As a book that teaches wisdom, Proverbs fits into a category of literature that includes Job and Ecclesiastes as well as various psalms (e.g., Pss. 1; 49; 73).

Within the book of Proverbs, we discover two dominant types of literature: the discourse and the proverb per se.

The discourse is the major genre of chapters 1–9. These are extended speeches, typically of a father to a son (e.g., 1:8–19), but occasionally of Wisdom to all the young men who are going by (1:20–33). Both the father and Wisdom encourage their hearers to stay on the path of wisdom, which leads to life, and to avoid folly, which leads to death. Most of the discourses of Proverbs begin with an exhortation that summons the hearer to pay attention and often gives motivation for doing so. It is followed by a lesson (notice, e.g., the extensive teaching about proper sexual relationships in chaps. 5–7). A conclusion typically talks about the consequences of listening or not listening to the lesson.

The bulk of the second part, chapters 10–31, is proverbs per se, though there are longer forms, such as the poem to the virtuous woman (31:10–31). The proverb is a short (typically a two-part parallel line) saying that provides an observation, warning, or encouragement concerning a certain type of behavior. An example is the observation in 10:4: "Lazy hands make for poverty, but diligent hands bring wealth." Although this proverb simply makes an observation, it implicitly offers encouragement to live with diligence in order to avoid poverty.

The proverb as a genre makes no claim to universal truth. While some proverbs are always true by virtue of their link with a law that is always true (e.g., 30:20, reflecting the commandment not to commit adultery), the proverb itself does not claim to always be true. Proverbs are true only if applied at the right time and in the right situation. That is why we encounter contradictory proverbs such as 26:4 and 26:5, where the advice not to answer a fool is followed immediately by the advice to answer a fool. The wise person must read the situation in order to know which of these two proverbs is applicable.

The circumstantial nature of proverbs is also typically true of observations such as the one in 10:4, noted above. It is not always true that lazy people become poor or that hard workers become rich. The former might inherit a fortune, while the latter might have their hard work destroyed by a natural catastrophe.

In order to use proverbs correctly, readers and users of proverbs must recognize the circumstantial nature of the truth claims of a proverb. After all, proverbs misused are useless (26:7) and even dangerous (26:9).

Another common misuse of a proverb involves the "rewards" and "punishments" described in relationship to wise and foolish behavior. These are not promises. They are, instead, the most likely outcome from a particular course of action, all other things being equal. Thus, the advice to "start children off on the way they should go" tells parents the best route to a desired end (22:6). If they do so, it is likely that their children will not turn from the way of wisdom. But there is no guarantee.

Other factors might lead the child astray.

Style. The book of Proverbs is poetry (*see* Imagery; Poetry). It utilizes figurative language to convey its message. Perhaps the most intriguing image in the book is that of Wisdom (see below). The poetry of Proverbs also uses sound plays as well as the acrostic form (31:20–31) (*see* Acrostic).

THEOLOGICAL MESSAGE

Fear of the Lord. According to Proverbs, no one can be wise without having the proper relationship with God (1:7). This relationship is characterized by "fear." This fear is not horror, but it is more than respect. The point is that the wise person must understand that God, and no one else, is at the center of the universe, that God is more important than any human being. After all, God created the world (3:19–20; 8:22–31), so it is important to know one's place before the Creator in order to understand how the world works.

Wisdom and Folly. The relational nature of wisdom as "fear of the LORD" is taught in yet another intriguing way. In 1:20–33; 8:1–36; 9:1–6 the reader encounters a woman, Wisdom, who invites all the young men (the readers) to dinner. Such an invitation presumes an intimate relationship. The location of Wisdom's home on "the highest point of the city" (9:3) reflects the location of the temple and indicates that Wisdom stands for Yahweh's wisdom, even Yahweh himself. On the other hand, in 9:13–18 another woman, Folly, issues a rival invitation. Her home too is on "the highest point of the city" (9:14), indicating that she stands for a god as well, but in her case the false gods of the nations. In chapter 9, the reader must decide with whom to dine, Wisdom (Yahweh) or Folly (false gods). Thus, wisdom and folly are not only practical, but also theological categories. Someone who acts wisely is behaving like a proper worshiper of the true God, whereas someone who acts foolishly is behaving like an idolater.

NEW TESTAMENT CONNECTIONS

The Letter of James has many interesting connections with Proverbs. It describes "the wisdom that comes from heaven" (3:17) and speaks to a number of proverbial topics. In terms of the latter, the extensive teaching about speech is notable (3:1–12).

The most striking NT connection to Proverbs, however, comes in the association drawn between Jesus and Wisdom, particularly as she is described in Prov. 8. John 1 describes Jesus as the Word in language reminiscent of Wisdom, and he is connected with Wisdom in Matt. 11:19; Col. 1:15–20; Rev. 3:14. It is not that Wisdom is a prophecy of Jesus, but the NT associates this figure of Yahweh's wisdom with Jesus because in him "are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Col. 2:3).

PROVIDENCE The word "providence" comes from the Latin word *providentia*, which means "foresight." However, the modern theological use of the term refers not to foresight or foreknowledge per se but rather to how God continues to sustain and guide his creation. There is no single term in either the OT or the NT that translates as "providence." The one time the word occurs in the NIV (Job 10:12), the Hebrew word (*peqqudah*) is one that the NIV in other places usually translates with words such as "care," "charge," or "oversight." The concept of divine providence comes not from any one word but rather from numerous statements in the Bible that speak of God's continuing supervision of his world. The biblical data can perhaps best be organized under four headings: created order, world history, salvation history, and individual history. These headings are, however, not discrete; they continually intersect.

CREATED ORDER

Scripture testifies in numerous places to God's ongoing supervision of his creation. The psalms play a special role here. As one commentator has remarked, there are no nature lyrics in the psalms, only admiration and awe at how God runs his world. God actively cares for the land and waters it, causes grass to grow, plants trees, and makes sure that they are well watered (Pss. 65:9; 104:14, 16). God brings darkness on the land and tells the sun when to set and when to rise (Ps. 104:19–20). God is the zookeeper who makes sure all the animals are fed (Ps. 104:27). Every birth of every living creature is regarded as a new creative work of God, and he constantly renews the face of the earth (Ps. 104:30).

God blankets the earth with snow and lays down a sheet of frost (Ps. 147:16). When the snow and frost melt, it is because God commanded it by his word and sent breezes to make the melting waters flow (Ps. 147:18). Hail, snow, clouds, and stormy winds do their Master's bidding (Ps. 148:8). God commands the morning to dawn and keeps the snow and hail in storehouses, ready to be deployed on the day of battle (Job 38:12, 22–23). The sea waves roar because God stirs them up (Jer. 31:35). God even speaks of being in a covenant relationship with his creation (Jer. 33:20, 25).

In the NT, we find that Jesus Christ himself sustains "all things by his powerful word" (Heb. 1:3). In him "all things hold together" (Col. 1:17).

WORLD HISTORY

What happens on the world scene is under God's sovereign control. If the nations are scattered over the world and speak different languages, it is because God made it so (Gen. 11:1–9). God determines whether the nations are blessed or cursed (Gen. 12:3). God is the one who has apportioned each nation's inheritance and has established their boundaries (Deut. 32:8). Yahweh is the God of Israel, which is his special possession, but he has also appointed deities for the other nations to worship (Deut. 4:19 [evidently false gods, but still under Yahweh's sovereignty]). He judges the world and carries out justice for the peoples, foils the plans of the nations, forms the hearts of all people, reigns over the nations and guides them (Pss. 9:8; 33:10, 15; 47:8; 67:4).

It is by God's sanction that kings reign, and a king's heart is like a watercourse, which God can redirect at will (Prov. 8:15; 21:1). God "does as he pleases with the powers of heaven and the peoples of the earth" (Dan. 4:35). All thrones, powers, rulers, and authorities "were created through him and for him" (Col. 1:16). God is actively working to bring the whole universe and all peoples and nations under one head, his Son, Christ Jesus (Eph. 1:10).

SALVATION HISTORY

Within world history, God has also worked through one particular people, the Israelites, to accomplish his redemptive purposes. When Joseph told his brothers that what they had intended to do to him for evil, God had intended for good, for "the saving of many lives" (Gen. 50:20), he may not have fully realized how much his words were in accord with, and could even be said to summarize, redemptive history. God took the harm that Joseph's brothers intended and used it to fulfill the promises that he had made years earlier to Abraham with regard to what would happen to his descendants (Gen. 12:1–3). In the early chapters of Exodus, God's sovereignty over the "forces of nature" intersects with his deliverance of the Israelites in the plagues that he brings on the Egyptians.

Of course, God had raised up Pharaoh for the very purpose of displaying his own glory in victory over Pharaoh and “all the gods of Egypt” (Exod. 9:16; 12:12; cf. Rom. 9:17).

Throughout the ensuing Israelite history, God demonstrates his providential care for the Israelites. The Jews return from their Babylonian captivity because God raised up Cyrus, even though Cyrus did not acknowledge him (Isa. 44:28–45:13), for the very purpose of issuing the decree that allowed them to return. Even in narratives in which God’s name is not mentioned, such as the book of Esther, we are to understand that God is directing the action, and certainly the narrator wants us to connect the account of the origin of the festival of Purim (“lots”) with the idea that “the lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the LORD” (Prov. 16:33).

In the NT the act that secures our redemption, the crucifixion of Jesus, is not an unforeseen occurrence that God makes the best of; rather, the death of Jesus is that which he himself would “accomplish” (Luke 9:31 NRSV [NIV: “bring to fulfillment”]). No one takes Jesus’ life from him; he lays it down of his own accord (John 10:18). Jesus even gives Judas Iscariot directions on the night of his betrayal (John 13:27). What happens in the crucifixion is in accord with “God’s deliberate plan and foreknowledge” (Acts 2:23) and with what his “power and will had decided beforehand should happen” (4:28).

INDIVIDUAL HISTORY

Jesus promises that for those who seek the kingdom of God, “all these things will be given to you as well” (Matt. 6:33). If God feeds the birds of the air and clothes the grass of the field, much more will he take care to feed and clothe us (Matt. 6:26, 30). Indeed, “in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose” (Rom. 8:28).

PROVINCE A geographic territory whose local governance is subordinate to a ruling empire by either civil authority or military power. In the OT, Israel’s King Ahab oversaw provinces (1 Kings 20:14–15, 17, 19), as did the Persian kings (Esther 4:11). Judah was a province of the Persian Empire when King Cyrus allowed the exiles to return (Ezra 2:1; 4:15; Neh. 1:3). In the NT, Roman senatorial provinces were governed by annually appointed proconsuls (Acts 13:7; 18:12); Roman imperial provinces on the frontier were governed militarily. Judea was an imperial province under the direct control of a governor or procurator appointed by the emperor.

PROVOCATION Taunt, vexation, incitement, foment; the stirring up or arousing of anger (Deut. 32:19, 27; 1 Sam. 1:16; 1 Kings 15:30; 21:22; 2 Kings 23:26; Neh. 9:18, 26; Job 17:2; Ps. 95:8; Prov. 27:3; Jer. 32:31; Ezek. 20:28; Hos. 12:14; Heb. 3:8, 15).

PSALMIST The author of any psalm. This term is specially associated with David, who is referred to in many Bible versions as “the sweet psalmist of Israel” (2 Sam. 23:1 [NIV: “the hero of Israel’s songs”]) and is mentioned in the title of seventy-three psalms.

PSALMS, BOOK OF A collection of 150 poems. They are the hymnbook of the OT period, used in public worship. Psalms contains songs of different lengths, types, and dates. The earliest psalm (Ps. 90) is attributed to Moses (mid-second millennium BC), while the content of Ps. 126 and Ps. 137 points to the latest periods of the OT (mid-first millennium BC). They continue to be used as a source of public worship and private devotion.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Most psalms have a title. In the Hebrew text this title comprises the first verse, whereas English translations set it off before the first verse. Titles vary. Many name an author (e.g., David [Ps. 3]; Asaph [Ps. 77]; sons of Korah [Ps. 42]), while others provide information about genre (e.g., Psalms of Ascent [Pss. 120–134]), tune (e.g., “Do Not Destroy” [Ps. 75]), use in worship (Ps. 92), and a circumstance that led to composition (Ps. 51). Information in the title gives hints concerning how psalms were written and brought into a final collection.

COMPOSITION

As mentioned, the titles of the psalms often give indications of authorship and occasionally name the circumstance that led to the writing of the psalm. A good example is Ps. 51, where the title states, “For the director of music. A psalm of David. When the prophet Nathan came to him after David had committed adultery with Bathsheba.” The title connects the psalm with the events recorded in 2 Sam. 11–12 and suggests that David wrote the song in response to his sin and Nathan’s confrontation.

Although only a handful of the psalms have such a historical title, it is likely that most psalms were composed in response to some specific circumstance that encouraged the author to write. Interestingly, though, the psalmists do not speak about the specific circumstance in the psalm itself. Psalm 51, for instance, fits perfectly with the situation that the title describes in that it expresses guilt toward God and asks for forgiveness, but nowhere does it speak specifically about adultery. The psalmists do this intentionally because they are writing the song not as a memorial to an event, but rather as a prayer that others who have had similar though not identical experiences can use after them. Thus, Ps. 51 has been used as a model prayer for many penitents, whether they have sinned like David or in another way.

Most modern hymns have a similar background. John Newton, for instance, was inspired to write “Amazing Grace” because of awe that he felt at his conversion to Christianity from the evil of being a slave trader. However, when he wrote it, he wanted others to sing it as reflecting not on his conversion but on their own.

COLLECTION

The psalms were composed over a thousand-year period. Thus, it appears that the book of Psalms was a growing collection until it came to a close at an unknown time between the writing of the two Testaments.

In 1 Chron. 16:7–36 we may get a glimpse of how the process worked. The text describes David turning a musical composition over to the Levitical musician Asaph and his associates. It is likely that the priests kept an official copy of the book of Psalms in the holy place (the temple while it stood). The psalms, after all, were the hymns of ancient Israel. Their primary function was as a corporate book of prayer, though certainly they could be used in private devotions (note Hannah’s prayer in 1 Sam. 2:1–10 and its relationship to Ps. 113).

ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE

The psalms have no obvious organization that explains the location of all the psalms. They are not organized in terms of genre, authorship, time of composition, or length. There is only one statement about organization, found in Ps. 72:20: “This concludes the prayers of David son of Jesse.” In the light of this comment, it is surprising that a number of Davidic psalms appear in subsequent sections

(Pss. 101; 103; 108–110; 122; 124; 131; 133; 138–145). The best explanation is that at one point Ps. 72 concluded the Davidic psalms, but there was a reorganization before the canonical order was permanently closed.

A number of contemporary theories try to find some deep structure to the book, but it is best to refrain from speculation in regard to the overall structure. Nonetheless, a few structural characteristics are obvious. First, the division of Psalms into five books seems to reflect the fivefold division of the Pentateuch:

I. Book 1 (Pss. 1–41)

II. Book 2 (Pss. 42–72)

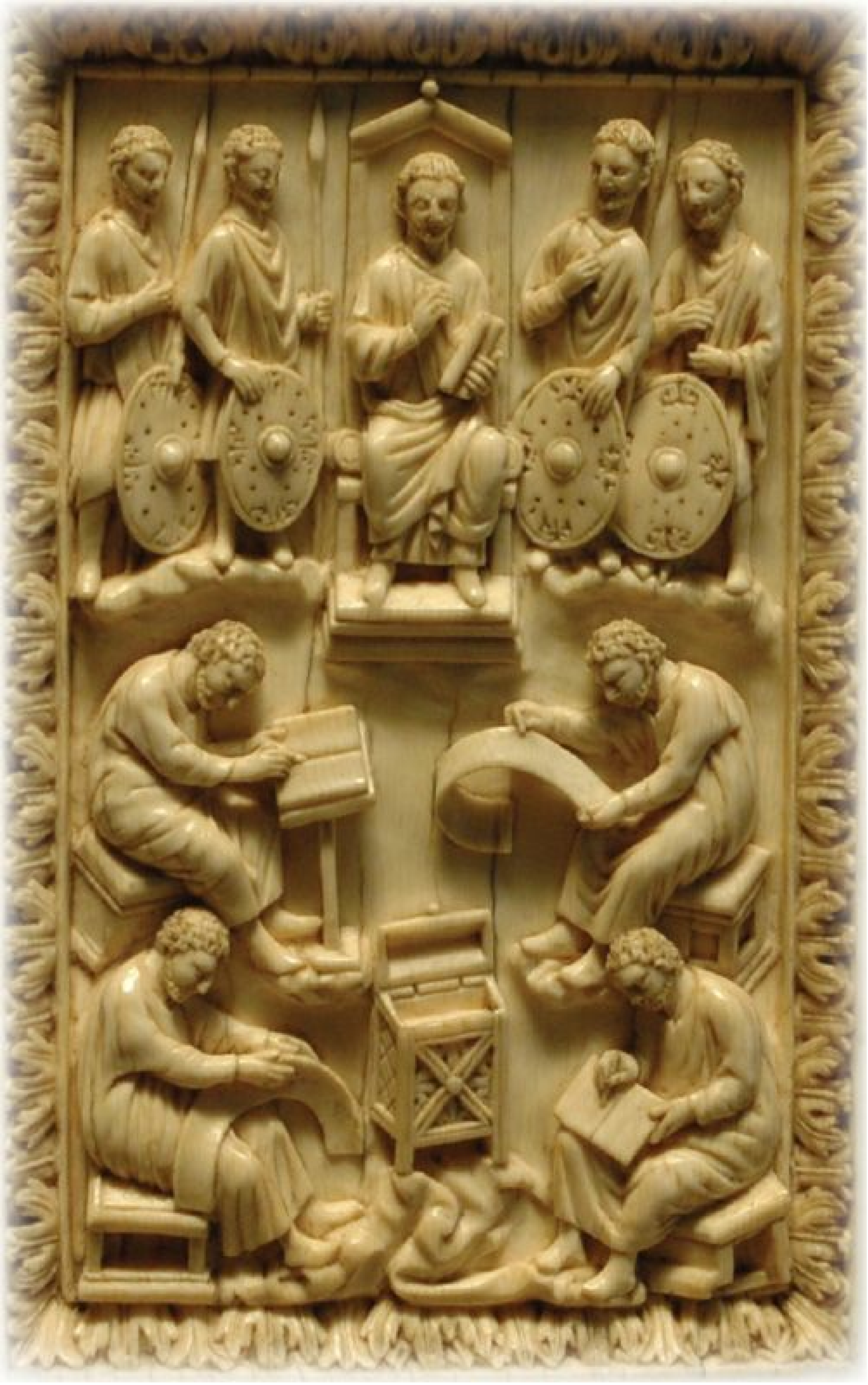
III. Book 3 (Pss. 73–89)

IV. Book 4 (Pss. 90–106)

V. Book 5 (Pss. 107–150)

Each book ends with a doxology. Such an intentional association with the Pentateuch would lend support to the Psalter’s claim to authority. Although these are prayers to God, they are also God’s word.

Second, within the Psalter there are subcollections. That is, there are psalms that came into the book not individually but as a group. The best-known such group are the Psalms of Ascent (Pss. 120–134), probably so named because worshipers sang them while going up (ascending) to the Temple Mount during one of the annual religious festivals in Jerusalem.



Ivory book cover showing David dictating the Psalms (tenth–eleventh century AD)

Third, it appears that psalms are intentionally placed at the beginning and at the end of the book to serve as an introduction and a conclusion. Psalms 1–2 serve as an introduction that alerts the reader to the twin important themes of law and messiah. Psalm 1 pronounces a blessing on those who love God’s law. The psalms, after all, are an intimate and personal conversation with God. One must be on the side of the godly to enter such a holy textual space, just as one must be godly to enter the precincts of the temple. After the reader enters, Psalm 2 provides an encounter with God and his anointed one (messiah). At the end of the book, the last five psalms (Pss. 146–150) constitute a tremendous doxology of praise.

This leads to the final observation on structure. Psalms of lament predominate at the beginning of the book, but they give way to hymns of praise toward the end. It is almost as if one enters the Psalter mourning and leaves it praising. Indeed, the Psalter brings the reader into contact with God and thus transforms the reader from sadness to joy.

LITERARY CONSIDERATIONS

Genre. The individual psalms may be identified as songs, prayers, or poems. Specifically, they are lyric poems (expressing the emotions of the poet), often addressed to God, and set to musical accompaniment. Although the categories overlap, seven different types of psalms can be recognized, with the first three being by far the most common.

- *Lament.* The largest single group of psalms are the laments, characterized by the expression of unhappy emotions: sadness, disappointment, anger, worry. The lamenters call on God to save them, even while at times complaining about God’s actions toward them (Ps. 42:9–10). Some laments contain petitions for forgiveness (Ps. 51), while others assert innocence of any wrongdoing (Ps. 26). A few laments even contain curses directed toward the enemies who are trying to harm the psalmist (Ps. 69:19–28). Most laments end by praising God or reaffirming confidence in God (Ps. 130:7–8). Usually the reason for the change from mourning to rejoicing is not given, but Ps. 77 pinpoints the reason as the memory of God’s great salvation events in the past (vv. 10, 16–20). One psalm, Ps. 88, laments but never makes the turn, remaining in the pit of despair. Yet even here we have a glimmer of hope in that the one who laments is still speaking to God.
- *Thanksgiving.* When God answers a lament, the response is thanksgiving. Psalms of thanksgiving are very similar to hymns (see below), but they cite an earlier problem that God has addressed. Psalm 30 praises God for restoring the psalmist’s good fortune and health after he suffered due to his earlier arrogance that led him to forget God (vv. 6–7).
- *Hymn*. Hymns are psalms of unalloyed praise directed toward God. The psalmists often call for others to join their worship of God (Ps. 100).
- *Remembrance.* While many psalms evoke memories of God’s actions in the past (as the lament in Ps. 77 recalls the exodus), certain psalms focus on rehearsing the actions of God in the past. Psalm 136 is one of the most memorable examples. As a liturgical psalm, it recites a divine action (“[God] swept Pharaoh and his army into the Red Sea” [v. 15]) followed by a congregational response (“His love endures forever”).
- *Confidence.* These psalms are defined by their mood of quiet trust in God even in the midst of trouble. They often present a reassuring image of God. The picture of God as a shepherd in Ps. 23 or as a mother in Ps. 131 are good examples.
- *Wisdom.* Some psalms meditate on the law (Pss. 1; 119) or have interests similar to those of wisdom literature, such as Job, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes (Pss. 49; 73).
- *Kingship.* A number of psalms praise God as king (Ps. 47) or the human king as his agent (Pss. 20–21) or both (Ps. 2).

Style. The psalms are poems, and so their style is characterized by the use of parallelism and figurative language. Poetry is also notable for its short lines. A poet packs a lot of meaning into very few words. So it is important to slow down and reflect on a psalm in order to derive its maximum effect. Besides brevity of expression, parallelism, and figurative language, poets create interest by using other literary tools. The psalmists use these poetic devices not only to inform their readers’ intellect but also to stimulate their imagination and arouse their emotions. (*See also* Acrostic; Imagery; Poetry.)

THEOLOGICAL MESSAGE

Although the psalms are not theological essays, readers can learn about God and their relationship with God from these poems. The book of Psalms is a bit like a portrait gallery of God, using images to describe who he is and the nature of our relationship with him. Some examples include God as shepherd (Ps. 23), king (Ps. 47), warrior (Ps. 98), and mother (Ps. 131), and the list could be greatly expanded. Each one of these picture images casts light on the nature of God and also the nature of our relationship with God. After all, the aforementioned psalms explicitly or implicitly describe God's people as sheep, subjects, soldiers, and children.

CONNECTION TO THE NEW TESTAMENT AND TODAY

Jesus himself draws attention to Psalms as a book that anticipated his coming suffering and glorification (Luke 24:25–27, 44). The Gospels recognized that Jesus' zeal for God was well expressed by Ps. 69:9 (John 2:17). When at the apex of his suffering on the cross, Jesus uttered the words found in Ps. 22:1 (Matt. 27:46). The NT writers also saw that Jesus was the fulfillment of the covenant that promised that a son of David would have an everlasting throne (2 Sam. 7:16). Accordingly, the royal psalms (e.g., Pss. 2; 110) often were applied to Jesus, who is the Messiah (the Christ, "the anointed one").

Today we read Psalms not only as an ancient witness to the coming work of Christ but also, as John Calvin put it, as a mirror of our souls. The psalms were written for worshipers who came after them with similar though not identical joys and problems. The psalms should become models of our prayers.

PSALTER A collection of psalms, usually arranged for singing and/or devotional reading. Often the psalms in a psalter are adorned with drawings to inspire the reader. The biblical book of Psalms is sometimes poetically referred to as the Psalter.

PSEUDEPIGRAPHA A pseudepigraphon (pl., "pseudepigrapha") is a book that purports to have been written by someone other than its actual author, often a famous historical figure. Ancient Jewish and Christian authors produced numerous pseudepigrapha attributed to biblical figures from both Testaments. A large collection of texts from the Second Temple period is known as the Pseudepigrapha, or Old Testament Pseudepigrapha (e.g., *1 Enoch*, *Jubilees*, *Odes of Solomon*, *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*). Another collection of texts from the early church is often referred to as the New Testament Pseudepigrapha or Apocrypha (e.g., *Acts of Paul*, *Gospel of Mary*, *Protevangelium of James*). However, the term "pseudepigrapha" covers a wide range of literature difficult to characterize in terms of common features. Biblical pseudepigrapha can either be authoritative canonical books for some communities (e.g., Wisdom of Solomon, *4 Ezra*) or fail to achieve such status. As for genre, pseudepigrapha include narratives, histories, testaments, apocalypses, poems, gospels, and epistles. What unites this body of literature is a common but variously construed interest in biblical figures or stories. When reduced to these terms, the boundaries of the category are broad and porous. *See also* Pseudepigraphy, Pseudonymity.

PSEUDEPIGRAPHY, PSEUDONYMITY A literary device whereby an author writes under a name other than his or her own (a pseudonym) or a book is deliberately assigned to a fictitious author (pseudepigraphy). In the case of ancient Jewish practice, the name borrowed was usually that of some famous worthy of the past (e.g., Enoch, Ezra), with the aim of bolstering the credentials of the book to which the name was attached. This is a common phenomenon in the Apocrypha (e.g., 2 Esdras, Baruch, Epistle of Jeremiah). It is even more common in the large collection of Second Temple texts now known as the Pseudepigrapha (e.g., *1 Enoch*, *Odes of Solomon*, *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*). (*See also* Pseudepigrapha.)

Scholars continue to debate the morality of pseudonymity and whether it is proper for a pseudonymous book to be placed within the canon of Scripture. Some excuse pseudonymity as a mere stylistic device or explain it as a culturally accepted convention. Others put a positive spin on the phenomenon, and so, for example, claim that in the Pastoral Epistles literate disciples of Paul sought to apply his ideas to newly developing situations in the years following his death. Some argue that such deception for a good cause is legitimate because it helped to gain a hearing for orthodox teaching. Others totally reject pseudepigraphy, viewing it as little better than deception and forgery and thus unworthy of literature viewed as inspired by God. The last approach seems to be most consistent with a high view of Scripture.

Over the last two hundred years a number of biblical books have been identified by some scholars as pseudonymous, notably Daniel in the OT, and in the NT six letters in the Pauline corpus—Ephesians, Colossians, 2 Thessalonians, and the Pastoral Epistles (1–2 Timothy, Titus)—together with 2 Peter and Jude.

A replica of a scribe’s work bench from Qumran, showing the instruments used during writing. Pseudepigraphy was a literary device used by some ancient writers.

OLD TESTAMENT

Certainly one mark of Jewish apocalyptic works is pseudonymity, and the book of Daniel is often viewed by critical scholars as no exception to this rule. It is difficult, however, to see how the name “Daniel” would have served to give the OT book named after him the desired authority, which is a major motivation for attaching a pseudonym.

Apart from the book itself, we essentially know nothing about this Daniel, whom it describes as living in Babylonia during the exile. In the book of Ezekiel we have two references to a Daniel (Ezek. 14:14, 20). In this passage the prophet says that when the land sins against God, “even if these three men—Noah, Daniel and Job—were in it, they could save only themselves by their righteousness.” There is, in addition, the further reference in Ezek. 14:16 to “these three men,” obviously referring to the same three men. Ezekiel speaks of these three men as embodiments of righteousness, but the fact that this Daniel figure is placed between two ancients (Noah and Job) suggests that he too is a figure of antiquity, not a contemporary of Ezekiel.

Ezekiel 28:3 taunts the king of Tyre: “Are you wiser than Daniel? Is no secret hidden from you?” Here “Daniel” (the Hebrew text at Ezek. 28:3 actually reads “Danel”) obviously is a proverbial figure of wisdom, and this implies that he may have been well known in Tyre and therefore could well have been Syro-Phoenician. There is in fact a “Danel” figure mentioned in Ugaritic literature (before 1200 BC). On the other hand, the Daniel of the book of Daniel is not a patriarch like Enoch, Noah, and Job, nor is he a famous figure like Ezra or the assistant to a prophet, as Baruch was to Jeremiah. Daniel is known only through the book that bears his name. In other words, the usual motivation explaining the use of a pseudonym does not apply to the canonical book of Daniel.

Also, the closing up and sealing of the book (Dan. 8:26; 12:4) is no mere device necessitated by using as a pseudonym the name of a man supposedly living in the time of Cyrus. Rather, the sealing signifies that much of the content of the later chapters of the book will be understood only when the predicted events begin to take place at a future time, with the book placing Daniel (its presumed author) in the sixth century BC.

NEW TESTAMENT

The Pastoral Epistles. With regard to the Pastoral Epistles, all three letters claim to be authored by the apostle Paul (1 Tim. 1:1; 2 Tim. 1:1; Titus 1:1). In seeking to determine the time of composition within a chronology of Paul’s ministry, they must be dated toward the end of his life (in the case of 2 Timothy, perhaps only shortly before his death) and after the close of the book of Acts, which concludes with the apostle’s arrival in Rome (Acts 28). In his letter to the Romans, Paul anticipates a future mission to Spain (Rom. 15:23–29), but the Pastoral Epistles imply that he returned to the east. Ephesus and Crete are the presumed locations of his coworkers Timothy and Titus (see 1 Tim. 1:3; Titus 1:5). On this supposition, these letters arise from a further mission there and a second (and final) imprisonment. The fact that Acts says nothing about this is no evidence against the supposition.

It is not necessary to view the mundane ecclesiastical arrangements of the Pastoral Epistles as inconsistent with a charismatic model of leadership in other Pauline letters (note the address to “overseers and deacons” in Phil. 1:1). We know from Acts 14:23; 20:17–38 that Paul appointed elders in the churches that he founded. The theological differences between the Pastoral Epistles and earlier Pauline compositions should not be overemphasized. The stress laid upon “the faith” and “sound teaching” is exactly what might be expected if Paul anticipated his imminent removal from the scene.

The other alternative is the theory that after Paul's death, members of a Pauline school (Timothy? Luke? Onesimus?) continued to supply letters under his name, addressing contemporary church issues in the guise of Paul, hoping to guarantee the legacy of the great apostle. Some scholars go as far as to assert that an admirer of Paul combined genuine Pauline fragments within a fictitious framework. The earliest listing of Paul's letters is that of Marcion (c. AD 140), and he fails to mention the Pastoral Epistles. That omission may be explained in various ways. There is no evidence, however, that anyone in the early church (orthodox or heterodox) who knew of the letters doubted their authenticity.

Ephesians and Colossians. There is some textual uncertainty with regard to the words "in Ephesus" in Eph. 1:1, making it possible that the letter was originally a circular letter written by Paul to more than one church. The letter mentions no one by name except Tychicus (Eph. 6:21), who carried the letter (perhaps to different churches in turn). This is enough to explain its more general orientation than some other Pauline letters, and any supposed theological "development" is not beyond the likely boundaries of Paul's expansive mind (e.g., his teaching on the church). The use of the "in Christ" formula in Ephesians is not substantially different from how Paul handles it elsewhere. The letter's twofold structure of doctrinal exposition followed by practical instruction fits a common Pauline epistolary pattern. Indeed, F. F. Bruce refers to this letter as "the quintessence of Paulinism."

In a number of ways Colossians and Ephesians share a common outlook. The Jewish Christian proto-gnostic false teaching combated in Colossians is not referred to in other Pauline letters, but it may have been a local Colossian variant. The letter is explicitly attributed to Paul, at both the beginning and the end (Col. 1:1; 4:18). Arguments about authorship based on style and unusual vocabulary are notoriously slippery and inconclusive. The high Christology of cosmic dimensions in Col. 1:15–20; 2:9–10, 15 is also present in undisputed Pauline letters (cf. Phil. 2:9–11). The obvious relationship of Colossians to the little letter to Philemon (e.g., Col. 4:9, 17; cf. Philem. 2, 12) is one of the strongest arguments in favor of the Pauline authorship of the former. Any theory of pseudepigraphy turns Col. 4:7–17, with its many names, into fanciful and free invention with little real purpose. Also, we might wonder why a later author chose to write under the name of Paul to a church that Paul himself did not found.

Second Thessalonians. Some view the futuristic timetable provided in 2 Thess. 2:1–12 as moving beyond Paul, with the world's end not yet in sight, for the writer teaches that certain things have to happen before the return of Christ, whereas in 1 Thess. 4:13–5:11 Paul has a nearer end in view. In both letters, however, the apostle is seeking to dampen the wrong kind of apocalyptic excitement. In 2 Thessalonians, it is clear that Paul knows a tradition of Jesus' teaching about the future, such as also found in Mark 13, so that there is nothing unreasonably "late" in the views expressed.

The substantial overlap in material between 1 Thessalonians and 2 Thessalonians is not evidence of the labors of a later disciple and imitator of Paul. It is highly ironic that some scholars suggest 2 Thessalonians is not a genuine letter of Paul: the letter itself condemns a fake letter supposedly from him that claims that the day of the Lord is already past (2 Thess. 2:2), and the original letter included a final greeting written in Paul's own hand (2 Thess. 3:17).

Second Peter and Jude. As for 2 Peter, it was not as well known in the early church as 1 Peter, and some (according to Origen) were hesitant to accept it. Its author claims to be a witness to the transfiguration (2 Pet. 1:16–18). Such personal allusions need not be attributed to a later writer who was trying too hard to show that he was Simon Peter. The obvious connection of 2 Pet. 1:14 to what is recorded in John 21 does not prove that the writer was dependent on that chapter.

The remarkable parallels between 2 Peter and Jude show that one is dependent upon the other, though scholars are not unanimous about which letter was prior. We cannot rule out that Peter would use and adapt the writings of a less prominent leader such as Jude. Jude makes use of apocryphal books, but neither in Jude nor in 2 Peter do arguments against the particular brand of false teaching require a second-century (postapostolic) dating.

PTOLEMAIS A port city seven miles north of Mount Carmel. Ptolemy II (283–246 BC) changed the name of the city of Akko (Judg. 1:31) to "Ptolemais." Jonathan Maccabeus was captured in Ptolemais (1 Macc. 12:45). Paul landed at Ptolemais on his way to Caesarea from Tyre (Acts 21:7).

PTOLEMIES A line of Hellenistic kings who ruled over major segments of the ancient Near East after the death of Alexander the Great and before the rise of the Roman Empire. The dynasty was initiated by Ptolemy I after the death of Alexander in 323 BC, and it arose out of a conflict among Alexander's generals about how the succession to his throne should be administered. The Ptolemaic line would eventually control the southern portion of what had been Alexander's kingdom. Their legal and administrative power was centered in Egypt, and they were in continual conflict with the Seleucid line over control of "Syria and Phoenicia," until the Seleucids finally gained the upper hand in 200 BC.

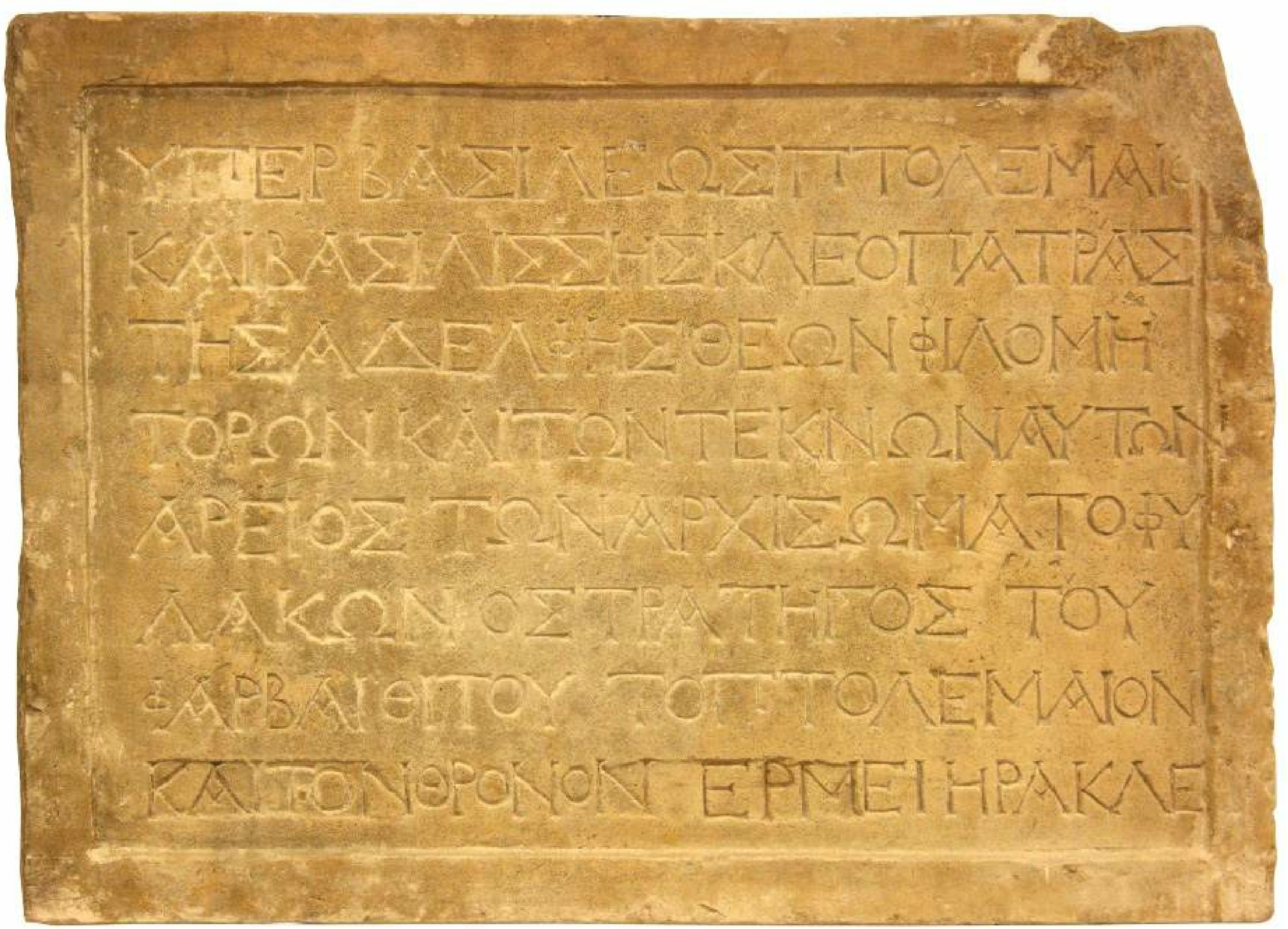
Table 6. The Ptolemaic Kings

Years (BC)	King
305–283/2	Ptolemy I Soter
283–246	Ptolemy II Philadelphus
246–221	Ptolemy III Euergetes
221–204	Ptolemy IV Philopator
204–180	Ptolemy V Epiphanes
180–145	Ptolemy VI Philometor

Administration. Administratively, the Ptolemaic kingdom was rigidly centralized, with an all-powerful king who presented himself as a "savior" or "divine manifestation" and ruled the nation's territory as his personal "estate." The empire was comprised of individual administrative units, each of which was ruled by military-political and economic officials, and the chief governmental official of the empire was the minister of economics and finance. Apart from state monopolies in land and agricultural production, the wealth of the Ptolemaic state rested on an extensive and tightly controlled system of taxation that employed private middlemen ("tax farmers") as a means of extracting as much wealth as possible from the population. This system deputized relatively wealthy members of the population to collect a specified amount of taxes from a particular area and allowed the tax farmers to keep any excess for themselves.

In historical documents. Perhaps the most detailed and concrete historical information relating to the administration of Palestine during this time period comes from the Zenon Papyri. This archive, discovered in Egypt in 1915, documents the travels of Ptolemy II's minister of finance, Zenon, in the administration of his duties in the period of January 259–February 258. Zenon's journey brought him into contact with at least one wealthy and prosperous Jew under Ptolemaic rule, Tobiah. He lived in Araq el-Amir and is generally believed to have been a descendant of the Tobiah mentioned in the OT as an opponent of the reforms of Ezra and Nehemiah. Josephus also mentions this Tobiah in the

Tobiad Romance (*Ant.* 12.154–236 [see 12.160]), which recounts the political career of Tobiah's son Joseph and his descendants, as well as their interactions with the high-priestly family of Onias. According to Josephus, the political infighting that developed among the sons of Joseph would be responsible for the rise of ongoing strife among the Jewish people during the later Seleucid period.


ΥΠΕΡΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣΠΤΟΛΕΜΑΙ
ΚΑΙΒΑΣΙΛΙΣΣΗΣΚΛΕΟΠΑΤΡΑΣ
ΤΗΣΑΔΕΛΦΗΣΘΕΩΝΦΙΛΟΜΗ
ΤΟΡΩΝΚΑΙΤΩΝΤΕΚΝΩΝΑΥΤΩΝ
ΑΡΕΙΟΣΤΩΝΑΡΧΙΣΩΜΑΤΟΦΥ
ΛΑΚΩΝΟΣΤΡΑΤΗΓΟΣΤΟΥ
ΦΑΡΒΑΙΘΙΤΟΥΤΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΑΙΟΝ
ΚΑΙΤΟΝΘΡΟΝΟΝ ΕΡΜΕΙΗΡΑΚΛΕ

Dedication monument to honor Ptolemy VI

Also prominent among documents relating to Ptolemaic rule over Palestine is the *Letter of Aristeas*, which describes the translation of the Pentateuch into Greek (the LXX) at the command of Ptolemy II Philadelphus. While much of the *Letter of Aristeas* is undoubtedly legendary in nature, the basic claim that portions of the OT were translated from Hebrew into Greek early in the Hellenistic period seems to be confirmed by fragmentary copies and quotations from such works dating to the early part of the third century BC. Aristeas claims to have been present in the court when Ptolemy, at the urging of his librarian, Demetrius of Phaleron, began preparations for the copying of the Jewish law into Greek. Aristeas recounts how he himself used the opportunity to request the emancipation of more than one hundred thousand Jews who had been enslaved since the time of Ptolemy I. He also describes the gifts lavished upon Jerusalem and the Jewish people by Ptolemy, as well as the specific circumstances of the translation of the LXX. According to Aristeas, the high priests selected six scribes from each of the twelve tribes of Israel, who brought a copy of the Torah to Alexandria and completed the translation, which was finished in seventy-two days and then approved by all the Jewish people of the kingdom. Whatever the actual events may have been, this translation project provided Jews living outside Judea with a more accessible version of Scripture, which had not been available to them previously.

PUA *See* Puvah.

PUAH **(1)** One of the Hebrew midwives blessed by God for refusing to heed Pharaoh's command to execute all newborn Hebrew males (Exod. 1:15–22). **(2)** A grandson of Jacob, he was one of four sons of Issachar who settled in Egypt (Gen. 46:13; Num. 26:23; 1 Chron. 7:1). **(3)** The son of Dodo and the father of Tola, who was a judge in Israel after Abimelek (Judg. 10:1). *See also* Puvah.

PUBLICAN In the KJV, the term used to refer to tax collectors employed by the Romans to help collect taxes in the provinces. *See also* Tax Collector.

PUBLIUS The chief official of the island of Malta, where Paul's ship wrecked en route to Rome. Publius (Gk. *Poplios*) hosted the group for three days, and Paul healed his father of a fever and dysentery (Acts 28:7–8).

PUDENS A friend and associate of the apostle Paul whom he names in his last letter, along with Eubulus, Linus, Claudia, and all the brothers and sisters as sending greetings to Timothy from Rome (2 Tim. 4:21).

PUHITES *See* Puthites.

PUITES Descendants of Puah, who was of the tribe of Isaachar (Num. 26:23; cf. Gen. 46:13; Judg. 10:1; 1 Chron. 7:1).

PUL The biblical record and cuneiform documents agree that this was an alternate appellation for the Assyrian king Tiglath-pileser III (r. 744–727 BC). Pul is first mentioned as campaigning in Samaria during the reign of Menahem and subsequently exacting tribute from him (2 Kings 15:19; 1 Chron. 5:26). *See also* Tiglath-pileser III.

PULPIT A structure that a preacher stands on, in, or behind while delivering a sermon (Neh. 8:4 KJV [NIV: "platform"]). Depending on time period and style, a pulpit may have been a box, an elevated platform, or a tall and narrow stand that held the speaker's notes.

PULSE A category of edible beans or peas that grow in pods near the ground or on climbing vines (2 Sam. 17:28 KJV). Examples include lentils and chickpeas. In Dan. 1:12–16 the KJV uses "pulse" to refer to vegetables that Daniel requests while in Nebuchadnezzar's palace (Dan. 1:12–16).

PUNITES *See* Puites.

PUNON One of the stopping points for the Israelites during their desert wanderings (Num. 33:42–43). The site usually is identified with modern Khirbet Feinan in the Wadi Arabah, an area famed in antiquity as a copper-mining district. Mining occurred at this site as early as the Chalcolithic period (4500–3500 BC), then in the Early Bronze period (3500–2250 BC) and the Iron Age (1200–586 BC), through the Roman period. This is attested archaeologically by the presence of numerous copper mines and smelting sites. During the OT period, many of these locations likely belonged to the Edomites, since the area was in ancient Edom. Interestingly, the incident in which Moses makes a snake out of bronze is placed at about the same time the Israelites stopped here (Num. 21:4–9).

Wadi Punon, near the site of the city Punon

PUR *See* Purim.

PURAH A servant of Gideon. After reducing Gideon’s army from thirty-two thousand to three hundred, God told Gideon to take Purah with him to survey the camp of the Midianites, from which they would gain courage to quell their fears (Judg. 7:10–11).

PURGATORY In the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church, purgatory is where the souls of the elect are purified after death to be prepared for heaven. Although they are saved by the sacrifice of Jesus, their sanctification may be incomplete. If so, the fire of purgatory perfects and readies them to enter the presence of God. In 1999 Pope John Paul II confirmed that purgatory is a condition of existence rather than a place.

Purgatory is a product of medieval scholasticism. The pious lived their lives in a continuous cycle of sin, sacramental confession, priestly absolution, penance, and grace. Penance fulfilled the required temporal punishment for forgiven mortal sin. Those who died owing penance were able to meet their obligations in purgatory. It also provided a means of cleansing the faithful departed of their venial sins.

Purgatory is not formally described in Scripture, but it is inferred from the following sources: a tradition of prayers on behalf of the dead derived from the deuterocanonical 2 Macc. 12:46; the implication of the possibility of forgiveness in the age to come in Matt. 12:32; the description of the testing of one’s works by fire in 1 Cor. 3:11–15.

The Greek and Latin churches clarified the concept during the Council of Florence in 1438. In addition to the biblical texts, they reflected on church tradition, which had included prayers for the dead from its earliest days. They reasoned that since souls in neither heaven nor hell could benefit from such prayer, there must be souls in a third state who could.

They also considered the teaching of the church fathers. The Greek fathers had differing views on concepts that together seemed to support purgatory but individually were varied. Dionysius and Epiphanius emphasized prayers for the dead; Basil the Great mentioned the detention of the faithful after death; and Gregory of Nyssa spoke of a crucible of purifying fire after death. By contrast, the Latin fathers Ambrose, Augustine, and Gregory the Great more explicitly set forth the foundational concepts of a fiery purgatory between death and heaven.

The Council of Florence was not decisive regarding purgatory, and ultimately the Greek church rejected the doctrine. The Latin church, however, affirmed purgatory at the Council of Trent in 1563 and included then the obligation of the faithful to intercede for the souls in purgatory through prayers, eucharistic celebration, almsgiving, indulgences, and works of penance.

PURGE A process of purifying, cleansing, or eliminating. One underlying Hebrew term, *ba’ar*, means “to burn” and is used to describe the removal of evil persons or things (such as idols) from Israel (Deut. 13:5; 2 Kings 23:24 [cf. *taher* in 2 Chron. 34:3]). “Purge” is sometimes used to translate the idea of atonement (Deut. 21:9).

PURIM The festival established following the deliverance of Jews throughout the Persian Empire during the time of Esther. The name comes from *pur*, “the lot” (Esther 3:7) cast by Haman to determine the day on which Jews would be destroyed. Although the lot originally was cast for evil purposes, in keeping with the reversals of the book it came to designate the celebration. “Purim” is plural because two days were devoted to the events that reversed Haman’s decree. *See also* Festivals.

PURITY, PURIFICATION The concepts of purity and purification are largely unfamiliar to modern Western readers of the Bible. These terms often appear in cultic contexts and are used to refer to physical, ritual, and ethical purity. They are most frequently applied to the process needed to restore someone to a state of purity so that he or she could participate in ritual activities once again (Lev. 22:4–7). These terms are cultural and theological, serving to constrain actions and behaviors through definite boundaries; thus, in their ancient use they have little to do with modern notions of hygiene (e.g., diseases that may be caught from a pig [Lev. 13]; the medical advantages of washing [Lev. 15]; quarantining a leper [Lev. 13]). Although some have attempted to relate the rules of purity to simple physical events, such modern medical rationale cannot account for the range of prohibitions or find explicit support in the text.

OLD TESTAMENT

The law of Moses. According to Lev. 10:10, it was the duty of the priests to "distinguish between the holy and the common, between the unclean and the clean" and to teach the nation of Israel the difference between the two. God required that his people observe purification rites when they came into his presence for worship. Ritual purity was intended to teach God's holiness and moral purity; thus purification rituals functioned to prepare individuals to approach God (Exod. 19:10; Num. 8:15). These fundamental regulations and rites are outlined in Mosaic law.

Two major sections of the Torah describe ritual purity and the laws of purification: Lev. 11–15 and Num. 19. Here the need for purification resulted from direct or indirect contact with any one of a number of natural processes, including childbirth (Lev. 12:1–8), scale disease (Lev. 13:1–14:32), genital discharges (Lev. 15:1–33), the carcasses of certain animals (Lev. 11:1–47), and human corpses (Num. 19:1–22). Although both the duration of impurity and the rite of purification for each of these conditions differ, there are three distinct characteristics of ritual impurity: (1) the sources of ritual impurity generally were natural and more or less unavoidable; (2) it was not necessarily sinful to contract these impurities; (3) these conditions conveyed temporary loss of ritual purity.

Although sexual discharge, contact with corpses and carcasses, and the contraction of diseases were sources of impurity, they were unavoidable in the normal course of life. Israelites were obligated to reproduce (Gen. 1:28; 9:7), and they, along with their priests, were obligated to bury their dead (Lev. 21:1–4). Therefore, many of these impurities were unavoidable and, though not encouraged, not necessarily sinful. Further, these conditions conveyed a temporary loss of purity. All the impurities described in Lev. 11–15 and Num. 19 were not permanent and had specific rites of purification. These rites included washings (a man who had a discharge waited seven days and then washed his clothes and bathed in order to be clean [Lev. 15:13]), offerings (after the birth of a child, a mother had to wait a certain period and then bring certain offerings to be cleansed "from her flow of blood" [12:7–8]), and other procedures (a "leprous" man who had been healed had to go through an elaborate ceremony to be declared clean [14:4–20]; a "leprous" house went through a similar process [14:48–53]). The ultimate instance of cleansing was the Day of Atonement, which required blood as the purifying agent: "[The priest] shall sprinkle some of the blood on [the altar] with his finger seven times to cleanse it and to consecrate it from the uncleanness of the Israelites" (16:19).

A final characteristic of ritual purity is that it was highly graded; that is, there were various degrees of impurities. Corpse impurity was especially serious and highly contagious. One could contract corpse impurity through direct contact, proximity (being in the same tent with a corpse [Num. 19:14]), or by merely touching the bone or the grave of a human (19:16). The individual who contracted corpse impurity was able to contaminate other objects and individuals. Major impurities also demanded greater time for purification (seven days rather than one). Unlike major impurities, minor impurities lasted only until sundown and were not contagious. Individuals might contract minor impurity from contact with unclean carcasses (whether by touching [Lev. 11:24, 27] or carrying [Lev. 11:25, 28]), someone defiled with corpse impurity (Lev. 22:4, 6; Num. 19:22), a diseased person or house (Lev. 13:45–46; 14:46–47), or discharge from either a man or a woman (Lev. 15:5–11, 19–23, 26–27). The duration of minor impurity was only a day ("until evening" [Lev. 11:24–25, 27–28, 39–40]), and one was purified either by bathing or washing one's clothing.

The Prophets and the Writings. Outside the Mosaic law, the terms of "purity" and "purification" are much less common; however, at times they are taken up figuratively to describe sin. Loss of purity is used figuratively for transgression. For example, the technical term for "menstrual impurity" is used figuratively to illustrate the sin of Israel: "Zion stretches out her hands, but there is no one to comfort her. . . . Jerusalem has become an unclean thing among them" (Lam. 1:17); and in Ezek. 36:17, "When the people of Israel were living in their own land, they defiled it by their conduct and their actions. Their conduct was like a woman's monthly uncleanness in my sight."

It was not the ritual purification that ultimately mattered for the prophets, but rather the forgiveness from God that rendered people pure from sin. Thus, purification is a figure of God's forgiveness; God says, "Your hands are full of blood! Wash and make yourselves clean. Take your evil deeds out of my sight; stop doing wrong" (Isa. 1:15–16). God promises cleansing in key passages in Ezekiel: "I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols" (Ezek. 36:25; cf. 36:33); "they will no longer defile themselves with their idols and vile images or with any of their offenses, for I will save them from all their sinful backsliding, and I will cleanse them" (37:23).

Although there are "those who are pure in their own eyes and yet are not cleansed of their filth" (Prov. 30:12), it is only God who can promise, "I will cleanse them from all the sin they have committed against me and will forgive all their sins of rebellion against me" (Jer. 33:8). Painfully aware of his sin with Bathsheba, David cries out, "Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. . . . Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean. . . . Create in me a pure heart, O God" (Ps. 51:2, 7, 10).

NEW TESTAMENT

In the NT, the idea of ceremonial purity as an important element in Jewish life appears in John 11:55; Acts 21:23; 24:18. But just as in the prophets, the notion of purity is applied to a life lived in wholehearted devotion to God. An individual is purified when obeying the truth (1 Pet. 1:22). James describes repentance in terms of purity: "Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded" (James 4:8); and he describes helping those in distress as the kind of genuine piety that "God our Father accepts as pure and faultless" (James 1:27).

PURLOIN In Titus 2:10 the KJV translates the Greek word *nosphizomai* as "purloin," referring to Paul's insistence that slaves not "steal" (NIV) or "pilfer" (NRSV) from their masters.

PURPLE Because purple dye was expensive, purple cloth represented wealth (Prov. 31:22; Luke 16:19; Acts 16:14; Rev. 18:16) and authority (Judg. 8:26; Dan. 5:7), especially royalty (Lam. 4:5; cf. Mark 15:20; John 19:2–5). In the tabernacle, temple, and the priestly garments, purple was often combined with blue and scarlet or crimson, themselves symbols of wealth and power (Exod. 26:1; 28:4–15, 33; Num. 4:6–12; 2 Chron. 3:14). *See also* Colors.

PURSE Made typically of leather, bags or purses were used to contain either coins (Prov. 1:14; 7:20; Isa. 46:6; Luke 12:33; 22:35, 36) or stones for weighing (Deut. 25:13; Mic. 6:11). Jesus instructed seventy-two disciples not to take "purse or bag" carrying money or provisions on a short-term mission (Luke 10:4). The Hebrew word *kharit* in Isa. 3:22, used to describe "purses" (NIV) or "handbags" (NRSV) of wealthy Jewish women, suggests some sort of ornamentally woven pouch or satchel. *See also* Bag.

PURSLANE Any member of the succulent plant family *Portulacaceae,* which features a low, trailing habit, fleshy leaves, and tiny yellow flowers. Although considered an invasive weed, purslane has significant nutritional benefits. Additionally, its slightly sour and salty taste has many culinary applications. The underlying Hebrew word, *khallamut*, appears only in Job 6:6, where in many versions it is translated as “egg” (e.g., NASB) rather than “purslane” (RSV). Other versions render it as “mallow” (NIV, NRSV); *see also* Mallow.

PUT A grandson of Noah, a son of Ham, and brother of Cush (Ethiopia), Mizraim (Egypt), and Canaan in the Table of Nations (Gen. 10:6; 1 Chron. 1:8). “Put” appears as a geographic designation that can be identified with Libya, based on Old Persian *putiya* and Babylonian *puṭa,* and is the source of soldiers in passages in Ezekiel (27:10; 30:5; 38:5), Jeremiah (46:9), and Nahum (3:9). Another Hebrew word for Libya, “Lub,” always occurs in the plural and likely refers to the population, “the Libyans.” *See also* Libya.

PUTHITES One of four Judahite clans that lived in Kiriath Jearim, a city located approximately ten miles northwest of Jerusalem where Judah’s territory met the tribal regions of Benjamin and Dan. Shobal, the father of these four clans, founded Kiriath Jearim (1 Chron. 2:52–53).

PUTIEL The father-in-law of the priest Eleazar and a grandfather of Phinehas (Exod. 6:25).

PUVAH The Hebrew name of the second son of Issachar, the ancestor of the Punites (Gen. 46:13; Num. 26:23 [MT]), which appears as “Puah” in 1 Chron. 7:1 (MT). The Samaritan Pentateuch, the Syriac versions, and some LXX manuscripts (followed by the NIV) are more consistent with Puah in all three instances. *See also* Puah.

PUVVAH *See* Puvah.

PYGARG The LXX translates the Hebrew word *dishon* in Deut. 14:5 with the Greek word *pygargos* (“white rump”), which the KJV transliterates as “pygarg.” This animal probably is an antelope (NJB), either the addax (NAB) or a white-rumped *Kobus* antelope. The word is translated as “ibex” in the NIV (so also NRSV, ESV, NLT).

PYRAMIDS Monumental tombs with a square base and four triangular sides sloping to a single apex that were originally built for Egyptian kings. Scholars believe that pyramids symbolize the primeval hill that emerged from the waters of chaos during the creation of the world. It is also believed that their sloped sides represent the rays of the sun, reflecting the Egyptians’ relationship with the sun god Amun. Building the pyramids required enormous vision, planning, organization, and skill. Their construction reflects strong central governments and powerful kings who had vast control over both people and resources.

Most pyramids were built during the Old Kingdom period (the Pyramid Age, c. 2687–2190 BC). The first pyramids, built by Djoser, are stepped and surrounded by a complex of other buildings. At the beginning of the Fourth Dynasty, the step pyramids gave way to the true pyramids with straight sides, and the pyramid complex became standardized, consisting of a pyramid with burial chamber, a valley temple, a causeway, and a mortuary temple. After the Old Kingdom period, pyramids were reduced in size and appeared with private tombs as well. During the Nubian dynasty (760–715 BC), the pyramid again became a favorite form of a royal tomb.

Interestingly, there is no mention in the Bible of the gigantic structures in Egypt, although the pyramids must have been sighted in contemporary Egypt. In the Apocrypha, pyramids are mentioned in 1 Macc. 13:27–29 in connection with the splendid monument built by Simon Maccabeus in memory of his parents and brethren.

Pyramid at Giza, Egypt

PYRE A deliberately arranged pile of wood or other combustible material, particularly, though not necessarily, for the ritual, funerary burning of corpses. In the OT, pyres are mentioned with a triumphal tone as the destination for the enemies of God and Israel (Isa. 30:33; Ezek. 24:9).

PYRRHUS The otherwise unknown father of Sopater from Berea (Acts 20:4).

PYTHON The origin of this term is in Homer's *Hymn to Apollo*, dating to the seventh century BC. "Python" was the name for the mythical serpent that lived in Delphi (Pythos). According to the myth, Python attempted to kill Apollo's mother, the pregnant wife of Zeus, to prevent her from giving birth to Apollo. Later, Apollo hunted and killed Python and assumed the authority of the oracle at Delphi from him. Apollo was believed to have the power to grant individuals the ability to predict the future; thus, the term "Python" became associated with those who possess the gift of prophecy. Typically, such individuals uttered their prophetic messages with their mouths closed, and so they also came to be known as ventriloquists. For nearly a thousand years, people journeyed to Delphi to seek advice from the priestess Pythia, who presided over the oracle and was supposed to grant prophecies in the spirit of Apollo.

"Python" occurs in the Greek text in Acts 16:16 describing a young woman with a "spirit of divination" (*pneuma pythōna* [NIV: "spirit by which she predicted the future"]). This spirit gave her the ability to predict the future, which was exploited by her masters for profit. When Paul and his companions came to Philippi, the girl met them and identified them as true prophets who were proclaiming the way of God. She continued to follow them for many days, repeatedly identifying them as servants of the Most High God. Eventually, Paul became annoyed and exorcised the evil spirit that possessed her. But when the girl's masters realized that their source of revenue had been jeopardized, they had Paul and Silas seized and brought before the authorities in the marketplace. There they incited the multitude against Paul and Silas, who were then beaten and imprisoned, but later miraculously rescued by God.

"Python" also occurs in some early English translations of Scripture in Lev. 20:27; Deut. 18:11; 1 Sam. 28:7–8; 1 Chron. 10:13; Isa. 29:4, rendering the Hebrew word *'ob*, meaning "medium." It is still used today to refer to demonically empowered divination. The exact connection of this term with the snake of the same name is uncertain.

Q

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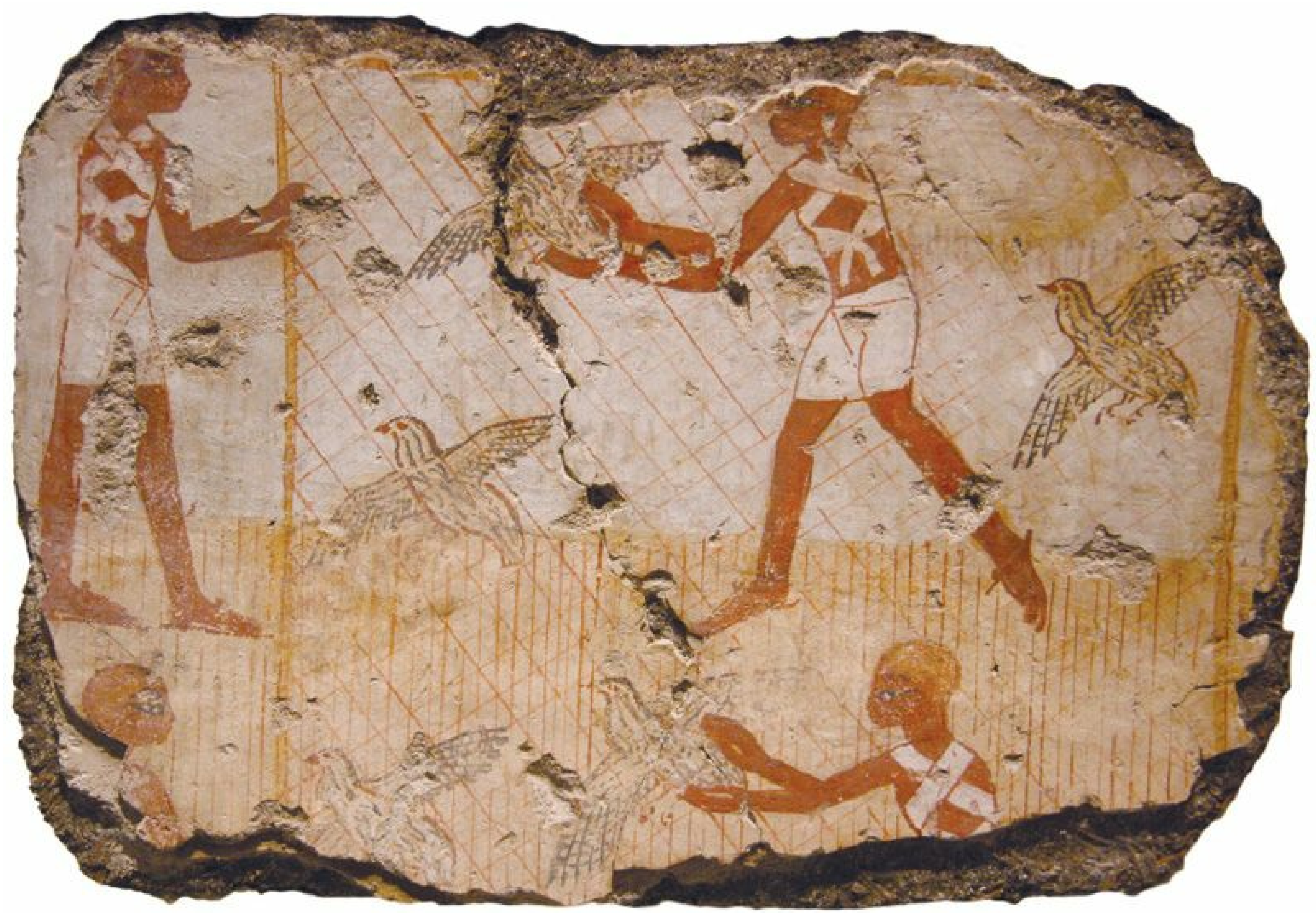
Q Traditionally, scholars understand Q as the material common to Matthew and Luke that does not appear in Mark. The abbreviation "Q" stands for the German word *Quelle* ("source"). Theories about Q arose as scholars wrestled with the Synoptic Problem: how do we account for the similarities between Mark, Matthew, and Luke from a historical point of view? Q became one of the most important hypothetical sources in the common Two Source Hypothesis: Mark was written first; Matthew and Luke both independently used Mark and Q. This is sometimes called the Four Source Hypothesis, when taking into account the source material unique to Matthew (known as M) and Luke's additional source material (known as L). Q thus provides a historically plausible common-source explanation for the similarities between Matthew and Luke in the places where they differ from Mark.

Teachings and sayings of Jesus comprise most of the traditionally accepted Q material. Q fascinates many, as it is supposedly a writing about Jesus that predates some of our canonical Gospels. Manipulations of Q, especially positing multiple early stages of it, function prominently in some scholarly depictions of earliest Christianity. Nevertheless, many scholars also remain skeptical of either the existence of Q or the possibility of our reconstructing it with much accuracy.

QERE AND KETHIB These Hebrew terms, meaning (respectively) "to be read" and "and it is written," are a feature of the Masorah Parva (marginal notes in the Hebrew Bible generated by rabbinic scribes), which addresses difficulties or other matters of interest in the OT text. Instead of the consonantal text being changed, the proposed correction (Qere) was written in the margin of the Hebrew Bible, and its vowel points were inscribed under the uncorrected word (Kethib). The Qere was intended to be read automatically. Corrections included unusual and archaic forms, defective spelling, offensive words, and words prompting impious readings. Certain words were always read other than written (Qere Perpetuum)—for example, *yhwh*, which is pointed and read *ʾadonay* ("my Lord"). Due to their frequency, these are not indicated in the margins.

QOHELETH A transliteration of the Hebrew word *qohelet*, which identifies the main character of Ecclesiastes. Traditionally, this character has been identified with Solomon, although it is widely recognized that the indirect reference to Solomon is a literary device. English translations of the name include "Preacher" and "Teacher," although these are completely speculative and have no real connection with the Hebrew root. The verbal root of *qhl* concerns gathering, and it may be used as a literary device to allude to Solomon's acts of gathering, whether it be gathering of wealth, gathering of people for instruction in wisdom, or gathering wisdom sayings. Perhaps the second of these options is to be preferred because the Hebrew verb *qhl* generally is used in reference to gathering people (e.g., Exod. 35:1), and the nominal forms almost always refer to gatherings of people (e.g., Num. 10:7). See also 1 Kings 8:1, 2, 14, 22, 55, where the verb *qhl* is used to describe Solomon's gathering the people together for the dedication of the temple.

QUAIL A bird that God twice gave to the Israelites for food. In both instances the Israelites' grumbling about their diet prompted God's action. God first provided quail to the Israelites early in the wilderness wanderings, also giving them manna for the first time in the same twenty-four-hour period (Exod. 16:1–15; Ps. 105:40). The next time God provided quail, he became angry and sent a plague upon the people who were about to eat the quail. Many died and were buried at Kibroth Hattaavah, which means “graves of craving” (Num. 11:1–35).



A scene of men catching quail, from an Egyptian tomb

QUARRY A place where stonecutters hewed out blocks of stone for constructing and repairing buildings (2 Chron. 34:11). Much of hilly Israel has limestone or other types of rock near the surface, making stone a common building material throughout history. Many structures were made from naturally shaped fieldstones, but the wealthy could afford to pay stonecutters for their skilled and dangerous (Eccles. 10:9) work in quarries to cut out and shape stones for homes, palaces, and temples. King Solomon used eighty thousand stonecutters in quarries in Israel’s hill country when he built the temple (1 Kings 5:15). The stonecutters even dressed the stones at the quarries, so the noise of hammer and chisel finishing the stones was not heard at the site of the temple (1 Kings 6:7).

QUARTERMASTER The person or officer in charge of storing and distributing food and supplies for a military group, rarely appearing in Scripture. David brought supplies to his brothers’ military camp and left them with the quartermaster (1 Sam. 17:22 GW; NIV: “the keeper of supplies”).

Jeremiah 51:59 describes Seraiah as “quartermaster” (NRSV, NASB, NET) or “staff officer” (NIV), literally, “prince of the resting place” (Heb. *sar menukhah*), perhaps indicating the person in charge of the place where soldiers rested and were resupplied.

QUARTUS A believer in Corinth whom Paul refers to as “our brother” as he conveys greetings from Erastus and Quartus to the church in Rome (Rom. 16:23).

QUATERNION In Acts 12:4 the KJV translates the Greek term *tetradion* as “quaternion,” referring to a squad composed of four soldiers. Peter was guarded by four such squads when arrested by Herod Agrippa.

QUEEN The highest-ranking female member of a royal household. In the book of Esther the position of queen, though tenuous, is shown to be one of influence over the king (chap. 7) and over the nation (1:16–20). A queen may also be associated with great beauty (Esther 2:2–17; Song 6:8–9; Ezek. 16:13). A queen’s participation in governing with the king varies in different passages. Queen Esther is expected to come before the king only when summoned (Esther 4:11), while the queen of King Belshazzar enters the banquet hall freely to counsel the king (Dan. 5:10–12). In Neh. 2:6 the queen of Persia sits enthroned beside the king.

The Queen of Sheba (“Queen of the South” in Matt. 12:42; Luke 11:31) is involved in foreign policy and tests the wisdom of King Solomon before the two leaders exchange royal gifts (1 Kings 10:1–13; 2 Chron. 9:1–12). Other foreign queens mentioned in Scripture include Pharaoh’s wife Tahpenes (1 Kings 11:19) and the Kandake of Ethiopia (Acts 8:27).

In some passages the title of queen is bestowed not on the wife but on the mother of the king, who is called the “queen mother” (1 Kings 15:13; 2 Kings 10:13; 2 Chron. 15:16; Jer. 13:18; 29:2). Hence, Jezebel is referred to not as queen but only by name or as the wife of the king (e.g., 1 Kings 16:31; 21:5–7; cf. Herodias in Matt. 14:3).

Though never called a queen in the Bible (probably because she was a usurper), Athaliah, the mother of King Ahaziah (who had been assassinated by Jehu), reigned as queen of Judah for approximately six years (842–836 BC; 2 Kings 11; 2 Chron. 22:10–23:21). She secured the throne by murdering many in the royal family. The one exception was Joash, a baby son of Ahaziah, saved by his nurse, Jehoshabeath. After six years, the priest Jehoiada executed a successful coup to remove her from the throne and to put seven-year-old Joash, a surviving son of Ahaziah, on the throne.

The term “queen” also appears in prophetic texts in reference to other gods (the “Queen of Heaven” in Jer. 7:18; 44:15–24) and to the city of Babylon (Isa. 47:5–7).

QUEEN OF HEAVEN The title that Jeremiah uses in reference to a goddess being worshiped in Judah (Jer. 7:18; 44:17–19, 25). This title was bestowed on several major goddesses in the ancient Near East, and since Jeremiah avoids using her name, the precise identity of the goddess is uncertain. According to Jeremiah, aspects of her worship included baking cakes in her image, offering sacrifices, and pouring out drink offerings. All these are recognized as elements in the worship of the Babylonian goddess Ishtar, but identifying her as Jeremiah’s “Queen of Heaven” is not without problems. In particular, Jer. 44 makes reference to Judah and Egypt, which were not the primary locations for Ishtar, suggesting that one of the Canaanite goddesses, Anat or Ashtarte (Ashtoreth), might be more likely, for they were also worshiped in Egypt.

An Egyptian making an offering to the Canaanite goddess Anat, the Queen of Heaven

QUEEN OF SHEBA *See* Sabean; Sheba, Queen of.

QUICK, QUICKEN In the KJV, words that mean "alive," "to make alive," or "to revive" (e.g., Num. 16:30; Ps. 71:20; John 5:21; Acts 10:42; Rom. 8:11; 2 Tim. 4:1; 1 Pet. 4:5).

QUICKSANDS In Acts 27:17 the KJV translates the Greek word *Syrtis* as "quicksands," referring to the "sandbars of Syrtis" (NIV, NLT) or simply "the Syrtis" (NRSV, ESV). *See also* Syrtis.

QUILT A matting made from goats' hair (1 Sam. 19:13, 16 NASB, NET). This could be a woven piece of material or simply an intertwined tangle of goats' hair.

QUIRINIUS Publius Sulpicius Quirinius (c. 50 BC–AD 21) was a successful Roman military commander and politician best known for conducting a census mentioned at the beginning of Christ's birth narrative in Luke 2:2. Ancient historians, including Tacitus, Strabo, and Josephus, wrote about Quirinius, so a fair bit is known about his career. However, all this information lends to a historical problem when compared to the Gospel accounts. Jesus' birth takes place during the time of Herod the Great (Matt. 2:1; Luke 1:5), but only Luke's account mentions Quirinius conducting a census as the governor of Syria before Herod's death. Every other known account places this census in AD 6/7, some ten years after Herod's death.

For centuries a number of attempts have been made to solve the problem, but without more evidence each solution remains inconclusive. The following suggestions have been made: (1) The census began during Herod's reign but ended when Quirinius was governor of Syria. (2) "Quirinius" is a textual error, and Luke originally wrote of another governor in 2:2. Adherents to this theory usually cite Tertullian (*Marc.* 4.19), but no manuscript of Luke supports this. (3) Quirinius was governor of Syria twice, performing one census in Herod's day and one in AD 6/7. The ancient inscription *Lapis Tiburtinus* may support this. (4) "First" (Gk. *prōtē*) in Luke 2:2 should be translated "before," which makes Luke's census the one "before Quirinius was governor." However, some grammarians disagree. (5) "Governor" (*hēgemoneuōn*) in Luke 2:2 is ambiguous; therefore, Quirinius must have had some kind of office warranting Luke's mention. This appeal requires more evidence.

QUIVER A container, typically made of leather, for carrying arrows (Gen. 27:3; Job 39:23; Isa. 22:6) and usually slung over the shoulders of hunters.

QUMRAN Khirbet Qumran is an archaeological site about fifteen miles east of Jerusalem on the northwest bank of the Dead Sea. Although some cursory archaeological work was done at the site prior to 1951, Qumran would have remained obscure were it not for the discovery of the DSS from Cave 1 in 1947.

The earliest excavations did not conclusively connect the archaeological site with the scrolls. Archaeologists began to do so when large, drum-shaped pots identical to the ones that contained the scrolls found in Cave 1 were unearthed at the site. As scholars continued to study the scrolls, they recognized that a community such as the one described in the scrolls would fit nicely in the complex that the archaeologists had uncovered. Qumran has a large room for communal gatherings and meals as well as a scribal room complete with inkwells.

Most convincing is how the drum-shaped pottery found at Qumran that could be emptied easily only with a dipper or ladle fits with the rules in the *Halakhic Letter* (on the *Halakhic Letter*, *see* Dead Sea Scrolls) concerning the ritual pollution of pure vessels when liquid is poured from a pure vessel into an impure vessel. Numerous dippers have been found at Qumran by which liquids can be moved from one vessel to another without producing a continuous stream between vessels.

Other evidence that links Qumran with the DSS is Pliny the Elder's description of the Essenes living in the area of what may be Qumran. This evidence has to be viewed critically, as Pliny wrote some time after the Qumran community was destroyed. It also involves an equation of the Qumranites with the Essenes, which scholars increasingly call into question.

Archaeologists hold different positions concerning Qumran. Some submit that Qumran is the remains of a Roman country estate. Others say that it is the remains of a fort or a commercial center. Some scholars interpret the archaeological evidence without considering the DSS. It may be that the scrolls have unduly influenced the way archaeologists generally interpret Qumran. However, some of the caves in which the scrolls were found are almost organically connected with Qumran and can be accessed only by going through it, so it is only natural to use one to interpret the other.

R

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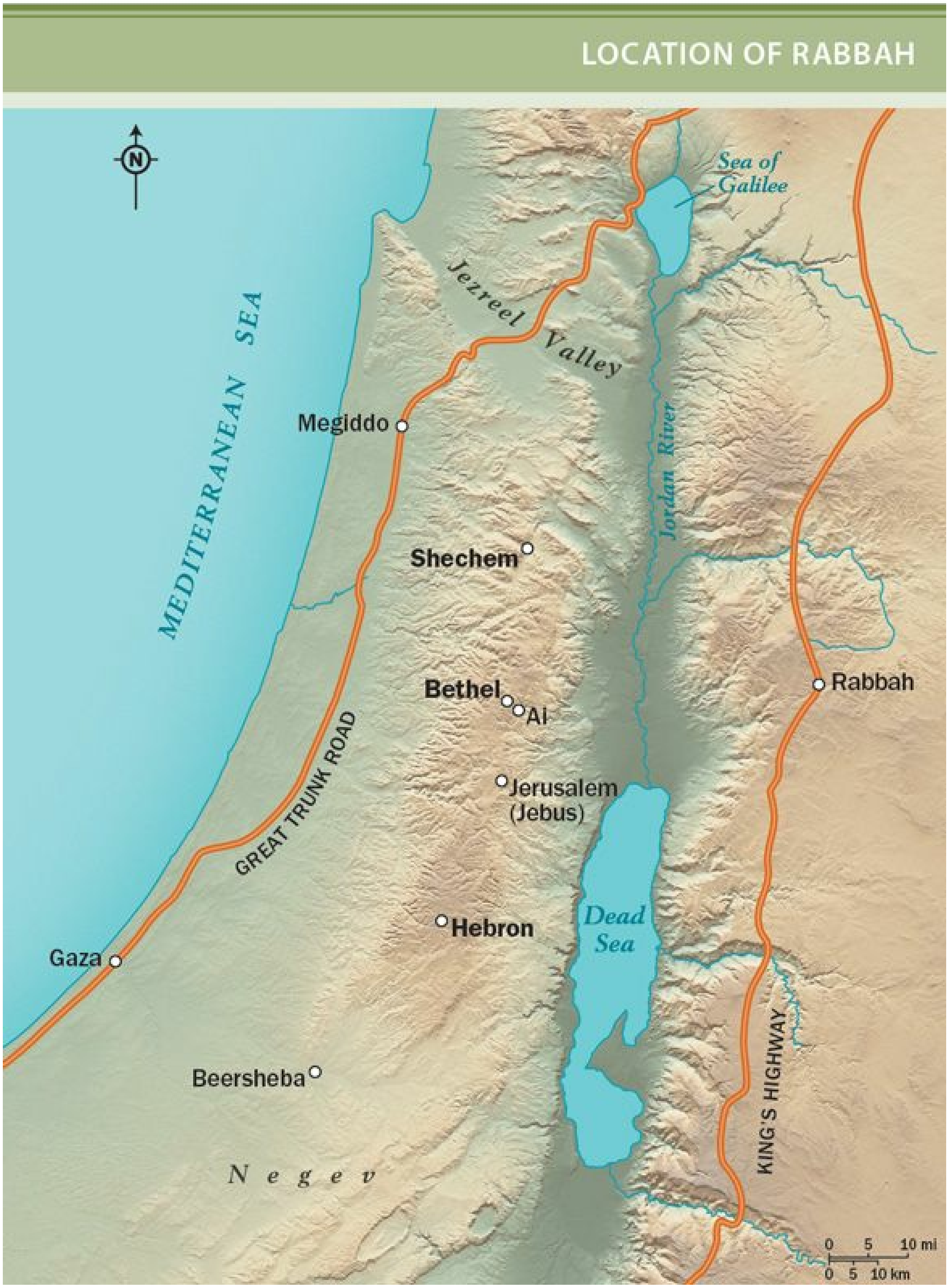
RAAMAH **(1)** A son of Cush and the father of Sheba and Dedan (Gen. 10:7; 1 Chron. 1:9). **(2)** Together with Sheba, an Arabian trading partner with Tyre for spices, precious stones, and jewels (Ezek. 27:22). Inscriptions found at Sheba indicate that Raamah was located at the site of the modern city of Negran in Yemen, though an ancient source has it at Regmah on the Persian Gulf.

RAAMIAH A returned exile recorded in Nehemiah's book of genealogy (Neh. 7:7). He is probably the same person called "Reelaiah" in Ezra 2:2.

RAAMSES *See* Rameses.

RABBAH **(1)** A city in the hill country of Judah (Josh. 15:60). **(2)** The capital city of the Ammonites, located about twenty-three miles east of the Jordan River at the site of the modern city of Amman. A wealthy city due to its prominent position on the major trade route from Arabia in the south to Damascus in the north, Rabbah was the site of the magnificent bed of King Og (Deut. 3:11). The city was comprised of two parts: the "city of waters" and the "royal city" (2 Sam. 12:26–27 KJV). Under the leadership of David, the Israelites took possession of Rabbah. It was during this siege that Uriah the Hittite was killed (2 Sam. 12:29–31). Soon after the division of the kingdom, Rabbah regained its independence. Both Jeremiah and Amos prophesied the destruction of Rabbah, but Jeremiah's prophecy also includes a promise of its restoration (Jer. 49:2–6; Amos 1:13–15).

LOCATION OF RABBAH


N
Sea of Galilee
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
Jezreel Valley
Jordan River
Megiddo
Shechem
Bethel
Ai
Rabbah
Jerusalem (Jebus)
GREAT TRUNK ROAD
Dead Sea
Hebron
Gaza
KING'S HIGHWAY
Beersheba
Negev
0 5 10 mi
0 5 10 km

RABBATH *See* Rabbah.

RABBI A title applied to teachers and others in respected positions, literally meaning “my master.” By the NT era, the term was used in a more specific sense to refer to teachers of the Mosaic law.

In the NT, the title occurs only in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and John, and it is most commonly used to address Jesus. In Mark’s Gospel the disciples three times address Jesus as “Rabbi” (Mark 9:5; 11:21; 14:45). In Matthew’s Gospel only Judas calls Jesus “Rabbi” and only in the context of betraying Jesus (Matt. 26:25, 49). The title is used more widely in John’s Gospel by individuals such as Nathanael and Nicodemus, as well as the group of disciples (John 1:38, 49; 3:2;

4:31; 6:25; 9:2; 11:8). The title conveys the respect of pupil for master and indicates the nature of the relationship that Jesus had with his followers.

Others were also called “Rabbi,” including John the Baptist and some of the Pharisees (John 3:26; Matt. 23:7). Although the Pharisees considered the title an honor, Jesus instructed his disciples not to allow themselves to be addressed as “Rabbi” and to acknowledge only one teacher, Christ (Matt. 23:8, 10). *See also* Rabboni.

RABBIT Rabbits (or perhaps hares) are listed in the OT law as unclean animals that chew the cud but do not have cloven hooves (Lev. 11:6; Deut. 14:7). Rabbits do not actually chew the cud, but their food does pass twice through their digestive system, since they eat their droppings.

RABBITH A city allocated to the tribe of Issachar in Josh. 19:20. This is probably the same town elsewhere known as Daberath (1 Chron. 6:72), located in the region of Mount Tabor.

RABBONI An Aramaic form of the more commonly found title “rabbi,” meaning “my master” or “my teacher.” “Rabboni” is found just twice in the NT, and on both occasions it is used in direct address, referring to Jesus. In Mark 10:51 (NASB, NKJV) blind Bartimaeus uses the title when asking Jesus for his sight to be returned, and in John 20:16 Mary Magdalene uses it to greet Jesus upon recognizing him. It is possible that “rabboni” was a heightened form of address, conveying greater honor or a closer personal relationship than “rabbi.” *See also* Rabbi.

RAB-MAG The title of Nergal-sharezer, an official of the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar. The title apparently derives from the Akkadian *rab-mūgi*, a term of unknown meaning (*rab* means “chief” and appears in other Babylonian titles). Along with several other officers, the Rab-mag (NIV: “high official”) was responsible for administering the surrender of Jerusalem to the Babylonians and for releasing the prophet Jeremiah from Babylonian custody at the order of Nebuchadnezzar (Jer. 39:3, 13).

RAB-SARIS A high-ranking official associated with Assyrian and Babylonian courts. “Rab-saris” in Hebrew would mean “chief eunuch,” but this title probably is a transliteration of the Akkadian, meaning “one who stands by the king” (NIV: “chief officer”). The Rab-saris had significant political power, as indicated in the OT accounts.

A Rab-saris was sent with the Assyrian delegation to King Hezekiah (2 Kings 18:17), another was included with the Babylonian court in the gate of Jerusalem (Jer. 39:3), and a third helped with the release of Jeremiah from prison (Jer. 39:13). In Dan. 1 Ashpenaz, the Rab-saris at Nebuchadnezzar’s court (NIV: “chief of his court officials”), was responsible for bringing Daniel and his companions into the king’s palace and for assigning their Babylonian names.

RABSHAKEH An Assyrian loanword in Hebrew, it designates one of the three officers sent by King Sennacherib of Assyria to King Hezekiah of Judah when the Assyrians invaded Jerusalem in 701 BC (2 Kings 18–20; cf. Isa. 36–37). Besides the other two officers—the Tartan (lit., “commander in chief”; NIV: “supreme commander”) and the Rab-saris (lit., “chief eunuch”; NIV: “chief officer”)—the Rabshakeh (lit., “chief cupbearer”; NIV: “field commander”), who could communicate effectively in the Judean language, openly challenged Hezekiah (2 Kings 18:23–25) and humiliated the people (18:27–37).

RACA A term of abuse that probably derives from an Aramaic word meaning "empty" or "worthless" and has the sense of "fool" or "good-for-nothing." In Matt. 5:22 Jesus condemns those who call their brother or sister "Raca," comparing this verbal abuse with the act of murder.

RACAL *See* Rakal.

RACHAB *See* Rahab.

RACHAL *See* Rakal.

RACHEL A daughter of Laban (Gen. 29:6); a wife of Jacob (29:28); mother of Joseph and Benjamin (35:24). Rachel is best known for her tumultuous relationship with her husband, Jacob, who, after meeting the beautiful shepherdess, agrees to work seven years for her father, Laban, in order to marry her. Jacob, however, receives Laban's oldest daughter, Leah, on his wedding night and must serve Laban an additional seven years for Rachel. Genesis 29–30 records the tension between Jacob's two wives as they engage in a childbearing competition for their husband's love. Clearly the object of Jacob's affection, Rachel bears only two of his twelve sons, Joseph and Benjamin. Outside Genesis, Rachel is mentioned in Ruth 4:11 and 1 Sam. 10:2, and in Jer. 31:15 and its NT quotation in Matt. 2:18.

RACIAL TENSION Conflict along racial lines is a common theme in the Bible, arising from a variety of causes. A number of tribal conflicts continually resurface through the generations, such as that between the Israelites, who were descendants of Jacob, and the Edomites, who were descendants of Esau (2 Sam. 8:13; 2 Kings 8:21–22; Ps. 137:7). Subjection to foreign rule (in Egypt, in Babylon, and under Roman occupation in Judea) also inevitably brought the Israelite people into tension with their foreign rulers.

In the NT, racial tension exists between Jews and Samaritans, and between Jews and Gentiles. These problems of racial tension are resolved in the reconciling work of Christ (Eph. 2:13–16), since in Christ there is "neither Jew nor Gentile" (Gal. 3:28). The spread of the gospel across ethnic boundaries, as recorded in Acts, illustrates how racial differences no longer have any religious significance in the new covenant.

RADDAI The fifth son of Jesse, he was one of David's elder brothers (1 Chron. 2:14).

RAFT The cypress and cedar wood required for building Solomon's temple was formed into rafts that could be transported by sea from Lebanon to Joppa (2 Chron. 2:16).

RAGUA *See* Reu.

RAGUEL *See* Reuel.

RAHAB **(1)** A woman associated with the conquest whose history is recounted in Josh. 2. Two Israelite soldiers entered Jericho and headed straight for the nearest brothel (Josh. 2:1). There, they "lay down" (the literal meaning of *shakab*, which the NIV translates as "stayed there") with Rahab. They were on a reconnaissance mission under Joshua's command, as a precursor to invasion. The king of Jericho demanded that Rahab hand over the spies to him. She lied and sent the pursuers away on a false path, enabling the Israelites to escape. Her justification for this action was that she, and all of Canaan, knew that Israel's God was with Israel and surely would destroy Jericho. She asked the spies to spare her family. This they promised to do if she would mark her window with a red cord, which she did.

These acts identified Rahab with Israel and Israel's God, making her, as it were, a de facto Israelite. Thus, her works justified her to Joshua and saved her family (James 2:25). Although the citizens of Jericho believed in the coming judgment, only Rahab's faith moved her to switch loyalties. Thus, her faith saved her (Heb. 11:31). The red cord in the window connects her story with Passover, where the angel of death passed over Israelite houses marked with lamb's blood. Joshua's forces passed over Rahab's house, since it bore this mark. She is found in the genealogy of Jesus (Matt. 1:5).

(2) A mythological monster especially associated with the ocean that represented the natural forces of chaos in the world. Many scholars believe that Rahab is identical to the Canaanite Leviathan. In the OT Yahweh fights Rahab in the process of ending chaos and creating the world. Rahab is depicted as a poor opponent (Job 9:13; 26:12; Ps. 89:10; Isa. 51:9). Later, Egypt is sometimes equated with the monster Rahab (Ps. 87:4; Isa. 30:7), although there is no historic relationship between the two. The NKJV transliterates the Hebrew in Isa. 30:7 as though a proper name, Rahab-Hem-Shebeth, but most versions translate it with a phrase such as "Rahab the Do-Nothing" (NIV) or "Rahab who sits still" (ESV, NRSV).

RAHAB-HEM-SHEBETH *See* Rahab.

RAHAM The son of Shema, a descendant of Caleb, in the tribe of Judah. Raham was the father of Jorkeam (1 Chron. 2:44).

RAHEL *See* Rachel.

RAIL In the KJV, this term is used to describe a kind of verbal abuse, scolding, accusation, or derision (1 Sam. 25:14; 2 Chron. 32:17; Mark 15:29; Luke 23:39; 1 Cor. 5:11; 1 Tim. 6:4; 1 Pet. 3:9; 2 Pet. 2:11; Jude 9).

RAIN In an agrarian society with an unpredictable climate, such as Israel, rainfall was of the utmost importance. Two rainy periods could be hoped for each year, in February/March and in October/November, and these seasons were critical in producing a good crop. Regular rainfall thus formed a significant part of God's promise of a good and fruitful land for his people (Lev. 26:4). Solomon's prayer acknowledges the conditional nature of this promise: rain would be withheld from a sinful nation but would be given to a forgiven and obedient people (1 Kings 8:35–36).

Rain could also be sent in judgment, most notably in the flood narratives, where God sent rain in order to destroy all living things on the face of the earth (Gen. 7:4), and in the exodus narrative, where rain accompanied hail and thunder in the seventh plague (Exod. 9:23).

Since rain is completely beyond human control, it naturally became a symbol of God's sovereignty in both blessing and curse. A striking example of this is in 1 Kings 17–18, when for three years the rains were withheld, until finally Elijah's trust in God was vindicated above the prophets of Baal, and the rain followed. The effectiveness of Elijah's prayers, first for drought and later for rain, is held up in the NT as an example for all believers (James 5:17–18).

RAINBOW An optical phenomenon caused by the refraction of sunlight through raindrops or other water vapor. The great beauty of rainbows results from their containing the full spectrum of visible light. In Scripture rainbows have a special significance and symbolism. A rainbow is a sign of God's covenant with the earth to never again destroy all life with a flood as he did in the time of Noah (Gen. 9:13–14, 16). The power of this particular image comes from the transformation of a bow—typically a symbol of warfare, destruction, and death—into a colorful symbol of heavenly mercy, grace, and peace. The rainbow thus became a sign of God's kindness and mercy and is found in descriptions of God in the heavenly visions of both Ezekiel and John (Ezek. 1:28; Rev. 4:3; 10:1).

A rainbow over the ruins of Beth Shan

RAISIN CAKES *See* Raisins.

RAISINS Raisins, or dried grapes, were among the foods forbidden to Nazirites (Num. 6:3). The reference to raisins in Song 2:5 indicates a belief in their aphrodisiac quality. Elsewhere, raisins frequently appear as a staple food, often pressed into cakes or patties that were easily transported (1 Sam. 25:18) and supplied quick energy (1 Sam. 30:12). Raisin cakes were also used as cultic offerings to other gods (Hos. 3:1).

RAKAL A town in Judah that received a share in the plunder from David's victory over the Amalekites (1 Sam. 30:29). In the LXX this town is called "Carmel."

RAKEM A descendant of Manasseh in the third generation and one of the two sons of Peresh (1 Chron. 7:16; GW, NCV identify his father as Peresh's brother, Sheresh; in the Hebrew and many

English versions the text is ambiguous). In the NRSV, the name appears as “Rekem.”

RAKKATH A fortified city allocated to the tribe of Naphtali (Josh. 19:35). Rakkath was traditionally thought to lie on the site of Tiberias, but it is more likely to have been a couple of miles farther north at the site of Khirbet el-Quneitireh, near the west shore of the Sea of Galilee.

RAKKON A city allocated to the tribe of Dan (Josh. 19:46). The most likely location for the city of Rakkon is at Tell er-Reqqeit, six miles north of Joppa and not far from the mouth of the River Jarkon on the Mediterranean coast.

RAM **(1)** A son of Hezron and the father of Amminadab, he was an ancestor of David (Ruth 4:19; 1 Chron. 2:9–10) and is mentioned in Matthew’s genealogy of Jesus (Matt. 1:3–4). **(2)** The firstborn son of Hezron’s son Jerahmeel (1 Chron. 2:25). His uncle is the Ram of 1 Chron. 2:9–10. **(3)** Head of the family of Elihu, the young man who angrily contends with Job and his three friends (Job 32:2).

RAMAH This Hebrew word, indicating a “high place,” is used as the name for several sites in ancient Israel. **(1)** A town in Benjamin (Josh. 18:25), possibly located on the site of the modern city of Er-Ram, five miles north of Jerusalem, or three miles farther north at Ramallah. Ramah was located near the cities of Gibeon and Mizpah and close to the eventual border between Israel and Judah. It was a resting place on the road to the north (Judg. 19:13). The judge Deborah held court near Ramah on the road to Bethel (Judg. 4:5).

When King Baasha of Israel invaded Judah, he made Ramah his base, fortifying the city in order to control northern access to Jerusalem (1 Kings 15:17). After Baasha was forced to abandon his position, King Asa of Judah dismantled the fortifications and used the materials to strengthen the cities of Geba and Mizpah (15:22). Following the return from exile, some of the Benjamites resettled in the city of Ramah (Neh. 11:33). Rachel’s tomb was said to be near Ramah, and the place is associated with her mourning for her children in Jeremiah’s prophecy (Jer. 31:15). Some scholars believe that Ramah of Benjamin was also the birthplace of Samuel (see #2).

(2) The birthplace and burial site of Samuel (1 Sam. 1:19; 25:1), also known as Ramathaim, or possibly Ramathaim Zuphim (1:1 NIV mg.), situated in the hill country of Ephraim. Ramah was Samuel’s home throughout his time as judge over Israel, and he built an altar to God there (7:17). It was at Ramah that the Israelite elders came to Samuel to demand a king (8:4–5). Later, when David fled from Saul’s house, he went to Ramah to take counsel from Samuel and find refuge from the king.

The location of Ramah is uncertain. The difficulty with identifying it as Ramah of Benjamin (see above) is the link with the territory of Ephraim (1 Sam. 1:1), though both Er-Ram and Ramallah are possible sites. Another suggested location is Beit Ramah, which is in the mountains of Ephraim, about eleven miles northwest of Bethel, though the distance from Saul’s home in Gibeah (sixteen miles) casts some doubt on this (see 9:1–6).

(3) A town on the boundary of Asher (Josh. 19:29). **(4)** A walled town in Naphtali (Josh. 19:36). **(5)** A town of Simeon (Josh. 19:8; 1 Sam. 30:27). **(6)** An alternative name for Ramoth-Gilead (2 Kings 8:28–29; 2 Chron. 22:5–6).

RAMATH Another form of “Ramah” (indicating a “hill” or “high place”), used in three place names in the OT. **(1)** Ramath Lehi (“hill of the jawbone”) is the place where Samson defeated a thousand Philistines, striking them with the jawbone of a donkey (Judg. 15:17). **(2)** Ramath Mizpah was a town allocated to the tribe of Gad (Josh. 13:26), located between Heshbon and Betonim. **(3)** Ramath Negev was a town given to the Simeonites within the tribal allotment of Judah (Josh. 19:8).

RAMATHAIM The home of Samuel's parents in the hill country of Ephraim (1 Sam. 1:1), though it is also called "Ramah" (1 Sam. 1:19). It may be modern Rentis (Arimathea in the NT [Matt. 27:57]), about eighteen miles east of Joppa.

RAMATHAIM-ZOPHIM *See* Ramathaim.

RAMATHITE A native of one of the towns called "Ramah." Shimei the Ramathite was responsible for overseeing David's vineyards (1 Chron. 27:27).

RAMATH LEHI *See* Ramath.

RAMATH MIZPAH, RAMATH-MIZPEH *See* Ramath.

RAMATH NEGEV *See* Ramah; Ramath.

RAMATH OF THE SOUTH *See* Ramah; Ramath.

RAMESES The Egyptian city and region settled by Joseph and his family, "the best part of the land" (Gen. 47:11). This was later the point of departure for the Israelites leaving Egypt (Exod. 12:37; Num. 33:3, 5). It is also the name of one of the two store cities that the Israelites were forced to build in Egypt (Exod. 1:11).

RAMIAH A son of Parosh, he was one of the Israelites who married foreign women during the time of the exile (Ezra 10:25).

RAMOTH *See* Remeth.

RAMOTH GILEAD A city of refuge located in the Transjordan territory of Gad (Deut. 4:43; Josh. 20:8; 21:38). King Ahab of Israel invited King Jehoshaphat of Judah to ally with him to retake Ramoth Gilead from the Arameans. In the ensuing battle Ahab was fatally wounded (1 Kings 22; 2 Chron. 18). After Ahab's son Joram was injured at Ramoth Gilead, Elisha's representative traveled there to anoint Jehu as king of Israel (2 Kings 8:25–9:13). Ramoth Gilead is commonly identified with Tell er-Rumeith, a small fortification about three miles south of Ramtha in northern Jordan, near the Syrian border.

RAMOTH NEGEV *See* Ramah; Ramath.

RAMPART Ramparts formed an important part of the fortification of ancient Israelite cities as the outer ring of defense. The Hebrew term *khel* could indicate moats, stone walls, or earthen ramparts encircling a city. In poetic descriptions of Zion the security of the city is indicated by its ramparts (Isa. 26:1).

Stone rampart supporting Middle Bronze walls (1850 BC) partially uncovered at Ashkelon, Israel

RAM’S HORN *See* Shofar.

RANGE In 2 Kings 11:8, 15; 2 Chron. 23:14 the KJV translates the Hebrew word *sederah* as “range,” referring to a formation of soldiers.

RANSOM A payment made to redeem a slave, release a captive, or free a criminal from punishment.

In the OT, slaves could be set free by ransom (Lev. 19:20), and certain kinds of criminals are excluded from ransom (Num. 35:31–32), implying that others could be ransomed to escape their punishment. Ransom is also used more broadly to include notions of atonement (Exod. 30:12) and as a near synonym for “redemption” (Jer. 31:11 NASB, NRSV, KJV). “Ransom” is frequently used metaphorically to describe God’s saving actions on behalf of the nation (Isa. 43:3; 50:2; Jer. 31:11; Hos. 13:14), saving them from their enemies, or of individuals (Job 5:20; Ps. 55:18), saving them from death. In these cases, the emphasis is on the rescue effected, not the price paid.

In the NT, “ransom” is used to describe the atoning work of Christ. Jesus describes his own purpose: “The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many” (Mark 10:45 // Matt. 20:28). Paul uses the same language: “Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all people” (1 Tim. 2:5–6). The author of Hebrews describes the effect of this ransom:

"He has died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant" (Heb. 9:15). All three references indicate that the price paid for the ransom is Jesus' life, given up to death on the cross. Each of the literal meanings of "ransom" has its metaphorical equivalent: Christ's death frees us from our slavery to sin and death (Rom. 6:6), releases us from our captivity to the law (7:4–6), and pays the price of the punishment that our sins deserved (3:25–26). The ransom was not paid to the devil, and it is best understood as the satisfaction of God's own justice (Rom. 6:23).

RAPE Nonconsensual sexual intercourse imposed on a person by force or trickery. The rape of a betrothed woman was considered a capital offense under OT law (Deut. 22:25–27), and a woman who had been the victim of this crime was not dishonored by it. A man who raped an unattached woman was required to pay her bride-price and marry her in order to preserve her honor. Such a man was not permitted to later divorce his wife.

The OT contains a number of stories describing rape and its consequences. In two instances, women compel men to sleep with them by trickery and deception. In order to preserve their family line, Lot's daughters persuaded their father to have sex with them by making him drunk (Gen. 19:30–35). For a similar reason, Tamar tricked her father-in-law, Judah, into thinking that she was a prostitute so that he would fulfill his family duty to give her a son.

More commonly, men perpetrated sexual violence against women to satisfy their own lust. Sometimes this was lust for an individual woman, as in the cases of Shechem (Gen. 34) and Amnon (2 Sam. 13:1–22). In other instances, it is clear that any woman would satisfy the violent sexual urges of the men involved (Judg. 19; similarly, Gen. 19:4–5). In many of these cases, the crimes committed have serious and long-lasting consequences beyond their immediate circumstances. The rape of the women of Jerusalem was one of the horrors associated with the fall of the city (Lam. 5:11; Zech. 14:2).

RAPHA **(1)** The fifth son of Benjamin (1 Chron. 8:2), omitted from the list in Gen. 46:21. **(2)** Either the ancestor of several of David's Philistine enemies (2 Sam. 21:15–22; 1 Chron. 20:4–8) or possibly a description of their race, indicating their gigantic size.

RAPHAH A descendant of Saul, he was the son of Binea and the father of Eleasah (1 Chron. 8:37). An alternate version of the name, "Rephaiah," is found in 1 Chron. 9:43.

RAPHU The father of Palti, the Benjamite who was selected as one of the twelve Israelite spies to reconnoiter the land of Canaan (Num. 13:9).

RAPTURE The word "rapture" (from Lat. *raptura*) describes Christians being "caught up" to meet the Lord at the second coming (1 Thess. 4:17). This seems to immediately follow the resurrection of the dead. Paul claims those who have "fallen asleep" will rise first (4:15), then the living will be caught up with them in the clouds and meet the Lord in the air.

Futurists disagree as to the timing of the rapture. Pretribulationists hold that the rapture happens before the great tribulation begins, sparing the church the trauma of that period. Midtribulationists place it at the midpoint of the tribulation. Both of these views see a two-part second coming: first, Christ returns secretly to remove his church; then, he returns visibly at the end of the tribulation. Posttribulationists see the church remaining throughout the entire period, protected from the wrath of God but experiencing intense persecution from the world.

RAS SHAMRA *See* Ugarit.

RAT A rodent that is one of the unclean animals (Lev. 11:29). A plague of rats was sent upon the Philistines who captured the ark of the covenant (1 Sam. 6:5).

RAVEN An omnivorous member of the crow family, the raven is listed among the unclean birds in Lev. 11:15 because it is a scavenger that feeds on live prey and carrion. Despite this, the raven is used as an example of God's care for his creation (Job 38:41; Ps. 147:9; Luke 12:24). God uses ravens to bring food to Elijah while he is hiding in the wilderness (1 Kings 17:4–6). A raven is the first bird sent out by Noah at the end of the flood (Gen. 8:6–7). It does not return, presumably because it was able to find its own source of food. As part of God's vengeance against Edom, ravens and other birds of prey will nest in the city (Isa. 34:11). Together with the vulture, the raven is used as a metaphor for vicious destruction (Prov. 30:17).

RAVEN, RAVIN In the KJV this term is used both as a verb meaning "to hunt food" or "to take prey" (Gen. 49:27; Ps. 22:13; Ezek. 22:25, 27) and as a noun meaning "prey taken as food" (Nah. 2:12).

RAVINE OF THE POPLARS Found only in Isa. 15:7 (NRSV: "Wadi of the Willows"; KJV, RSV: "Brook of the Willows"), it is likely the border between Moab and Edom and the same as the Zered Valley.

RAZORS Many examples of metal razors with sharp cutting blades for the removal of hair have survived from ancient Israel. Because of the sharpness of the blade, the razor was an appropriate metaphor for the destructive power of the tongue (Ps. 52:2).

A bronze razor from Egypt (1550–1070 BC)

Razors are most commonly referred to in the Bible in the terms of the Nazirite vow (Num. 6:5), which separated a person as holy to God. One way in which that holiness was symbolized was the refusal to allow a razor to come near the hair of one's head. Following the completion of the vow, the head could once again be shaved (Num. 6:18). Samson was born under a Nazirite vow (Judg. 13:5) and enjoyed great strength as long as he kept the vow. When Delilah caused Samson's head to be shaved, the vow was broken, and God's presence left him (Judg. 16:19–20).

In other circumstances, shaving was a necessary part of the cleanliness rituals of the Israelite community (Lev. 14:8–9), although priests were required not to shave (21:5). The Assyrian king and his army are described as a razor that will shave the people of Israel (Isa. 7:20). The image indicates the cleansing of the people through the experience of defeat and exile.

RE The principal Egyptian god, believed to have created the universe and to be the first pharaoh. His temple was located in Thebes. In Egyptian hieroglyphics Re is often portrayed as a disc representing the sun.

REAIAH **(1)** A son of Shobal and father of Jahath from the tribe of Judah (1 Chron. 4:2). **(2)** A descendant of Reuben (1 Chron. 5:5). **(3)** One of the ancestors of the temple servants (Nethinim) who returned to Jerusalem after the Babylonian captivity under the leadership of Zerubbabel in 539 BC or soon after (Ezra 2:47; Neh. 7:50). The fact that many of the names in the list are foreign has led to the belief that they were originally prisoners of war who were pressed into service to perform menial tasks as they assisted the Levites.

REAP The process of gathering in the harvest, reaping was subject to various Israelite laws. The corners of fields were left for the poor to glean (Lev. 19:9; 23:22), and in the Sabbath and Jubilee Years no harvest was reaped at all. Reaping is frequently used as a metaphor of retribution and reward in the Bible (Job 4:8; Rom. 6:22; Rev. 14:15).

REBA One of the five Midianite kings killed when Moses led the Israelites to execute God's vengeance on the Midianites for enticing the Israelites into the worship of Baal (Num. 31:8). In Josh. 13:21 the kings are called the "princes allied with Sihon," the Ammonite king who was defeated alongside them.

REBECCA *See* Rebekah.

REBEKAH The daughter of Abraham's nephew Bethuel (Gen. 24:15); Isaac's wife (24:67); the mother of Esau and Jacob (25:25–26). Rebekah is introduced as a beautiful virgin who is willing to serve others (Abraham's servant) and to follow God's plan (to marry Isaac). Like Isaac's mother, Rebekah is barren, but following Isaac's intercessory prayers, she becomes pregnant with twins twenty years after her wedding (25:20–21, 24–26). According to Gen. 25, Rebekah loves the younger son, Jacob, while Isaac loves the elder, Esau. Rebekah schemes to provide Jacob with the fatherly blessing due the elder son by disguising Jacob as Esau so that Isaac will unknowingly bless his younger son (27:5–17). In response, Esau plots to kill Jacob, and Rebekah is forced to send Jacob away to the home of her brother, Laban (27:42–28:5).

Cenotaph of Rebekah, located in the Tomb of the Patriarchs above the Cave of Machpelah in Hebron

RECAB *See* Rekab.

RECABITES *See* Rekabites.

RECAH *See* Rekah.

RECHAB *See* Rekab.

RECHABITES *See* Rekabites.

RECHAH *See* Rekah.

RECONCILIATION The restoration of a relationship from a state of hostility to one of peace. As such, the concept is far more common than the number of specific references might suggest. The Bible speaks of reconciliation on three levels: (1) God and humanity; (2) human beings with one another; and (3) God and creation.

GOD AND HUMANITY

The need for reconciliation between God and humanity begins when Adam and Eve rebel against God. What has been a relationship of intimate fellowship becomes one of fear and mistrust as Adam and Eve's sin brings God's judgment (Gen. 3:14–19). But in the midst of judgment is the cryptic promise of a descendant of the woman who will crush the serpent and end the estrangement between God and humanity (3:15). The rest of the OT gives glimpses of what reconciliation will be like. God gives the sacrificial system as a means to deal with sin and restore fellowship with him (Lev. 1–7; 16). Despite Israel's sin, God pursues reconciliation with Israel like a husband chases after a wayward wife (Hos. 1–3). Israel's hope for reconciliation is often expressed in terms of a desire for peace. Although Aaron's benediction asks God to give peace to his people in the present (Num. 6:24–26), God's people look forward to the day when a covenant of peace will be established through the Suffering Servant and announced to the ends of the earth (Isa. 52–54).

What is largely hinted at in the OT is stated explicitly in the NT. Paul in particular explains how believers are reconciled to God and the consequences of that reconciliation. God, not humanity, has taken the initiative. Even though we were sinners subject to God's wrath, alienated from God and enemies in thought and act, Christ died for us (Rom. 5:6–11; Col. 1:21). As the last Adam, Christ has removed the barrier that our sinful rebellion had created between God and humanity by taking the punishment for our sin. Thus reconciliation is a gift that God offers to humanity (Rom. 5:11), not something that we do to appease God. Because God has reconciled us to himself through Christ, he has entrusted us with the ministry of reconciliation (2 Cor. 5:19). Using his people as ambassadors, God appeals to humanity to be reconciled through the work of Christ, whom, though sinless, God made sin for us "so that in him we might become the righteousness of God" (2 Cor. 5:20–21). God's purpose in reconciliation is to present the believer "holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation" (Col. 1:22). The result of reconciliation is the joy that comes from being at peace with God (Rom. 5:1–2, 11). In view of this, Paul's frequent greeting "grace and peace" in his letters takes on new light as his desire for believers to experience the reality of their reconciliation to God.

HUMAN BEINGS WITH ONE ANOTHER

Reconciliation between God and humanity makes it possible for people truly to be reconciled to one another. Even the natural hostility between Jew and Gentile has been overcome by the work of Christ. Through the cross, Christ "destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, by setting aside in his flesh the law with its commands and regulations" (Eph. 2:14–15). As a result, Jew and Gentile have been brought together in one body as fellow citizens of God's kingdom who stand on equal footing before God (Eph. 2:16–22).

As evidence of being reconciled to God, believers are called to pursue reconciliation with others: "If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone" (Rom. 12:18). Pursuing reconciliation with others is so important that Jesus warns his followers that failure to do so can cause a rift in their own fellowship with God. That is why in the Lord's Prayer God's people are to pray, "Forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who sins against us" (Luke 11:4). Since God has forgiven us for our rebellion against him, we ought to forgive others who have wronged us (Col. 3:13). Believers are even instructed to seek reconciliation with others before entering the presence of God (Matt. 5:23–24).

GOD AND CREATION

Drawing upon the prophetic hope of the OT, the NT also speaks of a cosmic reconciliation. Through Christ, God is pleased "to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross" (Col. 1:20). By this Paul does not mean the salvation of everyone, but rather that the reconciling work of Jesus is the means by which God restores the created order to peace. Whereas the first Adam's sin brought a curse upon creation, Christ, as the last Adam, has brought peace that will culminate in new heavens and a new earth free from the effects of sin and death (Isa. 65:17; Rev. 21–22). It is there that God will dwell with his people forever in perfect harmony (Rev. 21:2–5).

RECORDER An Israelite court official who could represent the king in political and financial matters. Joah, the son of Asaph, was recorder to King Hezekiah and represented him in negotiations with the Rabshakeh, who stood on behalf of the Assyrian king (2 Kings 18:18–37; Isa. 36:3–22). Later, another recorder, also a Joah, represented King Josiah in arranging for the repair of the temple (2 Chron. 34:8).

RED The color of blood, red is therefore the color used to symbolize sin (Isa. 1:18) and is the color of the horse whose rider brings war upon the earth (Rev. 6:4). *See also* Colors.

REDEMPTION, REDEEMER The idea of redemption was well known in antiquity. More than a simple notion of deliverance, redemption spoke as much of the grace of the redeemer as of the deliverance of the redeemed. Classical texts use the Greek word *apolytrōsis* ("redemption") to articulate the ransom payment given to release a slave, a captive of war, or someone sentenced to death. The group of words based on the Greek term *lytron* ("ransom") conveys the idea of payment for release. The corresponding Hebrew word *padah* is a commercial term rooted in the idea of the transfer of ownership.

OLD TESTAMENT

The experience of the exodus gave the idea of redemption religious significance. The commemoration of this redemptive event included the dedication of the firstborn to Yahweh (Exod. 13:12–13). Moreover, Israel itself, God's own firstborn (Exod. 4:22), was redeemed by Yahweh—language that Isaiah later picked up to describe Abraham (Isa. 29:22). As the theme of redemption continued to broaden, God's redemption came to include deliverance from all Israel's troubles (Ps. 25:22). Redemption included the whole of the human situation, not just the eternal destiny (or the new age to come).

Another Hebrew term, *ga'al*, generally relates to the kinsman-redeemer. In the case of a person who had sold property due to poverty or even gone into slavery to pay a debt, a kinsman could become a redeemer by buying back the property (Lev. 25:25–28) and/or purchasing freedom from slavery (25:47–49). The book of Ruth describes this, detailing the relationship between the impoverished Ruth and Boaz, the kinsman-redeemer. The prophets and the psalms apply this understanding to how God redeems Israel (Isa. 43:1–3; Ps. 19:14; cf. Job 19:25). God, however, does not pay ransom *to* anyone (Isa. 52:3–4); rather, he causes redemption by his power (45:13).

The awaited Messiah, promised through the prophets, would become God’s ultimate expression of his redemptive love. When the people’s continued rebellion against God finally broke the Mosaic covenant, God’s judgment sent them into captivity and exile in Babylon. Now, without place and identity, their only hope for a future was if God would ransom his people and restore his covenant with them. This longing for God’s redemption grew during the exile. As the persecutions increased further during the so-called intertestamental period (an approximately four-hundred-year period between the OT and the NT), the earlier prophetic promises became a full-blown messianic hope. God will send the Messiah as redeemer to ransom his people from Greek and Roman oppression.

NEW TESTAMENT

The NT champions the theme of redemption (see Luke 4:18–19). When Jesus came, teaching that he would redeem his people from the slavery of sin (John 8:34–36), he spoke of himself as a ransom for many (Matt. 20:28 // Mark 10:45). Paul’s theology of the cross accentuated the same connection between sin, slavery, and Jesus’ ransom. He saw people as sold into slavery under sin (Rom. 6:17; 7:14) and redeemed by Jesus’ sacrifice (3:24). The Christian idea of ransom followed the accepted contemporary idea that people who are sentenced to death (Rom. 6:23) can gain their life back if a redeemer buys it with a ransom (Col. 1:13–14). The predominance of *apolytrōsis* in the NT, compared to common Greek literature of that period, underscores its significance for early Christian conceptualization.

Without reflecting on to whom the ransom should be paid, which was made an issue by later theologians and philosophers, the NT authors highlight Jesus’ blood as the ransom payment (e.g., Eph. 1:7; Heb. 9:12; cf. Rev. 5:9). The emphases of the NT remain on the need of the redeemed, the grace of the redeemer, and the effects of the redemption. Christ’s ransom transfers the redeemed from one sphere of influence to another, or rather, from one owner to another. Incomparable to commonly known worldly ransoms, which consisted of monetary means and remained external to the redeemer himself (1 Pet. 3:18–19), Jesus substituted his own life for the life of those he redeemed (*antilytron hyper* [1 Tim. 2:6]). God still did not pay ransom *to* anyone, but rather caused it by his own power.

The OT notion that redemption points to God’s involvement in the present, allowing for a historical experience of salvation, fills the NT conception as well. This is seen most clearly in Paul’s theological ethics. The new ownership accomplished by Jesus’ redemption enables a new kind of life to be lived in freedom from the slavery of sin (1 Cor. 6:20; Gal. 5:1). More than just a matter of ethics, it follows Jesus’ emphasis of an “already but not yet” experience of God’s presence. Redemption is evidenced by the Spirit’s presence (Rom. 8:1–17).

Although redemption is present, the fullness of it still awaits the future (Rom. 8:18–23), when the redeemer will fill all in all (1 Cor. 15:28; Col. 1:19–20). Contrary to Hellenistic conceptions of redemption, which expect redemption *from* the body, Paul expects redemption *of* the body. God’s eschatological redemption is universal; it restores the relationship between creation and the Creator (Col. 1:21–23; Eph. 1:7–10).

RED HEIFER In Num. 19 the red heifer is designated for sacrifice as part of the disposal of impurity from within the Israelite camp: “This is a requirement of the law that the LORD has commanded: Tell the Israelites to bring you a red heifer without defect or blemish and that has never been under a yoke. Give it to Eleazar the priest; it is to be taken outside the camp and slaughtered in his presence” (19:2–3). The red heifer was to be burned along with cedar, hyssop, and scarlet wool, and the ashes thus produced were to be stored in a ceremonially clean place and preserved as “water of cleansing.” Specifically, the procedure under consideration in Num. 19 concerns the disposal of impurity resulting from direct or indirect contact with a corpse, which was removed from the impure person by washing with the “water of cleansing.” It is unclear why a red heifer is specified, although most commentators agree that the color probably was understood as representative of blood. Hebrews 9:13–14 indicates that the significance and efficacy of this procedure are fulfilled by the sacrifice of Christ.

RED SEA, REED SEA The Red Sea separates the Arabian Peninsula (to the north and east) from the African continent along its approximately fourteen-hundred-mile length. At its southern end, the Red Sea is connected to the Indian Ocean through the Gulf of Aden. At its northern end, the Red Sea divides into the gulfs of Suez and Aqaba, which surround the Sinai Peninsula on two sides.

At high points of their political power (1 Kings 9:26; 22:48), the Israelite peoples controlled a Red Sea port at Ezion Geber on the Gulf of Aqaba (near modern Eilat). Maintaining and using this port required not only the cooperation of Phoenician shipbuilding neighbors to the north, but also the subjugation or cooperation of the Edomite peoples who occupied the long overland route between Ezion Geber and the Israelite homeland. According to 1 Kings 9:26–28, it was from Ezion Geber that Solomon sent ships for “gold of Ophir” (1 Chron. 29:4).

Perhaps the best-known appearance of the Red Sea (Heb. *yam sup*) in the Bible is the story of the exodus from Egypt and the miraculous crossing of the Red Sea by the Israelites (Exod. 14:17–15:21). By many accounts, the passage combines multiple earlier versions of the story, with the result that it is sometimes difficult to understand what is being described in the narration. The seemingly straightforward geographical references to the “Red Sea” lie at the heart of several debates about the interpretation of the story.

First, which body of water did the Israelites cross? The name “Red Sea” derives from the LXX translation (*erythra thalassa*) of *yam sup*, a Hebrew term that probably does not mean “red sea.” References to *yam sup* in the Bible indicate either the Gulf of Suez (Num. 33:10–11) or the Gulf of Aqaba (e.g., 1 Kings 9:26), though not, as in modern usage, the large body of water stretching all the way to the Gulf of Aden. In trying to determine which body of water the Israelites crossed in Exod. 14:17–15:21, we must look for evidence beyond the name of the sea alone. The picture is complicated by the fact that the composite text does not consistently identify the Red Sea (sometimes preferring simply “the sea”); there seem to be conflicting reports about whether the sea was split and thus about the amount of water present at the point of crossing.

Second, what is the meaning of *yam sup*? Further complicating the matter has been a discussion of the etymological meaning of *yam sup*. Pointing to an apparent Egyptian cognate (*twf*), a number of scholars have argued that Hebrew *sup* means “reed,” and that *yam sup* is the name not of a large saltwater sea (the shores of the modern Red Sea are not reedy), but of a marsh in the Lower Nile region (perhaps the easternmost Pelusiac branch of the Nile Delta). This theory takes note of the fact that Exod. 15 (according to many, the oldest account of the event, as well as one of the oldest texts in the Bible) does not refer to a splitting of the sea and has the (perhaps dubious) advantage of requiring something less than a miracle: the Israelites escaped from the Egyptians by crossing a marsh, in which the chariots of the pursuing army became mired down. Another proposal is to interpret *sup* not as “red” or “reed” but as cognate to Hebrew *sop*, “end.” In this view, the Israelites crossed a sea that was either “the border sea” (i.e., a geographical border between Egypt and Canaan) or, in a more mythological perspective, the “sea of ending/extinction.”

REED The bulrush or papyrus plant was a type of reed growing in marshes or riverbanks, especially of the Nile. It was a basic resource for writing, fuel (Job 41:20), ropes (Job 41:2), and light vessels (Exod. 2:3). It is also used as a symbol of God’s punishment of Egypt (Isa. 19:15) and the restoration of Zion (Isa. 35:7).

Bulrush, or papyrus, reeds growing on a riverbank

REED SEA *See* Red Sea, Reed Sea.

REELAIAH A leader of the returnees who came back from Babylon to Judah with Zerubbabel (Ezra 2:2). He is called “Raamiah” in Neh. 7:7.

REFINE In metallurgy, to separate pure metal from impurities. The process of refining is used figuratively in the Bible in reference to God purifying his people from their sin (Jer. 9:7; Zech. 13:9; Mal. 3:3).

REFINING POT *See* Crucible.

REFORMATION The translation in several Bible versions (e.g., KJV, NASB, ESV) of the Greek word *diorthōsis*, which appears in the NT only in Heb. 9:10, where it describes either the “new order" (NIV) in which Christ's work sets aside the old legal regulations for approaching God or the process of establishing it.

REFUGE, CITY OF *See* Cities of Refuge.

REGEM A descendant of Caleb and son of Jahdai (1 Chron. 2:47).

REGEM-MELECH *See* Regem-Melek.

REGEM-MELEK Probably the name, though possibly the title, of an emissary sent by the people of Bethel to the priests and prophets to determine whether fasting in the fifth month, likely to commemorate the destruction of the temple and Jerusalem by the Babylonians, was still required as the new temple neared completion seventy years later (Zech. 7:2–3).

REGENERATION In the most basic sense, regeneration refers to God giving new life to someone or something. Although the word "regeneration" does not appear in the NIV, the concept is abundantly present in a variety of terms and images, especially those of new birth, new life, new self, new heart, and new creation. The biblical concept of regeneration is applied to both individuals and creation.

Individuals. Because of Adam's rebellion in the garden, humanity plunged into spiritual death (Rom. 5:12–14). Nothing short of God imparting new life to a person can overcome this condition. The classic expression of this truth is found in Jesus' conversation with Nicodemus (John 3:1–21). According to Jesus, entering the kingdom of God requires being born again, which he further explains as being "born of water and the Spirit" (John 3:3–5). Jesus' description taps into the language of Ezek. 36:25–27, where God promises to sprinkle clean water on his people and put his Spirit within them.

Paul also attributes regeneration to the work of the Spirit when he says that God "saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life" (Titus 3:5–7). The renewing work of the Spirit is the initial aspect of a person's experience of salvation, but it is closely connected with several other aspects of God's work in the believer, such as justification, inheritance, and eternal life. The transformation that regeneration begins is so profound that Paul can refer to it as an act of "new creation" in which a person who experiences it is, in a very real sense, an entirely new person (2 Cor. 5:17).

In addition to making a person spiritually alive, God's act of regeneration places within the believer a new disposition or orientation toward faith in Christ and obedience to him. Those who are born of God believe that Jesus is the Christ (1 John 5:1), love God and others (4:7–11), and do not continue in sin (3:9). God makes sinners alive not only to show the riches of his grace (Eph. 2:4–7), but also so that they "do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do" (2:10).

Creation. God's work of regeneration extends beyond the individual to the entire creation. Jesus refers to the consummation of God's plans as "the renewal [*palingenesia*, 'regeneration'] of all things" (Matt. 19:28). Because of Adam's sin, creation was placed under a curse (Gen. 3:17–19). To this day, creation groans under that curse (Rom. 8:19–22). But in the OT, God promised to renew the created order (Isa. 65:17; 66:22). The death and resurrection of Jesus are the initial fulfillment of this cosmic regeneration (Matt. 27:51–53; 1 Cor. 15:20–23), but the completion awaits the new heaven and earth (Rev. 21–22).

The regeneration of the individual and creation are inseparable. God imparts new spiritual life to his chosen people so that they respond in faith and obedience to him. The same regenerating power that brings the believer alive will one day renew all creation to make a suitable place for God's regenerate people to dwell. *See also* New Birth.

REGIMENT *See* Augustan Cohort; Cohort; Italian Cohort.

REGISTER In the KJV, "register" refers to a genealogical record of names (Ezra 2:62; Neh. 7:5, 64). In the NIV and other modern translations, it is used in the verbal sense of recording in formal records (Ps. 87:6), as in a census (Luke 2:3, 5).

REHABIAH The son of Eliezer, a grandson of Moses, and a Levitical leader (1 Chron. 23:17; 24:21; 26:25).

REHOB **(1)** The father of Hadadezer, king of Zobah (2 Sam. 8:3, 12). **(2)** One of the Levites who signed the covenant made in the days of Nehemiah (Neh. 10:11). **(3)** A geographical region reached by the Israelite spies (Num. 13:21), marking the northern limit of the land of Canaan (cf. Beth Rehob in Judg. 18:28; 2 Sam. 10:6). **(4)** Two towns in the territory of Asher, one on its northern border and the other in the plain of Akko. One of them was given to the Levites (Josh. 21:31), and the other remained in Canaanite control for a long time (Judg. 1:31). **(5)** A city five miles south of Beth Shan, frequently found in the Egyptian sources, but not in the Bible.

REHOBOAM A son of Solomon, he was the first king of Judah (928–911 BC) after the ten northern tribes broke away to form a separate kingdom.

Rehoboam's mother, Naamah, an Ammonite woman (1 Kings 14:21), contributed to his father's turning toward the worship of foreign gods. For this reason, the united kingdom of Israel did not survive Solomon's reign. After his death, the tribe of Judah immediately proclaimed Rehoboam king, but the ten northern tribes imposed conditions on their acceptance of his leadership. Solomon had wrongly oppressed the northern tribes, and they wanted relief from his son. Listening to the counsel of his contemporaries rather than the wiser, older advisers, Rehoboam refused and even boasted that he would increase their work and taxation. They thus rejected him as king and appointed Jeroboam as their king (1 Kings 12:1–24). At first, Rehoboam waged war against the north, but he stopped when the prophet Shemaiah told him that he would fail because of God's judgment (2 Chron. 11:1–4). He returned south and fortified the border (2 Chron. 11:5–12). Rehoboam, like his father, engaged in false worship, and so God allowed him to be defeated and the temple plundered by King Shishak of Egypt. However, he repented and thus was not completely destroyed (2 Chron. 12).

REHOBOTH The name "Rehoboth" can mean either "plazas" or "spacious place." **(1)** In the Table of Nations, Rehoboth Ir is named as one of four cities built by Nimrod (Gen. 10:11), who "was a mighty hunter before the LORD" (Gen. 10:9). It may refer to a district of Nineveh rather than an independent city. **(2)** One of the wells that Isaac dug. Isaac previously dug two other wells in the Negev but lost both to the "herders of Gerar" (Gen. 26:20), who claimed that the water was theirs. His third well in the region he named "Rehoboth," saying, "Now the LORD has given us room" (Gen. 26:22). **(3)** "Rehoboth on the (Euphrates?) river" ("Rehoboth ha-Nahar") is listed as the home of Shaul, who replaced Samlah as king of Edom (Gen. 36:37 // 1 Chron. 1:48). This place name may refer to a region or a specific city.

REHOBOTH IR *See* Rehoboth.

REHUM **(1)** A Levite leader who returned with Zerubbabel to Jerusalem after the exile (Ezra 2:2; Neh. 12:3 [cf. Neh. 7:7, where Nehum is likely the same person]). **(2)** A commanding officer identified as one "of the enemies of Judah and Benjamin" (Ezra 4:1) whose offer of help to Zerubbabel was rejected. He, along with Shimshai, wrote a letter to Artaxerxes asking him to command the discontinuation of the temple building, which he did (Ezra 4:6–24). **(3)** The son of Bani, he helped in the rebuilding of the wall of Jerusalem under the direction of Nehemiah (Neh. 3:17). He is likely the same person as the Rehum of Ezra 2:2; Neh. 12:3. **(4)** One of the leaders who signed the covenant renewal at the time of Ezra and Nehemiah (Neh. 10:25). He is likely the same person as the Rehum of Ezra 2:2; Neh. 12:3.

REI A man who stayed loyal to David when Adonijah attempted to seize the throne (1 Kings 1:8).

REINS The KJV translation of Hebrew words (*kilyah*; *khalats*) that may mean either an anatomical ("kidneys"; "loins") or figurative ("heart") part of humans. It appears once in the NT, translating the Greek word *nephros* (Rev. 2:23). The variety of NIV translations reflects the manifold meaning of this word in Hebrew thought: "kidney" (Job 16:13), "waist" (Isa. 11:5), "heart" (Job 19:27), "spirit" (Ps. 73:21), "inmost being" (Ps. 139:13; Prov. 23:16), and "mind" (Jer. 17:10).

REKAB **(1)** One of Saul's commanders, a son of Rimmon, he and his brother Baanah murdered Saul's son Ish-Bosheth and brought his head to David. Contrary to their expectations in carrying out the act, David had the brothers executed (2 Sam. 4). **(2)** The father or ancestor of Jehonadab (Jonadab), who accompanied Jehu to Samaria when he destroyed the house of Ahab and assisted him in slaughtering the worshipers of Baal (2 Kings 10). **(3)** The father of Malkijah, an official who repaired one of the gates of Jerusalem (Neh. 3:14).

The identification of Rekab in 1 Chron. 2:55 is uncertain. The "house of Rekab" (TNIV; cf. ESV, NRSV, NASB ["house of Rechab"]; NIV: "Rekabites") or "Beth Rekab" (NIV mg.; cf. GW) may refer to a place, person, or both. Here the "house of Rekab" is associated with the Kenites. *See also* Rekabites.

REKABITES A family, or perhaps an order, who traced their lineage back to Jehonadab (2 Kings 10; called "Jonadab" in Jer. 35 [NASB, NRSV, KJV]), a Kenite son or descendant of Rekab (see 1 Chron. 2:55), and were, like Jehonadab, zealous for the Lord. When Nebuchadnezzar invaded Judah, the Rekabites fled to Jerusalem to escape. According to their tradition, Jehonadab ordered the family to live in tents, avoid agriculture, and abstain from alcohol. Jeremiah tested their commitment by commanding them to drink wine, which they refused to do. Jeremiah used their obedience to their forefather as an object lesson for the unfaithful Judah (Jer. 35). *See also* Rekab.

REKAH The home of Kelub and his descendants, who were part of the tribe of Judah (1 Chron. 4:12).

REKEM **(1)** One of the five kings of Midian defeated by an Israelite force led by Moses (Num.

31:8; Josh. 13:21). Josephus associates his city with Petra. **(2)** A descendant of Caleb (1 Chron. 2:43–44). **(3)** A city in the inheritance of Benjamin, likely on the western side (Josh. 18:27). *See also* Rakem.

RELEASE, YEAR OF Refers to the seventh year, wherein the law was read at the Feast of Tabernacles and debts were canceled (Deut. 15:1–9; 31:10–13). Jubilee was another year of release because slaves were set free and property that had been sold reverted to its original owner (Lev. 25:25–33, 54; 27:24). The NT uses language reminiscent of the year of release and Jubilee to speak about Jesus' redemptive work (Rom. 6:17–23; 8:1–4; Col. 2:13–14; Heb. 2:14–15).

RELENTING, GOD'S *See* Repentance of God.

RELIGION The word "religion" as used today refers to differing systems of worship and foundational theological principles undergirding those systems. There are as many systems of worship as there are deities in the world. In the sense that Christianity has a deity to worship, a system of worship related to him, and a set of foundational principles set forth for the acting out of that worship, it can be said that Christianity is a religion. The objection here for many is that identifying Christianity as a religion may detract from its exclusivity and class it as simply one among many world religions. Yet this objection probably is overstated. The word "religion" is certainly used in the Scriptures, and Christianity is referred to as a religion in a positive sense.

The Greek word commonly translated as "religion" in the NT is *thrēskeia.* It is used in reference to Christianity, but it also refers to Judaism or other forms of worship. As Paul gives his defense before Agrippa (and Festus), he notes that he has done nothing worthy of blame, for it was God who had changed his heart about Jesus as the Messiah. Before that, he had walked in the strictest of paths, as a Pharisee, in the Jewish religion (Acts 26:5). As Paul addresses the Colossian heresy, he instructs the believers not to be caught up in the worship (*thrēskeia*) of angels, a part of the composite false religion that was threatening the Colossian church (Col. 2:18). James notes that if a person claims to be religious but does not control the tongue, that person's religion is useless (James 1:26). Religion that is true religion, being pure and undefiled, is to act in compassion toward those most helpless, taking care of orphans and widows in their distress, and to walk in a proper biblical ethic (1:27).

As for other systems of religion in Scripture, God consistently warns the children of Israel about the false religions of the nations, worship of deities such as Baal and Chemosh. There was always a temptation for the Israelites to gravitate to those religions or to reshape Judaism to be like them. In the world of the NT, religions were varied and many, and Christians are warned against all forms of false worship.

God continually warned Israel not to participate in other religions or the worship of other gods, such as Baal, represented by this bronze figurine from Tyre (1400–1200 BC).

REMALIAH The father of Pekah, who was the chief officer of King Pekahiah and assassinated him in order to become king of Israel (2 Kings 15:25–16:5).

REMETH A town in the tribal allotment of Issachar (Josh. 19:21), probably the same as Ramoth (1 Chron. 6:73) and Jarmuth (Josh. 21:29).

REMISSION A word used in the KJV to describe the removal of the guilt or penalty of sin acquired through belief in Christ (Acts 10:43) and effected through his shed blood (Matt. 26:28; Heb. 9:22), bringing about salvation (Luke 1:77). Accompanied with repentance, baptism, either by John the Baptist (Mark 1:4; Luke 3:3) or in the name of Jesus (Acts 2:38), is done “for the remission of sins.” Modern translations prefer the word “forgiveness,” where it translates the Greek word *aphesis*. In Rom. 3:25 the KJV translates the word *paresis* as “remission,” where it refers to God’s leaving sins unpunished in anticipation of Christ’s atoning work. Although the noun “forgiveness” is rare in the OT (Ps. 130:4; Dan. 9:9), God is often asked to “forgive” (e.g., Exod. 32:32; Ps. 25:18); he is declared “forgiving” several times (Pss. 86:5; 99:8; Neh. 9:17), and this trait is included in the divine self-description given to Moses (Exod. 34:7). Remission may also refer to the removal of an economic instead of a spiritual debt, such as that commanded of the Israelites every seventh year (Deut. 15:1–2, 9; 31:10 NASB, NRSV), or taxes (Esther 2:18 ESV).

REMMON *See* Rimmon.

REMMONMETHOAR The KJV name for a Levitical city on the border of the tribe of Zebulun (Josh. 19:13). The NIV and other versions translate the name as “Rimmon” and “methoar” as the verb “to turn.” The same location is named “Rimmono” in 1 Chron. 6:77 and“Dimnah” in Josh. 21:35. It usually is identified with modern Rummaneh, six miles northeast of Nazareth.

REMNANT The concept of a remnant or a “remnant theology” runs throughout Scripture. Although appearing in a wide variety of texts and contexts, the central idea of the remnant concept or remnant theology is that in the midst of seemingly total apostasy and the consequential terrible judgment and/or destruction, God always has a small, faithful group that he delivers and works through to bring blessing.

OLD TESTAMENT

Early allusions to the idea of a remnant are introduced in the book of Genesis. Noah and his family (Gen. 6–9) are the remnant that is saved during the flood, when all other people are destroyed in judgment. Likewise, in Gen. 45:6–7 Joseph declares to his brothers, “For two years now there has been famine in the land, and for the next five years there will be no plowing and reaping. But God sent me ahead of you to preserve for you a remnant on earth and to save your lives by a great deliverance.”

The remnant theme surfaces in several other places in the OT. For example, when Elijah complains to God that he is the only faithful one left, God corrects him by pointing out that he has maintained a remnant of seven thousand faithful ones in the midst of national apostasy (1 Kings 19:10–18).

However, it is in the OT prophets that the remnant theme flowers into full blossom. The Hebrew words for “remnant” (*she’ar*, *she’erit*) occur over one hundred times in the prophetic books. The prophets proclaim that since Israel/Judah has broken the covenant and refuses to repent and turn back to God, judgment is coming. This judgment takes the form of terrible foreign invasions and destruction, followed by exile from the land. Thus, the northern kingdom, Israel, is destroyed and exiled by the Assyrians in 722 BC, and the southern kingdom, Judah, is destroyed and exiled by the Babylonians in 587/586 BC. Yet the prophets also prophesy hope and restoration beyond the judgment. They declare that many will be destroyed in the judgment, but not all. They prophesy that a remnant will survive, and that God will work through the remnant to bring blessings and restoration. Usually the remnant is identified as those who go into exile but who likewise hope to return to the land. The reestablishment of the remnant is often connected with the inauguration of the messianic age.

NEW TESTAMENT

The remnant theme continues into the NT, but it is not nearly as prominent in the NT as it is in the OT prophets. The term “remnant” does not occur in the Gospels, although the idea is implied in several texts. Thus, in Matt. 7:13–14 Jesus states, “For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it." Likewise, in Matt. 22:14 Jesus summarizes his preceding parable by stating, "Many are invited, but few are chosen."

In Rom. 11 Paul is much more explicit. Not only does he use the term "remnant," but also in Rom. 11:2–5 he connects his argument specifically to the remnant idea in 1 Kings 19:18 ("I have reserved for myself seven thousand"). Paul is pointing out the similarities between the apostasy in Israel in 1 Kings 19 and the parallel rejection of the Messiah by Israel during Paul's day. In both cases the nation had rejected God's word and his salvation plan. But in both situations, even though the nation as a whole has rejected God, God maintains a faithful remnant. Paul also underscores that the remnant is established by God's grace. Thus, in Rom. 11:5 Paul explains, "So too, at the present time there is a remnant chosen by grace." In the early church, that remnant consisted of Jewish Christians like Paul himself. And to the degree that the church as a whole inherited the promises to Israel, it too could be included in the category of remnant (see again Rom. 11:11–24; cf. 1 Pet. 2:5–10; Rev. 7; 14). Indeed, Paul hopes that the conversion of Gentiles to Christ might make his Jewish compatriots jealous so that they may "take back" their Messiah (in Rom. 11, cf. vv. 11–12 with vv. 25–36). In that case, national Israel would become the spiritual remnant for the very first time in Israel's history, because "all Israel" would be saved. That is, national Israel and spiritual Israel would be one.

Another way to grasp the idea of the remnant as it unfolds throughout the Bible is to use an hourglass illustration (i.e., wide, narrow, wide). Thus, God had created the world to have fellowship with him, only to have his creation spurn that offer. To rectify this problem, God calls Abraham out from paganism in order that he might make of him a new people, Israel, to worship God and declare him to the nations. Alas, however, Israel in time disobeys God's law just as the nations of the world had disobeyed God by worshiping other gods. But the purpose of God is not thereby thwarted, for he raises up a remnant, a faithful few who remain true to Yahweh (e.g., Elijah and the later returnees to Israel). However, by the end of the OT the hopes of Israel now rest upon one individual, the Messiah, who will turn the hearts of Jews back to God and who will convert the nations of the earth to the one true God. As it turns out, then, Israel's rejection of God throughout the OT actually carries along the plan of God as it narrows its focus, culminating in the expectation of the one Messiah. But with the advent of Jesus Christ, the focus of God now widens, beginning with the apostles (the beginnings of the remnant in the NT), expanding to include the church (the replacement of Israel, however temporary that may be), and one day encompassing the world (which will bring the revelation of God full circle).

REMPHAN *See* Rephan.

RENDING OF GARMENTS *See* Garments, Rending of.

REPENTANCE The act of repudiating sin and returning to God. Implicit in this is sorrow over the evil that one has committed and a complete turnabout in one's spiritual direction: turning from idols—anything that wrests away the affection that we owe God—to God (1 Sam. 7:3; 2 Chron. 7:14; Isa. 55:6; 1 Thess. 1:9; James 4:8–10).

Terminology. Two Hebrew word groups are associated with the concept of repentance: *nakham* and *shub*. *Nakham* means "to pant, sigh, groan, howl." When used with respect to the circumstances of others and the feeling of sympathy that they engender, it refers to compassion. When used in reference to feelings generated by one's own actions, it means "grief" or "remorse." In this regard, *nakham* predominantly has God as the subject. The KJV translates it about forty times as “repent.” While one of the senses of *nakham* is that of grief over one’s actions, those actions are ethically neutral: it does not presuppose that they are inherently evil. The NIV is correct, therefore, in never translating *nakham* as “repent” where God is the subject. In most cases where God is its subject, the term highlights God’s compassion and comfort for the afflicted (Isa. 40:1–2; 49:13), or his grief over the dire consequences brought upon or intended for the disobedient and his subsequent commutation of their punishment (Exod. 32:12–14; Judg. 2:18; 2 Sam. 24:16; Jon. 3:10), or his grief over human self-ruinous obstinacy (Gen. 6:6–7; 1 Sam. 15:11). Even in the few cases where *nakham* has human subjects, it need not always be rendered “repent,” their concern for change of heart notwithstanding (cf. Exod. 13:17; Judg. 21:6).

The concept of repentance is better conveyed by the Hebrew verb *shub* (“to turn, return back, restore, reverse, bring back”) or its noun form in rabbinic Judaism, *teshubah* (“repentance”). While *shub* has many nonreligious uses, its theological significance derives from the sense of either “turning away from God” (apostasy [cf. Hos. 11:7; Jer. 11:10]) or “turning to God” (repentance [cf. 1 Sam. 7:3–4; Hos. 14:1]). Our concern is with the latter sense, which normally would be followed by God’s return to his people (Zech. 1:3; Mal. 3:7).

In the OT, *shub* is central to the concept of repentance. It is the key term employed in the entreaty to God’s people to return to him (2 Chron. 30:6; Isa. 44:22; Ezek. 14:6). The outward signs of repentance in the OT include fasting, mourning (sometimes while sitting in dust or pouring ashes or dust upon one’s head), rending garments, wearing sackcloth, and offering sacrifices (Lev. 5:5–12; 2 Kings 22:11, 19; Neh. 9:1; Joel 2:12–17). The Israelites became so preoccupied with these outward forms that God told them repeatedly that he no longer had interest in them, but rather sought contrition of the heart (Ps. 34:18; Isa. 1:10–16; 58; 66:2; Joel 2:13).

In the NT, the dominant terms used for repentance are the verb *metanoeō* and the cognate noun *metanoia*; the overwhelming majority of these occur in Luke-Acts. These terms are used to express the complete turnaround in one’s way of life, including conversion, faith, and regeneration (Acts 2:28; 3:19; 5:31; 20:21). Occasionally these two terms are complemented by *epistrephō* to stress the positive side of repentance, that of turning from sin or idols to God (Acts 9:35; 11:21; 26:20).

Elements of repentance. The constituent elements of biblical repentance include the following: (1) A recognition of one’s sin, its damaging effects on life and nature, its affront to God’s word and authority, and its dire consequences (Ezek. 18:4; Rom. 3:23; 8:19–22; Rev. 21:8). (2) Personal outrage and remorse over one’s sin, grief at one’s helplessness, and a deep longing for forgiveness, reconciliation, and restoration. (3) A personal response to God’s grace in choosing a new spiritual direction by breaking with the past and returning to God. This includes confession and renunciation of sin, and prayer for God’s forgiveness (Lev. 5:5; Prov. 28:13; 1 John 1:9). (4) In some circumstances, repentance may require restitution (Exod. 22:1–15; 1 Sam. 12:3; 2 Sam. 12:6; Luke 19:8). (5) At its core, repentance is a rejection of the autonomous life and the surrender of oneself to the lordship of Christ (Jer. 3:22; Mark 8:34–38). (6) The proof of true repentance is the worthy fruit of a changed life (Luke 3:7–14; Eph. 4:17–32; Col. 1:10).

REPENTANCE OF GOD God’s “repenting” (KJV) or “relenting” (NIV) may seem to be in tension with his sovereignty, but it makes sense on several assumptions. God wills to accomplish certain overall ends, but he retains freedom to modify the path that he takes to achieve them, as needed. This in turn assumes that God’s interaction with humanity involves genuine give-and-take. Therefore, God’s way in history may be recounted as a story with surprise twists and turns that are integral to the plot. We may affirm all this and also uphold divine sovereignty if we understand both human prayer and God's response as divinely ordained means for God to achieve his purposes.

Texts that speak of God relenting indicate that God is adopting a new course of action, a change of mind. In a sense, divine judgment itself represents a kind of "change of mind" from God's basic, original intent to bless. Whereas judgment is "his strange work . . . his alien task" (Isa. 28:21), undertaken when necessary, God's character is to be gracious and compassionate, to relent from sending calamity (Isa. 48:9; Joel 2:13), and to bring restoration after judgment (Gen. 9:11; Isa. 54:7–8; Hos. 2).

Terminology. To portray God relenting, the OT often uses the Hebrew word *nakham*, which carries a strong emotional content and an element of regret. On certain occasions, it refers to profound grief that God feels in reaction to human sin and calamity (Gen. 6:6–7; Judg. 2:18; 1 Sam. 15:35; 2 Sam. 24:16). This is not to suggest that God is making amends for wrongs or has the same kinds of regret for mistakes that humans have. But we should recognize that when *nakham* is used to speak of God "relenting," it means something more than a change in the direction of the wind: it involves the heart of God, engaged deeply with his people's welfare (cf. Hos. 11:8–9). Conversely, the human cry for God to relent is wrung from experiences of deep crisis (Job 6:29; Pss. 90:13; 106:44–45).

Exodus and Jonah. Two classic OT narratives about divine relenting may be contrasted. In Exod. 32 the Israelites' idolatry with the golden calf is followed by God's indictment and intention to destroy them. A dramatic turning point comes with Moses' intercession, in response to which God relents. The book of Jonah turns this sequence on its head. Here the prophet resists his mission of announcing Nineveh's doom because he fears that its people may repent, which they do (Jon. 3:5–9), and that God may then relent from bringing on them the judgment that he had sent Jonah to announce, which he does (4:2). The book of Jonah portrays the prophet as an antihero, out of step with the compassion and larger purposes of God, unhappy with the freedom of God. But it preserves the link between human repentance for sin and divine relenting from previously announced judgment, as seen in Exod. 32.

The prophets. Through the OT prophets, God wrestles with Israel, announcing one course of action, judgment, while often holding open the possibility of an alternate ending: if Israel repents (Jer. 18:8; 26:3, 13) or if a prophet (Amos 7:1–6) or a king (Jer. 26:19) intercedes, then God may relent. At the end of the day, relenting remains a move that God chooses to make or not to make (Isa. 57:6; Jer. 7:16–20; Ezek. 24:14), in faithfulness to his own purpose (Ps. 7:10–12; Jer. 23:20; 30:24; Zech. 8:14–15).

In the book of Amos, God does both. Amos 1–2 comprises a cycle of seven judgment speeches against Israel's neighbors, culminating in the eighth, lengthiest judgment speech against Israel. Each speech opens with the formula "For three sins of X, and for four, I will not turn back [my wrath]." Here God declares that he has committed himself to carrying out judgment. With the use of the verb *shub* ("to turn, turn back"), any implied question of reprieve is answered immediately: the nation's condemnation is irrevocable. But in 7:1–6 God is twice said to "relent" (*nakham*) from sending the locusts and fire that he has just shown Amos in visions. Granting stays from specific forms of punishment is not the same as forgiving Israel's sin, however, and these temporary measures are followed by a reassertion of God's determination to spare Israel no longer (7:7–9). Moreover, even though Israel's doom is sealed, Amos can still urge his hearers to repent and turn to God, on the grounds that God may relent—that is, freely respond with mercy and allow some to survive the nation's fall (5:4–6, 14–15).

Salvation and judgment. This divine freedom, compassion, and judgment that dovetail in OT accounts of God relenting are embodied in Jesus’ announcement of the kingdom, which signals both salvation and its corollary, judgment. Hence come his summons to “Repent and believe the good news” (Mark 1:15) and the apostolic call for hearers to escape their generation’s doom by repentance and faith in Jesus (Acts 2:40).

REPHAEL A Levitical gatekeeper and a son of Shemaiah (1 Chron. 26:7).

REPHAH A descendant of Ephraim (1 Chron.7:25).

REPHAIAH **(1)** A descendant of David through Zerubbabel (1 Chron. 3:21). **(2)** A Simeonite leader during Hezekiah’s reign (1 Chron. 4:42). **(3)** A mighty warrior descended from Issachar (1 Chron. 7:2). **(4)** A descendant of Saul (1 Chron. 9:43), also called “Raphah” (1 Chron. 8:37). **(5)** The son of Hur, he was the ruler of a half-district of Jerusalem who repaired a section of the wall after the exile (Neh. 3:9).

REPHAIM *See* Rephaites.

REPHAIM, VALLEY OF A valley southwest of Jerusalem, marking part of the border between Judah and Benjamin (Josh. 15:5; 18:16). After David became king and took Jerusalem, the Philistines twice encamped in the Valley of Rephaim to attack the city; both times David defeated them (2 Sam. 5:18, 22; cf. 2 Sam. 23:13; 1 Chron. 11:15; 14:9). Isaiah 17:5 refers to gleaning heads of grain in this valley.

Valley of Rephaim

REPHAITES A people group also called the "Anakites" (Deut. 2:11 [NRSV: "Anakim"]). They are described as giants (Deut. 3:11) who made Moses' spies feel like grasshoppers in comparison, and they are associated with the antediluvian Nephilim (Gen. 6:4; Num. 13:33). Thus, the KJV often translates the term as "giants" (e.g., Deut. 2:11; Josh. 12:4).

REPHAN The LXX rendering (Gk. *Raiphan*) of the Hebrew word for "Saturn" (*kiyyun*). Amos accuses the Israelites of worshiping this deity, which contributes to God's decision to send them into exile (Amos 5:26). Stephen quotes this verse in Acts 7:43.

REPHIDIM The location of the final Israelite encampment in their exodus from Egypt before they reached Mount Sinai (Exod. 17:1, 8; 19:2; Num. 33:14–15). Here the Israelites' complaints of thirst resulted in the miraculous provision of water from a rock after Moses struck it with his staff. That grumbling led Moses to call the place "Massah" ("testing") and "Meribah" ("contention"). At Rephidim the Israelites under Joshua also repelled an Amalekite attack, with success dependent on Moses' raised hands supported by Aaron and Hur (Exod. 17:8–16). Wadi Feiran is the traditional location dating back to Byzantine times, though Wadi Refayid in southwest Sinai is also commonly suggested.

REPROACH A reproach is an expression of shame or reviling based on certain behavior or circumstances. In context, reproach may involve one or more of the following: disreputable behavior, circumstances that are shameful or detrimental, a word of reproach, and the dishonor or shame brought by the reproach. The emotional flavor of the word "reproach" is seen in terms used in the contexts of reproach: derision, disgrace, contempt, dishonor, shame, taunt, reviling, curse, terror, proverb, byword. New circumstances may remove a reproach.

- *Disrepute.* Moral deficiency is cause for a rebuke or accusation. The person who is above reproach, or beyond reproach, is of the highest character, possessing integrity that prevents even an accusation. Many NT uses fall into this category in giving criteria for office (1 Tim. 3:2; 5:14; Titus 1:6).
- *Shameful circumstances.* In many passages, these result from God's punishments, but not always. Nahash threatened to gouge out the right eye of each of the men of Jabesh Gilead to bring disgrace (reproach) on Israel (1 Sam. 11:2).
- *Spoken word.* The spoken reproach may be a confrontational rebuke for disreputable behavior. In most occurrences in the OT it is a derogatory saying, like a byword, mocking the person and his or her circumstances. It may also be a taunt or challenge, as when enemies reproach God (2 Kings 19:4).
- *Dishonor or shame.* When this aspect is emphasized, the translation is often "disgrace." It may emphasize the dishonor demonstrated by others or the shame felt by the disgraced person.

REPROBATE In Romans, Paul argues that the necessary precondition for anyone to believe is God's sovereign election, since the human heart is against God. Faith in Christ confirms that one is elect. The Israelites who hardened their hearts and rejected Jesus did so because of their reprobate hearts, proving that they were nonelect (Rom. 9:11–13). Those whom God has rejected and destined to face sin's just deserts are reprobate (Rom. 9:18).

REPTILES

Terminology. The modern scientific category of reptiles (air-breathing, cold-blooded vertebrates) has no precise equivalent in the biblical vocabulary. The Hebrews described creatures by the way they moved, as “crawling things” (*zakhal* [Deut. 32:24; Mic. 7:17]), “creeping things” (*remes* [Gen. 1:25–26]), and “swarming things” (*sherets* [Gen. 7:21]). All these terms, which probably overlapped, included both reptiles and small mammals.

Nakhash (e.g., Gen. 3) is the commonest general term for snakes and other reptiles. Rarer terms are *tannin* (translated “snake” in Exod. 7:9, but more usually meaning a mythical “dragon”) and *sarap* (used, on its own or qualifying *nakhash*, of the fiery serpents in Num. 21:6, 8; Isa. 14:29; 30:6). In Greek, *herpeton* (Acts 10:12; 11:6; Rom. 1:23; James 3:7) includes snakes and lizards, while the generic word for snake is *ophis* (e.g., Matt. 7:10).

Besides these general terms, Scripture mentions the following: (1) the crocodile (*liwyatan*) found in Egypt and Israel and sometimes portrayed in poetry as a mythical monster (Job 3:8; 41:1; Pss. 74:14; 104:26; Isa. 27:1); (2) a variety of lizards, probably including geckos, skinks, and chameleons (Lev. 11:29, 30; Prov. 30:28); (3) a variety of poisonous snakes, including the cobra, or asp (Deut. 32:33; Rom. 3:13), and the viper, or adder (Isa. 59:5; Acts 28:3).

Although tortoises are common in the Middle East, the KJV translation of the Hebrew word *tsab* as “tortoise” in Lev. 11:29 almost certainly is wrong. However, since at least eighty kinds of reptile are found in Israel, precise identifications beyond this are difficult.

Reptiles in the Bible. The snake is an important image in Scripture. It is a snake that tempts Adam and Eve (Gen. 3:1; 2 Cor. 11:3), and in the first promise of salvation God says that the seed of woman will crush the snake’s head (Gen. 3:15). From that moment, the snake is condemned to crawl on its belly and eat dust (Gen. 3:14; Isa. 65:25).

All such crawling creatures were unclean in OT law (Lev. 11:29–31). Although some Middle Eastern snakes are nonpoisonous, the OT always portrays snakes as harmful as well as unclean (Deut. 8:15; 32:24, 33; Job 20:14, 16; Eccles. 10:8, 11; Isa. 30:6; Amos 5:19; Matt. 7:10; Luke 11:11). Because the venom was associated with the snake’s tongue, the snake was a symbol of treacherous, lying speech as well as of physical danger (Gen. 49:17; Pss. 58:4; 140:3; Prov. 23:32; Isa. 14:29; Jer. 8:17; 51:34; Matt. 23:33; Rev. 9:19), shrewdness (Matt. 10:16), and degradation (Mic. 7:17). For snakes to be rendered harmless was a sign of divine intervention (Ps. 91:13) and of the messianic age (Isa. 11:8; Luke 10:19; Mark 16:18). Paul and John identify the snake in Eden with Satan and look forward to his total destruction in the last days (Rom. 16:20; Rev. 12:9–17; 20:2–3).

Snakes feature three times in biblical miracles. First, Aaron’s rod was transformed into a serpent that, when Pharaoh’s magicians replicated the feat, devoured the magicians’ serpents (Exod. 7:10–15; cf. 4:3–4). This would have impressed Pharaoh all the more because the snake was a symbol of the pharaoh’s power. Second, when God sent poisonous snakes to punish the Israelites, who repented, God told Moses to set up a bronze snake on a pole; anyone who looked at the bronze snake (which only much later became an object of idolatry) was saved (Num. 21:6–9; 2 Kings 18:4). This prefigured the cross, on which Christ became a curse for us (John 3:14; 1 Cor. 10:9; Gal. 3:10). Third, Paul was bitten by a snake and suffered no harm (Acts 28:3–6).

REPUTATION A circulating report of one’s actions that are taken to indicate character. Proverbs 25:9–10 warns against betraying a confidence because such action would result in a bad report that one can never escape. Faithfulness, however, results in a good report (e.g., Josh. 6:27; Esther 9:4). According to the OT, reputation motivates God. In Exod. 32:9–14 Moses convinces God to change his mind concerning the destruction of the Israelites by appealing to the report that such an action would generate among the Egyptians. Reputation is also important in the NT. A good reputation is necessary for an overseer of God’s church (1 Tim. 3:7). Yet a reputation may not always indicate upright character (Rev. 3:1; cf. 1 Cor. 4:5).

RESEN A city founded by Nimrod in Assyria, between Nineveh and Calah (Gen. 10:12). It possibly is located in early ruins of Hamam Ali on the right bank of the Tigris River, eight miles south of Nineveh.

RESERVOIR A place to store large amounts of water. Some reservoirs were built aboveground, where the public could access them. Cisterns, which are plaster-lined holding tanks, were built belowground. Rainwater was diverted into cisterns from roofs of homes. Isaiah mentions a reservoir in one of his sermons (Isa. 22:11).

RESHEPH **(1)** A descendant of Ephraim (1 Chron. 7:25). **(2)** A Canaanite god mentioned in the tablets found at Ras Shamra/Ugarit but not mentioned in the Bible.

RESIN *See* Bdellium; Gum, Gum Resin.

RESPECT OF PERSONS Terminology used in the KJV to denote partiality. The NT repeatedly affirms that God is not a respecter of persons; that is, he does not show partiality based on worldly standards or appearances. Peter recognized this when God chose to pour out his Holy Spirit on Gentile believers, not merely Jewish believers (Acts 10:34). God will judge all people, including Christians, with impartiality (Rom. 2:11; Eph. 6:9; Col. 3:25; 1 Pet. 1:17). Since God is not a respecter of persons, those who serve him should not display partiality (Lev. 19:15; Deut. 16:19; Prov. 28:21; James 2:1, 9).

REST *See* Leisure Time; Sabbath.

RESTITUTION An act of restoration in which compensation is given to account for a loss by the person responsible for that loss. As an integral part of community life, restitution protects against the loss of one’s property due to a neighbor’s carelessness or treachery. The Hebrew word is usually a verb and thus is translated “make restitution,” with the root of this word (*shlm*) carrying the connotation of making something or someone complete.

As a part of economic life, restitution is prescribed for directly or indirectly causing someone else to lose his or her possessions. A thief must make restitution (Exod. 22:3). The person who digs a pit and leaves it is responsible for a neighbor’s ox or donkey that falls into it (21:33–34; cf. 22:6). When it is not clear who is responsible for the loss, the judges must decide (22:7–15). If the responsible party cannot be determined or found, then no retribution is required. Requiring retribution falsely would itself require retribution to the falsely accused. The function of retribution is to help protect one’s livelihood (livestock, crops) from loss due to the carelessness or spitefulness of another person in the community who would otherwise have no responsibility to help.

Restitution aims to restore what was lost through equal replacement (an ox for an ox in Exod. 21:36) and can involve matching value monetarily (21:34). However, in the case of theft, restitution is to be higher than equal value. Such cases may involve giving back double, quadruple, or sometimes quintuple of what was taken (22:1, 7), even to the point of selling oneself to pay the debt (22:3). In this way, restitution may also function as a deterrent, especially against theft. Restitution is not the same as retribution, as the aim is not to punish but rather to deter harmful actions and foster restoration between both parties. For Jesus' response to the retributive use of Lev. 24:19–20 (eye for eye, tooth for tooth), see Matt. 5:38–39.

In Num. 5:5–8 and Lev. 6:1–7, acts against one's neighbor are counted as acts against God, thus requiring an additional restitution, one-fifth of the value of the lost property, to be given to the priest along with a guilt offering. In this way, restitution operates not only to restore the owner of lost property, but also to restore the guilty party before God.

RESURRECTION Christ's resurrection is *the* foundational event for the Christian faith. Paul goes so far as to say that if Christ did not rise, then the Christian faith is futile and Christians are to be pitied more than all others (1 Cor. 15:17–19). Resurrection's climaxing position in all four Gospel narratives yields the same understanding. Christ came not merely to die, as some claim, but to conquer death. Resurrection gives everything that Christ did before his death an "of God" significance, and it establishes everything that follows as a guarantee of God's eschatological promises. Without the resurrection, Jesus would have been just another "prophet hopeful" who died a tragic peasant death in Jerusalem. However, as it is, evidenced by the resurrection, he is the Son of God. According to the NT, the resurrection is the triumphant cry that God indeed did come to visit his creation and conquer the power of sin and death.

The Garden Tomb, one of the suggested (though less likely) locations for the burial and resurrection of Jesus

OLD TESTAMENT

Resurrection hope is poorly attested by the OT, especially in earlier sections. References are made to death that seem to indicate that the dead have not ceased to exist, but such passages refer (at best) to death as a shadowy, nonlife existence (Job 26:5; Ps. 88:10; Ezek. 32:21). When early OT texts suggest that certain individuals experience everlasting life, they do so by escaping death altogether. Enoch (Gen. 5:24) walked with God and was simply taken away, while God dramatically picked up Elijah in a chariot of fire (2 Kings 2:11). Saul's attempt at Endor to reawaken Samuel from death to receive his counsel (1 Sam. 28:3–14) speaks more to the superstition and disobedience of Saul than it does to Israel's faith in life after death.

Some OT prophetic texts hint at a corporate restoration of life beyond the grave. It is a promise not of resurrection from death to life for the individual but of God's unceasing love for corporate Israel that ultimately results in the redemption of his people from the snares of death (Hos. 6:1–3; 13:14). Although these texts are difficult to separate from Israel's vision of postexilic national restoration, as in the vision of the valley of dry bones (Ezek. 37:1–14), they do indicate a growing sense of hope that God will restore Israel to renewed life in his presence after death. A similar trend may lie behind Job 14:14, where Job, after affirming the finality of individual death (14:12), still raises the question of a possible life after death. The basis for this notion rests on the affirmation that the living God, Job's gracious redeemer, has power over death and will allow Job to see life after death (Job 19:25–26; cf. Ps. 16:10).

Daniel 12:2, which on the surface looks like a full-fledged teaching on individual resurrection, still falls short as a beneficial comparison to the teaching of Jesus. Although the Pharisees (along with a number of modern interpreters looking for OT foundations for individual resurrection) later used this as a proof text for individual resurrection, its context (Dan. 11) clearly suggests a struggle between nations, to which God eventually will reveal his eternal judgment. God will vindicate his people. Notwithstanding, OT language of eternal awakening to a new reality, good or bad, opens the door for further reflection on God's eternal purpose and how it relates to human experience beyond death.

INTERTESTAMENTAL PERIOD

The speculations of the intertestamental period portray a vast array of philosophical influences that affected the thinking of Second Temple Judaism. The conservative Sadducees, who may have accepted only the Torah as Scripture, understood Sheol (the state or abode of the dead) to be a place of unending sleep and thus denied resurrection (cf. Sir. 17:27–28; 30:17; Acts 23:8). Other groups, such as the Pharisees and the Essenes, were to a greater or lesser extent influenced by Hellenistic thinking on the relationship between spirit and matter. The lack of unity among these groups, especially the Pharisees, created a plethora of understandings concerning resurrection. Some, influenced by the Platonic idea that the soul/spirit is immortal and will be released at the death of the body, turned reflections on the afterlife into an issue of immortality (4 Macc. 14:5; 18:23). Others seem to have affirmed a physical resurrection but restricted it to either Israel or a righteous remnant thereof. This latter perspective easily connected to the view that all would be raised, the unrighteous for punishment, the righteous for reward and bliss.

It proves impossible, therefore, to determine to what extent Christian reflections during the first century influenced Jewish writers rather than vice versa. Sociologically speaking, the early Christians were one of the many parties of Judaism developing during that period. As the Gospels seem to suggest, they interacted, maybe especially, with the Pharisees.

NEW TESTAMENT

The OT's relative silence on the issue of resurrection stands in stark contrast to the central position that it holds in the NT. All four Gospels build their narrative portrayal of Jesus' ministry toward this climaxing event, and Jesus himself argued against the view of the Sadducees (Mark 12:18–27). Beyond the Gospel narratives, Paul makes resurrection the very heart of the Christian faith (1 Cor. 15); Hebrews understands resurrection as part of Christian elementary teaching (Heb. 6:1–2); James plays on the word "raise" as he explains the connection between faith and strength of life (James 5:15); Peter sees resurrection as the basis for Christian hope (1 Pet. 1:3); Revelation details the quality of the resurrected life (Rev. 21–22). In short, every part of the NT affirms the reality of a resurrection after death. It is the climactic evidence that God's kingdom now dwells among people. God brings life; death will no longer have the last word.

The Gospels. The Gospels give four accounts of raisings from the dead. Strictly speaking, these are not resurrections but resuscitations. The people in question are not raised to eternal life but rather are brought back to life in their historical circumstances; they will later die again. The Gospels' intertwining of the raising of Jairus's daughter with the healing of the hemorrhaging woman (Mark 5:21–43 pars.) underscores the conceptual connection between life and God's presence. First-century Judaism had come up bankrupt and could do nothing to help a woman whose bleeding made worship of God impossible. Now, however, life could be restored after death. Even the leader of the worship center, who could do nothing to help this woman, now saw his own daughter raised from the dead.

The raising of the widow's son from Nain (Luke 7:11–17) similarly indicates that the days of the prophet Elijah had returned (1 Kings 17:8–24). God was again visiting his people and bringing life after death. Most spectacularly, Lazarus's raising after four days in the grave (John 11:1–44) speaks directly to God's power to bring life out of death in connection with OT understandings of the afterlife. The emphasis on the four days in the grave, along with Jesus' pronouncement of himself as "resurrection and life" and his application of God's revelatory name ("I am") to himself, make this event stand out as anticipating what is soon to come in full. The same holds true in the unleashing of power at Jesus' death, when graves spring open and the dead are raised (Matt. 27:51–53).

Paul's letters. Paul's teaching on resurrection anchors in eschatology, or vice versa. The reality and finality of death, introduced by Adam's disobedience, are now overcome by Christ through his resurrection (1 Cor. 15:21–22). Christ's resurrection evidences that God has ended death's reign; it heralds the imminent coming of the end, a time when all who belong to Christ will be raised in like manner, and death will be no more (15:23–24).

Although at times Paul uses the language of body, soul, and spirit, he never falls prey to a Platonic dualism that separates body from soul, claiming that only the body dies while the soul remains immortal (1 Tim. 6:15b–16a). Rather, following Hebraic thinking, he understands resurrection as total transformation of the whole person, comparing it to what happens to a seed put in the ground. It must die before something completely new comes up (1 Cor. 15:36). The promise of resurrection is the promise that the death-marked human who is buried will, at the time of resurrection, be transformed and suited to live eternally in God's presence. What is now perishable will become imperishable (1 Cor. 15:42–44). To Paul, this is not about getting rid of matter (the body) that is created by God, but about Christ's restoration of what Adam destroyed (1 Cor. 15:49). It is the same understanding expressed in Rev. 21:1–5a, where John prophesies the transformation of both heaven and earth when God reestablishes his covenant relationship with his people.

Summary. Although the Gospels' presentations of Jesus' resurrection vary in some detail (probably due to purpose and audience), all of them treat the event as *the* theological centerpiece of the Gospel narrative. The resurrection story launches God's eschatological work and opens the door, as the postresurrection appearances show, for a connection between the Jesus story and the church story. It is the foundation both for the Great Commission (Matt. 28:18–20) and for Pentecost (Luke 24:49). All people of all nations can now meet the living Christ.

RETRIBUTION *See* Divine Retribution.

RETURN OF CHRIST *See* Eschatology; Millennium; Parousia; Second Coming.

REU A descendant of Shem, the son of Peleg, the father of Serug, and an ancestor of Abraham and Jesus (Gen. 11:18–21; 1 Chron. 1:25; Luke 3:35).

REUBEN Reuben was the eldest son of Jacob and Leah. In Hebrew his name is a wordplay on "the LORD has seen my misery" (Gen. 29:32), referring to the troubles that Leah felt at not being loved by her husband. Jacob removed his privileges as firstborn son because Reuben slept with Rachel's maidservant Bilhah (Gen. 35:22; 49:3–4). When Jacob's ten sons conspired to kill their brother Joseph, Reuben tried to protect Joseph by suggesting that he be placed in a cistern. Reuben was greatly upset when his brothers sold Joseph to Midianite merchants (Gen. 37:22, 29).

REUBEN, TRIBE OF The tribe descended from Reuben, eldest son of Jacob and Leah. Moses gave permission for the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh to take as their inheritance the land east of the Jordan River, as long as they assisted the other tribes in conquering Canaan (Num. 32). When these three groups built an altar, the rest of Israel approached them to do battle, until it became clear that they were setting up not an alternative place of worship but rather a place of remembrance (Josh. 22).

REUBENITE *See* Reuben, Tribe of.

REUEL **(1)** The son of Esau with his wife Basemath (Gen. 36:4, 10, 13, 17; 1 Chron. 1:35, 37). **(2)** The father or/and perhaps the grandfather of Zipporah, the wife of Moses, also known as Jethro (Exod. 2:18; Num. 10:29). (*See also* Jethro.) **(3)** An ancestor of Meshullam, a Benjamite who lived in Jerusalem during the postexilic period (1 Chron. 9:8). **(4)** The father of Eliasaph, a Gadite who was a leader at the time of Moses (Num. 2:14 [cited as "Deuel" in many manuscripts; cf. Num. 1:14]).

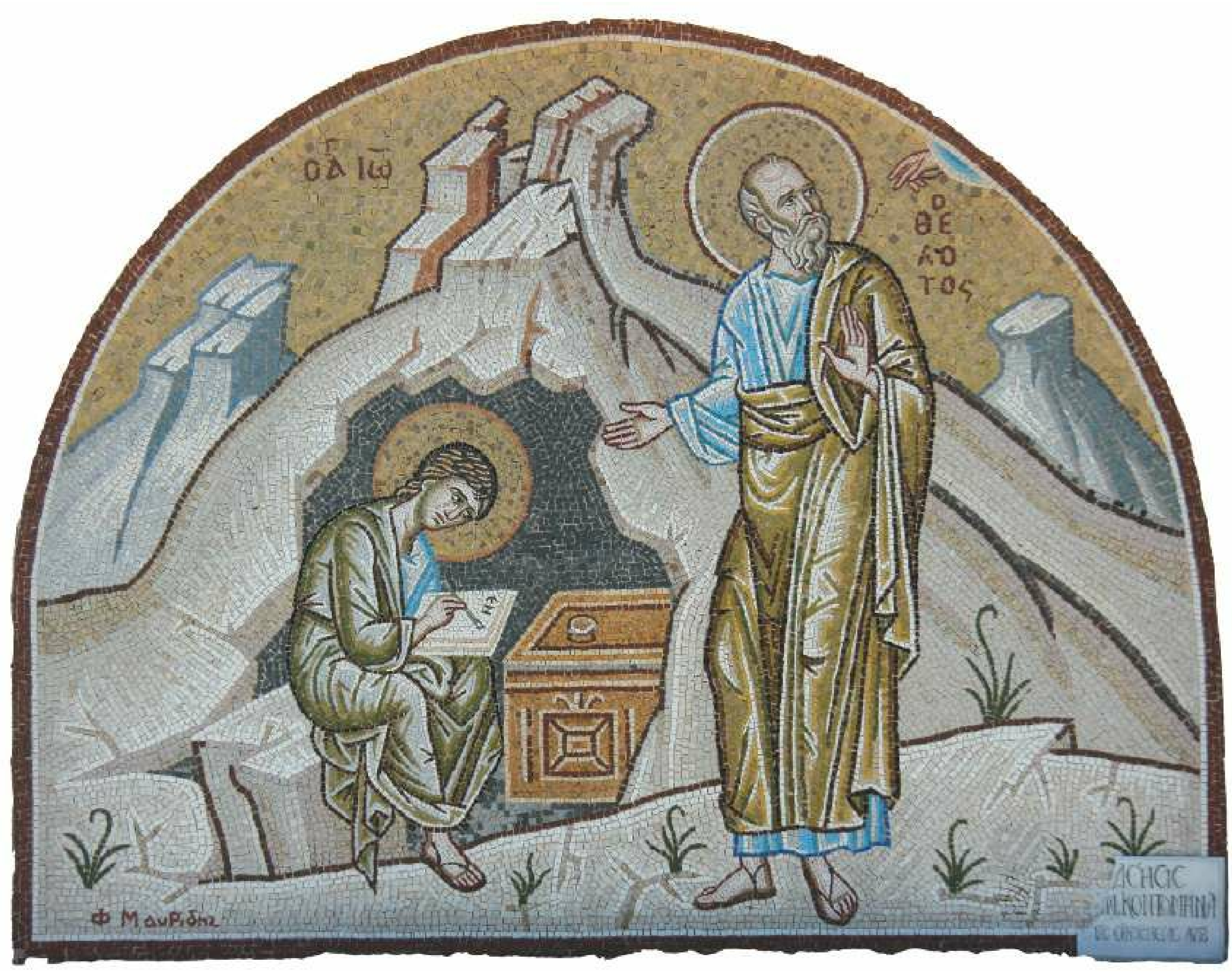
REUMAH The concubine of Nahor, the brother of Abraham (Gen. 22:24).

REVELATION, BOOK OF The final book of the Bible is known by its opening line: "The revelation of Jesus Christ" (1:1 ESV, NRSV, KJV). This phrase could indicate a "revelation *about* Jesus Christ" (the main character), or a "revelation *from* Jesus Christ" (the primary giver of the message to John; so NIV), or, as many believe, some of both.

In powerful language and vivid imagery, Revelation presents the conclusion to God's grand story of salvation, in which he defeats evil, reverses the curse of sin, restores creation, and lives forever among his people. Although the details are often difficult to understand, the main idea of Revelation is clear: God is in control and will successfully accomplish his purposes. In the end, God wins. As a transformative vision, Revelation empowers its readers/listeners to persevere faithfully in a fallen world until their Lord returns.

GENRE AND HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Genre. Revelation is best understood in light of its literary genre and its historical context. The literary genre of Revelation—letter, prophecy, and apocalyptic literature—explains much of the strangeness of the book. The entire book is a single letter to seven churches in Asia Minor (note the letter greeting in 1:4–5 and the benediction in 22:21). John is commanded to write what he sees and send it to the seven churches (1:11). A letter to seven churches is in reality a letter to the whole church, since the number "seven" symbolizes wholeness or completeness in Revelation. NT letters were intended to be read aloud to the gathering of Christians, and the same is true of Revelation. The book opens with a blessing on the one who reads the letter aloud and on those who listen (1:3) and closes with a stern warning to anyone (reader or listener) who changes the book (22:18–19). Like other NT letters, Revelation also addresses a specific situation. For this reason, any approach to Revelation that ignores the situation faced by the seven churches will fail to grasp its central message. Many say that the message of Revelation extends beyond the first century, but it certainly does not ignore its first audience.



This mosaic showing the apostle John recording his visions is above the entrance to the Cave of the

Revelation is also a letter that is prophetic. In both the opening (1:3) and the closing (22:7, 10, 18–19), the book is described as a "prophecy" (cf. 19:10). In 22:9 the angel identifies John as a prophet: "I am a fellow servant with you and with your fellow prophets." As a prophetic book in line with OT prophetic books, Revelation contains both prediction about the future and proclamation about God's will for the present, with emphasis falling on the latter.

Finally, Revelation is a prophetic letter that is apocalyptic. In the opening phrase, "the revelation of Jesus Christ," the term "revelation" is a translation of the Greek term *apokalypsis*, meaning "to unveil" or "to reveal" what has been hidden. Most believe that apocalyptic literature grew out of Hebrew prophecy. The OT books of Daniel and Zechariah are often associated with apocalyptic literature, and there were many Jewish apocalypses written during the time between the Testaments (e.g., *1–2 Enoch*, *2–3 Baruch*, *4 Ezra*).

In apocalyptic literature there is a revelation from God to some well-known human figure through a heavenly intermediary. God promises to intervene in human history, to defeat evil, and to establish his rightful rule. Such is the case with Revelation, which assumes a situation where God's people are threatened by hostile powers. God is portrayed as sovereign, and he promises to intervene soon to destroy evil. Through bizarre visions and imagery common to apocalyptic literature, those who hear Revelation are transported to another world for much-needed heavenly perspective. As the hearers move outside their hopeless circumstances and see God winning the war against evil, their perspective is reshaped, and they are empowered to persevere faithfully. They are simultaneously called to live holy and blameless lives as they worship the one, true God.

Historical context. Along with understanding the literary genre of Revelation, one must grasp its historical context in order to read the book responsibly. Revelation itself describes a historical situation where some Christians are suffering for their faith with the real possibility that the suffering could become more intense and widespread. John himself has been exiled to the island of Patmos because of his witness for Jesus (1:9). Antipas, a Christian in Pergamum, has been put to death for his faith (2:13). In his message to the church at Smyrna, Jesus indicates that they should not be surprised by what they are about to suffer (2:10). The book also includes several references to pagan powers shedding the blood of God's people (6:10; 16:6; 17:6; 18:24; 19:2). Revelation addresses a situation in which pagan political power has formed a partnership with false religion. Those who claim to follow Christ are facing mounting pressure to conform to this ungodly partnership at the expense of loyalty to Christ.

The two primary possibilities for the date of Revelation are a time shortly after the death of Nero (AD 68–69) or a date near the end of Domitian's reign (AD 95). Although there is solid evidence for both dates, the majority opinion at present favors a date during the reign of Domitian, when persecution threatened to spread across the Roman Empire. The imperial cult (i.e., the worship of the Roman emperor) was a powerful force to be reckoned with primarily because it united religious, political, social, and economic elements into a single force. As chapters 2–3 indicate, not every Christian was remaining faithful in this difficult environment. Some were compromising in order to avoid religious or economic persecution. Revelation has a pointed message for those who are standing strong as well as for those who are compromising, and this central message ties into the overall purpose of the book.

PURPOSE AND INTERPRETATION

The overall purpose of Revelation is to comfort those who are facing persecution and to warn those who are compromising with the world system. During times of oppression, the righteous suffer and the wicked seem to prosper. This raises the question "Who is Lord?" Revelation says that Jesus is Lord in spite of how things appear, and he will return soon to establish his eternal kingdom. Those facing persecution find hope through a renewed perspective, and those who are compromising are warned to repent. Revelation's goal is to transform the audience to follow Jesus faithfully.

There are five main theories about how Revelation should be interpreted: preterist, historicist, futurist, idealist, and eclectic. The preterist theory views Revelation as relating only to the time in which John lived rather than to any future period. John communicates to first-century readers how God plans to deliver them from the wickedness of the Roman Empire. The historicist theory argues that Revelation gives an overview of the major movements of church history from the first century until the return of Christ. The futurist theory claims that most of Revelation (usually chaps. 4–22) deals with a future time just before the end of history. The idealist theory maintains that Revelation is a symbolic portrayal of the ongoing conflict between good and evil. Revelation offers timeless spiritual truths to encourage Christians of all ages. The eclectic theory combines the strengths of several of the other theories (e.g., a message to the original audience, a timeless spiritual message, and some future fulfillment), while avoiding their weaknesses.

OUTLINE AND STRUCTURE

There have been many attempts to understand how Revelation is organized. Some see a threefold structure based on 1:19:

What you have seen (past) (1:1–20)
What is now (present) (2:1–3:21)
What will take place later (future) (4:1–22:21)

Others see the book organized around seven dramatic scenes with interludes occurring throughout:

Prologue (1:1–8)
Act 1: Seven Oracles (1:9–3:22)
Act 2: Seven Seals (6:1–17)
Act 3: Seven Trumpets (8:1–9:21)
Act 4: Seven Signs (12:1–14:20)
Act 5: Seven Bowls (16:1–21)
Act 6: Seven Visions (19:1–20:15)
Act 7: Seven Prophecies (21:2–22:17)
Epilogue (22:18–21)

The following outline provides an overview of Revelation in ten stages:

I. Introduction (1:1–20)

II. Messages to the Seven Churches (2:1–3:22)

III. Vision of the Heavenly Throne Room (4:1–5:14)

IV. Opening of the Seven Seals (6:1–8:1)

V. Sounding of the Seven Trumpets (8:2–11:19)

VI. The People of God versus the Powers of Evil (12:1–14:20)

VII. Pouring Out of the Seven Bowls (15:1–16:21)

VIII. Judgment and Fall of Babylon (17:1–19:5)

IX. God's Ultimate Victory (19:6–22:5)

X. Conclusion (22:6–21)

I. Introduction (1:1–20). Chapter 1 includes both a prologue (1:1–8) and John's commission to write what he sees (1:9–20). John's vision focuses on the risen, glorified Christ and his continued presence among the seven churches.

II. Messages to the seven churches (2:1–3:22). Chapters 2–3 contain messages to seven churches of Asia Minor: Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea. The seven messages follow a similar literary pattern: a description of Jesus, a commendation, an accusation, an exhortation coupled with either warning or encouragement, an admonition to listen, and a promise to those who overcome. These messages reflect the twin dangers faced by the church: persecution and compromise.

III. Vision of the heavenly throne room (4:1–5:14). In chapters 4–5 the scene shifts to the heavenly throne room, where God reigns in majestic power. All of heaven worships the Creator and the Lion-Lamb (Jesus), who alone is qualified to open the scroll because of his sacrificial death.

IV. Opening of the seven seals (6:1–8:1). The unveiling of God's ultimate victory formally begins here. This section begins the first of a series of three judgment visions (seals, trumpets, and bowls), with seven elements each. When the sixth seal is opened, the question is asked, "Who can withstand it?" Chapter 7 provides the answer with its two visions of God's people; only those belonging to God can withstand the outpouring of the Lamb's wrath.

V. Sounding of the seven trumpets (8:2–11:19). The trumpet judgments, patterned after the plagues of Egypt, reveal God's judgment upon a wicked world. Again, before the seventh element in the series, there is an interval with two visions (10:1–11; 11:1–14) that instruct and encourage God's people.

VI. The people of God versus the powers of evil (12:1–14:20). Chapter 12 offers the main reason why God's people face hostility in this world. They are caught up in the larger conflict between God and Satan (the dragon). Although Satan was defeated by the death and resurrection of Christ, he continues to oppose the people of God. Chapter 13 introduces Satan's two agents: the beast from the sea and the beast from the earth. The dragon and the two beasts constitute an unholy trinity bent on seducing and destroying God's people. As another interval, chapter 14 offers a glimpse of the final future that God has in store for his people. One day the Lamb and his followers will stand on Mount Zion and sing a new song of redemption.

VII. Pouring out of the seven bowls (15:1–16:21). The seven golden bowls follow the trumpets and seals as the final series of seven judgments. As the bowls of God's wrath are poured out on an unrepentant world, the plagues are devastating indicators of God's anger toward sin and evil. The only response from the "earth dwellers" (MSG; NIV: "inhabitants of the earth" [17:2, 8]; this is a common term in Revelation for unbelievers) is to curse God rather than repent (16:9, 11, 21).

VIII. Judgment and fall of Babylon (17:1–19:5). This section depicts the death of Babylon, a pagan power said to be “drunk with the blood of God’s holy people, the blood of those who bore testimony to Jesus” (17:6). The funeral laments for the deceased Babylon of chapter 18 give way to a celebration as God’s people rejoice over Babylon’s downfall (19:1–5).

IX. God’s ultimate victory (19:6–22:5). This climactic section describes God’s ultimate victory over evil and the final reward for the people of God. This scene includes the return of Christ for his bride (19:6–16), Christ’s defeat of the two beasts and their allies (19:17–21), the binding of Satan and the millennial reign (20:1–6), the final defeat of Satan (20:7–10), and the final judgment and the death of death itself (20:11–15). Chapter 21 features a description of the new heaven and new earth, where God’s long-standing promise to live among his people is fully realized.

X. Conclusion (22:6–21). Revelation closes with final blessings for those who heed the message of the book and warnings for those who do not. Jesus’ promise to return soon is met with John’s prayer, “Come, Lord Jesus” (22:20).

CHARACTERS AND THEMES

The foregoing outlines are helpful for understanding Revelation, but perhaps an even better way to grasp the message of the book is to look closely at its main characters and story line. The following seven themes capture the overall theological message of this dynamic prophetic-apocalyptic letter.

1. God. Revelation presents God as a central character in the story. He is sovereign and firmly in control of history, as his description from 1:4–8 suggests: “the Alpha and the Omega” (the beginning and the end), “the one who is, and who was, and who is to come” (God of the past, the present, and the future), and “the Lord God, . . . the Almighty” (ruler over the universe). The throne room vision of chapters 4–5 also clearly asserts God’s sovereign rule. The throne of God itself stands as a central symbol in the book, representing God’s sovereignty over all things. As a main character, God rightly receives worship. He is worshiped because he is the creator (e.g., 4:11; 14:7) and the righteous judge who condemns evil and vindicates his people (15:3–4; 16:5–7; 19:1–2). Revelation also describes God as one who desires to be fully and intimately present with his people. God cares for and protects his people (e.g., 7:2–3; 14:1; 21:4). As the book closes, God announces the fulfillment of his long-standing promise to live among his people (21:6–7; cf. Exod. 29:45–46; Lev. 26:11–12). God’s children have unhindered access to their loving Father as they serve him, see his face, and bear his name—all in his presence (22:1–5).

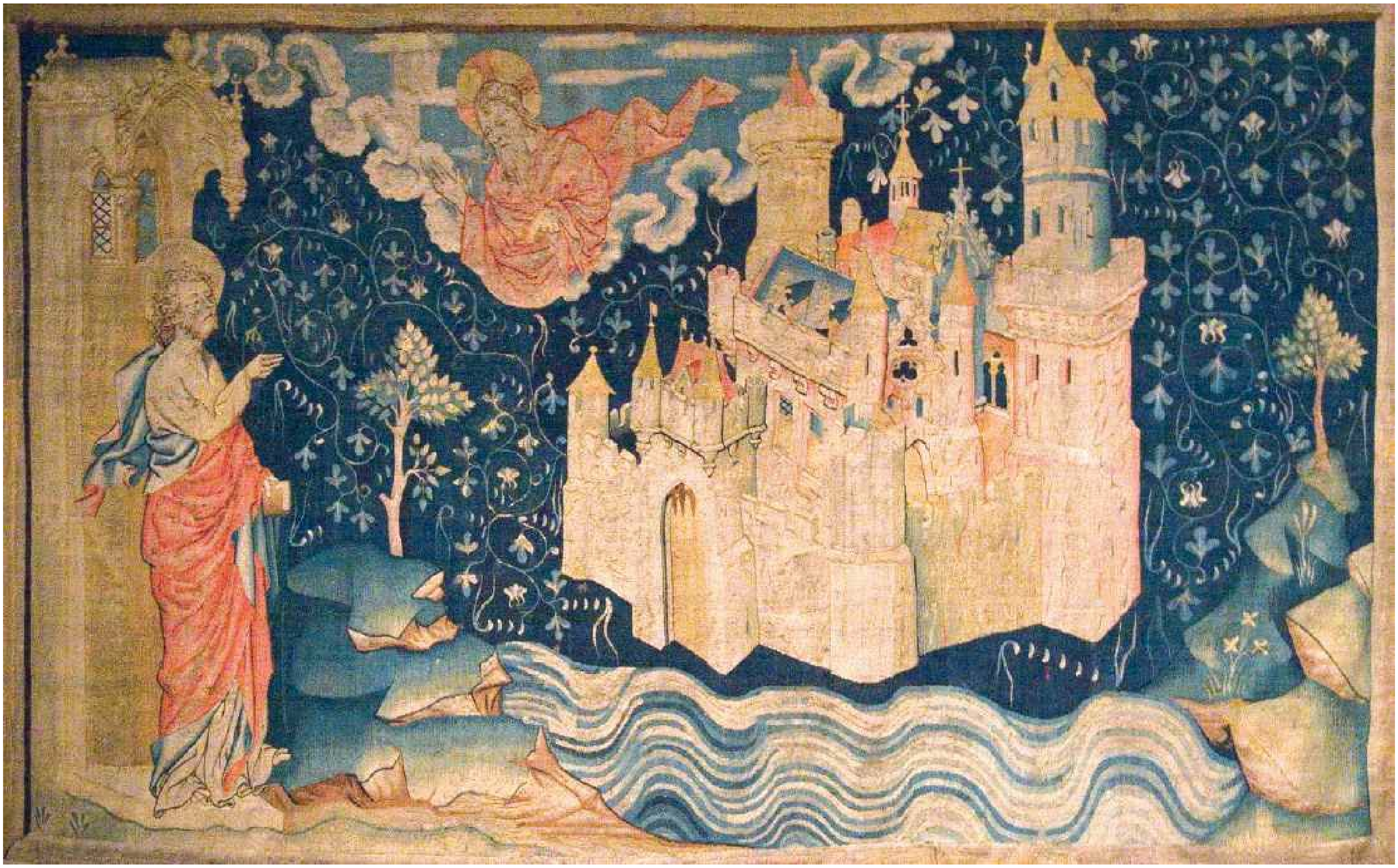
2. God’s enemies. Although God reigns supreme, he has enemies who oppose him and his people. As God’s chief enemy, Satan (also known as the dragon, the devil, the serpent, the accuser) works through worldly systems with the intent of thwarting God’s plan. Chapter 12 summarizes this cosmic conflict. In that scene, God defeats the dragon, who then turns his anger against the woman and the rest of her offspring. The dragon’s evil partners include the beast from the sea (traditionally called the “antichrist”) and the beast from the earth (the “false prophet”). The first beast often has been identified with Rome, the dominant pagan power in the first century, although the reference likely extends beyond Rome to any political-economic power that demands absolute allegiance (see 13:1–8; 19:19–20; 20:10). The second beast uses miraculous signs to deceive people into worshiping the first beast. This opponent represents religious power organized in support of the first beast (13:11–18; 19:20; 20:10). The dragon, the beast from the sea, and the false prophet constitute the unholy trinity. God’s enemies also include people (usually called the “inhabitants of the earth”) who follow the beast (13:8, 12), indulge in the ways of this world (17:2), and persecute believers (6:10; 11:10).

3. The Lamb of God. Jesus, the Lamb of God, plays a central role in God's redemptive plan. In Revelation the Lamb is clearly identified as a divine figure who shares in the authority, glory, and worship reserved for God (5:6, 9–14; 7:10, 17; 12:10; 21:22–23; 22:1, 3). Expressions that refer to God are also used of Jesus, thereby affirming Jesus' deity (e.g., "Alpha and Omega," "Lord" [see also 1:4–5]). Revelation highlights the Lamb's sacrificial death as the key to his victory over evil, paradoxical though it may be (1:5, 18; 5:9). As the slaughtered yet risen Lamb (1:17–18), Jesus is able to identify with his suffering people (1:9; 12:17; 20:4). The Lamb promises to return as the warrior-judge to defeat God's enemies and rescue God's people (1:7; 3:11; 16:15; 19:11–21). The famous battle with the forces of evil is recorded in 19:20: "But the beast was captured, and with it the false prophet." The two beasts are then condemned to the lake of fire, and their followers become the banquet meal for the birds of prey.

4. God's people. The people of God figure prominently in the book of Revelation. John uses a variety of terms and images to portray God's people (e.g., church, saints, great multitude, bride of the Lamb, new Jerusalem). These people have been redeemed by the Lamb, and they continue to rely upon his sacrificial death in spite of opposition (1:5; 5:9; 14:3–4). They are a genuinely multicultural people, as indicated by the seven uses of a fourfold formula: every "tribe, language, people, and nation" (5:9; 7:9; 11:9; 13:7; 14:6; cf. 17:15). They are also a persecuted people (1:9; 2:9–10; 7:14; 11:9–10; 12:10; 13:16–17) and at times even a martyred people (6:9–11; 16:6; 17:6; 18:24; 19:2; 20:4). Throughout Revelation, God's people are characterized as those who obey the commandments of God (1:2, 9; 6:9; 12:17; 14:12; 20:4; 22:9) and who hold fast to the testimony of Jesus (1:2, 9; 6:9; 12:17; 19:10; 20:4). They are a tempted people who are warned throughout the book to endure in faith (13:10; 14:12; 18:4). Like their Savior, they conquer evil by holding fast to their confession even to the point of death (12:11).

5. God's judgment. God's judgment of evil plays a crucial role in the book. The central section of Revelation contains three series of seven judgments: the seals (6:1–8:1), the trumpets (8:2–11:19), and the bowls (15:1–16:21). God sends these plagues on his enemies to demonstrate his power and to vindicate his people. These images of judgment also encourage repentance and remind people that God will win the battle against evil. Using two images of judgment—the grain harvest (14:14–16) and the winepress (14:17–20)—chapter 14 presents a clear choice: fear and glorify God (14:7) or face God's inescapable and eternal judgment (14:11, 19). God's final judgment on "Babylon the great, the mother of prostitutes" is reported in 17:1–19:6. Babylon represents the worldly system that has blasphemed God and persecuted his people. God's final judgment of the satanic trinity, their followers, and death itself is described in 19:11–21; 20:7–15. Evil has been destroyed, preparing the way for the restoration of creation.

6. The paradise of God. The story culminates in God's ultimate restoration of his people and his creation—the paradise of God. What God began to do in Gen. 1–2 he now completes in Rev. 21–22. The river of life replaces the sea. The tree of life supplies food for all. God's throne as a symbol of God's sovereign rule over all reality serves as the source of life. God has kept his promise to conquer his enemies, vindicate his people, and restore his creation. The Abrahamic covenant of Gen. 12, that God would bless "all peoples on earth" (v. 3), is fulfilled as the tree of life provides healing for the nations (Rev. 22:2). The new heaven and new earth is identified primarily as the place where God lives among his people (22:4). In the paradise of God there will be no more Satan or sin or death or evil of any kind. God's people will bask in his glory and respond in worship.



The new Jerusalem, from the Apocalypse Tapestries (fourteenth century AD)

7. The present struggle. A final theme of Revelation is the believer's struggle to live out God's story in the present. The Lamb's followers rely upon the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus for their victory, but they continue to live in enemy territory. They long for the new heaven and new earth, but they must wage war in the present against the forces of evil. Jesus challenges the seven churches to "overcome" or "conquer," a requirement for inheriting his promises of eternal life, provision, justice, victory, and the presence of God (21:7). A voice from heaven summarizes what it means to overcome: "They [Christians] triumphed over him [Satan] by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death" (12:11).

They triumph in the same way that Jesus triumphed: victory through faithfulness, even if it includes suffering. This calls for rejecting false teaching, resisting idolatry, living righteously, and refusing to compromise. Triumphing includes authentic faith that results in obedience to Jesus. Above all, to triumph or overcome means to follow the Lamb.

These seven themes of Revelation reveal how the book offers hope to those who are suffering for the cause of Christ and warning to those who are compromising with the world. Revelation presents the final chapter in God's grand plan to defeat evil, reverse the curse of sin, transform creation, and live forever among his people. For first-century readers or twenty-first-century readers, Revelation offers a dramatic and empowering vision of what it means to follow Jesus.

REVELATION OF GOD God is the all-powerful, all-knowing, morally perfect creator of the universe; and we are his creatures—no less, but also no more. Thus, an unimaginable distance must exist between God and us; and this fact has led some theologians to despair of knowing anything about him for sure, not even that he actually has these attributes of deity. It might seem, furthermore, that some biblical texts encourage such a view. Psalm 92:5 recognizes the distance: "How great are your works, O LORD, how profound your thoughts!" Psalm 145:3 says that "no one can fathom" God's greatness. According to Ps. 147:5, "Great is our Lord and mighty in power; his understanding has no limit." In Ps. 139:6, David tries to comprehend God's perfect insight and concludes, "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain." The doxology of Rom. 11:33–36 exults in the uniqueness of God: "Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out!" In Isa. 55:9, God says, "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts higher than your thoughts." Based on these passages and others, and knowing what the difference between creator and creature must generally imply, one might suspect that we can know nothing of substance about God.

In fact, however, the biblical writers tell a different story, being cautiously optimistic about theology's prospects. On the one hand, they note our creaturely limitations and God's transcendence, as seen above. We cannot fully comprehend our Creator. We never will, not even through the eons of eternity. God will always have something more to show us about himself, more that we can learn and adore. In that sense, the biblical writers are cautious about what theology can grasp. On the other hand, we must be able to learn some things about God; otherwise, the Scriptures themselves would not exist, since they tell us about God and much else besides. Divine omnipotence, therefore, includes the ability to produce in us adequate theological understanding. We always lean on God, and no one understands him at all apart from his initiative. He remains sovereign over this event, as with any other. But God has made himself known in two general ways, according to Scripture.

GENERAL AND SPECIAL REVELATION

First, the biblical writers expect each of us to grasp something of God's nature, based on what is called "general revelation." General revelation operates in a broadcasted way, so to speak, relying upon commonplace experience and the latter's God-given ability to make us aware of his existence and nature. We all see the heavens that "declare the glory of God" (Ps. 19:1). Paul argues that every person can detect the "invisible qualities" of God, his "eternal power and divine nature," in what he has created, so that we have no excuse for decadent theology and behavior (Rom. 1:20). The law of God is "written on [our] hearts" (Rom. 2:15), so that we grasp what we owe to him and each other. Even though God has not spoken directly to every nation, "he has not left himself without testimony"; he has shown all people "kindness by giving [them] rain from heaven and crops in their seasons" (Acts 14:17). We can learn some things about God from these sources given to us, and thus we are accountable for right conduct in relationship to them. However, general revelation lacks the detail and assurance of what is called "special revelation."

Special revelation differs from general revelation in having a target audience. It conveys information about God, human beings, and our world that cannot be deduced from everyday, highly accessible experience. Jesus suffered for our sins. Our trust in his death on the cross will save us. God is a Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, though there is one God. Christ will return in power and glory to judge all nations. We can think of God as our heavenly Father, a morally perfect deity who cares about the individual person. The Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness as we wonder how to pray. God is always sovereign, even over the wicked deeds of human beings and the suffering that they cause. These are essential points of Christian doctrine. Yet we cannot substantiate any of them by carefully observing ourselves, our world, or the facts of history. Indeed, sometimes our own thoughts lead us to resist these claims because they entail great mysteries. One can easily (but wrongly) equate “I do not understand this” with “This is false.” Thus, our knowledge of these doctrines rests upon God’s willingness to speak and our readiness to hear what he says with humility and trust, without having all our questions answered. The vehicle for this latter kind of knowledge is called “special revelation.”

All revelation is “special,” simply because we can learn nothing about God apart from his self-disclosure. However, theologians use the technical term “special revelation” to capture the idea that God has revealed some matters of doctrine only to specific people, with the expectation that they will preach these truths to others as he requires them to do. These doctrinal matters include the claims given above concerning some aspects of God’s nature, his attitude toward human beings, the plan of salvation, and so forth. Thus, the Bible is special revelation par excellence; likewise, the preaching of prophets, Jesus, and then his chosen apostles (to list them in chronological order) is special revelation. Of course, since we do not have access to prophetic teaching and the life and words of Christ apart from Scripture, the latter is our sole source of special revelation. We cannot now see and hear Jesus as his first-century observers did, but we encounter him as the incarnate Word through the inerrant written word of Scripture. Theology, therefore, concerns what the Bible says about God, humanity, Christ, and so forth, and it looks to general revelation, if at all, merely to corroborate or illustrate what Scripture substantiates. Likewise, the promises of God to bless the preaching of his truth attach to special revelation rather than to what one might glean from other sources (Isa. 55:11).

THE BIBLE AS SPECIAL REVELATION

The Bible stands alone in revealing who God is and showing what pleases him. Its exact contents were ordained by God through inspiration. Scripture is “God-breathed” (2 Tim. 3:16), having been produced when people “spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit” (2 Pet. 1:21). Consequently, even though prophecy occurs in NT churches (1 Cor. 14), it is not received there as the unchallengeable teaching of OT prophets, Jesus, or his apostles. Rather, observers are to weigh carefully what prophets say (1 Cor. 14:29). John expressly warns of false prophecy in the churches: “Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world” (1 John 4:1). These facts should lead one to be cautious in using such phrases as “God told me that . . . ” and in urging other Christians to act upon anyone’s private sensations of being led by the Spirit, absent any objective reasons for doing so. Prophecy given by the Holy Spirit today should involve the application of biblical truth to present challenges and opportunities. The same principle applies to subjective promptings from the Holy Spirit. They should apply received doctrine without revising it and must always be tested by the church.

The sixty-six books of the Bible were written by real people, living in concrete historical settings, and using ordinary language. Yet they intend to speak of heavenly things and of a holy God. Consequently, theologians face the challenge of “seeing through” the Bible’s figurative statements and artistic forms to the truths they convey, but without landing in unhelpful abstractions. Most people who read the book of Exodus assume that God does not have an actual “arm” to outstretch (6:6) or a “face” that one may not see and live (33:23). But Moses chose these words to reveal something about God, and thus we have to ask how far the analogy goes and to what degree it reaches down to our human level of understanding. We know that God must somehow “talk down” to us, using our own language, even as he gives us historical and theological claims having real content. Balancing these two realities—the "otherness" of God and the earthiness of the written, human word that reveals him—is the delicate task of exegesis.

The interpreter must also negotiate the various kinds or genres of literature found in the Bible, especially the ones that seem most alien to our own ways of communicating. Our own documents do not (usually) feature the elaborate images of the book of Revelation or the structures of Hebrew poetry found in the Psalter, and we do not live in the first-century world. Therefore, to read the Scriptures correctly, we must become culturally literate, so that we see our texts through ancient Near Eastern and Greco-Roman eyes. These fields are studied with care, based on the assumption that the Bible's forms of literature were customary for their own time. They were not entirely strange to their original audiences. Thus, they can become less strange to us; and since the Bible is fully human as well as fully divine, reading its pages through the appropriate cultural lenses will give us access to what the Spirit says to the churches.

HUMAN LIMITATIONS

An analysis of general and special revelation should consider the so-called noetic effects of sin—that is, the effects that sin has upon our ability to reason and to learn. Human beings were created in the image of God (Gen. 1:26–27), having the capacity to interact with their Creator. They bear some "family resemblance" to God, notwithstanding their materiality and finitude. But when Adam and Eve sinned, they corrupted themselves and their descendants, so much so that Paul can describe them as being enslaved to sin and death (Rom. 5–6). Since the fall, the biblical writers have proclaimed the blindness of human beings to the things of God. All people are "under the power of sin," and "there is no one who understands" (Rom. 3:9–11). In Eph. 2:1–3 Paul describes unrepentant sinners as being "dead in [their] transgressions and sins," so that they follow carnal "desires and thoughts." Even someone as naturally qualified as Nicodemus fails to see who Jesus is apart from the sovereign power of the Holy Spirit (John 3:1–15). Fallen human beings do not see what they ought to see and grasp what they ought to grasp. They can even say in their hearts, "There is no God" (Ps. 14:1).

Human beings do not have 20/20 intellectual vision, and our desires are corrupted. Consequently, we do not benefit from God's self-revelation as Adam did, not to mention the glorified Christian who knows fully (1 Cor. 13:12). In some cases, the sinner does not want to acknowledge the disclosures of God and thus does not perceive them. Habitual sin and doctrinal innovation can "sear" the conscience as with an iron, making "hypocritical liars" impervious to sound teaching (1 Tim. 4:2). Although the heavens declare the glory of God, and although "in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son" (Heb. 1:2), fallen human beings will not grasp these truths. Yet they remain accountable to God because the disabling wounds of sin are self-inflicted. Even the demons of Scripture, who identify Jesus accurately, recoil from what they clearly perceive (Matt. 8:29; Mark 3:11; 5:7), as do the Pharisees who attribute the Spirit's work to Beelzebul (Matt. 12:22–32). In these cases, the difficulty is not cognitive but affective. Character becomes intellectual destiny.

The world abounds with religious viewpoints, each one claiming to reveal how it works and what constitutes the good life. It is also unlikely that each of them contains only false statements and no true ones. On the contrary, the major rivals to Christianity gain some converts, we may assume, by including fractions of truth and addressing some perceived human needs. Islam is not wrong in its rejection of polytheism and idolatry. Buddhism is right in its belief that suffering raises key philosophical questions. However, we should avoid saying that God has actually revealed something of his nature through these sources, as if their existence were a subset of general revelation. Paul may note the Athenians' religiosity and illustrate a point by quoting one of their poets (Acts 17:22, 28), but his overall polemic makes it clear that he views their ideas as mistaken responses to general revelation. Similar remarks would apply to cults that mix some orthodoxy, based on Scripture, with enough error to pervert the whole. God is not speaking indistinctly through them; rather, they are mishandling what he has said through the biblical writers. In this sense, therefore, the Bible stands alone as the unique word of God.

REVELRY Boisterous merrymaking. Although God often commands his people to rejoice, be glad, and celebrate (e.g., Deut. 16:14; Zeph. 3:14), revelry differs in its excess, attitude, and associations. It is connected with idolatry (Exod. 32:6; 1 Cor. 10:7), pride (Zeph. 3:11), self-indulgence (2 Pet. 2:13), and a carpe diem attitude (Isa. 22:13), and is notably lacking after God's judgment (Isa. 22:2; 23:7, 12; 24:8; 32:12; Zeph. 2:15). The KJV uses the term "revellings" as a work of the flesh (Gal. 5:21) and as an example of Gentile behavior (1 Pet. 4:3), where modern translations generally have "orgies" (NIV, ESV) or "carousing" (NASB).

REVENGE, REVENGER *See* Avenger.

REVERENCE Closely related to honor and respect and often translating the Hebrew and Greek words for "fear," reverence is directed primarily toward the sacred or divine, such as God's sanctuary (Lev. 19:30; 26:2), the temple (Ps. 5:7), God's name (Rev. 11:18), God himself (Dan. 6:26; Mal. 2:5), and his messengers, the angel of the Lord (Josh. 5:14), and Peter (Acts 10:25). Reverence for God motivates behavior that honors him, such as just governance (Neh. 5:15), mutual submission (Eph. 5:21), purity (2 Cor. 7:1), and obedience (Col. 3:22). It is an attitude of acceptable worship (Heb. 12:28), connected with humility (Jer. 44:10), which may win over unbelievers (1 Pet. 3:2).

REZEPH A city conquered by the Assyrians and used in a letter from their king to warn Hezekiah of a similar fate (2 Kings 19:12; Isa. 37:12; cf. 2 Kings 18:33–34). Assyrian texts mention this city and its governors in 839–673 BC. It was likely the Assyrian provincial capital on the road from Harran to Palmyra, south of the Euphrates at modern Rezzafeh.

REZIA *See* Rizia.

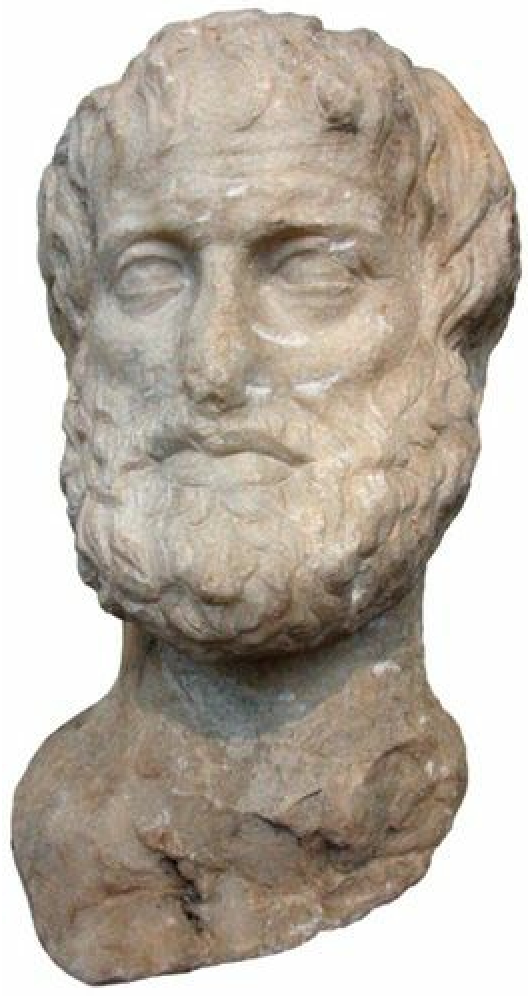
REZIN **(1)** The king of Aram who in 733 BC, accompanied by King Pekah of Israel, invaded Judah and threatened Jerusalem during the reign of King Ahaz of Judah. Ignoring the advice of the prophet Isaiah, Ahaz enlisted the support of King Tiglath-pileser III of Assyria. See 2 Kings 15:37–16:9; Isa. 7:1–9. **(2)** One of the ancestors of the temple servants who returned to Judah from the Babylonian captivity under the leadership of Zerubbabel in 539 BC or soon after (Ezra 2:48; Neh. 7:50).

REZON The name, or possibly the title, of an official of King Hadadezer of Zobah. He left Zobah to lead a band of rebels to take control of Damascus and become the ruler of Aram and an adversary of Solomon (1 Kings 11:23–25).

RHEGIUM A port city of Greek influence on the Strait of Messina at the southern tip of Italy, across from Sicily (modern Reggio di Calabria). Paul's ship docked there overnight en route to Rome (Acts 28:13). It was the last stop before docking at Puteoli and embarking by land to Rome.

RHESA An otherwise unknown postexilic ancestor of Jesus mentioned only in Luke 3:27 as the son of Zerubbabel and the father of Joanan.

RHETORIC Rhetoric is the process by which people influence others for good through the use of language, images, symbols, and metaphors. Aristotle (384–322 BC) defined rhetoric as the discovery of the available means of persuasion in any given situation. Quintilian (c. AD 35–95) defined rhetoric as a good person speaking well. Rhetoric is the study of how others are influenced for good. The rhetorician directs others toward noble beliefs and actions that enable them to best meet their goals and enhance the life of the community in which they live.



The philosopher Aristotle, author of a treatise on rhetoric

Biblical scholars now acknowledge that rhetoric is inherent in Scripture. Rhetoric deals with discovering and addressing concerns, issues, and problems in a particular setting. Each book of the Bible is written to a specific context and audience. Therefore, the authors, intentionally or not, systematically or not, use rhetoric to communicate their message.

Yet because of Paul's statement to the Corinthians, some conclude that Paul and Scripture oppose rhetoric. Paul writes, "I came to you in weakness. . . . My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, so that y

On the one hand, Paul is opposed to the rhetoric of his opponents, who engage in sophistry and use rhetoric solely to pursue status and recognition. On the other hand, Paul is well versed in the principles of Greco-Roman rhetoric and uses rhetoric, but in a different way and with different motives. His rhetoric is tempered by the gospel message rather than by audience expectations or concern for status. The message of God's love determines the parameters of Paul's rhetoric.

Since the late 1960s, scholars have used the discipline of rhetoric to study biblical texts. Rhetorical criticism enables scholars to explore in greater depth the unique features of a text. Form criticism identified the "pure" form of a text, but it could not see its particularity. It abstracted texts, detaching them from their historical context and audience. Initially used as a means of attaching a text more closely to its historical and sociological setting, rhetorical criticism now focuses primarily on the synchronic and intrinsic dimensions of a text. Though the interpretive goal of rhetorical criticism is not to seek a singular meaning for a text, neither does it hold that a text can mean whatever the interpreter or reader wants it to mean. The interpretive constraints of rhetorical criticism are limited by a text's form and content in its context. Thus, rhetorical criticism is a study of texts that seeks to identify the ways in which such texts influence readers in a particular setting.

Because rhetoric is a means of discovering ways to influence others for the good, it can also serve as a hermeneutical tool for studying biblical texts. Both of these uses fall under an even larger umbrella of purpose. In its fullest sense, rhetoric is a resource employed in the pursuit of knowledge and truth. Rhetoric is most at home when engaged as a heuristic source to aid in discovering truth and understanding, not in distorting them. Rhetoric does not possess an independent reality of its own but rather exists imbedded in the reality of truth and knowledge. Stanley Fish, an important scholar of rhetoric, compares rhetoric to a physician. It is the physician's job to diagnose a particular problem in a particular situation and prescribe the best course of action to take for that person. That is the task of rhetoric.

RHODA The servant who greeted Peter at the courtyard gate after he had been miraculously delivered from prison, where he awaited trial by Herod (Acts 12:13). Rhoda apparently was involved in the prayer meeting at the house of Mary the mother of John Mark. Instead of opening the gate when Peter knocked, Rhoda became excited and ran back into the prayer meeting. When she announced that Peter was at the door, the group did not believe her, but when she persisted, they went out and found Peter.

RHODES A Mediterranean island of over five hundred square miles, with a capital city also named "Rhodes" at the northeast point. The island extends toward Crete from the southwest extremity of Asia Minor on the main sea route between the Aegean and Phoenician ports. In antiquity, the residents of Rhodes took advantage of their location to play an influential economic and political role. In Ezekiel's lament for Tyre, Rhodes is mentioned as its trading partner (Ezek. 27:15). Rhodes became a leading Greek republic after Alexander and built the Colossus of Rhodes (completed in 292 BC), a statue of Apollos (Helios), the sun god, whose cult was centered there. Due to disloyalty, the Romans advanced Delos to hinder the rise of Rhodes, leaving the island as a resort for learning and leisure by the time Paul stopped there on his last journey (Acts 21:1).

RIBAI The father of Ithai, one of David's elite soldiers, a Benjamite who lived in Gibeah (2 Sam. 23:29; 1 Chron. 11:31).

RIBBAND In Num. 15:38 the KJV translates the Hebrew word *patil* as "ribband," referring to a blue "cord" (NIV, NRSV) or "thread" (NET) attached to tassels on the corners of Israelite garments.

RIBLAH **(1)** A Syrian city located on the eastern border of the Orontes River. The modern city of Riblah is in the same location. Riblah was the site for the deposing of two kings of Judah. After reigning only three months upon the death of his father, Josiah, Jehoahaz was taken captive by Pharaoh Necho, bound in chains at Riblah, and deported to Egypt (2 Kings 23:29–34). Twelve years later, Zedekiah was punished by King Nebuchadnezzar for rebellion, and his sons along with the chief priest and other officials were executed in Riblah, which the Babylonian king was using as a staging area (2 Kings 25:6–7, 18–21; Jer. 39:5–6; 52:9–10, 26). **(2)** An unidentified city on the eastern boundary of Israel, near Ain (Num. 34:11).

RICHES *See* Wealth and Materialism.

RIDDLE A word puzzle, often involving a pun, in which the true meaning of a word or phrase is hidden and must be discovered. To solve a riddle requires an understanding of the mind-set of the person who crafted it. Although often associated with wisdom sayings, the most famous riddle in the Bible is that presented by Samson, a man known more for his brawn than his brain. Samson's riddle functions both as an entertaining brainteaser and as the object of a bet with his bridegrooms (see Judg. 14). A riddle can be performed with a harp (Ps. 49:4) and is listed alongside proverbs, parables, and the sayings of the wise (Prov. 1:6). The ability to explain riddles is a talent attributed to Daniel along with interpreting dreams and solving difficult problems (Dan. 5:12). God may communicate with riddles (Dan. 5), or he may purposely avoid them (Num. 12:8).

RIGHTEOUSNESS Righteousness is an important theme in both Testaments of the Bible. The concept includes faithfulness, justice, uprightness, correctness, loyalty, blamelessness, purity, salvation, and innocence. Because the theme is related to justification, it has important implications for the doctrine of salvation (*see also* Justification).

OLD TESTAMENT

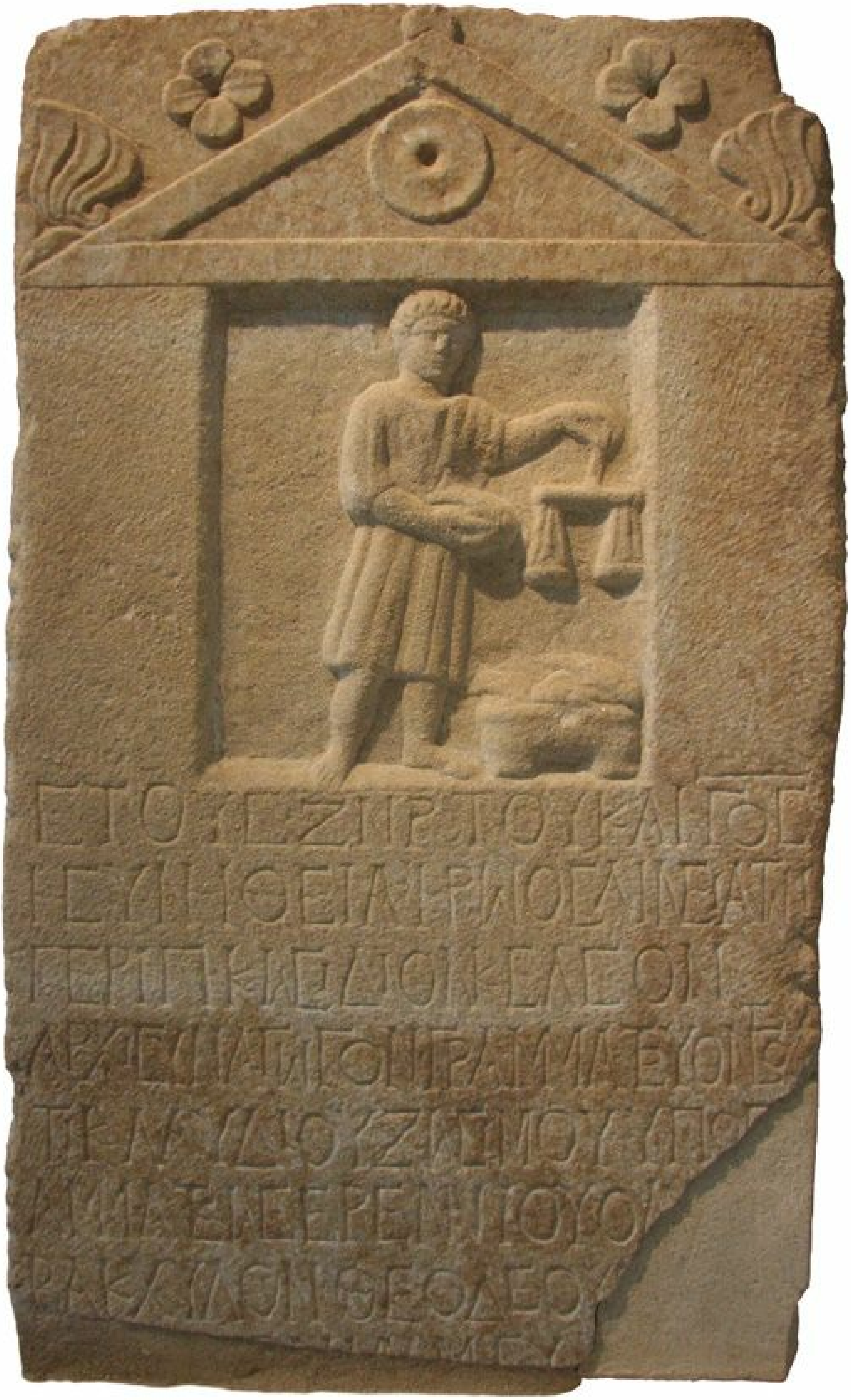
Divine righteousness. Being careful to avoid imposing Western philosophical categories onto OT texts, we may say that the core idea of righteousness is conformity to God's person and will in moral uprightness, justness, justice, integrity, and faithfulness. Behind the many and varied uses of righteousness language in the OT stands the presupposition that God himself is righteous in the ultimate sense (e.g., Ezra 9:15; Isa. 45:21; Zeph. 3:5). Righteousness is the expression of his holiness in relationship to others (Isa. 5:16), and all other nuances of righteousness in the biblical texts are derived from this. Either he reveals what is right or demonstrates rightness in his activity. God's decrees and laws are righteous (Deut. 4:8; Ps. 119); his will is righteous (Deut. 33:21); his acts are righteous (Judg. 5:11; 1 Sam. 12:7; Ps. 71:24); his judgments are righteous (Ps. 7:11); and he always judges with righteousness (Ps. 96:13). In OT texts, divine righteousness is often linked to God's saving activity, particularly in Psalms (e.g., Ps. 71) and in Isa. 40–66. Divine righteousness is much broader than deliberative justice (i.e., punishing the wicked and rewarding the righteous), though it does include it.

Human righteousness. Related to humans, righteousness is often found as the opposite of wickedness. Righteousness often occurs in evaluative contexts, where it relates to proper conduct with respect to God, the order of the world as he created it, the covenant, or law (e.g., Deut. 6:25). God reigns in righteousness and justice (e.g., Ps. 97:2), and humans should align their conduct with this righteous reign. Righteousness can be expressed as personal integrity with phrases such as "my righteousness” (2 Sam. 22:21, 25; Ps. 7:8) and “their righteousness” (1 Sam. 26:23). Unrighteousness is found in poetic parallel to injustice (e.g., Jer. 22:13); the unjust are parallel with the wicked (Ps. 82:2).

It seems likely that the OT understanding of righteousness was more concrete and less absolute than the typical thinking of most contemporary Western Christians. A more absolute way of understanding righteousness might lead one to think that a truly righteous person is sinless. While we do have references to absolute righteousness in the OT (e.g., Ps. 143:2; cf. Job 4:17; 25:4; Isa. 64:6–7), there are many more references to a righteousness grounded in particular or generalized situations (e.g., Pss. 32:11; 64:10). Another way of unpacking this conceptual difference is the helpful distinction between “ordinary” and “absolute” righteousness. Ordinary righteousness reflects the kind of righteousness that we intend when making comments such as “my wife is a righteous woman.” This means, taken in broad perspective, that her life is characterized predominantly by righteousness. This statement is not making a claim of sinlessness, absolute righteousness. The OT offers examples of comparative righteousness between people (e.g., Gen. 38:26; 1 Sam. 24:17; Jer. 3:11). Absolute righteousness is different from this. It is the extraordinary righteousness that we see in the person and work of God; he is righteous and without sin, totally holy in his dealings.

Noncanonical Jewish documents from the intertestamental period, while varying greatly in individual perspective, generally affirm OT views of human and divine righteousness. In these documents righteousness often is associated with mercy, goodness, justness, and concern for the poor and is contrasted with wickedness.

In Greco-Roman society, righteousness was one of the cardinal virtues and thus had an important influence in society. Greco-Roman righteousness did have some measure of abstractness as a kind of external norm, but this abstractness should not obscure the fact that righteousness often had a relational component in Greco-Roman literature and life. Righteous and unrighteous behaviors often were embedded in interpersonal relationships. Unrighteous deeds not only violated “transcendent” standards of righteousness, but also impacted humans.



A relief of a fisherman holding scales. The use of accurate scales was an indication of a merchant’s honesty and righteousness.

New Testament

Ordinary human righteousness. Righteousness language is more rare in the Gospels than one might expect in light of OT and Jewish intertestamental usage. These references fit with the Jewish setting: righteousness is required of God’s people, and unrighteousness is to be avoided. Righteousness is proper conduct with respect to God or Torah (Matt. 21:32) in contrast to wickedness (Matt. 13:49). Righteousness could be conceived as one’s own (e.g., Luke 18:9) and has its reward (Matt. 10:41). While the specific terms related to righteousness are infrequent in the Gospels, the broader concept of conformity to God’s will is widely apparent in calls for repentance, personal moral uprightness, mercy, and concern for the marginalized. The NT Epistles continue these general strands of the concept. Righteousness is related to personal conduct (1 Thess. 2:10; 1 Tim. 6:11; 2 Tim. 2:22; 1 Pet. 2:24) and is contrasted with wickedness (2 Cor. 6:14); it is a matter of doing, not knowing (Rom. 2:13). An example of righteousness in doing is the kindness shown by the prostitute Rahab, who hid the Israelite spies (James 2:25).

The NT does signal some new dimensions related to righteousness. In the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5–7), Jesus extends the requirements of righteousness to conformity to his own teaching and directives, a shocking display of authority. In his mission to call sinners rather than the “righteous” (e.g., Mark 2:17), Jesus implicitly questions the righteousness of the “righteous.” In similar manner, personal righteousness in terms of a righteousness of one’s own is negative in the NT (Rom. 10:3; Phil. 3:6; cf. Luke 18:9).

Divine righteousness. The NT continues the OT theme of righteousness as it relates to God himself. God is righteous (John 17:25; Rom. 3:5; 9:14; Heb. 6:10; cf. Matt. 6:33). His judgments are righteous (Rom. 2:5), and his commands and laws are righteous (Rom. 7:12; 8:4). God is a righteous judge (2 Tim. 4:8). His saving activity is righteous; he does not compromise his own justice in justifying the ungodly (Rom. 3:24–26). The righteousness of God is contrasted with human unrighteousness and wickedness (Rom. 3:5; James 1:20). Since God reigns over creation in righteousness, human conduct should conform to that standard (e.g., Rom. 14:17). Jesus is also noted as righteous (Acts 3:14; 7:52; 22:14; 1 Pet. 3:18; 1 John 2:1, 29). He fulfilled righteousness in the absolute sense of demonstrating complete conformity to the nature and will of God (e.g., 1 Pet. 3:18). He also fulfilled God’s righteousness in the sense of his saving activity toward humans (e.g., 2 Pet. 1:1).

“The righteousness of God” and extraordinary human righteousness. There is a significant OT connection between God’s righteousness and his faithfulness in saving activity (e.g., Psalms; Isa. 40–66). Although there are glimpses of righteousness related to God’s saving activity outside of Paul’s Letter to the Romans (e.g., Matt. 5:10; 6:33), a technical phrase, “the righteousness of God,” is used in three important texts in Romans (1:17; 3:21–22 [2×]; 10:3 [2×]). In the gospel, “the righteousness of God” is revealed, where “righteousness of God” could mean his divine righteousness in some sense, righteousness from God (NIV), God’s saving activity as related to his righteousness in fulfilling his covenant faithfulness (e.g., Psalms), or some combination of these.

The righteousness of God is further discussed in Rom. 3:21: “the righteousness of God” has now been revealed apart from the Mosaic law, though the OT testifies about it (cf. Rom. 4 and Rom. 1:17; Gal. 3:11; Heb. 10:38). This righteousness of God is clarified in that it is by trust in Jesus Christ for all, both Jews and Gentiles. The “righteousness of God” may be distinguished from righteousness as a character quality of God (Rom. 3:25–26). In fact, it must be, for God’s righteousness as a character quality was revealed in the OT, whereas “the righteousness of God” is “apart from the [Mosaic] law” (3:21).

In Rom. 10:3 Paul comments that the Israelites are ignorant of “the righteousness of God”; they are seeking to establish their own righteousness because they are not submitting to “the righteousness of God.” The Israelites certainly knew of God’s righteousness in terms of his character, judgments, and expectations of his people. The lack of submission to “the righteousness of God” occurs in the context of the Jewish rejection of Jesus (e.g., 9:32–33; 10:9–13). And Jesus is the key to understanding “the righteousness of God” in the other texts also.

In Rom. 1:17 the righteousness of God is revealed in the gospel, which is the power of God for salvation to all who trust in Jesus (1:3–5, 16). The righteousness of God in 3:21–22 is related to trust in Jesus (3:22, 25–26), who as a sacrifice of atonement (3:25) enables the justification and redemption of sinners (3:24, 26). In Jesus we become the righteousness of God (2 Cor. 5:21). The righteousness of God, then, is God’s saving activity revealed and manifested in the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ, whereby sinners are justified as both innocent and righteous in Christ.

RIGHT MIND To be in one’s right mind is to be sane. After Jesus exorcizes the demons called “Legion,” the formerly possessed man sits at Jesus’ feet, completely sane, no longer out of control (Mark 5:15; Luke 8:35). Paul uses the term (Gk. *sōphroneō*) to contrast sanity with insanity (2 Cor. 5:13).

RIMMON **(1)** Meaning “pomegranate,” it is a common place name, both on its own and in combination. There were settlements by that name in the tribes of Judah, Simeon, Zebulun, Dan, and Manasseh (Josh. 15:32; 19:7–45). One of the resting places during Israel’s wilderness wandering, Rimmon Perez, bore this name (Num. 33:19–20). During the Israelite civil war at Gibeah, a Benjamite remnant of six hundred men took refuge at the “rock of Rimmon” (Judg. 20:45). (*See also* Remmonmethoar.) **(2)** The father of Ish-Bosheth’s murderers, a Gibeonite from Beeroth (2 Sam. 4:2–6). **(3)** An Aramean (and Babylonian) deity, the god of rain (2 Kings 5:18).

Rimmon, where the Benjamites fled (Judg. 20:45) after the battle at Gibeah

RIMMON, ROCK OF *See* Rimmon; Sela.

RIMMONO *See* Remmonmethoar.

RIMMON-PAREZ, RIMMON-PEREZ *See* Rimmon.

RINNAH A son of Shimon and descendant of Judah (1 Chron. 4:20).

RIPHATH A son of Gomer (Gen. 10:3; 1 Chron. 1:6), he was a great-grandson of Noah and the brother of Ashkenaz and Togarmah. At 1 Chron. 1:6 some versions (RSV, NRSV, NASB) give the name as "Diphath," an alternate reading. The spelling confusion likely arises from the similar appearance of the Hebrew letters *resh* and *dalet*.

RISHATHAIM Meaning "double wickedness," this appellation is attached to the name of Cushan, king of Mesopotamia (Aram Naharaim). The people of Israel served him eight years before Othniel son of Kenaz, first of the judges, delivered them (Judg. 3:8–9). *See also* Cushan-Rishathaim.

RISSAH A stop on the Israelite trek through the wilderness (Num. 33:21–22). The name may mean "dewdrop," "rain," or "ruins." It is possibly an ancient name for the oasis of Sharma, east of the Gulf of Aqaba.

RITHMAH A stop on the Israelite trek through the wilderness (Num. 33:18–19). The name may mean "broom plant." It is possibly located east of the Gulf of Aqaba, where there is a valley named "er-Ratame," which could be related.

RITUAL *See* Sacrifice and Offering; Worship.

RIVERS AND WATERWAYS

RIVERS IN COSMOLOGY

Genesis 2:10–14 describes the garden in Eden as the source of an unnamed river that subsequently divided into four "headwaters": the Pishon, the Gihon, the Tigris, and the Euphrates. This description defies any attempt to locate the purported site of Eden in terms of historical geography. The Tigris and the Euphrates do not diverge from a common source, but instead converge before emptying into the Persian Gulf. Moreover, the Gihon, if it is to be identified with the sacred spring of the same name in Jerusalem (1 Kings 1:45), is several hundred miles away from the Tigris and the Euphrates. The Pishon is otherwise unknown. If, as various commentators since antiquity have suggested, the Gihon and the Pishon are to be identified with other great rivers in the same class of importance as the Tigris and the Euphrates (the Nile, the Ganges, etc.), then this would further confound any attempt to understand Gen. 2:10–14 in terms of historical geography. The image of four rivers emanating from a primordial garden and dividing unnaturalistically from a common source is attested in ancient Near Eastern art, notably in the eighteenth-century BC wall painting illustrating the investiture of Zimri-Lim. In this image, two goddesses stand in a paradisiacal garden, guarded by mythical, sphinxlike creatures (cf. the cherubim in Gen. 3:24), holding vessels from which four rivers flow.

In his vision of the restored land of Israel, Ezekiel sees a great river emanating from the temple in Jerusalem, flowing into the Judean desert, and ultimately turning the Dead Sea into freshwater (Ezek. 47:1–12). Along the banks of the river, Ezekiel sees fishermen and perpetually fruitful trees.

Similarly, the vision of the new Jerusalem in Rev. 22:1–2 describes a river of the “water of life” flowing through the city and watering trees that bear fruit in every month. In both cases, the visions draw on the notion that Jerusalem is the cultic and religious center of the world and therefore endow its spring—geologically speaking, an insignificant body of water—with a cosmological significance. It was perhaps this same impulse that led the author of Gen. 2:13, probably himself a Jerusalemite, to mention the Gihon in the same class as the Tigris and the Euphrates.

In Ps. 89:25, in the context of a poem describing the adoption of the Davidic king as a divine son, God is described as promising to “set his hand over the sea, his right hand over the rivers.” Like the sea, a symbol of cosmic chaos in ancient Near Eastern mythology, the rivers represent a force that is overcome by the divine warrior and then placed under the subjection of his human representative, the beloved king. In this connection, it is significant that the exodus—in many ways the preeminent foundational moment of the Israelite religion—involved the splitting of both a sea (Exod. 14:21–22) and a river (Josh. 3:16; Ps. 114:3) and the subsequent passage of the Israelites on dry ground. This people-creating deliverance, in turn, is comparable to the account of creation in Gen. 1, where the Creator God drives back the waters to prepare a dry-ground habitation for humanity (vv. 9–10). In Ugaritic mythology, Yamm, the sea god, also bore the epithet “judge river,” underscoring the cosmological connection between sea and river. As we will see, prophetic oracles of divine judgment, especially when they are directed against the river-based civilization of Egypt, often recapitulate the theme of the God of Israel fighting against the river.

THE NILE RIVER

The Nile (Heb. *ye’or*) is fed by two major tributaries: the White Nile, which begins at Lake Victoria, and the Blue Nile, which begins in Ethiopia. At over four thousand miles, the Nile is the longest river in the world. The ancient civilization of Egypt depended entirely on the flow of the Nile and upon its annual flood (the “gift of the Nile”) for irrigation of crops. Even today, arable land along the Nile is confined in some places to an area no more than a few miles from its banks.

Given the dependence of Egyptian civilization on the Nile, especially its annual flood and the accompanying deposit of silt, it is not surprising that the river figured prominently in Egyptian mythology and religion. In particular, the story of the dying and rising god Osiris was linked with the annual ebb and flow of the great river. The annual inundation is still impressive today; an ancient impression may be gleaned from Amos 9:5, where the prophet appeals to the rising and falling of the Nile as a description of divine, earth-melting judgment.

Two of the plagues sent by God upon the Egyptians took place at the Nile, an appropriate setting for a confrontation between the God of Israel and the Egyptian pharaoh, himself a living representation of the Egyptian pantheon. In Ezek. 29:3 the God of Israel says to Pharaoh, “I am against you, Pharaoh king of Egypt, you great monster lying among your streams. You say, ‘The Nile belongs to me; I made it for myself.’ ” Since the Nile was perhaps the preeminent natural or environmental symbol of Egyptian culture, the God of Israel’s assertion of control of that river would have been understood as an unmistakable claim to sovereignty. At the time of the birth of Moses, the Nile was a place of extinction for the Israelites, for Pharaoh had commanded that every boy born to the Hebrews be thrown into the Nile (Exod. 1:22). Ironically, Moses was saved when his mother put him in the Nile in a pitch-coated basket, where he was found by the royal daughter of Pharaoh, who had come to the Nile to bathe (2:3, 5).

God told Moses to confront Pharaoh at the Nile (Exod. 7:15), and the first plague with which God afflicted the Egyptians consisted of turning the Nile into blood, causing its fish to die and rendering its water unsuitable for drinking. The Egyptians were forced to dig wells along its banks (7:20–21). The second plague involved the multiplication of frogs in the Nile, to the point of great inconvenience (8:3).

Isaiah continues the theme of God punishing the Egyptians by attacking the Nile: “The waters of the river will dry up, and the riverbed will be parched and dry. The canals will stink; the streams of Egypt will dwindle and dry up. The reeds and rushes will wither, also the plants along the Nile” (Isa. 19:5–7). The passage goes on to underscore the importance of the Nile as a source of irrigation water and fishing and the devastation that results from the failure of the Nile to flood as expected. In other texts, where the emphasis is on the better fortunes of Egypt, the power of Egypt is symbolized by the mighty Nile: “Who is this that rises like the Nile, like rivers of surging waters? Egypt rises like the Nile. . . . She says, ‘I will rise and cover the earth; I will destroy cities and their people’ ” (Jer. 46:7–8).

THE EUPHRATES RIVER

The Euphrates is the westernmost of the two great rivers of Mesopotamia (along with the Tigris [see below]), the land “between the rivers.” As mentioned above, the Euphrates was one of the four rivers flowing from the garden of Eden, according to Gen. 2:14. Along the Euphrates were located the ancient cities of Carchemish, Emar (Tell Meskeneh), Mari, Babylon, and Ur. The Euphrates runs over seventeen hundred miles from northwest to southeast, beginning in the mountains of eastern Turkey before joining with the Tigris and entering the Persian Gulf.

In the Bible, the Euphrates represents the northern boundary of the territory granted to Abraham (Gen. 15:18; see also Exod. 23:31). David extended his territory as far as the Euphrates when he fought the Aramean king Hadadezer (2 Sam. 8:3), and so the dimensions of Israel at its apex under Solomon are described as controlling all the kingdoms “from the Euphrates River to the land of the Philistines, as far as the border of Egypt [i.e., the southern limit of his realm]” (1 Kings 4:21).

In addition to its significance as a political boundary, the Euphrates marked an important cultural boundary in Israelite thought. Abraham and his family are remembered as having come from “beyond the Euphrates River” (Josh. 24:2). The exile was described as a scattering “beyond the Euphrates River,” an expression that underscores complete dispossession from Israel’s own land (1 Kings 14:15). Interestingly, the cultures to the east of the Euphrates shared the notion that this river marked a major boundary, as evident from the convention among the Neo-Assyrians and the Persians of referring to western lands by the name “Beyond the River” or “Trans-Euphrates” (Akk. *eber-nari*; Aram. *abar nahara*). This was the name of the province encompassing the land of Israel in the time of Ezra (see Ezra 4:10).

Isaiah made use of the association between the Euphrates and the Mesopotamian empires when he likened the king of Assyria to the mighty waters of the river (Isa. 8:7). The Euphrates figures prominently in Revelation, where it restrains punishment from the north, a punishment that is released when God dries up the river, allowing “kings from the East” to cross over (Rev. 9:14; 16:12).

THE TIGRIS RIVER

Along with the Euphrates, the Tigris (Heb. *khiddeqel*) was one of the two rivers of ancient Mesopotamia. The Tigris lies east of the Euphrates and runs over a course of approximately 1,150 miles from northwest to southeast, finally joining with the Euphrates and emptying into the Persian Gulf. In antiquity, the cities of Calah, Nineveh, and Ashur lay along the Tigris. The Tigris is mentioned twice in the Bible: first, as one of the four headwaters emanating from the garden of Eden (Gen. 2:14) and, second, as the location of Daniel's visionary experience (Dan. 10:4).

THE JORDAN RIVER

The Jordan (Heb. *yarden*) runs southward from the Hula Valley into the Sea of Galilee (also known as the Sea of Tiberias; modern Lake Kinneret) and from there through a river valley (the "plain of the Jordan" [see Gen. 13:10]) to the Dead Sea. Over its course of approximately 150 miles, it descends dramatically from an elevation of approximately 200 feet in the Hula Valley to an elevation of 690 feet below sea level at the Sea of Galilee, and then farther downward to an elevation of 1,385 feet below sea level at the Dead Sea. Fittingly, the name "Jordan" is related to the Hebrew word *yarad* ("to go down").

In the story of the exodus and conquest, the Jordan River marked the boundary of the "promised land," despite the fact that two and a half tribes received inheritances on the eastern side of the river (the Transjordan [see Num. 32:32; 34:12, 15]). For those living in the land of Israel, the river marked the boundary between them and what they termed "the other side of the Jordan" (Heb. *'eber hayyarden* [Num. 32:19; Deut. 1:5]).

In the OT, several memorable stories are set near the Jordan. In addition to Joshua's dramatic crossing of the Jordan (Josh. 3:1–17), the "fords of the Jordan" were strategic locations, and it was there that the Gileadites slaughtered forty-two thousand Ephraimites as they attempted to return to their territory on the western side of the Jordan (Judg. 12:5). Elisha instructed Naaman, the leprous Aramean general, to bathe seven times in the Jordan for the healing of his condition (2 Kings 5:10). When Elisha's companions wished to build shelters for themselves, they went to the Jordan, where they knew they would find abundant vegetation and poles (2 Kings 6:2; cf. Zech. 11:3). When one of them dropped an iron ax head into the water, Elisha caused it to float to the surface (2 Kings 6:6–7).

In the NT, the Jordan was the site of much of John the Baptist's ministry (Matt. 3:5–6; Mark 1:5; Luke 3:3). John 1:28 specifies that John was on the eastern bank (also John 3:26; 10:40). It was in the waters of the Jordan that he baptized those who came to him, including Jesus (Matt. 3:13; Mark 1:9; Luke 3:21).

TRIBUTARIES OF THE JORDAN

South of the Sea of Galilee, the Jordan is fed by several tributaries. The Yarmuk River joins the Jordan just south of the lake, draining the biblical region of Bashan to the east. The Wadi Far'ah joins the Jordan from the west, halfway between the Sea of Galilee and the Dead Sea, and drains the hill country of Ephraim. Nearly across from the Wadi Far'ah, the biblical Jabbok River (Wadi Zerqa) enters the Jordan from the east. In biblical times, the Jabbok was the limit of Ammonite territory (Num. 21:23–24). The Arnon River (Wadi Mujib), not a tributary of the Jordan, enters the Dead Sea from the east, opposite En Gedi. It was the border between the Moabites and the Amorites (Num. 21:13).

THE WADI OF EGYPT

In a number of texts the "wadi of Egypt" (or "brook of Egypt") represents the far southern limit of Israelite territory. Some ancient interpreters understood this as referring to the Pelusian branch of the Nile River delta, while most modern scholars favor the Besor River, farther east, in present-day Israel. Besides the Bible, Assyrian texts also refer to the Wadi of Egypt. In 733 BC Tiglath-pileser III set up a victory stela there, perhaps to advertise to the Egyptians the southern extent of the territory that he claimed for Assyria.

Several biblical passages refer to the Shihor River as marking a boundary between Egypt and Israelite territory (Josh. 13:3; 19:26; 1 Chron. 13:5; Isa. 23:3; Jer. 2:18).

THE ORONTES RIVER

Although it is not mentioned in the Bible, the Orontes marked an important international boundary in the biblical world. The Orontes begins in the Bekaa Valley in present-day Lebanon, then flows northward between the Lebanon and the Anti-Lebanon mountain ranges before turning sharply westward to empty into the Mediterranean Sea. Along the Orontes lay the kingdom of Hamath (see, e.g., 2 Sam. 8:9; 2 Chron. 8:3; Jer. 39:5). Because it ran through a valley that was an artery of travel from north to south, the Orontes was the perennial focus of strategic interest, and several important battles were fought at or near the Orontes. In 1274 BC the Egyptian pharaoh Ramesses II fought the Hittite king Muwatallis II at the Battle of Kadesh. In 853 BC the Assyrian king Shalmaneser III was challenged at Qarqar on the Orontes by a coalition led by Hadadezer of Damascus and including King Ahab of Israel.

RIZIA The third of the three sons of Ulla from the tribe of Asher (1 Chron. 7:39).

RIZPAH King Saul’s concubine, with whom he fathered two sons, Armoni and Mephibosheth. She first appears when Saul’s son Ish-Bosheth accuses Abner of having sexual intercourse with her—an innuendo for royal pretensions—which Abner denies (2 Sam. 3:7–10). She reappears in the episode relating to the sacrifice of her sons and their five nephews in Gibeon as atonement for Saul’s alleged brutality against the Gibeonites—David’s remedy for a three-year famine (2 Sam. 21:1–14). Rizpah’s valiant action against the desecration of their corpses by scavenging animals and birds prompts David to order the retrieval of the bones of Saul and his sons from Transjordan and their proper burial in the tomb of Kish (their ancestor) in Gibeah. While Rizpah’s bravery in protecting the corpses of the deceased Saulides parallels that of the men of Jabesh Gilead (1 Sam. 31:8–13), David’s commendation of the latter (2 Sam. 2:5–7) is not extended to her.

ROAD *See* King’s Highway; Streets; Transportation and Travel.

ROASTED GRAIN *See* Parched Grain.

ROBAOM *See* Rehoboam.

ROBBERY The acquisition of another’s property by force or threat. This crime was perpetrated by bandits (Hos. 7:1), often through ambush (Judg. 9:25). In Jesus’ parable of the good Samaritan, the robbers’ attack leaves the victim half dead (Luke 10:30). The eighth commandment’s prohibition against stealing (Exod. 20:15; Deut. 5:19) certainly includes robbery, which is explicitly condemned in Lev. 19:13. OT law does not distinguish robbery from theft, which is done by stealth or deception, likely because the unlawful seizure of another’s goods was seen as a civil crime and the legal emphasis was on the restitution of property along with some compensation for distress, which varied according to the item stolen and served as a deterrent to thieves (Exod. 22:1, 4; Lev. 6:1–7). If unable to make restitution, the criminal could be sold into slavery to pay the debt (Exod. 22:3). Should the violence of robbery result in injury, laws concerning personal injury applied (Exod. 21:23–25; Lev. 24:19–20). In fact, under certain conditions, the law addresses an injured thief as the victim and not the perpetrator of violence (Exod. 22:2–3). The two men crucified with Jesus are traditionally described as “robbers” (Matt. 27:38; Mark 15:27), though in this case the Greek word (*lēstēs*) likely refers to rebels or insurrectionists (NLT: “revolutionaries”). This was the Roman authorities’ way of casting them as common criminals rather than as freedom fighters.

God declares his hatred for robbery, contrasting it with justice (Isa. 61:8). Robbery is often an example of injustice, especially when perpetrated upon the poor (Isa. 10:2; Ezek. 22:29). Rescuing a victim from a robber is enjoined as a just action (Jer. 21:12; 22:3), one for which God himself deserves praise (Ps. 35:10). God describes himself as the victim of robbery as he accuses Israel of stealing from him by withholding its tithes (Mal. 3:8–9).

Greek has two different words to distinguish a robber (*lēstēs*) from a thief (*kleptēs*). In the NT, robbery appears primarily as a metaphor. Jesus uses it to represent false prophets (John 10:1, 8), his own plunder of Satan’s house (Matt. 12:29; Mark 3:27), and, in a reference from Jer. 7:11, those seeking economic gain in the temple (Matt. 21:13; Mark 11:17; Luke 19:46).

ROCK In the OT, the “rock” (*sela’*, *tsur*) is an image of inaccessibility and so of refuge from danger (Isa. 7:19), but rocks will not provide refuge on the day of God’s wrath (Isa. 2:10, 19, 21; Rev. 6:15–16). A great rock providing needed shade (Isa. 32:2) is a variation on this theme of protection. By extension, the image is applied to God himself in poetry (e.g., 2 Sam. 22:2; Ps. 31:3, in both cases parallel with “fortress”). God as the “Rock” is the object of trust (2 Sam. 22:3). This quality is an aspect of his incomparability: “And who is the Rock except our God?” (2 Sam. 22:32).

Repeated references in the OT to the incident in Num. 20 in which God brought water from the rock in the wilderness (e.g., Deut. 8:15; Neh. 9:15; Ps. 78:16) form the background to Paul’s typological identification of Christ with this rock (1 Cor. 10:4). The water from the rock was “spiritual drink” that pointed forward to the later spiritual realities of the Lord’s Supper.

Isaiah 8:14 turns what is usually a positive image of God’s protection into a negative picture of destruction (“a rock that makes them fall”). This verse, together with Isa. 28:16; Ps. 118:22, lies behind the “stone” sayings of Jesus (e.g., Luke 20:18; NIV: “stone”), Paul (Rom. 9:33; NIV: “stone”), and Peter (1 Pet. 2:8) in which Jesus is described as a rock that people stumble over in unbelief.

In the NT, “rock” (Gk. *petra*) as a solid foundation for a house (as in Jesus’ parable of Matt. 7:24–25) is the idea behind something that Jesus said to Simon, whom he named “Peter” (Gk. *petros*): Peter’s confession of Jesus as “the Messiah, the Son of the living God” would be the unshakable foundation of the church that Jesus would build (Matt. 16:16–18).

ROCK BADGER In Lev. 11:5; Deut. 14:7 the NRSV translates the Hebrew word *shapan* as “rock badger.” The Hebrew term refers to the hyrax (the NIV rendering), a rabbit-sized mammal found throughout the Mediterranean region; although it resembles a rodent, it is a hoofed animal. *See also* Hyrax.

ROCK OF ESCAPE *See* Sela Hammahlekoth.

ROD, STAFF A wooden walking stick that could have various functions. In ancient times, people did considerable amounts of walking. The ground in Israel is very uneven and rocky, making a walking stick a useful item (Gen. 32:10; Matt. 10:10). It is likely that walking sticks were customized so that they could serve as identification (Gen. 38:25).

Rods like those shown here were used as walking sticks and as symbols of authority.

Besides their utilitarian purpose, a rod or staff also came to denote an office and/or one's authority. Military figures carried staffs that indicated their status (Judg. 5:14), and Gen. 49:10 predicts that the ruler's staff will not depart from the tribe of Judah. Shepherds also carried a staff (Ps. 23:4; Mic. 7:14).

Sometimes a staff signified the presence of God with an individual. It was symbolic of the tree from which it was made, and a tree sometimes symbolically represented God. For this reason, some divine signs are associated with a raised staff. This was the case of Aaron's staff. The Red Sea split after Moses extended his rod, and the Israelites had the better of the Amalekites on the battlefield as long as Moses kept the rod above his head. *See also* Aaron's Rod.

RODANIM *See* Rodanites.

RODANITES Descendants of Javan listed in the Adamic chronology of Israel (Gen. 10:4; 1 Chron. 1:7). Most translations read "Rodanim," and some treat this as the name of an individual (e.g., ESV, NASB, NKJV). Based on name derivation alone, "Rodanim" could be considered the progenitor of the people of Rhodes; however, the name variant "Dodanim" (see KJV) questions this association, although the variant may be a scribal error. *See also* Dodanim.

RODENTS One Hebrew word (*'akbar*) covers rats, mice, and similar small rodents, which sometimes formed plagues (1 Sam. 6). The OT also mentions rodentlike weasels (*kholed* [sometimes translated as "rat" or "mole rat"]), hyraxes (*shapan*), and rabbits or hares (*'arnebet*). All these animals were unclean because they "swarm," and hyraxes and rabbits also appear to chew cud. The rendering, in some translations, of *qippod* as "hedgehog" or "porcupine" is probably incorrect (Isa. 14:23; 34:11 NRSV; Zeph. 2:14 ASV), as is the KJV translation of *tanshemet* (Lev. 11:30) and *khepor* (Isa. 2:20) as "mole" (Israel has no moles). Bats, as flying creatures, were grouped with the unclean birds. No rodents are mentioned in the NT.

ROE, ROEBUCK The Hebrew word for this animal, *yakhmur*, is usually translated as "roe(buck)," a small, solitary, brown-gray deer relatively rare in Israel. This animal was clean food and was enjoyed by Solomon (Deut. 14:5; 1 Kings 4:23). It may instead be the Bubal hartebeest; archaeologists have found hartebeest bones at Israelite sites.

ROGELIM The hometown in Transjordan of Barzillai the Gileadite (2 Sam. 17:27), who escorted David to the Jordan River (2 Sam. 19:31). The meaning of the name, "treaders," may indicate the local industry. It possibly was located at Tell Barsina or Zaharet's Soq'ah.

ROHGAH A son of Shomer from the tribe of Asher (1 Chron. 7:34).

ROLL *See* Scroll.

ROLLER In Ezek. 30:21 the KJV translates the Hebrew word *khittul* as "roller," referring to a splint (NIV) or bandage (NRSV).

ROMAMTI-EZER A Levitical musician and descendant of Heman at the time of David (1 Chron. 25:4).

ROMAN EMPIRE *See* Rome, Roman Empire.

ROMAN LAW To understand the persons and events of the NT, it is important to have at least a cursory understanding of Roman law. Rome held absolute power over its people and vassals from the time of its foundation (c. 750 BC) until the collapse of its empire (c. AD 500); thus, its understanding of law had influence on both philosophical and pragmatic levels. Roman law was remarkable for the detailed yet succinct way cases were treated. Roman law was primarily private law in character; that is, it was law focused on relationships between people. Fathers of families were significant figures in Roman law and custom. They held great power over their wives, children, and slaves. Precedent also played an important role in Roman law, with ritualized legal formulas and style being the key components. Generally speaking, parties determined the outcome between themselves with the help of an arbitrator. Only when such arbitration was unsuccessful, or at the end of arbitration when contractual steps had to be taken, was a jurist/judge brought in. Public trials were more a case of oratory and debate than legal wrangling and procedure.

Roman citizenship. Much of Roman law and activity was dependent on the status of the participants. Roman citizenship itself carried with it a privileged status in terms of law, property, and governance. Citizenship and the rights related to it also varied, depending on the class of the person. The native peoples who lived in territories conquered by Rome, citizens of Roman client states, and Roman allies could be given a limited form of Roman citizenship such as the Latin Right, which permitted land ownership, marriage rights, and certain rights in matters of punishment and detainment. Women's rights varied over time; however, women were never accorded all the rights of citizens, since they could not vote or hold office. They could, however, own property. Slaves were considered property and had only certain very limited rights as granted by statute. They could essentially be treated in any fashion considered appropriate by their owners. Despite this, a freed slave was granted a form of Roman citizenship. All slaves freed by Roman owners automatically received a limited Roman citizenship. The law of the magistrates as applied to foreigners focused on three areas of interest: trade law, finding a way to apply Roman law to foreign societies, and the procurator's own sense of fair play and justice.

Paul was a Roman citizen from birth (Acts 22:28), though given his lineage, this citizenship would have been similar to that of the Latin Right. He took advantage of his citizenship at numerous points during his missionary travels by limiting punishment and by an appeal to Caesar (Acts 22:24–29; 25:10–12). There is little information about how people were able to document their citizenship, though undoubtedly some sort of official document would have served such a purpose.

Household and family. As noted above, the father of a household had almost absolute power in that sphere. In relation to this, Paul and Peter's instructions to the various churches about household relationships stand in stark contrast to the culture within which they were expressed (see Eph. 5:21; Col. 3:18–4:1; 1 Pet. 2:18–3:7). Like Jews, Romans viewed the family as the core element of their society. What occurred in the family was an expression of the core values of the society. For the church to have granted the freedom it did to women and others (Gal. 3:28) would have been difficult for many in the culture to accept. Furthermore, Paul in several places seems to call for restraint in Christian expression of freedom so as not to cause ill repute for the Christian community.

History and hierarchy. Concerning Roman jurisprudence, the system went through many phases of development over the periods of the republic and the empire. During the period of the republic (753–31 BC), the civil law was the primary focus of development. Roman law, like other ancient systems, originally adopted the principle of personality: laws of the state applied only to its citizens.

Foreigners had no rights in their courts unless protected by a treaty. Gradually, a more generalized legal code developed in Rome that was applied to everyone, and by the time of the empire, such perspectives of law were well established. This may explain the different treatment received by Paul (and others) in relationship to whether they were known to be citizens.

Procurators and prefects were governors appointed by Rome over Judea after the removal of Archelaus in AD 6 and over all of Palestine at the death of Herod Agrippa. Governors such as Pontius Pilate were the highest power in their province, but they answered to the legate, who could replace them, and ultimately to Caesar, who could overrule them. They had to give their assent to lower local courts before a sentence involving death could be carried out. Because of the lower standing that noncitizens held, the governor often was quick to sacrifice them in order to maintain peace and avoid disturbances. Pilate's treatment of Jesus seems to fall into such a category.

In general, disputes between members of the same subject state were settled by that state's own courts according to its own law, whereas disputes between provincials of different states or between provincials and Romans were resolved by the governor's court applying these principles.

Religion. Since Rome had no centralized cult, the Romans would not execute someone simply on religious grounds. Instead, there needed to be a perception of political revolt, and the charges had to be specific (Matt. 27:12; John 18:29). Because Roman law and trial were more a matter of oratory and reason than legal maneuvering and loopholes, it is not surprising that both Pilate and Felix allowed such leeway in the questioning of Jesus and Paul (John 18; Acts 24).

ROMANS, LETTER TO THE Romans is a letter sent by Paul from Corinth to the house churches in Rome. The letter is unique in several ways. It is the longest of all Pauline letters, which explains why it appears first in the NT canon (Paul's letters are arranged in length from longest to shortest and divided into two groups: to churches and to individuals). Romans is one of the last letters Paul wrote while he was a free man. Shortly after sending it, Paul traveled to Jerusalem, where he was arrested, and subsequently spent several years in prison in Caesarea and Rome. Romans is one of two letters Paul sent to churches that he had never visited (the other is Colossians, a church started by Paul through one of his missionary associates, Epaphras). But what sets Romans apart from the rest of his letters is this: it is the only letter Paul sent to establish contact with a church that he did not start. Since letter production was so expensive, why did Paul send this, his lengthiest letter, to a group of people he did not know? It seems perfectly reasonable for Paul to send letters to straighten out problems among his own converts while he was absent, but it seems odd that he would send a very long, sophisticated theological argument (with several warnings) to a group of house churches that did not know him, much less ask for his advice. Why did he do it?

PAUL'S PURPOSE

Rome and Spain. Paul states his purpose for sending Romans at the beginning and toward the end of the letter. At first, he explains why he had not visited Rome, even though he wanted to come in order to "impart to you some spiritual gift to make you strong" and "that I might have a harvest among you, just as I have had among the other Gentiles" (1:11–13). Paul's intentions are revealing. He believes that since God has called him to be the apostle to the Gentiles (1:1), it is his duty to impart spiritual gifts to churches with Gentile members as well as add to their number by converting Gentiles in their region. In other words, although Paul had never visited Rome or had a hand in starting or guiding the Roman church to this point, he believes that he is responsible for it by virtue of his calling. Therefore, since he has been unable to do the work of an apostle by coming to them, he sends the Roman house churches a letter (15:14–16). But this is not the only reason for Romans. At the end of the letter Paul asks the Roman Christians to support his upcoming mission to Spain (15:22–29) and to pray that God will protect him during his visit to Jerusalem, for he expects trouble when he arrives there (15:30–32).

Paul's request for financial support is a little unusual. Only a few churches helped him financially (Philippi and probably Antioch), and as far as we know, he did not ask for this assistance (Phil. 4:15–17; 2 Cor. 11:9). He preferred to support himself by working (1 Cor. 9:6–18; 2 Thess. 3:7–10). In Paul's day, money came with strings attached; clients were obligated to "obey" their patrons—an arrangement that Paul would find intolerable. So, in light of Paul's practice of self-support, why did he ask the Roman house churches for assistance with his planned mission to Spain? And if that were his primary purpose in writing, why did he send such a lengthy letter containing arguments that seem to have little to do with his request? A simple letter asking for help would have sufficed. Besides breaking from his usual practice of self-support, why would he ask the Roman church for help? Why not send a letter to churches that he himself had started and ask for their help? Paul had recently finished collecting a relief offering from his churches to help the poor in Jerusalem. Why did he not collect additional funds (or use part of the money) to expand his missionary efforts to Spain? If he was willing to be indebted to someone, why not let it be his own converts (especially the Philippians)? Indeed, there seems to be more to Paul's letter than a request for financial aid. Apparently, Paul's reasons for writing Romans go beyond his stated purposes.

The Roman churches. Paul's relationship with the Roman house churches may have been more involved than what might be presumed. At the end of the letter Paul greets at least five house churches, naming several individuals (16:5, 10–11, 14–15). It is a long list of names, especially compared to other Pauline letters. These are persons Paul knew very well, not only Prisca and Aquila (cf. Acts 18:2; 1 Cor. 16:19), but also Epenetus, Ampliatus, and Stachys, whom Paul calls "my dear friend" (16:5–9) as well as Andronicus, Junia, and Herodion, who are called "my relatives" (16:7, 11; NIV: "my fellow Jews"). He even referred to a member of the church as "a mother to me" (16:13). Paul also knew about the problems in Rome (14:1–15:13) and felt obliged to clear up what others were saying about him in Rome (3:8). In other words, Paul and the Roman church were not strangers. He did not send the Roman letter to introduce himself in order to ask for help. Even though the apostle to the Gentiles had never visited Rome, Paul and the Roman church knew each other. He obviously had many friends among their number; several were key leaders (a group to which Paul was trying to add Phoebe [16:1–2]). Perhaps Paul's influence in the church was so significant that he was compelled to send the Roman letter for the same reason he sent other letters: they needed his help in straightening out their problems. In particular, Jewish Christians were not getting along with Gentile Christians—a situation that Paul had faced several times before—which the apostle addresses in the last half of the letter (9:1–15:13). But if that is the main reason for Romans, what is the purpose of the first half of the letter—a lengthy, sophisticated theological argument concerning the righteousness of God that seems to have little to do with ethnic divisions among Roman Christians?

Theology. Since Romans contains the clearest and most substantive theological argument of all of Paul's letters, scholars wonder why he wrote it. Some have thought that Paul was trying to get his beliefs down on paper before facing perilous times in Jerusalem. Others have argued, based on Paul's appeal for financial support, that Romans is a condensed version of his gospel—a "this is what I preach so you can support me" letter. Recently, scholars have been emphasizing the correlation between chapters 1–8 and 9–16. That is to say, the first half of Romans is the theological foundation upon which Paul builds his argument for a unified church threatened by ethnic, social, and economic divisions. But what is the evidence of ethnic strife in the Roman letter? First of all, when Paul greets certain house churches, the grouping of names reveals that “birds of a feather flocked together.” Persons with Jewish names appear together (16:1–7), separated from those with slave names (16:8–10a), and distinguished from those with high-status Greek names (16:14–15). This conforms to the demographics of the first-century city, where Jews were segregated from their neighbors and the poor lived together in the least desirable part of Rome. The contentious debate over food and calendar between the “weak” and the “strong” reveals fault lines that conform to ethnic and social divisions within the church: weak = Jews, strong = Gentiles (14:1–15:13). At one point, Paul even singles out his Gentile readers by issuing a specific warning about ignoring the Jewish roots of their faith (11:13–24). With these issues in mind, scholars see how Paul front-loaded his warnings about ethnic strife with the theological argument of 1:1–8:39. Indeed, Romans is a pastoral letter with theological purpose.

OUTLINE

I. Introduction (1:1–17)
    A. Greeting (1:1–7)
    B. Thanksgiving and prayer (1:8–15)
    C. Thesis: the righteousness of God by faith (1:16–17)

II. The Righteousness of God by Faith (1:18–8:39)
    A. Judgment of God against ungodliness and unrighteousness (1:18–3:20)
    B. Righteousness of God in Christ by faith (3:21–5:11)
    C. Questions regarding the righteousness of God in Christ by faith (5:12–8:39)

III. Living Righteously by Faith (9:1–15:13)
    A. What about Israel? (9:1–11:36)
    B. Present the body as a sacrifice (12:1–21)
    C. Submit to God (13:1–14)
    D. Accept one another (14:1–15:13)

IV. Conclusion (15:14–16:27)
    A. Paul’s purpose (15:14–33)
    B. Final greetings (16:1–27)

PAUL’S ARGUMENT

The main point of Paul’s letter to the Romans is that the righteousness of God has been fully revealed in Christ Jesus. According to Paul, this is “good news” (gospel) for Jews and Gentiles. In fact, the entire letter is Paul’s explanation of why he believes that this new revelation of God’s righteousness in Christ is good news for all people, even his own kin. But what does Paul mean by “the righteousness of God”? Is he talking about how God makes individuals right by faith in Christ? Or is he defending God’s way of saving the world, saying that God is right to bring salvation to all people through the gospel? Does the phrase “righteousness of God” mean “personal justification that comes from God" or "the justice of God"? What makes Paul's meaning even more confusing for speakers of English is that one Greek word (*dikaiosynē*) can be translated three ways: "righteousness," "justice," or "justification." Thus, there are those who argue that Paul emphasizes personal righteousness—that is, how a person can have right standing with God. Others, however, maintain that Paul is arguing for his gospel as an undeniable demonstration of God's justice—that is, how God's character as a just God is revealed through the salvation of the world through Christ (not only sons of Abraham, not only sons of Adam, but all creation). The different emphases have significant implications for Paul's argument.

The Roman forum, the center of ancient Rome

Judgment of God against ungodliness and unrighteousness (1:18–3:20). Take, for example, Paul's view of the law and how it functions in the first part of Romans (1:18–3:20). Some take 3:20 as the climax of this part of the argument, where Paul assigns one purpose to the law: to define sin. So according to this line of interpretation, Paul believes that God gave the law in order to show humanity's need of Christ. Since no one is able to keep the whole law, especially those to whom it has been given, the Jews, then "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (3:23). The implication, of course, is that God gave the law in order to reveal to people Israel's failure so that Israel would recognize their need for a righteousness that depends not on obedience but on God's free gift through Christ. But there are two problems with this approach: Paul is offended by the idea that God gave the law to the Israelites in order to cause them to "stumble so as to fall" (11:11–12), and he also maintains that there were some who kept the law (Gentiles!), proving that "doers of the law will be justified" (2:13–14 NASB, NKJV). In other words, the law is God's gift to Israel that is supposed to give it an advantage when it comes to righteousness (3:1–2). But the Jews disobeyed God (2:17–24), incurring his wrath (just like the Gentiles [1:18–32]). So Paul makes the argument that God is right to punish Israelites (as well as the Gentiles) for their disobedience (2:1–12): "There will be trouble and distress for every human being who does evil: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile" (2:9). In other words, 1:18–3:20 is not only an argument for the universality of sin (which neither Jew nor Gentile would deny) but also a justification of the revelation of God's righteous wrath against *all* ungodliness and disobedience, even for the Jewish people. Paul is pointing out the justice of God by emphasizing his impartial punishment of sin.

But this is where an interlocutor (a hypothetical opponent of Paul) could raise an objection: "But we Jews have the covenant with God, consisting of laws and promises from God. God promised to bless the sons of Abraham and gave us the law—with all the prescriptions for sacrifices and atonement—to deal with sin. We will escape God's wrath because God is faithful even though we are not." Even though Paul's interlocutor does not use these words, this is the basis of the argument that Paul puts into the mouth of his imaginary opponent in 3:1–8. The interlocutor essentially says, "If our sin reveals the righteous wrath of God, then Paul is saying that our disobedience serves his purpose. Why should we be judged as sinners?" In other words, what is the point of the covenant if God's chosen people are no better off than pagans on the day of judgment? But this is the very point that Paul will contend with on two counts. First, who says that God's chosen people do not have an advantage in preparing for the day of judgment (an argument that he will come back to in 9:1–11:32)? Second, who says that the law is God's only requirement of the covenant (a question that he answers in 3:21–5:21)? Throughout the entire Roman letter Paul holds two seemingly contradictory ideas in tension: the fulfillment of God's covenant promises to Abraham is not contingent upon Israel's obedience (God is faithful), and not every descendant of Abraham will realize the covenant promises of God (only those who have faith like Abraham). The reason for the tension is that a new kind of righteousness has been revealed apart from the law (although predicted by the Law and the Prophets), fulfilling the salient requirement of the covenant. Those who believe that the righteousness of God is found *in Christ* will inherit the promises of God to Abraham, whether Jew or Gentile. Therefore, Christ's followers are the sons of Abraham, the children of the covenant, justified by faith, not by law. All of this is by divine design—what Paul calls "predestination."

Righteousness of God in Christ by faith (3:21–5:11). According to Paul, sacrifices prescribed by the law only deferred the wrath of God. "In his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished" (3:25). On the other hand, Jesus' sacrificial death, a public display of God's righteousness, atones for the sins of Jews *and* Gentiles "at the present time" (3:25–30). To describe the justification of Christ's death as an act of redemption, Paul uses a technical word, "propitiation" (v. 25 [NIV: "sacrifice of atonement"]), which has two meanings: either God's righteous requirement was "satisfied" by the blood of Christ, or God's wrath was "appeased" by the blood of Christ. Either way, at this point we might have expected Paul to explain how Christ's death satisfied the requirements of the law by offering the perfect sacrifice (much like the argument of Hebrews). Instead, he emphasizes the role of faith in this new revelation of God's righteousness: both the faith(fulness) of Jesus and the faith of those who believe in him (the phrase often translated "faith in Jesus Christ" might also mean "faithfulness of Jesus Christ" [3:22, 26]). This does two things at once: it makes the righteousness of God available to Gentiles as well as Jews because it is based on faith ("Is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles too? Yes, of Gentiles too" [3:29]), and it elevates the role of faith above works of the law in the story of God's covenant with Israel ("For we maintain that a person is justified by faith apart from the works of the law" [3:28]). In other words, by privileging faith over works of law, Paul has made a way for Gentiles to realize the promises God made to Abraham and has established the supreme requirement of the Abrahamic covenant for Jews. This is why scholars say that 4:1–25 (Paul's interpretation of God's covenant with Abraham) is crucial to his argument for the righteousness of God in Christ.

Abraham was God's first Gentile convert. That is to say, Abraham was an uncircumcised Chaldean when God established his covenant with the father of Israel. For Paul, the sequence of the story is pivotal to his argument. In 4:3 he quotes Gen. 15:6, "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness," and points out that God's righteousness was "credited" or "reckoned" to the patriarch because of his faith while he was still uncircumcised (Rom. 4:10–12). Abraham believed God's promise of making him the father of many nations even though he had no son. Faith in God's promise is what made this uncircumcised man righteous. Furthermore, because of his faith, the promise of God was fulfilled: Abraham not only became the father of Israel; he became the father of *all* nations (Gentiles) who have faith like Abraham. And what kind of faith is that? It is a resurrection faith—one who believes that God gives life to the dead, not only dead loins and a dead womb, but also a dead man (4:16–25). So the righteousness of God is "reckoned" for "us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead. He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification" (4:24–25). Faith in the promise of God is the requisite of covenant blessing. For if the covenant were based on works of law, then Israel would be the only beneficiary of God's grace, and the promises God made to Abraham—that he would be the father of many nations—would be made void (4:13–15). "Therefore, the promise comes by faith, so that it may be by grace and may be guaranteed to all Abraham's offspring—not only to those who are of the law but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham. He is the father of us all" (4:16).

The death and resurrection of Jesus changed everything. It turned God's enemies into friends. It brought peace to those who deserved God's wrath. In Christ's death, God loves the ungodly. In Christ's resurrection, hope befriends the helpless. When Paul spells out the advantages of the righteousness of God in Christ in 5:1–11, it reads like a condensed version of all that is right with the gospel according to Paul. His favorite triad is there: faith, hope, love. He employs his favorite metaphors to explain the meaning of the sacrifice of Christ: justification and reconciliation. He writes of salvation in every tense: past, present, and future. In fact, the rest of the argument in 5:12–8:39 is Paul's explanation of what he means in these few verses, gathering up issues raised at the beginning of the letter—the problem of sin, the law, and the righteousness of God.

Questions regarding the righteousness of God in Christ by faith (5:12–8:39). Paul once again begins with the human condition: the law of sin and death reigns in the world because of Adam. But where the first Adam failed, the second Adam (Christ) has succeeded: because of his obedience, grace reigns eternally through his righteousness (5:12–21). How does this righteousness apply to Christ believers, especially Gentiles without law? Sin was crucified with Christ so that believers can be slaves of righteousness, freed from the bondage of sin (6:1–23). Furthermore, believers have been freed from the law, a spiritual and holy gift that sin used to arouse the flesh, effecting death (7:1–25). What the law could not do (bring life) because of the weakness of the flesh, God did by sending his Son in human flesh in order to condemn sin, bring about justice/righteousness required by the law, and provide his Spirit to enable believers to have resurrection life (8:1–27). This has been God's plan from the beginning (predestination): he will have a people (election) like Jesus Christ (justification), who will share in his resurrection (glorification). And what God starts, he finishes. Nothing can frustrate the plans of God. His love is too great; his power is irrepressible (8:28–39). Since God is the one who justifies the "elect," no charge can be brought against them (8:33).

PAUL'S ADVICE

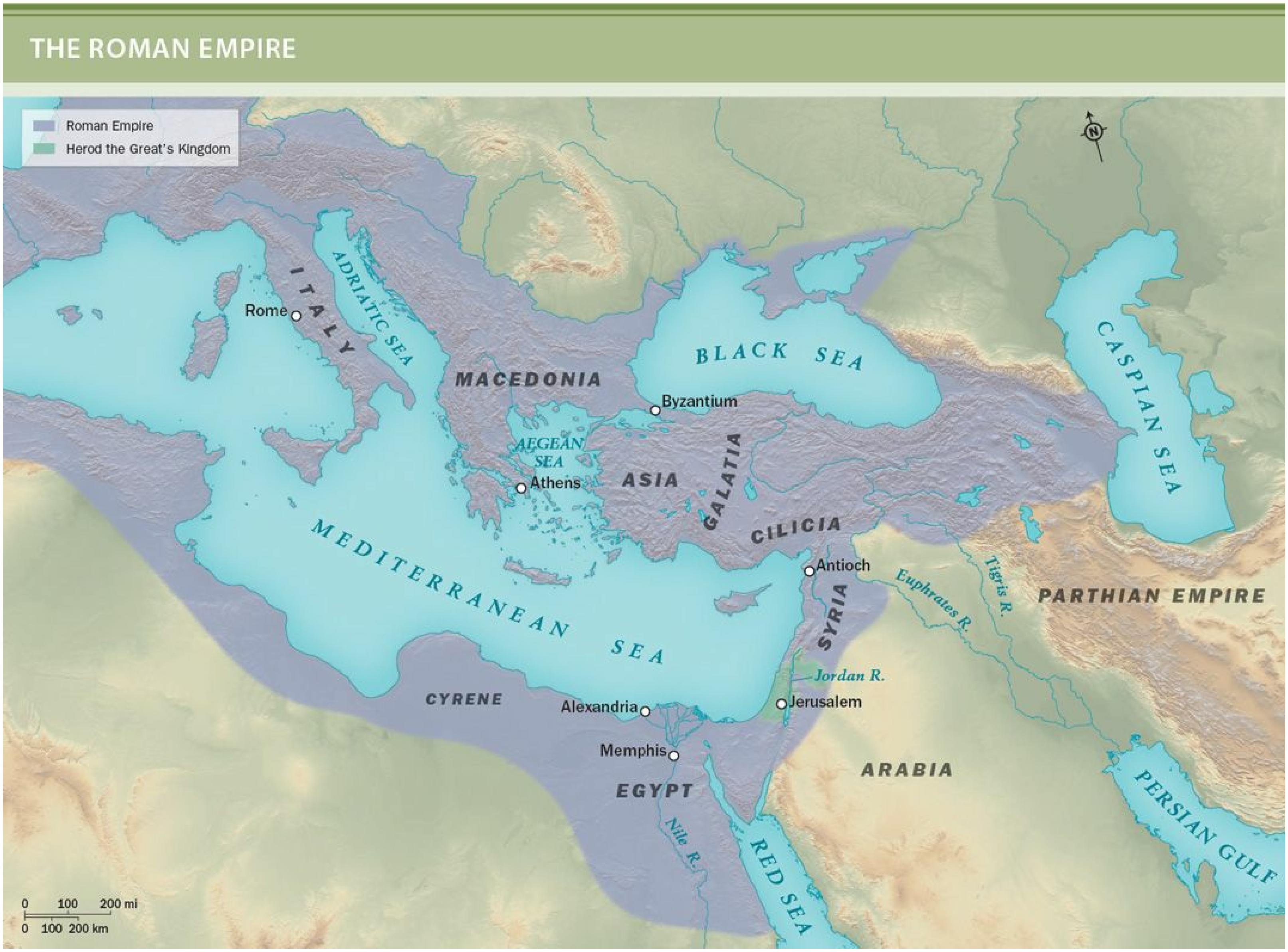
The conclusion to Paul's argument—believers in Christ can do nothing to jeopardize God's love for them as his "elect"—brings to mind the problem of Israel's rejection of the gospel (9:1–11:32). If Paul believes that God's promises are irrevocable, should not the same apply to Israel? If the righteousness of God is found in Christ, what does this mean for Jews who do not believe in Jesus? Does their unbelief undermine God's faithfulness? This was more than a theological problem for Paul. Ethnic issues threatened to divide the church in Rome. Evidently, Gentile believers were displaying an arrogant attitude toward Jewish members of the church (11:13–24), contemptuous of their dietary restrictions and Sabbath observances (14:3–6). Perhaps Paul's notorious reputation as a lawbreaker (3:8) added fuel to the fire of ethnic strife and emboldened Gentile believers to disregard Jewish sensibilities with smug confidence, especially in a place such as Rome, where tensions between Jews and Gentiles were prevalent. Or, maybe Paul had nothing to do with it; Gentile contempt for Jewish people and their ways was an unfortunate by-product of the argument for Gentile inclusion: the law no longer defined righteousness ("Who needs the Jews and their law?"). Whatever the cause, Israel's rejection of the gospel coupled with the historical problem of Jew versus Gentile was a delicate issue that required a carefully nuanced answer from Paul (9:1–11:32), setting up his advice for house churches that needed to learn how to get along with one another (12:1–15:13).

What about Israel? (9:1–11:36). Paul uses Isaiah's idea of a faithful remnant to explain how God's promises to Abraham are fulfilled despite Israel's disobedience (9:27–11:10). In this case, the disobedient of Israel are made evident by their refusal to believe in the gospel according to Paul (10:5–21). Because they prefer a righteousness of their own (a Jewish kind of righteousness), zeal for the law has made them ignorant of the righteousness of God in Christ (9:30–10:4). But does Jewish unbelief compromise God's faithfulness, jeopardizing God's promise to Abraham? No, for according to Paul, not every descendant of Abraham inherits the covenant blessings (e.g., Ishmael and Esau [9:6–26]). So, if Gentiles are grafted into the tree of Abraham's descendants by faith, and Jews who deny the righteousness of God in Christ are branches broken off the tree of promise, does this mean that God has given up on Israel (11:11–24)? No, because Paul believes that "Israel has experienced a hardening in part" (11:25). Eventually, the hearts of the Jews will soften to the gospel, because they will be jealous of God's covenant blessing extended to Gentile believers, and "all Israel will be saved" in the end; the natural branches cut off from the olive tree will be grafted back into Abraham's family tree (11:11–15, 24–32). Here Paul inverts the Jewish eschatological expectation that Gentiles will be saved before the end of the world because of their jealousy of God's blessings for his people, Israel (Isa. 19:23–25; 49:6–7). In the end, then, God's mercy triumphs over all disobedience (whether Jewish or Gentile) because "God's gifts and his call are irrevocable" (Rom. 11:29).

Present the body as a sacrifice (12:1–21) and submit to God (13:1–14). Because of God's mercies for Jews and Gentiles, Paul appeals to the house churches in Rome to sacrifice themselves for the cause of Christ (12:1–2). What does a life of surrender look like? It means keeping overinflated self-esteem in check (12:3) and affirming the diversity of the body of Christ, meeting the needs of all members, and overcoming evil with good by avoiding revenge, helping enemies, and submitting to Roman law (12:4–13:7). Love is the key to this life of sacrifice, in which the believer wears the Lord Jesus Christ like an armor of righteousness, knowing that the day of salvation draws near (13:8–14). In the meantime, believers must accept one another "just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God" (15:7). Indeed, for Paul, Christ is the supreme example of sacrifice because he "did not please himself" but rather took on the sins of the circumcised and the uncircumcised (15:3–9).

Accept one another (14:1–15:13). Thus, since Christ was a servant to Jews and Gentiles, how much more Jewish and Gentile Christ believers should serve one another. Jewish members of the Roman church should quit judging believers who eat meat, drink wine, and recognize every day as a holy day (14:1–12). Gentile members should stop parading their freedom to eat and drink whatever they want (14:13–23): "If your brother or sister is distressed because of what you eat, you are no longer acting in love. Do not by your eating destroy someone for whom Christ died" (14:15). Regarding these gray areas, each person should operate according to his or her own conviction before God (14:22–23). But when it comes to the bonds of fellowship, Paul encourages them to have "the same attitude of mind toward each other that Christ Jesus had" (15:5). So Paul's innocuous request of the segregated house churches may reveal a unifying strategy: "Greet one another with a holy kiss" (16:16).

ROME, ROMAN EMPIRE The historical origins of Christianity need to be set against Jewish history, beliefs, and culture in Palestine and the eastern Mediterranean, but they also need to be set in the context of the wider Greco-Roman world that was dominated politically and militarily by the Roman Empire.



THE ROMAN EMPIRE

Roman Empire
Herod the Great's Kingdom
N
ITALY
Rome
ADRIATIC SEA
MACEDONIA
BLACK SEA
Byzantium
CASPIAN SEA
AEGEAN SEA
Athens
ASIA
GALATIA
CILICIA
Antioch
SYRIA
Euphrates R.
Tigris R.
PARTHIAN EMPIRE
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
Jordan R.
Jerusalem
CYRENE
Alexandria
Memphis
EGYPT
ARABIA
Nile R.
RED SEA
PERSIAN GULF
0 100 200 mi
0 100 200 km

From Republic to Empire

Rome began as a city-state but soon became a transcontinental empire reaching over parts of Europe, Africa, and Asia. Rome emerged as the most dominant force in the Mediterranean after it defeated Carthage in the Second Punic War (218–201 BC). Thereafter, Rome began to expand its control and power over the various Hellenistic city-states in the east, including Macedonia, Illyria, and Asia Minor. By the mid-first century AD, Rome had also conquered or annexed Syria, Palestine, Egypt, Cyrene, Gaul, Spain, North Africa, and Armenia.

The transition from the Roman Republic to the Roman Empire took place under the Roman emperors beginning with Julius Caesar (100–44 BC), who, after crossing the Rubicon and defeating Pompey, was proclaimed *dictator perpetuus* ("dictator for life"). The period after Julius Caesar's assassination (44 BC) was a time of political upheaval as Rome was marred by a series of civil wars. The first was between Octavius and Antony against Caesar's assassins Brutus and Cassius. This climaxed in the Battle of Philippi (42 BC), which the former allies of Julius Caesar won. The second was between Octavius and Antony, where Antony and Cleopatra were defeated at the Battle of Actium in 31 BC, leaving Octavius as the undisputed leader of Rome.

Octavius was given the honorific name "Augustus" by the senate. His reign (31 BC–AD 14) marked a period of consolidation, reorganization, and renewal of the Roman Empire. Augustus embarked on an empire-wide policy of fiscal rationalization, developed a constitutional settlement for Rome, centralized his military authority over the various provinces, and had Julius Caesar deified. Writers and artists of the era heralded Augustus's reign as a time of unprecedented peace and security—peace from civil war and security from the Germanic tribes in the north and the Parthian Empire in the east. Worship of the emperor became more frequent especially in the Roman East, although Augustus did not permit it in Rome. What is most significant about Augustus is that it is with his reign that the Roman Empire essentially began. He was the emperor at the time of Jesus' birth (Luke 2:1). It was under Trajan (AD 98–117), however, that the Roman Empire expanded to its largest area, encompassing parts of Britain and Persia.

EMPERORS (AD 14–98)

Tiberius, Augustus's adopted heir, reigned in the years AD 14–37. He was a highly successful military general, but as emperor he was remembered as being gloomy and melancholic. Tiberius even went into a self-imposed exile for a time, leaving the praetorian prefect Sejanus in charge until Tiberius finally had him executed for treason. It was during the reign of Tiberius that Jesus conducted his ministry in Palestine.

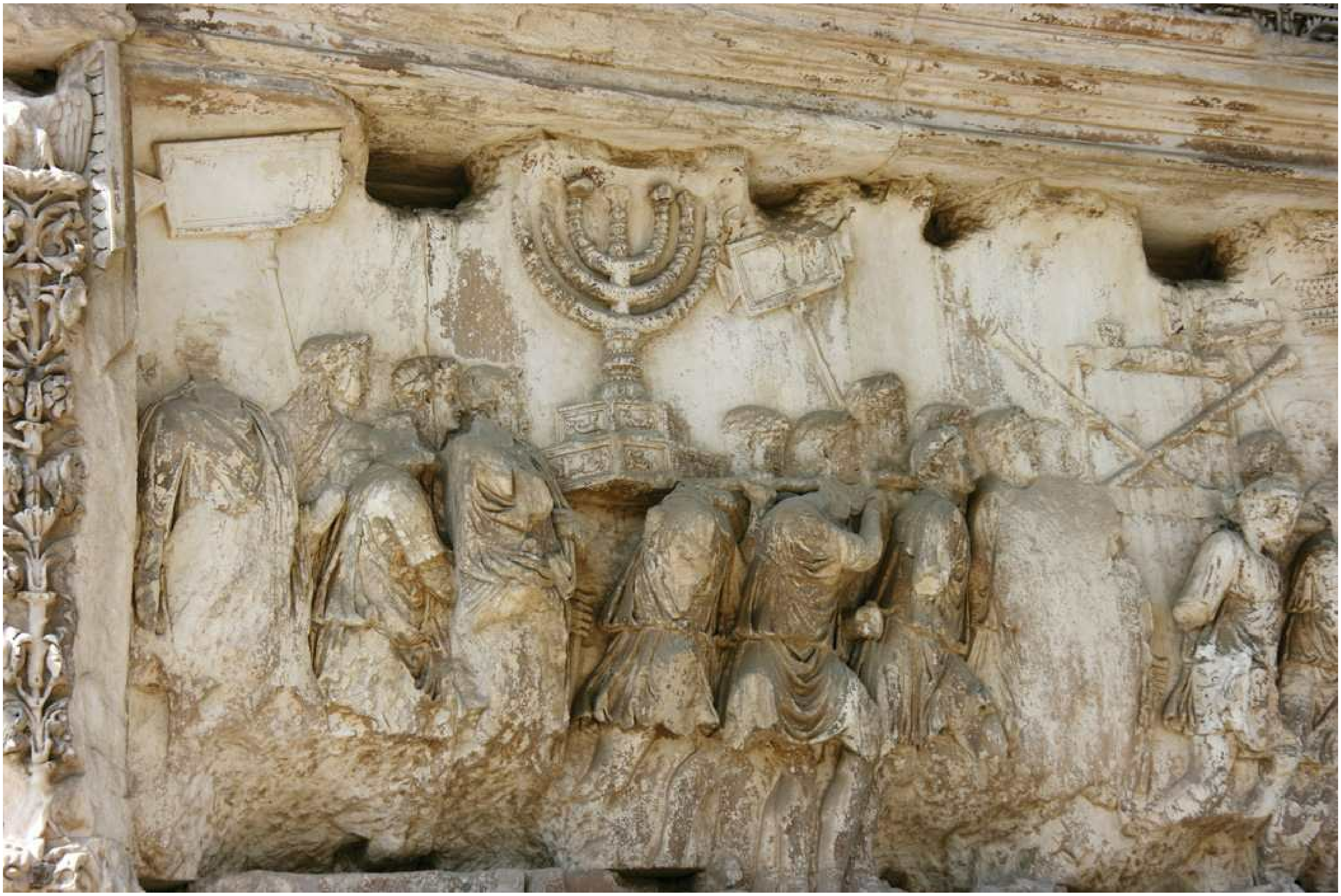
Tiberius was succeeded by his adopted grandson Caligula, who reigned in the years AD 37–41. Caligula was the son of the popular Roman general Germanicus, who died in Antioch in AD 19. Historical sources are not favorably disposed toward Caligula, who was remembered as a malevolent tyrant given to self-aggrandizement and sexual perversity. In AD 39/40 Caligula departed from imperial policy that permitted emperor worship in the east and veneration of deceased emperors in Rome, and he often appeared dressed as a god in public and demanded worship as a living god. During this time he deposed Herod Antipas, the tetrarch of Galilee and Perea, on suspicion of consorting with Parthia (Josephus, *Ant*. 18.7). Caligula also ordered that his statue be placed in the holy of holies in the Jerusalem temple (Philo, *Embassy* 203). Petronius, the governor of Syria, knowing that such an act would lead to civil war, refused to comply and appealed to Caligula to reverse the order. In response, Caligula sent an order to Petronius that he commit suicide. Fortunately, news of Caligula's assassination by a conspiracy involving the praetorian guard and senators reached Petronius first.

Claudius, Caligula's uncle, reigned in the years AD 41–54, and his rule was defined by numerous public works, a reordering of the judicial system, a torrid series of marriages, the conquest of Britain, and a number of attempted coups by the Roman senate. In AD 49 he expelled the Jews from Rome because of disputes about a certain "Chrestus," probably Christ (cf. Acts 18:2). No one is sure whether Claudius was murdered or died of old age, but he remained a sharp contrast to the brutal excesses of Caligula and Nero.

Nero, the stepson of Claudius, reigned in the years AD 54–68. The early period of his rule was marked by cultural endeavors and diplomatic efforts. The later years were, in contrast, distinguished by tyranny and self-aggrandizement. There was a Jewish revolt against Rome in Judea (AD 66–70) during Nero's reign, and Vespasian was sent to pacify the territory. According to ancient sources, Nero accused Christians of starting the fire of Rome in AD 64 and subjected them to the cruelest of punishments, including crucifixion, being thrown to wild animals, and even being burned alive. It probably was during this time that the apostles Peter and Paul were martyred in Rome. Nero eventually was declared a public enemy by the Roman senate, and he committed suicide before he could be captured in AD 68. There arose a "Nero redivivus" legend, whereby many hoped or feared that Nero had not died in AD 68 but had fled to Parthia and would return to Rome in order to destroy it (*Sib*. *Or*. 4.119–124; 5.137–141, 361–396), and this arguably stands behind the imagery of Rev. 13:3; 17:8–11.

The suicide of Nero left a power vacuum in Rome, and AD 69 saw no less than four emperors ascend the throne: Galba, Otho, Vitellius, and finally Vespasian. Galba was governor of Hispania Tarraconensis and was invited to become emperor by the senate, but he was killed by the praetorian guard after they were bribed by the praetor Otho. Otho himself committed suicide after his forces were defeated by Vitellius, the commander of the legions on the Rhine. Vitellius became emperor, but he was fiscally irresponsible and murdered many of his rivals. The legions in the Danube, Egypt, Syria, and Judea had declared Vespasian emperor and marched on Rome. Vespasian controlled the grain supplies to Rome from Egypt and had a superior force. Vitellius's forces were defeated at Bedriacum, and Vitellius went into hiding but eventually was killed in Rome. Vespasian was declared emperor by the senate, and so began the Flavian dynasty, which restored order after the chaos of civil war.

The Flavians ruled in the years AD 69–96. Vespasian (r. AD 69–79) consolidated the empire after its year of strife and instituted new taxes, such as the *fiscus judaicus*, a war reparation tax placed on all Jews and paid to the temple of Jupiter in lieu of the Jerusalem temple tax. Vespasian was succeeded by his sons Titus (r. AD 79–81) and Domitian (r. AD 81–96). When Vespasian sailed to Rome from Judea, Titus was left in charge of the siege of Jerusalem, which he completed and celebrated in a triumph in Rome in AD 72. This triumph is memorialized in the Arch of Titus, which depicts Roman soldiers bringing the vessels of the temple to Rome as part of the booty taken. Later Roman writers regarded Domitian as a malevolent and malicious tyrant (e.g., Tacitus, Suetonius), but this probably is an exaggeration caused partly by a desire to highlight the greatness of succeeding emperors such as Nerva and Trajan. It probably was during the reign of Domitian that some Christians in Asia Minor were being persecuted for their failure to worship the emperor, as depicted in the book of Revelation.



Relief on the Arch of Titus showing Roman soldiers carrying the temple vessels as part of the spoils taken from Jerusalem

Table 7. Roman Emperors (31 BC–AD 117)

Years	Emperor
31 BC–AD 14	Augustus
AD 14–37	Tiberius
AD 37–41	Caligula
AD 41–54	Claudius
AD 54–68	Nero
AD 68–69	Galba
AD 69	Otho
AD 69	Vitellius
AD 69–79	Vespasian
AD 79–81	Titus
AD 81–96	Domitian
AD 96–98	Nerva

MILITARY

Military expeditions expanded Rome's control of foreign territories and safeguarded its borders from incursion, most threateningly from the Germanic tribes east of the Rhine River and north of the Danube River and from the Parthian (= Neo-Persian) Empire east of the Euphrates River. A Roman legion consisted of around six thousand men, including cavalry. Under Tiberius, there were twenty-five legions stationed across the empire: eight on the Rhine, three in Spain, two in Egypt, four in Syria, two in Africa, and six in the Danube region. In terms of command structures, the legions were under the control of certain regional commands by men of consular rank, including two on the Rhine, one in Spain, one in Syria, and three in the Balkans (Tacitus, *Ann.* 4.5). These were among the most powerful persons outside the ruling family and could be kingmakers or contenders during times of civil war. A legion was divided into ten cohorts and commanded by a legate, usually of senatorial rank. Units of one hundred were commanded by centurions, and service in the legions was set at between twenty and twenty-five years. Upon recruitment, the soldier swore an oath of loyalty to the emperor (*sacramentum*) that was renewed annually. During times of peace, Roman soldiers could perform a number of civil tasks relating to taxation, building projects, and policing.

Centurions are mentioned several times in the NT (e.g., Matt. 8:5; Mark 15:39; Acts 10:1; 21:32; 27:1). There is a mention of a "legion" of demons that oppressed the Gerasene demoniac (Mark 5:9), and Jesus refers to the possibility of the Father sending him "legions" of angels (Matt. 26:53). Military terminology is very apparent in Paul's letters, where he refers to fighting armor (Rom. 13:11–13; 2 Cor. 6:7; Eph. 6:10–18), compares commitment to Christ to military service (2 Tim. 2:4), refers to his coworkers as "soldiers" or "fellow soldiers" (Phil. 2:25; Philem. 2; 2 Tim. 2:3), and likens ministerial remuneration to a soldier being paid his *salarium* (1 Cor. 9:7).

CULTURE AND RELIGION

One of the primary reasons for Rome's rise and dominance, militarily and culturally, was its capacity to absorb other peoples and even other gods into its constituency and pantheon. Its constantly growing pantheon, application of the rule of law, and superior military force made Rome what it was: a melting pot of all cultures and a Romanizer of other cultures.

Roman society was heavily stratified, but social mobility, upward and downward, was possible. Wealth, marriage, education, and military exploits were the primary means to social advancement. The senatorial class represented the wealthy nobility of Rome and provided the primary cohort of civil and military administrators. The equestrian class (or "knights," as they are sometimes called) were a larger group of less wealthy Roman citizens. Decurions were members of civil councils in provincial cities who often acted as magistrates and were leaders of local communities. The plebeians represented the general citizenry of Rome, who, until the time of Tiberius, had some power in electing officials. Finally, there were freedmen, who were ex-slaves usually in a relationship with their former master, and also slaves, who were regarded as little more than property.

The ancient Roman religions focused on the *numen*, the somewhat impersonal divine power associated with certain localities. From the third century BC, Greek deities were assimilated and Romanized, so that Zeus became Jupiter, and Vesta was identified as Hestia. The Capitoline Hill was crowned with a temple that was dedicated around 500 BC to Jupiter, Minerva, and Juno. These were the principal gods of Rome, although others were added to the pantheon as the Romans conquered other peoples and adopted their gods. Other gods also received greater honor, such as the goddess

Pax, the personification of peace (based on the Greek goddess Eirene); Vespasian built and dedicated a temple in her honor in Rome in AD 75. The Roman emperor was the Pontifex Maximus and supreme high priest of Rome and the empire. In the mid- to late first century AD, the fastest-growing religion was the imperial cult, the worship of (usually) deceased Roman emperors. This cult became popular in the eastern Mediterranean cities, where worship of rulers was commonplace, but was regarded with indifference in Rome.

Religions and philosophies from all over the known world eventually made their way to Rome. Egyptian rites and religions gained followings, Mithraism acquired currency within the ranks of the military and among public servants, Judaism entered Rome probably with the Hasmonean delegation sent there around 139 BC, and Christianity came to Rome probably during the late 30s and early 40s of the first century AD through Jewish pilgrims visiting the east and through Judean immigration to Rome. Many Roman intellectuals lamented the fact that so many foreign superstitions had found their way to Rome, and that Roman peoples found them more attractive than their own state religion. Roman religion was largely controlled by the state through a set calendar and the appointment of priests and vestal virgins. It was practiced in public and in the home. As such, religious life was very much intertwined with social and political life. Roman religion engendered the need for its citizens to act with *pietas*, the honoring of one's obligations to the gods, and with *religio*, which designated appropriate scruples and rites in the presence of the gods.

SUMMARY

The birth of the church and the growth of Christianity took place within the wider social, religious, and cultural context of the Greco-Roman world. The politics and power of the Roman Empire provide the backdrop for the birth of Jesus (Luke 2:1), and since Rome was considered to be the center of the world, it was necessary that Paul himself testify to Jesus Christ there (Acts 19:21). The history, literature, and cultural background of Rome form an important background to the NT and should be studied along with the history and literature of Judaism during the time of Jesus and the apostles. Although the Romans were the primary threat to the survival of Christians in the ancient world, after the conversion of Constantine in the fourth century AD, they became the primary means by which Christianity spread to the rest of Europe and western Asia. *See also* Roman Law.

ROOF *See* Architecture; House.

ROOF CHAMBER *See* Architecture; Chamber.

ROOSTER A rooster marks the passage of time in the story of Peter's denial of Jesus in all four Gospels (Matt. 26:34, 74–75; Mark 14:30, 72; Luke 22:34, 60, 61; John 13:38; 18:27). In the story, Jesus predicts that Peter will deny him three times before the rooster crows. The event takes place in the Sanhedrin courtyard in the presence of the high priest's servants (the high priest was one of the people trying Jesus). In Mark 13:35 Jesus warns that the coming apocalypse will take people by surprise if they are not watching during the different times of night, including "when the rooster crows."

ROOT The word "root" occurs in a literal sense in Job 30:4, but ordinarily it is used in a figurative sense. Its most prevalent connotation refers to the foundation or core of a matter or one's life (Job 28:9; Prov. 12:3, 12; Isa. 14:30). It also, by analogy, signifies that which gives life to the plant (Matt.

13:6; Rom. 11:17). When pictured near water, roots symbolize prosperity (Job 29:19; Ezek. 31:7), even a blessing of the Lord (Job 8:17; Jer. 17:8).

The term sometimes indicates the lowest part or depth (Job 36:30). It can also carry the idea of origin, as in that of bitterness or evil (Deut. 29:18; 1 Tim. 6:10; Heb. 12:15), or the cause of a matter (Job 19:28).

Frequently, the word is used to describe something established, as in a kingdom (Ps. 80:9, 15; Isa. 27:6; 37:31; 40:24; Jer. 12:2). It emphasizes positively that which is secure (Prov. 12:3, 12) or negatively that which is uprooted or destroyed (1 Kings 14:15).

Finally, the word may refer to the offspring of a family (Judg. 5:14; Ps. 80:15), ultimately pointing to the coming Messiah (Isa. 11:1, 10; 53:2; Rev. 5:5; 22:16) as the heir through whom the dynasty is completed.

ROSE, ROSE OF SHARON *See* Flowers; Plants.

ROSETTA STONE A Ptolemaic Egyptian stela, dating from the early second century BC, containing the same passage in three languages: Demotic and Hieroglyphics (two Egyptian languages) and Classical Greek. Discovered in 1799, it eventually aided scholars in deciphering and understanding Hieroglyphics. They worked from the two already known languages on the stone, Demotic and Classical Greek, to learn about Hieroglyphics. British scholar Thomas Young and French scholar Jean-François Champollion were pivotal in exploiting the multilingual stela for this breakthrough.

ROSETTES *See* Filigree.

ROSH The seventh of Benjamin’s ten sons (Gen. 46:21). The name does not appear in the other genealogies of Benjamin (Num. 26:38–41; 1 Chron. 7:6–12), which leads some to suggest that “Ehi” and “Rosh” in Gen. 46:21 resulted from a scribe miscopying the name “Ahiram.”

ROUND TIRES In Isa. 3:18 the KJV translates the Hebrew term *saharon* (“moon, crescent”) as “round tire,” which, as the KJV translation of the same term in Judg. 8:21, 26 recognizes, served as an ornament worn by both people and camels. The NET translates the term as “crescent-shaped ornament” (NIV: “crescent necklaces”; NRSV: “crescent”).

ROWERS, ROW *See* Ships, Sailors, and Navigation.

ROYAL CITY A king’s residence (1 Sam. 27:5; Josh. 8:1; 10:2). Being a walled city, it was the last bastion of defense in wartime (2 Sam. 12:26). David took the Jebusite royal city, the citadel of Zion (Jerusalem), and made it Israel’s royal city (2 Sam. 5:7–9).

RUDDER *See* Ships, Sailors, and Navigation.

RUDDY A reddish hue. The term is used to describe skin or perhaps hair (1 Sam. 16:12; 17:42 NASB, NET, NRSV, KJV; NIV: “glowing with health”; Song 5:10; Lam. 4:7; see also Gen. 25:25). When used of skin, it indicates health.

RUE An herb (*Ruta graveolens*) subject to tithe and mentioned only in Luke 11:42 (Gk. *pēganon*), rue was used for flavoring and for its medicinal value.

RUFUS One of the two sons of Simon of Cyrene, who was conscripted to carry Jesus' cross (Mark 15:21). A man named "Rufus" is sent greetings by Paul in Rom. 16:13, and he may be the same person. The equation of the two is made more likely if Mark's Gospel was written for a Roman audience.

RUHAMAH *See* Lo-Ruhamah.

RULER OF THE SYNAGOGUE *See* Synagogue.

RUMAH The hometown of Zebidah, mother of Jehoiakim (2 Kings 23:36). The name means "elevated place." A mention by Josephus places it in Galilee, but the exact location is unknown; it is possibly Arumah near Shechem (Judg. 9:41) or Khirbet Rumeh near Nazareth.

RUN, RUNNING Although athletic games probably came to Israel only with the Greeks and Romans, running was a natural part of biblical life: carrying messages (2 Sam. 18:19–32; Jer. 51:31), fleeing predators (Amos 5:19), pursuing enemies (2 Sam. 2:18–23). Running might also be viewed as undignified behavior, since in a Middle Eastern household only children and servants commonly ran about. It has been suggested that in the parable of the prodigal son, the father's running to greet the prodigal son is a shocking display of unbridled joy (Luke 15:20).

RUNNERS Troops running before an official riding in a chariot, perhaps as heralds and bodyguards and to clear the way. They were used by Absalom and Adonijah (2 Sam. 15:1; 1 Kings 1:5) and apparently by Joseph (Gen. 41:43).

RUNNING SORES A sore that oozes or emits pus, unacceptable for priests (Lev. 21:20) and the sacrificial animal (Lev. 22:22). This followed both the requirement that priests and sacrificial animals bear no physical blemish and the general taboo against bodily effluences such as nocturnal emissions (Deut. 23:10).

RUSH, RUSHES *See* Plants; Reed.

RUST The corrosion of metal. It is used metaphorically in the Bible to illustrate the transitory nature of earthly treasures. Jesus warns against storing up treasure on earth, where moth and rust destroy (Matt. 6:19 ESV, NRSV, NASB). Ezekiel uses rust as an image of the lasting blight of sin, comparing the people's wickedness to the corrosion encrusting a pot that not even fire can remove (Ezek. 24:6, 12). James combines these ideas as he warns the rich that the corrosion of their gold and silver will testify against them, eating their flesh like fire (James 5:3). Because James is building on these metaphors, the fact that gold and silver do not actually rust should not distract from his message: the rust that symbolizes the destruction of earthly goods threatens to destroy those who rely on them.

RUTH Ruth was a Moabite woman who, during the turbulent period of the judges, married into an Israelite family that had immigrated to Moab, east of the Dead Sea, because of a famine in Israel. At the beginning of her story, her husband, father-in-law, and brother-in-law had died. Thus, she and her mother-in-law, Naomi, returned to Israel, specifically Bethlehem.

On the way back, Naomi informed her daughters-in-law, Ruth and Orpah, that it would be difficult for her to secure husbands for them, and she urged them to return home. Orpah tearfully returned to Moab, but Ruth was determined to go with her mother-in-law and make her family, country, and God hers as well (Ruth 1:16–18).

Upon their return, Ruth had to glean the fields in order to feed herself and Naomi (cf. Lev. 19:9–10; 23:22). A wealthy landowner, Boaz, took pity on Ruth and made sure that she got plenty to eat.

Naomi urged Ruth to reveal her feelings for Boaz by going up to the threshing floor where he was sleeping after work and lying down beside him. Ruth did this to indicate to Boaz that she wanted to marry him. He complimented her by calling her a "woman of noble character" (Ruth 3:11 [cf. Prov. 31:10–31]). Boaz was a relative of Naomi, and the law called for a near relative to marry a widow and produce an heir for the family (Deut. 25:5–10; see also Gen. 38). Complications arose, however, because a nearer kinsman existed who had to be given first chance to marry Ruth. This unnamed kinsman declined Boaz's offer to recognize his precedence, opening the way for Boaz to marry Ruth.

The union produced offspring, a baby boy, Obed. Obed was the grandfather of David. Thus, the NT mentions Ruth as an ancestor of Jesus Christ (Matt. 1:5).

RUTH, BOOK OF The book of Ruth is set during the time of the judges. The book of Judges selects stories that illustrate the difficulties of the time between Joshua and the rise of kingship, particularly in the period before the rise of David. Ruth, however, gives a story of hope in the midst of suffering.

Ruth's historical setting is signaled in English Bibles by its location right after the book of Judges. In the Hebrew Bible, it is placed after Proverbs, perhaps suggesting that the book gives us a picture of the virtuous woman (cf. Prov. 31:10–31), and at the beginning of the Megilloth, or festival scrolls, since the book was important for the celebration of the Feast of Weeks in early Judaism.

GENRE

The book of Ruth, like those that precede it, has the form of theological history. However, this history is based not on large national events but rather on the story of a single family. The book has a simple style and plot but considerable drama and suspense.

OUTLINE AND STRUCTURE

I. Naomi Returns to Bethlehem with Ruth (1:1–22)

II. Ruth Meets Boaz (2:1–23)

III. Ruth and Boaz at the Threshing Floor (3:1–18)

IV. Boaz Marries Ruth (4:1–12)

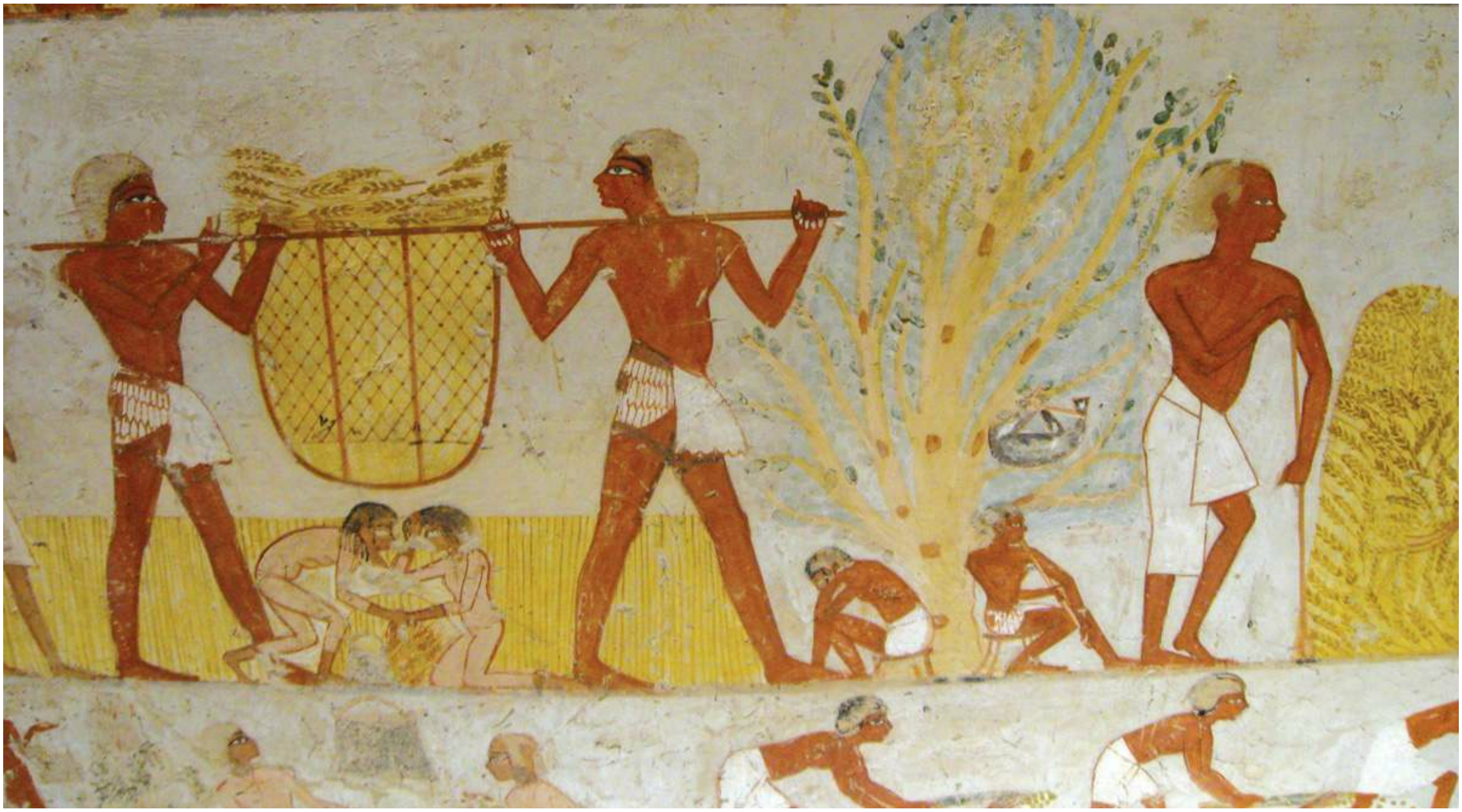
V. Their Offspring, Culminating with David (4:13–22)

I. Naomi returns to Bethlehem with Ruth (1:1–22). The story begins sadly with the death of three men, Elimelek and his two sons, who had moved from Bethlehem to Moab. Their deaths leave their three wives as widows. Elimelek's wife, Naomi, and her two Moabite daughters-in-law, Ruth and Orpah, then begin the trip back to Bethlehem.

Naomi has grown bitter in her loss, changing her name from "Naomi" ("pleasant") to "Mara" ("bitter"). She encourages her two daughters-in-law to return home because the future looks bleak in

Bethlehem. Orpah returns, but Ruth stays with her mother-in-law, and she renounces her pagan Moabite background, affirms Yahweh, and associates herself with Israel.

II. Ruth meets Boaz (2:1–23). Boaz is now introduced as a wealthy landowner and a relative of Elimelek. When Ruth goes out to glean the leftovers of the harvest, she happens to do so in the fields of Boaz. This is the first of many "coincidences" that point to the providence of God. She catches the attention of Boaz, who makes sure that she is safe and that she gets a good supply of food. Naomi reveals to Ruth that he is one of their closest relatives and a family redeemer.



Harvesting scene from the Tomb of Menna, showing two women gleaning in the field

III. Ruth and Boaz at the threshing floor (3:1–18). Naomi then takes matters into her own hands and encourages Ruth to go up to Boaz as he is celebrating the harvest. She instructs Ruth to wait until Boaz is done eating and drinking and goes to sleep on the threshing floor. Ruth then goes to him, lies beside him, and uncovers his "feet," almost certainly a euphemism for his genitalia. When he awakens, she asks him to spread his covering over her, in essence asking him to marry her. He does not take advantage of her but praises her for coming to him rather than chasing after the young men of the town. Boaz virtuously admits that there is a family redeemer even closer than he, and so Boaz must deal with him first.

IV. Boaz marries Ruth (4:1–12). Boaz meets the family redeemer, whose name is never given but whose rights to Ruth are greater than those of Boaz. He does want to redeem the land of Elimelek, but when told that this also involves marrying Ruth, he refuses. The customs here are not totally clear, but it appears that if he had paid to redeem the land and then married Ruth, it would be her descendant rather than he who would benefit from the transaction. Boaz, however, does not share his hesitation and marries Ruth.

V. Their offspring, culminating with David (4:13–22). The book ends on a celebratory note. Boaz and Ruth have a baby boy, Obed. This birth is followed by a genealogy showing that Obed is none other than the father of Jesse and the grandfather of David.

DATE, AUTHORSHIP, AND PURPOSE

Although the book of Ruth is clearly set in the period of the judges, no mention is made of the time of its composition or authorship.

Many scholars date Ruth late in the history of Israel. They detect a polemic from this book directed at the books of Ezra and Nehemiah. The latter books present a harsh policy toward intermarriage with Gentiles (Ezra 10; Neh. 13:23–27). On the other hand, Ruth presents the picture of a devoted Moabite woman whose sacrificial love rescues an Israelite family from oblivion and leads to the glory of the kingship of David.

However, Ruth does not have the tone of a polemic. Also, it may be argued that Ruth does not contradict Ezra and Nehemiah in the issue of intermarriage with Gentiles. Ruth has in essence become an Israelite through her devotion to Yahweh. Ezra and Nehemiah are not worried about bloodlines; they are worried about women who may lead Israel toward the worship of false gods.

A preexilic date is more likely when one takes into account what appears to be an important purpose of the book. The book ends with a genealogy of King David. The child whom Ruth bears to Boaz is an ancestor to none other than King David, with whom the genealogy concludes. The union between Boaz and Ruth is the result of divine providence (see “Theological Message” below), and this providence leads to the future king of Israel. Thus, the implicit message is that God was in control of the events that led to David. We know from the historical books that David would have been considered a usurper by some who considered a descendant of Saul the rightful heir. The book of Ruth may have had the contemporary purpose of supporting David’s claim to the throne by showing that it was the result of God’s intervention.

Although the best arguments favor an early preexilic date, the question remains open.

THEOLOGICAL MESSAGE

Although no supernatural events or miracles punctuate the book of Ruth, the attentive reader finishes it knowing that God’s hand guided the events of this story as directly as those of the story of the exodus from Egypt. The book of Ruth is a story of God’s providence narrated in an extremely subtle manner. When the narrator says, “As it turned out, [Ruth] was working in a field belonging to Boaz” (2:3), the meaning is that Ruth herself did not know the significance of her action. God was guiding her toward deliverance.

The book also tells a story of a non-Israelite (Gentile), Ruth herself, who joins the people of faith. In this, we are to see a preview of the fulfillment of God’s promise to Abraham that his descendants will be a blessing to all peoples on earth (Gen. 12:3).

Finally, Ruth’s story may be a family story, but this family leads to great things in Israel. Ruth’s survival leads ultimately to the birth of David, one of the greatest figures in biblical history. In this way, the author says that David was a divine gift to Israel. Of course, Christian readers further recognize that Ruth is named later in the genealogy of the one who is David’s greater son, Jesus Christ (Matt. 1:5).

CONTEMPORARY SIGNIFICANCE

At first glance, the lasting significance of the book of Ruth appears to be connected to an illustration of the foundational virtues of loyalty, kindness, and generosity. Ruth is the example of loyalty as she sticks close to her mother-in-law, Naomi. Boaz exemplifies kindness and generosity when compared to the unnamed "guardian-redeemer" (4:1–12). Because of the virtuous actions of these characters, the story ends happily. Indeed, the book does encourage its readers to act in positive ways toward others. However, such a reading fails to plumb the book for all its richness.

As noted above, the book subtly describes how God works behind the scenes in order to bring Ruth and Naomi from a dire situation to a blessed one. The book informs those who read it that God works in the lives of ordinary people to accomplish great things.

RYE In Exod. 9:32; Isa. 28:25 some English versions translate the Hebrew word *kussemet* as "rye" (KJV: "rie"; NIV, NRSV, NASB: "spelt"; ESV: "emmer"). In Ezek. 4:9, where the KJV translates the word as "fitch," this grain is used to make bread.

S

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SABAOTH This term occurs in the KJV of Rom. 9:29; James 5:4 (NIV: “Almighty”). In both cases the word in the Greek text (*sabaōth*) is a transliteration of the Hebrew term *tseba’ot*. This word occurs approximately five hundred times in the OT and is variously rendered. Among English translations, the NIV is practically alone in translating it as “Almighty,” but in doing so it follows the practice of the LXX. Most translations render it as “hosts” or “armies.” The underlying thought is that Israel’s God is “Yahweh of hosts” or “Yahweh of armies” (a phrase occurring approximately 280 times), the God who commands all the armies of both heaven and earth.

The term is grounded in the Israelite understanding of God as a warrior (Exod. 15:3) who fights alongside and for Israel against its enemies (holy war). In doing so he commands the armies of the heavens (the angels) as well as Israelite soldiers. It is also important to note that when Israel forsakes its God to serve other deities, “Yahweh of armies” will become the unseen commander of the armies of Israel’s enemies (e.g., the Assyrians or Babylonians) to fight against Israel (see, e.g., Isa. 7:18–20).

Assyrian relief picturing their god fighting alongside them (Nimrud, 865–860 BC). The Hebrew term “Sabaoth” is grounded in the idea of God as a warrior.

SABBATH God’s people were to observe the Sabbath on the seventh day of each week by resting from normal daily work. It is first explicitly introduced in Exod. 16:23–30, where God provides twice as much manna for the Israelites in the desert on the sixth day so that they might enjoy his provision for them on the seventh day without having to gather it on that day.

The Sabbath command is incorporated into the Ten Commandments (Exod. 20:8–11). The motivation given in Exodus for keeping the Sabbath is the fact that God made the world in six days and rested on the seventh (cf. Gen. 2:2–3)—hence sometimes it is considered a "creation ordinance." God's rest was his enjoyment of a world that met his expectations, and thus the weekly celebration might look to a time when the world would once again truly enjoy such "rest." In Deut. 5:12–15 the motivation is given as the new creation event, the redemption of Israel from slavery in Egypt.

The week, marked off by its Sabbath, is closely associated with the new moon as a quarter of that natural cycle (1 Chron. 23:31; Isa. 1:13). The people of Mesopotamia observed a lunar festival *shabbatu*, but we do not know of any people independently of Israel observing a weekly Sabbath. The Sabbath is a communal rather than an individual observance, including even "any foreigner residing in your towns" (Exod. 20:10; Neh. 13:15–22), a sign of Israel's covenant relationship with God (Exod. 31:13–17; Isa. 56:6).

Although religious worship is not prominent in the Sabbath injunctions in the OT, there was to be a gathering of God's people on that day with special offerings (Lev. 23:3; Ezek. 46:3–5), and it was a day when a visit to a prophet might be more likely (2 Kings 4:23). Psalm 92 is identified as a psalm for the Sabbath.

The terms "Sabbath" or "sabbath rest" could also be applied to special days, such as the Day of Atonement, which did not fall on the seventh day (Lev. 16:31). In an extension of the sabbatical system, the land was to enjoy a Sabbath of rest every seven years (Lev. 25:4–7).

By NT times, regular gatherings were held at local synagogues on the Sabbath wherever a sufficient number of observant Jews resided. Jesus offended Pharisaic sensitivities with regard to Sabbath observance, using it to alleviate human suffering and presenting himself as the true representative of humanity, for whom the Sabbath was designed (Matt. 12:1–13; John 5:9–10). The healings on the Sabbath day draw attention to the realization of God's creative and redemptive purposes for the world.

The writer to the Hebrews treats the Sabbath as a foretaste of the ultimate rest God provides for those who persevere in faith and obedience (Heb. 4:1–11).

Paul regards the victory of Christ as bringing a freedom "with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day" (Col. 2:16 [cf. Gal. 4:10]). Some Christians understand this as denying continuity of the Sabbath principle of a weekly day of rest. Others understand it in a way similar to Jesus' remarks on Pharisaic restrictions imposed on the day and see a continuity of Sabbath observance, perhaps with a change of day, to make it a celebration of the Lord's resurrection on the first day of the week.

SABBATH DAY'S WALK A Sabbath day's walk or journey describes the maximum distance a faithful Jew could walk on the Sabbath day without becoming guilty of violating the fourth commandment, which prohibits working on the Sabbath (Exod. 20:8–11). This expression is used a single time in Scripture (Acts 1:12) to describe the distance from the city of Jerusalem to the Mount of Olives. Traditionally, the Jewish rabbis considered a Sabbath day's walk to be a distance of no more than twelve hundred yards, or about two-thirds of a mile.

The idea of a Sabbath day's walk illustrates the mind-set of Jewish legalism on matters where Scripture is silent. On the one hand, the Jewish rabbis had a potentially legitimate concern to make the principles of God’s word practical and applicable to the average person in everyday life. On the other hand, they often ended up making arbitrary decisions that had no scriptural warrant. Even worse, as Jesus pointed out, these Jewish leaders often became so preoccupied with minor matters of the law that they “neglected the more important matters of the law—justice, mercy and faithfulness” (Matt. 23:23), or in this case, on the positive command of keeping the Sabbath day holy.

SABBATICAL YEAR The Sabbatical Year was part of a wider pattern of six periods of work followed by one of rest. God instituted a seventh year of rest (Exod. 23:10–11; Lev. 25:1–7; Deut. 15:1–17), calling it a “sabbath of rest” (*shabbat shabbaton*), a term also used with regard to the weekly Sabbath (Exod. 31:15; 35:2; Lev. 23:3) and the Day of Atonement (Lev. 16:31; 23:32). This year was environmentally beneficial, providing rest for the land, as the Israelites were not to sow seed, prune vines, or harvest crops. There is no indication in the historical books that the law was actually practiced, and when the Israelites were taken into exile, the land finally enjoyed its Sabbath rests (2 Chron. 36:21).

The Sabbatical Year had sociological implications. Because the land was not harvested, the poor could avail themselves of whatever it produced. It was a year for canceling debts and freeing slaves, who were not to be sent away empty-handed. These instructions were based on a paradigm of redemption: just as the Israelites were slaves in Egypt and God redeemed them, so they were to free slaves and provide for them. Those who had means were not to refuse essential loans just because the seventh year was coming. These practices would have kept the Israelites from developing a permanent underclass. The seventh year was also a time for public and corporate reading of Torah during the Feast of Tabernacles (Deut. 31:10–13).

SABEAN A name for people of three ancient kingdoms descended from Ham (Gen. 10:6–7; 1 Chron. 1:9) and known in the ancient world for their gold, frankincense, and merchant culture (Ps. 72:10; Isa. 60:6; Ezek. 27:22). The name “Sabean” could be applied to any one of these three peoples. First, and most prominent, is the south Arabian Sheba. Located in modern Yemen, this may be the kingdom of the famed Queen of Sheba, who visited Solomon (1 Kings 10:1–13; 2 Chron. 9:1–12). These Sabeans are also mentioned by the prophet Joel (Joel 3:8). Second, it is believed that along their northern trade routes a separate people of the same name may have emerged in the vicinity of Medina. Some think that these are the Sabeans who attacked Job’s children (Job 1:15). They are also mentioned in conjunction with Tema or Dedan (Job 6:19; Ezek. 38:13). The third group of Sabeans may also be a trade colony of the South Arabian Sabeans. These people are known by the Hebrew *seba’* (not *sheba’*). Their kingdom was located across the Red Sea in modern Eritrea and Ethiopia. Gold is desired from both Sheba and Seba in a royal psalm (Ps. 72:10). God offers Seba and its neighbors as ransom for his people (Isa. 43:3). Later, Isaiah refers to these Sabeans as “tall” people (Isa. 45:14). A final reference to the African Sabeans may be found in Ezek. 23:42, where a possible scribal error causes some to prefer “Sabeans” (*saba’im*) over the similar word for “drunkard” (*soba’im*).

SABTA, SABTAH The third son of Cush (Gen. 10:7: “Sabtah”; 1 Chron. 1:9: “Sabta”). He can be tentatively identified with Shabaka (r. 712–698 BC), an Ethiopian pharaoh of the Twenty-fifth Dynasty in Egypt and predecessor of Shabataka (r. 705–690 BC), known as Sabteka in the Bible.

SABTECA, SABTECHA, SABTECHAH *See* Sabteka.

SABTEKA The fifth son of Cush (Gen. 10:7; 1 Chron. 1:9). He can be tentatively identified with Shabataka (r. 705–690 BC), an Ethiopian pharaoh of the Twenty-fifth Dynasty in Egypt and successor of Shabaka (r. 712–698 BC), known as Sabtah in the Bible.

SACAR, SACHAR *See* Sakar

SACHIA *See* Sakia.

SACK *See* Bag.

SACKBUT A medieval brass instrument, the forerunner of the modern-day trombone. The word appears in the KJV of Dan. 3:5, 7, 10, 15, most likely a mistransliteration of the Aramaic word *sabbekha'*. The actual instrument to which Daniel refers is more likely a larger Syrian seven-stringed harp with a rich, dark tone, though there is some evidence that it could be a small, handheld harp. The NIV translates it as “lyre,” and other versions as “trigon” (NRSV, RSV, NASB, ESV). It was used in the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar’s “band” to entice people to worship the image of gold he set up. *See also* Trigon.

SACKCLOTH Made of goat or camel hair, a material that was made into sacks for grain and into clothes generally worn to express grief or repentance (Gen. 37:34; 2 Sam. 3:31). Occasionally sackcloth was worn to express social protest (Esther 4:1; Dan. 9:3). It was generally black or dark in color (Rev. 6:12), rough in texture, and worn close to the body, even next to the skin in extreme cases (1 Kings 21:27; 2 Kings 6:30; Job 16:15).

SACRAMENT Sacraments have been practiced from the beginning of church history even though they were not always known by that term. The Latin term *sacramentum* was regularly used to refer to money set aside as a pledge or for the oath of loyalty taken by a soldier entering service, and its theological connotations developed long after the NT age. The new sense of the word combined both original meanings, identifying certain rituals as setting Christians apart by an oath of loyalty and providing a sign or pledge that God would keep his promises to them. Protestants recognize two sacraments explicitly instituted by Christ—baptism and the Lord’s Supper—the first identified as a onetime rite of initiation into the church, the second as a regularly repeated rite that unites believers and serves their growth. Roman Catholics officially accept five others: confirmation, penance, extreme unction (last rites), orders (ordination), and matrimony. Understanding the term in a broader sense, some have identified up to thirty different sacraments.

From Augustine, sacraments have been understood to be outward and visible signs of an internal and spiritual grace conferred upon those who receive them. Divergence comes with explanations of how the sacraments benefit their recipients. Roman Catholics understand that the sacraments themselves are endowed with power that confers saving grace as long as an individual does not resist and the rites are performed by an ordained priest. Protestants reject the idea that the sacraments have inherent power, insisting that faith is necessary for them to have any benefit. The Reformed view is that grace is bestowed by the blessing of Christ and the work of the Holy Spirit through the sacraments as they are received in faith. Lutherans agree that faith must be present. Even so, they concur with Catholics that the sacraments confer saving grace, though they disagree that the power is in the elements, locating it instead in the power of God’s word proclaimed when they are dispensed.

The followers of Zwingli and Anabaptists denied that the sacraments were an instrument of grace, maintaining that they are a sign and seal of grace already received. They benefit believers only by strengthening their faith and giving them an opportunity for obeying Jesus' command.

Some refuse to use the word "sacrament" because it does not appear in most English versions of the Bible, preferring to call baptism and the Lord's Supper "ordinances" because they were ordained by Christ. However, this use of the word "ordinance" is not found in Scripture either. Both terms were applied after the NT era, and both espouse positive truths. As the Latin word *sacramentum* signified, Christians proclaim their loyalty to Jesus Christ by being baptized and partaking of the Lord's Supper. In doing so they also demonstrate obedience to his commands. The rites benefit believers by reminding them of the work that Jesus performed on their behalf and of their unity with the church, which he established. Through them faith is strengthened, and believers are enabled to experience the grace that God has freely extended to those he loves. *See also* Ordinance.

SACRIFICE, HUMAN *See* Human Sacrifice.

SACRIFICE AND OFFERING The words "sacrifice" and "offering" often are used interchangeably, but "offering" refers to a gift more generally, while "sacrifice" indicates a gift consecrated for a divine being. In biblical Hebrew "sacrifice" is more narrowly equated with the peace offering. All other "sacrifices" are referred to as gifts. Sacrifices were offered to honor God, thanking him for his goodness. More important, they enabled persons to be made right with God by atoning for their sins. Whereas sin upset the fellowship God desired to have with people and kindled his wrath, sacrifice restored the relationship.

OLD TESTAMENT

OT offerings included cereals (whether the grain was whole, ground into flour, or mixed with other elements), liquids (wine, oil, or water), and animals (or parts thereof, such as the blood and fat). Although the Bible acknowledges that other ancient Near Eastern people had their own sacrificial rites, it rejects them as unworthy of the God of Israel. The people of God therefore were instructed how to sacrifice properly while at Sinai. Even so, offerings and sacrifices are recorded as taking place before the law was given.

Prior to the law. Cain and Abel brought the earliest offerings. Contrary to a common interpretation, Cain's offering was not rejected because it did not include blood; the Hebrew word for the brothers' gifts, *minkhah*, usually denotes grain offerings. A better conclusion is that Cain only brought some of his produce (no mention of firstfruits), while Abel brought the best of the best (the fat portions from the firstborn of the flock).

Immediately after the flood, Noah built an altar and presented the first burnt offering mentioned in the Bible (Gen. 8:20). That this (and other sacrifices) was received as a "pleasing aroma" indicates that God approved of and accepted it. It is significant that immediately after the offering, God made a covenant with Noah, his descendants, and every living creature. Sacrifices are closely related to covenant relationships, as can be seen in the story of Abraham enacting a covenant ceremony in Gen. 15 and in Israel receiving many instructions about sacrifice while at Sinai (cf. Gen. 31:43–54).

Sacrificial laws in Leviticus. Sacrificial laws are found throughout the Pentateuch, the most being in Lev. 1–7. As Leviticus makes clear, Israel understood sacrifice to have a number of different purposes. It was a means to bring a gift to God, to express communion with him and others in the community, to consecrate something or someone for God's use, and to deal with personal uncleanness or sin. These ideas are developed in the descriptions of the different sacrifices that Israel was required to bring to God. In general, the sacrifices were made of clean animals raised by the one making the offering or of grain or wine produced by the person. In some cases, the offering was connected with the person's economic ability, a poorer person being allowed to present doves or even cereal if a lamb or goat was unaffordable for a sin offering (Lev. 5:6–13). In all cases, only the best—what was "without defect"—was to be offered.

Hittite relief of a man carrying an animal to be sacrificed (eighth century BC)

Priest as mediator. Three parties were involved in the sacrifices: the worshiper, the priest, and God. The worshiper—the person who had sinned or become unclean in some way—brought an animal to God, laid a hand upon it, and then killed it. Whether the animal's death represents the death that the worshiper deserves due to sin or whether the sin is transferred to the animal that bears it instead is unclear. The priest served as a mediator who offered the blood of the sacrifice to God and, in many instances, burned all or part of the offering. In response to the offering, God, who had graciously given the sacrificial system so that those who had sinned could be restored to fellowship with him, forgave the person. Uniquely in the ancient world, Israelite sacrifices were not considered magical acts that could manipulate God to act on behalf of the worshiper. Presenting an improper sacrifice while exhibiting an improper attitude or motive resulted in rejection.

Types of sacrifices. Leviticus introduced five main sacrifices: the *'olah* (1:1–17; 6:8–18), the *minkhah* (2:1–16; 6:14–23), the *shelamim* (3:1–17; 7:11–36), the *khatta't* (4:1–5:13), and the *'asham* (5:14–6:7). Most of these focused on uncleanness or sin. The worshiper who brought such an offering was not allowed to eat any of it, as it was wholly given to God. Even when priests were allowed to eat part of a sacrifice, their portion was "waved" before God, indicating that it belonged to him.

1. The *'olah*, or burnt offering, is the basic OT sacrifice connected with atonement for sin (Lev. 1:4). When rightly offered, it was accepted as "an aroma pleasing to the LORD." The worshiper brought a male animal (young bull, sheep, goat, dove, or young pigeon) without blemish, laid a hand upon it, and then killed it. After the priest sprinkled some of the blood on the altar, the rest was burned up.

2. The *minkhah* is simply a gift or offering. The Hebrew word is often used for a present given to another person or tribute to a ruler. When used of sacrifice, it is usually rendered as "grain offering" or "meal offering." A *minkhah* can, on occasion, include flesh or fat (Gen. 4:4; Judg. 6:18–21). Considered "an aroma pleasing to the LORD," it consisted of unground grain or fine flour mixed with oil and incense and was presented either cooked or uncooked. Part of the offering was burned as a "memorial portion," the rest being given to the priests (Lev. 2:1–3). It usually was accompanied by a drink offering—wine poured out on the altar. Grain offerings frequently complemented burnt offerings or fellowship offerings. The showbread may have been considered a grain offering.

3. The *shelamim* (NIV: "fellowship offering") has traditionally been called the "peace offering," as the term is related to *shalom*. This offering most likely indicated that the worshiper was at peace with God and others; all the worshiper's relationships were whole. Classified into three types, it could be used to express thanksgiving, to signify the fulfillment of a vow, or simply to denote one's desire to bring an offering to God out of free will. Only those who made a vow were required to offer a *shelamim*; the other forms were wholly optional. The worshiper brought a male or female animal (ox, sheep, or goat) without blemish, laid a hand on its head, and slaughtered it. The priest sprinkled its blood on the sides of the altar and burned the fat surrounding the major organs. It is described as "an aroma pleasing to the LORD."

This offering significantly recognized the covenant relationship existing between those who shared in it. God received the fatty portions, the officiating priest received the right thigh, the other priests the breast, and the remainder was shared among members of a family, clan, tribe, or some other group. According to Leviticus, a thanksgiving offering was to be eaten on the day it was offered, and a vow or freewill offering could be eaten within two days. Anything not eaten in the prescribed time period was to be burned.

4. The *khatta't*, or sin offering, atoned for the sin of an individual or of the nation and cleansed the

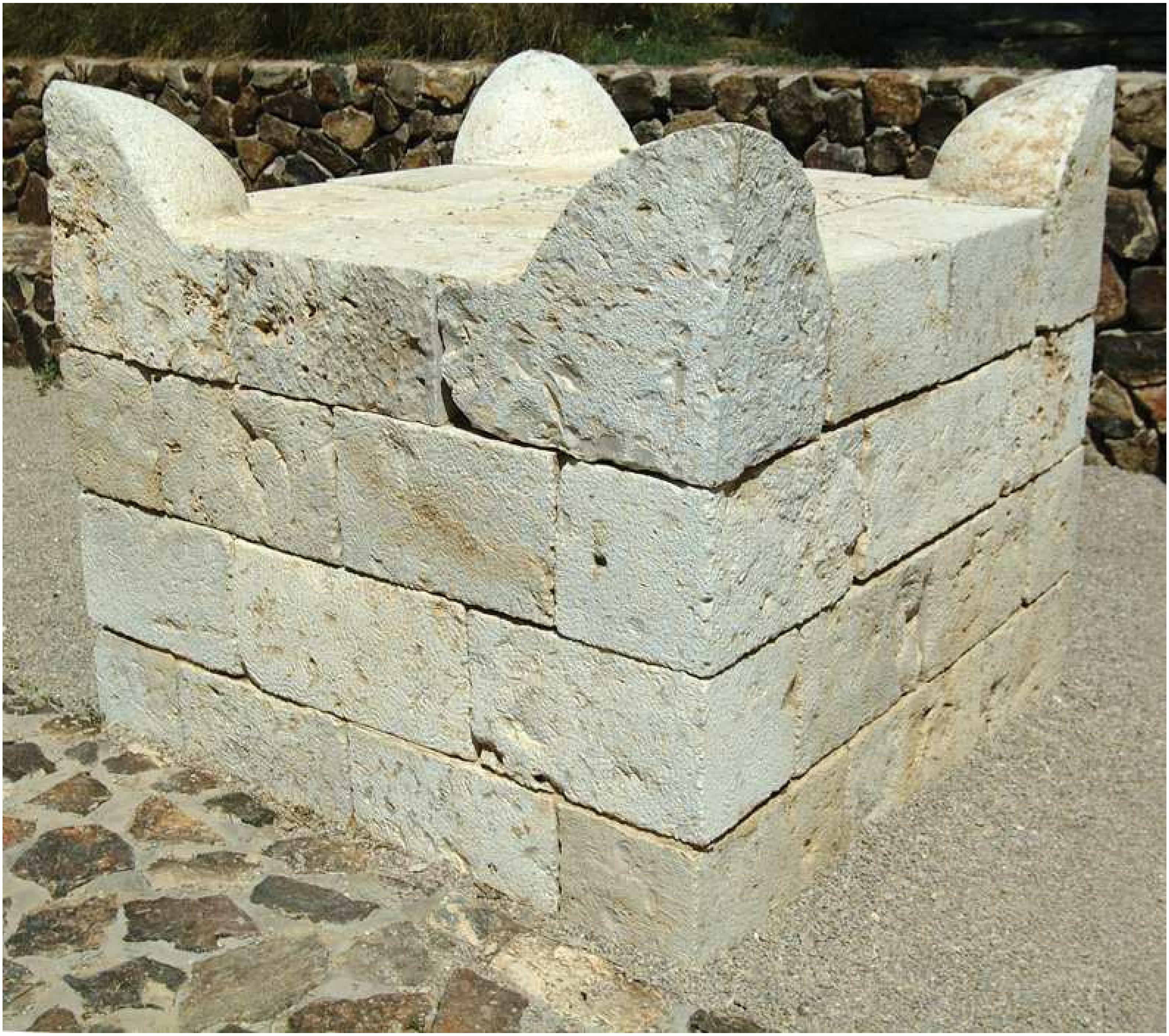
sacred items in the tabernacle that had been corrupted by sin. Since a sin offering could purify ceremonial as well as moral uncleanness, people who were unclean due to childbirth, skin diseases, bodily discharges, and so forth also brought them (Lev. 12–15).

The kind of animal sacrificed and the sacrificial ritual varied with the offender and the offense. If a priest or the entire congregation sinned, a bull was sacrificed and its blood was sprinkled before the veil of the tabernacle and on the incense altar in the holy place. The rest was burned, leaving nothing to be eaten. Leaders who sinned sacrificed a male goat. Its blood was sprinkled on the bronze altar, and the remainder was given to the priest. A commoner brought and slaughtered a she-goat or lamb, the priest sprinkled its blood on the horns of the altar, and the fat was burned for God and the rest given to the priests. A poor person could bring two doves or pigeons, and the very poor could bring a grain offering. This differentiation apparently indicated that the sins of some members of the community had more serious consequences than others. Those in closest contact with the tabernacle contaminated it at a deeper level, requiring a more costly sacrifice. The poor were not required to bring more than they could afford.

5. The *’asham*, or guilt offering, provided compensation for sins. A ram without blemish was sacrificed, its blood was sprinkled on the altar, and its fatty portions, kidneys, and liver were burned. The rest was given to the priest. In addition, the value of what was misappropriated plus one-fifth of its value was given to the person wronged or to the priests.

Altars. According to Leviticus, only the Aaronic priests could handle the blood or other parts of a sacrifice brought to the altar at the tabernacle. Even so, throughout Israel’s history other sacrificial altars were built. While some of these were illicitly used for syncretistic practices, others were constructed at God’s instruction (Josh. 8:30–35; Judg. 6:25–26). Some of these were used by priests making rounds so that people from different areas could sacrifice to God (1 Sam. 7:17). Others were used by individuals who were not priests yet desired to call upon the name of the Lord or sacrifice for communal meals. The solitary altars were mainly used for burnt offerings and peace offerings, although grain and drink offerings also were known. Sin and guilt offerings were offered only at the tabernacle or temple.

Times and purposes. The OT regulates a number of different occasions upon which regular sacrifices were to be made. Burnt offerings were presented every morning and evening (Exod. 29:38–41; Num. 28:1–8). Additional offerings were sacrificed on the Sabbath and the new moon (Num. 28:9–15). Special sacrifices were brought to celebrate the major festivals of the year (Num. 28:16–29:39), particularly the Day of Atonement (Lev. 16). Sacrifices might also accompany requests for safety or deliverance or in response to God’s deliverance. Thus, burnt and fellowship offerings could be brought along with prayers that God would put an end to a plague (2 Sam. 24:18–25). King David brought burnt offerings and fellowship offerings when the ark of the covenant was returned after having been captured by the Philistines (2 Sam. 6:1–19).



Reconstructed four-horn altar at Beersheba

Sacrifices could also be made to consecrate people or things for a special task. When the tabernacle was consecrated, special offerings were brought for twelve continuous days (Num. 7). Later, fellowship, burnt, and grain offerings were sacrificed when the temple was dedicated (1 Kings 8:62–64). Sin offerings were presented when a priest was ordained (Lev. 8–9). Those who completed a vow dedicating themselves as Nazirites brought sacrifices to God so that they could again become a normal member of the congregation (Num. 6:9–21). Fellowship offerings often accompanied the announcement of or installation of a king (1 Sam. 11:14–15; 1 Kings 1:9, 25).

Although the sacrificial system was intended to bring the Israelites back into fellowship with God, at times their misuse of it separated them from him. When his people showed more interest in sacrificial ritual than in obeying God’s instructions, they were chastened (1 Sam. 15:13–22; Jer. 7:21–28). When the people of Israel were guilty of confusing the worship of Yahweh with Canaanite fertility cults, God sent prophets to warn them (Isa. 1:11–16; Amos 4:4–5). Prophetic statements denouncing sacrificial rites were aimed at the misuse of sacrifices rather than their existence. Jeremiah and Ezekiel were so positive about sacrificial worship that they looked forward to a time when it would be reestablished in its pure form (Jer. 17:26; Ezek. 43:18–27; 46:1–24).

NEW TESTAMENT

The NT indicates that the OT sacrificial system was still in place in the early first century AD. Following directions given in Leviticus, Mary brought a sacrifice to the temple in Jerusalem so that she could be purified after giving birth to Jesus (Luke 2:21–24; cf. Lev. 12:3, 8). Mary and Joseph would have sacrificed and eaten a Passover lamb during their annual pilgrimage to Jerusalem to celebrate the Feast of Passover. It is not recorded whether Jesus always went with them, but he did join them at the Passover celebration when he was twelve years old. It is safe to assume that at this time and after he grew up, Jesus took part in the sacrifices when he visited Jerusalem to celebrate the feasts.

Jesus' disciples attend several feasts with him. In addition, after his resurrection they frequently went to the temple to pray at the time when sacrifices were made. Encouraged by the Jerusalem church leaders, Paul went to the temple to join in and pay for the purification rites of some men who had taken a vow, perhaps to serve as Nazirites (Acts 21:23–26). He later testified before Felix that he had returned to Jerusalem in order to bring gifts to the poor and present offerings in the temple (24:17). Although Gentile believers were exempt from these practices (15:1–29), early Jewish believers clearly saw no contradiction between believing the gospel of Jesus Christ and engaging in sacrificial rituals. They likely followed Jewish piety until the destruction of the temple in AD 70, when all sacrifices at the temple ceased.

Even so, Christians quickly came to understand Christ's death as the final sacrifice that completed the OT system. Various NT authors consider the nature of Christ's death and metaphorically relate it to OT sacrifices, but the writer of Hebrews develops this in the most detail. According to Hebrews, the sacrificial system was merely the shadow that pointed to Jesus. Although the blood of animals could not adequately deal with sins, Jesus' sacrifice could (Heb. 10:1–10). Jesus is regularly identified as the sacrificial lamb whose blood purifies humanity from sin (John 1:29, 36; Rom. 8:3; 1 Cor. 5:7; Eph. 5:2; 1 Pet. 1:19; 1 John 1:7; Rev. 5:6, 12; 7:14; 12:11; 13:8). His sacrifice is considered a propitiation that turns away God's wrath (Rom. 3:25; 1 John 2:2).

The end of the OT sacrificial system does not mean that those who come to God through Jesus Christ no longer bring sacrifices. Instead of animal and grain offerings, spiritual sacrifices are to be made (1 Pet. 2:5). Emulating their Savior, Christ's followers should offer themselves as living sacrifices, devoted to God (Rom. 12:1). This implies that everything done in this life could be considered a sacrifice. Simply believing the gospel makes one an acceptable offering to God (Rom. 15:16). Labor for the sake of the gospel, or perhaps martyrdom, can be viewed as a drink offering (Phil. 2:17). The author of Hebrews identifies three types of sacrifices that believers should offer: praise, good deeds, and sharing with those in need (13:15–16). In line with the last of these points, Paul counts the gift sent by the Philippian church as a fragrant offering that pleases God (Phil. 4:18).

SADDUCEES One of three Jewish factions, they did not believe in the resurrection of the dead or in angels or spirits (Acts 23:8). Known as the aristocracy of the priesthood, Sadducees dominated the Sanhedrin, including the high priesthood (Acts 5:17). They were committed to the Torah, but not to the Pharisaic oral tradition. *See also* Jewish Parties.

SADOC *See* Zadok.

SAFFRON In the Bible, saffron is mentioned only in Song 4:14, in a list of fragrant items used metaphorically by the lover to describe his beloved. Produced from flowers, saffron was an expensive spice used both for culinary and medicinal purposes. *See also* Flowers; Spices.

SAILOR *See* Ships, Sailors, and Navigation.

SAINTS Used as a reference for God's people in the OT and NT, the Hebrew word *qadosh* (e.g., Ps. 16:3) and the Greek word *hagios* (e.g., Acts 9:13; 2 Cor. 1:1) emphasize being singled out or consecrated. The Hebrew root was also used to designate cult prostitutes (*qadeshah*) as "consecrated," though in Scripture this use is relatively infrequent (e.g., Gen. 38:21; Deut. 23:17). Another Hebrew word sometimes translated "saint" is *khasid* (e.g., 1 Sam. 2:9; Pss. 30:4; 31:23 KJV), which emphasizes faithfulness and devotion to God. In biblical terms, then, the saints of God are those whom he has designated as belonging to him and who live in faithfulness to him. They are not necessarily noted for exceptional holiness or meritorious acts. Thus, Paul places "his saints" in parallel with "all who have believed" (2 Thess. 1:10 NRSV).

The Bible speaks of saints as sometimes being in need (Rom. 16:2; 2 Cor. 8:4; 9:1, 12) and persecuted (Rev. 13:7), but also as called to endure (Rev. 13:10) and offer help, especially to other saints (Rom. 12:13; Gal. 6:10; 1 Tim. 5:10). The saints are the recipients of the faith (Jude 1:3), of grace (Rev. 22:21), and of special equipping for ministry in the church (Eph. 4:12) and prayer (Rev. 5:8; 8:3–4). As those who belong to the Lord, the saints will be raised to eternal life (John 6:39; 1 Cor. 15:22–23).

"Saint," however, has come to function as a title given to Christians of exceptional merit, beatified or canonized by the Roman Catholic Church. The need for canonization and beatification arose from the Catholic doctrine of the veneration, invocation, and intercession of the saints (see Augustine, *Quaest. Hept.* 2.94; *Faust.* 20.21) and is connected to the Catholic doctrine of the "communion of the saints" (a phrase drawn from the Apostles' Creed), which includes believers in heaven, on earth, and in purgatory, recognizing them as saints in the general sense by virtue of their being redeemed and set apart for fellowship with God. These doctrines suggest that just as Paul, for example, sought the prayers of the church on earth (Rom. 15:30; 2 Cor. 1:11), so also prayer by members of the church in heaven might be sought. Canonization, then, publicly establishes which persons can be surely known to be in heaven and may be properly asked to intercede on behalf of the church on earth.

Protestants, on the basis of the unique intercession of Christ Jesus (1 Tim. 2:5), exclude invocation of heavenly saints as unnecessary and unwarranted. They further find no basis in the Scriptures for a doctrine of purgatory. Thus, Protestant understandings of the communion of the saints focus on the believers on earth, who, "being united to one another in love, have communion in each other's gifts and graces and are obliged to the performance of such duties, public and private, as to conduce to their mutual good, both in the inward and outward man" (*Westminster Confession of Faith* 28.1).

SAKAR **(1)** The Hararite father of Ahiam, one of David's mighty warriors (1 Chron. 11:35). He is named as "Sharar" in 2 Sam. 23:33. **(2)** One of the eight sons of Obed-Edom (1 Chron. 26:4).

SAKIA A leader in the tribe of Benjamin, he was the sixth of seven sons born in Moab to Shaharaim and his wife Hodesh, after Shaharaim had divorced Hushim and Baara (1 Chron. 8:10).

SAKKUTH The Hebrew word *sikkut* in Amos 5:26 has traditionally been interpreted as "Sakkuth," the name of an obscure astral deity in the Akkadian pantheon, but recently this equation has been shown to be untenable. The Hebrew word is better understood as a noun meaning "stela" or "standing stone." The NIV translation "shrine" is based on the LXX (the NIV mg. has "Sakkuth your king"). God rebukes the Israelites in Samaria for erecting a stela of their king for worship.

SALA In the Greek NT (cf. KJV, RSV), two different people in Luke's genealogy for Jesus. **(1)** The father of Boaz (Luke 3:32 ESV, NRSV, NIV mg.), elsewhere named "Salmon" (Ruth 4:21; Matt. 1:4–5) and "Salma" (1 Chron. 2:11 NASB, NRSV, KJV). **(2)** The father of Eber (Luke 3:35 KJV), elsewhere named "Shelah" (Gen. 10:24; 11:12–15; 1 Chron. 1:18, 24).

SALAMIS The first stop on Paul and Barnabas's journey to the island of Cyprus (Acts 13:5). Located on the east coast of Cyprus, Salamis was an important Greco-Roman commercial city with a notable Jewish population.

SALATHIEL *See* Shealtiel.

SALCAH, SALCHAH *See* Salekah.

SALECAH *See* Salekah.

SALEKAH A city along the boundary of the half-tribe of Manasseh that previously was ruled by King Og of Bashan (Deut. 3:10; Josh. 12:5; 13:11; 1 Chron. 5:11). This city is currently identified with Salkhad, which is east of the Jordan.

SALEM A shortened and probably archaic form of "Jerusalem." Melchizedek was the king of Salem (Gen. 14:18; Heb. 7:1–2). The name "Salem" means "peace."

SALIM A place mentioned only in reference to Aenon, where John conducted his last baptisms (John 3:23). Its location is debated, with several issues being considered. First, John is thought to have started in the south and moved northward along the Jordan. Second, ancient church fathers wrote that it was eight Roman miles south of Scythopolis. Third, a location that fits with the text needs to have an abundance of water present. Of the several possibilities, none has been satisfactorily agreed upon.

SALIVA *See* Spit, Spittle.

SALLAI A descendant of the Benjamite tribe who returned from the exile to resettle in Jerusalem (Neh. 11:8). Some versions also spell the name of the priest in Neh. 12:20 as "Sallai," but the NIV spells it as "Sallu."

SALLU **(1)** The son of Meshullam from the tribe of Benjamin, he resettled in Jerusalem after the Babylonian exile (1 Chron. 9:7; Neh. 11:7). **(2)** A priest who returned with Zerubbabel and Jeshua after the exile (Neh. 12:7). He is called "Sallai" in some versions of Neh. 12:20.

SALMA **(1)** The father of Boaz (1 Chron. 2:11; NIV: "Salmon") and an ancestor of David, he is in the genealogy of Jesus. He is also called “Salmon” (Ruth 4:20–21) and “Sala” (Luke 3:32; NIV: “Salmon”). (*See also* Sala; Salmon.) **(2)** The son of Hur and the father/founder of Bethlehem (1 Chron. 2:51, 54).

SALMON The father of Boaz and an ancestor of David and Jesus. The English spelling stems from Ruth 4:21 (Heb. *salmon*) and Matt. 1:4–5 (Gk. *Salmōn*), but variant spellings are used at 1 Chron. 2:11 (Heb. *salma’*); Ruth 4:20 (Heb. *salmah*); and Luke 3:32 (Gk. *Sala*).

SALMONE Modern Cape Sidero, the northward-pointing promontory on the eastern end of the island of Crete, past which Paul sailed en route to Rome in an attempt to avoid unfavorable winds (Acts 27:7).

SALOME Mark lists Salome among the women who observed Jesus’ crucifixion (Mark 15:40), who followed and cared for Jesus in Galilee (15:41), and who attempted to anoint Jesus’ body (16:1). Matthew 27:56 may speak of her as “the mother of Zebedee’s sons,” who asked Jesus to honor her sons (Matt. 20:20–21). Although of doubtful accuracy, several extrabiblical sources relate Salome to Mary, Joseph, or Zachariah. Additionally, Josephus identifies the daughter of Herodias (Matt. 14:6–11; Mark 6:22–28) by this name.

SALT A crystallized mineral compound, often harvested from the Dead Sea, used with food for flavor and preservation (Job 6:6) and medicinally rubbed on infants (Ezek. 16:4). Salt was to be added to the grain offering to represent the covenant (Lev. 2:13). Just as salt survives the sacrificial fires, so does the covenant survive the difficulties of life. In the first century, salt was known as a preservative, seasoning, and fertilizer. All these uses may be behind Jesus’ statement that his disciples were “the salt of the earth” (Matt. 5:13), indicating that they were important for the welfare of the world.

Salt-encrusted vegetation debris at the edge of the Dead Sea, which is an important source of salt and mineral products

SALT, CITY OF *See* City of Salt.

SALT, COVENANT OF *See* Covenant; Covenant of Salt.

SALT, VALLEY OF A location apparently in the Rift Valley near the southern end of the Dead Sea, notable for its heavy concentration of salt. Numerous battles cited in Scripture took place there, usually between the armies of Judah and Edom, the peoples who lived on either side of the valley (2 Sam. 8:13; 2 Kings 14:7; 1 Chron. 18:12; 2 Chron. 25:11; Ps. 60 superscription; see also Gen. 14:3).

SALT SEA *See* Dead Sea.

SALTWORT *See* Mallow.

SALU The father of Zimri, a man who was put to death by the priest Phinehas because he brought a Midianite woman into his family (Num. 25:14).

SALUTATION Many of the letters, or epistles, in the Bible include salutations consisting of expressions of goodwill from the sender to the recipient. Salutations can be found at the beginning and end of the NT Epistles. While the salutation itself was not the invention of the authors of the NT Epistles, the form has been adapted in this literature to express explicitly Christian theological content.

The simplest form of salutation found in the NT is simply "Greetings," which appears in James 1:1, as well as in the letter sent from Jerusalem to Antioch (Acts 15:23) and the letter of Claudius Lysias to Felix (Acts 23:26). See also the examples of secular correspondence in Ezra 4:17; 7:12; Dan. 4:1.

Most of the letters bearing the name of Paul begin with the greeting "Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 1:7) or a slight variation thereof (1 Cor. 1:3; 2 Cor. 1:2; Eph. 1:2; Phil. 1:2; Col. 1:2; 1 Thess. 1:1; 2 Thess. 1:2; Titus 1:4; Philem. 3). The salutation in Gal. 1:3–5 is a theological expansion of Paul's standard salutation. The salutations in 1 Tim. 1:2 and 2 Tim. 1:2 include "Grace, mercy, and peace."

The salutation of the Petrine letters is "Grace and peace be yours in abundance" (1 Pet. 1:2; 2 Pet. 1:2). Salutations are also found in 2 John 3; Jude 2; Rev. 1:4–5. Hebrews, 1 John, and 3 John do not begin with salutations.

In a number of cases, salutatory remarks function to close the letter near its end, often in connection with individual greetings. See Rom. 16:20; 1 Cor. 16:21–24; 2 Cor. 13:14; Gal. 6:18; Eph. 6:23–24; Phil. 4:23; Col. 4:18; 1 Thess. 5:28; 2 Thess. 3:16–18; 1 Tim. 6:21; 2 Tim. 4:22; Titus 3:15; Philem. 25; 1 Pet. 5:14.

SALVATION The term "salvation" is the broadest one used to refer to God's actions to solve the plight brought about by humankind's sinful rebellion and its consequences. It is one of the central themes of the entire Bible, running from Genesis through Revelation.

OLD TESTAMENT

In many places in the OT, salvation refers to being rescued from physical rather than spiritual trouble. Fearing the possibility of retribution from his brother Esau, Jacob prays, "Save me, I pray, from the hand of my brother Esau" (Gen. 32:11). The actions of Joseph in Egypt saved many from famine (45:5–7; 47:25; 50:20). Frequently in the psalms, individuals pray for salvation from enemies that threaten one's safety or life (Pss. 17:14; 18:3; 70:1–3; 71:1–4; 91:1–3).

Related to this usage are places where the nation of Israel and/or its king were saved from enemies. The defining example of this is the exodus, whereby God delivered his people from their enslavement to the Egyptians, culminating in the destruction of Pharaoh and his army (Exod. 14:1–23). From that point forward in the history of Israel, God repeatedly saved Israel from its enemies, whether through a judge (e.g., Judg. 2:16; 3:9), a king (2 Kings 14:27), or even a shepherd boy (1 Sam. 17:1–58).

But these examples of national deliverance had a profound spiritual component as well. God did not save his people from physical danger as an end in itself; it was the necessary means for his plan to save them from their sins. The OT recognizes the need for salvation from sin (Pss. 39:8; 51:14; 120:2) but, as the NT makes evident, does not provide a final solution (Heb. 9:1–10:18). One of the clearest places that physical and spiritual salvation come together is Isa. 40–55, where Judah's exile from the land and prophesied return are seen as the physical manifestation of the much more fundamental spiritual exile that resulted from sin. To address that far greater reality, God announces the day when the Suffering Servant would once and for all take away the sins of his people (Isa. 52:13–53:12).

NEW TESTAMENT

As in the OT, the NT has places where salvation refers to being rescued from physical difficulty. Paul, for example, speaks of being saved from various physical dangers, including execution (2 Cor. 1:8–10; Phil. 1:19; 2 Tim. 4:17). In the midst of a fierce storm, Jesus' disciples cry out, "Lord, save us! We're going to drown!" (Matt. 8:25). But far more prominent are the places in the Gospels and Acts where physical healings are described with the verb *sōzō*, used to speak of salvation from sin. The healing of the woman with the hemorrhage (Mark 5:25–34), the blind man along the road (Luke 18:35–43), and even the man possessed by a demon (Luke 8:26–39), just to name a few, are described with the verb *sōzō*. The same verb, however, is also used to refer to Jesus forgiving someone's sins (Luke 7:36–50) and to his mission to save the lost from their sins (Luke 19:10). Such overlap is a foretaste of the holistic salvation (physical and spiritual) that will be completed in the new heaven and earth (Rev. 21–22). The NT Epistles give extensive descriptions of how the work of Jesus Christ saves his people from their sins (see below).

COMPONENTS

In several passages (e.g., Rom. 5:1–11; Eph. 2:1–10; Titus 3:4–7) "salvation" is clearly a summary term for the totality of what God has done for his people in and through Christ. Salvation is such a rich and multifaceted work of God that it takes a variety of terms to bring out its fullness. "Regeneration" refers to the new life that God imparts, bringing a person from spiritual death to spiritual life (John 3:3–8; Eph. 2:4–7; Titus 3:4–7). "Justification" speaks of God declaring a person not guilty in his court of law on the basis of Christ's sacrificial death and life of perfect obedience (Rom. 3:21–5:12; Gal. 2:14–21). "Atonement" describes Christ's payment for sin and resulting forgiveness (Rom. 3:21–26; Heb. 2:17). "Redemption" captures the reality of God paying the price to bring his people out of their slavery to sin and into the freedom of the Spirit (Gal. 4:1–7; 5:1). "Reconciliation" refers to God turning hardened rebels and enemies into his friends (Rom. 5:10–11; 2 Cor. 5:18–21; Col. 1:20–22). "Adoption" extends that reality into the astonishing truth that God makes those whom he reconciles not just his friends but his sons and daughters (Rom. 8:14–25; Gal. 4:1–7). In "sanctification" God sets his people apart for his special purposes and progressively changes them into the image of Christ (1 Cor. 1:30 ESV, NRSV, NASB; cf. Rom. 8:29). The final component is "glorification," when God brings to completion the work of salvation by granting his people resurrection bodies, removing every last stain of sin, death, and the curse and placing them in a new heaven and earth (Rom. 8:30; 1 Cor. 15:35–57; Rev. 21–22).

PREPOSITIONS OF SALVATION

Another way that the Bible fills out the nature of salvation is through the various prepositions connected to it. The prepositions in the following list are among the more significant.

From. Since the basic idea of salvation is rescue from danger, it is not surprising that Scripture describes that from which believers are saved. David cries out to God, "Save me from all my transgressions" (Ps. 39:8). Salvation from sin is possible only through Jesus, for it is he who "will save his people from their sins" (Matt. 1:21). Reflecting on the work of Jesus on the cross, Paul claims that because of the sacrificial death of Christ believers are saved from God's wrath (Rom. 5:9–10). At the same time, the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus saved people from their slavery to sin (Rom. 6:1–11). As a result of these and other things from which Christ has saved people, on the day of Pentecost Peter exhorts his audience to be saved "from this corrupt generation" (Acts 2:40).

Thus, the unanimous testimony of Scripture is that believers have been saved from their sin and its consequences.

To/into. Believers are saved not merely from something; they are saved to/into certain states or conditions. Whereas they were once slaves, believers have now been saved “into the freedom and glory of the children of God” (Rom. 8:21 [cf. Gal. 5:1]). Through the cross God “has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves” (Col. 1:13). Another way of stating this reality is to speak of the peace into which believers now have been brought as a result of Christ’s work on their behalf (John 14:27).

By. Scripture frequently uses the preposition “by” to express the instrument of salvation. Stated negatively, “It is not by sword or spear that the LORD saves” (1 Sam. 17:47). In the broadest sense, believers are saved from their sins by the gospel (1 Cor. 15:1–2). More specifically, salvation is by the grace of God (Eph. 2:5, 8). The preposition “by” can also express the agent of salvation. A distinguishing feature of Israel was that it was saved from its enemies by God (Deut. 33:29; Isa. 45:17). The same thing is meant when Scripture speaks of God saving his people by his right hand (Ps. 17:7) or his name (Ps. 54:1).

Through. The consistent testimony of the Bible is that salvation comes through faith (e.g., Eph. 2:8–9). Through faith, believers have been justified (Rom. 3:22; 5:1–2) and made children of God (Gal. 3:26). It is not righteousness based on the law that matters, “but that which is through faith in Christ” (Phil. 3:9). The remarkable actions of God’s people throughout history have been accomplished through faith (Heb. 11:1–40).

In. Especially in Paul’s writings the various components of salvation (see above) are modified with the phrase “in Christ” or “in him.” Believers are chosen (Eph. 1:4), redeemed (Eph. 1:7), justified (Gal. 2:17), and sanctified (1 Cor. 1:2) in Christ. Indeed, God has blessed believers “in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ” (Eph. 1:3).

With. Many of the components of salvation that believers experience are said to happen “with Christ.” Believers are united with Christ in his death, burial, and resurrection (Rom. 6:4–11; Gal. 2:20). With Christ, believers have been made alive, raised up, and seated in the heavenly realms (Eph. 2:4–6; Col. 2:13). Because of their union with Christ, believers share in his inheritance (Rom. 8:16–17; Gal. 3:29; 1 Pet. 1:4). Even the very life of the believer is said to be currently “hidden with Christ in God” (Col. 3:3).

TENSES OF SALVATION

The Bible speaks of salvation in the past, present, and future tenses. Pointing to a definitive experience in the past, Paul tells believers that “in this hope we were saved” (Rom. 8:24). Yet he can also speak of himself and other believers as those “who are being saved” (1 Cor. 1:18; 2 Cor. 2:15), pointing to a process that is ongoing. Just a few sentences after assuring believers that they have been justified already (Rom. 5:1–2), he can still say that believers will “be saved from God’s wrath” through Christ (Rom. 5:9–10).

The use of these three tenses reflects the “already and not yet” dynamic of salvation. Through the obedience, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus, God has rescued his people from their sins. But the final and complete realization of all the benefits of salvation must still await the return of Christ and the establishment of a new heaven and earth (Rev. 19–22).

CONCLUSION

Without a proper understanding of humankind's plight as a result of its rebellion, the Bible's repeated emphasis on salvation makes little sense. Because sin is humanity's greatest problem, salvation is humanity's greatest need. Given the breadth, width, and depth of what God has done to save his people from their sins through Jesus Christ, it is no wonder that the author of Hebrews asks, "How shall we escape if we ignore so great a salvation?" (2:3).

SAMARIA Samaria was the capital city of the northern kingdom of Israel. After the fall of Jeroboam I's dynasty, and the reigns of Baasha, Elah, and Zimri, the ruling center of the northern kingdom moved from Tirzah to Samaria during the rule of Omri (r. 882–871 BC), the first king of northern Israel's third dynasty. He built a new capital and called it "Samaria," based on "Shemer," the name of the person from whom he bought the hill on which it was built (1 Kings 16:24).

Samaria remained the capital of the northern kingdom of Israel until it fell to the Assyrians under Sargon II in 721 BC, when he deported most of the population to other areas of the Assyrian Empire (2 Kings 17:6). According to Sargon's annals, he improved the city and populated it with peoples deported from other countries that he had conquered. The report of the fall of Samaria in 2 Kings 17:24 generally agrees with this. The populace of Samaria worshiped its own gods and the God of Israel as well.

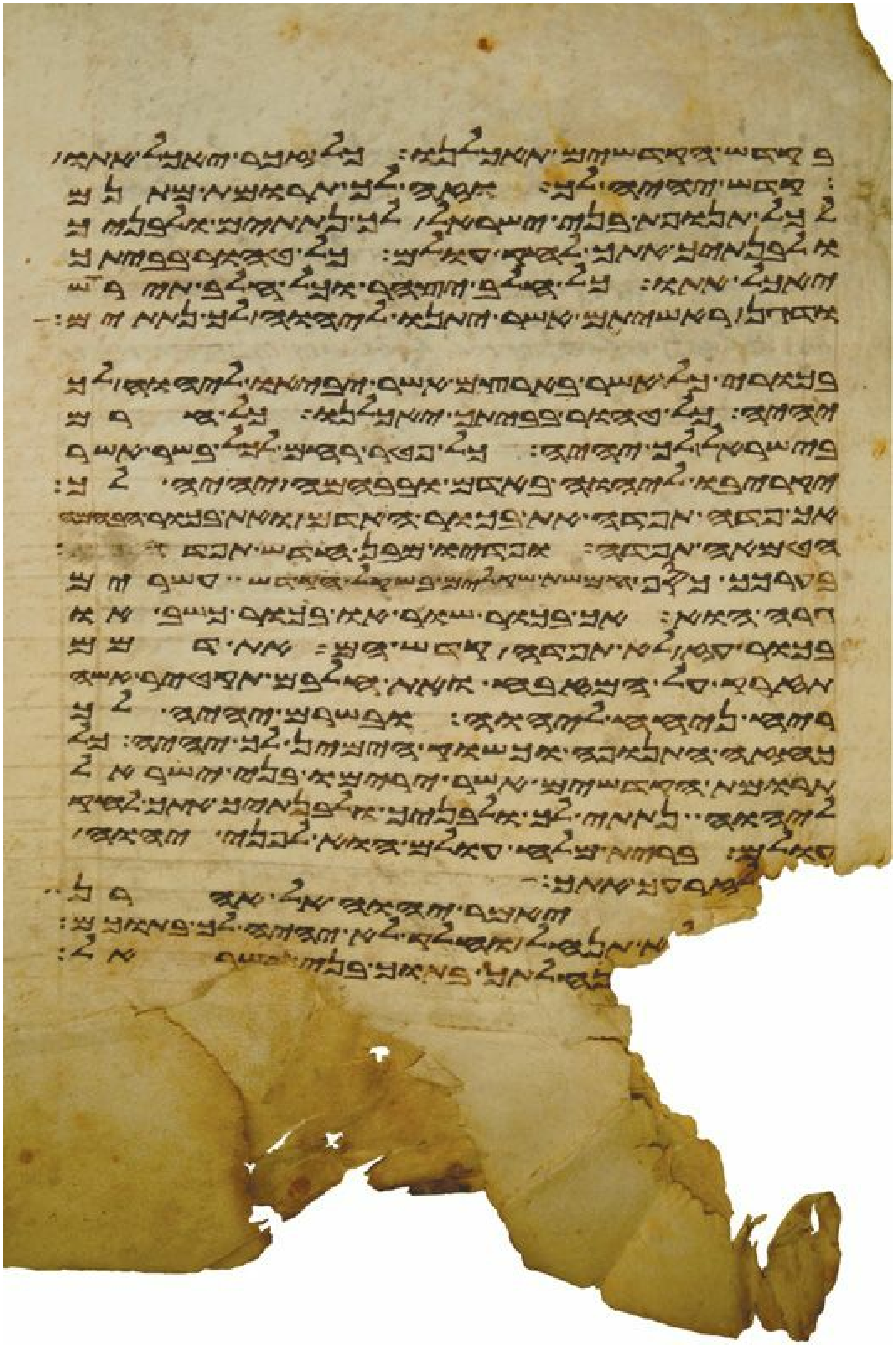
In the Persian period, Samaria was ruled by an appointed governor, Sanballat the Horonite. The book of Nehemiah relates Sanballat's plots to keep the returned exiles from building the walls of Jerusalem. In the time of Herod the Great, the city of Samaria was rebuilt and renamed "Sebaste."

Besides being the name of the capital city of the northern kingdom of Israel, "Samaria" was a name for the northern kingdom itself. The northern kingdom was always politically and economically more prosperous than Judah.

The Bible says that Samaria fell as a result of its worship of other gods and lifts up the "sin of Jeroboam" (1 Kings 16:31), the establishment of golden calves in Bethel and Dan as a rival to the Jerusalem temple, as the chief sin. In Hos. 8:6, a pronouncement of judgment against the golden calf at Bethel, the calf is called the "calf of Samaria." All of the northern kings, even Jehu (r. 842–814 BC), who was relatively faithful to Yahweh, did not remove the golden calves. Second Kings 17:8–23 contains a catalog of the various ways in which the northern kingdom was unfaithful to Yahweh. In general, the prophets declare God's judgment on Samaria. For example, Hosea pronounces judgment on Samaria for moral and ethical sins (7:1–7).

In the NT, Samaria is the region between Galilee and Judea through which Jews avoided traveling. By this time, there had been great animosity between the Jews and Samaritans for centuries. Luke lists Samaria as one of the regions to which Jesus' disciples would be witnesses (Acts 1:8). The archaeological ruins of Samaria lie eight miles northwest of the modern city of Nablus. The town of Sabastia is located there today. *See also* Samaritans.

SAMARITAN PENTATEUCH The Samaritan version of the first five books of the OT (the Torah). This document's history is separate from the history of the Hebrew Bible. It is notable that it varies significantly from the Hebrew version in places, including a strong rejection of the temple in Jerusalem (in favor of the Samaritan temple). The earliest versions of the text likely date to the first century BC, but the most current extant text is from the tenth century AD. Some small fragments of a proto-Samaritan Pentateuch have been found among the DSS.



A manuscript of the Samaritan Pentateuch (thirteenth century AD)

SAMARITANS According to the Bible, the Samaritans are the descendants of the peoples whom Sargon II settled in Samaria after he conquered it and the northern Israelites (*see also* Samaria). As such, they were not quite Jewish, not quite Gentile. Although there is a Samaritan religious sect, it is a mistake to equate Samaritans in the Bible with one of the sectarians in every instance. Samaritans are mentioned rarely in the OT; for example, 2 Kings 17:29 reports that the Samaritans worshiped the gods that they brought from their home countries at high places that they made.

The NT mentions the Samaritans. The story of the woman at the well in John 4 depicts Jesus ministering to a Samaritan. We learn in this passage (John 4:9) that Jews like Jesus did not eat or drink from the same vessel as a Samaritan since they believed it would render them ritually unclean [see NET: "For Jews use nothing in common with Samaritans"]. One of the chief points of contention between Jews and Samaritans is highlighted in this passage: Samaritans believe that Mount Gerizim is God's chosen worship site, not Zion. Also alluded to here is the Samaritans' belief in a "returning one" (Aram. *taheb*), who will guide the Samaritans to repentance and reestablish proper worship. In John 8:48 Jesus' opponents level a charge against him, asking him if he is not indeed a Samaritan and possessed by a demon.

In the Synoptic Gospels, Samaritans are variously depicted as being included in Jesus' ministry (Luke 9:52) or excluded from it (Matt. 10:5). In other places in the Gospels, Samaritans are used as a foil by which Jesus indicts his listeners for not following God as well as they should. His Jewish audience would not have missed the point in his parable when the Samaritan proves to be a more compassionate neighbor than the priest or Levite (Luke 10:25–37), or when Jesus heals ten lepers and only one, a Samaritan, returns to praise God and give thanks (17:16). Given Luke's emphasis on the inclusive nature of the Gospel, his mentioning of Samaritans in such positive ways highlights that emphasis.

In the book of Acts, Luke continues to use the Samaritans as an example of how the Gospel is for everyone. Peter and John, after confirming that Samaria had received and responded to the word, preached in the villages of the Samaritans (Acts 8:14–25).

Scholars are not certain when Jews and Samaritans became two different religious groups, but most likely this happened when John Hyrcanus destroyed the Samaritan temple on Mount Gerizim in 128 BC. Although there were tensions before this, as is evident in Nehemiah and in Josephus, before the destruction of their temple the rift probably was not complete.

The Samaritans exist today and have the following basic beliefs: (1) There is only one God. (2) Moses was the last and greatest prophet. (3) The five books of Moses are the only authoritative Scripture. (4) Mount Gerizim is God's chosen place. (5) There will be a day of judgment and recompense. (6) The "returning one," the Taheb, will appear.

Reconstructing the beliefs of the Samaritans before the fourth century AD is difficult because all we have before then are the sparse statements of outside sources and archaeological remains. Archaeological remains of a Samaritan synagogue on the Greek island of Delos include dedicatory inscriptions dated from the late third to early second centuries BC and the second to first centuries BC. These inscriptions mention those who worship on Mount Gerizim.

SAMGAR-NEBO Possibly an official of the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar. According to the Hebrew text, he, along with other Babylonian officials, took his seat in Jerusalem's middle gate during the siege (Jer. 39:3 NRSV). Some versions, including the NIV, have correctly understood this name to be a misunderstanding of the passage. It is possible to understand "Samgar-Nebo" as a proper name, but based on a parallel Akkadian expression, "Samgar" is more likely a title to be associated with the previous name. "Samgar" should then be understood as either the name of a locality (NIV: "Nergal-Sharezer of Samgar") or a title (NET: "Nergal-Sharezer, who was a high official"). *See also* Nebo-Sarsekim.

SAMLAH An early king of Edom from the town of Masrekah (Gen. 36:36–37; 1 Chron. 1:47–48).

SAMOS An important mountainous island, with a capital city by the same name (meaning “height” or “mountain”), in the Aegean Sea to the southwest of Ephesus. A naval and cultural center (and the birthplace of Pythagoras), Samos apparently had a large population of Jews by the second century BC (cf. 1 Macc. 15:15–24). At the end of his third missionary campaign, Paul’s ship either came near or stopped at (Gk. *paraballō*, a nautical term meaning “to approach, arrive at, sail to”) Samos en route to Miletus (Acts 20:15).

SAMOTHRACE A small island in the northeast of the Aegean Sea, south of Thrace. With a peak over a mile above sea level, Samothrace (“the height/mountain of Thrace”) is the highest of all the Aegean islands and a conspicuous navigational landmark. On his second missionary campaign, Paul’s ship overnighted at Samothrace en route to Neapolis (Acts 16:11), and he may have stopped there on the third missionary campaign (see Acts 20:6).

SAMSON The last judge of Israel whose story is found in the book of Judges (the story of Eli’s and Samuel’s judgeship is found in 1 Samuel). The period of judges was a time of spiritual confusion, moral depravity, and political fragmentation. The situation became increasingly worse as time wore on in Judges, and the time of Samson was the worst of all. Samson did nothing except to satisfy his own desires and lusts. He did not care about God, his family, or his nation. Even so, God used him to deliver Israel in spite of his sin.

Samson’s mother had been childless. An angel announced that she would have a child, but she must consecrate him as a Nazirite, a special holy status. Numbers 6:1–21 describes the rules by which such a person must live, including not drinking wine, cutting one’s hair, or coming into contact with anything that was dead. (*See also* Nazirite.)

When Samson grew up, he did not seem particularly interested in observing Nazirite requirements or even acting like a good Israelite. Against his parents’ wishes, he even married a Philistine woman (Judg. 14). On the way to the wedding, he scooped honey out of the carcass of a dead lion, thus breaking his Nazirite vow. He also came up with a riddle and bet his Philistine groomsmen that they could not solve it. When they did (because they forced his wife to reveal the answer to them), he killed thirty Philistines in order to steal their clothes to pay off the bet. This story sets a pattern for the following stories of Samson pursuing his own desires and, when frustrated, killing Philistines or destroying their property. Samson was doing this for his own ends; God was using it to weaken the Philistines.

The climactic story is more of the same. Samson took up with another Philistine woman, Delilah. She pestered him to reveal the secret of his great strength. At first, he misled her twice by saying that his strength would be diminished if he was bound by “seven fresh bowstrings” (Judg. 16:7) or if she wove the seven braids of his hair (16:13–14), both of which she did, to no effect. Finally, he gave into her nagging and told her his secret. Delilah then cut off his hair, rendering him powerless. After Samson was taken captive, he was put on display in the Philistine temple. He prayed for the strength to bring the temple down on the heads of the Philistines, and God granted it. “Thus he killed many more when he died than while he lived” (16:30). But even this act was done not for the glory of God, but rather to “get revenge on the Philistines for my two eyes” (16:28), which the Philistines had gouged out. Even so, the book of Hebrews points to Samson as an example of faith, perhaps referring not to his personal faith, but to the fact that God used him to further his purposes of salvation (Heb. 11:32).

SAMUEL Samuel oversaw the transition from the period of judges to the time of the monarchy. He was the final judge (1 Sam. 7:6, 15–16; cf. 8:1 NIV mg.). He also was a priest (2:18) and functioned as a prophet (3:20).

The account of his life begins when his mother, Hannah, desperately prayed that God would open her barren womb. The situation in Israel was not good. Eli, the high priest, was incompetent and spiritually dull. He even mistook her sincere prayers for the blabbering of a drunkard (1 Sam. 1:12–16). In answer to her prayers and her vow to dedicate her future child as a Nazirite (cf. Num. 6:1–21), God opened her womb, and Samuel was born. Upon his birth, he was committed to the service of Yahweh at the tabernacle.

Samuel was quite different from Eli's wicked sons, Hophni and Phinehas. While they stole from the sacrifices and slept with the women who ministered at the tabernacle, Samuel "was ministering before the LORD" (1 Sam. 2:18). The narrative even draws a contrast between Samuel and Eli in that the latter was dull and did not immediately recognize that God was speaking to Samuel one evening (1 Sam. 3).

Sometime after the death of Eli, Samuel found himself in the position of leadership as a judge in Israel (1 Sam. 7). God used him to inflict a serious, but not decisive, defeat against the Philistines. Afterward Samuel set up a stone called "Ebenezer" ("stone of help") to commemorate the event.

The people, however, felt that Israel needed a stronger central leader to expel the Philistines from their land, so they requested that Samuel anoint a king over them (1 Sam. 8:5). This worried and angered Samuel, who took it as a personal affront, and in reality it was more seriously an insult toward God. The people should have trusted God to provide the victory over the Philistines. Even so, God directed Samuel to anoint a king over the people, and Saul was chosen.

After this event, Samuel no longer was judge over Israel, but he was a priest and a prophet. As such, he led the people in a covenant renewal ritual whereby they reaffirmed their allegiance to God, the heavenly king, even though they now had an earthly king (1 Sam. 12).

As part of his duties, Samuel operated as the conscience of King Saul. He confronted Saul on numerous occasions when the king chose to go his own way rather than obey the commands of Yahweh (1 Sam. 13; 15).

Saul greatly disappointed God and his representative Samuel. Accordingly, God commissioned Samuel to anoint the next king, even before the death of Saul. In Bethlehem, God directed Samuel to anoint David as the future king of Israel.

Samuel died and was buried at Ramah before David's kingship became a reality (1 Sam. 25:1). Even with death, the story of Samuel does not end. Toward the end of Saul's life, God cut off communication with him. Desperate to control the outcome of a battle with the Philistines, Saul showed his spiritual perversity by consulting a necromancer. The latter summoned Samuel from the dead (1 Sam. 28), and Samuel pronounced Saul's demise.

Samuel was remembered as an important and faithful spiritual leader, compared favorably even to Moses (Jer. 15:1; Acts 13:20; Heb. 11:32). He is honored as a prophet whose words anticipated the coming of Jesus Christ (Acts 3:24).

SAMUEL, BOOKS OF The books of Samuel tell the story of how kingship began in Israel and was subsequently secured under David. Almost all of David's own story is recounted in Samuel, including God's promise to him of a dynasty. This promise became a key seedbed for the messianic hope within the OT, which finds its fulfillment in Jesus as David's son (Matt. 1:1).

GENRE AND PURPOSE

Samuel is part of a block of texts running from Joshua through Kings (excluding Ruth), which is known in the Hebrew Bible as the Former Prophets. This block offers a more or less continuous account of Israel's life in the land of promise from its entry under Joshua until the exile after Jerusalem was captured by the Babylonians (2 Kings 25). Any assessment of the genre and purpose of Samuel must consider its relationship to these surrounding texts, though it should also recognize the distinctive elements of Samuel itself.

At its simplest, Samuel is a work of narrative prose that tells how kingship began in Israel and was secured under David after the failure of Saul, though it also contains a number of important poems. Although contemporary history writing would not be done in the same way, since Samuel points to the ways in which God is active throughout this time, Samuel certainly offers a testimony to this crucial period in Israel's history. It is not the whole story of the period, as its testimony is concerned with a specific set of issues, and that testimony is related through God's purposes for Samuel, Saul, and David. But this observation is vital for appreciating that Samuel is not just the story of how kingship came to Israel but is specifically a theological examination of it. It explores how God was at work, fulfilling the hope for kingship that had been expressed through Judg. 17–21, while also providing hope that the exile was not the end of his purposes for Israel as a whole and the kings of David's line in particular. We should not think of this as a dry piece of history writing, for an important element is also that the telling of this story should entertain and grip those who either read or (perhaps more likely) heard it. Knowing that God had acted in the past for his people and that these actions continued to be important was not enough; the excitement that this should generate also needed to be apparent in the skill with which the story was told.

OUTLINE

I. The Rise of Samuel (1 Sam. 1–7)

II. The Birth of Monarchy (1 Sam. 8–12)

III. Saul's Early Reign and Rejection (1 Sam. 13–15)

IV. Long Rivalry Narrative: David and Saul (1 Sam.16–2 Sam. 1)
    A. David's anointing and arrival at court (1 Sam. 16–17)
    B. David within Saul's court (1 Sam. 18–20)
    C. David as an outlaw in Judah (1 Sam. 21–26)
    D. David in Philistine territory and Saul's death (1 Sam. 27–2 Sam. 1)

V. Short Rivalry Narrative: David and Ish-Bosheth (2 Sam. 2:1–5:5)

VI. First Summary of David's Reign (2 Sam. 5:6–8:18)

VII. Narrative of David's Court (2 Sam. 9–20)
    A. David accepts Mephibosheth (2 Sam. 9)
    B. The war with Ammon and David's sin (2 Sam. 10–12)
    C. Long rebellion narrative: Absalom against David (2 Sam. 13–19)
    D. Short rebellion narrative: Sheba against David (2 Sam. 20)

VIII. Second Summary of David’s Reign (2 Sam. 21–24)

COMPOSITION

Authorship and sources. The books of Samuel are anonymous, and any assessment of their authorship needs to start with this basic fact. There is a tradition in the Talmud (*b. B. Bat.* 14b; 15a) that associates the book with Samuel, Nathan, and Gad, presumably concluding that the books of Samuel constitute the source mentioned by 1 Chron. 29:29. But this reference is only to information on David’s life and thus is unlikely to refer to the whole of Samuel. Since Samuel’s own death is recorded in 1 Sam. 25:1, the book’s title in our tradition (in the LXX the books of Samuel are the first two books of Kingdoms, which continue into Kings) is unlikely to refer to authorship. Rather, it is more likely that a later author has drawn together a range of source materials in order to offer a coherent testimony about the origins of kingship.

For some time, the main sources behind Samuel seemed to have been identified, and they included a series of Shiloh traditions concerning the end of the house of Eli and the rise of Samuel (1 Sam. 1:1–4:1a), an ark narrative (2 Sam. 4:1b–7:1; 6), traditions concerning Saul and the origins of kingship (1 Sam. 7:2–15:35), a history of David’s rise (1 Sam. 16:1–2 Sam. 5:5), a succession narrative (2 Sam. 9–20), and a Samuel appendix (2 Sam. 21–24). Within this analysis, the place of 2 Sam. 5:6–25 and 2 Sam. 7:1–8:17 remained unclear, but the general thought was that the sources were more or less placed one after the other in their chronological sequence. But the probability of this conclusion has been challenged in recent times because the various sections of the books are clearly aware of information in other parts, so that the whole is actually well integrated. In addition, the actual boundaries of the sources remained unclear. An unfortunate effect of the source theories is that they tended to downplay some parts of the book, especially 2 Sam. 21–24, as being of less importance, whereas some recent studies have shown that they are closely integrated into the rest of the book, tying together themes developed elsewhere while also showing the structural integrity of the whole of Samuel.

Relief showing captured Sea Peoples, which included the Philistines (Temple of Ramesses III, Egypt, twelfth century BC). The Philistines were often opponents of the Israelites, such as in 2 Sam. 5.

Samuel is likely the end product of several stages of material collected together, rather than being the product of sources that are kept intact, but it is still a unified work. Possibly the oldest material is the collection of longer poems in 1 Sam. 2:1–10; 2 Sam. 1:17–27; 22:1–23:7, all of which draws on common themes and language and comments on the nature of kingship. The opening and closing blocks form the bookends, raising the hope of kingship (1 Sam. 2:1–10) and then commenting on how the king must submit to God's reign (2 Sam. 22:1–23:7). In the central poem (2 Sam. 1:17–27) David laments the deaths of Saul and Jonathan. It is likely that these poems were joined with the stories about Samuel, Saul, and David in the ninth century BC but were then carefully placed to comment on the stories and yet also be commented on by them. Further editing may have continued until the time of Hezekiah in the late eighth century BC. Later on, more or less the whole of Samuel as we know it was included in the Former Prophets, perhaps during the exile. The important point to note here is that Samuel is a carefully composed whole and not simply a collection of source materials.

Literary devices. Evidence for the nature of the book's composition can be seen in how it employs certain literary devices throughout. Two that are worth noting are the way the text plays with narrative chronology and employs repetition in various forms. The play with narrative chronology means that although the movement of the book is broadly chronological (moving from the origins of the monarchy to the latter period of David's reign), not every element is recorded in its actual chronological sequence, since at some points other factors were more important. Alternatively, at some points different narrative strands are brought into a chronological relationship with one another, most notably in comparing the locations of David and Saul in 1 Sam. 27–2 Sam. 1. A simple example of relating material outside its chronological sequence occurs in 1 Sam. 26:12, where it is said that God had caused Saul's soldiers to sleep so that David could enter Saul's camp only after David had reached Saul, though clearly the soldiers must already have been asleep.

At other points, the breaks with chronological sequence cover different stories about David. For example, in 2 Sam. 5:17–8:14 there are four accounts about David, two in which he overcomes enemies (5:17–25; 8:1–14) and two associated with events in Jerusalem and public worship (6:1–7:29). Since 7:1 tells us that David's desire to build a temple came after God had delivered him from all his enemies, it follows that the events of chapter 7 must have come after those of 8:1–14. Here, arranging the material to highlight the theme of public worship was more important than placing it in chronological sequence.

This same section also demonstrates the use of repetition. Hence, 5:17–25 recounts two nearly identical defeats of the Philistines in which David must trust God, while the victories in 8:1–14 are twice said to come about because God gave David victory wherever he went (8:6, 14). Similarly, both 6:1–23 and 7:1–29 depend upon interest in the ark and thus mutually interpret each other. Other large-scale repetitions include two announcements of the coming of kingship (1 Sam. 2:10, 34), two announcements of the end of Eli and his family in the sanctuary at Shiloh (1 Sam. 2:27–36; 3:10–14), and two times when David does not kill Saul (1 Sam. 24; 26). In an oral culture, such repetitions are not evidence of poor composition but rather are a crucial tool for emphasizing the central themes being developed. In addition, variations within each repetition are a tool for increasing the audience's interest, showing that the authors of Samuel were interested in both giving historical testimony and entertaining their audience.

TEXT

It is generally agreed that the text of Samuel poses more than its fair share of difficulties, something that can be seen in the often significant differences between the received Hebrew text (MT) and the early translations, especially the main Greek translation (LXX). For example, in 1 Sam. 17 the best-regarded edition of the LXX lacks vv. 12–31, 50, 55–58, and even in shared material it is sometimes significantly shorter. It is generally agreed that the Greek version resolves a number of anomalies, but is this because the MT has been expanded or because the LXX has been abbreviated? In addition, three significant Samuel manuscripts were found at Qumran. Although two of these are only fragmentary, one covers significant portions of Samuel. Although the disputed portions of 1 Sam. 17 are absent from it, there are some points where it appears to support the LXX and others where it agrees with the MT while also introducing some other issues of its own.

It is clear, therefore, that complex issues are involved in determining the text of Samuel, and one must avoid taking a doctrinaire position and allow each point to be resolved on its own merits. At the same time, the difficulties should not be magnified beyond reason, since large sections of the text can be established with reasonable certainty, and for all the problems, the MT remains a reliable guide. One might suggest in the case of 1 Sam. 17, for example, that the LXX text represents an early attempt to address apparent difficulties in the narrative (especially the question of when Saul met David) that nevertheless failed to realize that not everything in Samuel is narrated in exact chronological order. Nevertheless, anyone who compares different translations of Samuel (e.g., NIV and NRSV) will notice variants and should make use of good commentaries at that point.

CENTRAL THEMES

The reign of God. Kingship lies at the heart of Samuel. But although it is concerned with the story of Israel's first two kings (Abimelek in Judg. 9 is an aberration and probably only a local figure), it places their story within the framework of God's reign. No matter what authority a king in Israel might claim, it was always subject to God's greater authority. Indeed, Samuel makes clear that God did not need a king but rather chose the monarchy as the means by which his own reign might be demonstrated.

An important way in which God's reign is demonstrated is through the motif of the reversal of fortunes, in which the powerful are brought down and the weak raised. This is announced in Hannah's Song (1 Sam. 2:4–8) and is then demonstrated when God removed the corrupt family of Eli from their position of power in the sanctuary at Shiloh (2:27–36; 4:1–18). On the other hand, Samuel himself came to prominence even though he had no position of power. Saul, likewise, although a member of a relatively wealthy family (9:1–2), knew that he was not someone who had automatic power (9:21) but still was raised up to be king by God. Yet when he, like Eli before him, became corrupt and clung to power rather than submit to God, he too was removed so that he could be replaced (15:28–29).

David also came from a humble position as the youngest son in his family (1 Sam. 16:11), but unlike Eli and Saul, he would not grasp power for himself. Indeed, he twice refused to kill Saul when he had the chance (1 Sam. 24; 26) and punished those who claimed that they could exercise violence on his behalf (2 Sam. 1:11–16; 4:9–12). Even when it seemed that David had later lost all to Absalom, he held to the fact that he could reign only as long as he had God's support (2 Sam. 15:25–26). This, in fact, is a central theme in 2 Sam. 7 when David wanted to build a temple for God, for there it is made clear that David cannot act without God's authority, and that his descendants will have authority as long as they too submit to God (2 Sam. 7:11b–15). David's closing songs (22:1–23:7) make clear that the king has no authority apart from God.

Kingship. Kingship in Israel is closely related to the theme of God's reign. The possibility of kingship first arises in Hannah's Song (1 Sam. 2:10) and is confirmed by the man of God who announces the judgment against Eli's family (2:34). Both references occur before Israel's elders requested a king because of the failure of Samuel's sons (8:1–9), indicating that the request for a king did not take God by surprise. In addition, it indicates that authentic kingship in Israel could only be that which was initiated by God.

The story of Saul's rise to the throne needs to be read in light of this. Although the human move to kingship stemmed from the request of the elders for a king (1 Sam. 8:4–9), it was still the case that Saul could become king only because of God's decision. Although 1 Sam. 8–12 often has been broken down into supposedly conflicting sources, it is better to read it as a unified text but to note that the narrator's voice is not equivalent to any of the characters that speak through it. When the text is understood in this way, it is possible to appreciate that kingship was part of God's purposes for Israel, but it needed to follow his model. Kings in Israel could prosper only when they submitted to the greater reign of God. It was Saul's mistake that he did not recognize this. David, although he made some terrible mistakes, always understood this truth, and his closing songs (2 Sam. 22:1–23:7) reflect on it. David learned what Saul never did: power is never something to be grasped; rather, it can only be accepted as a gracious gift from God to be used for his purposes.

NEW TESTAMENT CONNECTIONS

The importance of the books of Samuel for the NT is far greater than its five direct citations there (Acts 13:22; Rom. 15:9; 2 Cor. 6:18 [2×]; Heb. 1:5) might indicate. The theme of kingship and the associated promise to David in 2 Sam. 7 are fundamental to the messianic hope throughout the OT and are picked up in the NT. Even when the NT cites other OT texts (such as Ps. 2) with reference to Jesus, it is still the books of Samuel that lie behind the citation. In addition, the NT frequently indicates that Jesus was a son of David (e.g., Matt. 1:1). Although such texts do not cite Samuel directly, they clearly allude to it because of God's promise that David's throne would be established forever (2 Sam. 7:16). Jesus' ministry transcends that of David in every way, but we cannot understand his ministry apart from David and God's promise to him.

SANBALLAT The governor of Samaria who resisted Nehemiah's efforts to rebuild Jerusalem's walls. He and his associates (Tobiah and Geshem) appealed to the Persian king but were ultimately unsuccessful (see Neh. 2:10, 19; 4:1–7; 6:1, 2, 5, 12, 14). Even later, Nehemiah deposed one of the sons of the priest Joiada for being the son-in-law of Sanballat (13:28). The name "Sanballat" is Akkadian, meaning "Sin [the god of the moon] gives life," leading some to think that his family descended from an intermarriage between an Israelite and someone brought into the north by the Assyrians after 722 BC. We know from later inscriptions (e.g., Elephantine papyri and the Wadi ed-Daliyeh Papyrus) that his family continued to be politically important in Palestine during the intertestamental period.

SANCTIFICATION

SANCTIFICATION AND HOLINESS

In the biblical sense, the word "sanctification" relates directly to the Hebrew and Greek words for "holy" (*qadosh* and *hagios* respectively). One may even argue that "holyfication" would be preferable to "sanctification" to underscore the intertwined nature of these terms. In Scripture, English terms such as "holy"/"holiness," "consecrate"/"consecration," and "sanctify"/"sanctification"/"saints" express cognates of *qadosh*/*hagios*.

Despite continued emphasis by many writers that "holy" speaks to separation and that "to be holy" means "to be set apart," the biblical terms are relational and speak primarily of belonging. "To be holy" (sanctified) means "to belong to God"; separation follows only as the exclusivity of this relationship demands it.

Qadosh is God's adjective. God's character defines the meaning of "holy," not the other way around. Holy, then, cannot be reduced to religious notions of purity (and/or exclusivity) but rather must be understood in light of the full expression of God's character and will. While other adjectives such as "great," "majestic," and "powerful" can also describe humans, God exclusively determines the meaning of the adjective *qadosh* (*hagios*). "Holy" has no meaning apart from God. Humans (and things) become holy only as they belong to God. For example, an ordinary table dedicated to God becomes a holy table. The people belonging to God are a holy people. Different from other spirits, the Holy Spirit belongs to God and expresses his presence exclusively (cf. Isa. 6:3; 52:1).

It follows that holiness and divine presence are tightly interwoven. God opens the door into his presence, enabling sanctification (John 17:18; 1 Cor. 1:2; Heb. 10:10), and he calls for his people not to violate his relational presence (2 Cor. 7:1; 2 Tim. 2:21; Heb. 12:14). Sanctification, then, is not as much an intrinsic "either/or" quality (granted or not granted) as it is a relational "more or less" quality based on God's dynamic presence. Put differently, the biblical perspective on holiness resists reduction to a mere “holy versus profane” dichotomy and cannot be reduced to a simple declaration (granted!) or to a specific list of godly requirements (dos and don’ts).

OLD TESTAMENT

The gradation of the OT priesthood into levels of holiness that enabled entrance and service in weaker or stronger intensities of God’s presence underscores further this dynamic quality of holiness. Although all the people of Israel were holy (belonging to God), the priests enjoyed a higher degree of holiness than the ordinary Israelite. Within the ranks of the priests, the high priest went through stricter rituals of consecration (Exod. 29:1–8, 20–21; Lev. 8:7–24; 21:13–15), since he alone could minister in the most intensive presence of God (Lev. 16:1–17). Less holy were those of the Aaronic lineage born with physical defects. Although sufficiently holy to eat from the most holy offerings, they could not serve at the altar (Lev. 21:16–23).

Average Israelites possessed a lower level of holiness than Levites and priests but could, as individuals, acquire greater levels of holiness through obedience (Lev. 11:44–45; Num. 15:40–41). Moreover, special vows, like that of the Nazirite, enhanced the average Israelite’s quality as holy. The Nazirite vow (Num. 6:1–21) did not transfer priestly status to any person, but it did elevate one’s holiness to a comparable level during the period of dedication.

This dynamic connection between divine presence and sanctification becomes even more evident in the prophets. They were “holy men” because they were endowed with the divine spirit, and as the level of this endowment varied from prophet to prophet, so did their effectiveness as God’s messengers. False prophets still carried the name, but their lack of devotion to Israel’s God caused inaccuracy in their message (e.g., Jer. 6:13–14).

NEW TESTAMENT

This dynamic relationship between divine presence and holiness translates directly to the NT use of *hagiasmos* (and cognates). Although the Gospels rarely use “sanctification” vocabulary, Jesus’ ongoing polemic against the Pharisees, who had turned their piety (holiness) into a question of mere conspicuous behavior, makes the same point. John’s correlation of Jesus’ sanctification as God’s Son with the disciples’ experience of the Spirit’s empowerment (John 10:34–38; 17:17–19) indicates the same. Sanctification could not be separated from purpose and sending (20:21–23) and could not be reduced to a process of learning specified “Christian” behaviors. This, again, follows the pattern outlined in Acts; it was the outpouring of the Spirit that enabled the disciples to live the Christian life, which required the dynamic, creative power of God’s presence (Acts 1:8; 2:1–21).

Paul’s conversion exemplifies this tight connection between divine presence and sanctification (holiness). Not attaining the experience of God that he expected from keeping the law, Paul found the law-promised access to God in Christ. This turned him into a theologian of the Spirit who focused on the relational quality of God’s presence. In Paul’s vernacular “divine presence,” as expressed through the language of holiness or sanctification, stems from the relational work of the Holy Spirit. Accordingly, sanctification centers on deepening the relationship between God and the Spirit-filled Christian. Sanctification as a process of “learning” ethics surfaces only as a derivative; ethics is a by-product of divine presence, not vice versa. The antidote to the vices of the flesh (Gal. 5:18–21) is not a contrasting list of virtues of the Spirit but rather a fruit, the product or result, of living in God’s presence (Gal. 5:22–23).

For Paul, Spirit possession was synonymous with being a Christian (Rom. 8:9). His concern involved the intensity of the Spirit's presence. The Spirit could be grieved and his presence quenched—a devastating situation to the Christian's power and sanctity (Eph. 4:30; 1 Thess. 5:19).

SANCTUARY A place set aside for worship. In the Bible, a sanctuary is a place consecrated for God or for idols.

SANDALS, SHOES In ancient times, footwear generally was sandals, a flat sole constructed of leather, wood, or matted grass secured to the foot with leather straps. Soldiers and dignitaries had more-substantial foot coverings than common people had (cf. Eph. 6:15). Sandals were common and cheap; their quality and presence or absence were indicators of social status (Ezek. 16:10; Luke 15:22). Prisoners were unshod (2 Chron. 28:15; Isa. 20:2–4), and those in mourning also went barefoot (2 Sam. 15:30; Ezek. 24:17). One put on sandals in preparation for a journey (Exod. 12:11; Mark 6:9; Acts 12:8). Moses and Joshua were instructed to take off sandals when they stood on holy ground (Exod. 3:5; Josh. 5:15). The transfer of a sandal from one party to another sealed a property transaction (Ruth 4:6–10; cf. Ps. 60:8), while the removal of the sandal of a man who refused to marry his brother's widow was a ceremony of disgrace (Deut. 25:9–10).

The lowest servant in a household removed guests' sandals and washed their feet, as Jesus demonstrated for his disciples (John 13:5; cf. 1 Sam. 25:41; Luke 7:38). John the Baptist did not consider himself worthy of the humble task of untying Jesus' sandal (Matt. 3:11; Mark 1:7; Acts 13:25).

A child's sandals, excavated from a house in El-Amarna, Egypt (1550–1096 BC)

SANDBAR *See* Quicksands; Syrtis.

SANHEDRIN The Jewish ruling body in Jerusalem that played a part in Jesus' execution and the persecution of the early church. The Greek word for this body, *synedrion*, often is translated as "council," and in ancient sources other than the Bible the word does not denote one specific ruling authority but rather is used for many different city or regional councils. However, in the NT the word refers to the council in Jerusalem headed by the high priest that was charged by the Roman authorities with maintaining order among the Jewish people. According to Jewish tradition, Moses instituted the Sanhedrin at God's prompting, so that its members might lead the nation as God's anointed elders (see Num. 11:16–17). Further tradition says that Ezra called the Sanhedrin together again following the exile.

In the first century AD, the Sanhedrin functioned as the highest judicial authority of the nation of Israel (which sheds light on Matt. 5:22). The Sanhedrin contained members from the Sadducees and the Pharisees, along with other prominent members of the Jewish establishment. In the Gospel of Mark it is described as being made up of "the high priest, and all the chief priests, the elders and the teachers of the law" (Mark 14:53). As the highest authority representing the religious establishment of Israel, the Sanhedrin under the high priest Caiaphas played a prominent role in the final conflict that led to Jesus' crucifixion. John indicates that the Sanhedrin, and Caiaphas in particular, plotted to kill Jesus just after the raising of Lazarus from the dead (John 11:45–53). Caiaphas expressed the fear that the Sanhedrin's authority would be usurped if Jesus continued to gain popularity through his miracles, and also that a messiah would trigger a backlash of oppression from the Roman rulers.

After Jesus was taken from the garden of Gethsemane, the Sanhedrin tried him on a charge of blasphemy using false testimony, and some of the Gospels also have the accusers claim that Jesus promised to destroy the temple and raise it in three days, taking his words as a literal threat against the temple (Matt. 26:58–68; Mark 14:53–65; Luke 22:63–71; see also John 18:13–27). The Sanhedrin was unable to carry out a sentence of death that the charge of blasphemy called for, however, and so they were forced to bring Jesus to the Roman authorities to achieve their desired result. When Jesus was brought before Pilate, they portrayed his crime as proclaiming himself to be the "King of the Jews," thereby tailoring the charge to make him look like a revolutionary rather than a religious teacher with whom the Sanhedrin disagreed (Matt. 27:11–14; Mark 15:2–5; Luke 23:2–7; John 18:29–38). The man who arranged for the burial of Jesus, Joseph of Arimathea, is said to be a member of "the Council" (Mark 15:43), but Luke is quick to mention that Joseph had "not consented to their decision or action" regarding Jesus' fate (Luke 23:51).

Following the death and resurrection of Jesus, the Sanhedrin attempted to suppress the budding Christian movement by arresting Peter and John and having them beaten for preaching about Jesus (Acts 4:1–21). The Sanhedrin also ordered the apostles "not to speak in the name of Jesus" (5:40). Paul, after being arrested, was brought before the Sanhedrin so that they might determine his crime, and he cleverly used the disagreement between the Sadducees and the Pharisees regarding the resurrection of the dead to disrupt the assembly (23:1–9). They then plotted to kill him (23:12–22).

SANSANNAH A town given to Judah in the southern part of their territory (Josh. 15:31). There is a possibility that it is also known as Hazar Susah (Josh. 19:5) and Hazar Susim (1 Chron. 4:31) because of its placement in the list of cities with Ziklag. Its precise location is unknown.

SAPH A descendant of the giants (NIV: "descendants of Rapha") of the Philistines. Saph was killed in battle by Sibbekai the Hushathite, a soldier of King David (2 Sam. 21:18). In 1 Chron. 20:4 he is called “Sippai.”

SAPHIR *See* Shaphir.

SAPPHIRA Sapphira and her husband, Ananias, died as a result of withholding part of the proceeds of a property sale from the early community of believers (Acts 5:1).

SARAH The wife of Abraham, the father of Israel and God’s chosen people. Thus, Sarah is a matriarch (mother) of Israel along with Rebekah and Rachel. When first introduced, her name is given as “Sarai,” but God changes it to “Sarah” (at the same time Abram’s name is changed to “Abraham” [Gen. 17:15–16]). Both names mean “princess.” The significance of the change may be subtle, since “Sarai” is an East Semitic version of West Semitic “Sarah,” indicating her transition from Mesopotamia to the promised land.

According to Gen. 11:29–30, Sarai was married to Abram before they entered the promised land. The passage also announces that she was barren. Since an essential part of the divine promises to Abram is that he will be father to a great nation, the lack of offspring is a considerable problem and propels much of the plot of the narrative (esp. Gen. 12–26).

In brief, Sarai’s inability to conceive is an obstacle to the fulfillment of the promise and is a threat to Abram’s faith. Thus, when a famine forces them to go to Egypt to survive, he tells his wife to lie about her status by saying that she is his sister. Although it is true that she is his half sister, the statement is a lie because he hides the most relevant part of his relationship with her and puts the matriarch in danger (Gen. 12:10–20; 20:12). Abraham’s faith (the narrative does not reveal Sarah’s thinking except perhaps in Gen. 18:10–15, when she laughs at the thought of giving birth in her old age) in God’s ability to fulfill the promise fluctuates, and he certainly has not come to a consistent position of trust even just before the birth of Isaac (Gen. 20). As a matter of fact, acting on fear and trying to produce an heir, Abraham takes a concubine, Hagar, who gives birth to Ishmael. Sarah’s relationship with Hagar is troubled (Gen. 16), and Sarah treats her harshly and eventually has Hagar and Ishmael expelled from their camp (21:8–21).

Eventually, in advanced old age, Sarah gives birth to Isaac, the child of the promise (Gen. 21:1–7). Sarah is not mentioned in the story of the “binding of Isaac,” the focus again being on Abraham’s faith.

Sarah predeceases Abraham, and he buys a field from Ephron the Hittite in order to bury her (Gen. 23), the first part of the promised land owned by the people of promise. This location near Hebron became the burial spot of Abraham and other patriarchs.

The Cave of Machpelah in Hebron, the traditional site of Sarah's tomb. This building, known as the Tomb of the Patriarchs, stands above the cave.

Later OT literature often looks back on Abraham as patriarch, but only Isa. 51:2 explicitly mentions Sarah in the role of cofounder of the people of God. She is mentioned also in the NT, along with Abraham, as the one through whom God brings the promise of a son to fulfillment (Rom. 4:19; 9:9; Heb. 11:11). In 1 Pet. 3:6 Sarah is put forward as a model of wifely submission because she obeys Abraham and refers to him as her lord (likely a reference to the Greek version of Gen. 18:12).

SARAI *See* Sarah.

SARAPH A son of Shelah, a son of Judah, he, along with Joash, ruled in Moab and Jashubi Lehem (so NIV; NRSV takes the verb as indicating he married into Moab), perhaps during the reign of David or Solomon when Israel had control over that area (1 Chron. 4:22).

SARDIS A city of the ancient Roman province of Asia, it was located approximately fifty miles northeast of Ephesus, in what is modern Turkey. During the sixth century BC, Sardis was among the most wealthy and powerful cities in the world. This prominence, however, was in relative decline in subsequent centuries. In AD 17 a severe earthquake destroyed the city, though it was quickly rebuilt within a decade. The church at Sardis is among the seven churches addressed in the book of Revelation (Rev. 1:11). The message to it reflects a complacent church resting on its past accomplishments (Rev. 3:1–6).

SARDITE *See* Seredite.

SARDIUS The KJV rendering of the Hebrew word *'odem* (NIV: "carnelian") and the Greek word *sardion* (NIV: "ruby"). The former is an orange-red gemstone that adorns Aaron's breastpiece (Exod. 28:17; 39:10) and the king of Tyre (Ezek. 28:13). The latter is a precious stone used in the gemstone imagery of God on the throne and is the sixth foundation stone in the city wall of the new Jerusalem (Rev. 4:3; 21:20).

SAREPTA *See* Zarephath.

SARGON The third ruler of the Neo-Assyrian Empire, Sargon II (r. 721–705 BC), took credit for his predecessor's defeat of Samaria in 722 BC and advanced the policies of Tiglath-pileser III. Most of his reign was marked by warfare. His three western campaigns went as far as Egypt. Around 714 BC, Egypt incited Ashdod and others to rebel against Assyria. Isaiah warned Hezekiah against relying on Egypt. Hezekiah's role in the rebellion is unclear, but he appears to have heeded Isaiah's advice. On Sargon's third campaign, in 712 BC, he captured Ashdod (Isa. 20:1) and other cities in today's Gaza Strip. Subsequently he defeated Babylon in 710 BC and removed Marduk-Baladan, who later rebelled against Sennacherib.

SARID The first town listed in the border description of Zebulun's tribal allotment mentioned in Josh. 19:10–12. From this farthest point, Zebulun's boundaries continued west, east, and north. Support for Tel Shadud as the location of biblical Sarid exists both philologically in LXX manuscripts as well as archaeologically via remains showing appropriate occupation levels.

SARON *See* Sharon.

SARSECHIM, SARSEKIM *See* Nebo-Sarsekim.

SARUCH *See* Serug.

SASH *See* Clothing.

SATAN The Hebrew word *satan* means "accuser" or "adversary." Passages in the OT apply it to human and divine figures enforcing justice or hindering purposes, often on behalf of God (e.g., Num. 22:22; 1 Kings 11:14). The *satan* appears in Job 1–2 and Zech. 3 as a member of the heavenly council responsible for accusing and indicting. In some later Second Temple Jewish and Christian writings *satan* appears as a proper name for a leading evil divine being. *See also* Devil, Demons.

SATAN, SYNAGOGUE OF A metaphor used to describe Jewish persecutors of the church in Smyrna (Rev. 2:9) and in Philadelphia (3:9).

SATISFACTION In Num. 35:31–32 the KJV translates the Hebrew word *koper* as "atonement," referring to the "ransom" (NIV, NRSV, NET) that is rejected as a substitute for the death penalty due for murder.

SATRAP The official title of a governmental ruler under the sovereignty of the Persian king. These rulers were entrusted with the provinces of the Persian Empire. According to Dan. 6:1, Darius appointed 120 of them over the empire. They appear in the books of Ezra, Esther, and Daniel. The

KJV translates the Hebrew term (*'akhashdarpan*) as "prince" or "lieutenant."

SATYR In Greek and Roman mythology, satyrs were sylvan gods associated with drunkenness and sexual licentiousness and characterized by a mixture of human and goatlike (or equine) features. Following the LXX and the Vulgate, some older English translations of the Bible rendered the noun *sa'ir* ("he-goat") as "satyr" or "demon." In several cases, the context suggests the translation "goat," without connotations of the mythological entity (Isa. 13:21; 34:14). In two cases, the context does involve the worship of false deities (Lev. 17:7; 2 Chron. 11:15; and, with a minor textual emendation, possibly 2 Kings 23:8). In such cases, the translation "goat-idol" may be an appropriate way of avoiding the anachronism introduced by using the Greek-derived terms "satyr" and "demon" in the translation of the Hebrew text.

SAUL **(1)** The first king of Israel (1 Sam. 9:1–2 Sam. 1:27; 1 Chron. 9:35–10:14). Out of fear of their enemy the Philistines as well as displeasure over Samuel's wicked sons, the people of Israel asked Samuel for a king like all the other nations had (1 Sam. 8). Though God and Samuel both expressed displeasure with the people's request, God directed Samuel to anoint Saul as king. Saul's initial reluctance to make his role public and also his hesitation to immediately confront the Philistines are not a sign of humility, but rather are an early example of the kind of disobedience to God and his prophet Samuel that eventually would bring God's great anger against him.

Saul's first significant failure, however, occurred before a battle with the Philistines, while he and his army were camped at Gilgal (1 Sam. 13). Before initiating battle, it was necessary to offer sacrifices. Samuel the priest, however, was late in arriving. Saul grew nervous because his troops were deserting, so he sacrificed the animals. When Samuel arrived, he confronted Saul. After all, with God on one's side, large numbers of troops were unnecessary. Saul thus displayed a lack of confidence in God by his actions. For this, Samuel announced that he would not found a dynasty of kings (13:13–14).

Soon thereafter, Saul showed his disobedience in another important aspect of war. Upon victory, the king should immediately offer all the plunder to God. In addition, if the enemy came from within the land, all the captives were to be put to death (*see* Holy War). However, after defeating the hated Amalekites (cf. Exod. 17:8–16; Deut. 25:17–19), Saul kept the sheep and did not personally execute King Agag, their leader (1 Sam. 15). For this, Samuel announced God's decision to remove him from the kingship and anoint another king (15:26).

At this time, Samuel anointed David, but David did not immediately become king (1 Sam. 16:1–13). For a period of time, David entered into Saul's service (16:14–23). It was never David's intention to forcibly remove Saul from the throne (1 Sam. 24; 26), but Saul grew intensely jealous of this popular young man. Indeed, Saul was a man deeply plagued by mental problems, perhaps depression and paranoia, even before the conflict with David. His jealousy also brought him into conflict with his own brave son, Jonathan, who had a deep friendship with David. Saul ejected David from the court and then spent much of his energy trying to track him down and kill him. He was, however, unsuccessful.

Eventually, God abandoned Saul. He was defeated and killed by the Philistines in the battle of Mount Gilboa (1 Sam. 31), and David mourned his death and the death of his friend Jonathan (2 Sam. 1).

(2) Another name for the apostle Paul (*see* Paul).

SAULIDES King Saul's descendants or partisans.

SAVIOR In the Greco-Roman world the title "savior" (*sōtēr*) often was ascribed to deities. It carried with it the sense of rescue and preservation for subjects of a particular god. The LXX also uses the term, sometimes with reference to God as Savior (especially in the Prophets), and sometimes referring to deliverers such as the judges.

In the NT, God is also called "Savior" (Luke 1:47). He will rescue his people from sin. At the birth of Jesus, the angel announced that the one born will be a "Savior, who is the Messiah [Christ], the Lord" (Luke 2:11 NRSV). The Samaritans believed in Jesus as the Savior (John 4:42). Peter connected the exaltation and the majesty of Christ to his salvific work (Acts 5:31). In Paul's thinking, Christ is Savior of the body and is also the model for the husband-wife relationship (Eph. 5:23). Also for Paul, the believer is to anticipate the return of this now-exalted Savior (Phil. 3:20). Of special note are the frequent references to "God our Savior" (e.g., 1 Tim. 1:1), "Christ Jesus our Savior" (e.g., Titus 1:4), or some other such formula. John notes the Father has sent the Son to be Savior of the world (1 John 4:14).

SCALE *See* Itch; Scall.

SCALES *See* Balances; Weights and Measures.

SCALL In Lev. 13–14, in the context of laws outlining the appropriate action to take with skin conditions and leprosy, the KJV translates the Hebrew word *neteq* as "scall," referring to a dry or itchy spot on the skin, usually the scalp. This dryness or itchiness usually is found in patches upon the head and is often caused by parasitic organisms.

SCAPEGOAT A goat that carried away the sins of Israel. Chosen through lot on the Day of Atonement by the high priest, the scapegoat was offered to God alive and then released into the desert (Lev. 16:8, 10). The high priest laid his hands upon the head of the scapegoat, thus symbolically transferring all of Israel's guilt and sin to it. An appointed man then took the goat into the wilderness and released it, where it would "carry on itself all their sins to a remote place" (16:22). The complete removal of Israel's sin provided a powerful demonstration of the purification offered through the sacrifices on the Day of Atonement. The act of releasing the scapegoat caused the chosen man to become unclean. After bathing himself with water, he was able to reenter the camp (16:26).

SCARLET *See* Colors; Crimson; Red.

SCEPTER A rod, club, or mace that signified royal authority and power. The king ruled over the nation and enemies with his primary weapon, the scepter (Num. 24:17; Pss. 2:9; 110:2). The king was "the one who holds the scepter" (Amos 1:8). In the hands of the wicked, the scepter symbolized oppression and violence (Ps. 125:3; Jer. 48:17). The scepter symbolized royal authority throughout the ancient world, as evidenced by the many depictions of kings holding scepters. Through metonymy, the OT uses "the scepter" to refer to kingship and kingdoms (Gen. 49:10; Num. 24:17). The Roman soldiers mocked the royalty of Jesus by putting a crown of thorns on his head and a staff in his hand, which represented his scepter (Matt. 27:29).

SCEVA In Acts 19:14 Sceva is mentioned as a "Jewish chief priest." His seven sons were among a group of itinerant Jewish exorcists in Ephesus who unsuccessfully tried to exorcize demons in the name of Jesus, which Paul was able to do. No such Jewish high priest is known from other sources, nor is one known to have lived in Ephesus. Sceva may have taken the title for himself to impress the Ephesians.

SCHOOL The word “school” does not appear in the NIV, and it occurs only once in the KJV and NASB, referring to a lecture hall of Tyrannus that Paul used to instruct his disciples (Acts 19:9). The Greek word *scholē* primarily refers to leisure and suggests having the time to debate and listen to lectures. However, analogies with other Near Eastern cultures whose literature mentions schools support the idea that formal education existed in ancient Israel and Greece. The first schools were developed in the third millennium BC in Sumer to train scribes in cuneiform for official administrative duties or temple work. In preexilic Israel, education was done primarily at home through the family, though it is probable that schools were connected to the temple or court. The first mention of a school in Jewish literature is in Sir. 51:23 in reference to a “house of instruction” (*bet midrash*).

A book of wax tablets with Greek school exercises (fourth–fifth century AD)

SCHOOLMASTER In Gal. 3:24–25 the KJV translates the Greek word *paidagōgos* as "schoolmaster," referring to a function of the OT law as a custodian, guardian, or tutor to prepare a person for salvation by faith in Christ through creating an awareness of the holiness and righteousness of God and an accompanying sense of personal need. The term was used of a slave placed in charge of a boy in a wealthy Greco-Roman household whose task it was to accompany the boy to school and to guide his conduct until he came of age and took on the responsibilities of a man.

SCIENCE A way of knowing (Lat. *scientia*) through observing nature. The discipline grew up alongside philosophy in ancient Greece but acquired its modern sense of collecting and analyzing data with Aristotle. The approach overlaps with the biblical wisdom tradition and is not incongruous with Paul's reflections on general revelation (Rom. 1:20).

SCOFFER A person who shows contempt for others by insulting them with words or actions. Proverbs contains many warnings about scoffers and often contrasts the scoffer with the wise man or wise son. The scoffer refuses to listen or be disciplined, whereas the wise person seeks wisdom and responds to discipline. The Hebrew term *lets* often is translated by the NIV as "mocker." Scoffers are associated with the last days in 2 Pet. 3:3. However, scoffing is not always described as evil. God is pictured as a scoffer of evildoers in a number of biblical passages (e.g., Pss. 2:4; 59:8).

SCORN To treat with contempt, ridicule, despise. The people of God, through their thoughtlessness and rebellion, scorn God and his worship (1 Sam. 2:29). More often the godly are scorned by the wicked (Ps. 69:7, 10, 20; Prov. 23:9). God will also subject his people to scorn when they reject and ignore him (Deut. 28:37; Jer. 18:16; Ezek. 22:4).

SCORPION A nocturnal arachnid that preys on insects and other arachnids. It has a pointed, poisonous stinger on its tail that is lethal to small animals and very painful or lethal to humans. The Israelites encountered them as they wandered through the wilderness (Deut. 8:15). They are referred to symbolically as a torturous punishment (1 Kings 12:14; Rev. 9:3, 5, 10). When Jesus sends out the seventy-two missionaries, he gives them the authority to trample scorpions without fear of being hurt (Luke 10:19).

SCORPION PASS *See* Akrabbim.

SCOURGE The word "scourge" refers to both the act of whipping and the whip used in such action. Such a whip usually was laced with sharp rocks or bones capable of decimating the victim's body.

Rehoboam notes that he would scourge with scorpions, a reference to the stinging of whips (1 Kings 12:11–14). Job refers to a scourge of sudden death (Job 9:22–23), and Isaiah notes God's punishment the rebellious have sought to avert (Isa. 28:15).

In the NT, Jesus predicts his own scourging (Matt. 20:19; 27:26 [the fulfillment]) and the scourging and death of his followers (23:34). Paul challenges the authority of a tribune to scourge (*mastizō*) an untried Roman citizen (Acts 22:25).

SCRIBE An individual with the ability to read and write who uses these skills in a professional manner. The scribe was highly esteemed in ancient Mesopotamia and Egypt. Most scribes were royal secretaries (2 Sam. 8:17; 20:25). Early scribal activities included writing official records, drafting letters, and preparing royal decrees, deeds, and other things (2 Kings 12:10; 25:19; 2 Chron. 26:11). The scribes also read to the king (Jer. 36:21). As a result, scribes often became counselors to the king in matters of state (1 Chron. 27:32). After the exile, scribes became experts in the law of Moses (Ezra 7:6). By NT times, scribes were associated with the Pharisees as professional teachers of the law (Mark 2:16). Along with the chief priests, scribes conspired to kill Jesus (Luke 19:47).

SCRIPTURE The term "Scripture" (*graphē*) appears fifty-one times in the NT, used in reference to the OT. Sometimes the biblical writers cite a specific OT text as Scripture, while at other times they refer to Scripture in a more comprehensive manner.

Most references occur in the Gospels, in which Jesus details the nature and the extent of Scripture. Jesus opened the Scriptures from Moses through all the prophets in order to explain everything about himself as the anticipated Messiah (Luke 24:44–45). The prophetic quality of Scripture is evidenced in OT passages that are referenced in the NT as being fulfilled in his birth, life, betrayal, death, burial, and resurrection.

Jesus characterized the Scriptures as the powerful source of eternal life (John 5:39; 7:38). They have abiding authority and cannot be broken (10:35). He highlighted the dynamic quality of the Scriptures when he said that they speak, testify, and declare.

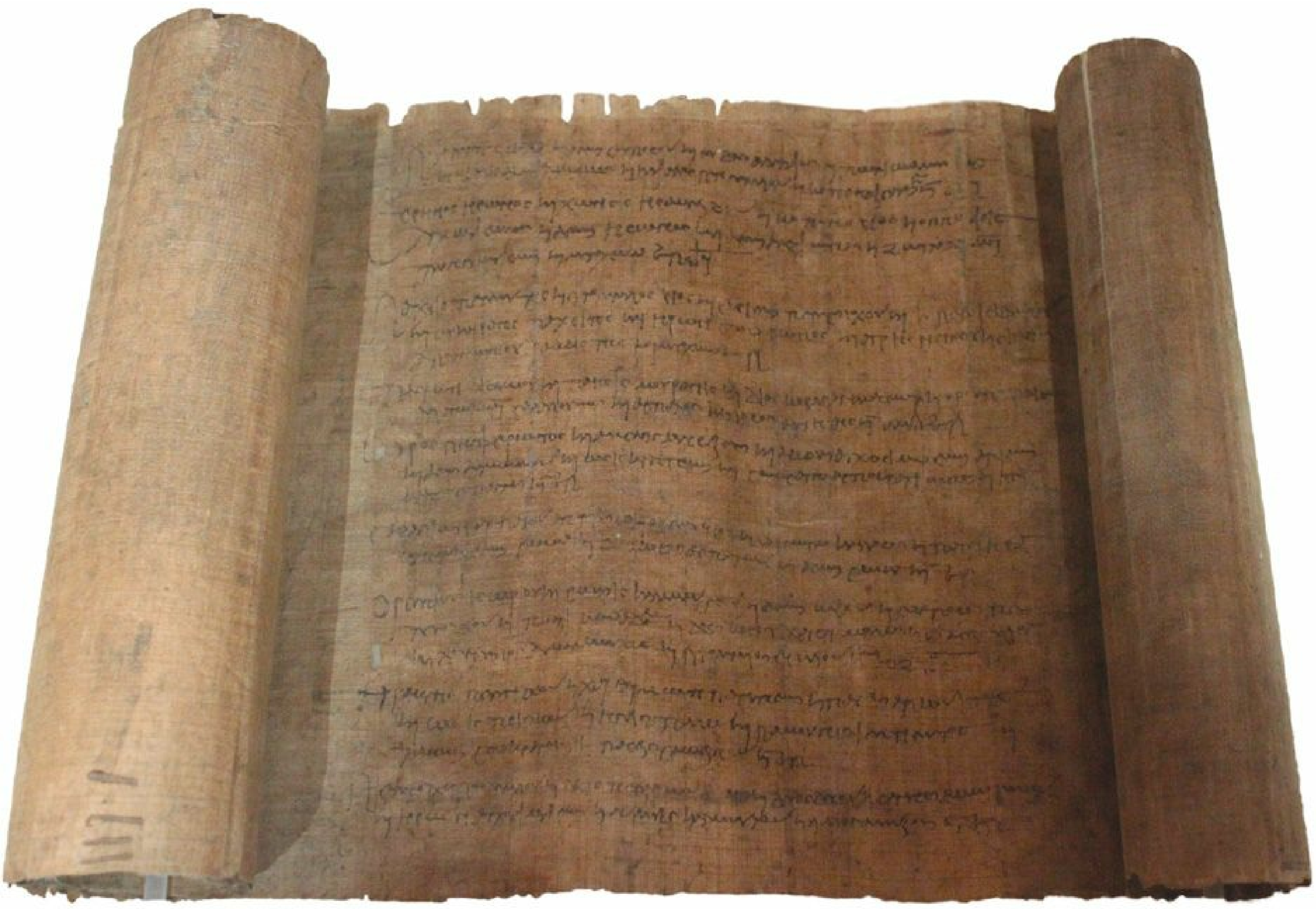
In Acts, Scripture is the authoritative source from which the apostle Paul explains the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (17:2; 18:28). Apollos is distinguished as a man with a thorough knowledge of Scripture, and the Bereans were known for their investigative inquiry into the truthfulness of the Scriptures.

The book of Romans opens (1:2) and closes (16:25–26) with references to the gospel as Scripture. Throughout this letter Paul broadens Scripture referents beyond Christ and his redemptive work to include the themes of divine power, the nature of belief, and the prophetic ministry of Elijah. Finally, Paul characterizes Scripture as holy, prophetic, and intimately associated with the Lord himself. The Scriptures are a source not only of eternal life but also of encouragement.

In Galatians, Scripture includes the prophetic anticipation of Gentile participation in the gospel (3:8). It is a convicting authority that shows all people to be bound by sin and unbelief (3:22). The historical narrative account of Gen. 21 is also regarded as Scripture and used in an analogous typological manner (Gal. 4:21–31).

The Pastoral Letters and the book of James cite legal sections of the OT under the heading of Scripture (1 Tim. 5:18 [quoting Deut. 25:4; Lev. 19:13]; James 2:8). The most significant references to Scripture are 2 Tim. 3:16 and 2 Pet. 1:20–21 because they define the origin, nature, and function of Scripture. In addition, 2 Tim. 3:16 details the sufficiency of Scripture in its ability to teach, rebuke, correct, and train. In every period of history, Scripture is sufficient in extent and content to sustain people and nurture their relationship with God.

SCROLL References to "books" in biblical narratives are more properly said to indicate scrolls, that is, book rolls, made from papyrus, tanned hides of sheep and goats (as were most of the DSS), or parchment (hides with the hair removed and rubbed clean) (2 Tim. 4:13). They were unrolled for reading (Luke 4:17, 20) and could be secured with a wax seal (Rev. 5:1). The physical limitations of scroll length probably affected the size of biblical books. Almost invariably, only one side was written on, which makes Ezek. 2:9–10 and Rev. 5:1 exceptional. *See also* Books; Writing Implements and Materials.



Papyrus scroll with list of farmers recorded in Greek (Roman period)

SCURVY The KJV rendering of the Hebrew term *garab* in Lev. 21:20; 22:22, and the NRSV rendering of that term in Deut. 28:27, referring to what was considered an incurable skin disease (NIV: "festering sores"). This is not the scurvy caused by a deficiency of vitamin C, but rather a chronic fungal disease that appears as a draining lesion. Both priests and the animals sacrificed as burnt offerings were to be free of it (Lev. 21:20; 22:22). In Deut. 28:27 God would afflict Israel with "scurvy" because of its disobedience. *See also* Diseases and Physical Abnormalities.

SCYTHIANS An ethnic group that inhabited the northern and eastern shores of the Black Sea. The term is also used more generically to refer to a nomadic people who rode on horseback, herded sheep and cattle, and moved from one seasonal pasture to another on the steppes from the Black Sea to what is now southern Russia. They often were employed as military mercenaries by Near Eastern powers.

Scythians are mentioned in Assyrian, Babylonian, Persian, and Greek literature from the seventh century BC to the first century AD, after which time they appear to fade from history. Some earlier biblical scholars associated Scythians with the horse-riding nation that would bring destruction from the north (Jer. 4:29; 5:15–17; 6:22–26; 50:41–42; Zeph. 1:2–18), although more recent scholars normally identify this foe as the Babylonians.

Scythians were renowned for savagery, caricatured as rude and rough, and treated with contempt by outsiders. The Greek word *skythizō* means "to drink immoderately" and also "to shave the head" because of the Scythian practice of scalping their dead enemies. Josephus describes them as "little better than wild beasts" (*Ag. Ap.* 2.269).

Scythians are mentioned in 2 Macc. 4:47; 3 Macc. 7:5; 4 Macc. 10:7. The only reference to them in the NT is in Col. 3:11, where they are coupled with barbarians. There is no evidence of a particular problem with Scythians at Colossae, but Paul wishes to point out that there is no place within the church for racial, ethnic, or social contempt.

SCYTHOPOLIS *See* Beth Shan.

SEA, MOLTEN *See* Molten Sea.

SEA COW *See* Leather.

SEA GULL *See* Gull.

SEAL In the biblical world, documents were sealed with clay or wax (1 Kings 21:8; Job 38:14; Neh. 9:38; Jer. 32:10; Rev. 5:1). The integrity of the seal was assured by impressing an image into the soft substance, which would then harden and retain the unique image of the sender's seal. The archaeological record attests this practice in the form of bullae (the impressions themselves, which survive long after the documents have disintegrated) as well as a large number of seals, which often were carved (Exod. 28:11; 39:6; Sir. 38:27; 45:11) into semiprecious stones or stone cylinders.

A person's unique seal was closely identified with the owner and could be worn as a ring or pendant (see Gen. 38:18; Esther 8:8; Song 8:6). Besides documents, we have records of the sealing of caves (Matt. 27:66; cf. Dan. 6:17; 2 Macc. 2:5) and bags (Job 14:17; Tob. 9:5). In apocalyptic literature, seals are used to conceal prophecies of the future (Dan. 12:4) and to mark humans as belonging to God (Rev. 7:3–8).

SEA MONSTER *See* Dragon.

SEA OF GALILEE A large, freshwater lake in the northern, Galilee region of Israel measuring thirteen miles long, eight miles wide, and between 80 and 150 feet deep. Because it is shaped like a harp, the OT refers to it as the "Sea of Kinnereth," which comes from the Hebrew word for "harp" (Num. 34:11; Deut. 3:17; Josh. 13:27; 19:35). It is also called "Lake of Gennesaret," which derives from the lush Plain of Gennesaret nearby (Matt. 14:34), and the "Sea of Tiberias," which comes from the name of the most prominent city on its banks (John 6:1; 21:1).

The Sea of Galilee is located about sixty miles north of Jerusalem and is fed by the Jordan River. It is surrounded by mountain peaks and cliffs, except on the southern side, where the Jordan River flows out of it. These peaks form a valley and make for strong, frequent, and unexpected storms as the Mediterranean winds blow down the western slopes and swirl across the sea. Jesus demonstrated his power over nature as he calmed such violent storms (Matt. 14:22–33; Mark 6:45–51; John 6:16–21).

The Sea of Galilee

The Sea of Galilee boasted a large fishing industry, which provided the ideal location for Jesus to call his first disciples—Peter, Andrew, James, and John, who were fishermen (Mark 1:16–20). Much of Jesus' ministry in the Synoptic Gospels took place in the towns around the Sea of Galilee. The Sea of Galilee provided an abundance of fishing illustrations (Matt. 13:48) and lessons on discipleship. Its shore may have provided a convenient location for the feeding of the five thousand (Matt. 14:13–21; Mark 6:35–44; Luke 9:10–17; John 6:1–13). After Jesus' resurrection, his disciples briefly returned to their fishing nets on this lake, resulting in the miraculous catch of 153 fish (John 21:11).

SEA OF JAZER A body of water mentioned in Jer. 48:32 (NASB, KJV) during Jeremiah's oracle against Moab, perhaps a small lake or reservoir associated with the biblical city of Jazer. The modifier "sea of" is considered a scribal error and is absent in some Hebrew manuscripts (cf. Jer. 48:32 with Isa. 16:8–9, which is reflected in some translations (NIV, NRSV).

SEA OF REEDS *See* Red Sea, Reed Sea.

SEA OF THE ARABAH *See* Dead Sea.

SEA OF THE PLAIN *See* Dead Sea.

SEASON "Season" is used in Scripture mainly in reference to the agricultural seasons, whether it be breeding (Gen. 31:10), plowing (Exod. 34:21), harvest (Num. 13:20; Ps. 1:3), or the many other seasons. “Season” is also used as a way of referring simply to an appropriate time period, such as in Eccles. 3:1. Paul also uses this word in encouraging Timothy to “be prepared in season and out of season” (2 Tim. 4:2). Paul later uses the term to speak of God’s own perfect timing in bringing the word to understanding (Titus 1:3). The great majority of references, however, are agricultural. *See also* Weather.

SEBA **(1)** A son of Cush (Gen. 10:7; 1 Chron. 1:9; cf. Isa. 43:3). **(2)** A kingdom located in modern Eritrea and Ethiopia. The people of Seba are referred to as Sabeans (along with the people of two other kingdoms descended from Ham). Presents from both Sheba and Seba are requested in Ps. 72:10 as part of God’s blessing on the king. *See also* Sabean.

SEBAM A town in the Transjordan given to the tribes of Reuben and Gad by Moses (Num. 32:3; “Sibmah” in Josh. 13:19). The reference to “Sibmah” in Num. 32:38 is likely to the same town, rebuilt by the Gadites, and “Sebam” may actually be a later alteration to the original name “Sibmah.” It had become a Moabite town by the time of Jeremiah and Isaiah and apparently was known for its lush vines and summer fruits (Isa. 16:8; Jer. 48:32). *See also* Sibmah.

SEBAT *See* Shebat.

SECACAH *See* Sekakah.

SECHU *See* Seku.

SECOND COMING Jesus’ personal return to earth at the end of history. Three main Greek terms are used in the NT to describe this event: *parousia*, *apokalypsis*, and *epiphaneia*. The word *parousia* means “presence” or “arrival” and was used in ancient times to describe the arrival of a ruler or king (e.g., Matt. 24:3, 27, 37, 39; 1 Cor. 15:23; 1 Thess. 3:13; 4:15; 5:23; 2 Thess. 2:1, 8; James 5:7–8; 2 Pet. 3:4, 12; 1 John 2:28). The term *apokalypsis* refers to an “unveiling” or “revealing” of Jesus Christ at the end of the age (Rom. 2:5; 1 Cor. 1:7; 2 Thess. 1:7; 1 Pet. 1:7, 13; 4:13; cf. Rev. 1:1). The word *epiphaneia* speaks of an “appearing” or “manifestation” and refers to the visible, earthly appearance of Jesus (2 Thess. 2:8; 1 Tim. 6:14; 2 Tim. 4:1, 8; Titus 2:13).

Jesus clearly predicted his second coming in his Olivet Discourse: “Then will appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven. And then all the peoples of the earth will mourn when they see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory” (Matt. 24:30). Jesus uses the word “come” in this discourse to speak about his return (Matt. 24:39, 42–44, 46; 25:19, 27, 31). Jesus’ return is also predicted by angels (e.g., Acts 1:11) and apostles (Phil. 3:20; Acts 3:20–21; 1 Cor. 11:26; Heb. 9:28).

The NT describes certain events that will precede Jesus’ coming. There will be wars, famines, earthquakes, and other cosmic disturbances (Matt. 24:6–8, 29). Believers will be persecuted and hated (Matt. 24:9–13, 21–22). Many erstwhile believers will turn away from the faith (Matt. 24:10–13; 1 Tim. 4:1; 2 Tim. 3:1–5; 2 Pet. 3:3–4). There will be false messiahs and false prophets who will deceive many through signs and wonders (Matt. 24:11, 23–26). The “man of lawlessness” (sometimes referred to as the antichrist) will be revealed (2 Thess. 2:1–12). In addition, the gospel will be preached to all nations (Matt. 24:14).

Although Jesus’ coming is certain, its exact time is uncertain in the sense that it cannot be predicted. Jesus himself said, “But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father” (Matt. 24:36 [cf. Acts 1:7; 3:21; 2 Pet. 3:4, 8–9]).

When Jesus comes again, his return will be visible to all, like “lightning that comes from the east is visible even in the west” (Matt. 24:27). The last trumpet will announce his coming in awesome power and great glory with his holy angels (Matt. 16:27; 24:30–31; 25:31; 1 Cor. 15:52; 1 Thess. 3:13; 4:16; 2 Thess. 1:7; 2:8; Jude 14). His coming will also be sudden and unexpected, “like a thief in the night” (1 Thess. 5:1–2; see also Matt. 24:37–39, 43–44; 2 Pet. 3:10; Rev. 16:15).

Jesus will come again for several reasons. He will raise the dead (John 5:28–29; 1 Cor. 15:22–23, 52; 1 Thess. 4:16) and separate the wicked from the righteous (Matt. 24:40–41; 25:31–32). He will transform the bodies of believers into glorious resurrection bodies (1 Cor. 15:51–53; Phil. 3:20–21), gather his followers to himself (1 Thess. 4:17; 2 Thess. 2:1), and reward them for their faithfulness (Matt. 16:27; 24:46–47; 1 Thess. 2:19; 2 Tim. 4:8; 1 Pet. 5:4; Rev. 22:12). The believer’s suffering will be replaced with the Lord’s praise (2 Thess. 1:7; 1 Pet. 1:7; 4:13) and the full experience of salvation (Heb. 9:28). By contrast, Jesus’ second advent means wrath for the wicked (Matt. 24:51; Rom. 2:5; 2 Thess. 1:8–9; Jude 15; Rev. 20:11–15) and destruction for God’s enemies (1 Cor. 15:25–26; 2 Thess. 2:8; Rev. 19:11–21; 20:7–10).

Since his coming is imminent but its timing uncertain, believers should eagerly expect his return (1 Cor. 1:7; 11:26; 16:22; Phil. 3:20; James 5:7–8; Rev. 22:20). Remaining watchful and ready consists of being faithfully engaged in doing what Jesus instructed (Matt. 24:46; 25:14–30; 1 John 2:28), even if this means suffering (Matt. 24:13; 1 Pet. 1:6–7). Believers are called to live holy and blameless lives in anticipation of meeting Jesus face-to-face (1 Thess. 3:13; 5:23; 1 Tim. 6:14; 1 Pet. 1:13; 2 Pet. 3:11–14; 1 John 2:28–29; 3:2–3). The promise of Jesus’ return is a motivation for mission (2 Tim. 4:1–2; 2 Pet. 3:12) and obedience (Rev. 22:7, 12, 17). It is, in short, the “blessed hope” of the believer (Titus 2:13).

SECOND DEATH A name for the eternal punishment of unbelievers in hell. In Rev. 20:14 the lake of fire is described as the second death. According to 21:8, “the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars—they will be consigned to the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death.” Believers have the glorious promise that they will not be hurt by the second death (2:11) because “the second death has no power over them” (20:6). *See also* Hell.

SECOND DISTRICT, SECOND QUARTER *See* New Quarter.

SECRETARY A worker skilled and trained in handwriting who prepared records, copies, and letters. Ancient writers, including authors of biblical letters, used secretaries (Rom. 16:22), who worked from notes to create rough drafts, reworking the material until the author was satisfied. *See also* Amanuensis.

SECT A group or faction with distinctive beliefs and practices. The author of Acts uses “sect” (Gk. *hairesis*) in reference to the Sadducees, the Pharisees, and Christians, without pejorative connotations (Acts 5:17; 15:5; 24:5, 14; NIV: “party” at 5:17; 15:5). Paul’s use of the term is more critical (e.g., Gal. 5:20).

SECU *See* Seku.

SECUNDUS One of several travel companions of Paul on his third missionary campaign, mentioned only in Acts 20:4. Secundus (along with Aristarchus), from Thessalonica, may have been among the "representatives of the churches" accompanying the collected gifts for Jerusalem (2 Cor. 8:16–24; see also Acts 24:17; Rom. 15:25–26).

SECURITY OF THE BELIEVER The safety and endurance of a Christian's salvation. Theologians over the centuries have debated whether salvation can be lost, but several lines of argument taken from Scripture support the teaching that salvation by its very nature is eternal.

ELECTION AND GRACE

Passages on divine election reveal that those who come to faith do so not merely out of personal choice, but ultimately because they have been chosen by God (Eph. 1:4). God draws those whom he chooses, and they respond to his call (John 6:37, 44, 65). If genuine believers could lose their salvation, it would imply that God's purpose and plan in election had been ineffective, an idea that contradicts Scripture (John 6:39).

The apostle Paul maintains that salvation is bestowed by God as a gift of his grace (Rom. 3:24; 6:23; Eph. 1:7; 2:8–9). This free gift cannot be merited or earned. It is not granted or withheld on the basis of a person's moral character, no matter how noble or wicked, and it is never merited or forfeited through anything a person does, no matter how good or evil. Rather, it is granted due to something that lies within the nature of God—his gracious character, his purpose, and his free choice. Salvation endures due to the same perfections in God that cannot change (Mal. 3:6; James 1:17). Although salvation is bestowed as a matter of God's grace, faith is the means by which it is received (Rom. 3:21–25). Yet faith is not a work and is never said to earn God's grace (Eph. 2:8). Good works are the evidence of a life that has experienced the grace of God.

REBIRTH AND ETERNAL LIFE

Scripture reveals that salvation is imparted through regeneration or rebirth. Jesus describes it as being "born again" (John 3:3, 7). Paul uses a related concept when he writes that we are saved "through the washing of rebirth" (Titus 3:5). Peter teaches essentially the same thing: "He has given us new birth" (1 Pet. 1:3). The life that is imparted is "eternal" (John 3:16; 10:28; 17:2; Rom. 6:23). Paul maintains that God's gifts and call are irrevocable (Rom. 11:29). Thus, there is no notion in the Scriptures that a regenerated follower of Christ ever becomes unregenerate, nor does eternal life ever morph into something temporal. In praying to the Father, Jesus notes that believers are a gift from the Father to the Son, and that none of them would be lost (John 17:2, 12). Judas Iscariot's perdition clearly was part of God's sovereign plan (John 17:12; Acts 1:16).

PROTECTION OF THE BELIEVER

The Holy Spirit is said to seal or be the seal of believers. Paul writes, "When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit" (Eph. 1:13). This refers to the divine ownership and protection granted to the believer, who has been given "the Spirit as a deposit," guaranteeing that God will finish the work that he began (2 Cor. 5:5; Phil. 1:6). Jesus taught the same truth regarding the believer's security: "No one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand" (John 10:28–29). Peter maintained this same confidence when he wrote that the believer is shielded through faith "by God's power" (1 Pet. 1:5). One of the strongest arguments for the security of the believer is found in Rom. 8:38–39: "Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Something greater than God would be needed to wrestle salvation from those to whom he has granted it.

Not all Christians believe that the Bible teaches eternal security, citing passages that seem to imply that a saved individual can again become lost and suffer eternal judgment, most likely referring to the severe yet temporal discipline of God directed toward his erring children or toward those who depart from the faith because they were merely professing believers (Matt. 13:20–21, 24–30; John 15:6; 1 Cor. 11:30–32; 2 Cor. 11:13–15; 2 Tim. 4:10, 14; Heb. 6:4–9; 10:26–31; 2 Pet. 2:1, 22; 1 John 2:19; 5:16; 2 John 9; Rev. 2:5, 16). But those who defend the doctrine believe these passages do not contradict this teaching; they merely reveal that God purposes to accomplish this work with the cooperation of the believer (1 John 5:4; Rev. 2:7, 11, 17, 26; 3:5, 12, 21).

The writer to the Hebrews, who lays down some of the most severe warnings in the NT, nevertheless maintains that God is "able for all time to save," and that his readers did not belong to those who "shrink back and so are lost" (Heb. 7:25; 10:39 NRSV). Jude asserts that God is able to present the believer "without fault" before his presence (Jude 24). Essentially, this is what Jesus says in John 10:28–29: "They shall never perish" (cf. 17:12). The loss of one sheep would impugn the power and character of God, who not only saves by grace but also keeps us by his grace and in his grace (Rom. 5:2).

SEDITION Conduct or speech leading people to rebel against their established government. Hezekiah rebelled against the king of Assyria (2 Kings 18:7), and Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon (2 Kings 24:20). After Cyrus decreed that the Jewish exiles should return to Jerusalem and rebuild their temple, the locals resisted by sending a malicious letter to the Persian government. This identified the Jews as a rebellious people who would pose a threat if they were allowed to persist (Ezra 4:15). When the Pharisees asked Jesus whether the Jews should pay taxes to Caesar, they were trying to trick him. His support for the tax would alienate the people, while his opposition to it would make him an instigator of sedition. Jesus outmaneuvered their political trap (Matt. 22:15–22).

SEER *See* Divination and Magic; Prophecy, Prophets.

SEGUB **(1)** The youngest son of Hiel. His life, and that of his brother Abiram, were lost when Hiel rebuilt the foundations and gates of Jericho, fulfilling the curse pronounced by Joshua (1 Kings 16:34; Josh. 6:26). **(2)** The son of Hezron and the father of Jair (1 Chron. 2:21–22).

SEIR, MOUNT "Seir" means "hairy" and derives from Esau's hairiness (Gen. 25:25) or the woody nature of the mountain. It is located south of the Dead Sea. Although it was once occupied by the Horites (Gen. 14:6), Yahweh gave Mount Seir to Esau's descendants (Deut. 2:4–12). Thus, it is used in both biblical and extrabiblical literature to refer to Edom (2 Chron. 20:10–33). The Edomites' sense of security, arising from the height and ruggedness of Mount Seir, coupled with their hostility against Judah made them a constant object of prophetic diatribes (Isa. 63:1–7; Jer. 49; Ezek. 35:2–15; Obad. 1).

SEIRAH The rallying point for Israel after Ehud assassinated King Eglon of Moab (Judg. 3:26). It was from here that Ehud blew the horn to bring the tribes together to expel the foreign invaders. The exact location is unknown, but it is thought to be in the mountains of Ephraim, close to the borders of Benjamin.

SEIRATH *See* Seirah.

SEKAKAH One of the six desert towns inherited by Judah upon the Israelites' initial entrance into the promised land (Josh. 15:61). It is thought to be around Bethany near the Dead Sea, but the exact location is debated.

SEKU A place between Ramah and Gibeah where Saul inquired of Samuel and David (1 Sam. 19:22). Seku was known for its large well. Its location is debated.

SELA The Hebrew word *sela'* may designate any rocky height or cliff (*see also* Rock), but it is also used as a proper name, "Sela," implying some sort of "rock fortress." **(1)** A fortress city in Edom that King Amaziah captured and renamed "Joktheel" (2 Kings 14:7). It is near Buseirah (biblical Bozrah) in modern-day Jordan. **(2)** A site in Amorite territory (Judg. 1:36) of unknown location. **(3)** A city in Moabite territory (Isa. 16:1), perhaps the same place as in Judg. 1:36. **(4)** Sela Hammahlekoth, in the Desert of Maon, is the place where Saul left his pursuit of David and went to meet the Philistines (1 Sam. 23:24–28). (*See* Sela Hammahlekoth.) **(5)** Sela of Rimmon (NIV: "rock of Rimmon [pomegranate]"), in the wilderness of the territory of Benjamin, east of Geba; perhaps the large cave 1.2 miles east of Geba. Six hundred Benjamites fled here to escape the Israelites (Judg. 20:45–47; 21:13). **(6)** "Sela" occurs also in Isa. 42:11, but it is difficult to know whether it indicates only a craggy dwelling place (cf. Jer. 48:28) or perhaps refers to the site in 2 Kings 14:7 or Isa. 16:1.

SELAH Although the Hebrew word *selah* appears seventy-one times in Psalms and three times in the book of Habakkuk, its meaning remains obscure. Most, however, agree that it represents some sort of instruction for worshipers. The LXX considers it to be a musical interlude; others see it informing worshipers to repeat themselves, while still others suggest the translation "forever" (cf. Vulg.). Those who seek the word's meaning in its etymology suggest that it directs worshipers to sing or play louder or to pray.

SELA HAMMAHLEKOTH A gorge or ravine in the wilderness of Maon, south of Hebron and Ziph in Judah, where Saul pursued David until he was informed of a Philistine invasion by a messenger (1 Sam. 23:28). The name means "rock of divisions" (also "rock of parting" [NIV mg.] or "Rock of Escape" [NRSV]) and is currently known as Wadi Malaky. The surrounding landscape is in the mountainous region, with the gorge cutting through it.

SELED One of the two sons of Nadab, a descendant of Jerahmeel, he died without having children (1 Chron. 2:30).

SELEUCIA The port city of Antioch in northern Syria, founded by Seleucus Nicator in 301 BC. In 64 BC Pompey made it a free city. Paul and Barnabas embarked upon their first missionary journey from Seleucia (Acts 13:4). Although the city is not named directly, Paul sailed to or from Seleucia on other occasions (14:26; 15:39).

SELEUCIDS

THE SELEUCID EMPIRE

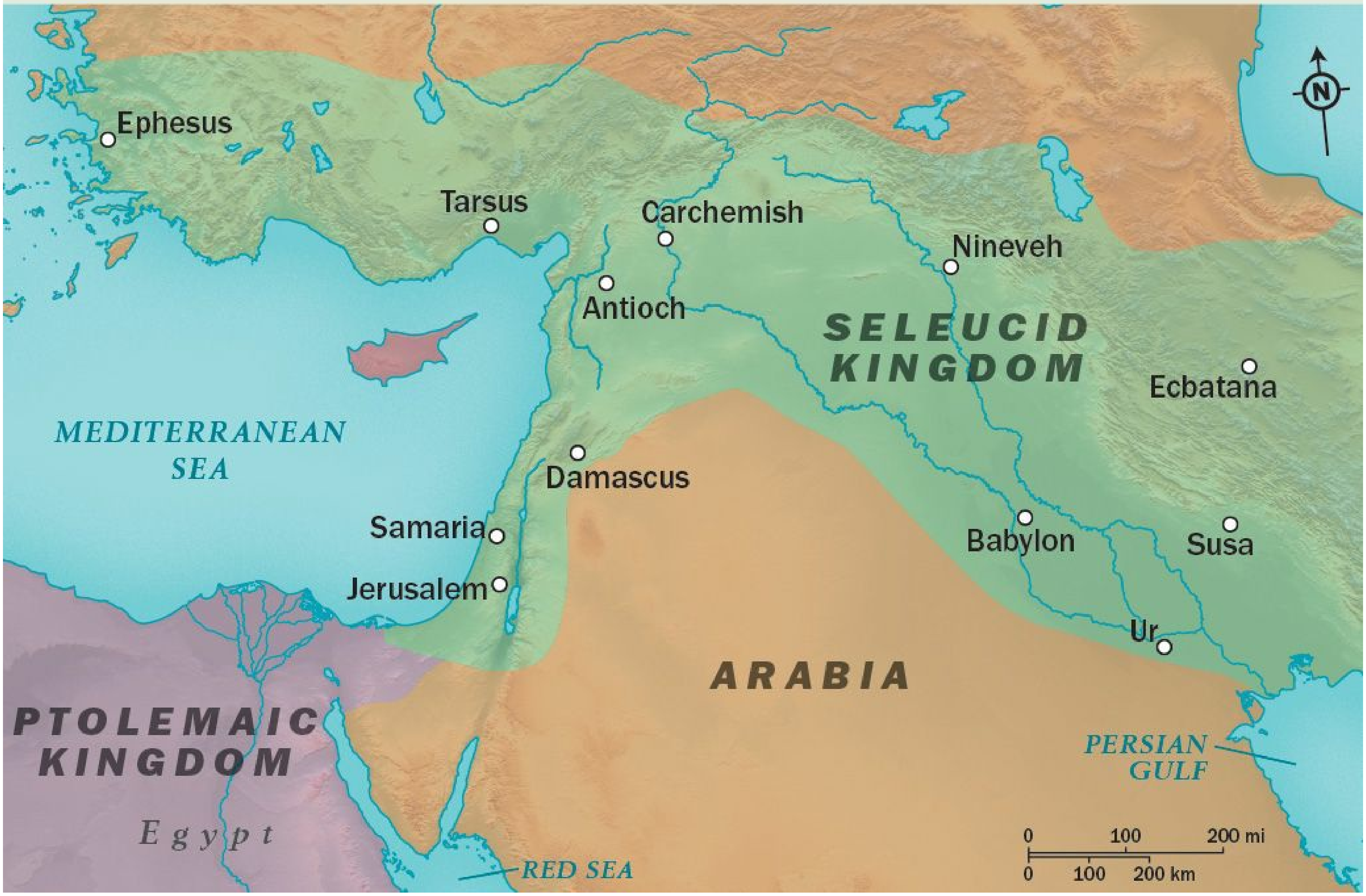
The Seleucids were a line of Hellenistic kings who ruled over major segments of the ancient Near East after the death of Alexander the Great and before the rise of Roman power in that region. The dynasty was initiated by Seleucus I after the death of Alexander in 323 BC, and it arose out of a conflict among Alexander's generals about how the succession to his throne should be administered. The Seleucid line would eventually control the eastern portion of what had been Alexander's kingdom. Their legal and administrative power was centered in Babylon, and they were in continual conflict with the Ptolemaic line over control of "Syria and Phoenicia." The Seleucids finally gained the upper hand in that region, under the leadership of Antiochus III, in 200 BC. They controlled Palestine until the Maccabean rebellion and the arrival of the Hasmonean Dynasty (see tables 8 and 9).

Table 8. Seleucid Kings

Years (BC)	King
223–187	Antiochus III
187–175	Seleucus IV Philopator
175–164	Antiochus IV Epiphanes
164	Lysias (vice-regent)
163–162	Antiochus V Eupator
162–150	Demetrius I Soter
150–145	Alexander Balas
145–140	Demetrius II
138–129	Antiochus VII Sidetes
129–126	Demetrius II
126–96	Antiochus VIII Gryphus
111–99	Antiochus IX Cyzicenus
95–87	Demetrius III Eucaerus

The Seleucid administration was centered on the person of the king, who claimed to be a descendant of both Alexander the Great and Apollo. The royal cult was institutionalized under Antiochus III and, along with the worship of Olympian Zeus as the supreme imperial deity, seems to have been intended as a uniting influence upon the various regions and people groups of the empire. Economically, the Seleucid kingdom appears to have been comprised of four administrative levels, with varying types of administrative responsibility, delineated as follows: (1) the king, who held control over exports and imports, public spending, and the minting of money; (2) the regional ruler (satrap), who was responsible for the safekeeping of revenues from the province, including production and taxation; (3) the *polis* (city), which was entitled to revenues from real estate and business taxes; and (4) the private citizen, who accumulated funds from land and interest charges.

SELEUCID AND PTOLEMAIC KINGDOMS


Ephesus
Tarsus
Carchemish
Nineveh
Antioch
SELEUCID KINGDOM
Ecbatana
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
Damascus
Samaria
Babylon
Susa
Jerusalem
Ur
ARABIA
PTOLEMAIC KINGDOM
PERSIAN GULF
Egypt
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SELEUCID RULE OVER PALESTINE

Early in the Seleucid period, the Jews of Palestine seem to have enjoyed relatively favorable treatment from their Hellenistic rulers. This is clear from the edicts of Antiochus III, which granted considerable wealth and tax relief to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and gave the Jewish people considerable religious freedom and assistance. Perhaps most important, Antiochus offered the Jewish people the right to live “according to the laws of their fathers,” thus granting them autonomous or semiautonomous status within the kingdom. In this way, Antiochus was able to curry favor with his new subjects, following the overthrow of Ptolemaic rule. Unfortunately, this favorable treatment did not continue during most of Seleucid control over Palestine.

Where Jewish affairs are concerned, the most significant developments of the Seleucid period occurred in the wake of the so-called religious edicts enacted during the reign of Antiochus IV (167 BC). Scholars are divided on the reasons for the edicts themselves, although the essential nature of the decrees, as well as the series of events arising from them, is fairly well understood. According to 1 Macc. 1:41–50, Antiochus decreed that all his subjects should abandon their ethnic religions and practices and replace them with various pagan practices or else face execution for their disloyalty. In Jerusalem, the sanctuary was rededicated to Olympian Zeus, temple prostitution was instituted, and unclean sacrifices were offered (2 Macc. 6:2–7). In addition to this, a “desolating sacrilege” was erected on the altar of burnt offering on the fifteenth of Chislev (November/December) (1 Macc. 1:54).

In response to these actions by Antiochus, a Jewish resistance movement rose up under the leadership of Judas Maccabeus and his sons (1 Macc. 2; 2 Macc. 5) and soon began to draw support from religiously conservative Jews in the surrounding region. This resistance movement was successful in retaking Jerusalem (1 Macc. 3:10–4:35) and instituting a series of procedures for the cleansing of the temple and the revival of Torah-centered religion among the Jewish population of the city. This culminated in the rededication of the temple to Yahweh, not more than three years after the erection of Antiochus's desolating sacrilege, and the institution of Hanukkah as a perpetual festival in honor of those events (1 Macc. 4:36–59).

Although the Seleucid Empire would eventually regain control over the city of Jerusalem, the final decades of its administration were a time of considerable internal conflict and turmoil. Those circumstances had a significant effect upon the fortunes of the Jewish population living under Seleucid control, and in fact, the members of the Maccabean family were able to win for themselves and their people a new measure of independence and self-rule. In so doing, they managed to establish a dynasty of their own, albeit under the influence and protection of the Seleucid line, within Judea (see table 9).

Table 9. The Maccabean (Hasmonean) Rulers of Judea

Years (BC)	Ruler
152–142	Jonathan
142–134	Simon
134–104	John Hyrcanus
104–103	Aristobulus I
103–76	Alexander Jannaeus
76–67	Salome Alexandra
67–40	Hyrcanus II and Aristobulus
40–37	Matthias Antigonus

During this time, the Hasmoneans were able to exploit their position as desirable military allies for the various claimants to the Seleucid throne and began to accumulate both political and religious authority in their own hands in a way that was unprecedented among the leadership of the Jewish people. Along with this, the Hasmoneans played upon the desire of the emerging Roman republic to compete with the Seleucids for control of Syria and Palestine and thereby gained further prestige and security for themselves. As time passed, however, the Hasmonean line also fell into a pattern of both internal strife and conflict with other influential groups, particularly of a religiously conservative bent. This process is described in great detail by Josephus in *Antiquities of the Jews*.

Seleucid control over Judea and the broader region along the eastern coast of the Mediterranean continued until the middle of the first century BC, when Roman troops, under the direction of Pompey, were able to gain control of Jerusalem after a siege of three months.

SELF-CONTROL Self-control involves the willingness to submit to the boundaries of nature, society, and family that God places in the world to bring about order and harmony in relationships. The self-restraint of an individual's thoughts, words, and actions reflects the ordered discipline of

God’s creation (Gen. 1–3; 8:22; Prov. 6:6–8). Discipline of the self is essential to live a productive life in community (Prov. 25:28).

“Self-control” is one of the terms that Luke uses to summarize Paul’s message to Felix (Acts 24:25). God’s people must exercise self-control (1 Thess. 5:6; 2 Tim. 1:7; 2 Pet. 1:6). Ultimately, self-control is a gift, a fruit that comes from being in submission to God’s Spirit (Gal. 5:22–23).

SELF-ESTEEM The modern concept of “self-esteem” may have roots in individualism, but Scripture conceives of it in relation to God and community. Creation grounds positive self-regard in dignity, blessing, and authority bestowed by God (Gen. 1:26–28; Pss. 8; 139:13–16), hence the concern that God preserve one from oppression, illness, and shame (Ps. 71). Self-esteem is not absolute, unlimited self-regard, but rather a healthy valuing of oneself and others as beloved, gifted by, and responsible to God (Rom. 12:3–8; contrast Ps. 14).

Self-esteem draws strength from the community’s defining story. The people of Israel are commanded to teach their children their narrative of promise, oppression, and deliverance (Deut. 6), and prophetic words of divine assurance help restore the exiles’ corporate identity, preparing them for return to the land (e.g., Isa. 54). Similarly, Jesus pledges the Father’s care for the disciples as persons, forming them as a community and freeing them for lives of trust and contentment as God’s beloved children (Luke 12:32–34; Phil. 4:10–20).

SELF-WILLED This term is used twice in the KJV, both times denoting a sense in which the individuals are full of their own gain or importance (Titus 1:7; 2 Pet. 2:10; cf. Gen. 49:6). The NIV translates the Greek word (*authadēs*) differently in each occurrence (“overbearing” and “arrogant”). Most important, an overseer is not to have this character quality (Titus 1:7), but it is the character quality of the false teachers (2 Pet. 2:10).

SELVEDGE A band on either edge of a bolt of fabric, woven so as to prevent the edge from fraying. In Exod. 26:4; 36:11 the KJV translates the Hebrew word *qatsah* as “selvedge,” referring to the edge of the end curtain of the tabernacle.

SEM *See* Shem.

SEMACHIAH *See* Semakiah.

SEMAKIAH One of the sons of Shemaiah, he is listed along with Elihu as among the capable men of the Korahite gatekeepers (1 Chron. 26:7).

SEMEI *See* Semein.

SEMEIN An otherwise unknown postexilic ancestor of Jesus mentioned only in Luke 3:26 as the son of Josek and the father of Mattathias.

SEMEN *See* Discharge.

SEMITE The term “Semite” does not appear in the biblical text, but reflects the name used for the descendants of Noah’s son Shem, “Shemites,” later modified to “Semites” (see Gen. 10:21–31). The term is used now to refer to those peoples speaking one of the Semitic languages, today mainly the

Jews and the Arabs, but in ancient times the Akkadians, the Amorites, the Babylonians, the Phoenicians, and the Canaanites as well. Scholars agree that the inclusion of peoples in Gen. 10 under the rubric “Semites” is not justified by the linguistic criterion. The common features of the languages of Assyrians, Arameans, and Hebrews, which mark them as members of one family, set them apart from the “Semitic” Lydians (Lud) and Elamites, whose languages are totally unrelated. The grounds for the inclusion of Babylonians, Phoenicians, and Canaanites—these are considered Hamitic (Gen. 10:10, 15–19)—among the Semites are chiefly linguistic, although political and cultural affinities are also considered.

The common features of the Semitic languages include the Proto-Semitic phonetic inventory from which all Semitic languages developed their phonetic systems: a triliteral root, the absence of a neuter noun, aspectual verbal system, enclitic use of pronouns, the verb-first syntax (the verb-first order of Akkadian is undoubtedly the result of Sumerian influence), and so on. Based on the form of the perfective verb, the Semitic languages are divided into East Semitic (Akkadian and Eblaite) and West Semitic, which includes the Northwest Semitic subfamily, which in turn includes Hebrew and other Canaanite languages.

SENAAH The family name, otherwise unknown, of a large group of exiles who returned with Zerubbabel to Jerusalem (Ezra 2:35; Neh. 7:38).

SENATE *See* Sanhedrin.

SENEH The southern cliff in the valley in front of Mikmash (Wadi es-Suweinit) that Jonathan passed on his way to the Philistine garrison there. It was located between the Philistine garrison at Mikmash and Saul’s camp at Gibeah. The cliff opposite Seneh was called “Bozez” (1 Sam. 14:4).

SENIR The Amorite name for Mount Hermon (Deut. 3:9 [KJV: “Shenir”]). It most likely designates the most prominent of the three central summits on Mount Hermon. It was also known as Sirion by the Sidonians. Mount Hermon itself was known for many sanctuaries of Baal worship.

SENNACHERIB A king of Assyria (r. 705–681 BC), he came to the throne upon the death of his powerful father, Sargon II, who had solidified Assyria’s empire, including incorporating the northern kingdom of Israel (722 BC). Many vassal states chose this moment of transition to rebel against Assyria, including Hezekiah of Judah, who stopped paying tribute. Sennacherib responded by moving his army to Judah in 701 BC, a moment of crisis recorded in 2 Kings 18:13–19:37; 2 Chron. 32:1–23; Isa. 35:1–37:38.

Relief showing Sennacherib raising his hand in greeting to his father, Sargon II

At first, Sennacherib had success against Judah, even taking Lachish and Azekah, cities that guarded the entrance to Jerusalem. The defeat of the former is pictured on reliefs that have been discovered from the remains of the Assyrian palace. When Sennacherib moved on Jerusalem, however, the prophet Isaiah encouraged Hezekiah to remain resolute and not surrender. The Bible records that God prevented an Assyrian victory. After hearing rumors of an approaching Egyptian army, the Assyrians withdrew and then experienced what seems to be a plague that killed 185,000 soldiers. Sennacherib then withdrew from the field. His life ended some time later when he was assassinated by two of his sons.

SENSUAL The word "sensual" pertains to what is experienced through the senses, virtuously (Prov. 24:13; Song 2:3) or nonvirtuously (Col. 2:23; 1 Tim. 5:11). God made a sensuous creation, pleasing to the eye and taste (Gen. 2:9; 3:6). Honesty is likened to a kiss (Prov. 24:26), yet the same kiss can deceive (Gen. 27:26) and betray (Luke 22:48). God’s creation is radiant (Job 31:26), and his angels cast their splendor abroad (Rev. 18:1).

SENTRY A watchman or guard (Acts 12:6 NIV).

SENUAH *See* Hassenuah.

SEORIM The head of David’s fourth unit of priests (1 Chron. 24:8).

SEPARATION Separation pertains either to a period of ritual uncleanliness during menstruation (Lev. 12:2, 5; 15:20, 25–26) or to voluntary separation from otherwise acceptable behavior, as in the Nazirite vow (Num. 6). The latter is a personal consecration of the individual for a set amount of time; the person reenters daily life only after a ritual sacrifice.

SEPHAR A town used as a demarcation for the descendants of Joktan (Gen. 10:30). Most scholars have argued that it is the town known to us as Zafar (or Zaphar) along the coast of the Indian Ocean.

SEPHARAD The sole biblical occurrence of the place name “Sepharad” is in Obad. 1:20, in a passage in which the prophet promises the restoration of various exiled Israelite entities. Among them, “the exiles from Jerusalem who are in Sepharad shall possess the towns of the Negev.” This location is otherwise obscure, though inscriptions attest Persian satrapies (provinces) in Asia Minor (Sardis) and Media with similar names. Postbiblical tradition identifies Sepharad with Spain, so that the Jewish communities of the Iberian Peninsula have been traditionally described as “Sephardim,” or Sephardic Jews.

SEPHARVAIM A demarcation for two cities, both called Sippar, on opposite sides of the Euphrates. The residents of the cities are referred to as Sepharvites (2 Kings 17:31). Sippar of Shamash and Sippar of Anunit hosted large temples for the Babylonian sun god Shamash and the goddesses Ishtar and Anunit. Exiles from these two towns were brought to resettle Samaria after the Assyrians conquered the northern tribes of Israel (2 Kings 17:24, 31; 18:34; 19:13). The Assyrian army later taunted the inhabitants of Jerusalem with their exploits over these cities (Isa. 36:19; 37:13). The current archaeological site is ’Abu-Habbah, which has produced many finds.

SEPHARVITES *See* Sepharvaim.

SEPPHORIS An acropolis 948 feet above sea level and three miles northwest of Nazareth. Sepphoris is traditionally regarded as the birthplace of Mary the mother of Jesus. After Roman forces destroyed Sepphoris in 4 BC, it was beautifully rebuilt by Herod Antipas and became the capital of Galilee and Perea for a time. Josephus called it the “ornament of all Galilee” (*Ant.* 18.27). Sepphoris featured a forum, Antipas’s royal residence, a four-thousand-seat theater, waterworks, and other structures typical of a significant Roman provincial city. Although Sepphoris is not mentioned in the Bible, its proximity to Nazareth has fueled scholarly speculation that Jesus was familiar with the city and possibly involved in its construction.

Aerial view of the excavations at the Hellenistic city of Sepphoris

SEPTUAGINT The Septuagint (abbreviated LXX) is the Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible that also contains original Greek compositions from around 300–200 BC. The Septuagint (and the subsequent abbreviation) gets its name from the tradition that each one of seventy-two scholars translated the text into Greek, and when all the texts were compared, they were found to be identical (see *Letter of Aristeas*). In fact, however, there is no one place or time of origin for the LXX. Its translational history is diverse, complex, and fluid, and the final edition was not settled even in Jesus' day. Current editions bear witness to different interpretive styles. The most reliable early manuscripts of the LXX contain all the books of the Protestant OT along with several deuterocanonical books, including Wisdom of Solomon, Sirach, Judith, Maccabees, and Tobit. For Christians, the greatest significance of the LXX is that it was the Bible used by most of the NT authors. For example, Paul uses the LXX when citing the Torah on many different occasions. Also significant is the fact that the LXX actually predates many of the current editions of the Masoretic Text (the Hebrew Bible). It is also important that there are several instances where the LXX text more closely resembles that of the DSS than does the MT. The LXX is a fairly wooden translation of the Hebrew, but on occasion it does shed light on how these early translators understood the Hebrew Bible.

SEPULCHRE The KJV translation of the Hebrew and Greek words referring to a tomb. Tombs are found throughout both Testaments. The first recorded sepulchre is the cave in which Abraham buried his wife, Sarah (Gen. 23:20). The most notable is the one in which Jesus was buried, given by Joseph of Arimathea (Matt. 27:59–60). These burial sites could take different forms: natural caves, chambers carved into rock, or piles of stones.

SERAH The daughter of Asher and a granddaughter of Jacob (Gen. 46:17; Num. 26:46; 1 Chron. 7:30).

SERAIAH **(1)** A royal secretary in the court of David (2 Sam. 8:17; he is called "Sheva" in 2 Sam. 20:25, "Shavsha" in 1 Chron. 18:16, and "Shisha" in 1 Kings 4:3). **(2)** The son of Tanhumeth the Netophathite, he was one of the Judean army officers who joined the Babylonian-appointed governor Gedaliah at Mizpah (2 Kings 25:23; Jer. 40:8). **(3)** The second son of Kenaz and the brother of Othniel, his son was Joab, "the father of Ge Harashim" (1 Chron. 4:13–14). *See* Ge Harashim. **(4)** A Simeonite, the son of Asiel and the grandfather of Jehu (1 Chron. 4:35). **(5)** The son of Azariah and the father of Jozadak, a descendant of Aaron (1 Chron. 6:14). A high priest executed at Riblah by Nebuchadnezzar (2 Kings 25:18–21; Jer. 52:24–27). **(6)** An ancestor of Ezra the scribe (Ezra 7:1). **(7)** One of the returnees to Jerusalem with Zerubbabel (Ezra 2:2). **(8)** One of the priests who sealed the postexilic covenant renewal with Nehemiah (Neh. 10:2). **(9)** A priest and a descendant of Hilkiah, he was a supervisor in the house of God (Neh. 11:11). **(10)** One of the twenty-two "leaders of the priests" (Neh. 12:7) who accompanied Zerubbabel and Jeshua out of exile (Neh. 12:1). **(11)** The son of Azriel, he was one of the officers of King Jehoiakim sent to arrest Jeremiah and Baruch (Jer. 36:26). **(12)** The son of Neriah and the brother of Baruch (cf. Jer. 32:12), he was an official who went with King Zedekiah into exile in Babylon. Jeremiah gave him a scroll containing his prophecy of destruction upon Babylon and commanded him to read it aloud and then sink it with a stone in the Euphrates, symbolizing the fall of Babylon (Jer. 51:59–64).

SERAPHIM Seraphim appear in Isa. 6:2, 6. The prophet sees God on his throne, and over him fly the seraphim. They have six wings: with two they cover their faces, with two they cover their feet, and with two they fly. The Hebrew word *sarap* means "to burn"; thus, the *serapim* are "burning ones" (cf. *sarap* in Num. 21:6, 8; Deut. 8:15; Isa. 14:29; 30:6 in reference to venomous serpents). They are living bolts of lightning, and their cries of "Holy, Holy, Holy," are peals of thunder, which shake the heavenly temple and fill it with smoke.

SERED The first of Zebulun's three sons (Gen. 46:14; Num. 26:26).

SEREDITE One of the three clans of the descendants of Zebulun, counted at the second wilderness census (Num. 26:26).

SERGIUS PAULUS A Roman proconsul on the island of Cyprus at the time of Paul's first missionary journey (Acts 13:7). Described as an intelligent man and interested in the Christian faith, he summoned Paul and Barnabas in order to hear their message. One of his attendants, Elymas, tried to dissuade him from believing and was subsequently cursed by Paul and blinded by God as punishment (13:8–11). This highly placed Roman official became the first recorded convert from Paul's first missionary journey when he saw the miracle of judgment. Luke, however, stresses the role of the apostles' teaching in his conversion (13:12).

SERJEANT In Acts 16:35, 38 the KJV translates the Greek word *rabdouchos* as “serjeant,” referring to the (police) officers sent to release Paul and Silas from prison.

SERMON ON THE MOUNT The Sermon on the Mount is the inaugural sermon of Jesus in Matthew’s Gospel (5:1–7:29), which sets out Jesus’ kingdom program for the people of God. Whether this was a single sermon delivered on one occasion or Matthew’s compilation of Jesus’ teaching is uncertain. Luke’s Gospel has a similar sermon (6:17–49), which may or may not be the same event (sometimes called the “Sermon on the Plain” because of v. 17, although this may simply be a “level place” on the same hill that Matthew describes).

Luke’s account is similar to Matthew’s on several points: same beatitudes regarding the poor, the hungry, and the persecuted; same teaching of loving enemies, turning the other cheek, not judging, the Golden Rule; same illustrations of removing a speck from the eye, good trees producing good fruit, wise man building a house on the rock. Of course, there are many differences in Luke’s version: woes pronounced upon the rich, the satiated, and the honored; the importance of giving; warning the blind who lead the blind; how students become teachers. In Luke, Jesus delivers his sermon to the twelve disciples just chosen as well as directly to a larger crowd (Luke 6:12–20), “Blessed are *you* . . .” In Matthew, Jesus addresses the crowd (including the disciples) gathered around him because of the miracles he has performed (Matt. 4:24–5:1)—note the third person, “Blessed are *the poor* in spirit . . .” Finally, Matthew’s account has more unique material than Luke’s: beatitudes regarding the pure in heart, peacemakers, and mourners; questions about the righteousness of scribes and Pharisees; the importance of obeying the Law and the Prophets; teachings regarding murder, adultery, divorce, revenge, swearing oaths, giving alms, prayer, fasting, worry; illustrations of salt and light, dogs and pigs, fish and stones, narrow and wide gates, wolves in sheep’s clothing. That Matthew begins the story of Jesus’ earthly ministry with this sermon is significant: he wants his readers to see Jesus as the rabbi who knows more about the kingdom of heaven than any scribe or Pharisee.

Church of the Beatitudes, at the traditional site of the Sermon on the Mount

THE BEATITUDES

With the first words of the sermon, commonly known as the Beatitudes, Jesus challenges the conventional wisdom that the poor, the hungry, and the meek are cursed. Instead, Jesus claims that his hearers are blessed (these poor, hungry, and meek Galileans) because the kingdom of heaven comes to those who need God. Not surprisingly, these subversive ideas are couched in paradoxes: the poor are kingdom rich; the hungry are satisfied with righteousness; the meek inherit the land of promise; the bereaved are comforted; the persecuted find joy in their tribulations. They are pure-hearted; they are peacemakers. These are the kind of people Jesus calls “the salt of the earth” (Matt. 5:13). They are “the light of the world” (v. 14) because they reveal the glorious work of God in their lives. They are what the kingdom of heaven looks like on earth.

All of this may sound like the opposite of what was taught in the Torah, where it was said that material blessings are a sign of divine favor for the obedient, and sickness and death come to those who disobey God (Deut. 30:1–20). But Jesus claims that he is not ignoring the Law and the Prophets. Instead, he intends to keep the Law and the Prophets better than anyone, especially the scribes and the Pharisees, whom Jesus accuses of abrogating the law because they have missed the heart of the commandments (Matt. 5:17–20; cf. 23:23–24).

LOVE GOD AND NEIGHBOR

The Sermon on the Mount appears to be an exposition of two great commandments emphasized by Jesus: love God (6:1–34; Deut. 6:5) and love your neighbor (5:21–48; Lev. 19:18). In particular, Jesus challenges the experts of the law—the scribes and the Pharisees—in regard to their righteousness.

Do the experts keep the law when it comes to loving your neighbor? They say, “You shall not murder” (quoting the Decalogue) and “Anyone who murders will be subject to judgment” (quoting their tradition). But according to Jesus, they break the commandment and their tradition when they call someone a “fool.” Their indignation is not righteous; in fact, it condemns them to hell and prevents them from worshiping God (5:21–26). They say, “You shall not commit adultery” (again quoting the Decalogue) and “Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of dismissal” (quoting Deut. 24). But Jesus believes that the commandment is broken when a man lusts for a woman; so he advises men to take drastic measures in dealing with eyes and hands, the instruments of lust (5:27–30). He even accuses husbands of practicing and promoting serial adultery when they abuse women by treating them as objects, trying to justify their selfish behavior by appealing to the provision of divorce in the law of Moses (5:31–32). The scribes and Pharisees also swear oaths to cover false vows (5:33–37). They hate their neighbors when they seek revenge against their enemies, desiring only to help their friends (5:38–47). Instead, Jesus teaches that when it comes to the kingdom of heaven, children of God must replicate the qualities of their heavenly Father (5:48): defying injustice (unrighteousness) through love, self-sacrifice, and mercy (turning the other cheek, giving away clothing, helping enemies, praying for persecutors). When it comes to loving your neighbor, this righteousness is picture perfect.

Certainly the scribes and the Pharisees cannot be accused of not loving God, for their standards of holiness are considered the highest of all. Yet according to Jesus, their acts of holiness are not for God’s benefit but for their own (6:1). When they give to the poor, it is an ostentatious display designed for social approval (6:2–4). When they pray, it is for human eyes, not God’s ears (6:5). When they fast, they want everyone to know about it (6:16). Jesus, on the other hand, believes that acts of holiness are for God's eyes only. Give in secret; pray in private; fast in disguise (6:3–4, 6–13, 17–18). In this way, a person is storing up treasures in heaven. Those who seek human approval get their rewards on earth, where treasures are temporal (6:1–2, 5, 16, 19–21). Indeed, slaves of mammon worry about things that do not last (money, food, clothing). Those who seek the kingdom of heaven, on the other hand, are anxious for nothing. They serve the master who feeds sparrows and clothes fields of grass with flowers (6:24–34). God knows what kingdom seekers need before they ask, which is why they pray for the kingdom to come, for the will of God to be done on earth as it is in heaven (6:8–13). Rather than judging others, kingdom seekers forgive their debtors (7:1–5). They are delivered from the evil one because they make requests to a Father who gives only good gifts (7:7–11). Kingdom seekers treat others as they themselves want to be treated because they know that the Law and the Prophets are summed up in these two commandments: love God and love your neighbor (7:12).

THE NARROW GATE

The sermon ends with an invitation. Two gates stand before Jesus' listeners. One is wide, and many enter this way—a broad path that leads to destruction. It is the way of the Pharisees and the scribes. The other gate is narrow, and few enter this way, even though it leads to life—the way of righteousness, according to Jesus (7:13–14). There are two kinds of prophets, two kinds of trees, two kinds of builders (7:15–27). False prophets make bad trees; those who listen to them are fools. True prophets produce good fruit; those who listen to them are wise persons who build their lives on the rock of Jesus' words—a Sermon on the Mount.

SERPENT The serpent (*nakhash*) initially appears in Gen. 3:1, endowed with wisdom and the capacity to speak. In addressing Eve, it intentionally changes God's positive command to eat from all trees of the garden, with one exception, to a comprehensive prohibition and then goes on to contradict God and promise that eating will make Adam and Eve "like God, knowing good and evil" (3:5). While an explicit identity for the serpent is not given at this point, the curse pronounced against the creature (Gen. 3:14–15) has transcendent implications (cf. Rom. 16:20). By the first centuries BC and AD, the serpent became linked with the malevolent figure of Satan, the devil, the great dragon. This connection is most comprehensively articulated for the Christian community in Rev. 12:9–15; 20:2. Eve acknowledged its deceptive wiles (Gen. 3:13), a point that both Jesus (John 8:44) and Paul (2 Cor. 11:3) reinforce.

Deadly snakes were recognized and feared denizens of the great and terrible wilderness (Deut. 8:15) as the Israelites made their way toward the promised land. When the people spoke against God and Moses, God sent burning serpents that bit the people (Num. 21:6–9). Moses' action in elevating a bronze serpent on the pole served as the paradigm for Jesus' reference to lifting up the Son of Man (John 3:14) and the necessity of belief in the unlikely prospect of a crucified Messiah. Later, this bronze snake became an object of worship, and Hezekiah destroyed it (2 Kings 18:4). Because serpents were so dangerous, their venom was a figure for utterly destructive evil (Ps. 140:3).

Isaiah 27:1 moves the sphere of activities from barren wilderness to tumultuous water: "In that day, the LORD will punish with his sword—his fierce, great and powerful sword—Leviathan the gliding serpent, Leviathan the coiling serpent; he will slay the monster of the sea." The same motif is evident in Ps. 74:13–14, which declares that God broke the "heads" of the sea monsters and smashed the "heads" of Leviathan (cf. Gen. 3:15). The "fleeing serpent" of Isaiah also appears in Job 26:12–13, which describes God cutting Rahab in pieces and piercing the "gliding serpent." Around the central figure of the serpent, a land creature, are watery glimpses of the mythic and shadowy Leviathan, a sea monster, and Rahab, all of which represent a creature opposed by God. It is likely that this malevolent cosmic figure is lurking below the surface of the crocodile-infested waters of Job 41, a subtle but powerful closure to the contest with which the book commenced; although Job could not restrain Leviathan, God does.

The motifs that recur in these passages were also part of the mythologies of cultures surrounding ancient Israel. The *Enuma Elish* (a Babylonian creation story) depicts the violent battle between the goddess Tiamat and the god Marduk that involved monster-serpents and roaring dragons. Closer to Israelite culture, in the Canaanite myth of Baal and Anat, we read that Anat claimed to crush the crooked serpent with seven heads. Just as serpents and related figures in the biblical text occasionally crossed the flexible boundaries between good and evil, in the wider cultural context of the ancient Near East the serpent served as a metaphor for a vast complex that included life, fertility, and wisdom, as well as chaos and death.

For the Christian community receiving the Revelation of John, "the great dragon, that ancient serpent" (20:2), presented a powerful metaphor. Wise, shrewd, quick, beguiling, and terrifying, it had been in opposition to God in the age-old conflict between good and evil, the reality of which was expressed across cultural boundaries and a part of which was enveloping the church in the Roman Empire of late antiquity. Even its defeat was not instantaneous; the "head" of the serpent, struck by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, would bear one final blow; the cosmic evil would be ultimately and completely defeated to accomplish the purposes of God. *See also* Venomous Serpent.

SERPENT, BRONZE *See* Bronze Serpent.

SERPENT CHARMERS *See* Charm.

SERPENT OF BRASS *See* Bronze Serpent.

SERUG A great-grandfather of Abraham, he was the son of Reu, the father of Nahor, and an ancestor of Jesus (Gen. 11:20–23; 1 Chron. 1:26; Luke 3:35). As with other names in Abraham's ancestry, forms of personal and place names similar to this occur in ancient extrabiblical Semitic texts.

SERVANT *See* Slave, Servant.

SERVANT OF THE LORD One of the most important themes in Isaiah is the messianic promise of a Davidic king. Yet intertwined throughout Isa. 42–53 are several passages that also identify the coming messianic personage as a servant, or more specifically, the Servant of the Lord. Often called the "Servant Songs," four passages in Isaiah focus particularly on the coming Servant of the Lord (42:1–7; 49:1–6; 50:4–9; 52:13–53:12). These texts present several important aspects of the coming Servant. First, God declares that he delights in his Servant and that he will put his Spirit on him. Furthermore, the Servant will establish justice and righteousness, two dominating themes of the prophetic literature associated with the coming Messiah. The Servant will regather the people of Israel, but he will also be a light and a covenant to the nations/Gentiles and thus will provide life for all of God's people. Ironically, however, and in contrast to the Davidic kingly images of the Messiah, Isaiah declares that the Servant will come quietly and humbly. Shockingly, the Servant of the Lord will be mocked and rejected by his people, even though he bears their sin and suffers for their iniquities. In fact, Isaiah declares, it is through the suffering of the Servant that righteousness is to be found (thus, the Servant is often referred to as the Suffering Servant). Even though the Servant will suffer greatly and be humiliated, ultimately he will be lifted up and exalted.

Throughout history there has been much discussion as to the identity of the Servant of the Lord. Some scholars understand the Servant to represent the nation Israel in a collective sense. Others see the Servant as a historical person during the OT era. Still others suggest a “corporate view” in which the Servant is an individual who nonetheless represents the group that he leads. Note that in several texts Isaiah seems to refer to the Servant as an individual, whereas Isa. 49:3 appears to use “Servant” to refer to the nation Israel.

This discussion is similar to the puzzlement that the Ethiopian eunuch in Acts 8:32–34 expresses to Philip regarding the identity of the Servant in the fourth Servant Song (Isa. 52:13–53:12). Regarding this text, the Ethiopian asks Philip, “Who is the prophet talking about, himself or someone else?” Philip, however, is not confused about the identity of the Servant, and beginning with that particular passage, Philip explains to the Ethiopian that Jesus Christ is the Servant, the coming Messiah.

Likewise, throughout the Gospels there are quotes from and allusions to the Servant Songs, especially Isa. 53, thus establishing clearly that Jesus is the promised Servant of the Lord. Paul makes numerous allusions to Isa. 53 as he discusses the redemptive work of Christ, and Peter includes the Servant theme as part of his foundational understanding of Jesus’ work and mission.

Yet, although the NT bears strong testimony that Isaiah’s prophecies concerning the Servant of the Lord are fulfilled by the Messiah, Jesus Christ, there is still a sense in which Jesus also represents the ideal Israel. Unlike Israel, however, Jesus (the true Israel) is completely obedient, thus fulfilling many of the things that the nation itself had failed to complete. In this sense, as we find in Isaiah, the nation Israel can be called “the Servant.” On the other hand, only Jesus Christ, as the perfect and ideal Servant of the Lord, fulfills all that Isaiah prophesies of the coming one in the Servant Songs.

SERVICE The Bible speaks of service in both general and spiritual senses. Humans often are portrayed as serving other humans, such as a slave serving the master, a worker serving the employer, a courtier serving the king, or one nation serving another. In Genesis, when God places the man in the garden “to work” the ground, the Hebrew word is *’abad*, which also means “to serve” (2:15). When used of the spiritual realm, service indicates the worship of God, the gods, idols, or created things. Israel was specifically called out of Egypt to serve Yahweh—that is, to worship him. Throughout their history, the Israelites were regularly exhorted to choose between serving Yahweh or other gods (e.g., Josh. 24:15).

When used of God, service often includes the performance of specific rituals. In OT times this included offering sacrifices, performing duties such as caring for the tabernacle, singing and praising God, and celebrating the appointed festivals. The NT portrays people serving God by preaching the gospel, fasting and praying, and meeting the needs of others. Jesus sets the example by coming not to be served but rather to serve and to give his life for others. NT authors, although firmly believing that God alone should be worshiped, affirmed Jesus’ deity by continually encouraging people to serve him. Service of God includes what we do when gathered as a community of faith, what we do privately, and what we do in public as long as we do it unto the Lord.

SERVITUDE Defeated people could be placed in servitude, or slavery. Impoverished persons could sell themselves into servitude in order to provide for their families. The OT mandated that such indentured slaves be released after six years or in the Year of Jubilee (Exod. 21:1–11; Lev. 25:39–55; Deut. 15:12–18).

SETH The third son of Adam and Eve, Seth was viewed as a God-given replacement for the murdered Abel (Gen. 4:25–26). His name (Heb. *shet*) is a wordplay on “God has granted [*shat*] me another child,” suggesting that he will be a new foundation for humanity.

SETHUR One of the twelve Israelites sent “to explore the land of Caanan” (Num. 13:2). Sethur was the delegate from the tribe of Asher (Num. 13:13).

SEVEN CHURCHES OF ASIA The addressees of the book of Revelation: Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea. All seven were located in the Roman province of Asia, present-day western Turkey.

Ruins at Laodicea, one of the seven churches in the book of Revelation

SEVENTY WEEKS The reference to seventy “weeks” (or “sevens”) in Dan. 9:24–27 is one of the most puzzling of biblical prophecies to decipher. The “weeks” here almost certainly are weeks of years rather than days, and so they refer to seventy units of seven years, or 490 years. The critical issue involves the nature and fulfillment of the prophecy. One approach sees the prophecy covering from 445 BC (Artaxerxes’ decree to rebuild Jerusalem) to AD 33 (Christ’s death), with the remaining one week of seven years referring to the future great tribulation. Another approach to Dan. 9:24–27 sees the prophecy stretching from 605 BC (Jeremiah’s oracle against Jerusalem) to 164 BC (Judas

Maccabeus's restoration of the Jerusalem temple). Neither interpretation, however, is without problems. The first seems artificial (should leap years be counted?). The second does not actually add up to 490 years. Thus, another interpretation believes that the number is not referring to a literal number of years but rather is symbolic.

SEVENTY YEARS Seventy years represent completeness or perfection (being a multiple of seven and ten, both of which represent completeness). The number is a figurative way of describing the fulfillment of a divine decree, such as the duration of judgment on Tyre (Isa. 23:15–17).

Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem in 586 BC, and Cyrus's decree to allow the exiles to return home dates to 539 BC. Thus, the period of exile was about forty-seven years. The prophet Jeremiah, however, predicts the period of exile with the figure of "seventy years" (Jer. 25:11–12; 29:10). In the book of Daniel, Daniel seems not to have understood what this prophecy meant (Dan. 9:2), and it is revealed to him that its fulfillment would require seven times that number, or 490 years (9:20–24). The original prophecy of two figurative values is therefore multiplied again by another figurative seven, which apparently defines the apocalyptic timetable all the way up to the end of the world.

Another way of regarding Jeremiah's "seventy years" is found in 2 Chron. 36:21. There, as in Daniel, the number relates to 490 years. Unlike Daniel, however, this 490-year figure is from the past, not the future. The Chronicler's argument is that the law of Moses required the land to lie fallow once every seven years (see Exod. 23:10–11). Since Israel had not obeyed this command in its entire sojourn, the land had accumulated seventy years of Sabbaths, which God then imposed by removing his people for seventy years.

SEVEN WORDS FROM THE CROSS The following are the seven last sayings of Jesus, spoken while he was on the cross.

1. *"Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing" (Luke 23:34).* This prayer that the Father forgive his enemies and executioners was actually answered by his own death, which made forgiveness possible.
2. *"Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise" (Luke 23:43).* This promise offered paradise—a place of life, rest, peace, and fellowship with God—to the repentant criminal being crucified beside Jesus.
3. *" 'Woman, here is your son.' . . . 'Here is your mother' " (John 19:26–27).* Since by this time, presumably, Joseph had died, Jesus, as the oldest son, was now responsible to care for his mother. He does so by entrusting her to "the disciple whom he loved."
4. *"My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Matt. 27:46; Mark 15:34).* Jesus quoted Ps. 22:1, a prayer of King David, who was suffering unjustly. As the ultimate righteous sufferer, Jesus also confessed his feelings of abandonment by God.
5. *"I am thirsty" (John 19:28).* Jesus likely requested a drink in order to speak the final few words as well as to fulfill Scripture. Here he alludes to Pss. 22:14–15; 69:21.
6. *"It is finished" (John 19:30).* "It" refers to his redemptive work, "finished" means to be "paid in full," and the verb tense of the Greek verb indicates an action that has been completed but has ongoing results. The Son's work stands accomplished—now and forever.
7. *"Father, into your hands I commit my spirit" (Luke 23:46).* The backdrop is Ps. 31:4–5. Jesus anticipated restored fellowship with the Father and entrusted himself to the Father's care.

SEX, SEXUALITY When God creates humans, he pronounces them "very good/beautiful" (Gen.

1:31). They are designed to be magnificent visual displays of God's character (1:26–27). Human sexuality originally is set in a context of overwhelming beauty. God's first command is to reproduce and extend this paradise throughout the earth (1:28). Human sexuality is not simply a mechanism for reproduction. From the outset it has been about completion, without which there is loneliness (2:18).

Although the Bible does not define the distinctives of masculinity and femininity in any detail, it does defend that there are distinctions between the genders. Behaviors that confuse the genders are explicitly condemned (Deut. 22:5; 1 Cor. 6:9; 11:4–16).

Homosexual intercourse (Lev. 18:22; 20:13; Rom. 1:24–27; 1 Cor. 6:9; 1 Tim. 1:10) and intercourse with an animal (Exod. 22:19; Lev. 18:23; 20:15–16; Deut. 27:21) are violations of God's created order.

NAKEDNESS

"Nakedness" is confined to the genitals and buttocks (Exod. 20:26; Isa. 20:2–4; Ezek. 23:18, 29; Nah. 3:5) and, after the fall, is synonymous with shame (Gen. 3:7–10; 1 Sam. 20:30; Isa. 47:3; Jer. 13:26; Mic. 1:11; Nah. 3:5; Rev. 3:18; cf. Rom. 1:23–24; 1 Cor. 12:23–24). A woman's breasts are recognized as erotic (Prov. 5:19; Ezek. 23:3, 21) but not shameful. God slaughters an animal in order to cover nakedness (Gen. 3:21). Ultimately, when sin and death are removed and the body raised, the redeemed will have no shame and will be clothed only in their righteousness (Rev. 19:5–9).

Exposing nakedness is an action used to humiliate enemies (2 Sam. 10:4–5; 1 Chron. 10:9; Isa. 47:3). Jesus is stripped naked (Matt. 27:28, 35–36). Violating another's nakedness includes touching or seeing (Deut. 25:11) and produces extreme personal disgrace (Lev. 18:6–19 NASB; Hab. 2:15–16). It is an act of grace to cover another's nakedness (Isa. 58:7; Ezek. 18:7, 16). To even talk or laugh about inappropriate exposure brings dishonor (Gen. 9:21–23). The overarching principle is purity (Lev. 18:24).

MARRIAGE AND ADULTERY

Although damaged by sin, marriage continues to be the ultimate human relationship involving intimacy, privacy, and liberty. Marriage is defined by a covenant—a contract witnessed and enforceable, not just a promise made in private. The couple separate from their parents to become "one flesh" (Gen. 2:24).

Once the marriage contract is agreed upon, the couple are married. They cannot consummate the marriage until the economic commitments of the contract have been delivered (Matt. 1:18; 25:1–13). This is celebrated with a feast. Jesus uses this custom as an analogy for his departure and return (John 14:1–3).

Paul commands husbands to love their wives (Eph. 5:25–33; cf. Gen. 24:67; 29:20; 1 Sam. 1:5; Eccles. 9:9; Song 8:6–7). Nowhere in the Bible is a wife commanded to love her husband, though older women should teach younger women to do so (Titus 2:3–4). Love is the husband's responsibility. Love is a command that can be obeyed, not just a pleasurable feeling over which one has no control. The model of husbandly love is Jesus laying down his life for his people.

The ecstasy of making love is celebrated in the erotic Song of Songs, which holds out the hope of such marital delight even now. The axiom of marriage is a righteous jealousy (cf. Exod. 20:5; 34:14; Num. 5:14, 30; Prov. 6:34).

The first year of marriage is especially important and is protected by exemption from military service (Deut. 20:7; 24:5).

When a man dies without a male heir, his widow's possession of that part of the family estate can result in her marrying a man from another family and so alienating that land. This can be resolved either by the injustice of eviction or by the device of levirate marriage. The nearest male relative of the deceased husband marries the widow, and their son then inherits the deceased husband's name and title to the land (Deut. 25:5–10; cf. Gen. 38; Ruth).

Concubines are wives from poor families, slaves, or captives, and their marriages are protected (Exod. 21:7–9; Deut. 21:11–14).

Rape of a married woman constitutes adultery by the rapist, not the victim. Consensual sex with a married woman is adultery by both parties. Rape of a single woman is treated as fornication, with no blame attached to the woman. Her father has the option of letting her marry the man or receiving significant financial compensation (Exod. 22:16–17; Deut. 22:23–27). Her father has the right to take the money and refuse the marriage. To falsely accuse a woman of adultery is a crime (Deut. 22:13–21).

Prostitution is an extreme form of adultery or fornication and totally forbidden (Lev. 19:29; Deut. 23:17). Under the new covenant, this warning is heightened by the reality of the gift of the Holy Spirit transforming each believer into the temple of the Lord (1 Cor. 6:15–20).

Originally, marriage between siblings is implied (Gen. 4:17, 26; 5:4). Abram married his half sister, Sarai (Gen. 20:12; cf. Gen. 11:29; Num. 26:59). The Mosaic covenant at Sinai bans marriage to blood relationships closer than first cousins and to in-laws (Lev. 18:6–30; cf. 2 Sam. 13; 1 Cor. 5:1).

Polygamy occurs soon after the fall (Gen. 4:19–24). It is never explicitly forbidden in the Bible, but it is managed by OT law so as to restrain further injustice and damage. It is always seen as less than satisfactory (cf. Gen. 29–30; 1 Sam. 1:6; 2 Sam. 13; 1 Kings 1–2; 11). In the NT, monogamy is mandatory for those who would lead the church (1 Tim. 3:2, 12; Titus 1:6). (*See also* Premarital and Extramarital Sex.)

Terra-cotta lamp-filler in the form of a man and woman reclining on a couch (Greek, 120–70 BC)

SELF-CONTROL AND PURITY

The violation of sexual purity is a decision of the heart (Ezek. 23:11; Matt. 5:28). The biblical concept of lust entails more than just physical arousal. It involves a strong desire for/coveting of (cf. James 1:14–15) something that one has no right to acquire. This establishes both the need for self-control (Titus 2:5–6) and the availability of appropriate options (1 Cor. 7:2, 5, 9). Masturbation is nowhere mentioned in the Bible (Gen. 38:9 is about failure to fulfill the levirate). The critical issue is lust.

Sexual misconduct is never the responsibility of the victim (Deut. 22:25). Nevertheless, for reasons of personal safety as well as out of concern for one another, the family of Christ must practice modesty in dress (1 Tim. 2:9) and consider how to build one another up rather than put stumbling blocks in each other's way.

God always provides the believer with what is necessary to resist temptation and make the right choices (1 Cor. 10:13). Consequently, a significant aspect of every parent's role is to teach godly sexual wisdom to children before they face such challenges (cf. Prov. 1–9).

The gospel requires us to view sexuality from a wider perspective. Reproduction also occurs through the preaching of the gospel, calling forth new birth and a new people (Matt. 28:18–20). This gospel call will divide families (Luke 12:53). Singleness is no barrier to one's ability to fulfill the command to multiply and fill the earth (Isa. 56:3–8). In times of distress it may be better to remain single (1 Cor. 7, esp. v. 26). This is also a gift of God (1 Cor. 7:7), given to equip one for the fulfillment of the gospel commission.

SHAALABBIN One of the towns allocated to the tribe of Dan under Joshua (Josh. 19:42). It is probably the same town as Shaalbim (Judg. 1:35; 1 Kings 4:9), modern Selbit, located about fifteen miles northeast of Jerusalem.

SHAALBIM A city mentioned in Judg. 1:35 as one of three places where the Amorites held out against the tribe of Dan. The Amorites kept the Danites from moving into the plain from the hill country. The Amorites were never removed from Shaalbim, but later they were pressed into forced labor. It was also one of four cities under the authority of Ben-Deker, a district governor of Solomon. Solomon had twelve district governors responsible for supplying provisions to the royal household from their assigned territories. It may also be the same as Shaalbon, the hometown of David's mighty man Eliahba.

SHAALBON The hometown of Eliahba, one of David's mighty warriors (2 Sam. 23:32; 1 Chron. 11:33). It probably is the same town as Shaalbim and Shaalabbin.

SHAALBONITE *See* Shaalbon.

SHAALIM A region in the territory of Ephraim where Saul searched for his father's lost donkeys (1 Sam. 9:4). The name is likely to be identified with Shaalabbin (Josh. 19:42) or Shaalbim (Judg. 1:35; 1 Kings 4:9).

SHAAPH **(1)** A descendant of Judah through Jahdai (1 Chron. 2:47). **(2)** A descendant of Judah through Caleb and his concubine Maakah. He was the "father" (founder) of the town of Madmannah (1 Chron. 2:49; cf. Josh. 15:31).

SHAARAIM **(1)** A town strategically located in the Shephelah on the main road from Philistia to Jerusalem (Josh. 15:36). Not all agree, but scholars have recently identified it with Khirbet Qeiyafa, atop a hill bordering the Elah Valley twenty miles southwest of Jerusalem (1 Sam. 17:52). Excavators have recently uncovered two gates here, a feature corresponding to the town's Hebrew name. **(2)** A town belonging to Simeon in the Negev (1 Chron. 4:31). It possibly is to be identified with Sharuhen (Josh. 19:6) and Shilhim (Josh. 15:32), occurring in parallel lists.

SHAASHGAZ King Ahasuerus's eunuch in charge of the concubines in the second harem. This harem was designated for those who had already spent a night with the king as opposed to the virgins who were waiting their turn (Esther 2:14).

SHABBETHAI A Levite in the postexilic period involved in Ezra's decree against having foreign wives (Ezra 10:15). The significance of the verse is disputed, but it appears that Shabbethai and others named in the verse represent a dissenting party. They are likely opposing not the divorce but rather the laxity of the suggested plan to carry it out. He is also likely the same person who supported

Ezra’s policy (Neh. 8:7; 11:16).

SHACHIA *See* Sakia.

SHACKLES *See* Bond; Fetter.

SHADDAI A transliteration of part of the Hebrew expression *’el shadday* (Gen. 17:1; 28:3; 35:11; 43:14; 48:3; Exod. 6:3; Ezek. 10:5), translated as “God Almighty,” following the Vulgate translation. There is no scholarly consensus on the translation or its precise meaning.

SHADES Spirits of the dead. In modern Bible translations, “shades” is most often used in poetry, especially in parallel to “the dead” (e.g., Ps. 88:10; Isa. 26:14 NRSV; cf. Prov. 2:18; Isa. 14:9). *See also* Sheol.

SHADOW A shadow may refer to shade generally, darkness, or to a specific shadow cast by something; “shadow” and “shade” also have other uses by extension. Perhaps because shade is a protection from the heat of the sun, shade and shadow are metaphors for protection (Pss. 91:1; 121:5; Isa. 49:2), as in the phrase “shadow of [God’s] wings” (Pss. 17:8; 36:7; 57:1; 63:7). Since shadows change through the day and pass away, shadow becomes a metaphor for brevity, particularly the brevity of life (1 Chron. 29:15; Job 8:9; 14:2; Pss. 102:11; 109:23; 144:4), and for change (James 1:17 [though this text has other interpretations]). As darkness, shadow sometimes refers to a place to hide (Job 34:22) or to gloom or danger (Pss. 44:19; 107:10, 14; Isa. 9:2; Jer. 2:6). The “land of darkness and deep shadow” appears to be a reference to death (Job 10:21 ESV, NASB). And since a shadow’s shape resembles the outline of what casts the shadow, shadow may refer to that similarity as a copy, however imperfect (Col. 2:17; Heb. 8:5; 10:1).

Two miracles involved shadows. God gave Hezekiah a miraculous sign by moving the shadow on the steps backward (2 Kings 20:9–11). As people believed the apostles’ message, they brought the sick to Solomon’s Colonnade, where they were healed when Peter’s shadow fell on them (Acts 5:12–16).

The Hebrew word for “deep darkness,” *tsalmawet*, was seen as two words by LXX translators and rendered as “shadow of death” (*skia thanatou*). This wording came into the NT as a quotation or allusion (Matt. 4:16; Luke 1:79). Texts discovered from around the time of the judges in Ugaritic, a language closely related to Hebrew, have shown that *tsalmawet* is one word, meaning “deep darkness” or “gloom.” Modern translations have tended to change the rendering of this word, but some may leave “shadow of death” in Ps. 23:4 because of the popularity of this traditional wording.

SHADRACH The Babylonian name given to Hananiah (“Yahweh is gracious to me”) by Nebuchadnezzar’s chief official, Ashpenaz, as part of an attempt to turn him into a Babylonian official (Dan. 1:7). He is one of Daniel’s Judahite companions, along with Abednego and Meshach. The three later are appointed as administrators over the province of Babylon (2:49). After being accused of failing to worship one of Nebuchadnezzar’s gods, the men are cast into the fiery furnace. They are kept safe by a fourth “man,” who looks like a “son of the gods” (3:25). Afterward, all three are promoted (3:8–30). “Shadrach” likely means “command of Aku” (moon god).

SHAGE *See* Shagee.

SHAGEE The father of Jonathan, one of David's mighty warriors (1 Chron. 11:34). He was from Harar, a place of unknown location. In the parallel list he is called "Shammah" (2 Sam. 23:33).

SHAHAR A Hebrew word meaning "dawn" that appears in the name of the town Zereth Shahar (NASB, ESV: "Zereth-shahar"; KJV: "Zarethshahar"), which was part of the allotment to the tribe of Reuben under Joshua (Josh. 13:19).

SHAHARAIM A descendant of Benjamin (1 Chron. 8:8). The biblical text names nine of his sons, seven of whom were born to his wife Hodesh after he had divorced Hushim and Baara.

SHAHAZIMAH *See* Shahazumah.

SHAHAZUMAH A town on the border of the tribal allotment to Issachar (Josh. 19:22 [KJV: "Shahazimah"]). Some scholars believe that the Hebrew word may actually represent both a town name and a topographical designation. The town's location is uncertain.

SHALEM In Gen. 33:18 the KJV transliterates the Hebrew word *shalem* as a place name, "Shalem." More-recent versions understand the word as an adverb meaning "safely." Thus, for example, the NIV has "arrived safely" versus the KJV's "came to Shalem."

SHALIM *See* Shaalim.

SHALISHA The land of Shalisha was one of the areas in which Saul searched for his father's lost donkeys (1 Sam. 9:4). The location of the area is uncertain, though the land of Shalisha may be connected with Baal Shalishah (2 Kings 4:42). *See also* Baal Shalishah.

SHALISHAH *See* Shalisha.

SHALLECHETH *See* Shalleketh.

SHALLEKETH A gate in Jerusalem assigned to the families of Shuppim and Hosah to guard (1 Chron. 26:16). The gate was "on the upper road," leading from outside the Shalleketh Gate to the West Gate of the temple.

SHALLUM **(1)** A descendant of Judah through Sismai (1 Chron. 2:40–41). **(2)** A descendant of Simeon (1 Chron. 4:25). **(3)** A descendant of Levi through Zadok (1 Chron. 6:12–13). He is the ancestor of Ezra (Ezra 7:2). **(4)** A son of Naphtali (1 Chron. 7:13 [in some MT and LXX manuscripts "Shillem," as rendered in the NIV]). **(5)** A Korahite, the chief gatekeeper under David (1 Chron. 9:17–19, 31). After the Babylonian exile, his descendants continued in the role of gatekeeper (Ezra 2:42; Neh. 7:45). **(6)** The son of Jabesh, he conspired against King Zechariah, last of the line of Jehu, and assassinated him, fulfilling prophecy. Shallum took the throne and ruled over Israel for one month (2 Kings 15:10–15).

(7) The husband of the prophetess Huldah, he was keeper of the temple vestments (2 Kings 22:14–20). **(8)** A son of King Josiah (1 Chron. 3:15), he ruled by the name "Jehoahaz" for three months until deposed by Pharaoh Necho (2 Kings 23:31–34). Jeremiah prophesied that Shallum would die in exile because he failed to uphold the cause of the needy and to continue his father's reforms (Jer. 22:11–

17). **(9)** An uncle of Jeremiah the prophet (Jer. 32:7). **(10)** A gatekeeper known by Jeremiah the prophet (Jer. 35:4). **(11)** A gatekeeper who married a foreign wife and pledged to put her away when confronted by Ezra (Ezra 10:24).

(12) A descendant of Binnui who married a foreign wife and pledged to put her away when confronted by Ezra (Ezra 10:42). **(13)** The father of Jehizkiah, a leader in Ephraim (2 Chron. 28:12). **(14)** The son of Hallohesh, he was the ruler of a half-district of Jerusalem who, with assistance from his daughters, helped to rebuild the Jerusalem wall after the return from exile (Neh. 3:12). **(15)** The son of Kol-Hozeh, he was the "ruler of the district of Mizpah" and helped to rebuild the Jerusalem wall after the return from exile (Neh. 3:15 [most manuscripts have "Shallun," as rendered in the NIV]).

SHALLUN The son of Kol-Hozeh and "ruler of the district of Mizpah." He carried out construction on the Fountain Gate and the wall of the Pool of Siloam during the wall-rebuilding efforts led by Nehemiah (Neh. 3:15). A few manuscripts read "Shallum."

SHALMAI One of the ancestors of the temple servants (Nethinim) who returned to Jerusalem after the Babylonian captivity under the leadership of Zerubbabel in 539 BC or soon after (Ezra 2:46; Neh. 7:48). The fact that many of the names in the list are foreign has led to the belief that they were originally prisoners of war who were pressed into service to perform menial tasks as they assisted the Levites. The name is "Shamlai" in some versions, the difference being due to variant readings in the Hebrew text.

SHALMAN A leader whose forces "devastated Beth Arbel on the day of battle" (Hos. 10:14). Shalman's conquest of this unknown place stands in Hosea's prophecy as an example of the forthcoming judgment on the northern kingdom. Some suggest that "Shalman" is a shortened form of "Shalmaneser," the name of several Assyrian kings. Others identify Shalman with Salmanu, a king of Moab known from an ancient inscription.

SHALMANESER The name of a number of Assyrian kings, only two of whom seem to have direct biblical significance. Shalmaneser III fought against a coalition of Syrian kings who supposedly were backed by Ahab of Israel, at the battle of Qarqar in 853 BC. Shalmaneser III later exacted tribute from Jehu, an Israelite king, around 841 BC. Jehu's submission to Assyria is recorded in Shalmaneser III's Black Obelisk inscription. Shalmaneser V was a son of the Assyrian king Tiglath-pileser III. In 721 BC, Shalmaneser V conquered Samaria, the capital of Israel's northern kingdom, because Hoshea failed to pay tribute to Assyria (2 Kings 17:3–6). Shalmaneser V's reign was likely brought to an end in a violent coup led by Sargon II.

Basalt statue of Shalmaneser III

SHAMA One of David’s mighty warriors, along with his brother, Jeiel (1 Chron. 11:44). They were sons of Hotham the Aroerite.

SHAMARIAH *See* Shemariah.

SHAME AND HONOR In the ancient world, shame and honor are two binary opposites used to depict one’s status or behavior, which a culture approves or disapproves. The system of honor and shame serves as a primary means of social control. Thus, knowing how to act to conform to the code of social behavior expected by one’s group is essential to the maintenance of that community.

In the Bible, the noun “honor” is represented by *kabod* (from the verb “to be heavy”) in the OT, and by *timē* (from the verb “to honor”) in the NT. The reverse of honor is shame, which is represented by a variety of Hebrew and Greek terms, such as *boshet* in the OT, and *aischynē* in the NT.

In Israel, the Holiness Code (Lev. 17–26; cf. Num. 5:2–3; 8:6–7, 14–15) is comparable to the code of honor and shame. As a covenant community, Israel has the obligation to abide by the sanction imposed by God to attain honor (Deut. 4:6–8; 26:18–19; Pss. 34:5, 8–9; 37:18–19; 127:5; cf. 2 Chron. 26:18; Pss. 8:5; 62:7; 84:11; Rom. 2:7–11). Israel is honored (Exod. 32:11–12; Deut. 32:26–27) before the nations when God's honor is upheld (Exod. 7:5; 10:1–2; 14:4, 17–18). Violation of covenantal stipulations—for example, deceptions in trading (Deut. 25:16), acts of "abomination" (Lev. 18:17, 22–23, 26–29), idolatry (Deut. 31:20; 32:15–17), and failure to perform duties prescribed in the law (Deut. 25:7–10)—results in disgrace before others (Exod. 32:25) and God (Deut. 28:25–26, 37).

The status of honor can be ascribed to an individual. A person is more honorable who is the firstborn (Gen. 49:3), comes from an esteemed family (Ps. 45:9), or is married into a dignified family (Gen. 41:45; Ruth 4:5). This worth will last a lifetime unless the reputation of the family is compromised, either because of economics (Ruth 1:1–21) or violation of the codes of conduct, such as adultery and incest (Exod. 20:14; Lev. 18:20; 20:10–21; Deut. 5:18; 22:22; Prov. 6:32–33), though not necessarily divorce (Deut. 24:1–4). Certain groups of people are honored because of special privilege granted to them (Prov. 8:15–16; Dan. 2:21; Rom. 13:1–5)—for example, priests (Exod. 28:2, 40; Ps. 110:4; Heb. 7:21), kings (Ps. 2:7), sages (Prov. 3:35), Israel (Exod. 19:6; Deut. 7:6; 8:11–9:7; 26:16–19), and the church (1 Pet. 2:9).

Wealth symbolizes one's status and claims respect for its owners (Gen. 12:10–20; 14:21–24; 1 Kings 3:13; Prov. 3:16; 8:18; 22:4; Ps. 49:16; Isa. 61:6, 12) but does not equate the state of being poor with shame (cf. Ps. 12:5) unless it is a result of moral lassitude (Prov. 13:18). Parts of the human body symbolize worth and value. Certain parts of the body are less honorable than others, and to expose them is to invite disgrace (2 Sam. 10:4–5; 1 Chron. 19:4; Isa. 20:4; 1 Cor. 12:23–24).

The status of honor can also be achieved by an individual's merits (cf. Rom. 2:7–11). Certain types of behavior are honorable—for example, humility (Prov. 15:33; 18:12; 29:23), taking care of one's master (Prov. 27:18), honoring parents (Exod. 20:12; 21:15; 22:28; Prov. 19:26; Mal. 1:6; Matt. 15:4; Eph. 6:2), good service (Gen. 45:13), military exploits (2 Sam. 23:19–23; cf. 2 Chron. 32:21), almsgiving and justice (Prov. 21:21). One important aspect of achieving honor is the pursuit of wisdom. The ways of wisdom are honorable (Prov. 3:16–17; 4:8; 8:18), preserving a person from dishonor (Prov. 3:16–17, 31–33, 35; 24:14), but the ways of folly, such as injustice (Prov. 1:22; 14:31) and dishonoring parents (Prov. 30:17; cf. Exod. 20:12; 21:15; Lev. 20:9; Deut. 27:16), are a disgrace (Prov. 20:3; 26:1). The failure to perform one's duty (Gen. 40:1–3) or a defeat in battle (Isa. 23:9; Lam. 1:8; Nah. 3:10) results in shame and, accordingly, loss of social status (Isa. 16:14; 23:9; Jer. 46:12; Lam. 1:6, 8; Hos. 4:7). An ultimate form of disgrace is to be hanged for public viewing (Deut. 21:22–23; Esther 5:14; 7:7–10; Matt. 27:32–44; Mark 15:22–32; Luke 23:33–43; John 19:17–24; 1 Cor. 1:18–25). In a patriarchal society, the status of women is obtained through their sexual exclusiveness. Their chastity (Gen. 38:24; Lev. 20:10; Deut. 22:13–21; cf. 2 Sam. 13:13; Song 8:8–9) and fertility (Gen. 16:2; 30:2; 1 Sam. 1:3–8) become indicators of family and social worth.

SHAMED *See* Shemed.

SHAMER *See* Shemer; Shomer.

SHAMGAR A judge of Israel (Judg. 3:31; 5:6), apparently a foreigner (cf. Jael [Judg. 4:17; 5:6]). His name is perhaps Hurrian and occurs in texts from Nuzi. His appellation "son of Anath" may either indicate his hometown (Beth Anath in Galilee [Josh. 19:38]) or be a title connected to the Canaanite deity Anath, perhaps with military connotations. The Philistines whom Shamgar slew with an oxgoad (a long metal-tipped pole) perhaps were not Philistines proper, but rather another of the Sea Peoples.

SHAMHUTH The commander of the fifth division of King David's army (1 Chron. 27:8). He may be the same person as Shammah the Harodite (2 Sam. 23:25) and Shammoth the Harorite (1 Chron. 11:27), making him one of David's mighty warriors. His designation as an Izrahite is unclear.

SHAMIR **(1)** The first-named town within the hill country in the tribal allotment to Judah (Josh. 15:48). Its location is uncertain, though some have suggested sites approximately fifteen miles southwest of Hebron. The next two towns in the list, Jattir and Sokoh, are known to have been in this general vicinity. **(2)** A town in the hill country of Ephraim (Judg. 10:1–2). It was the hometown and burial place of the judge Tola, who was a descendant of Issachar. Some scholars place the town at the site of Samaria, but this identification is uncertain. **(3)** A descendant of Levi through Micah (1 Chron. 24:24).

SHAMLAI *See* Shalmai.

SHAMMA A descendant of Asher through Zophah (1 Chron. 7:37), he was one of several "heads of families, choice men, brave warriors, and outstanding leaders" (7:40) from his tribe.

SHAMMAH **(1)** One of four chiefs in Edom who were sons of Reuel and grandsons of Esau through his wife Basemath (Gen. 36:13, 17; 1 Chron. 1:37). **(2)** The third son of Jesse, David's father (1 Sam. 16:9; 17:13). He is also called "Shimeah" (2 Sam. 13:3, 32) and "Shimea" (1 Chron. 2:13 [KJV: "Shimma"]; 20:7). **(3)** The son of Agee the Hararite, he was one of "the Three," among David's mighty warriors. He courageously defended a field against the Philistines (2 Sam. 23:11–12). He probably also is the father of Jonathan, one of "the Thirty," among David's mighty warriors (2 Sam. 23:32–33). **(4)** One of "the Thirty" among David's mighty warriors, he hailed from Harod (2 Sam. 23:25). He is also called "Shammoth" (1 Chron. 11:27) and "Shamhuth" (1 Chron. 27:8).

SHAMMAI **(1)** The first son of Onam and the father of Nadab and Abishur, in the tribe of Judah (1 Chron. 2:28). **(2)** The son of Rekem and the father of Maon, in the tribe of Judah (1 Chron. 2:44–45). **(3)** A son of Mered and Pharaoh's daughter Bithiah, and the brother of Miriam and Ishbah (1 Chron. 4:17–18).

SHAMMOTH A Harorite, he was one of "the Thirty" among David's mighty warriors (1 Chron. 11:27). He is also called "Shammah the Harodite" (2 Sam. 23:25) and "Shamuth" (1 Chron. 27:8).

SHAMMUA **(1)** The representative of the tribe of Reuben among the twelve spies sent by Moses to scout the promised land (Num. 13:4). **(2)** The first of eleven children born to David while he reigned in Jerusalem (2 Sam. 5:14; 1 Chron. 3:5 ["Shimea" NIV mg.]; 14:4). **(3)** The father of Abda, a Levite who resettled in Jerusalem in the postexilic period (Neh. 11:17). **(4)** The head of a priestly family during the time of Ezra (Neh. 12:18).

SHAMSHERAI A descendant of Benjamin through Jeroham (1 Chron. 8:26). He was one of several "heads of families, chiefs as listed in their genealogy" (1 Chron. 8:28), who lived in Jerusalem.

SHAPHAM The second-highest-ranking leader of the tribe of Gad (1 Chron. 5:12), possibly during the time of Jotham and Jeroboam II (1 Chron. 5:17).

SHAPHAN **(1)** The son of Azaliah, he was secretary to King Josiah. Shaphan's reading of the Book of the Law, which Hilkiah the high priest had recently found, to King Josiah ultimately led to sweeping religious reform in Judah (2 Kings 22:3–20; 2 Chron. 34:8–28). Shaphan's sons Ahikam (2 Kings 22:12; Jer. 26:24), Elasah (Jer. 29:3), and Gemariah (Jer. 36:10–12), as well as his grandson through Ahikam, Gedaliah (Jer. 39:14; 40:11; 41:2), appear prominently in the book of Jeremiah. **(2)** The father of Jaazaniah, a leader of Israel who was guilty of abominations against the Lord (Ezek. 8:11).

SHAPHAT **(1)** The delegate from the tribe of Simeon among the twelve spies sent by Moses to explore Canaan (Num. 13:5). **(2)** The father of the prophet Elisha (1 Kings 19:16, 19; 2 Kings 3:11; 6:31). **(3)** A descendant of David through Shemaiah (1 Chron. 3:22). **(4)** A leader of the tribe of Gad (1 Chron. 5:12). **(5)** King David's official over "the herds in the valleys" (1 Chron. 27:29).

SHAPHER *See* Shepher.

SHAPHIR One of the towns included in Micah's lament (Mic. 1:11). Micah says that its residents will be led into captivity in shameful nakedness. Its location is unknown.

SHARAI A descendant of Binnui who was among those guilty of marrying foreign women (Ezra 10:40).

SHARAIM *See* Shaaraim.

SHARAR *See* Sakar.

SHARD A broken piece of pottery, usually clay, also known as a potsherd. Shards were little better than garbage (Isa. 45:9), though larger pieces were sometimes used for writing brief notes. *See also* Potsherd.

SHAREZER **(1)** A son of Sennacherib, king of Assyria. He and his brother Adrammelek murdered their father "while he was worshiping in the temple of his god Nisrok" several years after he withdrew from his siege of Jerusalem. Sharezer and Adrammelek escaped to Ararat, and Esarhaddon took the Assyrian throne (2 Kings 19:37; Isa. 37:38). Ancient records confirm that Sennacherib was murdered by a son, but they mention only one assailant. **(2)** A man whom the people of Bethel sent, along with Regem-Melek, during the time of Zechariah to inquire of God about worship practices (Zech. 7:2). Alternative interpretations of the Hebrew text would make Sharezer one who sent to inquire of God rather than one who was sent.

SHARON "Sharon" refers to the Sharon Plain (e.g., Acts 9:35). The coastal plain, one of the north-south sections into which Palestine can be divided north of the Negev, is the westernmost geographical feature of these strips. The Mediterranean Sea is to the west of the coastal plain and the foothills of the Shephelah to the east. The coastal plain is called the Sharon Plain once it extends north of the Yarkon River. The Sharon Plain is divided by two kurkar (local sandstone) ridges running north to south. North, toward the Carmel Mountains, the plain narrows and virtually disappears at the promontory at Haifa. It widens farther north past Akko and into Lebanon. The Sharon Plain held forests of oaks and terebinth trees during antiquity, but it was deforested during the Ottoman Empire. New forests have been replanted since modern Israel's statehood.

SHARON, PLAIN OF *See* Sharon.

SHARONITE One who hails from Sharon. In the Bible only Shitrai, one of David's leaders, bears this designation (1 Chron. 27:29).

SHARUHEN A Simeonite city within the tribal territory of Judah, since Simeon did not get a separate tribal allotment (Josh. 19:6). In parallel passages the site is called "Shilhim" (assigned to Judah in Josh. 15:32) and "Shaaraim" (1 Chron. 4:31). Egyptian texts mention Sharuhen as the first stronghold of the Hyksos after their expulsion from Egypt in the sixteenth century BC. Sharuhen has been identified with Tell el-Far'ah (south) and Tell Abu Hureirah/Tel Haror, but the former is too small for the three-year siege described in Egyptian texts, and the latter is now securely identified with Gerar. A more viable recent suggestion is to identify Sharuhen with the large site of Tell el-'Ajjul.

SHASHAI A descendant of Binnui who was among those guilty of marrying foreign women (Ezra 10:40).

SHASHAK A descendant of Benjamin (1 Chron. 8:14) through either Beriah (NIV, KJV) or Elpaal (RSV, ESV). He had eleven sons (1 Chron. 8:14).

SHAUL **(1)** From "Rehoboth on the river," he succeeded Samlah as king over Edom and preceded Baal-Hanan (Gen. 36:37–38; 1 Chron. 1:48–49). **(2)** A son of Simeon by a Canaanite woman (Gen. 46:10; Exod. 6:15; Num. 26:13) who was the ancestor of the Shaulite clan (Num. 26:13) and the father of Shallum (1 Chron. 4:24–25). **(3)** A descendant of Levi through Uzziah (1 Chron. 6:24).

SHAULITE A descendant of Shaul son of Simeon. The Shaulite clan was one of five clans of Simeon (Num. 26:12–14).

SHAVEH This term means "plain" and is employed in Gen. 14:17 to designate the place where Abram met with the kings of Salem and Sodom ("the Valley of Shaveh, that is, the King's Valley"). Since the King's Valley is also mentioned in 2 Sam. 18:18 (where Absalom erected a monument), it seems likely that the "Valley of Shaveh" refers to a place at the confluence of the Hinnom, Tyropoeon, and Kidron valleys, just south of Jerusalem. *See also* Shaveh Kiriathaim.

SHAVEH KIRIATHAIM This Transjordanian location, mentioned only in Gen. 14:5, most likely refers to a plain near the city of Kiriathaim, which is mentioned in the inscription of the Moabite Stone (line 10) and may be identified with Khirbet el-Qureiyeh, located six miles west of Medeba on the bank of Wadi 'Uyun edh-Dhib. *See also* Kiriathaim.

SHAVING *See* Razors.

SHAVSHA *See* Shisha.

SHEAF A bundle of grain. In the OT, the Israelites are commanded to refrain from retrieving a forgotten sheaf of grain from the field (Deut. 24:19), but rather to leave it as provision, along with other agricultural leftovers (Deut. 24:20–22; Lev. 19:10), for the dispossessed from the fringes of society. Ruth benefits from such provision (Ruth 2:1–23), and Job complains of those who withhold such offerings (Job 24:10). Sheaves also figure in one of Joseph's dreams (Gen. 37:7).

SHEAL A descendant of Bani, Sheal was an Israelite who returned to Jerusalem with Ezra and was found guilty of marrying a foreign wife when Ezra wanted to purge Israel of foreign influence (Ezra 10:29).

SHEALTIEL Listed as a descendant of King Jehoiachin of Judah in 597 BC before the king was carried off into Babylonian exile (1 Chron. 3:17). Most often he is remembered as the father of Zerubabbel, an important Jewish leader in the early postexilic period (Ezra 3:2, 8; Hag. 1:1). In 1 Chron. 3:17–19 he appears as Zerubabbel's uncle, suggesting a levirate marriage (Deut. 25:5–10). Shealtiel is listed in the genealogy of Jesus (Matt. 1:12; Luke 3:27).

SHEARIAH A descendant of Benjamin and Saul. Sheariah was one of six sons of Azel (1 Chron. 8:38; 9:44).

SHEARING HOUSE In 2 Kings 10:12, 14 the KJV translates the Hebrew phrase *bet-'eked* ("house of binding") as "shearing house." More-recent versions understand the phrase as part of a place name, "Beth Eked of the Shepherds" (NIV). *See also* Beth Eked.

SHEAR-JASHUB The son of Isaiah, whom God commanded the prophet to take with him to meet King Ahaz (Isa. 7:3). "Shear-Jashub" is a sign-name and message to the fearful king. It means "[only] a remnant will return." There is ambiguity in "return," which could indicate either a physical return or repentance. The name is an assurance to Ahaz that he has nothing to fear from the foreign alliance: only a remnant of the armies of Aram and Israel will return home. Or it could mean that only a remnant will turn to God in faith.

SHEBA **(1)** A descendant of Ham, a son of Raamah (Gen. 10:7; 1 Chron. 1:9). **(2)** A descendant of Shem, a son of Joktan (Gen. 10:28; 1 Chron. 1:22). **(3)** A descendant of Abraham through Keturah, the patriarch's wife in his old age (Gen. 25:3; 1 Chron. 1:32). **(4)** A town or village given to the Simeonites within the tribal allotment of Judah (may be an alternate name for Beersheba; Josh. 19:2). **(5)** A Benjamite, son of Bikri, who led a revolt against David (2 Sam. 20) in the aftermath of Absalom's rebellion. Joab pursued Sheba to the city of Abel Beth Maakah, where he was killed by the inhabitants, and thus the city was spared a siege. **(6)** The region made famous by the queen who visited Solomon in order to test his wisdom (1 Kings 10:1–13; 2 Chron. 9:1–12; see also Job 6:19; Ps. 72:10, 15; Isa. 60:6; Jer. 6:20; Ezek. 27:22, 23; 38:13); the region is located in southwestern Arabia (modern Yemen). **(7)** A Gadite from the time of Jotham king of Judah and Jeroboam king of Israel (1 Chron. 5:13).

SHEBA, QUEEN OF A queen who came to Jerusalem to visit Solomon (1 Kings 10; 2 Chron. 9; cf. Matt. 12:42). Sheba probably is located in southwestern Arabia (modern Yemen). *See also* Sabean.

SHEBAH *See* Shibah.

SHEBAM *See* Sebam.

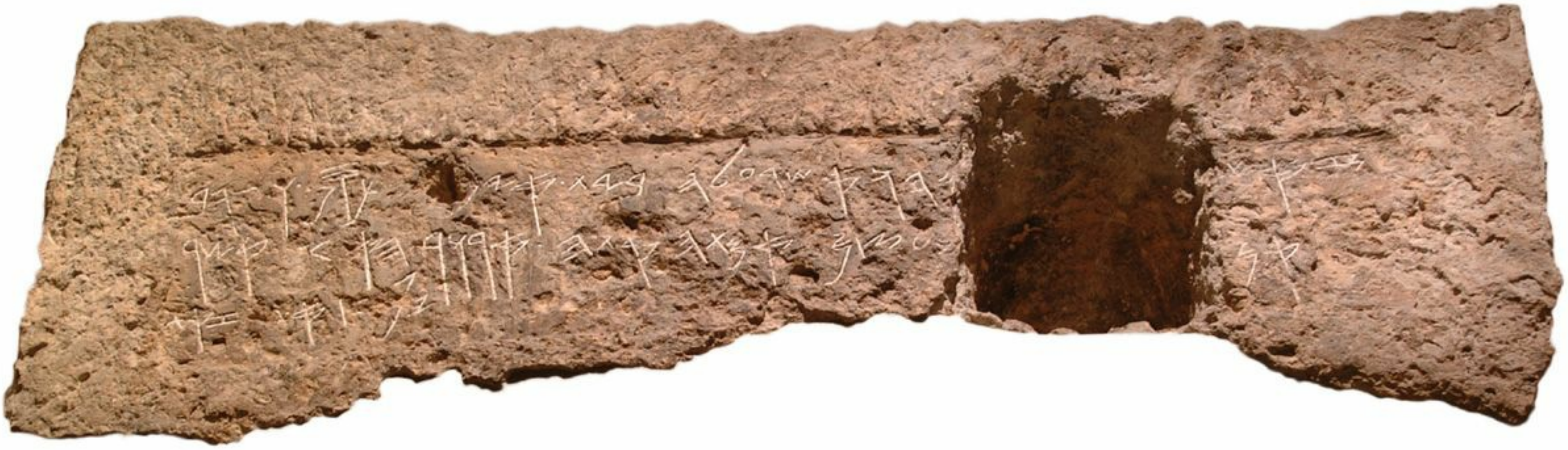
SHEBANIAH **(1)** One of several priestly musicians appointed by David to blow trumpets in the procession of the ark of the covenant (1 Chron. 15:24). **(2)** A Levite who led public worship during Ezra's reforms (Neh. 9:4–5). **(3, 4)** Two Levites named in Neh. 10:10, 12. **(5)** A priest who signed the covenant in Neh. 10:4, possibly named "Shekaniah" in Neh. 12:3.

SHEBARIM A site named in the battle of Ai (Josh. 7:5). Literally meaning "broken places," the name may refer to some broken terrain a few miles southeast of Ai. Most translations simply transliterate the Hebrew word as this place name, but the NIV translates it as "stone quarries."

SHEBAT The eleventh month of the year according to the Babylonian calendar (roughly February/March). See Zech. 1:7.

SHEBER A descendant of Judah through Caleb (1 Chron. 2:48). Sheber and three brothers were born to Caleb's concubine Maakah.

SHEBNA Shebna (or "Shebnah," a variant Hebrew spelling) served as a royal officer of King Hezekiah and as one of his intermediaries (2 Kings 18:18; 19:2; Isa. 36:3; 37:2). He was criticized by Isaiah (Isa. 22:15–25).



Inscription on a rock-hewn tomb at Silan, near Jerusalem (seventh century BC). The text states that the tomb is that of the "royal steward," who is perhaps Shebna, the official criticized by Isaiah (Isa. 22:15–16) for building too conspicuous a tomb.

SHEBUEL *See* Shubael.

SHECANIAH, SHECHANIAH *See* Shekaniah.

SHECHEM **(1)** A descendant of Manasseh and patriarch of a family (Num. 26:31; Josh. 17:2). **(2)** The second of the four sons of Shemida, from the tribe of Manasseh (1 Chron. 7:19). **(3)** The son of Hamor the Hivite, who was the head of the town and environs of Shechem (Gen. 34:2; cf. Josh. 24:32; Judg. 9:28). He raped Jacob and Leah's daughter Dinah, whose brothers killed him, Hamor, and the men of their town and plundered it in revenge.

(4) A crucial town in the hill country on the border of the tribal allotment of Ephraim (Josh. 20:7). The site has been identified with Tell Balata in a valley between Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim. Shechem is the first Canaanite town to be mentioned in the book of Genesis (12:6). Abraham camped at the site near the oak tree of Moreh, and God revealed himself to Abraham there, giving the first indication of the importance of the place. In response to God's revelation, Abraham built an altar at Shechem. Later, Jacob settled in the region of Shechem and purchased land from Hamor the Hivite (33:18–19). When Hamor's son Shechem raped Jacob's daughter Dinah, her brothers Simeon and Levi killed the men of the region, and Jacob's other sons pillaged the town of Shechem. Jacob buried his foreign gods at Shechem under the aforementioned oak tree in response to the revelation of God (35:1–4). It was in the general region of Shechem that Joseph later would seek his brothers and their flocks (Gen. 37). Israel would bury the bones of Joseph there in accordance with his wishes (50:25; Josh. 24:32).

Due to the revelation of God and its significance to the patriarchs, Joshua gathered the Israelites to Shechem after the conquest of Canaan and just prior to his death in order to renew the covenant (Josh. 8:30–35; 24). After the conquest the town was allotted to the Kohathite Levites and was one of the cities of refuge (Josh. 20:7; 21:21; 1 Chron. 6:67). However, in the period of the judges Shechem apparently was still under the cultural and religious influence of the Canaanites, as evidenced by the presence of the temple of Baal-Berith (Judg. 9:4). Abimelek, whose mother was a Shechemite, convinced the people of the town to make him their king. After three years, the Shechemites rejected Abimelek, and he killed many of them and destroyed the town (Judg. 9). It was at Shechem that the ten northern tribes made the decision to reject Solomon's son Rehoboam and make Jeroboam their king. Jeroboam subsequently made Shechem his capital for a period (1 Kings 12).

Archaeological evidence indicates that Shechem suffered major damage during the Assyrian invasion in 724–721 BC. Yet the town continued to be occupied, and the inhabitants brought offerings to the temple in Jerusalem up until its destruction in 586 BC. Shechem became the religious and civic center for the Samaritans. This put Shechem in competition with Jerusalem and is the motivation for the Samaritan woman's question in John 4:5 (where Shechem is called "Sychar").

SHECHEMITE *See* Shechem.

SHEDEUR The father of Elizur, who was the tribal leader of Reuben during the wilderness wanderings (Num. 1:5; 2:10; 7:30, 35; 10:18).

SHEEP A cultically clean, domesticated animal representing the wealth and livelihood of many in biblical times. Mentioned more than any other animal in the Bible, sheep were critical to ancient Israel's rural economy, with both the animal itself and the wool it produced serving as one of the measurements of a person's prosperity (1 Sam. 25:2; Ezek. 27:18). Sheep were useful throughout Israel's history, especially during the patriarchal period (Gen. 46:32), providing milk to drink (Deut. 32:14), wool and hide for clothing (Job 31:20; Heb. 11:37) and tent coverings (Exod. 26:14), and meat to eat (Deut. 14:4). Usually, male lambs from eight days old (Lev. 22:27) and year-old sheep served as various sacrifice offerings to God: the Passover celebration (Exod. 12:5), burnt offerings (Lev. 1:10), sin offerings (Lev. 5:6), guilt offerings (Lev. 5:15), and fellowship offerings (Lev. 3:6), though the firstborn of the flock belonged to God (Exod. 13:12). Their fat tails were the prized portion of the sheep offered as burnt offerings (Lev. 3:9).

Naturally gentle and submissive (Jer. 11:19), sheep are predisposed to becoming easily lost or led astray (Isa. 53:6; Matt. 9:36). Because sheep are social animals that gather in clusters, a shepherd can easily lead a large flock. The animal's defenselessness against those who would steal its coat or demand its life is pictured in Isa. 53:7. In order to protect sheep against predators, a shepherd provided a protective area, or fold, which might be a cave or an enclosure of rough stones. A unique relationship existed between shepherd and sheep: the shepherd knew each animal by name, and the sheep could recognize the shepherd's voice (John 10:1–11). Sheep therefore serve as a fitting metaphor for God's people (Ps. 100:3), suggesting that God's people are naive and utterly dependent on their shepherd for divine guidance and protection (Matt. 12:11; Luke 15:4). Jesus promises that not a single one of his sheep can be snatched from his Father's hand (John 10:29). Even though God's sheep wander, "the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls" restores (1 Pet. 2:25).

In a charade, false prophets are described as donning "sheep's clothing," a symbol of innocence, and appearing to be members of God's flock (Matt. 7:15). By contrast, the true disciples who are to go to the sheep—the lost people of Israel (9:36; 10:6)—are now sent out as sheep among wolves (10:16–19), but they are aptly protected.

Jesus is represented as the Lamb of God (John 1:29; Rev. 5:6; cf. Isa. 53:7), provided by God for the sins of the world, the ultimate fulfillment of the yearly Passover lamb (Exod. 12; 1 Cor. 5:7). Jesus is the good shepherd of all sheep, and he most profoundly demonstrates his commitment and love for the sheep: "The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep" (John 10:11).

SHEEPCOTE In the KJV, a pasture or perhaps a sheepfold (1 Sam. 24:3; 2 Sam. 7:8; 1 Chron. 17:7). *See also* Sheepfold.

SHEEPFOLD A sheepfold is an enclosure used to confine livestock, either near inhabited areas (Num. 32:16) or in the open country (1 Sam. 24:3). Several Greek and Hebrew words describe such enclosures and may be translated as "sheepfold." Depending on context, these words can also be translated "wall," "pasture," "courtyard," or simply "habitation." The use of the English word "sheepfold" is therefore a matter of context rather than of specific terminology in the original biblical languages.

Referring to the protective function of sheepfolds, Jesus refers to himself as the gate of a sheepfold (John 10:1, 9, 16), who keeps his flock from bandits. Shepherds may have used sheepfolds particularly at night. On several occasions, the OT prophets speak of Israel as a flock, and of the land of Israel as its "fold" or "pasture," so that the gathering of exiled Israelites is likened to the shepherd's ingathering of animals into their pen (see Jer. 23:3; Mic. 2:12).

SHEEP GATE A gate of Jerusalem restored by Nehemiah (Neh. 3:1, 32; 12:39). It was located on the northeast side of the city. In NT times a large pool, named "Bethesda," was built near the Sheep Gate, where Jesus healed a lame man on the Sabbath (John 5:1–9). Today, this gate has the modern sheep market, possibly a tradition from earlier times. In John 10, Jesus identifies himself as the gate for the sheep; those who enter through him are true sheep, but all others are thieves and robbers.

SHEEP MARKET *See* Sheep Gate.

SHEEPSHEARING A time for fleecing wool from sheep. It usually was a festive time that brought family and friends together (Gen. 38:13; 1 Sam. 25:4, 36; 2 Sam. 13:23–25). The occasion sometimes was exploited for selfish ends (Gen. 31:19; 2 Sam. 13:26–29). Typically, the sheep being fleeced remained silent during shearing. Isaiah used this imagery to characterize the attitude of the Suffering Servant before his oppressors (Isa. 53:7). Philip applied this Scripture to Jesus in his witness to the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:32–35).

SHEERAH The daughter of Beriah and a descendant of Ephraim, she built Lower and Upper Beth Horon as well as Uzzen Sheerah (1 Chron. 7:24).

SHEET The description of the object let down from heaven before Peter upon which were the unclean animals (Acts 10:11, 16; 11:5). It is also the description of an object covering the nations that God will remove, sometimes described as a veil (Isa. 25:7).

SHEHARIAH One of the six sons of Jeroham, he was a descendant of Benjamin and a chief and head of the family. He lived in Jerusalem (1 Chron. 8:26).

SHEKANIAH **(1)** A descendant of David and Hananiah (1 Chron. 3:21–22). **(2)** A priest whose family was assigned temple service during the time of David (1 Chron. 24:11). **(3)** One of the priests who distributed freewill offerings during the time of Hezekiah (2 Chron. 31:15). **(4)** The ancestor of a family group that returned from exile with Ezra (Ezra 8:3). **(5)** The family head of a group that returned from exile with Ezra (Ezra 8:5). **(6)** The son of Jehiel, he suggested that he and the other men guilty of marrying foreign wives make a covenant to send them away (Ezra 10:2). **(7)** The father of Shemaiah, one of the men who helped in Nehemiah’s rebuilding of the Jerusalem wall (Neh. 3:29). **(8)** The father-in-law of Tobiah, a man who opposed Nehemiah (Neh. 6:18). **(9)** One of the priests who returned from exile with Zerubbabel (Neh. 12:3).

SHEKEL *See* Coins; Weights and Measures.

SHEKINAH The Hebrew word *shekinah* refers to a continuing localized presence of God in the world, as this is portrayed in the Bible. Although the word *shekinah* does not occur in the Bible, it is related to the biblical Hebrew verb *shakan*, usually translated as “dwell,” and the biblical Hebrew noun *mishkan*, usually translated as “tabernacle, dwelling, tent.” Only the biblical usage of these Hebrew terms is discussed below.

The Bible presents God as acting in the world that he made. God sometimes speaks to people, as when he speaks to the prophet Moses from the burning bush (Exod. 3:1–6). God accompanies the nation of Israel in its journey out of Egypt, with his presence represented by pillars of cloud and fire (13:21–22; 14:19–24). From a cloud covering Mount Sinai, God speaks to the nation of Israel, giving the Ten Commandments (19:9–20:22). The Bible conceives of such entry into the world not as a denial of God’s transcendence and rule over the world but instead as affirming God’s power (Ps. 115:5–8). Those who deny God’s willingness or power to act in this way will naturally discredit the possibility of such events. However, that kind of denial is a philosophical and theological judgment, not a historical judgment. (For additional discussion of God’s action in the world, *see* Theophany.)

At Mount Sinai, God tells Moses to make a sanctuary, where God will dwell continually among his people, Israel (Exod. 25:8). The sanctuary is called a “tabernacle,” and it is a tent structure. The sanctuary or tabernacle is built, the cloud of God’s presence covers it, and God’s glory fills it (40:34–35). The term *shekinah* refers to God’s presence, as found, for example, in this tabernacle. The cloud of God’s presence rises up whenever the tabernacle is to be moved for another day’s journey through the desert and drops back down afterward (Exod. 40:36–38; Num. 9:15–23).

Centuries later, Solomon builds a temple in Jerusalem to replace the portable tabernacle as God’s sanctuary. The cloud of God’s glory fills the temple (1 Kings 8:10–13). Centuries after this, the prophet Ezekiel has a vision in which he sees the cloud of God’s glory leaving the temple because of the sin of the nation of Israel and envisions the impending destruction of the temple (Ezek. 10–11). The temple is destroyed, later rebuilt, and ultimately destroyed again in AD 70.

In the NT, the presence of God in the tabernacle is compared to the presence of God in Jesus Christ. John’s Gospel begins with literary references to Gen. 1, where God creates the world by merely speaking. John says that God’s Word of creation both was “with God” and “was God,” since God’s Word is distinct from God, even while God himself is present in his Word (John 1:1–3). John goes on to say that this divine Word became flesh and dwelled among us (1:14). The Greek word for “dwell” is *skēnoō*, which often has the meaning of dwelling in a tent (*skēnē*). The idea is that just as God had previously come to dwell in the tabernacle, the divine Word has now come to dwell in human flesh. This interpretation is confirmed in the following words, that the disciples had seen “his glory.” This is an allusion to God’s glory, which had typically rested on the tabernacle, and which John says was revealed in Jesus’ miracles (e.g., 2:11).

SHELAH **(1)** A son of Arphaxad and the father of Eber (Gen. 10:24; 11:12–15; 1 Chron. 1:18, 24), whom Luke (following the LXX) calls “Sala” (KJV) and lists as the grandson of Arphaxad, son of Cainan, and father of Eber in Jesus’ genealogy (Luke 3:35). **(2)** The third son of Judah and a Canaanite woman (Gen. 38:2–5; 46:12; 1 Chron. 2:3; 4:21) and namesake of the Shelanite clan (Num. 26:20). **(3)** The name of the pool in Jerusalem better known as Siloam (Neh. 3:15 NRSV, NIV mg.; cf. John 9:7).

SHELANITES A clan descended from Shelah counted at the second wilderness census (Num. 26:20; cf. 1 Chron. 9:5 NIV). *See also* Shilonite.

SHELEMIAH **(1)** A Levite of the Korahite clan who was chosen by lot to guard the East Gate of the sanctuary during David’s reign (1 Chron. 26:14). He is also called “Meshelemiah” (1 Chron. 26:1–2). **(2, 3)** Two descendants of Binnui who vowed to divorce their foreign wives during Ezra’s reforms (Ezra 10:39–41). **(4)** A priest and one of three men whom Nehemiah appointed to oversee the temple storerooms and the distribution of tithes among the priests (Neh. 13:13). **(5)** The son of Abdeel and one of three men commanded by King Jehoiakim of Judah to arrest Baruch and Jeremiah (Jer. 36:26). **(6)** The father of Hananiah, who performed repairs to a segment of Jerusalem’s wall (Neh. 3:30). **(7)** The son of Cushi, the father of Nethaniah, and an ancestor of Jehudi (Jer. 36:14). **(8)** The father of Jehukal (or Jucal) (Jer. 37:3; 38:1). **(9)** The son of Hananiah and the father of Irijah, the captain of the guard who arrested Jeremiah (Jer. 37:13).

SHELEPH The second of the thirteen sons of Joktan, a descendant of Shem (Gen. 10:26; 1 Chron. 1:20).

SHELESH The third of the four sons of Helem, of the tribe of Asher (1 Chron. 7:35).

SHELOMI The father of Ahihud, who was the representative of the tribe of Asher among those enlisted by Moses to assign grants of land in Canaan (Num. 34:27).

SHELOMITH **(1)** The wife of an Egyptian whose son was stoned for blasphemy in the Israelite camp after an argument (Lev. 24:11). **(2)** The daughter of Zerubbabel (1 Chron. 3:19). **(3)** The first son of Izhar of the Kohathite family (1 Chron. 23:18). He is also referred to as "Shelomoth" (1 Chron. 24:22), which appears to be a family name. **(4)** The son of Zikri, he, along with his family, was responsible for a portion of the temple treasuries during David's time (1 Chron. 26:25–26, 28). **(5)** The fourth of four sons born to Rehoboam and Maakah (2 Chron. 11:20). **(6)** The head of a family that returned with Ezra after the Babylonian exile (Ezra 8:10).

SHELOMOTH **(1)** The first son of three sons of Shimei, he was a Levite who was the head of a family in the Gershonite clan (1 Chron. 23:9). **(2)** The first son of Izhar of the Kohathite family (1 Chron. 24:22). He is called "Shelomith" in 1 Chron. 23:18.

SHELTER *See* Booth.

SHELUMIEL The son of Zurishaddai, he was the leader of the tribe of Simeon during the wilderness wanderings. He helped Moses in taking the military registration (Num. 1:6). He is mentioned in the description of the layout of the camp (2:12). He is the one who presented Simeon's offering for the sanctuary (7:36, 41) and is mentioned as the leader of Simeon when the tribe departed from Sinai along with the rest of Israel (10:19).

SHEM The eldest son of Noah (Gen. 9:24; 10:21) and the brother of Ham and Japheth. He and his wife were among the eight survivors of the flood (6:6–9). He was the father of the Semites, ancestor of the Hebrews (Gen. 11:10–14), and in the lineage of the Messiah (Luke 3:36).

SHEMA **(1)** A town in the territory of Judah (Josh. 15:26). Some have argued that it is the same as the town of Sheba, depending upon the translation (Josh. 19:2). **(2)** An individual in the tribe of Judah, of the clan of Caleb (1 Chron. 2:43–44). **(3)** A Reubenite (1 Chron. 5:8). **(4)** A Benjamite who was the head of a family in the city of Aijalon and is known for driving away the men of Gath (1 Chron. 8:13). He is later referenced as "Shimei" (1 Chron. 8:21). **(5)** One of those who stood to Ezra's right side as he read the law to the Israelites (Neh. 8:4).

SHEMA, THE *Shema* is the transliteration of a Hebrew word meaning "hear" (*shema'*), the first word of Deut. 6:4: "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one." The text that begins with this verse is therefore referred to as the Shema. The Shema emphasizes the oneness of God and the obligation to love him and is the most important prayer in Judaism. It is recited twice daily and begins a weekly liturgical reading that includes Deut. 6:4–9; 11:13–21; Num. 15:37–41. These Torah passages emphasize monotheism and the centrality of the commandments.

Jesus called the Shema the greatest commandment (Mark 12:29–30; Matt. 22:37–38; Luke 10:27) and invoked it in teaching his oneness with the Father (John 10:30). Paul later expanded the Shema to include Jesus (1 Cor. 8:6).

SHEMAAH A Gibeathite, the father of Ahiezer and Joash of Benjamin, warriors who joined David at Ziklag when he was banished from the presence of Saul (1 Chron. 12:3).

SHEMAIAH **(1)** A prophet who delivered God's word to King Rehoboam regarding Jeroboam (1 Kings 12:22–24; 2 Chron. 11:2–4) and the cause of the invasion by King Shishak of Egypt (2 Chron. 12:5, 7). He also recorded the events of Rehoboam's reign (2 Chron. 12:15). **(2)** A Judean and a descendant of Zerubbabel (1 Chron. 3:22). **(3)** An individual who assisted in the postexilic repair of the Jerusalem wall (Neh. 3:29), possibly the same person as #2. **(4)** A Simeonite chief, the father of Shimri (1 Chron. 4:37). **(5)** A Reubenite chief, the son of Joel (1 Chron. 5:4). **(6)** A Merarite Levite in Nehemiah's time, the son of Hasshub (1 Chron. 9:14; Neh. 11:15).

(7) A Levite, a descendant of Jeduthun, and the father of Obadiah (1 Chron. 9:16). **(8)** A Kohathite Levite in David's time, chief of the sons of Elizaphan (1 Chron. 15:8, 11–15). **(9)** A Levite and scribe in David's time, the son of Nethanel (1 Chron. 24:6). **(10)** A Korahite Levite, the firstborn son of Obed-Edom (1 Chron. 26:4, 6–7). **(11)** One of the Levites sent by King Jehoshaphat to teach God's word to the people (2 Chron. 17:8). **(12)** A Levite who helped cleanse the temple in Hezekiah's time, a descendant of Jeduthun (2 Chron. 29:14). **(13)** One of six Levites who assisted in the distribution of the freewill offerings in Hezekiah's time (2 Chron. 31:15). **(14)** One of the Levite leaders who gave generous Passover offerings in Josiah's time (2 Chron. 35:9).

(15) A descendant of Adonikam who returned to Judah with Ezra (Ezra 8:13). **(16)** One of the leaders sent by Ezra to recruit the Levites (Ezra 8:16). **(17)** A descendant of Harim, he was a priest who had married a foreign wife and pledged to divorce her (Ezra 10:21). **(18)** A descendant of Harim, he was an Israelite who had married a foreign wife and pledged to divorce her (Ezra 10:31). **(19)** A false prophet hired by Tobiah and Sanballat to discredit Nehemiah (Neh. 6:10). **(20)** One of the priests who sealed the covenant with Nehemiah (Neh. 10:8) and returned from exile with Zerubbabel (Neh. 12:6).

(21) A leader present at the dedication of the Jerusalem wall (Neh. 12:34). **(22)** A musician present at the dedication of the Jerusalem wall (Neh. 12:36). **(23)** A Levite musician present at the dedication of the Jerusalem wall (Neh. 12:42). **(24)** A descendant of Asaph, he was a grandfather of the priest Zechariah (Neh. 12:35). **(25)** The father of Uriah the prophet (Jer. 26:20). **(26)** A Nehelamite false prophet against whom Jeremiah prophesies God's punishment (Jer. 29:31). **(27)** The father of Delaiah, an official of King Jehoiakim and a contemporary of Jeremiah (Jer. 36:12).

SHEMARIAH **(1)** One of David's mighty warriors who joined him at Ziklag (1 Chron. 12:5). **(2)** The son of Rehoboam and Abihail (2 Chron. 11:19 [KJV: "Shamariah"]). **(3, 4)** Two men who married foreign women during Ezra's time and pledged to divorce them (Ezra 10:32, 41).

SHEMEBER The king of Zeboyim during the time of Abraham (Gen. 14:2). He was one of five Canaanite kings who formed an alliance against a coalition of four Near Eastern kings. Besides taking plunder, the coalition kidnapped people, including Lot, Abraham's nephew. Abraham successfully recaptured the plunder and the people.

SHEMED A descendant of Benjamin through Elpaal (1 Chron. 8:12). He "built Ono and Lod with its surrounding villages." These cities lay about five miles apart on the Mediterranean coastal plain. Some ancient manuscripts spell the name as "Shemer."

SHEMER **(1)** The man who sold a hill in north central Israel to King Omri. The hill, located seven miles northwest of Shechem, became Israel's new capital. Omri named the city "Samaria" after the seller (1 Kings 16:24), perhaps as a condition of sale. **(2)** A Levite and a descendant of Merari (1 Chron. 6:46). **(3)** A descendant of Asher (1 Chron. 7:34), also called "Shomer" (7:32).

The remains of the palace of King Ahab, Omri's son, in the city of Samaria, built on the hill that was purchased from Shemer

SHEMIDA A descendant of Gilead from the tribe of Manasseh and the ancestor of the Shemidaites (Num. 26:32; Josh. 17:2; 1 Chron. 7:19).

SHEMIDAITES A clan descended from Shemida, a Gileadite from the tribe of Manasseh counted at the second census in the wilderness (Num. 26:32).

SHEMINITH A musical term whose meaning is debated (1 Chron. 15:21; Pss. 6:1; 12:1). Some have argued that it refers to the bass tones of a male voice in contrast to the soprano tones of a female voice, referenced by the term "alamoth." Others have argued that it refers to the musical scale or possibly to an eight-stringed instrument. This term was translated in earlier times as "for the eighth," supporting neither argument decisively.

SHEMIRAMOTH **(1)** One of the Levites during the time of David appointed to play the harp (1 Chron. 15:18, 20; 16:5). **(2)** One of the Levites appointed by Jehoshaphat to teach the law in the cities of Judah (2 Chron. 17:8).

SHEMUEL The more phonetic rendering of the Hebrew name usually translated as "Samuel" (following the LXX), meaning "God heard." Like the NIV, many versions use this transcription for Ammihud's son Shemuel, who was the representative of the tribe of Simeon among those enlisted by Moses to assign grants of land in Canaan (Num. 34:20).

SHEN Samuel set up a remembrance stone to God between Shen and Mizpah and named it "Ebenezer" (1 Sam. 7:12). This is the only place Shen is mentioned, most likely in reference to a rocky outcropping resembling "teeth," as the name implies.

SHENAZAR *See* Shenazzar.

SHENAZZAR Listed as a descendant of King Jehoiachin of Judah, before the king was carried off into Babylonian exile in 597 BC (1 Chron. 3:18). Attempts to identify him with Sheshbazzar, later governor of Judah (Ezra 1:8, 11; 5:14, 16), are mistaken. *See also* Sheshbazzar.

SHENIR *See* Senir.

SHEOL In the OT, an underworld place to which all were destined after death. The Hebrew word *she'ol* is generally translated as "the grave" in modern versions of the Bible, including the NIV. Sheol appears in the OT most frequently in songs and prayers (David's song [2 Sam. 22:6]; Hannah's prayer [1 Sam. 2:6]; many references in Psalms), as well as in the wisdom books of Job and Proverbs. The ancient Israelites visualized the cosmos as comprised of three distinct realms: heaven, the realm of the divine; earth, the realm of humanity and God's creation; and Sheol, a place underneath the earth and the seas, the realm of the dead (Job 11:8; 26:5–7).

THE REALM OF THE DEAD

In the OT, Sheol is not a place of judgment or of God's wrath, but rather a realm that harbored those who had died. Sheol was the great equalizer in the OT, as it was thought to be inhabited not only by the masses, but also by the rich and powerful (Job 3:19; Isa. 5:14; 14:9, 11), the bravest of warriors (Ezek. 32:21), the righteous (Gen. 37:35; Isa. 38:10; Ps. 30:3, 9), the wicked (Num. 16:30, 33), indeed everyone (Ps. 89:48; Eccles. 9:10). Although Sheol itself is not a place of judgment, it is connected to God's wrath in the OT. The consequence of God's wrathful judgment is frequently an early descent into Sheol (Num. 16:30; 1 Kings 2:6; Job 24:19; Ps. 31:17; Isa. 38:10; Ezek. 31:17). Premature death is the result of God's wrath and judgment in the OT, not the descent into Sheol, which itself is inevitable.

Descriptions of Sheol do not occur in third-person narratives or in legal material, but are found only in first-person speeches throughout the OT. Moreover, Sheol is never described in full detail but is referred to only occasionally. Similar to depictions in other ancient Near Eastern cultures, descriptions of Sheol in biblical texts locate it in the farthest depths beneath the earth (Job 11:8; 26:6–13; Ps. 139:8) and the seas (Ezek. 31:15; Jon. 2:4), as contrasted with the heavens above. Sheol is portrayed as a watery underworld (Ps. 69:1–2, 13–15; Jon. 2:6), a place of darkness (Job 17:13;

Ps. 88:3, 6, 12), of silence (Pss. 6:5; 31:17; Isa. 38:18), with gates at its entrance (Isa. 38:10; Jon. 2:7). By contrast, Sheol is also portrayed as a place of peace (1 Kings 2:6; Job 21:13), a place where greetings and conversations might take place (Isa. 14:9), where one would be reunited with a loved one who had already died (Gen. 37:35).

Sheol is a place where the fullness of joy in life no longer abides, for one cannot praise God in Sheol (Ps. 6:5; Isa. 38:18–19). Indeed, the book of Ecclesiastes encourages readers, “Eat your food with gladness. . . . Enjoy life with your wife, whom you love. . . . For in the realm of the dead [Sheol] . . . there is neither working nor planning nor knowledge nor wisdom” (9:7–10). In a similar manner, the book of Sirach in the Apocrypha states that one must fully enjoy one’s earthly life, for no pleasures are to be found in Sheol (14:16). Job, however, views Sheol as a positive alternative to his tragedies, and he imagines Sheol to be a peaceful place where earthly struggles give way to rest, even for the wicked (Job 3:1–19).

Sheol often is personified along with the figure of Death, particularly in the prophetic literature and Proverbs. Portrayals of Sheol generally are synonymous with those of Death and match iconographic representations of the god Death (Motu) in the ancient Near East. Sheol is portrayed as a monster with formidably large jaws (Isa. 5:14) and clutching hands (Ps. 89:48; Hos. 13:14), employing plagues and scourges to slay its victims (Hos. 13:14), as well as snares and traps (2 Sam. 22:6; Ps. 116:3) to feed its insatiable appetite (Prov. 1:12; 27:20; 30:16; Song 8:6; Hab. 2:5).

Sheol is not, however, a place outside the authority and power of Yahweh. Indeed, it is a place that is open to God’s vision (Job 26:6) and within the reach of God’s hand (Amos 9:2). The realm of Sheol is under the purview of God’s authority, and those who dwell there are not separated from God’s presence: “If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths [Sheol], you are there” (Ps. 139:8). Yet the OT maintains that one’s life of faith in God is altered in Sheol. According to Ps. 6:5, “Among the dead no one proclaims your name. Who praises you from the grave [Sheol]?” And, indeed, “those who go down to the pit cannot hope for your faithfulness” (Isa. 38:18). These texts imply that although Yahweh’s presence remains with those who dwell in Sheol, the dead are unable to respond to God in praise and trust as they did in life.

THE AFTERLIFE AND RESURRECTION

Belief in the afterlife was common in the ancient Near East. Thus, it is remarkable that the OT is so restrained in the hope that it offers for life after death. Most OT texts affirm that no one returns from Sheol (Job 7:9; Isa. 38:10, 18; cf. Sir. 48:5). Yet the question remains open. God’s limitless sovereignty is acknowledged in the prayer of Hannah: “The LORD brings death and makes alive; he brings down to the grave [Sheol] and raises up” (1 Sam. 2:6). Thus, Yahweh has the power to raise people up from Sheol, but whether he will choose to do so is a question unanswered in the OT.

Hints of resurrection from the grave can be found in the metaphoric use of Sheol in the psalms and the prophetic literature to represent dire struggle and sin from which the psalmist or Israel receives healing and deliverance: “I will deliver this people from the power of the grave [Sheol]; I will redeem them from death. Where, O death, are your plagues? Where, O grave [Sheol], is your destruction?” (Hos. 13:14 [see also Job 14:13; Pss. 16:10–11; 30:2–3; 49:13–15; 86:13; Jon. 2:3]). However, it is unclear whether these texts portray salvation after descent into Sheol has already taken place or, rather, Yahweh’s deliverance experienced as a protection from descending into Sheol in the first place. Stronger hints at a bodily resurrection come from the narratives in which the prayers of Elijah and Elisha result in a resurrection from the dead (1 Kings 17:17–24; 2 Kings 4:17–37).

When the OT was translated into Greek for Hellenized Jewish readers, “Sheol” was translated as

"Hades," importing a similar Greek concept of the underworld into the biblical text. The NT uses the words "Hades" and "hell" interchangeably; however, the distinction between the grave and hell is maintained. The grave is simply a place to which all are destined, as was Sheol. Thus, it is not until the NT that firm conceptualizations of a place for eternal punishment, as well as a place of eternal reward, emerge. Jewish literature written between the OT and the NT demonstrates a stronger hope in the resurrection, yet these texts largely parallel the OT usage of Sheol as simply an underworld abode of the dead. It is not until the coming of Christ that the resurrection from the dead transforms from a glimmer of hope to a resplendent promise in the Bible.

SHEPHAM A border town on the eastern side of the promised land (Num. 34:10). Its exact location is uncertain.

SHEPHATIAH **(1)** The fifth of six sons born to David while he reigned from Hebron (2 Sam. 3:4; 1 Chron. 3:3). His mother was Abital. **(2)** A Benjamite who deserted from Saul to David in the period before David became king (1 Chron. 12:5). **(3)** The son of Maakah, he was a tribal officer representing Simeon during the time of David (1 Chron. 27:16). **(4)** One of the sons of King Jehoshaphat who received valuable gifts when their father died. It was their brother Jehoram, however, who inherited the kingship (2 Chron. 21:2). **(5)** The son of Mattan who, along with three others, conspired to throw Jeremiah into a cistern (Jer. 38:1). **(6)** The father of Meshullam, who returned to Jerusalem with Sheshbazzar after the exile (1 Chron. 9:8). **(7)** The head of a clan that was part of the early return to Judah from Babylonian captivity in 539 BC or soon after (Ezra 2:4; Neh. 7:9). **(8)** An ancestor of a family that belonged to the "servants of Solomon" (Ezra 2:57; Neh. 7:59) and that returned with Zerubbabel in 539 BC or soon after. Little is known about this group except that they likely performed menial functions at the temple, since they are grouped with the "temple servants" (*see* Nethinim). The name of the group suggests that they were formed during the period of Solomon, although they could have been so named because Solomon had the first temple built. **(9)** An ancestor of Athaiah from Judah who resettled Jerusalem at the time of Ezra and Nehemiah (Neh. 11:4).

SHEPHELAH The Hebrew word *shepelah,* translated "lowland" or "foothills," generally refers to the low hills immediately west of the Judean hill country, although on two occasions it indicates similar topographical features in proximity to the hills of western Galilee (Josh. 11:2, 16). The region functioned as a buffer zone between the secure location in the hill country and the foreign powers on the coastal plain. The Shephelah of Judah is cut through by five east-west valleys that provide access into the interior. Four of these valleys, Aijalon, Sorek, Elah, and Lachish, figured prominently in significant confrontations in the history of Israel.

The Shephelah

SHEPHER A mountain at which the Israelites encamped during their wilderness wanderings (Num. 33:23–24 [KJV: “Shapher”]). It appears between Kehelathah and Haradah in the list of sites visited, but its location is unknown.

SHEPHERD Shepherds were pastoralists who herded sheep and goats for meat, milk, clothing, and sacrifices. Shepherding was an integral part of life and a potent symbol in Israelite culture, reflected in biblical portrayals of Abel (Gen. 4:2), Moses (Exod. 3:1), David (1 Sam. 16:11), and Jesus (Luke 2:8–20; John 10:11, 14).

A shepherd could herd his or her own flock (Gen. 30:37–43). Sons (Gen. 37:2), daughters (Gen. 29:6, 9), or hirelings (Gen. 13:7; 1 Sam. 25:7; Luke 17:7) could assume the task. As agriculture developed and crops were cultivated, shepherds became marginalized (note that it was the youngest son of Jesse, David, who tended the sheep [1 Sam. 16:11–13]) and even despised (Gen. 46:34). Shepherds could live in villages, daily herding their flock to and from nearby arable land (Gen. 29:7–14). Once all the grazing land had been consumed, shepherds led the flock to pastureland far enough from town to prohibit daily returns. They would then live a seminomadic existence, wandering when new grazing land and water were needed (Gen. 37:12; cf. Isa. 13:20). Shepherds constructed makeshift enclosures out of available materials (stones, brush) or used a cave and remained with the flock throughout the night (Gen. 31:40; Song 1:8; Luke 2:8).

A shepherd’s tools included a clublike rod used to guard the flock and fend off predators and thieves (Gen. 31:39; Isa. 31:4; Mic. 7:14) and as a tool for dividing the flock (Lev. 27:32; Jer. 33:13); a crook or staff to retrieve strays and injured (Ezek. 34:16; Zech. 11:7); a sling and some sort of pouch (1 Sam. 17:40); and even dogs (Job 30:1). A shepherd was held accountable for any losses in the flock and was required to pay restitution (Gen. 31:39; Exod. 22:10–13).

The vital role of shepherding in ancient Near Eastern culture naturally led to the metaphorical use of the term to refer to both civil authorities (Num. 27:17; 1 Kings 22:17; Isa. 44:28; Ezek. 34:1–19) and deity (Gen. 48:15; 49:24; Pss. 23:1; 78:52), both in Israel and among its neighbors. Both the exodus (Exod. 15:13, 17; Ps. 78:52–55, 71–72) and the return from Babylonian exile (Ps. 44:11–23; Jer. 23:1–8; 31:8–14) are portrayed in pastoral terms as Yahweh shepherding his people to safe pasture. In the NT, Jesus called himself the “good shepherd” (John 10:1–16), and the metaphor is extended to church leaders who are to imitate the good shepherd in their provision and protection of God’s people (Acts 20:28; 1 Pet. 5:1–3).

SHEPHI *See* Shepho.

SHEPHO The fourth of the five sons of Shobal, an early Edomite leader (Gen. 36:23). In some Bible versions (e.g., KJV, NASB, NRSV), he is called “Shephi” in 1 Chron. 1:40.

SHEPHUPHAM A descendant of Benjamin and the ancestor of the Shuphamite clan (Num. 26:39). A few Hebrew manuscripts give his name as “Shupham” (so the NIV), which is followed by the Samaritan Pentateuch and the Latin Vulgate. *See also* Shupham, Shuphamites.

SHEPHUPHAN *See* Shephupham.

SHERAH *See* Sheerah.

SHERD *See* Shard.

SHEREBIAH **(1)** A Levite sent to accompany Ezra (Ezra 8:18). Sherebiah was one of twelve men entrusted with carrying temple treasure to Jerusalem (8:24). This may be the same person listed in Neh. 10:12 and 12:24. The Sherebiah contemporary with Ezra who assisted with the interpretation of the law (Neh. 8:7) and with public worship (Neh. 9:4–5) is also likely the same person mentioned in Ezra 8:18. **(2)** A Levite who returned with Zerubbabel (Neh. 12:8).

SHERESH The son of Makir and Maakah and a grandson of Manasseh (1 Chron. 7:16).

SHEREZER *See* Sharezer.

SHESHACH *See* Sheshak.

SHESHAI One of three Anakite leaders (with Ahiman and Talmai), mentioned first in the account of the Israelite spies’ mission to the promised land in the region around the city of Hebron (Num. 13:22). One of the spies, Caleb, drove them out of the region (Josh. 15:14). However, they must have repossessed the area because they are also described as having been driven from the area by the men of Judah after the death of Joshua (Judg. 1:10).

SHESHAK A coded name for Babylon occurring only in Jer. 25:26; 51:41. The word results from a simple substitution scheme, called *atbash*, whereby the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet is replaced by the last letter, the second letter with the next-to-last letter, and so forth.

SHESHAN The son of Ishi and the father of Ahlai, his daughter (1 Chron. 2:34–35). He is listed in Judah’s genealogy (1 Chron. 2:31) among the descendants of Jerahmeel.

SHESHBAZZAR An early leader of the postexilic community who returned from Babylonian captivity to Jerusalem soon after Cyrus the Persian issued a decree that allowed them to go back (c. 539 BC). Though Jewish, he had a Persian name. He was commissioned by Cyrus to bring the temple vessels taken by Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. 1:2) back to Jerusalem and to rebuild the temple (Ezra 1:8, 11). Upon his return, Sheshbazzar oversaw the construction of the foundation of the temple (Ezra 5:16), but then the building stopped for a period of time and the temple was not completely finished until 515 BC.

Ezra 1:8 refers to him as “prince of Judah,” a title that has led to much speculation. However, it is doubtful that he was of the Davidic line (attempts to connect him to Shenazzar of 1 Chron. 3:18 are incorrect). His more precise title was “governor” (Ezra 5:14), appointed by Cyrus over the province of Judah (Yehud).

SHETH A more phonetic English transcription of the Hebrew name otherwise written as “Seth” (based on its transliteration in the LXX). This form is used in Balaam’s speech, which mentions the “people of Sheth” as a poetic parallel to Moab (Num. 24:17; NRSV: “Shethites”).

SHETHAR One of seven top-level officials under King Xerxes (Ahasuerus), who advised him to put away Queen Vashti because of her refusal to obey the king’s command to appear before the banquet (Esther 1:14).

SHETHAR-BOZENAI A Persian officer who attempted to hinder the rebuilding of the temple with Tattenai, the Persian governor of the lands east of the Euphrates (Ezra 5:3, 6; 6:6). Later he was mandated to help with the procurement of supplies for the rebuilding process due to Darius’s decree (Ezra 6:13).

SHETHITES *See* Sheth.

SHEVA **(1)** The secretary of David (2 Sam. 20:25), who is also known as Seraiah (2 Sam. 8:17), Shisha (1 Kings 4:3), and Shavsha (1 Chron. 18:16). **(2)** The father of Makbenah and Gibea and the son of Caleb through his concubine Maakah (1 Chron. 2:49).

SHEWBREAD *See* Bread of the Presence.

SHIBAH A well dug by Isaac’s servants (Gen. 26:33). Its name (“oath” or “seven”) and that of its town, Beersheba (“well of the oath” or “well of the seven”), commemorated an oath (cf. Gen. 21:31; 26:26–33).

SHIBBOLETH The Hebrew word used by Jephthah’s forces in Judg. 12:6 to identify escaping Ephraimite troops, who would pronounce it as “Sibboleth.” The meaning of the word is uncertain and probably irrelevant to the events recounted in Judg. 12, but it may mean “ear of corn” or “flowing water.”

SHIBMAH *See* Sibmah.

SHICRON *See* Shikkeron.

SHIGGAION One of the classifications in the superscriptions of the psalms, appearing only in Ps. 7 (cf. Hab. 3:1). Its meaning is uncertain. The root meaning seems to relate to “wandering” or “ranging.” Musically, this could mean that the tune went up and down the scale. It has also been interpreted to mean “fervent,” suggesting a passionate lament. *See also* Shigionoth.

SHIGIONOTH A word found in the heading to Habakkuk’s prayer (Hab. 3:1), in the place where a stylistic comment might occur in the title of a psalm. Its meaning is uncertain, but it seems to be a plural of “Shiggaion” (cf. Ps. 7 superscription). It perhaps indicates the literary genre of the prayer or a musical style to be used in singing it. *See also* Shiggaion.

SHIHOR A river that forms part of the boundary between the promised land and Egypt (Josh. 13:3; 1 Chron. 13:5). It is now connected with the Wadi el-’Arish, which forms the southern border of what was Canaan. In those cases where “Shihor” appears to be in reference to the Nile (Isa. 23:3; Jer. 2:18), it has been argued that the Wadi el-’Arish was once connected to the Nile and serves as the first sweet, freshwater that a traveler would come to en route to Egypt.

SHIHOR LIBNATH A river that marks a border for Asher (Josh. 19:26), which must be south of Carmel. “Shihor” is a designation for a river, and there is some speculation that it could indicate that there were crocodiles within the waters, much like the Nile. It is most commonly argued to be the current Nahr Zerka, which empties its waters into the Mediterranean.

SHIKKERON A boundary marker on the northern boundary of Judah toward its western edge (Josh. 15:11 [KJV: “Shicron”]). It existed between Ekron and Jabneel.

SHILHI The maternal grandfather of King Jehoshaphat (1 Kings 22:42).

SHILHIM A town in the southern part of the tribe of Judah (Josh. 15:32).

SHILLEM The fourth of Naphtali’s four sons (Gen. 46:24). In most Hebrew manuscripts of 1 Chron. 7:13 he is called “Shallum.”

SHILLEMITE A clan descended from Shillem and mentioned as counted in the second census in the wilderness (Num. 26:49).

SHILOAH, WATERS OF Probably the Siloam aqueduct, which passed southward from the Gihon Spring along the western slope of the Kidron Valley and provided water for irrigation. Preparing for military siege, Hezekiah dug an underground tunnel to redirect parts of it to the Pool of Siloam (2 Kings 20:20). In Isa. 8:6–8 “waters of Shiloah” is a metaphor for God’s presence and blessing for his people, which they rejected; as a result, the “mighty floodwaters of the Euphrates,” representing Assyria’s power, would sweep over and inundate Judah.

SHILOH Protected in the hill country of Ephraim, Shiloh was a secure location for the tabernacle and the ark of the covenant in the early centuries of Israel's presence in the land. Judges 21:19 gives a remarkably precise location for Shiloh. It was "north of Bethel, east of the road that goes from Bethel to Shechem, and south of Lebonah." This means that it was centrally located in the hill country just off the internal north-south ridge route.

The tell of Shiloh

The Israelites established their worship center at Shiloh after the conquest of the land (Josh. 18:1), and it was there that the assembly gathered in order to apportion the rest of the tribal allotments after Judah's apportionment (18:8–10). When the tribes west of the Jordan faced the possibility of war with the two and one-half tribes that had returned to Transjordan, Shiloh was the central meeting place (Josh. 22:9–12). The "house of God" continued to be at Shiloh during the period of the judges (Judg. 18:31), and annual festivities were celebrated there (21:19–21).

The apparatus of the cult was in place at Shiloh when Eli was the high priest. Elkanah brought his two wives, Hannah and Peninnah, to Shiloh to worship each year. When Samuel was born to Hannah, she dedicated him to God at Shiloh (1 Sam. 1). Because Eli's sons abused their privileges as priests (1 Sam. 2:14), God told Samuel that he would remove the priesthood from Eli's family. That word is affirmed in 1 Kings 2:27: "So Solomon removed Abiathar from the priesthood of the LORD, fulfilling the word the LORD had spoken at Shiloh about the house of Eli." God "continued to appear at Shiloh, and there he revealed himself to Samuel through his word" (1 Sam. 3:21).

When the Philistines were encamped at Aphek on the coastal plain, the Israelites engaged them in battle and lost. Viewing the ark of God as a magic box, the Israelites took it from Shiloh out to the battle, abusing the sanctity of that symbol. The ark was captured, and a man of the tribe of Benjamin ran uphill from Aphek through the rugged Shiloh wadi system and arrived at Shiloh to announce the news (1 Sam. 4:12).

Although it is uncertain when the sanctuary at Shiloh was destroyed, it was likely by the Philistines as they later encroached well into Israelite territory (1 Sam. 13). Nevertheless, Shiloh remained a significant location. As the northern kingdom broke away from the south, Ahijah from Shiloh prophesied to Jeroboam son of Nebat (1 Kings 11:29–40) and later addressed Jeroboam's wife (1 Kings 14:2–4). Jeremiah reminded the inhabitants of Jerusalem that God destroyed Shiloh, the first dwelling place for his name in the land, because of the wickedness of Israel and would do the same again to the temple in Jerusalem (Jer. 7:12–14; 26:6–9). Even the psalmist noted the tragedy: "He abandoned the tabernacle of Shiloh" (Ps. 78:60).

SHILONI In Neh. 11:5 the KJV renders the Hebrew phrase *ben-hashiloni* as "son of Shiloni," which likely refers, as in the NIV rendering, to the descendants of the patriarch Judah's son Shelah (see Num. 26:20).

SHILONITE A person from or associated with Shiloh or the Shiloh shrine. Ahijah, the prophet who predicted Jeroboam's removal of ten tribes from the monarchy and the death of Jeroboam's son Abijah, was a Shilonite (1 Kings 12:15; 15:29; 2 Chron. 9:29; 10:15). In 1 Chron. 9:5, most English versions follow the Hebrew in listing Asaiah and his sons as Shilonites, although the NIV interprets this as "Shelanites" (cf. Num. 26:20).

SHILSHAH The ninth of the eleven sons of Zophah, from the tribe of Asher (1 Chron. 7:37).

SHIMEA **(1)** The third son of Jesse and brother to David (1 Chron. 2:13). He fathered Jonadab (2 Sam. 13:3, 32) and Jonathan (1 Chron. 20:7). He is also called "Shimeah" (2 Sam. 21:21) and "Shammah" (1 Sam. 17:13). **(2)** A variant of the name for one of David's sons, Shammua (1 Chron. 3:5; see NIV mg.). **(3)** A descendant of Merari the Levite (1 Chron. 6:30). **(4)** A grandfather of Asaph, a Levite temple musician appointed by David who served with Heman (1 Chron. 6:39).

SHIMEAH *See* Shimea; Shimeam.

SHIMEAM The son of Mikloth in the family line of Saul (1 Chron. 9:38). In 1 Chron. 8:32 he is called "Shimeah."

SHIMEATH The Ammonite mother of one of the assassins of King Joash (2 Kings 12:21; 2 Chron. 24:26). The name of this assassin appears as "Jozabad" in 2 Kings 12:21, but as "Zabad" in 2 Chron. 24:26.

SHIMEATHITES Descendants of Salma, in the line of Caleb, mentioned only in 1 Chron. 2:55 and of unknown origins. Some scholars have suggested some sort of musical or cultic function behind the name.

SHIMEI **(1)** A Benjamite and the son of Gera, Shimei cursed David in the name of the Lord near Bahurim during David's flight from Jerusalem (2 Sam. 16:5–14). David twice refused to have Shimei executed, first at the time of the curse and then later at David's reinstallment as king (19:23). Although David had promised Shimei with an oath that he would live, in his final days David instructed Solomon to kill Shimei. King Solomon offered Shimei a life sentence in Jerusalem, with death the punishment for leaving. Shimei later left and was killed (1 Kings 2:36–46).

(2) A son of Gershon and the head of a Gershonite clan (Exod. 6:17; Num. 3:18). **(3)** The son of Ela, Solomon's official in Benjamin (1 Kings 4:18). **(4)** The second son of Pedaiah (1 Chron. 3:19), he was a grandson of King Jehoiachin. **(5)** The third son of Mishma, a descendant of Simeon (1 Chron. 4:26). **(6)** The third of the seven sons of Joel, a Reubenite (1 Chron. 5:4). **(7)** The third of the seven sons of Merari, a Levite (1 Chron. 6:29). **(8)** The son of Jahath, he was an ancestor of the temple musician Asaph (1 Chron. 6:42). **(9)** The fourth of the six sons of Jeduthun, who served under him as musician-prophets (1 Chron. 25:3). **(10)** The Ramathite in charge of David's vineyards (1 Chron. 27:27).

(11) He assisted his brother Konaniah, who was the supervisor of contributions, tithes, and gifts to the temple during the reign of Hezekiah (2 Chron. 31:12). **(12, 13, 14)** Three returned exiles who had married foreign women and pledged to divorce them (Ezra 10:23, 33, 38). **(15)** The son of Kish and a grandfather of Mordecai (Esther 2:5).

SHIMEITES A priestly clan descended from Shimei (Num. 3:21; Zech. 12:13).

SHIMEON A descendant of Harim, he is listed among the returning exilic priests who were guilty of intermarriage with foreigners and were required to divorce their wives (Ezra 10:31).

SHIMHI, SHIMI *See* Shimei.

SHIMITE *See* Shimeites.

SHIMMA *See* Shimea.

SHIMON A man with four sons in the genealogy of Judah (1 Chron. 4:20).

SHIMRATH The ninth of the nine sons of Shimei, of the tribe of Benjamin (1 Chron. 8:21).

SHIMRI **(1)** An ancestor of Ziza (1 Chron. 4:37). **(2)** The father of Jediael, one of David's mighty warriors (1 Chron. 11:45). **(3)** One of the thirteen sons of Hosah the Merarite, appointed as gatekeepers in Jerusalem (1 Chron. 26:10). **(4)** A Levite who helped to consecrate the temple during Hezekiah's time (2 Chron. 29:13).

SHIMRITH The Moabite mother of Jehozabad, one of King Joash's assassins (2 Chron. 24:26). In 2 Kings 12:21 Jehozabad is said to be the son of "Shomer," a variant of the name "Shimrith" without the feminine ending.

SHIMRON **(1)** One of four sons of Issachar and a grandson of Jacob (Gen. 46:13; 1 Chron. 7:1). He was the eponymous head of the Shimronite family (Num. 26:24). **(2)** A Canaanite city. Its king joined other Canaanite city-kings assembled by King Jabin of Hazor against the Israelites under Joshua (Josh. 11:1). It was later allotted to the tribe of Zebulun (Josh. 19:15). The site has been identified with Tell Simuniya, located about seven miles west of Nazareth. Its name appears in the Egyptian Execration texts. It is mentioned on a papyrus that lists the Palestinian towns during the reign of Thutmose III in the Egyptian New Kingdom period.

SHIMRONITES Descendants of Shimron who are counted in the second census in the wilderness (Num. 26:24).

SHIMRON MERON One of the thirty-one Canaanite cities defeated by Joshua (Josh. 12:20). In Josh. 11:1 only Shimron is mentioned. “Shimron-Meron” might be the full name for Shimron. However, the LXX lists Shimron and Meron as two distinct towns in Josh. 12:20 and emends “Madon” to “Meron” in Josh. 11:1.

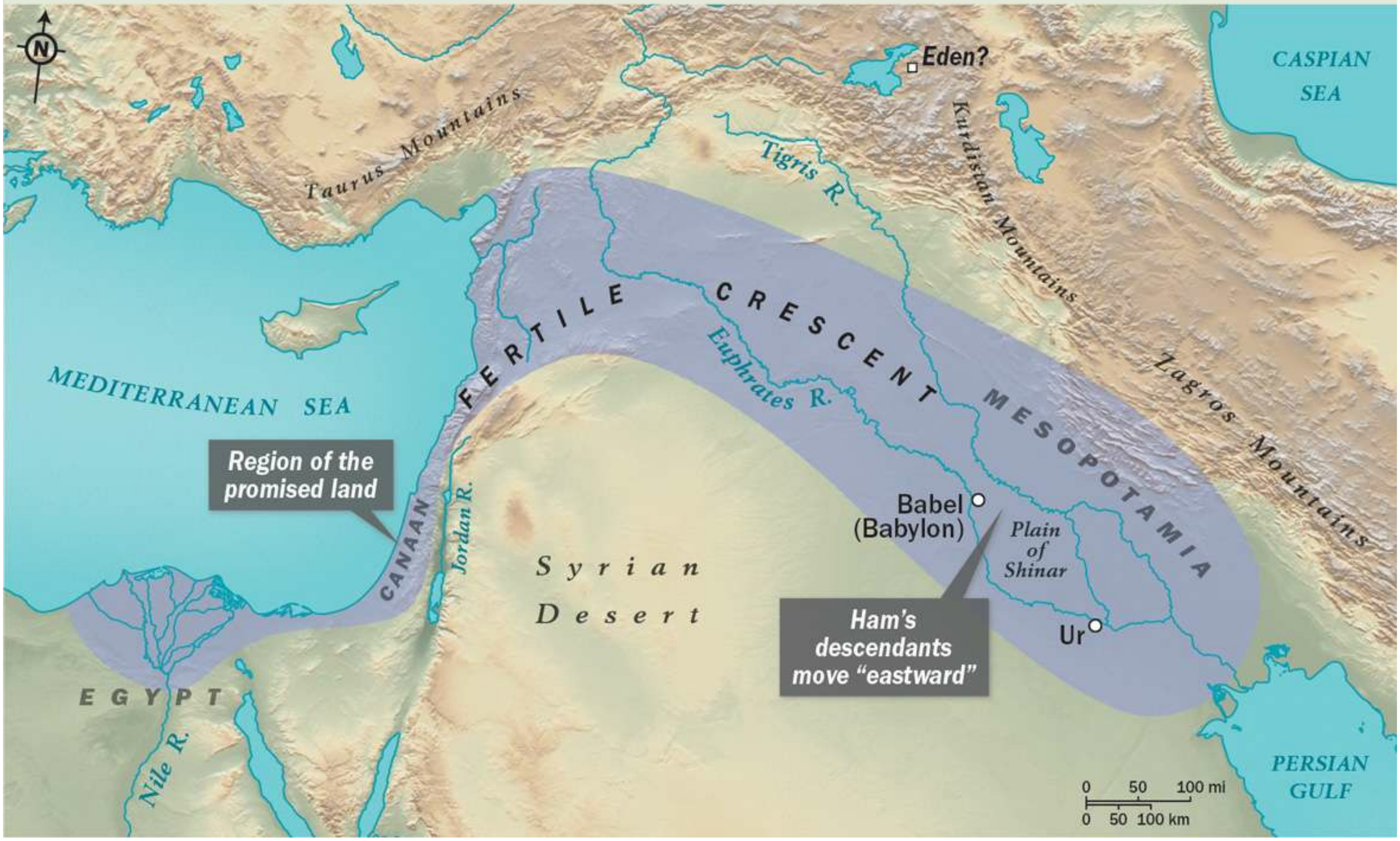
SHIMSHAI A Persian scribe living in Samaria during the reign of Artaxerxes I (Ezra 4:8–9, 17, 23). Along with the Persian official Rehum, he sent a letter warning Artaxerxes that allowing the rebuilding of Jerusalem would cultivate rebellion. Artaxerxes replied, ordering reconstruction there to cease (Ezra 4:18–22).

SHINAB The king of Admah during the time of Abraham (Gen. 14:2). He was one of five Canaanite kings who formed an alliance against a coalition of four Near Eastern kings. Besides taking plunder, the coalition kidnapped people, including Lot, Abraham’s nephew. Abraham successfully recaptured the plunder and the people.

SHINAR, PLAIN OF The Plain of Shinar was the site of the tower of Babel. According to Genesis, people settled here after they moved “eastward” (Gen. 11:2 [or perhaps “from the east” or “in the east”]). The identification of Shinar as Babylonia (so the NIV footnote at 11:2) makes it probable that this phrase is better rendered “eastward” (NIV) or “to the east” (NLT). After the immigrants settled, they began to build a tower that would help them not “be scattered over the face of the whole earth” (11:4). When God confused their language, they were indeed scattered (11:9).

The Plain of Shinar, then, was the epicenter of postdiluvian civilization, the point from which the various people groups migrated outward with their distinct languages. This picture of the dispersion of civilization from southern Mesopotamia is similar to secular models that propose that recorded history started with the Sumerian people and language.

THE PLAIN OF SHINAR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Eden?
CASPIAN SEA
Taurus Mountains
Tigris R.
Kurdistan Mountains
FERTILE CRESCENT
Euphrates R.
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
Zagros Mountains
MESOPOTAMIA
Region of the promised land
CANAAN
Jordan R.
Babel (Babylon)
Plain of Shinar
Syrian Desert
Ham's descendants move "eastward"
Ur
EGYPT
Nile R.
PERSIAN GULF
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SHION A town in Issachar (Josh. 19:19). It is reported by early authorities to be near Mount Tabor.

SHIPHI The father of Ziza, from the tribe of Simeon (1 Chron. 4:37).

SHIPHMITE The native designation of Zabdi (1 Chron. 27:27), whom David put in charge of the wine cellars. It is most likely a reference to the town of Shepham, which probably was a hill town on the eastern border of Judah.

SHIPHRAH One of the two Hebrew midwives (the other being Puah) who refused to heed the command of the king of Egypt to execute all male children upon their birth (Exod. 1:15–22). Consequently, the Hebrew population increased, and she was blessed because she feared God.

SHIPHTAN The father of Kemuel, who was the representative from the tribe of Ephraim among those chosen by Moses to assign grants of land in Canaan (Num. 34:24).

SHIPMASTER *See* Ships, Sailors, and Navigation.

SHIPS, SAILORS, AND NAVIGATION

Old Testament

Phoenicians and Philistines. As a people whose ancestral territory lay in the landlocked and timber-poor highlands of Ephraim and Judah, the Israelites of biblical times never achieved prominence in seafaring or shipbuilding. Instead, they relied for their maritime enterprises on alliances with their coastal neighbors, particularly the Phoenician states to the north of Israel, who excelled in seafaring and had access to the abundant timber forests of Lebanon. The Phoenicians (the Punics of classical antiquity) were famous in antiquity for their seafaring. In biblical times, they traded heavily between Syria-Palestine and Egypt and also sailed throughout the Mediterranean, establishing colonies as far away as Tunisia (Carthage) and Spain (Cadiz).

Another seagoing people prominent in the OT were the Philistines, whose base of power was to the west of Judah, along the Mediterranean coast. The Bible associates the Philistines with the five cities of Ashdod, Ashkelon, Ekron, Gath, and Gaza. The Philistines were among the Sea Peoples, who came to the Levant from the Aegean beginning in the twelfth century BC (Amos 9:7; Jer. 47:4).

The perennial enmity between the Philistines and the Israelites precluded joint maritime ventures of the sort shared by Israel and the Phoenicians, and the Bible does not describe Philistine maritime activities in any depth. Nevertheless, the seagoing nature of the Philistines is reflected by the fact that their settlements remained confined to the coastal region. They never made a systematic attempt to take over the traditionally Israelite and Judahite highlands. When they did venture into the Judean mountains, it was to assert a military and political presence among the agrarian Israelites and Judahites rather than to establish permanent settlements and Philistine population centers. Twelfth-century BC reliefs at Medinet Habu (in the mortuary temple of Ramesses III) depict a naval battle between the Sea Peoples and the Egyptians. The reliefs include pictures of Philistine ships and sailors.

Israelite seafaring. One of the rare references to Israelite seafaring describes the Danites and the Asherites in connection with ships and harbors (Judg. 5:17; see also Ezek. 27:19). Traditional Danite territory overlapped with the area of Philistine settlement. Asherite territory overlapped substantially with Phoenician territory. It is possible that Judg. 5:17 refers to the fact that the Danites and the Asherites worked in the port cities serving Philistine and Phoenician shipping. In another passage, Zebulun is associated with ports (Gen. 49:13). It is noteworthy that the Israelite coast between Jaffa and Dor (roughly between Philistia and Phoenicia) does not have an abundance of natural harbors. Later, Herod the Great would build the artificial harbor at Caesarea in the first century BC. The great expense of such a project—including the construction of over 2,500 feet of breakwaters made of underwater concrete, mostly imported from Italy—suggests the extent of the need for secure harbors in this region.

Solomon’s fleet. The zenith of Israelite seafaring occurred during the reign of Solomon. Solomon built a fleet of ships at “Ezion Geber, which is near Elath in Edom, on the shore of the Red Sea” (1 Kings 9:26). The purpose of these ships was to bring back gold from Ophir (1 Kings 9:28), possibly a location in the Arabian Peninsula, to which a port on the Red Sea would have offered ready access. The story confirms the aforementioned dependence on the Phoenicians in the area of seafaring: although the ships belonged to Solomon, “Hiram [the Phoenician king of Tyre] sent his men—sailors who knew the sea—to serve in the fleet with Solomon’s men” (1 Kings 9:27). The timber for the ships would also have been imported by Israel from Phoenicia (see 1 Kings 9:11). Even at the height of its power, Israel lacked the human resources to embark on sea voyages independently of the Phoenicians.

The success of Solomon’s project, of course, depended not only on warm relations with the Phoenicians but also on territorial control of the historically Edomite lands between Judah and the

Red Sea. This favorable combination of conditions would come and go throughout the biblical period, and with it, Israel's modest presence on the seas. From the Phoenician point of view, cooperation with Israel was an essential component of gaining access to a Red Sea port, and with it to the products of Arabia, the Horn of Africa, and India. The Phoenicians, as expansive as their travel was in the Mediterranean, could never independently control the long overland route from Phoenicia to the Red Sea, since it ran through the territory of Israel and Edom. Their best hope was a friendly and powerful Israelite ally. This explains the cordial relationship and why Hiram sent not only his sailors to serve Solomon but also craftsmen and supplies for the construction of the temple (1 Kings 5:10–12). Solomon and Hiram jointly operated "a fleet of trading ships" that would return to port every three years bringing "gold, silver, and ivory, and apes and baboons" (1 Kings 10:22).

Jehoshaphat. In the mid-ninth century BC, King Jehoshaphat of Judah attempted to repeat Solomon's feat of launching a fleet from Ezion Geber (1 Kings 22:48–49; 2 Chron. 20:35–37). According to both accounts, the ships were wrecked before they could set sail. On several other points, however, the two versions of the story disagree in ways that bear on questions of the political and economic conditions of Israelite seafaring.

By this time, Israel and Judah had split into separate kingdoms, with the northern kingdom of Israel being geographically and politically closer to the Phoenicians. The powerful King Ahab of Israel, Jehoshaphat's contemporary through much of his reign, married Jezebel, the daughter of the Sidonian (Phoenician) king Ethbaal (1 Kings 16:31). According to 1 Kings, King Ahaziah of Israel (Ahab's son) proposed to cooperate with Jehoshaphat by sending his own men on the voyage, much as Hiram had assisted Solomon in the previous century. Jehoshaphat rejected the suggestion, possibly indicating a bid for Judean autonomy in an era of northern dominance. According to 2 Chronicles, however, Jehoshaphat did cooperate willingly with Ahaziah, and this was the reason that the ships foundered in port: God punished the righteous Jehoshaphat for too close a relationship with his wicked northern counterpart. In 1 Kings 22:47 it is mentioned that at the time of Jehoshaphat's venture there was no king in Edom. As noted, control of the overland route between Judah and the Red Sea was necessary for the success of any voyage originating from Ezion Geber.

However the contradiction between 1 Kings and 2 Chronicles regarding the involvement of Ahaziah is resolved, both versions of the story highlight the fact that the port at Ezion Geber commanded the interest of the Judeans, the Israelites, and the Phoenicians, and its successful operation probably depended on the cooperation of all three.

Ships of Tarshish. Several biblical texts, including the stories of Solomon and Jehoshaphat, mention "ships of Tarshish" (1 Kings 10:22 NIV mg.). In a number of contexts, such ships are associated with the transportation of metals and metal ores, including iron, lead, tin, gold, and silver (1 Kings 10:22; Ezek. 27:12; Jer. 10:9). The exact derivation of the term "ships of Tarshish" is uncertain, though it is clear from the descriptions of their cargoes that such ships could travel over long distances. As Ezekiel observes, "The ships of Tarshish serve as carriers for your wares. You are filled with heavy cargo as you sail the sea. Your oarsmen take you out to the high seas" (Ezek. 27:25–26).

In the Table of Nations, Tarshish is listed as a descendant of Javan (Gen. 10:4), along with a number of other seafaring peoples of the eastern Mediterranean ("Javan" indicates the peoples of the Aegean and is linguistically equivalent to "Ionia" [see also Ezek. 27:12–22]). Some have suggested, then, that the ships of Tarshish should be associated with Tarsus in southeastern Turkey, an area containing silver mines (also the birthplace of Paul [Acts 9:11]). Others have suggested the Phoenician colony of Tartessus in Spain, another metal-producing area. This location figures in the interpretation of the identification of the destination of Jonah as Tarshish (Jon. 1:3): presumably, if he were avoiding Nineveh and departing from Joppa, he would head toward Spain, in the exact opposite direction, rather than toward Tarsus in Cilicia.

In addition to these two geographical options, some have attempted to explain the expression “ships of Tarshish” as deriving from the Akkadian term for smelting or refining: perhaps the many references to cargoes of metals indicate that the ships were used to transport metal ore to refining centers. Finally, one scholar has proposed that the term is related to the Greek word *tarsos*, meaning “oar.”

Descriptions of ships and seafaring. Ezekiel, in his lament concerning the Phoenician city of Tyre (Ezek. 27), relates a number of details related to Phoenician seafaring. The picture largely confirms the descriptions of how Solomon built and manned his fleet with the assistance of his Tyrian ally. Timber for the construction of the ship came from Lebanon and Cyprus, among other places (vv. 5–6). Sails were made from Egyptian linen (v. 7), and as noted above, the oarsmen and sailors were from the Phoenician city-states (vv. 8–9). Ezekiel goes on to list a large number of ports of call as well as a dazzling variety of cargoes (vv. 12–24). Notably, Ezekiel has the Judahites and the Israelites offering the products of their agrarian economy—“wheat from Minnith and confections, honey, olive oil and balm” (v. 17)—thus filling out the picture of what the Israelites gave in exchange for the precious metals and luxury items imported by their country from elsewhere.

In 1999 archaeologists explored two eighth-century BC Phoenician ships that had sunk thirty miles west of Ashkelon. The ships, each measuring about fifty feet in length, contained large cargoes of wine and were headed either for Egypt or for the Phoenician colonies in the western Mediterranean.

Ships and sailing figure prominently in the story of Jonah, who boarded a ship bound for Tarshish (see discussion above) at Joppa on the Mediterranean coast. In the story we see a number of features of ancient sea travel. Jonah paid a fare for his voyage (Jon. 1:3). Not only the biblical author (see 1:4), but also the presumably non-Israelite sailors, believed that the great storm was the doing of a god, and that it could be calmed by appealing to that god (1:6)—although cargo was thrown overboard for good measure. When Paul was caught in a storm in the first century AD, the same strategies were still in use (Acts 27:38). The religious habits of ancient sailors, particularly their reverence for the gods who controlled the stormy seas and thus held their lives in the balance, are illuminated by the discovery of stone anchors in several temples (presumably left by sailors as offerings), including at the port cities of Ugarit, Kition, and Byblos.

Psalm 107:23–32 speaks of God’s care of sailors from an Israelite perspective. In the psalm, those who “went out on the sea in ships,” the “merchants on the mighty waters” (i.e., the deep, open sea), witness firsthand the works of the God of Israel, which include both the raising and the quieting of the storm. This passage vividly expresses the terror of being caught in a storm and the great relief and gratitude felt by sailors who reached safe haven.

NOAH’S ARK

According to the biblical account, Noah’s ark was 450 feet long, 75 feet wide, and 45 feet high (300 cubits by 50 cubits by 30 cubits [Gen. 6:15]). It had three decks, a roof, and a window. By comparison, the ship of Uta-napishti in the Epic of Gilgamesh is described as having six decks (and thus seven stories), edges of 180 feet (ten dozen cubits) in each dimension, and occupying the space of an acre (a rough approximation of the dimensions given). Both ships are described as providing space for the builder’s family and every living creature. In the Atrahasis Epic, the boat is roofed, but its dimensions are not given.

Because of the character of Gen. 6–8, it is inappropriate to draw conclusions from the story regarding shipbuilding in historical antiquity. According to the specifications given in the biblical text, Noah's ark would have been the largest wooden ship in history, equaled only by the United States schooner *Wyoming*, completed in 1909. While the overall length of the *Wyoming* was also 450 feet, nearly 100 feet of length was accounted for in the fore and aft booms, so that the hull length was only 350 feet. Even with early twentieth-century shipbuilding technology, its extravagant length rendered the *Wyoming* unseaworthy, and the ship foundered in 1924. The largest documented wooden ships of antiquity include the Greek *Syracusia* (third century BC; 180 feet), described by Athenaeus; the Roman *Isis* (second century AD; 180 feet), described by Lucian; Caligula's "Giant Ship" (first century AD; 341 feet), recovered in modern times and possibly corresponding to a ship described by Pliny the Elder; and Ptolemy IV's *Tessarakonteres* (third century BC), reported by Plutarch to have been about 425 feet long. This last ship was not designed for cruising in open water.

NEW TESTAMENT

Fishing in the Sea of Galilee. Several of Jesus' disciples worked as fishermen on the Sea of Galilee, and the Gospels document their use of small boats for fishing and traveling across the sea. Fishing was done with nets thrown both from boats and from the shore (Mark 1:16, 19). The boats used by fishermen on the Sea of Galilee may have been small enough to pull up onto the beach (Luke 5:2), or to be nearly capsized by a large catch of fish (Luke 5:7) or by a violent storm (Mark 4:37). They were large enough to transport several men and even to sleep in (Mark 4:38). Such boats could be rowed or sailed; in Mark 6:48 the disciples had to resort to rowing because of an unfavorable headwind. On one occasion, Jesus stood in a boat to preach to a crowd gathered on the shore (Mark 4:1). The Sea of Galilee is about eight miles wide and thirteen miles long. On several occasions, Jesus traveled by boat across the sea to avoid having to walk long distances around its circumference (e.g., Matt. 9:1; 14:22; 15:39).

In 1986 archaeologists recovered a fishing boat dating to the mid-first century AD on the shore of the Sea of Galilee. The boat had been scuttled near the shore and was preserved under mud. The "Jesus Boat," as it was dubbed, measures twenty-seven feet in length and has a beam seven and a half feet long. Numerous species of wood were used in its construction and repairs throughout its useful life. While there is no evidence to link the boat to Jesus or his disciples, radiometric dating places it in the correct period, and it provides a likely model of the type of boat portrayed in the Gospels.

The remains of a sunken first-century AD fishing boat excavated from the shore of the Sea of Galilee

A second source of information regarding ships and sailing in the NT is the account in Acts of Paul's many sea voyages. As in the case of Jehoshaphat, the Tyrians, Jonah, and Jesus' disciples, Paul learned firsthand the perils of seafaring in small wooden boats: among his many traumas, along with beatings and stonings, he recalled, "Three times I was shipwrecked, I spent a night and a day in the open sea" (2 Cor. 11:25).

Paul's journeys. A survey of Paul's sea travels on his four journeys gives some idea of the routes that could be taken by a paying traveler in the eastern Mediterranean and Aegean.

1. Paul's first missionary journey included voyages from Seleucia in Syria to the port of Salamis in Cyprus (Acts 13:4) and from Cyprus (Paphos) to Perga on the southern coast of Asia Minor (13:13). After journeying through the interior, Paul returned to Attalia, where he embarked for the return trip to Syria, presumably passing again through the port at Salamis (14:26).

2. The second missionary journey began not with a sea voyage but rather with a trek through the interior of Syria and Cilicia, illustrating that although sea travel was by far a more rapid means of travel, the overland routes were by no means impossible (Acts 15:39). Paul would repeat this land route during his third journey (19:1). Sea travel was fast, but when one had plenty of friends along the alternative land route, a sea journey was considerably less enjoyable. It is during the second journey that we have the first recorded accounts of Paul sailing in the Aegean. From Troas in Asia Minor, he sailed the short distance to Macedonia (16:11), putting in midway at the island of Samothrace. Apparently, Paul traveled by sea down the coast from Berea to Athens (17:14). At the conclusion of his second journey, Paul sailed from Corinth to Caesarea, with a stop at Ephesus (18:18–22). Not counting any intervening ports of call not mentioned in the text, this would be the longest single leg of

sea travel so far mentioned.

3. The third missionary journey once more began with a long overland trip from Syria through Asia Minor; by this time, Paul had many associates along the way to visit. Again, he sailed in the Aegean, from Ephesus to Macedonia (Acts 20:1) and back (20:6). At one point, Paul opted to travel overland, from Troas to Assos, while his companions sailed down the coast (20:13). Meeting up with them, he sailed on, hugging the coast of Asia Minor, then sailing south of Cyprus along an open-water route to Tyre. From Tyre, the ship again hugged the Palestinian coast, stopping in several ports before Paul disembarked at Caesarea (21:7). Paul's journeys illustrate the variety of itineraries taken by ships. They were capable of sailing in deep water, but they would also hug the coast when there were reasons to make frequent stops.

4. Paul's fourth journey, which he made in custody on his way to a trial before the emperor at Rome, was to be the most dangerous. From the account in Acts we can glean a number of details of life at sea in the first century AD. The ship bound for Italy was large, and it carried 276 passengers and crew (Acts 27:6, 37), including soldiers and prisoners, at least one companion of a prisoner (Paul's friend Aristarchus [27:2]), a ship's pilot, and the ship's owner (27:11). Sailors used celestial navigation (27:20) and took soundings in shallow water (27:28). We see also that the ship's course could be determined by the direction of the prevailing winds: twice during the journey Paul's ship was forced to sail to the lee of large islands (Cyprus and Crete)—a longer journey, but the only option for a ship that was not rigged to sail close-hauled.

When extended periods of unfavorable weather were forecast, one option was simply to put in at a port until conditions improved, preferably in a harbor that was in the lee of an island (Acts 27:12). We learn something of the measures that were taken in heavy weather, many of which are still used in modern times: ropes were tied around the hull of the ship to prevent it from breaking up in rough seas (27:17), the lifeboat was brought onto the deck and made fast (27:17), sea anchors were deployed to keep the bow of the ship oriented into the oncoming waves (27:7), the rudder was lashed amidships (27:40), valuable cargo and gear were jettisoned (27:19, 38), and, as in the days of Jonah, sailors and passengers prayed for divine deliverance (27:29; see also the protective emblems in 28:11).

When all other means had been exhausted, a ship could be run aground on a sandy beach (Acts 27:39), a measure that would have risked damage to the boat but saved lives. In the case of Paul's ship, the decision to run aground ultimately resulted in the destruction of the ship (27:41).

Metaphors and illustrations. Several NT authors draw illustrations from the nautical world. James likens the harmful power of evil speech to the rudder of a ship: although it is a small device, by it the pilot can control a great ship (James 3:4–5). Elsewhere, he compares the doubting of the unwise person to being lost at sea in a storm (James 1:6; cf. Eph. 4:14). In 1 Tim. 1:19 the loss of faith and good conscience is likened to a shipwreck. Hebrews 6:19 describes the assurance of God's faithfulness as an anchor for the soul.

SHISHA The secretary of David, also known as Seraiah (2 Sam. 8:17), Sheva (2 Sam. 20:25), and Shavsha (1 Chron. 18:16). In 1 Kings 4:3 two sons of Shisha (Elihoreph and Ahijah) are identified as "secretaries" (Heb. *soperim*) among the officials in Solomon's court. Their inclusion in a list of only thirteen officials (including high functionaries of the temple and the army) suggests that these scribes/secretaries had greater responsibilities than simply reading and writing for the king. The fact that they were brothers suggests that their office was hereditary. Shisha himself may have been a scribe before them, paralleling the later scribal family of Shaphan, which appears prominently in several accounts of the seventh and sixth centuries BC.

SHISHAK Shishak was king of Egypt (r. 935–914 BC) during the reigns of Solomon and his son Rehoboam. He gave sanctuary to Solomon’s rebellious servant Jeroboam, who, upon Solomon’s death, became king of the northern tribes (1 Kings 11:40). Not only was Shishak instrumental in stripping away the ten northern tribes from Solomon’s son, but also he stripped away from Rehoboam much of Solomon’s glorious gold and treasure (1 Kings 14:25–26). This was understood by the Chronicler as a direct judgment on Rehoboam because he had forsaken God’s law (2 Chron. 12:2–9). Shishak is there presented as being in command of a vast international force, including Libyans and Ethiopians.

SHITRAI A Sharonite, he is listed among the officials in charge of David’s property as the one in charge of David’s herds grazing in the Plain of Sharon (1 Chron. 27:29). Some manuscripts (and the Jewish reading tradition) give his name as “Shirtai.”

SHITTAH TREE *See* Acacia.

SHITTIM **(1)** A place on the east bank of the Jordan, opposite Jericho (Num. 25:1). The name means “acacias.” At Shittim, although God had just protected them from Balak and Balaam, Israelite men committed immorality and idolatry with foreign women. The resulting judgment ended only when Phinehas killed an Israelite man and a Midianite woman as they lay together (Num. 25). During the rest of Israel’s stay at Shittim, a census was taken of the new generation (Num. 26), and Moses taught the people (Num. 28–Deut. 33). After Moses’ death, Joshua sent spies from Shittim to Jericho (Josh. 2:1). Israel then left Shittim for the promised land (3:1). Centuries later, Micah urged Israel to remember this momentous journey “from Shittim to Gilgal” (Mic. 6:5). **(2)** A valley mentioned in Joel 3:18 NRSV (NIV: “valley of acacias”), probably close to Jerusalem.

SHITTIM WOOD *See* Acacia.

SHIZA The father of Adina, one of David’s elite warriors (1 Chron. 11:42).

SHOA A group of people named in Ezek. 23:23 in conjunction with the Babylonians and the Chaldeans, along with the equally obscure Pekod and Koa. The three names may belong to tribal groups within the Babylonian Empire, and some scholars link Shoa to another group, the Sutians. Since the three names rhyme (long *o* vowel), it is possible that one or more of the names has been made up or distorted to conform to this pattern.

SHOBAB **(1)** The second of Caleb’s three sons with his wife Azubah (1 Chron. 2:18). **(2)** One of the sons born to David while he reigned in Jerusalem (2 Sam. 5:14; 1 Chron. 3:5; 14:4). His mother was Bathsheba.

SHOBACH *See* Shobak.

SHOBAI A priestly gatekeeper at the time of the early postexilic period (Ezra 2:42; Neh. 7:45).

SHOBAK The commander of the army of the Aramean king Hadadezer (2 Sam. 10:16). He led an Aramean force across the Euphrates, at which time David met him in battle at Helam, where Shobak was killed (2 Sam. 10:17–19). In 1 Chron. 19:16, 18 he is called “Shophak.”

SHOBAL **(1)** The second of the seven sons of Seir the Horite, he was a chief and the ancestor of one of the Horite clans (Gen. 36:20; 1 Chron. 1:38). **(2)** A descendant of Caleb and the "father of Kiriath Jearim," perhaps referring to its clans (1 Chron. 2:50, 52–53). **(3)** The fifth of the five sons of Judah and the father of Reaiah (1 Chron. 4:1–2).

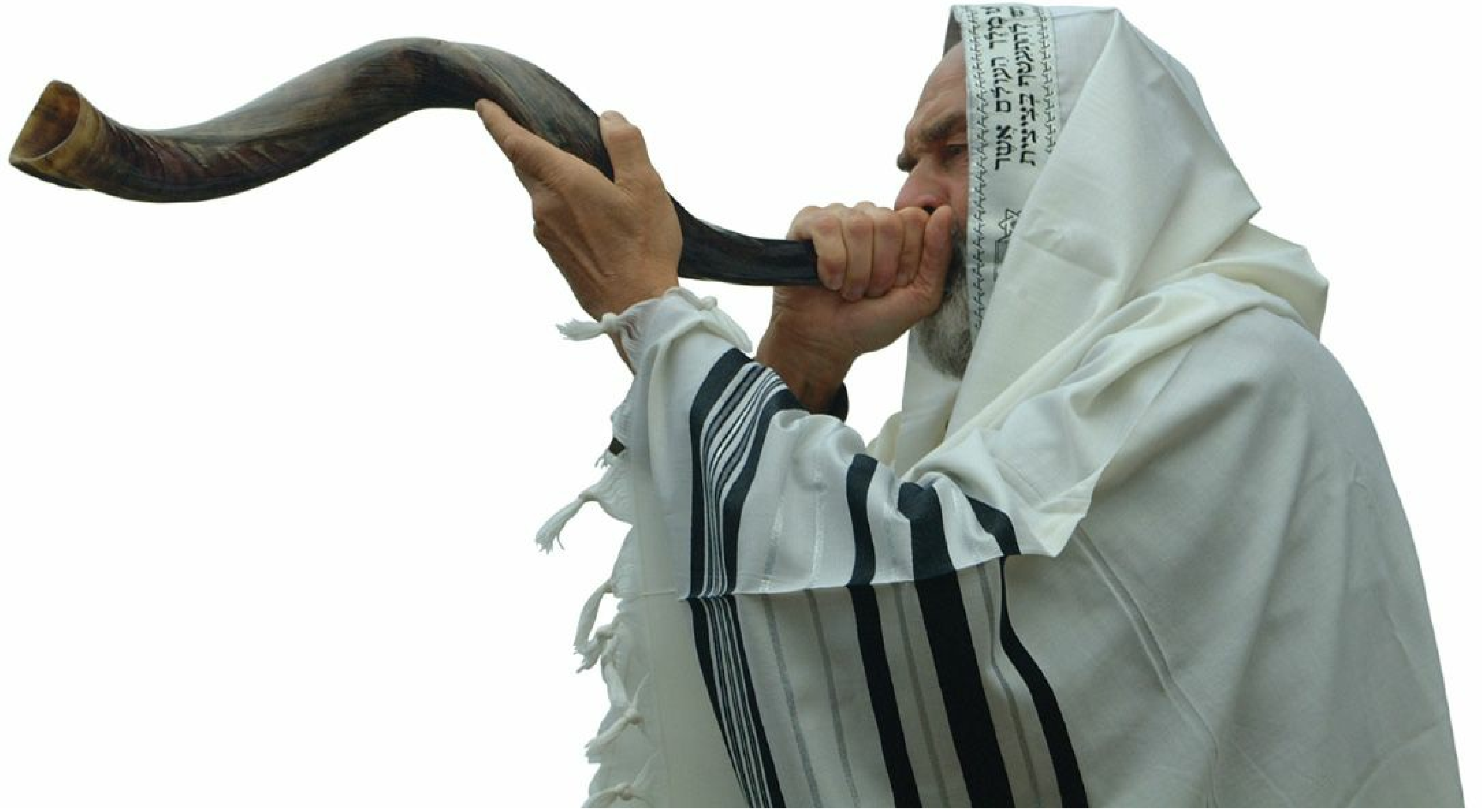
SHOBEK One of the leaders who sealed the covenant with God following Ezra's public reading of the law (Neh. 10:24).

SHOBI An Ammonite leader and son of Nahash who brought David supplies while he fled from his son Absalom (2 Sam. 17:27).

SHOCHO, SHOCO *See* Soko, Sokoh.

SHOE *See* Sandals, Shoes.

SHOFAR An instrument made out of an animal's horn (most commonly a ram) that had at most three notes. The Hebrew word, *shopar*, most often is translated as "trumpet" or "horn." It had many uses and was most often used to signal troops during times of war (Josh. 6:4; Judg. 3:27) and to gather people for religious or civic ceremonies (Exod. 19:13; 2 Sam. 15:10). It also has eschatological connotations in relationship to the day of the Lord (Joel 2:1).



Shofar being blown

SHOHAM The second of the four sons of Jaaziah, a Levite of the Merari clan (1 Chron. 24:27).

SHOMER **(1)** The father of Jehozabad, one of King Joash's assassins (2 Kings 12:21). In 2 Chron. 24:26 Jehozabad is said to be the son of "Shimrith," a variant of the name "Shomer" with a feminine ending. **(2)** A son of Heber (1 Chron. 7:32) of the tribe of Asher, also called "Shemer" (1 Chron. 7:34 NASB, NET, NRSV, NKJV).

SHOPHACH *See* Shobak.

SHOPHAN *See* Atroth Shophan.

SHOPHAR *See* Shofar.

SHOSHANNIM A transliteration of the Hebrew word for "lilies." The word appears in the titles to Pss. 45; 69; 80 (the title of Ps. 60 uses the singular, *shushan*). It likely refers to either lily-shaped musical instruments or a melody. Some word studies suggest specific reference to a six-stringed instrument. The same Hebrew word is translated "lilies" in Song 2:16; 4:5; 5:13; 6:2; 7:2.

SHOSHANNIM EDUTH The title of Ps. 80 includes the instruction "to the tune of 'The Lilies of the Covenant,' " apparently referring to a musical accompaniment. Several psalms are prefixed with titles including *shoshannim* ("lilies" [Pss. 45; 69; 80]) and *shushan 'edut* ("lily of the covenant" [Ps. 60]).

SHOULDER PIECE Two straps that attached to the front and back sides of the priestly ephod (Exod. 28:7, 12, 25, 27; 39:4, 7, 18, 20). Two precious stones were attached to them, each engraved with the names of six tribes of Israel. They served as a reminder of the people of God.

SHOVEL A tool with a rectangular flat blade used to place coals in pots or remove ashes from the altar (Exod. 27:3; Jer. 52:18).

SHOWBREAD *See* Bread of the Presence.

SHRINE A place of worship of local importance, often lacking the approval of the biblical authors. The translation "shrine" entails a judgment as to the illicitness of the place of worship, even when the Hebrew term is value-neutral: "shrine" renders "sanctuary" (*miqdash* [Isa. 16:12]), "house" (*bayit* [Isa. 44:13]), "room" (*kheder* [Ezek. 8:12]), "house of god" (*bet 'elohim* [Judg. 17:5]), and "mountains" (*heharim* [Ezek. 18:6, 11]). In each case, these terms can refer also to places of licit worship; the distinction is contextual rather than lexical. In other cases, "shrine" does reflect the Hebrew vocabulary of illicit worship: the "high places" (*bamot* [2 Kings 23:8]; *beth bamot* [1 Kings 12:31]; *ramah* [Ezek. 16:24]). Judges 17:5 describes a household shrine in ancient Israel. Acts 19:24 refers to the manufacture of shrines to Artemis in first-century Ephesus.

SHRINE OF HIS OWN IDOL *See* Chambers of Imagery.

SHROUD A cloth used to wrap a body for burial, as distinct from coffin burial, which was not customary in biblical Israel (though see Gen. 50:26 on the use of the coffin in Egypt). The haste with which Ananias's corpse was "wrapped up" (Acts 5:6) suggests shrouding with everyday garments. In other cases, the corpse was washed (Acts 9:37), dressed with spices, and carefully wrapped with strips of linen, and a cloth was placed on the face (John 11:44; 19:40).

Egyptian burial shroud with a picture of Osiris

SHUA **(1)** The Canaanite father of Judah's unnamed wife and mother of Er, Onan, and Shelah (Gen. 38:2–5; 1 Chron. 2:3). Shua was from Adullam, probably near Bethlehem. **(2)** Reflecting a different

Hebrew spelling, “Shua” also refers to a female descendant of Asher (1 Chron. 7:32).

SHUAH The sixth of the six sons of Abraham and Keturah (Gen. 25:2; 1 Chron. 1:32), the wife whom Abraham married after the death of Sarah. Among the sons of Keturah, the descendants of Jokshan and Midian figure most prominently in biblical ethnography (Gen. 25:3–4; 1 Chron. 1:32–33). The one possible case of a descendant of Shuah in the Bible is Bildad the Shuhite, one of Job’s three friends (Job 2:11), though it is not certain that this connection is intended.

SHUAL **(1)** The “land of Shual” (Heb. *’erets shu’al*) refers to an unidentified region in the vicinity of Ophrah (1 Sam. 13:17). Several texts also mention one or more places called “Hazar Shual,” in Judah or Simeon (Josh. 15:28; 19:3; 1 Chron. 4:28; Neh. 11:27). **(2)** The third of the eleven sons of Zophah, a descendant of Asher (1 Chron. 7:36).

SHUBAEL **(1)** A descendant of Levi and Gershom (1 Chron. 23:16; 26:24). He is the same person as Shubael in 1 Chron. 24:20; thus, Shubael was not Gershom’s son, but rather a later descendant. **(2)** A son of Heman (1 Chron. 25:4; see also 25:20).

SHUHAH According to 1 Chron. 4:11, Kelub and Shuhah were brothers among the descendants of Judah. Versional evidence (Greek, Syriac, Latin) and the broader context (see 1 Chron. 4:13, 15; also Judg. 1:13) suggest that the name “Kelub” should be read as “Caleb.” Thus, Shuhah would be related to the better-known family of Caleb. Little else is known.

SHUHAM, SHUHAMITES Shuham was from the tribe of Dan. A clan descended from Shuham, the Shuhamites, was counted at the second census taken in the wilderness (Num. 26:42).

SHUHITE Bildad, one of Job’s three friends, was a Shuhite (Job 2:11). Although it is not certain, this designation may refer to Shuah, one of Abraham and Keturah’s sons (Gen. 25:2).

SHULAMMITE The Shulammite (KJV: “Shulamite”) is found only in Song 6:13: “Come back, come back, O Shulammite; come back, come back, that we may gaze on you! Why would you gaze on the Shulammite as on the dance of Mahanaim?” Some connect the name with Shulmanitu, a Mesopotamian goddess of love, but such a view depends on identifying the Song of Solomon as connected to a pagan ritual, which is unlikely. Some others, noting an association between Shulam and the city of Shunem, argue that the title refers to a well-known woman from Shunem, possibly Abishag (1 Kings 1:1–4:15), the woman who kept David warm in his old age. Most likely, the term is a feminine form of the name “Solomon,” which as a noun is also *shalom*, meaning “peace.”

SHUMATHITE A clan descended from Caleb’s son Hur (1 Chron. 2:53).

SHUNAMMITE A person from Shunem. In the Bible, two women are referred to as “the Shunammite.” The woman whose son Elisha raises from the dead (2 Kings 4) is known only by this title. Abishag, the young woman who kept warm the elderly King David, is identified as “the Shunammite” as well (1 Kings 1–2). *See also* Shunem.

SHUNEM Shunem of Issachar’s territory (Josh. 19:18) is important in connection with three women. First, it was at Shunem that Saul, afraid of numerous enemies and having gotten no response to his request to God for guidance (1 Sam. 28:4–7), decided to consult a medium in the nearby town of Endor. The medium conjured Samuel, who in a postmortem rebuke announced Saul's impending death. Second, the beautiful Shunammite Abishag kept David warm in his old age (1 Kings 1:3–4, 15). Later, in an attempt to ursurp the kingdom, Solomon's brother Adonijah schemed with Bathsheba to convince Solomon to give him Abishag in marriage, but the shrewd king instead had Adonijah killed (1 Kings 2:16–25). Third, in Shunem a wealthy but barren woman provided for Elisha, who blessed her in return with a miraculous conception. But after her son had grown, he suddenly died. She called upon Elisha after the fact, and he then raised her son from death (2 Kings 4:8–37).

SHUNI, SHUNITES Shuni was a son of Gad (Gen. 46:16). A clan descended from him, the Shunites, was counted at the second census taken in the wilderness (Num. 26:15).

SHUPHAM, SHUPHAMITES Shupham was the ancestor of the Shuphamites, one of the seven clans of the descendants of Benjamin (Num. 26:39). His name may correspond to "Muppim" in the list of Benjamin's sons in Gen. 46:21. "Shuppites" and "Shuppim," possibly alternate forms of the group name, are mentioned in 1 Chron. 7:12, 15; 26:16.

SHUPPIM Each of the three occurrences of "Shuppim" is fraught with textual difficulties. **(1)** One of the sons (the other being Huppim) of Ir in the tribe of Benjamin (1 Chron. 7:12 NRSV [NIV: "Shuppites"]). **(2)** A man in the genealogy of the tribe of Manasseh, again with Huppim (1 Chron. 7:15 [NIV: "Shuppites"]). **(3)** With Hosah, a gatekeeper assigned by lot to the West Gate and the Shalleketh Gate in Jerusalem (1 Chron. 26:16). *See also* Shupham, Shuphamites.

SHUR, WILDERNESS OF A region of desert and perhaps a specific place in the Sinai Peninsula east of what is today known as the Suez Canal. Hagar was traveling to Shur when she met the angel of the Lord (Gen. 16:7). Abraham settled between Kadesh and Shur before he told Abimelek that Sarah was his sister (20:1). Ishmael's descendants also settled in the area (25:18). Moses led the Israelites into the wilderness of Shur (NIV: "Desert of Shur") after they fled Egypt and crossed the Red Sea (Exod. 15:22). Both Saul and David traveled through Shur in pursuit of their Amalekite enemies (1 Sam. 15:7; 27:8).

SHUSHAN *See* Susa.

SHUSHAN EDUTH *See* Lily of the Covenant; Shoshannim; Shoshannim Eduth.

SHUTHALHITES *See* Shuthelah, Shuthelahites.

SHUTHELAH, SHUTHELAHITES Shuthelah was from the tribe of Ephraim (1 Chron. 7:20–21 also lists a descendant of Shuthelah with the same name). A clan descended from him, the Shuthelahites, was counted at the second census taken in the wilderness (Num. 26:35–36).

SHUTTLE *See* Loom.

SIA *See* Siaha.

SIAHA One of the ancestors of the temple servants (Nethinim) who returned to Jerusalem after the

Babylonian captivity under the leadership of Zerubbabel in 539 BC or soon after (Ezra 2:44; “Sia” in Neh. 7:47). The fact that many of the names in the list are foreign has led to the belief that they were originally prisoners of war who were pressed into service to perform menial tasks as they assisted the Levites.

SIBBECAI *See* Sibbekai.

SIBBEKAI One of David’s elite soldiers. He is called a “Hushathite,” probably indicating that he came from a village southwest of Bethlehem. He is noted for killing a Philistine giant named “Saph” (assuming that “Rapha” means “giant”) at Gob, which is perhaps in the region of Gezer (2 Sam. 21:18; cf. 1 Chron. 20:4 [here the giant is named “Sippai”]). He may appear in the list of David’s men as Mebunnai in 2 Sam. 23:27 (NET, NASB), but he is listed as Sibbekai in 1 Chron. 11:29. He also commanded the military division for the eighth month (1 Chron. 27:11).

SIBBOLETH *See* Shibboleth.

SIBLING RIVALRY The struggle for supremacy between siblings. The common features of this topos include the following: (1) the younger brother triumphs over the older brother (Isaac wins over Ishmael [Gen. 21:8–12]; Moses wins over Aaron and Miriam [Num. 12:1–10]); (2) the father’s favorite son loses out to the other, often the mother’s favorite (Jacob prevails over Esau [Gen. 25–27]; Abel, the heavenly Father’s favorite, loses to Cain [Gen. 4:8]); (3) sibling rivalry often ends in fratricide (Cain murders Abel [Gen. 4:8]; Absalom kills Amnon [2 Sam. 13:28–29]); (4) fratricide in sibling rivalry usually occurs in the field (Cain’s killing of Abel; Absalom’s murder of Amnon; Joseph and his brothers [Gen. 37]; cf. the parable that Joab placed on the lips of the Tekoite sage [2 Sam. 14:6]). Deuteronomy’s prohibition of the subversion of the inheritance rights of the firstborn (Deut. 21:15–17) seems to be a genuine attempt to grapple with the perennial problem of sibling rivalry in Israel’s covenant community, which often was triggered by the special favors shown the younger son over his elder brother(s). In the NT the parable of the Prodigal Son is a well-known example of sibling rivalry (Luke 15:11–32).

SIBMAH One of the Transjordanian towns allotted by Moses to the tribe of Reuben (Josh. 13:19), which built the town up along with a number of others (Num. 32:38) near Ammonite and Moabite territory. The town is depicted in the oracles of Isaiah and Jeremiah against Moab as being known for its vines, which would be destroyed because of Moab’s pride and insolence (Isa. 16:8–9; Jer. 48:32). Sibmah has been identified with modern Khirbet Uyun Musa, approximately twenty miles southwest of Amman. *See also* Sebam.

SIBRAIM In Ezekiel’s version of the idealized boundaries of Israel, the northern border runs westward from the Mediterranean Sea through “Sibraim (which lies on the border between Damascus and Hamath)” (Ezek. 47:16). The exact location cannot be identified with certainty.

SICARII *See* Assassins.

SICHEM *See* Shechem.

SICK, SICKNESS *See* Diseases and Physical Abnormalities.

SICKLE A harvesting implement with a handle and a crescent-shaped blade used to cut grain at harvesttime. The sickle may have been made from chips of flint fitted to a bone or wooden piece, or else metal (bronze or iron) secured to a wooden handle. The instrument appears in passages that refer to actual cutting of grain (Deut. 23:25; Mark 4:29) as well as figurative descriptions of harvesting used to describe judgment (Joel 3:13; Rev. 14:14–19).

Iron sickle from Egypt

SIDDIM In this valley the kings of five allied cities (Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zeboyim, and Bela) awaited the approach of invaders (Gen. 14:3, 8, 10). This term appears to have been assigned to a broad, flattish tract, sometimes of considerable width, enclosed on each side by a definite range of hills.

SIDON *See* Tyre and Sidon.

SIEGE Ancient accounts and remains (e.g., the bas relief from Sennacherib’s palace in Nineveh depicting the siege of Lachish) and the biblical record (2 Kings 25:1–2; Ezek. 4:2) reveal the siege techniques of the period. Spies sought any strategic weakness (Judg. 1:22–26). The city’s water supply was interrupted (2 Sam. 12:27). People were prevented from entering or leaving. An attempt was made to starve the inhabitants into surrendering. The besieging army might use siege engines, scaling ladders, earthen ramps, and battering rams and make tunnels under walls. Although scholars refer to the Assyrian “siege” of Jerusalem in 701 BC, Isa. 36–37 and 2 Kings 18–19 indicate that the city was only blockaded, and the word used in Isa. 1:8 (*netsurah* [NIV: “under siege”]) means “watched, guarded.”

SIEGE WORKS A general war term referring to systematic methods or mechanisms designed to overcome a fortified city. Siege works might include earthen ramps built against city walls (Ezek. 4:2), towers probably designed for use by archers (Isa. 29:3), scaling ladders, and battering rams used to weaken walls and gates (Ezek. 21:22). Wood was the primary material (Deut. 20:20) used in the construction of siege works, often accompanied by metal, particularly on the heads of battering rams for added strength and weight. Nebuchadnezzar used siege works to overcome Jerusalem’s fortifications during Zedekiah’s reign (2 Kings 25:1; Jer. 52:4). Utter destruction often followed once a city’s defenses were overcome and the besieging forces had gained entry into the city (Jer. 52:10, 13).

SIEVE A screen-like implement used in biblical times to separate grain from debris such as pebbles (i.e., to sift). In two prophetic passages (Isa. 30:28; Amos 9:9), divine judgment against Israel and the nations is compared to the use of the sieve. This image can be compared to several other descriptions of divine judgment or military action in terms of agriculture (threshing in Isa. 27:12; Amos 1:3; Matt. 3:12; plowing in Mic. 3:12; reaping in Jer. 9:22) or viticulture (pruning in Isa. 18:5).

SIGN The word “sign” usually is a translation of the Hebrew word *’ot* or the Greek word *sēmeion*. Signs are visible, typically being an object, a mark, an event, or a custom. In addition, signs are symbolic, pointing to things not seen. Signs often reveal or share some quality with the unseen reality to which they point, and so they are a token of that reality. In the Bible, signs typically are caused or instituted by God, and in many cases they are miraculous. However, in a few cases signs are set forth as the work of other gods (as in Deut. 13:1–2) or as being instituted by merely human design (as in Num. 2:2). In summary, a sign may be defined as something seen that points to something unseen, and that is instituted or created to do so by someone’s intention.

Several examples support this definition. Keeping the Sabbath is a sign of God’s rest after creating the world (Exod. 31:15); the Sabbath rest itself imitates God’s rest. Circumcision is a sign of God’s promise to both Abraham and his descendants; circumcision is also a physical mark that is related to human fertility (Gen. 17:11). The rainbow is a sign of God’s promise not to destroy the world by water and rain; rainbows appear only with rain (Gen. 9:13). (In the original Hebrew text, both the custom of circumcision and the rainbow that appears after the great flood are called “signs.”) The early Passover plagues both bring and warn of judgment, while the healing miracles of Jesus both bring and promise blessing. While signs point to unseen realities, these realities do not diminish the value or importance of the visible world. Instead, the unseen realities themselves are ultimately expressed in the visible world.

DIVINE INTERVENTION

The word “sign” usually refers to an event that cannot be plausibly explained by natural or human causes but is consistent with intervention by God or by some other divine power. An important example of this occurs in the book of Exodus. In Exodus, Moses predicts each kind of plague that will occur and the time of its occurrence. Many of those plagues, such as the plague of locusts (Exod. 10:14–15), are events that could occur naturally. However, the merely natural occurrence of so many plagues in such a short time is quite improbable. It is likewise improbable that Moses could simply guess beforehand the type and timing of all these plagues.

Ultimately, a merely natural explanation for these plagues does not prove credible to the Egyptians. However, the plagues are consistent with acts of divine intervention, provided one does not rule out that possibility beforehand. They are consistent because Moses gives a plausible explanation of why God would intervene at this time, even though God had not intervened within living memory. All these evidences together are considered sufficient to infer that some god has caused the signs. The signs are portrayed as objectively known events. When Pharaoh refuses to admit that Moses can bring plagues, Pharaoh’s own officials say that he should know better (Exod. 10:7). The officials believe in the reality of the signs even though they do not follow the faith or God of Moses.

Throughout the Bible, signs give evidence of God’s direct action and identity, but they are not given as evidence for God’s existence. God’s existence is to be known by other means; for example, Paul writes that the existence of the Creator is “clearly seen” from the created world (Rom. 1:20).

MIRACLES AND FAITH

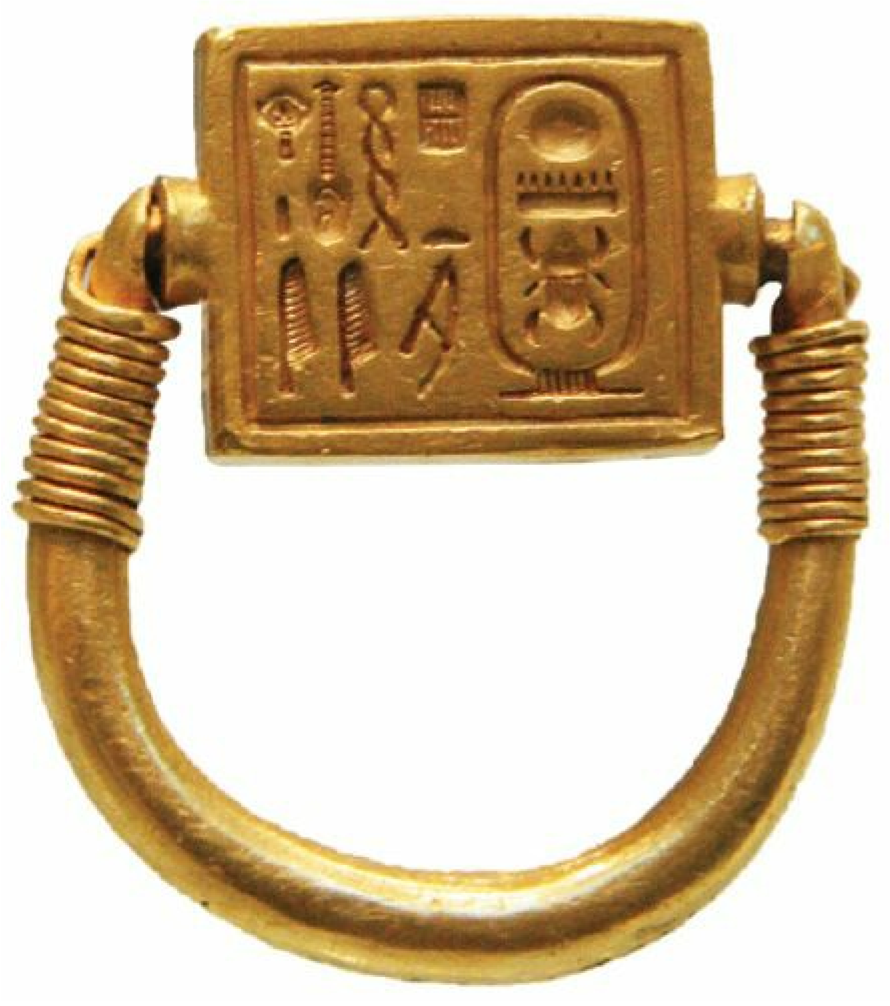
Miraculous signs often are given to validate a prophet and his message. Signs are especially frequent when that prophetic message is a covenant from God that has life-or-death consequences. Both the Mosaic covenant (Deut. 30:15–20) and the new covenant of Jesus (Luke 22:15–20; John 5:24–29) warn of life and death. In the OT, signs occur most prolifically at the hands of Moses. The signs manifested on behalf of Moses are explicitly given so that people will believe in Moses and follow God’s covenant (Exod. 4:1–9; 19:9).

Signs occur even more frequently and prominently in the NT. Jesus makes the lame walk, heals the blind, and even raises the dead (John 5:1–9; 9:1–7; 11:1–44). Throughout the Gospels, Jesus is characterized as performing many signs, and the signs are cited as one reason to believe in Jesus (John 20:30–31). The signs are characteristic of Jesus’ ministry and later of his apostles’ ministries. The tradition that Jesus performed signs is interwoven throughout the four Gospels as we have them, even in portions often thought to reflect earlier sources. The most important sign in the NT is the resurrection of Jesus, since this is the ultimate validation of Jesus by God, and the Christian faith hangs upon the truth of Jesus’ resurrection (1 Cor. 15:1–20).

Although signs are given to elicit faith, human nature and desires are such that reasonable belief does not always take root. As with Pharaoh, many others throughout the OT do not believe despite seeing signs (e.g., Num. 14:11; Ps. 78:11). In the Gospels, many will not believe any reports about miraculous signs. They instead demand to see signs personally (Mark 8:11–12; John 4:48; 6:30; 9:27–41; 20:29) or attribute them to Satan. The Passover signs were to be remembered and credited by later generations (Exod. 12:26–27). Similarly, the signs performed by Jesus were intended by the evangelists to be credited by readers who had not seen them (John 20:29–31). Belief is not expected without inquiry (John 4:39–42; Acts 17:11); however, unbelief in the face of evidence is seen as a human failing (John 11:37–40).

SIGNET A ring with a seal inscribed upon it. A signet ring denoted authority and honor. Set on the front side of the ring was a hard or semiprecious stone with a seal inscription carved in reverse. The seal upon the ring served as an individual’s official stamp or signature and could prove authenticity.

For instance, a royal document was not considered legitimate unless stamped with the king’s seal. Proof of witness to a contract also was confirmed by stamping the seals of the involved parties on a document or object. A seal could also be used to fasten a document by stamping a small, circular lump of clay (“bulla”) over the document. A seal might bear the name of its owner and/or various decorations. Some common motifs include Egyptian themes such as scarabs or winged sun discs, animals such as lions and bulls, and plant patterns incorporating important or symbolic plants such as the lotus, papyrus, or pomegranate. For occurrences in the Bible, see Gen. 38:18; 41:42; Exod. 28:36; Esther 3:10.



A signet ring with the name “Thutmose” inscribed in hieroglyphics

SIHON The Amorite king of Heshbon who opposed the passage of the Israelites through his territory on their journey from Egypt to Canaan (Num. 21:21–22; Deut. 2:26–29). Moses informed Sihon that the Israelites would stay on the highway and pay for any food or drink that they needed on the way. But Sihon refused, and he assembled his troops to fight against Israel in the wilderness (Num. 21:23). The Israelites defeated Sihon and took the cities and villages of his kingdom (21:24–25).

SIHOR *See* Shihor.

SIKKUTH *See* Kaiwan; Rephan; Sakkuth.

SILAS Silas was a Jewish Christian, a Roman citizen (Acts 16:37–38), and a leader of the Jerusalem church (15:22). He was assigned the very important role of emissary of the Jerusalem church to Antioch, carrying the letter related to the Jerusalem council of Acts 15. He was also a prophet (15:32). Paul chose Silas to accompany him on the second missionary journey (15:40–41), yet Silas was a coequal with Paul rather than a subordinate like Timothy. Silas's presence probably was a validation of Paul's gospel, and Silas likely represented the Jerusalem church in the "Pauline" missionary work.

Paul probably refers to Silas as an apostle of Christ in 1 Thess. 2:6. Silas preached the gospel to the Corinthians (2 Cor. 1:19) and is a named cosender of both Thessalonian letters. The same Silas is the secretary who wrote down the letter 1 Peter for the apostle Peter (1 Pet. 5:12–13). "Silas" is the Greek form of the Hebrew or Aramaic name "Saul"; the Latin spelling is "Silvanus" (cf. Gk. *Silouanos* in 2 Cor. 1:19; 1 Thess. 1:1; 2 Thess. 1:1; 1 Pet. 5:12).

SILENCE Several words are translated with the English word "silence." It usually is used to refer to the intentional act of not speaking, but it can refer to someone who is passive (2 Kings 7:9 KJV), the importance of listening (Acts 19:33), the process of subduing a people (Ps. 101:8), and figuratively of death (Ps. 94:17).

SILK In antiquity, silk was imported to the Mediterranean world from the Far East and thus was a luxury commodity. The secret of its manufacture was closely guarded into the Middle Ages. There is one certain mention of silk in the Bible, in Rev. 18:12 (Gk. *sirikos*). Some older English translations of the OT refer to silk, but the Hebrew word (*shesh*) probably refers to a linen textile. The Greek word from which English "silk" is derived (cf. Lat. *sericus*) came into the classical languages as a loanword from the Semitic world through which the overland silk trade passed and probably goes back to the Chinese word for "silk," by which the Chinese themselves were also known among classical geographers (*Sēres*).

SILLA The Judahite king Joash was assassinated by his officials "at Beth Millo, on the road down to Silla" (2 Kings 12:20). Beth Millo and Silla presumably are in Jerusalem's City of David, Silla at a lower elevation than Beth Millo. *See also* Beth Millo.

SILOAM A Byzantine-era pool on the southwest side of the Ophel Hill, near Jerusalem. Siloam is mentioned three times in the NT (Luke 13:4; John 9:7, 11). The Siloam Tunnel is one of two subterranean channels (along with "Hezekiah's Tunnel") bringing water from the Gihon spring to this location. These tunnels are best known for the discovery (in 1880) of the so-called Siloam Inscription, which describes the completion of work on those tunnels in some detail. The events mentioned in this inscription generally have been associated with 2 Kings 20 and 2 Chronicles 32, which describe the building projects of King Hezekiah, including "how he made the pool and the tunnel by which he brought water into the city" (2 Kings 20:20) and how he "blocked the upper outlet of the Gihon spring and channeled the water down to the west side of the City of David" (2 Chron. 32:30). The inscription has been dated to the late eighth century BC, based on paleographic data, and usually is associated with the preparations for Hezekiah's rebellion against Sennacherib in 701 BC.

The Siloam Inscription

The extant text of the Siloam Inscription reads as follows:

> . . . its tunneling through. And this was the way in which it was tunneled out. While the picks were still (in motion), each man toward his fellow worker, and while there were yet three cubits to be tun[neled through], the voice of a man [could be hea]rd calling to his fellow gang member, for there was a fissure in the rock on the right hand and on the left. Now on the day that the tunneling (was completed), the hewers struck (the rock), each man toward his fellow worker, pick against pick, and the water flowed from the spring to the pool—a distance of twelve hundred cubits. The rock was one [hun]dred cubits high over the heads of the hewers.

SILVANUS *See* Silas.

SILVER A precious metal used in the ancient world and the Bible as a measure of wealth (Gen. 13:2) and a medium of exchange (Deut. 2:28). The minting of coins did not begin until the very end of the OT, so the hundreds of earlier scriptural references to money were to silver. Ancient peoples used animals, grain, or other commodities to barter (Hos. 3:2) or pay taxes, but substituting smaller, more easily handled pieces of precious metal had obvious advantages, and silver served as a standard medium of exchange in the land of the Bible.

Silver had to be mined and purified before serving as an object of value. Silver ore was crushed, washed, strained, and heated to remove undesired materials (dross), a process that God used to symbolize spiritual purification (Ps. 66:10; Ezek. 22:18–22). Smiths then formed the refined silver (or gold or bronze) into pure pieces of metal that functioned as money (Gen. 23:15–16), war plunder (2 Sam. 8:11), jewelry (Gen. 24:53), household items (2 Tim. 2:20), or other desired objects. These other objects included trumpets (Num. 10:2) and implements used in worshiping God (Exod. 26:19–25) or items for illicit or pagan worship (Judg. 17:4; Acts 19:24). The Bible notes that the value and stability of silver are transient in light of eternity (1 Cor. 3:12–13; James 5:3).

SILVERSMITH A metalworker who creates objects out of silver and sometimes gold, brass, or iron (2 Chron. 2:7). The OT references translated “silversmith” are based on the Hebrew word for “smelter, refiner” (*tsorep*) with “silver” as a modifier (Judg. 17:4; Isa. 40:19) or implied from context (Prov. 25:4; Jer. 10:9). In the NT, the only silversmith (Gk. *argyrokopos*) is Demetrius of Ephesus (Acts 19:24), a guild leader who made shrines honoring Artemis. Recognizing that the gospel threatened his industry, he incited a riot against Paul.

SIMEON **(1)** Jacob's second son by Leah. Along with Levi, he massacred the men of Shechem for defiling their sister Dinah (Gen. 34). He was imprisoned in Egypt by Joseph when the other brothers returned to Canaan (42:24). He is identified in Jacob's blessing as a violent man whose descendants would be scattered in Israel (49:5–7). **(2)** One of Jesus' ancestors (Luke 3:30). **(3)** A righteous and devout man in Jerusalem who had received a vision that he would witness the Messiah's coming (Luke 2:25–35). After seeing Jesus, he offered praise to God. His words are often called the *Nunc Dimittis*, the first two words of his prayer in Latin ("now dismiss [your servant in peace]"). He prophesied that Jesus was "destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against" (2:34). **(4)** One of the prophets and teachers in Antioch along with Barnabas and Saul (Acts 13:1). He is called "Niger," evidently because he was an African or of dark complexion. **(5)** A variant name for Simon Peter (Acts 15:14; see NIV mg.).

SIMEON, TRIBE OF In the wilderness, the tribe of Simeon camped between Reuben and Gad. The Simeonites were allotted land within Judah's territory. Their subsequent absorption fulfilled Jacob's prophecy of scattering (Gen. 49:5–7).

SIMEONITES *See* Simeon, Tribe of.

SIMILITUDE There are two definitions for "similitude," both of which are archaic and rarely used but are found in the KJV. The first refers to a literary device that compares objects emphasizing their similarities (see Hos. 12:10 KJV). The second use of the word, much more common in the KJV, is simply a reference to the similarity between two people or objects. An example of this use is found in Ps. 106:20.

SIMMAGIR *See* Samgar-Nebo.

SIMON **(1)** One of the original twelve apostles (Matt. 10:2), also called "Peter." Simon Peter was the brother of Andrew and a fisherman by trade (Matt. 4:18). (*See also* Peter.) **(2)** The Zealot, one of the original twelve apostles (Matt. 10:4). **(3)** One of the brothers of Jesus, along with James, Joseph, and Judas (Matt. 13:55; Mark 6:3). **(4)** A leper who lived in Bethany. In his house the precious bottle of ointment was poured upon Jesus in preparation for his burial (Matt. 26:6). **(5)** A man from Cyrene who carried Jesus' cross on the way to crucifixion (Matt. 27:32). **(6)** A Pharisee who invited Jesus for a meal (Luke 7:40). Jesus was anointed with ointment in his house. He perhaps is the same individual as in Matt. 26:6. **(7)** The father of Judas Iscariot, who betrayed Jesus (John 6:71). **(8)** A sorcerer who believed the gospel and was baptized. However, he became enamored with the miraculous power of Philip and with the ability of the apostles to impart the Holy Spirit, and he offered them money to give him that ability (Acts 8:9–25). **(9)** A tanner with whom Peter stayed in Joppa before traveling to the house of Cornelius (Acts 9:43).

SIMON PETER *See* Peter.

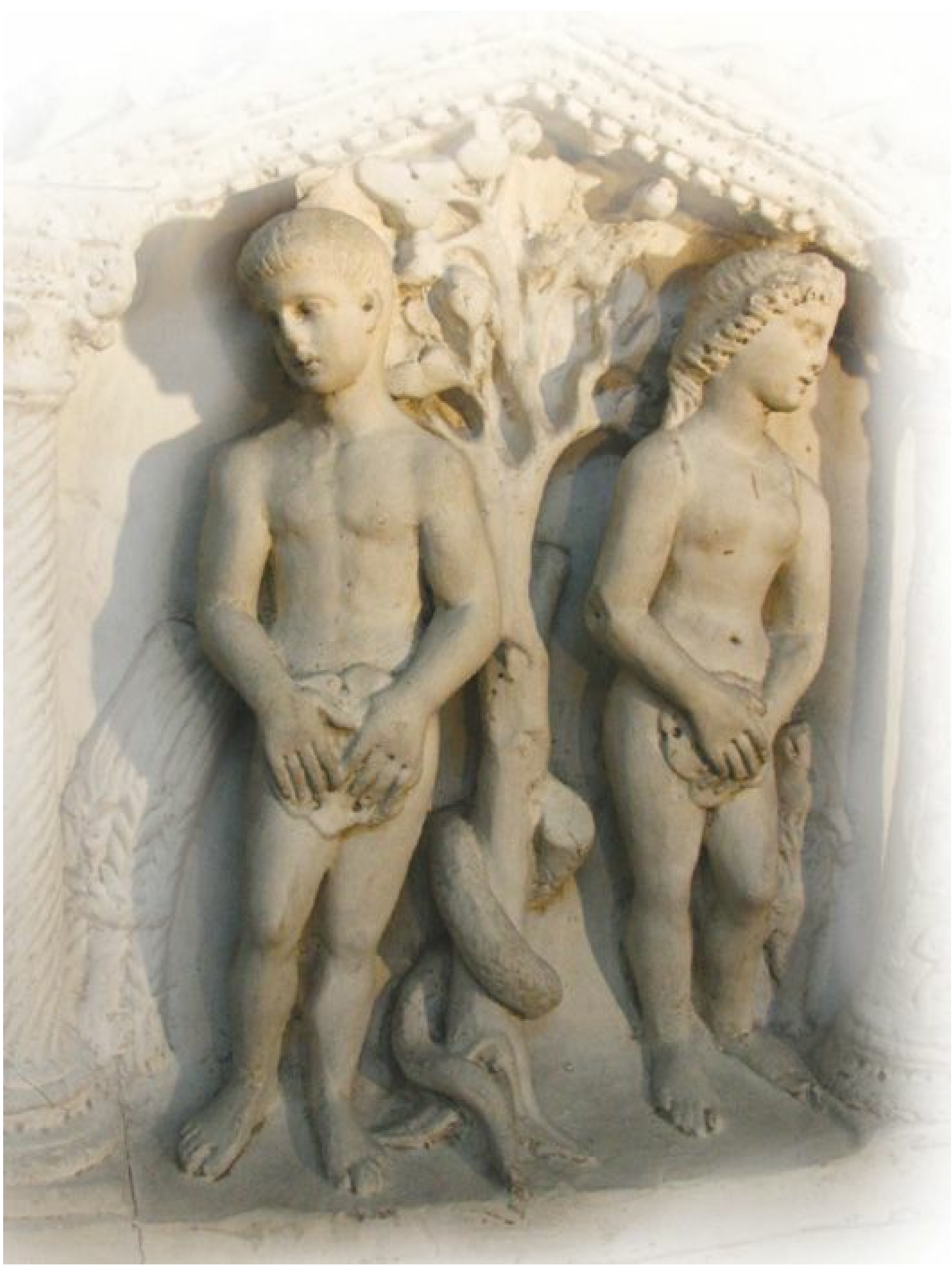
SIMPLE, SIMPLICITY In biblical wisdom, the notion of the simple person (Heb. *peti*) can carry either a negative or a positive connotation. Negatively, a simpleminded person is equivalent to the proverbial fool ("For the waywardness of the simple will kill them, and the complacency of fools will destroy them" [Prov. 1:32]) and is contrasted with the wise or prudent person ("The simple believe anything, but the prudent give thought to their steps" [Prov. 14:15]). Positively, the simple person depends on God for protection ("The LORD protects the simple" [Ps. 116:6 NRSV]) and is open to instruction ("The unfolding of your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple" [Ps. 119:130]).

SIMRI *See* Shimri.

SIN There are few subjects more prominent in the Bible than sin; hardly a page can be found where sin is not mentioned, described, or portrayed. As the survey that follows demonstrates, sin is one of the driving forces of the entire Bible.

SIN IN THE BIBLE

Old Testament. Sin enters the biblical story in Gen. 3. Despite God's commandment to the contrary (2:16–17), Eve ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil at the prompting of the serpent. When Adam joined Eve in eating the fruit, their rebellion was complete. They attempted to cover their guilt and shame, but the fig leaves were inadequate. God confronted them and was unimpressed with their attempts to shift the blame. Judgment fell heavily on the serpent, Eve, and Adam; even creation itself was affected (3:17–18).



A relief on the sarcophagus of Junius Bassus (d. AD 359) depicting the sin and fall of Adam and Eve

In the midst of judgment, God made it clear in two specific ways that sin did not have the last word. First, God cryptically promised to put hostility between the offspring of the serpent and that of the woman (Gen. 3:15). Although the serpent would inflict a severe blow upon the offspring of the woman, the offspring of the woman would defeat the serpent. Second, God replaced the inadequate covering of the fig leaves with animal skins (3:21). The implication is that the death of the animal functioned as a substitute for Adam and Eve, covering their sin.

In Gen. 4–11 the disastrous effects of sin and death are on full display. Not even the cataclysmic judgment of the flood was able to eradicate the wickedness of the human heart (6:5; 8:21). Humans gathered in rebellion at the tower of Babel in an effort to make a name for themselves and thwart God’s intention for them to scatter across the earth (11:1–9).

In one sense, the rest of the OT hangs on this question: How will a holy God satisfy his wrath against human sin and restore his relationship with human beings without compromising his justice? The short answer is: through Abraham and his offspring (Gen. 12:1–3), who eventually multiplied into the nation of Israel. After God redeemed them from their slavery in Egypt (Exod. 1–15), he brought them to Sinai to make a covenant with them that was predicated on obedience (19:5–6). A central component of this covenant was the sacrificial system (e.g., Lev. 1–7), which God provided as a means of dealing with sin. In addition to the regular sacrifices made for sin throughout the year, God set apart one day a year to atone for Israel's sins (Lev. 16). On this Day of Atonement the high priest took the blood of a goat into the holy of holies and sprinkled it on the mercy seat as a sin offering. Afterward he took a second goat and confessed "all the iniquities of the people of Israel, and all their transgressions, all their sins, putting them on the head of the goat, and sending it away into the wilderness. . . . The goat shall bear on itself all their iniquities to a barren region; and the goat shall be set free in the wilderness" (Lev. 16:21–22 NRSV). In order for the holy God to dwell with sinful people, extensive provisions had to be made to enable fellowship.

Despite these provisions, Israel repeatedly and persistently broke its covenant with God. Even at the highest points of prosperity under the reign of David and his son Solomon, sin plagued God's people, including the kings themselves. David committed adultery and murder (2 Sam. 11:1–27). Solomon had hundreds of foreign wives and concubines, who turned his heart away from Yahweh to other gods (1 Kings 11:1–8). Once the nation split into two (Israel and Judah), sin and its consequences accelerated. Idolatry became rampant. The result was exile from the land (Israel in 722 BC, Judah in 586 BC). But God refused to give up on his people. He promised to raise up a servant who would suffer for the sins of his people as a guilt offering (Isa. 52:13–53:12).

After God's people returned from exile, hopes remained high that the great prophetic promises, including the final remission of sins, were at hand. But disillusionment quickly set in as the returnees remained under foreign oppression, the rebuilt temple was but a shell of Solomon's, and a Davidic king was nowhere to be found. Before long, God's people were back to their old ways, turning away from him. Even the priests, who were charged with the administration of the sacrificial system dealing with the sin of the people, failed to properly carry out their duties (Mal. 1:6–2:9).

New Testament. During the next four hundred years of prophetic silence, the longing for God to finally put away the sins of his people grew. At last, when the conception and birth of Jesus were announced, it was revealed that he would "save his people from their sins" (Matt. 1:21). In the days before the public ministry of Jesus, John the Baptist prepared the way for him by "preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins" (Luke 3:3). Whereas both Adam and Israel were disobedient sons of God, Jesus proved to be the obedient Son by his faithfulness to God in the face of temptation (Matt. 2:13–15; 4:1–11; 26:36–46; Luke 3:23–4:13; Rom. 5:12–21; Phil. 2:8; Heb. 5:8–10). He was also the Suffering Servant who gave his life as a ransom for many (Mark 10:45; cf. Isa. 52:13–53:12). On the cross Jesus experienced the wrath of God that God's people rightly deserved for their sin. With his justice fully satisfied, God was free to forgive and justify all who are identified with Christ by faith (Rom. 3:21–26). What neither the law nor the blood of bulls and goats could do, Jesus Christ did with his own blood (Rom. 8:3–4; Heb. 9:1–10:18).

After his resurrection and ascension, Jesus' followers began proclaiming the "good news" (gospel) of what Jesus did and calling to people, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins" (Acts 2:38). As people began to experience God's forgiveness, they were so transformed that they forgave those who sinned against them (Matt. 6:12; 18:15–20; Col. 3:13). Although believers continue to struggle with sin in this life (Rom. 8:12–13; Gal. 5:16–25), sin is no longer master over them (Rom. 6:1–23). The Holy Spirit empowers them to fight sin as they long for the new heaven and earth, where there will be no sin, no death, and no curse (Rom. 8:12–30; Rev. 21–22).

As even this very brief survey of the biblical story line from Genesis to Revelation shows, sin is a fundamental aspect of the Bible’s plot. Sin generates the conflict that drives the biblical narrative; it is the fundamental “problem” that must be solved in order for God’s purposes in creation to be completed.

Definition and Terminology

Definition of sin. Although no definition can capture completely the breadth and depth of the concept of sin, it seems best to regard sin as a failure to conform to God’s law in thought, feeling, attitude, word, action, orientation, or nature. In this definition it must be remembered that God’s law is an expression of his perfect and holy character, so sin is not merely the violation of an impersonal law but rather is a personal offense against the Creator. Sin cannot be limited to actions. Desires (Exod. 20:17; Matt. 5:27–30), emotions (Gen. 4:6–7; Matt. 5:21–26), and even our fallen nature as human beings (Ps. 51:5; Eph. 2:1–3) can be sinful as well.

Terminology. The Bible uses dozens of terms to speak of sin. Neatly classifying them is not easy, as there is significant overlap in the meaning and use of the various terms. Nonetheless, many of the terms fit in one of the following four categories.

1. *Personal.* Sin is an act of rebellion against God as the creator and ruler of the universe. Rather than recognizing God’s self-revelation in nature and expressing gratitude, humankind foolishly worships the creation rather than the Creator (Rom. 1:19–23). The abundant love, grace, and mercy that God shows to humans make their rebellion all the more stunning (Isa. 1:2–31). Another way of expressing the personal nature of sin is ungodliness or impiety, which refers to lack of devotion to God (Ps. 35:16; Isa. 9:17; 1 Pet. 4:18).

2. *Legal.* A variety of words portray sin in terms drawn from the lawcourts. Words such as “transgression” and “trespass” picture sin as the violation of a specific command of God or the crossing of a boundary that God has established (Num. 14:41–42; Rom. 4:7, 15). When individuals do things that are contrary to God’s law, they are deemed unrighteous or unjust (Isa. 10:1; Matt. 5:45; Rom. 3:5). Breaking the covenant with God is described as violating his statutes and disobeying his laws (Isa. 24:5). The result is guilt, an objective legal status that is present whenever God’s law is violated regardless of whether the individual subjectively feels guilt.

3. *Moral.* In the most basic sense, sin is evil, the opposite of what is good. Therefore, God’s people are to hate evil and love what is good (Amos 5:14–15; Rom. 12:9). Similarly, Scripture contrasts the upright and the wicked (Prov. 11:11; 12:6; 14:11). One could also include here the term “iniquity,” which is used to speak of perversity or crookedness (Pss. 51:2; 78:38; Isa. 59:2). Frequent mention is also made of sexual immorality as an especially grievous departure from God’s ways (Num. 25:1; Rom. 1:26–27; 1 Cor. 5:1–11).

4. *Cultic.* In order for a person to approach a holy God, that individual had to be in a state of purity before him. While a person could become impure without necessarily sinning (e.g., a menstruating woman was impure but not sinful), in some cases the term “impurity” clearly refers to a sinful state (Lev. 20:21; Isa. 1:25; Ezek. 24:13). The same is true of the term “unclean.” Although it is frequently used in Leviticus to speak of ritual purity, in other places it clearly refers to sinful actions or states (Ps. 51:7; Prov. 20:9; Isa. 6:5; 64:6).

Metaphors

In addition to specific terms used for "sin," the Bible uses several metaphors or images to describe it. The following four are among the more prominent.

Missing the mark. In both Hebrew and Greek, two of the most common words for "sin" have the sense of missing the mark. But this does not mean that sin is reduced to a mistake or an oversight. The point is not that a person simply misses the mark of what God requires; instead, it is that he or she is aiming for the wrong target altogether (Exod. 34:9; Deut. 9:18). Regardless of whether missing the mark is intentional or not, the individual is still responsible (Lev. 4:2–31; Num. 15:30).

Departing from the way. Sin as departing from God's way is especially prominent in the wisdom literature. Contrasts are drawn between the way of the righteous and the way of the wicked (Ps. 1:1, 6; Prov. 4:11–19). Wisdom is pictured as a woman who summons people to walk in her ways, but fools ignore her and depart from her ways (Prov. 9:1–18). Those who do not walk in God's ways are eventually destroyed by their own wickedness (Prov. 11:5; 12:26; 13:15).

Adultery. Since God's relationship with his people is described as a marriage (Isa. 62:4–5; Ezek. 16:8–14; Eph. 5:25–32), it is not surprising that the Bible describes their unfaithfulness as adultery. The prophet Hosea's marriage to an adulterous woman vividly portrays Israel's unfaithfulness to Yahweh (Hos. 1–3). When the Israelites chase after other gods, Yahweh accuses them of spiritual adultery in extremely graphic terms (Ezek. 16:15–52). When Christians join themselves to a prostitute or participate in idolatry, they too are engaged in spiritual adultery (1 Cor. 6:12–20; 10:1–22).

Slavery. Sin is portrayed as a power that enslaves. The prophets make it clear that Israel's bondage to foreign powers is in fact a picture of its far greater enslavement to sin (Isa. 42:8; 43:4–7; 49:1–12). Paul makes a similar point when he refers to those who do not know Christ as slaves to sin, unable to do anything that pleases God (Rom. 6:1–23; 8:5–8). Sin is a cosmic power that is capable of using even the law to entrap people in its snare (Rom. 7:7–25).

SCOPE AND CONSEQUENCES

Sin does not travel alone; it brings a large collection of baggage along with it. Here we briefly examine its scope and consequences.

Scope. The stain of sin extends to every part of the created order. As a result of Adam's sin, the ground was cursed to resist human efforts to cultivate it, producing thorns and thistles (Gen. 3:17–18). The promised land is described as groaning under the weight of Israel's sin and in need of Sabbath rest (2 Chron. 36:21; Jer. 12:4); Paul applies the same language to all creation as well (Rom. 8:19–22).

Sin affects every aspect of the individual: mind, heart, will, emotions, motives, actions, and nature (Gen. 6:5; 8:21; Jer. 17:9; Rom. 3:9–18). Sometimes this reality is referred to as "total depravity." This phrase means not that people are as sinful as they could be but rather that every aspect of their lives is tainted by sin. As a descendant of Adam, every person enters the world as a sinner who then sins (Rom. 5:12–21). Sin also pollutes societal structures, corrupting culture, governments, nations, and economic markets, to name but a few.

Consequences. Since the two greatest commandments are to love God and to love one's neighbor as oneself (Matt. 22:34–40), it makes sense that sin has consequences on both the vertical and the horizontal level. Vertically, sin results in both physical and spiritual death (Gen. 2:16–17; Rom. 5:12–14). It renders humanity guilty in God's court of law, turns us into God's enemies, and subjects us to God's righteous wrath (Rom. 1:18; 3:19–20; 5:6–11). On the horizontal level, sin causes conflict between individuals and harms relationships of every kind. It breeds mistrust, jealousy, and selfishness that infect even the closest relationships.

CONCLUSION

No subject is more unpleasant than sin. But a proper understanding of sin is essential for understanding the gospel of Jesus Christ. As the Puritan Thomas Watson put it, “Until sin be bitter, Christ will not be sweet.”

SIN, DESERT OF One of the locations of the Israelites’ travels when they came out of Egypt. It is located between Elim and Mount Sinai (Exod. 16:1; 17:1; Num. 33:11–12) and should not be confused with the wilderness of Zin. About one month after the exodus, the Israelites came to this place, where they complained of starvation, and God provided manna and quail for them (Exod. 16:4–21). The exact location of the wilderness of Sin is unclear, as it depends on the location of Mount Sinai, also unknown.

SIN, UNPARDONABLE Jesus refers to an unpardonable or unforgivable sin in the Beelzebul controversy of the Synoptic Gospels (Matt. 12:31–32; Mark 3:28–30; Luke 12:10). After Jesus exorcised a demon from a deaf and mute man, the Pharisees charged him with doing this miracle by the power of Beelzebul. Jesus first responded by saying, “If Satan drives out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then can his kingdom stand?” (Matt. 12:26). His point is that it is by the power of the Spirit of God and the kingdom of God that he is able to accomplish this miracle. Jesus follows this statement by saying, “Every kind of sin and slander can be forgiven, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven. Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but anyone who speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come” (Matt. 12:31–32). In context, the unpardonable sin is attributing the work of the Holy Spirit to the power of Satan.

The question that many people ask and fear is whether a Christian can commit the unpardonable sin. The answer seems to be no, in that this was a specific charge against the Pharisees who were attributing the wrong power source to Jesus’ healing. In other words, they were blaspheming the Spirit of God by suggesting that it was by demonic power that Jesus had performed this miracle. Thus, the issue seems to be specific to this historical event rather than a general warning that would continue forever.

SIN, WILDERNESS OF *See* Sin, Desert of.

SINAI, MOUNT The mountain where Moses met with God and received the law and instructions for building the tabernacle. It is important to note that Sinai is sometimes referred to as Horeb. Scholars who believe that the Pentateuch is composed of sources from different periods of time suggest that the J and P sources used the name “Sinai” while “Horeb” is used by the E and D sources, but that the mountain is the same one. Sinai figures prominently in the biblical narrative between Exod. 19 and Num. 10, while the Israelites are camped around the mountain. During this time, Moses makes several trips up the mountain. He first ascends the mountain alone when the Israelites initially camp around it (Exod. 19–23). Next, Moses along with Aaron and the elders go up the mountain, followed another time by Moses and Joshua (Exod. 24). Moses then ascends for forty days and nights, at which time he receives the instructions for the tabernacle. This ascent is ruined for Moses when he descends the mountain to find the people worshiping a golden calf (Exod. 32). Moses once again climbs the mountain and receives a reiteration of the law (Exod. 34). All of this culminates with the descent of God from the top of the mountain to take up residence within the new tabernacle (Exod. 40).

Leviticus implies that it is a continuation of the law that Moses received on the mountain. Finally, the first ten chapters of Numbers describe the Israelites moving away from Sinai and toward the promised land. The mountain also plays a significant role in the book of Deuteronomy, which looks back at the earlier narrative. Sinai is also the location of Elijah's sojourn after his supernatural encounter with God on another mountain, Carmel (1 Kings 19). Interestingly, in the Elijah narrative the same physical elements of smoke, fire, earthquake, and wind are evidenced in the story, but God is found only in a small whisper. Because this is the place where Moses receives the law from God, a mountain often is seen as a symbol of God's revelation (cf. Matt. 5:1–2; 17:1–2; Rev. 21:10). In Galatians, Paul uses Sinai as a symbol or type of the old covenant.

The exact location of the mountain cannot be determined with certainty. Complicating matters is the fact that the desert and the peninsula on which the mountains sit are both called "Sinai." Furthermore, although some have speculated that the mountain must be a volcano, given the description of smoke coming from the mountain and the earthquakes (Exod. 19:16, 18), this suggestion is of little specific help because many of the mountains in this region at one time were active volcanoes. Several locations for the mountain have been suggested. The traditional location is Jebel Musa, in the southern part of the peninsula. The Greek Orthodox monastery of Saint Catherine marks this location. This is also the site of the discovery of the Codex Sinaiticus, one of the earliest and most complete Greek versions of the Bible. Although Jebel Musa is the tallest mountain in the area, several other mountains in this vicinity have also been suggested. Another possible location advocated by some scholars is in the northern part of the peninsula near Kadesh Barnea. Much of the debate about the site has to do with the amount of time it took the Israelites to go from the location where the Red Sea was parted to the mountain. The northern location favors a shorter travel time, while the southern location favors a much longer trip.

SINCERITY The quality of being free from deceit or hypocrisy. Sincere actions flow from authentic and apparent motives. Paul likens sincerity to "unleavened bread" (1 Cor. 5:8) and often speaks of sincere love (Rom. 12:9; 2 Cor. 6:6; 8:8). He charges slaves to be sincere in obedience to their masters (Eph. 6:5; Col. 3:22).

SINEW A tough structural tissue found in the body that connects muscles to bones; it is synonymous with tendon or ligament. It is symbolic of the intricate and wondrous nature of God's creation (Job 10:11; 40:17). The phrase "iron sinew" (Isa. 48:4 ESV, NRSV, NASB) connotes stubbornness and rebellion against God on Israel's part. Paul speaks of "sinews" with regard to the body of Christ and its various members (Col. 2:19).

SINGING, SINGERS *See* Hymn; Levites; Music, Instruments, Dancing.

SINIM Isaiah says that at the time of God's favor, people will come from far-off lands, including "from the land of Sinim" (Isa. 49:12 KJV). Some have suggested that this is China (classical Lat. *Sinae*). The LXX translates the Hebrew *erets sinim* as "land of the Persians." The NIV, following the DSS (1QIsa^a), emends the text slightly to read "Aswan," the location in Upper Egypt.

SINITES The Sinites are twice listed among the Canaanite peoples (Gen. 10:17; 1 Chron. 1:15), though not in the frequently occurring lists of the six or seven Canaanite nations (see Exod. 3:8; Deut. 7:1). Based on the form of the list, the Sinites may have dwelled to the north of Israel.

SINNER A person who fails to live up to God's standard of holiness and righteousness. As descendants of Adam, infected with a sinful nature, all of humankind fits this definition (Ps. 14:3; Rom. 3:10). In biblical terms, "sinner" can also be used in contrast with the self-righteous, who do not see their sinfulness. In this sense, a sinner is someone who is humbled before God and who recognizes his or her need for God's grace (Luke 5:30–32; 18:10–14). *See also* Sin.

SION The KJV uses "Sion" to translate the Hebrew word *si'on* in Deut. 4:48, referring to Mount Hermon (NIV: "Sirion"); the Hebrew word *tsiyyon* in Ps. 65:1, referring to Zion (NIV: "Zion"); and the Greek form of "Zion," *Siōn*, in Matt. 21:5; John 12:15; Rom. 9:33; 11:26; Heb. 12:22; 1 Pet. 2:6; Rev. 14:1 (NIV: "Zion").

SIPHITES *See* Ziph.

SIPHMOTH In 1 Sam. 30:28 Siphmoth is listed among a number of locations in southern Judah and the Negev where David sent plunder as a reward for prior hospitality (see 1 Sam. 30:31). Zabdi, the "Shiphmite" named in 1 Chron. 27:27, may have been a native of this place.

SIPPAI A giant killed by Sibbekai the Hushathite, one of David's elite soldiers (1 Chron. 20:4). In 2 Sam. 21:18 he is called "Saph."

SIRAH The location of a well or cistern mentioned in connection with Joab's murder of Abner (2 Sam. 3:26). It is the place where Joab's men found Abner. The current site of the well is not certain, but several wells near Hebron have been identified as possibilities.

SIRION *See* Hermon, Mount.

SISAMAI *See* Sismai.

SISERA **(1)** The commander of the army of King Jabin of Canaan. Sisera fled from Deborah and Barak's forces into the tent of Jael. When Sisera fell asleep, Jael killed him by driving a tent peg through his head (Judg. 4:1–22). **(2)** A family of temple servants who returned from exile in Babylon with Zerubbabel (Ezra 2:53; Neh. 7:55).

SISMAI The son of Eleasah, a descendant of Jerahmeel son of Hezron, of the tribe of Judah (1 Chron. 2:40).

SISTER Sisters play a major role in many OT narratives. Sarah was Abraham's half sister (Gen. 20:12; marriage or intercourse with one's half sister was later prohibited [Lev. 18:11; 20:17]). More than once he sought to protect himself in a cowardly way by presenting her as his sister, not mentioning that she was also his wife (Gen. 12:10–12; 20). Isaac repeated the sin of his father (Gen. 26). Jacob loved Rachel but was deceived by her father Laban into marrying her older sister Leah, initiating one of the most vicious sibling rivalries in the Bible. Miriam, the sister of Moses, was a prophet and an important leader in her own right (Exod. 15:20; but see Num. 12:1, when she challenged Moses' authority). Amnon began a bitter feud with his half brother Absalom when Amnon raped Absalom's sister Tamar (2 Sam. 13). Jeremiah and Ezekiel both depict the northern and southern kingdoms as unfaithful sisters (Jer. 3:6–10; Ezek. 23; cf. Ezek. 16).

Certain biblical stories indicate that sisters were protected by brothers rather than fathers. It is Laban who negotiates the terms of his sister Rebekah's marriage to Isaac (Gen. 24). Dinah is avenged and defended by her brothers; Jacob does nothing (Gen. 34). Tamar comes under Absalom's protection, not David's (2 Sam. 13). In Song of Songs, it is the brothers, not the parents, who supervise the girl (1:6) and who discuss her protection until she comes of age (8:8–9), though she declares she is able to take care of herself (8:10).

In the NT, the most famous sisters are Mary and Martha (Luke 10:38–42), who mourn the death of their beloved brother, Lazarus (John 11). Throughout the NT, the members of the church are often referred to as "brothers and sisters" (e.g., Matt. 18:15; Acts 6:3; 1 Cor. 12:1; Phil. 4:8; James 1:2; 1 John 3:13; many modern Bible versions [such as GW, NIV, NLT, NRSV] translate the Greek term *adelphoi* as including both men and women), carrying on Jesus' redefinition of the family: "whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother" (Matt. 12:50). *See also* Brotherly Love; Brothers and Sisters, Jesus'.

SITHRI The third of the three sons of Uzziel, a Levite (Exod. 6:22).

SITNAH Meaning "enmity" or "opposition," Sitnah was the name given to the second of three wells dug by the herdsmen of Isaac. This well, like the one dug before it (Esek), was the cause of hostility over water rights with the herdsmen of Gerar, a Philistine city (Gen. 26:21). The actual site is unknown.

SIVAN Persian word for the third month of the Jewish year, extending from the new moon in June to the new moon in July (Esther 8:9).

SKIN **(1)** Human skin: The skin on Moses' face was shining (Exod. 34:29–30, 35). Certain skin diseases were considered ritually unclean and were required to be examined by a priest (Lev. 13). Job suffered from a skin disease (Job 2:7; 7:5). The term "skin" is used proverbially (Job 19:20; Jer. 13:23) and metaphorically (Mic. 3:2–3). **(2)** Animal skin: Animal skins were used in a variety of ways in daily life and in sacrificial rituals. Cured or tanned animal skins were used for garments (Gen. 3:21; Num. 31:20; Heb. 11:37). The skins of goats' kids were used to cover Jacob's hands and neck (Gen. 27:16). Rams' skins and goatskins were used in the construction of the tabernacle (Exod. 25:5; 35:7). Processed animal skins were used as containers to store liquids such as wine (1 Sam. 1:24; 2 Sam. 16:1; Neh. 5:18; Matt. 9:17), water (Gen. 21:14), and milk (Judg. 4:19). Skins usually were burned outside in sacrifice (Exod. 29:14; Lev. 4:11; 8:17), with some exceptions (Lev. 7:8). **(3)** Plant skin: Anything produced by a grapevine, even the skins of the grapes, was prohibited as food for those who made the Nazirite vow (Num. 6:4).

Animal skin used for storing liquids

SKIRT The Hebrew word typically translated as “skirt” (*kanap*) does not indicate the woman’s garment of today. Instead, in the Bible “skirt” is often used in the archaic sense of “edge” or “extremity.” This is why some of the modern translations have changed the wording of the KJV and substituted words such as “edge,” “extremity,” and “hem.” For example, the KJV uses “skirt” in 1 Sam. 15:27 to translate *kanap*, but the NIV renders it as “hem” (cf. 1 Sam. 24:4, where *kanap* is rendered as “skirt” by KJV and as “corner” by the NIV; see also Ezek. 16:8; Hag. 2:12). The word translated as “skirt” is also used euphemistically, carrying sexual connotations. The biblical phrase literally reads, “So he shall not uncover the skirt [*kanap*] of his father,” which likely refers to having sexual intercourse with his father’s wife (Deut. 22:30; 27:20).

SKULL *See* Calvary.

SKY *See* Heaven.

SLANDER Evil, malicious talk or lies intended to defame or destroy another person or another’s reputation (Pss. 31:13; 50:20; Ezek. 22:9). Both Testaments frequently condemn the sin of slander. Mosaic law forbade it (Lev. 19:16), and the ninth of the Ten Commandments specifically condemns bearing “false testimony” (Exod. 20:16). Slandering was an especially malicious act, with accompanying consequences (Prov. 30:10), and was viewed as a crime worthy of God’s displeasure or punishment (Pss. 101:5; 140:11). Paul includes slander among destructive ways of relating and speaking to one another (Rom. 1:30; 2 Tim. 3:3; cf. 2 Cor. 12:20; Eph. 4:31; Col. 3:8). The great accuser and slanderer of God and his people is Satan (Gen. 3:4–5; Job 1:9–11; 2:4–5; Zech. 3:1). There is no truth in him; he is a liar and the father of lies (John 8:44).

SLAUGHTER OF THE INNOCENTS *See* Innocents, Slaughter of the.

SLAVE, SERVANT Slavery and servanthood were part of everyday life in the ancient world. There were many different kinds of circumstances through which a person might become a slave. Some were coerced into servitude after being captured in war; others were born into slavery; others served as slaves as a sentence for a crime; still others served by personal choice as an apprentice. Slavery was not based on race. Furthermore, there was an enormous range of social and economic classes among slaves, from the brutal life of a galley slave to that of a wealthy servant of a king who might likewise own property and slaves.

In some cases, manumission, or the freeing of slaves, was possible during Roman times. This could be accomplished if the master died or if the master’s will allowed for their freedom, and in some cases slaves could even purchase their own freedom. In the first century AD, there were many such manumitted slaves. Acts 6:9 speaks of a Synagogue of the Freedmen, which probably means that it was made up of former slaves.

OLD TESTAMENT

There are numerous relationships in the OT that could be characterized as following a servant-master model. These included service to the monarchy (2 Sam. 9:2), within households (Gen. 16:8), in the temple (1 Sam. 2:15), or to God himself (Judg. 2:8). We also see extensive slavery laws in passages such as Exod. 21:1–11; Lev. 25:39–55; Deut. 15:12–18. The slavery laws were concerned with the proper treatment of Hebrew slaves and included guidelines for their eventual release and freedom. For example, Hebrew slaves who had sold themselves to others were to serve for a period of six years. On the seventh year, known also as the Year of Jubilee, they were to be released. Once released, they were not to be sent away empty-handed, but rather were to be supported from the owner’s “threshing floor” and “winepress.” Slaves also had certain rights that gave them special privileges and protection from their masters. Captured slaves, for example, were allowed rest on the Sabbath (Exod. 20:10) and during special holidays (Deut. 16:11, 14). They could also be freed if their master permanently hurt or crippled them (Exod. 21:26–27). Also, severe punishment was imposed on a person who beat a slave to death (Exod. 21:20–21).

Some slaves chose freely to stay with their owner. Deuteronomy 15:16–17 speaks of a slave who might say to a master, “I do not want to leave you,” out of love for the master and his family. This commitment was sealed by piercing the earlobe of the slave with an awl. This symbolized a lifelong commitment to the master.

NEW TESTAMENT

Slavery was very common in the first century AD, and there were many different kinds of slaves.

For example, slaves might live in an extended household (*oikos*) in which they were born, or they might choose to sell themselves into this situation (1 Pet. 2:18–25). Although slavery was a significant part of society in the first century AD, we never see Jesus or the apostles encourage slavery. Instead, both Paul and Peter encouraged godly character and obedience for slaves within this system (Eph. 6:5–8; Col. 3:22–25; 1 Tim. 6:1–2; Philemon; 1 Pet. 2:18–21). Likewise, masters were encouraged to be kind and fair to their slaves (Eph. 6:9; Col. 4:1). Later in the NT, slave trading was condemned by the apostle Paul as contrary to "sound doctrine" and "the gospel concerning the glory of the blessed God" (1 Tim. 1:10–11).

Jesus embodied the idea of a servant in word and deed. He fulfilled the role of the "Servant of the Lord," the Suffering Servant predicted by the prophet Isaiah (Isa. 42:1–4; 50:4–9; 52:13–53:12). He also took on the role of a servant in the Gospels, identifying himself as the Son of Man who came to serve (Mark 10:45) and washing the disciples' feet (John 13:4–5). Paul says that in the incarnation Jesus took on "the very nature of a servant" (Phil. 2:7).

The special relationship between Jesus and his followers is captured in the servant-master language of the NT Epistles, especially in Paul's letters (Rom. 1:1; Phil. 1:1; Titus 1:1). This language focuses not so much on the societal status of these servants as on the allegiance and honor owed to Christ Jesus.

The imagery of slavery is also used metaphorically in the NT in both a negative and a positive manner. In Rom. 6 the apostle Paul discusses how slavery and obedience to former and latter masters is an essential part of the changed Christian life. Prior to knowing Christ, we were "slaves to sin" and obeyed its power (Rom. 6:16–17); after following Christ, we were freed from the power of sin and death and became "slaves to righteousness" (Rom. 6:18) and "slaves of God" (Rom. 6:22).

SLEEP In the Bible, "sleep" can refer to natural sleep (Gen. 28:11; Jon. 1:5), moral unawareness (Isa. 29:10; 1 Thess. 5:6), inattentiveness (Pss. 44:23; 121:4), and even physical death (Ps. 13:3; Dan. 12:2). Commonly the Bible speaks of deceased Christians as having "fallen asleep" (Acts 7:60; 1 Thess. 4:13–15). Proverbs warns readers strongly against indulging in too much sleep (Prov. 6:4–10; 19:15; 20:13; 24:33–34).

SLING In ancient cultures, the sling was a lethal military weapon with long-range precision. Slingers and slingstones are mentioned in battle contexts such as the descriptions of Benjamites (Judg. 20:16; 1 Chron. 12:2), David and Goliath (1 Sam. 17:40, 50), the siege of Kir Hareseth (2 Kings 3:25), and Uzziah's provisions for the army (2 Chron. 26:14) and in eschatological prophecy (Zech. 9:15). Slinging is also employed metaphorically in proverbs (Prov. 26:8) and in descriptions of divine judgment (1 Sam. 25:29; Jer. 10:18). Slingstones have been recovered from numerous excavations in Israel, and slingers are depicted on Assyrian battle reliefs.

Relief showing Assyrian slingers (700–692 BC)

SLOTH The slothful person or “sluggard” (NIV) is a recurring theme in the book of Proverbs. The Hebrew word, *’atsel*, occurs fourteen times in Proverbs and nowhere else in the OT. The sluggard stands in contrast to the diligent or upright person, exemplifying folly by being disinclined to take responsibility for self-provision. This is sometimes stated in an exaggerated manner: “A sluggard buries his hand in the dish; he will not even bring it back to his mouth!” (Prov. 19:24). Sluggards are portrayed as indulging excessively in sleep (6:9), making excuses for inactivity (22:13), and exasperating those who depend on them (10:26). Ultimately, the sluggard’s ways result in self-imposed privation (13:4; 20:4; 24:33–34). Ironically, sluggards think that they are wise (26:16; cf. 14:12).

A general concern for idleness and laziness is found in the wisdom books (Prov. 10:4; Eccles. 10:18) and in Paul’s letters (1 Thess. 5:14; 2 Thess. 3:6–7). In the latter, idleness is twice associated with “busybodies” (2 Thess. 3:11; 1 Tim. 5:13), revealing the negative impact that idleness has upon a community (idleness leads to gossip, producing division and strife).

Aside from physical idleness, Heb. 6:12 warns against spiritual sloth, which undermines faith. Jesus warns against indifference to the Son of Man’s appearing, reflected in his condemnation of the squandering of one’s “talents” in the meantime (Matt. 25:14–30 NIV mg.).

SMELTING POT *See* Crucible; Pottery.

SMYRNA The location of one of the seven churches addressed in Revelation (Rev. 1:11; 2:8–11). Smyrna was a port city on the western coast of Asia Minor, at the gulf joining the Hermus River and the Aegean Sea. This location allowed Smyrna to prosper as a metropolitan center. The Smyrna of NT times was established in the fourth century BC, replacing an ancient Greek settlement that had been destroyed three centuries earlier. Smyrna was known for its faithfulness to Rome, and it housed a temple dedicated to the worship of the emperor. Ancient writers mention the “crown of Smyrna,” perhaps prompting John’s reference to “the crown of life” (Rev. 2:10 ESV, NRSV, NASB). Polycarp, a disciple of the apostle John and the bishop of Smyrna, was martyred in the city around AD 155. The city remains in existence as modern Izmir, Turkey.

SNAIL Land snails were numerous in the Near East. In ancient belief, the snail, as it leaves a trail of slime behind, was thought to be gradually melting away. This pictures the self-destructing pathway of the wicked rulers (Ps. 58:8 [NIV: “slug”]). Secretions from sea snails provided highly valued purple dyes, purple being a color of distinction, wealth, and royalty. The Israelites imported purple goods (Ezek. 27:16), and Lydia was a “dealer in purple cloth” (Acts 16:14).

SNARE A device used to trap small birds and animals (Prov. 6:5; 7:23; Eccles. 9:12; Ezek. 12:13; 17:20; Amos 3:5). “To ensnare” means to catch or trap by secretive or deceitful means. Israel is frequently warned that foreign gods and idols will be snares to it, thus distracting it from undivided worship of Yahweh (Exod. 23:33; 34:12; Deut. 7:16; Judg. 2:3; 8:27; Ps. 106:36). A snare is a common image in Scripture implying anything of ill purpose or unwise practice (Exod. 10:7; 1 Sam. 18:21; Job 18:9; Pss. 25:15; 69:22; 91:3; 119:110; 124:7; 140:5; 142:3; Prov. 18:7; 21:6; 29:25; Eccles. 7:26; Isa. 8:14; 24:17–18; Jer. 5:26; 48:43–44; Hos. 5:1; Rom. 11:9).

SNOW Although not a normal occurrence in Palestine, snow was common in the higher regions of the area, notably Mount Hermon and the mountains of Lebanon, which often have snow year-round. Figuratively, snow refers to purity (Ps. 51:7), divine glory (Matt. 28:3), and paleness of skin color (Exod. 4:6).

SNUFFERS Golden instruments used in the service of the tabernacle and temple (Exod. 25:38; 37:23; Num. 4:9; 2 Chron. 4:22 NRSV [NIV: “wick trimmers”]). Associated specifically with the lampstand (1 Kings 7:50), these were a kind of scissors used to trim the wicks of lamps or to remove or dispose of the burnt portions of the wicks. Sometimes they were made of bronze (2 Kings 25:14; Jer. 52:18); they differed from the “tongs” (Isa. 6:6) used to take coals from the altar.

SOAP A cleansing product made from alkali and mixed with certain oils. Alkali was a product of burning certain kinds of plants or trees and collecting the ash, potash. Soap was used to cleanse a person (Jer. 2:22; Job 9:30) and clothes (Mal. 3:2) and to purify metals (Isa. 1:25).

SOBER Avoiding intoxication, or being "self-controlled" (see Titus 2:6 NIV). A sober manner of living is characterized by watchfulness in one's responsibility to God (1 Thess. 5:6, 8; cf. 2 Tim. 4:5; 1 Pet. 1:13; 4:7; 5:8) and self-control by curbing passions (Titus 2:6) and pride (Rom. 12:3).

SOCHO *See* Soko, Sokoh.

SOCO, SOCOH *See* Soko, Sokoh.

SODI The father of Gaddiel, who was the representative from the tribe of Zebulun among the twelve spies sent by Moses to scout the land of Canaan (Num. 13:10).

SODOM AND GOMORRAH After Abram (Abraham) realizes that the land between Bethel and Ai cannot support both him and Lot, he suggests that they part company. Abraham gives Lot first choice, and he decides to settle in the fertile cities of the Jordan plain on the outskirts of Sodom (Gen. 13:1–12). The text then describes Sodom's inhabitants as "wicked" and "sinning greatly against the LORD" (13:13). In Gen. 18 God reveals to Abram his plan to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah because of the "outcry against" these cities and their "grievous" sin. God says, "I will go down and see if what they have done is as bad as the outcry that has reached me" (18:20). Abram pleads on behalf of Sodom and bargains with God to spare the righteous in the city.

Two angels of the Lord then arrive at Sodom to carry out the task of God's investigation, and Lot meets them and invites them to stay the night with him. The men of Sodom then surround the house and demand that the visitors be brought out to them to be raped. Lot refuses and offers his daughters instead, intending to protect the visitors. The angelic messengers strike the wicked men of Sodom with blindness, and Lot, his wife, and his daughters flee the city. God destroys Sodom and Gomorrah with a rain of "burning sulfur" (Gen. 19:24).

In both the OT and the NT, the cities' names become a symbol of warning against violent wickedness and of God's wrathful response of fiery destruction (Deut. 29:23; Isa. 1:9; Rom. 9:29; Jude 7). The ancient site of the cities is disputed, though they likely were located near the Dead Sea.

SODOMITE Those who imitated the wickedness of Sodom, especially males who had sexual intercourse with other males (1 Cor. 6:9; 1 Tim. 1:10 NRSV [NIV: "those practicing homosexuality"]). Initially, the term "sodomite" referred to a citizen of the town of Sodom. Sodom was, along with Gomorrah, one of the cities near the Dead Sea destroyed by God for its wickedness (Gen. 19:24).

SOJOURNER *See* Foreigner.

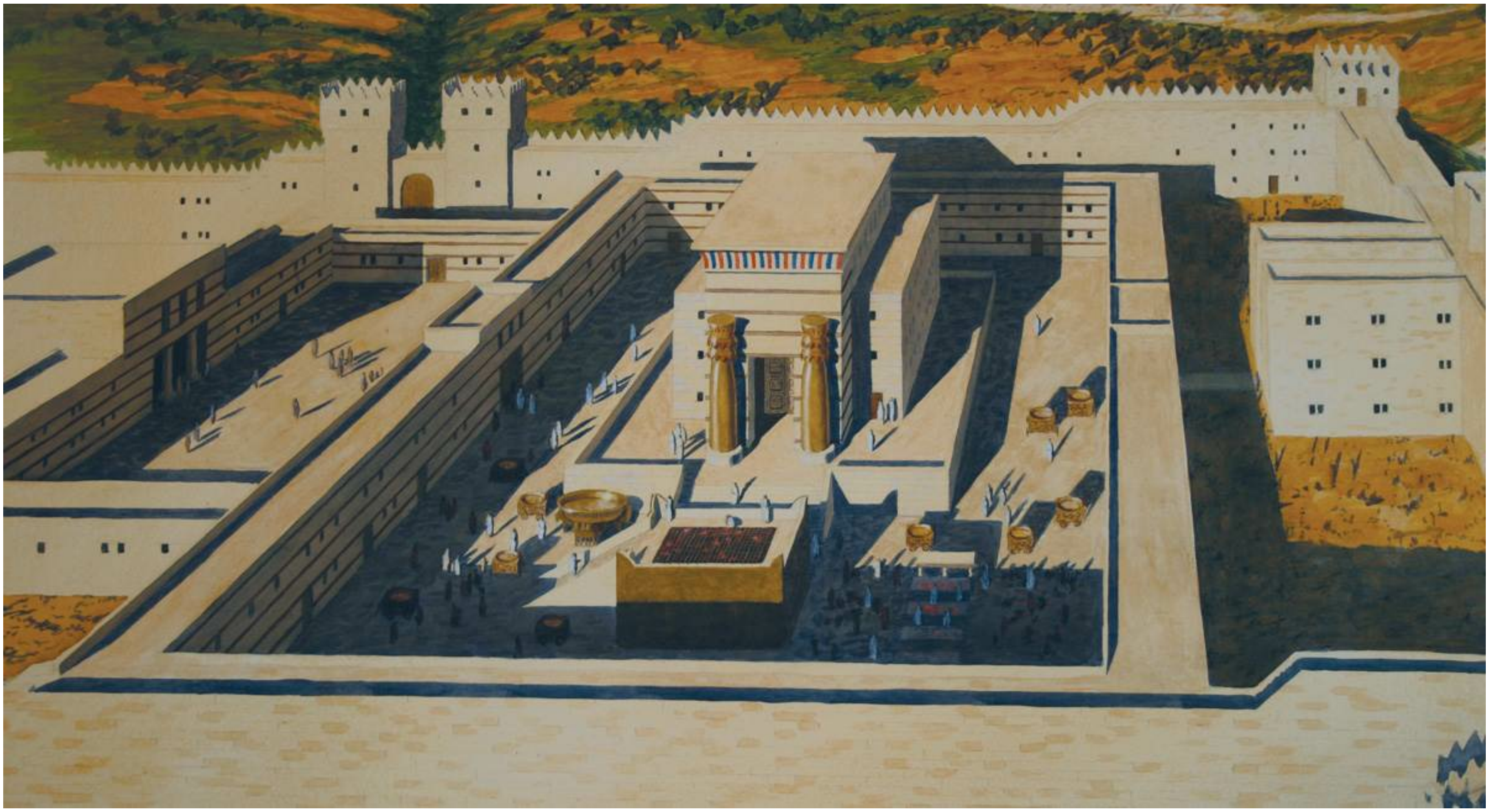
SOKO, SOKOH "Soko" and "Sokoh" (ESV, NRSV, NASB: "Soco" and "Socoh") are variant spellings of the same name. In the KJV, the name also appears as "Shocho(h)" (1 Sam. 17:1; 2 Chron. 28:18), "Socho(h)" (1 Kings 4:10; 1 Chron. 4:18), and Shoco (2 Chron. 11:7). **(1)** A town in the Elah Valley in the foothills of Judah (Josh. 15:35), located approximately sixteen miles southwest of Jerusalem. Situated near the border with the Philistines, it served as the assembly point for the Philistine forces before David fought Goliath (1 Sam. 17:1). The Philistines later captured Soko at the time of Ahaz, king of Judah (2 Chron. 28:18). **(2)** A different Judean town, up in the hill country, ten miles southwest of Hebron (Josh. 15:48). Rehoboam, son of Solomon, fortified a Soko (2 Chron.

11:7), but it is unclear if it is #1 or #2. **(3)** A town in Ephraim located approximately ten miles west of Samaria, near the Via Maris (1 Kings 4:10). **(4)** A descendant of Judah (1 Chron. 4:18; though some think this is actually a place name and associate it with #1).

SOLDIER Although the events narrated in the NT took place during a time of peace in the Roman Empire, Roman soldiers were a fixture in Judea, and they appear in a number of stories: the centurion whose servant Jesus healed (Matt. 8:5–13; Luke 7:1–10); the soldiers who tortured and executed Jesus (Matt. 27; Mark 15; Luke 23; John 19) and guarded his tomb (Matt. 28:4); the God-fearing centurion Cornelius (Acts 10); and the Roman garrison in Jerusalem (Acts 21:27–40). Soldiers also guarded prisoners (Acts 12:1–10; 23; 27:1–2, 31–32, 42–44; 28:16). In several places Paul writes of Christian workers as soldiers (1 Cor. 9:7; Eph. 6:10–17; Phil. 2:25; 2 Tim. 2:3–4; Philem. 1:2).

SOLEMN ASSEMBLY *See* Festivals.

SOLOMON As the son and successor to David, Solomon reigned forty years over the united kingdom of Israel (c. 971–931 BC). Extensive accounts of his reign are provided in 1 Kings 1–11; 2 Chron. 1–9. Solomon, the second son born to Bathsheba, was marked out at birth as “loved by the LORD” (2 Sam. 12:24–25 NIV mg.). He succeeded his father as king, even though he was not David’s oldest living son (1 Kings 2). The building of the temple is the centerpiece of the biblical accounts of Solomon’s reign.



Drawing of Solomon’s temple

It is common to divide Solomon’s reign into two unequal halves (1 Kings 1–10; 11), with Solomon only becoming apostate due to the influence of foreign wives (1 Kings 11). The earlier chapters, however, are not wholly commendatory. Solomon's "wisdom" in dealing with Joab and Shimei is vengeful and ruthless (2:6, 9). In 1 Kings 3:1 his palace is mentioned before the temple (because it took precedence in Solomon's mind?). He spent seven years on the temple but lavished thirteen years on his own house (6:38; 7:1). Behind the picture of his excessive wealth and lucrative trade in horses stand the (unheeded) prohibitions of Deut. 17:14–17. His Egyptian marriage and resort to the high places (1 Kings 3:1–4) foreshadow his overt apostasy (11:1–8). All in all, Solomon proved to be a sad disappointment.

In Chronicles the reigns of David and Solomon are viewed as complementary, such that Solomon completed what David had prepared for. Solomon needed David's plans and provisions (1 Chron. 28–29), but David needed Solomon to actually build the temple. Just as David brought the ark to Jerusalem, Solomon transferred it to the temple (2 Chron. 5). David organized the cultic officials (1 Chron. 22–27), but Solomon installed them (2 Chron. 8:14–15). Chronicles gives a picture of Solomon's reign that is very different from the one found in Kings. There is no competition to succeed (cf. 1 Kings 1–2), no apostasy, and no raising up of adversaries (cf. 1 Kings 11:14–40). Solomon enjoyed all Israel's support throughout his reign. This need not, however, be viewed as whitewashing Solomon. The true explanation is that the focus in Chronicles is almost exclusively on Solomon as temple builder. The Chronicler was also aware of Solomon's failings (as hinted at in 2 Chron. 9:29; 10:4–15).

The immediate dissolution of the united kingdom after Solomon's death cannot be simply blamed on the inept handling of the crisis by his son Rehoboam (1 Kings 12). Solomon's policies put an inordinate economic burden on the north (4:7–19). His conscription of forced labor (5:13–18) and sale of twenty cities in Galilee to Hiram of Tyre (9:10–14) were resented. The raising up of a series of adversaries, including Jeroboam, was a divine judgment (11:9–13). The prophet Ahijah favored Jeroboam (11:29–39). The prophet Shemaiah prevented Rehoboam's military invasion of the north (12:21–24). The northern tribes wanted relief from Solomon's harsh policies ("Your father put a heavy yoke on us" [12:4]). Rehoboam was unwilling (or unable?) to compromise. Solomon's death is reported in 1 Kings 11:41–43, but frequent allusions to him follow (e.g., 12:2, 4, 6, 9), for it was his policies that precipitated the split.

Solomon was largely responsible for the book of Proverbs (Prov. 1:1; 10:1; 25:1). The superscription of the Song of Songs (Song 1:1) associates the book with Solomon, and he is referred to a number of times within it (1:5; 3:7–11; 8:11–12). He is not, however, the lover depicted. The book of Ecclesiastes sometimes is attributed to him, given that the author describes himself as "son of David, king in Jerusalem" (Eccles. 1:1). The author's reputed wisdom, wealth, and building programs also suggest the figure of Solomon (1:12–2:11). Solomon's marriages are used as an illustration in a sermon against foreign marriages in Neh. 13:26. In the NT, Solomon's wealth and wisdom are alluded to in Jesus' teaching (Matt. 6:29; 12:42). He is also mentioned in relation to the temple (John 10:23; Acts 3:11).

SOLOMON'S PORCH A magnificent roofed structure, two hundred yards long, that stood behind the east wall of Herod's temple, similar to a Greek stoa. Jesus taught here during the Feast of Dedication (John 10:22–23). It was also known as Solomon's Colonnade (NIV) or Portico (NRSV) because of the many columns that made up its architecture and the erroneous belief that it dated from the time of Solomon. It figured prominently in the gatherings of the early church (Acts 3:11; 5:12).

SONG OF SOLOMON *See* Song of Songs, Book of.

SONG OF SONGS, BOOK OF By its title, Song of Songs claims to be the most sublime song of all. The history of its interpretation also reveals that it may be the most misunderstood song as well. The reader of this book is dazzled by its intensity and honest expression of desire for intimate relationship. No wonder that early theologians who thought that the body was only a temporary casing for the all-important spirit felt that this book could not be talking about what it appeared to be talking about. Thus, for example, when the woman describes the man as a sachet of myrrh lodged between her breasts (1:13), this had to be a reference to Christ spanning the OT and the NT (so Cyril of Alexandria). But over time this book could not be suppressed by such interpretive strategies. Today most readily acknowledge that Song of Songs is love poetry that articulates human desires as well as our joys and worries.

GENRE, STRUCTURE, AND OUTLINE

As implied by the preceding paragraph, Song of Songs is not an allegory. It is love poetry, in which a man and a woman express their deepest longings and desires to each other. They want to be in each other's passionate embrace. This book celebrates love between a man and a woman.

Some interpreters believe that Song of Songs is a drama or at least tells a story of a particular love relationship. Although there are almost as many different suggestions of a story as there are advocates of the so-called dramatic approach, two main types emerge. One approach believes that there are two characters, a lover and his beloved, and the plot entails their growing relationship, sometimes following the pattern of courtship, engagement, marriage, honeymoon, and so forth. Occasionally this plot is given a historical background, usually with Solomon as the man (thanks to the superscription in 1:1) and a woman who goes by the name of the "Shulammite" (6:13 [curiously, apparently a feminine form of the name "Solomon"]). On the other hand, other interpretations introduce yet a third character, an unnamed shepherd boy, who is the woman's true love. Thus, the story is that of a love triangle. Solomon is trying or has succeeded in adding the woman to his harem, but she retains her true love toward the shepherd boy. Thus, Song of Songs is the story of true love's triumph over power and wealth.

Other interpreters point out that if it is difficult to determine how many characters are in this supposed plot or the exact contour of the story, then interpreters must be reading too much into the book to make it work. After all, there is no narrator in the book providing narrative guidelines to the reader. Indeed, there are not even indications of who is speaking when (thus modern translations insert italicized text headings such as "Beloved," "Lover," and "Friends" to identify speakers).

Such interpreters argue that Song of Songs does not tell a story but rather is a kind of "love Psalter" containing a number of different love poems. In other words, it is an anthology, a collection, of love poems united by a consistency of character and imagery as well as the occasional recurrent refrain. The book is truly a "Song [composed] of [many] Songs." The exact number of poems in this anthology can be debated and is unimportant for their interpretation. The important point is that readers do not force connections between poems that are not there. However, the following division, after the superscription (1:1) into twenty-three poems may not be far off the mark.

I. Superscription (1:1)

II. Poem 1 (1:2–4)

III. Poem 2 (1:5–6)

IV. Poem 3 (1:7–8)

V. Poem 4 (1:9–11)

VI. Poem 5 (1:12–14)

VII. Poem 6 (1:15–17)

VIII. Poem 7 (2:1–7)

IX. Poem 8 (2:8–17)

X. Poem 9 (3:1–5)

XI. Poem 10 (3:6–11)

XII. Poem 11 (4:1–7)

XIII. Poem 12 (4:8–9)

XIV. Poem 13 (4:10–5:1)

XV. Poem 14 (5:2–6:3)

XVI. Poem 15 (6:4–10)

XVII. Poem 16 (6:11–12)

XVIII. Poem 17 (6:13–7:10)

XIX. Poem 18 (7:11–13)

XX. Poem 19 (8:1–4)

XXI. Poem 20 (8:5–7)

XXII. Poem 21 (8:8–10)

XXIII. Poem 22 (8:11–12)

XXIV. Poem 23 (8:13–14)

Date and Authorship

The conclusion that Song of Songs is a collection of love poems has implications for the date and authorship of the book. It is true that the superscription (1:1) associates the book with Solomon, and this connection must be taken seriously because there is no indication that the superscription is not a part of the canonical final form of the book. In light of a similar superscription in the book of Proverbs, however, this does not mean that Solomon wrote the entire book or that it is about him. Indeed, Solomon’s track record in love is dubious both in the book (Song 8:11–12) and outside it (1 Kings 11:1–13). Perhaps as in Proverbs, he is considered the fountainhead of the composition of the book, and like Psalms and Proverbs, the book came into existence over a lengthy period of time and as a result of several composers. If so, the final form bears the mark of a single editor who brought it all together at an unknown date within the period of the formation of the OT.

Seated figure of the Egyptian prince Amenemopet and his wife Hathor. Egyptian love poetry contains the closest ancient parallels to the Song of Songs.

THEOLOGICAL MESSAGE

Song of Songs celebrates love between a man and a woman. It reminds the people of God that intimate relationship is a divine gift that should be enjoyed. Although joy is indeed the dominant note of the book, the reader is warned that love is a powerful emotion that has its disappointments (so begins the poem in 5:2–6:3). Accordingly, the woman makes sure that the young girls who are watching and looking at her understand that it is important not to hurry love (2:7; 3:5; 8:4).

But we must not read Song of Songs in isolation from the rest of the canon. This book describes the man and the woman in the garden as naked and enjoying each other. How can the reader not think of the garden of Eden? God created a man and a woman and established marriage as a source of mutual joy (Gen. 2:23–25). The next chapter, however, narrates the fall, where the rebellion against God results in alienation not only between God and Adam and Eve, but also between Adam and Eve. Their estrangement results in their efforts to cover themselves from the gaze of the other and their ejection from the garden. The poems of Song of Songs, then, may be seen as the story of the "already but not yet" redemption of sexuality.

Last, the broader canon frequently uses marriage as a metaphor of the relationship between God and his creatures (e.g., Ezek. 16; 23; Hos. 1–3). In other words, the more we learn about intimate marital relationships, the more we learn about our intimate relationship with God. Thus, Song of Songs may be read in a way that deepens our understanding of God and his love toward his people (cf. Eph. 5:21–33).

CONTINUING SIGNIFICANCE

The opening chapters of Genesis describe human beings as creatures who were created for relationship, relationship with God to be sure, but also relationship with other people. Genesis 2:18–25 narrates the origin of the institution that formalizes the most intimate of human relationships, that between a man and a woman in marriage. The story continues in Gen. 3 on a tragic note when, because of sin, a barrier is erected between the man and the woman. Song of Songs poetically celebrates the redemption of the marriage relationship and encourages couples to grow closer to each other. The poems are not a how-to manual for courtship or intimate behavior, but they invite couples to cultivate their own love language and intimacies.

SON OF GOD In the OT, heavenly beings or angels are sometimes referred to as "sons of God" (Gen. 6:2; Job 1:6; 2:1; 38:7; Pss. 82:6; 89:6). The more important background for the NT, however, is the use of the term with reference to the nation Israel and the messianic king from David's line. Israel was God's son by virtue of God's unique calling, deliverance, and protection. Hosea 11:1 reads, "When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son." Similar references to God as the father of his people appear throughout the OT (Exod. 4:22; Num. 11:12; Deut. 14:1; 32:5, 19; Isa. 43:6; 45:11; Jer. 3:4, 19; 31:9, 20; Hos. 2:1). The king from the line of David is referred to as the son of God by virtue of his special relationship to God and his representative role among the people. In the Davidic covenant, God promises David concerning his descendant, "I will be his father, and he will be my son" (2 Sam. 7:14; cf. Pss. 2:7; 89:26). Later Judaism appears to have taken up these passages and identified the coming Messiah as the "son of God."

In the Synoptic Gospels, Jesus' divine sonship is closely linked to his messiahship. The angel Gabriel connects Jesus' status as "Son of the Most High" with his reception of the throne of David (Luke 1:32). At Jesus' baptism (which Luke identifies as Jesus' messianic anointing [Luke 3:21; 4:1, 14, 18]), the Father declares Jesus to be "my Son, whom I love" (3:22), an allusion to Ps. 2:7. Satan tempts Jesus as the Son of God to abandon obedience to the Father and claim independent authority (Matt. 4:1–11; Luke 4:1–13). Peter confesses that Jesus is "the Messiah, the Son of the living God" (Matt. 16:16), and the high priest questions whether Jesus is "the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed

One” (Mark 14:61; Matt. 26:63). In these and other texts “Son of God” is almost synonymous with “Messiah” (cf. Mark 1:1; Luke 4:41; 22:70; John 11:27; 20:31; Acts 9:20, 22). In other contexts, Jesus’ divine sonship appears to exceed messianic categories. Jesus prays to God as his Father (“Abba” [Mark 14:36]) and refers to himself as the Son, who uniquely knows and reveals the Father. The Father has committed all things to him. No one knows the Father but the Son and those to whom the Son reveals him (Matt. 11:25–27; Luke 10:21–22). It is by virtue of Jesus’ unique sonship that he invites his disciples to pray to God as their Father (Matt. 6:9).

In the Fourth Gospel, the status of Jesus as the Son of God is especially important, indicating both Jesus’ unique relationship with the Father and his essential deity. John introduces the notion of preexistent sonship in which the “Word” from creation is the Son (John 1:1–18; 17:5, 24). God sends into the world his Son (3:16), who reflects the glory of the Father (1:14; 14:6–11) and who will soon return (14:28). Jesus affirms that “I and the Father are one” (10:30), that “the Father is in me, and I in the Father” (10:38). John’s purpose in writing is to provoke faith “that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God” (20:31).

Some scholars reject the royal Jewish background of “the Son of God” when investigating the phrase in the Gospels. Instead, they appeal to Hellenistic sources to argue that Jesus as the Son of God is a “divine man” (*theios anēr*), which accounts for his ability to work miracles. This line of thinking, however, is fraught with many difficulties, not least of which is that the epithet is never used to describe the “divine man” in Greek literature.

In Paul’s thinking, the corporate, Israelite background of “Son of God” is renewed with reference to the NT people of God. Paul states that “theirs [the people of Israel] is the adoption to sonship” (Rom. 9:4). Although ethnic Israelites are rightfully called “sons of God,” this status is contingent upon being people of faith: “So in Jesus Christ you are all children of God through faith” (Gal. 3:26); Jesus’ death as the Son effects salvation (Rom. 8:2, 32; Gal. 2:20). The Spirit also plays a role in testifying with the spirits of believers that they are indeed children of God (Rom. 8:15–16), by which they cry, “Abba, Father” (Gal. 4:3–6). The believers’ status as God’s children will be completely revealed when they share in Christ’s glory (Rom. 8:17).

SON OF MAN

OLD TESTAMENT AND JEWISH LITERATURE

In the OT, the phrase “son of man” usually refers to humanity in general or to a specific individual. The general use of “son of man” occurs in poetic texts in which the phrase functions as a synonym for “man” or “human being” (Num. 23:19; Isa. 51:12; Pss. 144:3; 146:3). In Ps. 8:4 (ESV) the psalmist asks, “What is man that you are mindful of him, and the son of man that you care for him?” Echoing the creation of man in Gen. 1, “man” and “son of man” in this psalm have a royal status: being “crowned with glory and honor” and receiving dominion over all of God’s creation (Ps. 8:5–6). Later, in Ps. 80:17, “son of man” refers to the nation of Israel. The psalmist supplicates that God would make strong for himself the “son of man” over Israel’s enemies (80:12–16). In Ezekiel, God addresses the prophet himself as “son of man,” possibly indicating his human status compared with God or, alternatively, highlighting his unique status as God’s prophet in contrast with the rest of humanity.

One of the most crucial OT “son of man” texts is Dan. 7 because of its influence on the “Son of Man” in the Gospel tradition. Scholars debate the date of the composition of this chapter. While some argue for the sixth century BC, others prefer a second-century BC date during the oppressive reign of

Antiochus IV Epiphanes. The first half of the chapter records Daniel's vision (7:1–14), while the second half contains its interpretation (7:15–27). In the vision Daniel sees "one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven" (7:13). This exalted figure contrasts with the first three beasts, which are "like a lion" (7:4), "like a bear" (7:5), and "like a leopard" (7:6). The fourth beast is so gruesome that it defies comparison with any species of the animal kingdom (7:7). Many agree that the beasts likely refer to ancient world empires; however, the referent of "one like a son of man" has given rise to much debate. The figure may refer to earthly Israel, since at this figure's vindication he is endowed with authority and glory. This is precisely what "the holy people of the Most High" receive in v. 27. In this way, the "one like a son of man" is a symbol for the persecuted, earthly saints. Alternatively, the exalted figure could be a heavenly being such as the archangel Gabriel (Dan. 9:21) or Michael (Dan. 10:13; 12:1). Here "one like a son of man" is the heavenly counterpart and leader of suffering Israel and fights a cosmic battle on its behalf.

In subsequent Jewish literature, the "one like a son of man" from Dan. 7 becomes quite active, appearing to be a development of the static image who is "given authority, glory and sovereign power" (Dan. 7:14). In *1 En.* 37–71, a text that dates from the last half of the first century BC to the first half of the first century AD, the "Son of Man" is seated upon his throne and will judge "the kings and the mighty" who have persecuted faithful Israel (46:4–8; 62:5). At that point, the faithful ones (i.e., the holy, righteous, and chosen) will be formed into a new congregation. In another Jewish text that dates from the end of the first century AD, there is a strong echo of the Danielic son of man. In *4 Ezra* 13, "something like the figure of a man came up out of the heart of the sea" (v. 3a). Unlike in *1 Enoch*, this figure is a warrior who destroys with fire those who attempt to wage war on him. These texts indicate that at least two traditions developed and reinterpreted the "one like a son of man" from Dan. 7. He becomes an individual who executes judgment in one tradition, and one who executes destruction in another.

NEW TESTAMENT

In the NT the term "Son of Man" occurs mostly in the Gospels and, with the exception of John 12:34 (where the crowd quotes Jesus), is uttered exclusively by Jesus himself. The phrase, or a variation of it, also occurs in Acts 7:56; Heb. 2:6; Rev. 1:13; 14:14. Unlike in Daniel or *1 Enoch*, the epithet occurs in the Gospels with the definite article, likely indicating that the Son of Man was a known figure. Because of this and because the Son of Man in *1 Enoch* and *4 Ezra* have similar functions, many scholars in the mid-twentieth century speculated that in first-century Judaism many Jews believed that the Son of Man would return at the end as savior and judge. Others suggested that the significance of the phrase is found in its Aramaic background, *bar 'enash'a*, which in other texts means "I," "man," "a man," or "someone." Despite these alternatives, the OT provides the most helpful background for understanding the Son of Man in the Gospels.

The Son of Man sayings in the Gospels fall within three categories: earthly, suffering-resurrection, and future-vindication sayings. Starting with the earthly sayings, in Mark 2:10, for example, the Son of Man has "authority on earth to forgive sins," and in 2:28 he exercises dominion over the Sabbath. Although in Daniel the Son of Man does not receive such authority until his appearance in Yahweh's presence at his vindication, the Son of Man in the Gospels exercises such authority during his earthly ministry. Jesus also predicts that the Son of Man will suffer, die, and be raised again. In Mark, these suffering-resurrection predictions occur three times (8:31; 9:31; 10:33–34). Echoing Dan. 7, this plight of Jesus recalls the suffering of the holy ones caused by the little horn (v. 21). If the "one like a son of man" represents the holy ones in their vindication, then it is reasonable that he does so in their suffering as well; however, the text of Daniel is silent on this point. Finally, the clearest reference to Dan. 7 occurs in the future-vindication sayings. In Mark 13:26; 14:62 the Son of Man comes with/on the clouds, which points to his vindication over the Sanhedrin, the dominant adversaries of Jesus in Mark. Matthew appears to develop even more than Mark the judicial responsibilities of the Son of Man (Matt. 13:41–43; 25:31–33). Meanwhile, in Luke the church must stay alert and be prepared for the return of the Son of Man (Luke 12:39–40; 17:22–37; 21:34–36).

In Acts, the vision that Stephen witnesses confirms that the Son of Man has indeed been exalted to the right hand of God (Acts 7:56). In the Gospel of John, the epithet is used as the object of the verbs "to lift up" and "to glorify," so that the death of Jesus is a form of exaltation (John 8:28; 12:23; 13:31), which reflects his current exalted status in early Christian thinking. Finally, the Son of Man in Revelation is in the heavenly temple functioning as both judge and caretaker of the seven churches (Rev. 1:12–20) and reaps the saints while "seated on the cloud" (14:14–16).

SONS OF GOD This phrase occurs in Gen. 6:1–4; Job 1:6; 2:1; 38:7. The Hebrew expression "sons of" was a way of identifying members of a particular class, so this could also be a way of saying "some of the gods" (cf. Ps. 82).

GODS AND ANGELS

The identification of "sons of God" with angels is not found earlier than the Enoch literature, which presents its own distinctive interpretation of Gen. 6:1–4. It appears that *1 Enoch* reads Gen. 6:1–4 in response to an awareness of the Greek myths. The matter is further confused by the association of angels with the gods themselves. The traditions based on *1 Enoch* taught that pagan gods and idols were the outward forms of the demon offspring of the angels.

Biblical writers used the myths and identities from the religions of the surrounding nations to contrast God's character and to rebuke the claims of those religions. Job in particular uses the names of the monsters of these myths (Leviathan, Rahab, etc.) to proclaim Yahweh's superiority and lordship (Job 3:8; 9:13; 26:12; 41:1). In Job 38:7 (NIV mg.) the "sons of God" are the stars in the heavens who were worshiped in Gentile religions as gods. The appearance of "sons of God" in God's heavenly courtroom reflects a common ancient Near Eastern conception of the assembly of the gods. In Pss. 29:1; 82:1; 89:5–10 we find other similar descriptions. In each context the psalmist is proclaiming the authority of the one God of Israel over these gods and the regimes that they represent.

Egyptians believed that the royal family were offspring of the gods. The Ugaritic texts from Ras Shamra tell of Canaanite gods who married and gave birth. Kings of Damascus identified themselves as a son of one of these gods (Ben-Hadad [1 Kings 15:18; 20:1]). Constantly the OT tells of Israel's propensity to mix worship of Yahweh with worship of such gods.

The reference in Gen. 6:1–4 to "sons of God" and mighty warriors who fell (Nephilim = fallen ones [cf. 2 Sam. 1:25]) sounds very much like a reflection on Gentile accounts of the "culture heroes" of the past. Heroes such as Gilgamesh were part human and part god. They founded cities and dynasties, had numerous wives, violated the wives of others, and struggled with their mortality.

THE CHILDREN OF GOD

Throughout the Bible, God's relationship to his redeemed people is described with the metaphor of a father and his son. For Moses to declare that a nation of Asiatic slaves was God's "firstborn son" (Exod. 4:22–23; cf. Deut. 14:1; Isa. 43:6; Hos. 11:1–2) was a direct challenge to Pharaoh's identity.

When the time came for God to install a king in Israel, he referred to David's heirs as "my son" (2 Sam. 7:14; cf. Ps. 2:7; Ezek. 21:10). This promise is fulfilled in Jesus (Acts 13:33). Unlike the regimes of fallen humanity, the kingdom of God in Christ extends the status of "sons of God" to all who give their allegiance to Jesus (Rev. 21:7; cf. Exod. 6:7).

In this way, the gospel involves the restoration of what Adam lost (cf. Luke 3:38). Jesus' parable of the prodigal son transparently applies not only to particular individuals but also to the repentant remnant of all humankind (Luke 15:11–32).

Job's depiction of God's courtroom may be deliberately ambiguous. One could read this as a Gentile cosmology. The faithful could identify "the sons of God" as "the spirits of the righteous made perfect" (Heb. 12:22–24), whose claim to righteousness was then disputed and tested through the example of Job. It is significant that the author of Hebrews seems to deliberately refute those who understood "sons of God" to be angels (Heb. 1:5, 14; 2:5–18; cf. Matt. 22:30).

In the NT, this title first occurs when Jesus promised that his followers would be called "sons of God" (Matt. 5:9 ESV, NASB). Jesus' flight to Egypt marked him as the Son of God who would fulfill that promise (Matt. 2:15). Thus, all who are in Christ by faith receive Israel's status (Rom. 9:8; cf. Gal. 6:16).

Paul says that "the spirit of sonship" gives Christians the right, with Jesus, to address God as "Abba, Father" (Rom. 8:15–16 RSV; Gal. 4:6; cf. Mark 14:36). This adoption is both now and not yet. At conversion, the believer receives the right to bear the title and begin the relationship. It is only at the resurrection that the full implications of adoption as God's sons will be seen (Rom. 8:19–21).

John uses the more diminutive title "children of God" (John 1:12; 1 John 3:1–10; 5:1–2, 19). In Paul's letters this concept comes to the fore in his defense of the inclusion of Gentiles in the church (Rom. 9:4; Gal. 3:26; 4:4–6; Eph. 1:3–14). This connection can be traced back to the words of Jesus in John 11:52. *See also* Children of God, Sons of God.

SONS OF THE PROPHETS Ten times the "sons of the prophets" (NIV: "company of the prophets") are named in connection with Elisha (e.g., 2 Kings 2:3–7; 5:22; 9:1), and they are referenced once in 1 Kings 20:35. They were a small community of faithful Israelites who lived in the dark years of apostasy under Ahab and Jezebel, when worshipers of the true God were persecuted and the fertility cult of Baal was the state-sponsored religion. They lived in Bethel, Jericho, Gilgal, and along the Jordan River. The sons of the prophets knew that God was going to take Elijah away and were concerned that Elisha knew this as well. They saw Elijah divide the Jordan; they also observed Elisha repeat the sign later. They concluded, "The spirit of Elijah is resting on Elisha" (2 Kings 2:15). After that, they considered Elisha to be their leader and themselves his servants.

Unlike Elijah, who was a loner, Elisha is presented in 2 Kings as a man of the city, comfortable living among them. They turned to Elisha on matters small and great because he possessed extraordinary powers, and he used them for the betterment of this faithful group of covenant keepers. He secured the home of a widow who was the wife of one of the sons of the prophets (2 Kings 4:1–7). He recovered a submerged ax head when the sons of the prophets were endeavoring to expand their living space (6:1–7). He even raised the dead (4:36). In many ways, they were like the disciples of Christ, and some of the Gospel accounts seem designed to present Christ as a new Elijah and Elisha (Luke 4:25–27).

SOOTHSAYERS' TREE *See* Diviners' Tree; Terebinth.

SOP The KJV uses "sop" to refer to a thin bit or morsel of bread torn from a flat loaf and dipped into a common dish of meat with broth (cf. Ruth 2:14). At his last supper with his disciples, Jesus dipped a piece of bread in the common or central dish of the Passover platter and handed it to Judas Iscariot, revealing Jesus' unwillingness to treat his betrayer as an enemy and exposing Judas's hardness of heart (John 13:26–30). A sop could also be a bite of the tastiest food served as a central dish, handed to a guest by the host. This act expresses warmth and friendship and is a mark of special honor in the biblical lands even today.

SOPATER The son of Pyrrhus, he was a Berean traveling companion who accompanied Paul on his third missionary journey to deliver an offering from the Gentile churches to the Jerusalem church (Acts 20:4). He perhaps is the same person as Sosipater, who sent greetings with Paul to the church in Rome (Rom. 16:21).

SOPHERETH See Hassophereth.

SORCERER, SORCERY *See* Divination and Magic.

SORE **(1)** A painful breakage in the skin caused by a disease or wound that often becomes infected. Various skin ailments described in Hebrew vocabulary may be translated as "sore": skin disorder (*garab* [Lev. 21:20; 22:22; Deut. 28:27]); moist wound (*makkah teriyyah* [Isa. 1:6]); boil, ulcer (*mazor* [2 Sam. 3:29; Jer. 30:13]); infected sore (*nega'* [Lev. 13:3, 5, 29]); tumor, hemorrhoid (*tekhorim* [Deut. 28:27; 1 Sam. 5:6]); infectious skin disease, traditionally, though not necessarily correctly, translated as "leprosy" (*tsara'at* [e.g., Lev. 13:2–3, 8–9; 14:3, 7; Deut. 24:8; 2 Kings 5:6–7; 2 Chron. 26:9); skin sore or boil (*shekhin* [Exod. 9:9–11; Lev. 13:18–20, 23; Deut. 28:35; 2 Kings 20:7; Job 2:7; Isa. 38:21]); seeping sore, wart (*yabbelet* [Lev. 22:22]).

In contrast, NT Greek uses a single root, *helkos*, to refer to a sore, boil, skin abscess, ulcer (Luke 16:20–21; Rev. 16:2, 11). Sores are significant under Mosaic law, since certain types render one ritually unclean and therefore separated from community life (Lev. 13–14).

(2) A painfully tender physical discomfort (Gen. 34:25). **(3)** An archaic usage in older English versions that describes intensive upset or affliction (e.g., Gen. 20:8; 41:56–57; Josh. 9:24; Matt. 17:6; Acts 20:37 KJV).

SOREK, VALLEY OF One of four major valleys draining water runoff from the central hill country watershed westward through the Shephelah to the coastal plains (the other three are Aijalon, Elah, and Guvrin). The ridges between these valleys provide the approach routes to the hill country from the coast. A remnant of the Danites lived on either side of the Valley of Sorek; their cities were Eshtaol, Zorah, and Beth Shemesh. The Philistine city Timnah (the city of Samson's first love escapade with a Philistine woman [Judg. 14]) lay downstream in the Valley of Sorek. It also was the location of Samson's debacle at Delilah's bosom (Judg. 16:4–30). The cow-drawn cart returning the ark of the covenant from Philistine captivity came up the Valley of Sorek from Ekron to Beth Shemesh (1 Sam. 6:10–12).

The Valley of Sorek

SORROW Both the OT and the NT use several words that fall into the category of sorrow. Sorrow may be felt to different degrees as fits the severity of the circumstances. Likewise, it may be expressed in many ways, such as crying or weeping (Jer. 4:8; Joel 1:18), hiring professional mourners (Jer. 9:17; Mark 5:38), tearing one's clothes (2 Sam. 13:19), wearing sackcloth (2 Sam. 3:31; Jer. 4:8), sitting in dust and ashes (Job 2:8; Luke 10:13), throwing dust over one's head (Job 2:12), fasting (Esther 4:3), shaving one's head or beard (Job 1:20; Jer. 41:5), and beating one's chest (Isa. 32:12; Luke 18:13).

Because of sin and the curse, pain is inescapable and sorrow appropriate. Although people may respond negatively, sorrow can be a positive part of repentance, developing character (2 Cor. 7:10–11) or demonstrating sympathy to others (Rom. 12:15) as a response to their difficulties. The reality of pain highlights joy and anticipation of Christ's return (John 16:19–22; Rev. 21:4; cf. Jer. 31:13).

While sorrow may first come from the circumstances or threat of punishment, it is an important component of repentance, as regret over wrongdoing can lead one to change behavior.

SOSIPATER A "fellow Jew" present with Paul during his writing of his letter to the Romans and whose greetings are conveyed to the church at Rome (Rom. 16:21). He perhaps is the same person as Sopater, who accompanied Paul on his third missionary journey (Acts 20:4).

SOSTHENES **(1)** A synagogue ruler (leader) in Corinth when "the Jews" instigated legal action against Paul (Acts 18:12–17). Gallio, proconsul of Corinth, dismissed it as an internal Jewish matter. "The crowd" (probably the Jews, but perhaps the Greeks) shamed Sosthenes by publicly beating him, apparently believing that he was responsible for their loss (18:17); perhaps he selected or presented the charges. Apparently, Gallio agreed that Sosthenes' actions were shameful, since he did not intervene. **(2)** The cosender of 1 Corinthians (1:1). The fact that Paul names Sosthenes as cosender indicates that he had some role in the letter's composition. It is possible, but not proven, that this is the same person as in Acts 18:12–17. If so, he had become a believer in Jesus Christ, and perhaps he went to Ephesus from Corinth to visit Paul with Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus (see 1 Cor. 16:17–18).

SOTAI An ancestor of a family that belonged to the "servants of Solomon" (Ezra 2:55; Neh. 7:57) and that returned with Zerubbabel in 539 BC or soon after. Little is known about this group except that they likely performed menial functions at the temple, since they are grouped with the "temple servants" (*see* Nethinim). The name of the group suggests that they were formed during the period of Solomon, although they could have been so named because Solomon had the first temple built.

SOUL The way the word "soul" is used in English does not align well with any single Hebrew or Greek word in the Bible. Rather, it reflects the accumulation of cultural and religious understanding of the past. It is widely accepted that the biblical view (both OT and NT) of humanity does not recognize sharp boundaries between body and soul (bipartite anthropology) or between body, soul, and spirit (tripartite). The human being is, according to biblical teaching, a psychosomatic unity. In fact, *nepesh*, the Hebrew word most commonly translated as "soul," probably should more often be translated as "self." In several occurrences in the OT, *nepesh* seems to mean "life" (Josh. 2:13; 1 Kings 19:4). Of course, given the Hellenistic background of the LXX and the NT, Greek *psychē* could mean something akin to "soul" as it is commonly used in English. But close examination shows that the NT use of the word is much closer to the OT conception than to its contemporary Hellenistic sense.

Nevertheless, our intuition leads us to make a conceptual distinction between the nonphysical abode of our "hearts and minds" and the physical presence of our being. At the most basic level, it relates to the question of death and its aftermath: when we die, can anything remain apart from the physicality of our existence? The Greek answer to this is belief in the immortality of the soul; the biblical answer is resurrection of the body. Since the Bible maintains the psychosomatic unity, purely nonphysical existence for the nonphysical part of humanity is not presented as a valid answer to the fundamental question of death. This is why the OT describes a dead person as "sleeping with his fathers." The NT concept of soul is clearly based on the OT counterpart; nevertheless, there is also a clearer distinction between body and soul. An example is provided by Jesus when he says, "Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul" (Matt. 10:28).

SOUTH *See* Directions; Negev.

SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD Since the early apologists' first attempts to defend the Christian faith against contemporary Greco-Roman philosophers, explanations of God's sovereignty have found support from Platonic, Neoplatonic, and Aristotelian categories. This unfortunate "marriage" pushed theologians to identify God's power in static and absolute categories that explained God as unmoved and impassible. God’s sovereign will must be perfect and cannot be affected by the world or by human suffering. In his perfection, God is necessarily *apatheia* (Aristotle), beyond joy or sorrow (Plato). This notion led medieval and Reformation theologians to assert that Jesus suffered in his human nature, but not in his divine nature. To protect God’s integrity (incapability of corruption), the biblical emphasis on God’s passionate involvement with his creation and people (e.g., Isa. 34:2; Zeph. 3:17) was squelched.

Christian speculation on God’s sovereignty followed the Neoplatonic principle of plenitude, in which the created universe is little more than the divine being’s necessary overflow of temporal diversity. God’s perfection requires the unlimited actualization of all possibilities. For Augustine, this meant that all human experience is foreclosed in God’s eternity; for Anselm, it gave an ontological argument for God’s existence; for Abelard, it meant that God cannot do or leave undone anything other than what he has done; for Beza (Calvinism), double predestination was a given; for Schleiermacher, human self-consciousness had its roots in the divine being; for Tillich, a “God above God” was the ground of all being; and we could add many others. “Sovereignty,” in these delineations, expresses the necessary manifestation of God’s perfection and absolute power.

The biblical language of sovereignty does not parallel such logic. Broadly speaking, the Bible describes sovereignty as God’s divine authority to rule his creation in general and Israel in particular. He is the Lord of all creation and the King of Israel. He is almighty (sovereign) to accomplish his purpose, which is to restore his kingdom on earth through Christ (1 Tim. 6:14–15), to whom he now has given all authority (Matt. 28:18). Rather than an aloof divinity of perfection, God is presented in the Bible as intensely personal and superbly engaged in the affairs of his creation. He remains outside his creation as its supreme, infinite Creator (transcendence), while allowing his love to instruct both his justice and his power (immanence). He creates not because the necessity of his perfection requires it but rather out of sovereign freedom and love. He is both protective of his position as Lord of creation and concerned for his people’s welfare (Deut. 6:13–19). His sovereignty displays his moral character (Exod. 15:11–18) while demanding reciprocal love and relational obedience from his people.

As sovereign, God has power and rule that are above all other powers and rulers (Pss. 22:28; 103:19; Dan. 5:21). His providential care for all creation exhibits his loving kingship and confirms his essential goodness. God’s sovereignty affirms that human life has meaning and purpose; he does not leave us alone to create our own happiness, nor are we subject to whatever misery presses upon us (1 Chron. 29:11). Rather than an indivisible attribute, God’s power is subject to his control and expresses itself relationally. This same relationality lies behind the biblical understanding of God’s will and unchangeable character (James 1:17; cf. Ps. 102:25–27; Isa. 40:8). As a comparison of 1 Sam. 15:11 with 15:29 shows, God’s sovereignty does not militate against his freedom to change his mind. Rather, God remains unchangeably faithful and true to his character even when humans prove faithless and false (2 Tim. 2:13).

This relational quality of God’s sovereignty is rooted in his triunity. His existence is coexistence as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This makes love the distinctive mark of his sovereignty. The doctrine of the Trinity safeguards against metaphysical understandings of God that make light of his self-revelation in Christ. Opposite the self-expanding god of philosophical speculations, the biblical God manifests his sovereignty through the self-limiting and self-denying Christ (Phil. 2:5–11), who reveals God’s absolute power as the servant of his absolute love.

SOW A female pig. Peter uses the sow’s instinct to wallow in mud as a metaphorical proverb, illustrating sinners who return to their sin (2 Pet. 2:22). *See also* Swine.

SOWER A farmer or one who plants seeds by scattering them. A very common profession in biblical times, it was frequently used metaphorically to refer to the natural rewards of living lives of holiness or sin, or of reaping what one sows (Prov. 11:18; 2 Cor. 9:6; Gal. 6:7). Jesus contrasted the "sower" with the "reaper" to illustrate different responsibilities that individuals have in participating in God's "harvest" (John 4:36). He also used this example in one of his most famous parables to illustrate various responses of people to the word of God (Matt. 13:1–9 pars.).

SOWING The process of planting seeds. Because ancient Israel was an agricultural society, this concept is used in many biblical metaphors (Matt. 13:3; Luke 12:24; 1 Cor. 15:36–37).

SPACIOUS PLACE A wide, open, roomy space, either in a city or the countryside, often used as a figure for deliverance. Within a city a spacious place (NKJV, ESV: "broad place") provided space for assemblies or proclamations (e.g., Esther 4:6 ASV). In the country it allowed room for people to live and establish themselves (Job 36:16). The Bible often portrays God as providing the space (cf. Gen. 26:22), enabling his people to dwell in security, free from distress (2 Sam. 22:20; Ps. 18:19).

SPAIN A country on the Iberian Peninsula in southwestern Europe that was conquered by the Romans about 200 BC. Paul expressed a desire to evangelize the area before his death (Rom. 15:24, 28), though there is considerable debate as to whether he fulfilled this desire. According to *1 Clem.* 5.5–7 (c. AD 95), Paul did reach Spain ("farthest limits of the West").

SPAN A unit of measurement based on the breadth of a spread hand, the equivalent of half a cubit, nine inches, or twenty-two centimeters (Exod. 28:16; 39:9; 1 Sam. 17:4; Ezek. 43:13). More generally, it refers to the length between two limits (Exod. 23:26; Isa. 23:15).

SPARK A fiery particle thrown from a fire or produced by striking together two hard materials such as stone or metal. The figurative "sparks" (Job 41:19) are understood to emanate from the mouth of the mythical Leviathan. Man himself is the spark (Isa. 1:31), a catalyst for punishment, destroying both people and their work. A tiny spark instigating a forest fire describes the uncontrollable and destructive power of the tongue (James 3:5).

SPARROW A small, predominantly brown, seed-eating bird that adapts well to towns. Species found in Israel include the house sparrow, the Spanish sparrow, and the Dead Sea sparrow. The Greek word *strouthion* may refer specifically to sparrows (Matt. 10:29, 31; Luke 12:6; Tob. 2:10), but the Hebrew word *tsippor* (translated as "sparrow" by the NIV in Ps. 84:3; Prov. 26:2) simply means "bird" and covers a wide range of species (see Gen. 7:14; Ezek. 39:4).

Ritually clean small birds were snared or taken from the nest to be used for sacrifice and food, especially by the poor (e.g., Lev. 14:4–7; Deut. 14:11; 22:6–7; Neh. 5:18; Eccles. 9:12). In poetry, they are mentioned in connection with their nests (e.g., Pss. 84:3; 104:17; Prov. 27:8), flight (Prov. 26:2), and song (Eccles. 12:4). Since many are normally gregarious and stay close to the nest, a solitary or straying small bird is a striking image (Ps. 102:7; Prov. 27:8).

In the first century AD a sparrow cost 1⁄32 or even 1⁄40 of a day's wage. Jesus contrasts the low market price of sparrows with God's providential care for each one of them, thereby assuring us that we are of far greater value to our Father (Matt. 10:29–31; Luke 12:6–7).

SPECK *See* Mote.

SPECTACLE An exhibition, dramatic public scene, or noteworthy display. In the OT, it refers to God making someone (Ezek. 28:17 [the king of Tyre]) or something (Nah. 3:6 [the city of Nineveh]) an object of contempt. In the NT, "spectacle" translates the Greek words *theatron* (1 Cor. 4:9 [in reference to the apostles' public humiliations]) and *theōria* (Luke 23:48 [in reference to Jesus' public crucifixion]), referring to events on the stage of an amphitheater.

SPEECH IMPEDIMENT In Mark 7:32 Jesus heals a man who was deaf and "mute" (*mogilalos*) by spitting, touching his ears and tongue, and saying, "Be opened!" The exact nature of the speech impediment is unclear, though it is described figuratively as a "binding of the tongue" (7:35; NIV "could hardly talk"). In Exod. 4:10, Moses describes himself as "slow of speech and tongue," which many interpreters have understood as referring to a speech impediment; however, this may refer more broadly to a perceived lack of eloquence rather than to a literal impairment.

SPELT *Triticum spelta* is a hybrid of emmer wheat (*Triticum dicoccum*) and wild goat-grass (*Aegilops tauschii*) that appeared eight to ten millennia ago in the ancient Near East. Spelt spikelets contain two reddish grains that feature a hull tougher than that of common wheat (*Triticum aestivum*). In the Bible, it appears in the company of other grains and crops, such as wheat, barley, and millet (Exod. 9:32; Isa. 28:25; Ezek. 4:9).

SPICES In the Bible, words for "spice" include the Hebrew *bosem* (NIV: "spice, perfume, fragrance") and *sam* (NIV: "fragrant incense, fragrant spice") and the Greek *arōma* and *amōmon* (NIV: "spice"). Aromatic vegetable products were used either to season food or as perfuming agents, and sometimes as both. The Greek term *amōmon* occurs only in Rev. 18:13, in this context probably referring to a spice from India. The term *arōma* occurs only in Mark 16:1; Luke 23:56; 24:1; John 19:40, where it is not technically part of an embalming process, since it does not stop decomposition, but rather is intended to offset the odor of death. If a funeral pyre is not intended in 2 Chron. 16:14, the spices there serve this same function. The Hebrew term *sam* occurs most frequently in Exodus in connection with the incense to be burned before God (Exod. 25:6; 30:7, 34; 31:11; 35:8, 15, 28; 37:29; 39:38; 40:27; cf. Lev. 4:7; 16:12; Num. 4:16; 2 Chron. 13:11). The term *bosem* occurs more widely throughout the OT with reference to both fragrances (e.g., Isa. 3:24) and spices (e.g., 1 Kings 10:10) and can modify the name of specific spices, as in Exod. 30:23: "cinnamon spice" (NIV: "fragrant cinnamon") and "cane spice" (NIV: "fragrant calamus").

Middle Eastern spices

Spices were in high demand, making food and living more enjoyable, especially for the wealthy. They were used in food (implicit in Ezek. 24:10) and drink (Song 8:2). The spice trade forged the earliest routes from northern India to Sumer, Akkad, and Egypt (cf. Gen. 37:25). Trade led to cultural exchange and, in the time of Solomon, to national wealth from tolls collected on such shipments. Ezekiel 27:22 and Rev. 18:13 show the value associated with this trade, and 2 Kings 20:13 places spices among King Hezekiah's "treasures." The sensual luxury of spices could be erotic (e.g., Esther 2:12; Song 5:1; 6:2; 8:14); indeed, Song of Songs, though short, uses the word *bosem* more than any other book in the OT. Some spices, such as frankincense, were important to worship rituals in ancient Israel, being used in offerings (Lev. 24:7) and in the anointing oil and incense (Exod. 25:6; 30:22–38). Producing the right mixtures required skilled individuals (Exod. 30:25; 1 Chron. 9:29–30).

The list below includes a number of spices named in the Bible.

Aloe (Heb. *'ahalim*, *'ahalot*; Gk. *aloē*). In the OT this probably refers to *Aquilaria agallocha*, a spice derived from the eaglewood tree and used to perfume cloth (Ps. 45:8; Prov. 7:17; Song 4:14). In the NT, it refers to the juice from *Aloe vera* leaves (John 19:39).

Balm (Heb. *tsori*). Apparently native to Gilead, the plant is now unknown. The earliest association is with stacte (*Commiphora gileadensis*), which does not currently grow in Gilead. Noted for its healing benefit to wounds (Jer. 8:22; 46:11; 51:8), balm was exported (Gen. 37:25; 43:11; Ezek. 27:17).

Calamus (Heb. *qaneh*). Also known as sweet flag (*Acorus calamus*), calamus was used for its aroma and as a tonic and stimulant (Song 4:14; Isa. 43:24; Jer. 6:20; Ezek. 27:19).

Caraway (Heb. *qetsakh*). The seeds of this plant (*Nigella sativa*) were used as a condiment and to ease intestinal gas. A light beating freed the seeds without crushing them (Isa. 28:25, 27).

Cassia (Heb. *qiddah*, *qetsi'ah*). These Hebrew terms probably refer to an aromatic similar to cinnamon, like the bark of the *Cinnamomum aromaticum*, or more likely the *Cinnamomum iners* of Arabia and Ethiopia (Exod. 30:24; Ps. 45:8; Ezek. 27:19).

Cinnamon (Heb. *qinnamon*; Gk. *kinnamōmon*). A local variety of cinnamon, or “true cinnamon” (*Cinnamomum zeylanicum*) imported from Sri Lanka (Exod. 30:23; Prov. 7:17; Song 4:14; Rev. 18:13). Loosely related may be the “spice” (Gk. *amōmon*) of Rev. 18:13; the word often appears alongside “cardamom” in extrabiblical writings; it perhaps indicates black cardamom.

Coriander (Heb. *gad*). Also known as cilantro, this has long been used as a food seasoning; it also served as a medicine to aid digestion and sleep (Exod. 16:31; Num. 11:7).

Cumin (Heb. *kammon*; Gk. *kyminon*). *Cuminum cyminum*, which is similar to caraway in taste and appearance, has long been cultivated in Palestine as a seasoning. Like caraway, it is threshed to keep the seeds intact (Isa. 28:25, 27; Matt. 23:23).

Dill (Gk. *anēthon*). Used for seasoning, this herb (*Anethum graveolens*) was among those tithed by the Pharisees (Matt. 23:23).

Frankincense (Heb. *lebonah*; Gk. *libanos*). This fragrant resin from trees of the genus *Boswellia* was used in worship (Exod. 30:34; Lev. 24:7) and was among the gifts brought to Jesus at his birth (Matt. 2:11).

Gum resin (Heb. *natap*). Also known as stacte, this ingredient of the holy incense (Exod. 30:34) was derived from either *Commiphora gileadensis* (balm of Gilead) or *Styrax officinale*.

Mint (Gk. *hēdyosmon*). Most likely *Mentha longifolia*, it was tithed by the Pharisees (Matt. 23:23; Luke 11:42).

Myrrh (Heb. *mor*, *lot*; Gk. *smyrna*, cf. *myron*). A resin exuded from incisions in the branches of trees such as *Commiphora myrrha* and *Commiphora kataf* and useful for its fragrance and antiseptic properties (Exod. 30:23; Ps. 45:8; Prov. 7:17; Song 1:13; 3:6; Esther 2:12). Hebrew *lot* (Gen. 37:25; 43:11) probably refers to labdanum.

Nard (Heb. *nerd*; Gr. *nardos*). In the OT (Song 1:12; 4:13–14), camel grass (*Cymbopogon schoenanthus*) from northern Africa and Arabia probably is in view, but in the NT (Mark 14:3; John 12:3), *Nardostachys jatamansi* from Nepal is suggested. Nard was used as an ointment or perfume.

Rue (Gk. *pēganon*). Mentioned only in Luke 11:42, *Ruta chalepensis* was cultivated to flavor food and was thought to have medicinal value.

Saffron (Heb. *karkom*). Produced from the flowers of the *Crocus sativus*, native to Greece and Asia Minor, this expensive spice was used not only for culinary purposes but also as an antispasmodic and emmenagogue (Song 4:14).

SPIDER Spiders are common in Palestine. Spiderwebs picture the ungodly’s fragile existence (Job 8:14; cf. Job 27:18), and the weaving of webs describes wicked actions (Isa. 59:5–6).

SPIKENARD *See* Nard.

SPINDLE A rotating rod on which fibers are twisted to form thread. It is used along with the distaff in the process of spinning. Unspun flax or wool is drawn from the distaff and twisted onto a spindle. The spindle often is used in conjunction with a weight to expedite the process. In ancient times spinning was primarily the job of women (Exod. 35:25). The book of Proverbs gives a brief description of this process (Prov. 31:19).

SPINNING AND WEAVING Spinning (forming fibers into thread or yarn) and weaving (forming yarn into textiles) were the basic economic activities of women throughout the ancient world (see Exod. 35:25–26). This is reflected in the Bible in Prov. 31:10–31, where the “wife of noble character” is depicted as a proficient producer of fine textiles. The process is portrayed in some detail, including the gathering of raw materials (31:13), the skillful making of yarn with distaff and spindle (31:19), the crafting of garments and upholstery (31:22, 24), and the selling of the same (31:24). As is clear from this passage, textile production was a domestic activity, taking place not in specialized factories but in any home where sufficient labor was available. The Hebrew word for “weaver” occurs as a masculine participle, suggesting the participation of men in the craft (Exod. 35:35; Isa. 38:12).

In biblical Israel, fabric was made either from flax (a plant fiber yielding linen fabric) or wool (sheep or goat). In Isa. 19:9 the production of fine linen is particularly associated with Egypt. The most abundant evidence of spinning and weaving to survive in the archaeological record comes in the form of stone or clay loom weights and spindle whorls. Less frequently, we find fragments of the wooden parts of the loom (such as the heddle rod or beam [see 1 Sam. 17:7]), bone or ivory tools, spinning bowls, and in some cases actual textile and cordage fragments. A loom is a wooden framework on which fabric is woven. In biblical lands, both vertical (against a wall) and horizontal (parallel with the ground) looms were used. The ubiquity of these implements in excavations of domestic sites attests the universality of textile production as a home craft in the biblical world. Samson tricks Delilah into weaving his hair into a loom and tightening it with a pin (Judg. 16:13). Again, this story illustrates the fact that the typical home contained a loom.

A weaving loom

Several ancient cultures had a patron deity of spinning and weaving, usually a female goddess: the Mesopotamian Uttu, the Egyptian Tait, and Athena in the Greek world. There are indications that Asherah was the goddess of spinning and weaving in West Semitic culture, which includes Israel and its neighbors. Evidence for spinning and weaving has been discovered at a tenth-century BC cultic site at Ta’anach in central Israel (see 2 Kings 23:7).

Metaphorically, a spider spins its web (Isa. 59:5). Jesus reverses the analogy of spinning and weaving to the natural world by stating that the lilies of the field “do not labor or spin” and yet are magnificently clothed in natural beauty, exceeding even the artificial splendor of Solomon (Matt. 6:28; Luke 12:27).

SPIRIT In the world of the Bible, a person was viewed as a unity of being with the pervading breath and thus imprint of the loving and holy God. The divine-human relationship consequently is portrayed in the Bible as predominantly spiritual in nature. God is spirit, and humankind may communicate with him in the spiritual realm. The ancients believed in an invisible world of spirits that held most, if not all, reasons for natural events and human actions in the visible world.

OLD TESTAMENT

The OT writers used the common Hebrew word *ruakh* (“wind” or “breath”) to describe force and even life from the God of the universe. In its most revealing first instance, God’s *ruakh* hovered above the waters of the uncreated world (Gen. 1:2). In the next chapter of Genesis a companion word, *neshamah* (“breath”) is used as God breathed into Adam’s nostrils “the breath of life” (2:7). God thus breathed his own image into the first human being. Humankind’s moral obligations in the remainder of the Bible rest on this breathing act of God.

The OT authors often employ *ruakh* simply to denote air in motion or breath from a person’s mouth. However, special instances of the use of *ruakh* include references to the very life of a person (Gen. 7:22; Ps. 104:29), an attitude or emotion (Gen. 41:8; Num. 14:24; Ps. 77:3), the negative traits of pride or temper (Ps. 76:12), a generally good disposition (Prov. 11:13; 18:14), the seat of conversion (Ezek. 18:31; 36:26), and determination given by God (2 Chron. 36:22; Hag. 1:14).

On occasion in the OT, spirits are labeled “evil” (Judg. 9:23 ESV, NRSV, NASB). In the case of an evil spirit tormenting King Saul, the spirit was identified as “from the LORD” (1 Sam. 16:14–15, 23). According to the perspective of the ancients, once a person was possessed by a divine spirit, departure of such a spirit meant possession by a different spirit (1 Sam. 16:14). Such a perspective was common in the ancient Near Eastern and Mediterranean worlds and stemmed from the religious fervor of Semitic nomads.

NEW TESTAMENT

The NT authors used the Greek term *pneuma* to convey the concept of spirit. In the world of the NT, the human spirit was understood as the divine part of human reality as distinct from the material realm. The spirit appears conscious and capable of rejoicing (Luke 1:47). Jesus was described by Luke as growing and becoming “strong in spirit” (1:80). In “spirit” Jesus “knew” what certain teachers of the law were thinking in their hearts (Mark 2:8). Likewise, Jesus “was deeply moved in spirit and troubled” at the sickness of a loved one (John 11:33). At the end of his life, Jesus gave up his spirit (John 19:30).

According to Jesus, the spirit is the place of God’s new covenant work of conversion and worship (John 3:5; 4:24). He declared the human spirit’s dependence on God and ascribed great virtue to those people who were “poor in spirit” (Matt. 5:3).

Human beings who were possessed by an evil spirit were devalued in Mediterranean society. In various places in the Synoptic Gospels and the book of Acts, either Jesus or the disciples were involved in exorcisms of such spirits (Matt. 8:28–33; Mark 1:21–28; 7:24–30; 9:14–29; 5:1–20; 9:17–29; Luke 8:26–33; 9:37–42; Acts 5:16).

The apostle Paul pointed to the spirit as the seat of conversion (Rom. 7:6; 1 Cor. 5:5). He described believers as facing a struggle between flesh and spirit in regard to living a sanctified life (Rom. 8:2–17; Gal. 5:16–17). A contradiction seems apparent in Pauline thinking as he appears to embrace Greek dualistic understanding of body (flesh) and spirit while likewise commanding that “spirit, soul and body be kept blameless” (1 Thess. 5:23). However, the Christian struggle between flesh and Spirit (the Holy Spirit) centers around the believer’s body being dead because of sin but the spirit being alive because of the crucified and resurrected Christ (Rom. 8:10). Believers therefore are encouraged to lead a holistic life, lived in the Spirit.

HOLY SPIRIT

God’s Spirit is described in the opening chapters of Genesis as partaking in creation. His Spirit likewise is seen throughout the OT as an agent in establishing God's people as a nation and a people of his own. Leaders of Israel were chosen and possessed by the Spirit to assist in leading the people into God's will (Deut. 34:9; Judg. 6:34; 15:14; 1 Sam. 11:6; 16:23). Typically, the moment the Spirit of God descended on a leader, miraculous fortitude, wisdom, and power resulted. The Spirit also provided whatever was needed for God's prophets—courage, inspiration, and miracles (Num. 11:25; 1 Sam. 10:10; Isa. 11:2; Ezek. 2:2; Dan. 4:8; Joel 2:28). The office of prophet included prophesying both in the king's court and among the people of the land. As the Spirit came on a prophet of God, the prophet would correct the king's and others' behavior and at times foretell the future or the outcome of possible decisions.

In the Synoptic Gospels, the Holy Spirit functions in much the same way as in the OT. One such function appears in Luke's birth narrative when the angel answers Mary's question as to how she might conceive while a virgin (Luke 1:34): "The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you" (1:35). The Greek verb translated "will overshadow you" is used in the LXX to describe God's protective nature (Pss. 91:4; 140:7). Likewise, the coming of God's Spirit presented empowerment (Acts 1:8). Thus, Mary received both divine empowerment and protection. As the birth narrative continues, Luke records how other characters in the story, Elizabeth and Zechariah, were filled with the Spirit when Mary came to visit while pregnant with Jesus and when John the Baptist, the forerunner of the Messiah, was born (1:41, 67). The evangelists record the Spirit descending on Jesus at the time of his baptism (Matt. 3:16; Mark 1:10; Luke 3:22; John 1:32–34) and describe him as full of the Spirit when he was led by the Spirit into the desert (Luke 4:1). Finally, in John's Gospel the Spirit is the promised comforter whom Jesus will give to his followers. He will testify about Christ (John 15:26).

In the new covenant the Spirit-possession of the OT gave way to believers' reception of the Spirit at conversion. In Acts the Holy Spirit is presented as instrumental in carrying out the mission of the church, providing power and signs as well as moving and motivating missionaries. The apostle Paul attributes to the Holy Spirit the function of imbuing believers and the church with an assortment of virtues (Gal. 5:22), gifts (Rom. 12:7–8; 1 Cor. 12:1–11), and ministers (Eph. 4:7–13). He uses the idea of life in the Spirit as a point of contrast with life in the flesh. In John's letters the Spirit is described as providing discernment of truth (1 John 4:6). *See also* Holy Spirit.

SPIRIT, HOLY *See* Holy Spirit; Spirit.

SPIRITS IN PRISON According to 1 Pet. 3:18–20 (NIV 1984), Christ "made proclamation to the imprisoned spirits—to those who were disobedient long ago . . . in the days of Noah while the ark was being built." The identity of the "imprisoned spirits," or "spirits in prison," has long puzzled interpreters and is bound up with the larger issue of the nature of Christ's preaching. Historically, several explanations presuppose that the "spirits in prison" are the souls of dead humans. Theologians have disagreed regarding several issues. Did Christ preach to them while they were still living (in the days of Noah) or after they had died and were in "prison"? If the latter, was this preaching between Christ's death and resurrection, during the crucifixion, or after the ascension? Did Christ preach to the spirits of all who died prior to the incarnation of Christ, only to the righteous, only to the unrighteous, or even only to the generation that was alive at the time of Noah? Each of these possibilities has its proponents.

Another approach to the problem proceeds from the insight that the word "spirits" (Gk. *pneumata*) does not usually describe dead humans in the NT, nor does "prison" (Gk. *phylakē*) describe the abode of the dead. Based on these observations, it has been proposed that the “spirits in prison” are malevolent supernatural beings (nonhuman). This theory finds support, not explicitly in the NT, but in well-attested contemporary Jewish traditions, according to which the flood itself was caused by the malfeasance of such beings (see Gen. 6:1–6; cf. Luke 10:17–20). *See also* Descent into Hades.

SPIRITUAL GIFTS The Christian faith is the faith of the new covenant promised to Israel’s prophets of old (Jer. 31:31–34; Ezek. 36:26–27; Joel 2:28–29). As Jesus came to fulfill these prophecies about God’s renewed presence among his people (Mark 1:14–15), powerful acts of God’s Spirit gave visible expressions to the presence of God’s kingdom (Matt. 12:28; Luke 7:22). According to the NT, God established the new covenant by an outpouring of his Spirit (Acts 2:1–21) that empowered the church to continue the ministry of Jesus. Paul expresses the centrality of this experience when he states that unless a person evidences the presence of God’s Spirit, such an individual does not belong to Christ (Rom. 8:9). Put differently, the Spirit seals believers’ relationships with Christ (2 Cor. 1:22; Eph. 4:30), making them a part of his body, the church (1 Cor. 12).

Spiritual gifts are understood in light of this. They are seen as the Spirit’s enablement of Christians to express their new covenant relationship with God. The Spirit gifts all Christians, empowering them to function as serving members of Christ’s body and thereby fulfilling their purpose in God’s plan. Divine gifts are therefore indispensable to the Christian life, which without them would fail to bear witness to its supernatural origin.

TERMINOLOGY

The two terms Paul uses for these gifts, *pneumatika* (gifts of the Spirit) and *charismata* (gifts of grace), identify them as gifts bestowed freely and sovereignly by God through his Spirit. They are gifts, not earned qualities, and they belong to those whom the Spirit has filled (1 Cor. 2:12) and are withheld from those who are ignorant of the Spirit (2:14). These grace gifts, though they do not differ in nature (1 Cor. 12:4–11), vary in both function (Rom. 12:4–8; 1 Cor. 12:12–26; Eph. 4:11–13) and importance (1 Cor. 12:28–31).

Pneumatika is the lesser used of the two terms. It is a neuter plural noun and may be translated variously as spiritual “gifts, things, issues, truths.” For example, the English word “truths” or “things” may translate 1 Cor. 2:13 most accurately; “seeds” may fit 1 Cor. 9:11 best; “issues,” 1 Cor. 12:1; “gifts,” 1 Cor. 14:1; and “forces,” Eph. 6:12. In Rom. 15:27, Paul uses *pneumatika* to refer to Israel’s spiritual “blessing” or “wealth.”

Charismata, from which we get the English word “charismatic,” is also a neuter plural noun and is by far the more prevalent of the two. The use of *charis* (“grace”) moors this word to God as the gracious giver and underscores the unmerited quality of the gifts (Rom. 5:15; 6:23). With the sole exception of 1 Pet. 4:10, the word is exclusive to Paul. It functions mostly as a technical term describing the distribution of specific service gifts to each believer by the Holy Spirit. Their purpose is to build up the church (1 Cor. 12:7), not to classify, or spiritually evaluate, individual believers (12:12–25).

TYPES OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS

Although the NT mentions or alludes to individual gifts in various places, Paul gives three lists of *charismata* (Rom. 12:6–8; 1 Cor. 12:4–11, 28–30; Eph. 4:7, 11). Since the content of each of these lists so clearly fits a specific literary (and historical) context, they are not exhaustive. Rather, they are examples of how the Spirit manifests himself in the Christian community (1 Cor. 12:7). As Spirit manifestations, *charismata* are a permanent and necessary endowment for the church. The individual gifts may vary over time and between specific congregations, but it would be unthinkable for Paul that *charismata* as such would cease. Since their purpose is to empower the church to evidence the presence of God's kingdom, they will not cease until the end, when the kingdom becomes visible to all (1 Cor. 13:8–10).

Classifying the gifts that Paul mentions proves next to impossible, and the NT's apparent lack of interest in such organization may even make such efforts suspect. Similarly, the absence of the word *charismata* as introductory to the list in Eph. 4:11 does not indicate a Pauline attempt to classify the gifts. Although he refers to the recipients of the gifts rather than the gifts themselves, his expansion of the word *charismata* into *charis* ("grace" [Eph. 4:7]) and *domata* ("gifts" [4:8]) clearly qualifies 4:11 as a list of spiritual gifts.

Spiritual gifts grant the foundation for church leadership positions as, for example, apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers. According to Paul, a gift such as prophecy (hearing, knowing, and proclaiming God's word) proves greater than other gifts precisely because it empowers for the edification of the church (compare 1 Cor. 14:1–5 with Eph. 4:12). Paul's ranking of the gifts in 1 Cor. 12:28 hints at the same. Gifts such as these, which may be termed "office gifts," seem to have a more permanent character and, at least on some occasions, to be granted through the laying on of hands (1 Tim. 4:14; 2 Tim. 1:6).

It does not follow that the reception of an office gift automatically qualifies a person for, or grants the right to, a leadership position in the church. Rather, such qualification, or right, is granted by the church as it acknowledges the Spirit's equipping of a person for a specific leadership task. Such recognition needs to be based on both specific gifting and spiritual maturity (1 Tim. 3). A neglect of proper emphasis on the latter likely is a major reason that Paul feels compelled to remind Timothy not to be too hasty with the laying on of hands (1 Tim. 5:22).

Although sharp distinctions are impossible, it seems that the Spirit grants some gifts for specific ministry situations. Different from the more permanent office gifts, these are temporary empowerments from God granted according to occurring needs. The Spirit bestows these gifts not to bear witness to a particular endowment of certain people (possession), but rather to bring enablement to specific ministry situations and thereby bear witness to the continual action of the Spirit in the church. In this way, spiritual gifts become clear expressions of how the grace of the new covenant reaches people as an unmerited gift designed to generate worship of God (Heb. 12:28; cf. 1 Cor. 14:16).

Paul's eagerness to group all *charismata* under the inspiration of the "same Spirit" (1 Cor. 12:4, 8–9, 11), whether they be more "practical" (service, giving, helping, acts of mercy, administration, etc.) or more "numinous" (prophecy, wisdom, words of knowledge, speaking in tongues, miracles, etc.), almost certainly indicates that he found an inseparable link between the exercise of gifts and the awareness of the Spirit's presence. Although the mere occurrence of a gift-act (e.g., an act of mercy) does not singularly evidence the presence of the Holy Spirit, Paul must have perceived an indispensable connection between the expression of spiritual gifts and the experience of divine presence. Paul never explains a gift-act (e.g., administration) as a mere exercise of natural talent or learned skill; rather, even "natural talent" depends on Spirit empowerment for its usefulness in the kingdom.

It follows that although God grants his gifts as an act of grace and not on the basis of merit, there is a dynamic relationship between the effectiveness of the gift and the life of the Christian. Paul treats this connection between spiritual gifts and the quality of the believer's life most directly in 1 Cor. 13. The abrupt insertion of this chapter in the midst of his discussion of spiritual gifts (chaps. 12 and 14) signals the intrinsic relatedness of these two aspects in Paul's thinking. Furthermore, the unrelenting emphasis of chapter 13, that the Christian is nothing (v. 2) and gains nothing (v. 3) without love, exhibits how in Paul's reasoning spiritual gifts require godliness for true effectiveness.

BALANCE AND PROPORTION

The troubles that Paul addresses in Corinth are due not to a deficiency of gifts but to a lack of proportion and balance in their use. As 1 Cor. 14:1 amply indicates, the purpose of chapter 13 is not to parade love as the greatest among spiritual gifts, but to show that the spiritual gifts are given not for private convenience and gratification but as gifts whose purpose, function, and efficacy connect the believers' lives to the Spirit and their participation in the body of Christ (1 Cor. 14:12). Without such basis, the *charismata* would lose their purpose and power as instruments of the Spirit, and their use would eradicate the Spirit's presence rather than prove it.

Paul's discussion in Rom. 12:6 of the measure with which God bestows *charismata* to each individual follows this same line of reasoning. That this verse occurs in the midst of an exhortation on godliness suggests that Paul understood *charismata* to have dynamic qualities. The Spirit grants "in proportion." Moreover, when Paul begins his exhortation on the use of gifts by stating that prophecy must be done "in proportion" to the prophet's faith, he is asserting that it must result from the prophet's relationship to God. Since this is the opening statement that gives guidance to the understanding of the subsequent gift list, it follows that in Paul's mind the believer's faith and "walk" either open the door or set the limitation for a kingdom-revealing use of spiritual gifts.

The fact that some gifts are given as a result of prayer (1 Cor. 14:13) further reveals that Paul sees no discrepancy between the "free gift" aspect of the *charismata* and a believer's eager desire for a specific gift. Rather, Paul focuses his discussion in chapter 14 on the distinction between two gifts (prophecy and tongues), both of which were decidedly dependent upon the Spirit's enablement. Used correctly, either of these gifts could powerfully communicate the kingdom. When misused, however, they turn into tools of destruction for the church. Again, the effective use of even the most numinous of gifts rests on the quality of the believer's faith as a Spirit-empowered participant in God's new covenant.

SPIRITUALITY Spirituality is the outward working of inward devotion, the living expression of our spiritual nature. Spirituality is offering our bodies to God as our "spiritual service of worship" (Rom. 12:1 NASB), the acknowledgment of God in our daily living.

As part of our spiritual nature, we dedicate or devote portions of our lives to God, allowing all parts of our lives to become informed by our faith. We choose to examine the world in the light of Scripture and do our best not to conform to this world, but to be transformed by the renewing of our minds (Rom. 12:2).

Practical activities such as attending church, reading the Bible, praying, and witnessing are spiritual expressions. So are choices of dressing, eating, drinking, observing holidays, and so forth. Church service, in particular, is about spirituality: kneeling, standing, singing, raising hands, tithing, and so forth reflect our inward devotion.

Spirituality also involves broader demonstrations. For example, the observance of Lent is an expression of spirituality; wearing certain clothing is another.

Spirituality is not about salvation; it is about working out our salvation with “fear and trembling” (Phil. 2:12). We intentionally choose or reject life choices as a reaction to our faith, not in seeking salvation.

SPIT, SPITTLE Under the Mosaic law, the spit of certain sick persons caused ritual uncleanness to others if it contacted them (Lev. 15:8), and the inability to control one’s own saliva indicated insanity (1 Sam. 21:13). Jesus’ use of saliva in healings (Mark 7:33; 8:23; John 9:6) reflects Jewish and Hellenistic belief in the curative nature of saliva. His mixing it with clay was viewed by his opponents as breaking the Sabbath law (John 9:16). Spitting in the face was a deliberate, contemptuous insult (Num. 12:14; Deut. 25:9; Job 17:6; 30:10). Isaiah and Jesus himself prophesied the humiliation of the Messiah being spat upon (Isa. 50:6; Mark 10:34; Luke 18:32; cf. Matt. 26:67; 27:30; Mark 15:19; Luke 18:32).

SPOILS Persons, animals, or objects of value taken from a defeated enemy by the victor after a battle or war (Exod. 15:9; Num. 31:11–12, 27, 32; Judg. 5:30; Ps. 119:162; Isa. 33:23; 53:12; Jer. 30:16; Luke 11:22). In Num. 31 God gives lengthy and specific instructions to Moses on how spoils taken in “holy war” from the defeated Midianites are to be distributed and used by the victorious Israelites.

Assyrian soldiers carrying away spoils from Lachish (Sennacherib’s palace, Nineveh, 700–692 BC)

SPONGE The porous, flexible skeleton of a certain marine animal, common along the Palestinian coast of the Mediterranean Sea. Its liquid-absorbing quality made it useful as a drinking vessel. Jesus was offered a vinegar-filled sponge to quench his thirst (Matt. 27:48; Mark 15:36; John 19:29).

SPOON The KJV translates the Hebrew word *kap* as “spoon” (NIV: “dish”), referring to a small, shallow, golden incense bowl shaped like the hollow of the hand (e.g., Exod. 25:29; Num. 4:7; 7:14; 1 Kings 7:50; 2 Chron. 24:14; Jer. 52:18–19). A wooden pipe attached to the hollow handles allowed air to be blown through it, keeping the incense burning.

SPORT The word “sport” appears infrequently among various English translations and is used with the following specific meanings: (1) In Gen. 26:8 it is a euphemism for consensual sexual activity (KJV: “to sport with”; NIV: “caress”; the Hebrew word forms a wordplay with the name “Isaac,” both coming from the root for “to laugh, mock”). In Gen. 39:14, 17 it expresses the feigned humiliation of Potiphar’s wife and her court at Joseph’s alleged sexual advances (NIV: “to make sport of”). (2) To ridicule, mock, deride, humiliate—for example, “to make sport of” (Ps. 69:11; cf. NRSV, RSV of 1 Sam. 31:4; 1 Chron. 10:4; Job 30:1; Hab. 1:10). (3) Amusement or revelry without a specific athletic connotation—for example, “for sport,” “like sport” (Judg. 16:25, 27; Prov. 10:23; 2 Pet. 2:13 KJV; cf. RSV).

SPORTS Although athletic competition was found across the ancient world, sports receive little to no attention in the OT. Be it archery (1 Sam. 20:20), chariotry (1 Kings 9:22), slinging (1 Chron. 12:2), or running (1 Kings 1:5), no instance occurs in a demonstrably athletic context but rather refers to military activity. This likely includes Jacob’s wrestling with a divine stranger (Gen. 32:24; see too Abner’s challenge to Joab’s men in 2 Sam. 2:14, where a physical competition among some soldiers eventually breaks into combat). Athletic imagery seems to be used in Jer. 12:5, where God reasons with Jeremiah using racing metaphors (see also the mention of a ball in Isa. 22:18, which may have athletic connotations).

With the conquest of Palestine by Alexander the Great in 332 BC, Hellenistic customs began to influence the native Jewish population, including an affinity for sports. Antiochus IV Epiphanes (r. 175–164 BC) introduced Jerusalem’s first gymnasium, a Greek cultural center that held many athletic events. Athletes in Greek society competed naked, and events always honored pagan deities. Because of this and the reminder of foreign occupation, many Jews despised the gymnasium. But Greco-Roman athletics still pervaded the culture, as evidenced in the NT. Paul and the author of Hebrews are the only NT authors to refer to sports. The best example is Paul’s use of imagery from running, boxing, and athletic discipline when writing to the church at Corinth, the city of the famed Isthmian games (1 Cor. 9:24–27). Paul refers to running no less than five more times in his letters (Gal. 2:2; 5:7; Phil. 2:16; 3:12–14; 2 Tim. 4:7–8). The author of Hebrews also uses running imagery in Heb. 12:1–2.

SPOT A flaw or blemish causing a person or object to be cultically impure in some way. Certain white or reddish spots on a person’s body could indicate an infectious skin disease, rendering an Israelite ritually unclean (Lev. 13). Only animals without defect were acceptable as offerings to God (Exod. 12:5; Num. 19:2; Deut. 17:1). Figuratively, Christ’s followers are to be “spotless,” morally pure and thus qualified for fellowship with God (2 Pet. 3:14) and a pure church, free from “stain or wrinkle or any other blemish” (Eph. 5:27). Jesus “offered himself unblemished to God” (Heb. 9:14), the perfect sacrifice for sin as “a lamb without blemish or defect” (1 Pet. 1:19).

SPOUSAL ABUSE Spousal abuse is most succinctly defined as mistreatment of one's marriage partner through physical or emotional means. The source of abuse can be traced to the fall, as both partners struggle for control of the relationship (Gen. 3:16b). As such, abuse is an expression of a relational problem with God as well as with one's spouse.

Because abuse is rooted in the desire to exploit another, it can never be understood as consistent with the biblical understanding of marriage. Marriage is expressed in Scripture as a covenant between two individuals who were intended to work together as persons who "correspond" to each other and are "one flesh" (Gen. 2:18 NET; 2:24). The exploitation inherent in abuse is also counter to the ideas of mutual submission and of each person in a marriage belonging to the other. Neither person is to be driven by selfish motivations (1 Cor. 7:3–5; Eph. 5:21). Ultimately, abuse is counter to the Christian message because it cannot be an expression of the nature of love (1 Cor. 13) or the fruits of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22–23). Although abuse can be perpetrated upon either the husband or the wife, Scripture takes special care to instruct the husband to be gentle in relation to his wife, calling on him to treat her as Christ does the church and to be mindful of his significant role for the wife's well-being (Eph. 5:28–31; 1 Pet. 3:7).

SPRING The surface egression of underground water, a good source of water. Since water was scarce in the ancient Near East, spring locations determined human activities (cf. Gen. 24:13; Josh. 15:19; Judg. 7:1; Song 1:14). Owing to their perennial gushing, springs are also called "living waters" (Jer. 2:13 ESV). God applies the imagery of a spring's dependability to himself (Jer. 17:13), and Jesus likens a spring's ceaseless flow to the Spirit's life-giving indwelling of the believer (John 4:10–14; 7:38).

SQUAD In Acts 12:4 the partial translation of the Greek word *tetradion*, which means "squad of four soldiers" and refers to a small military tactical unit.

STABLE The word "stable" is not found in many English translations of the Bible; instead, the word "stall" is used (1 Kings 4:26). Archaeological evidence has brought to light numerous tripartite buildings from the Solomonic period (c. 950 BC) and subsequent periods that likely functioned as stables. The best known are at Megiddo and Hazor. These structures located throughout Israel likely functioned as military outposts where the king's chariots were stationed awaiting deployment.

Luke 2:7 (also vv. 12 and 16) refers to a "manger" where the infant Jesus lay "because there was no guest room available for them." The Greek word for "manger," *phatnē*, refers to a feeding trough. Such a setting suggests that Jesus was born in a stable, though that is not made explicit. Traditionally, the cave underlying the Church of the Nativity is understood to be the aforementioned stable.

STACHYS A believer at the church in Rome whom Paul greets as "my dear friend" (Rom. 16:9).

STACTE *See* Gum, Gum Resin.

STAFF *See* Rod, Staff.

STAIRS Wooden stairs built against the outside wall of a Palestinian home gave access to the roof, where many family activities took place, while a flight of stairs inside the home led to the second story. In the city, broad stone steps led from one level of the street to another (Neh. 12:37), into deep cisterns, and were found at theaters. "Winding stairs" of the temple are mentioned in 1 Kings 6:8

(KJV, NASB). Stairs are mentioned in Neh. 9:4 as the place where the Levites stood while leading Israel in a confession of sins. Ezekiel's vision of a future temple also refers to stairs (Ezek. 40:6; 43:17). The stairs of the City of David are rock-cut steps on the hill possibly leading to the Fountain Gate (Neh. 3:15).

STAKE In the OT, a wooden tent support (Isa. 33:20; 54:2). In the NT, the Greek word *stauros*, translated in English versions as "cross," literally refers to an upright stake or pole, to which a horizontal beam was attached to form a cross for execution of persons by crucifixion (e.g., Matt. 27:32; John 19:17).

STALL *See* Stable.

STARGAZER *See* Astrologer.

STARRY HOST *See* Host of Heaven.

STARS The word "star" is used in the Bible to refer to any bright point of light in the night sky; no linguistic distinction is made between stars and planets (cf. 2 Pet. 1:19; Rev. 2:28; 22:16).

Stars often are used to illustrate the scope of God's promises (Gen. 15:5; 22:17; 26:4; Deut. 10:22). They were used throughout the ancient Near East to represent the king, an association also evident in the OT (Num. 24:17; Isa. 14:12). Stars also were named, and some were objects of worship, a practice condemned in Israel (Amos 5:26; cf. Deut. 4:19). Stars were subject to study by foreign sages who sought to predict the future based on their observations, although their efficacy is denied (Isa. 47:13). Nonetheless, the arrival of the Messiah is heralded by a star in the service of its creator (Matt. 2:2–10). The falling (Rev. 6:13) and the darkening of stars (Joel 2:10; 3:15) are used to depict the coming of the day of the Lord in judgment.

STATURE Either one's physical height (1 Sam. 16:7; 1 Chron. 11:23; Isa. 45:14; Luke 19:3 NRSV) or one's repute or status in the eyes of others. Samuel grew in "stature and in favor with the LORD and with people" (1 Sam. 2:26). In the same way, Jesus grew in "wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man" (Luke 2:52). The term can be used figuratively concerning length of life (Matt. 6:27 KJV) or refer to spiritual growth (Eph. 4:13 NRSV).

STATUTE A law, rule, or commandment. Statutes could be issued from God (Ps. 119:2; 122:4) or an earthly ruler (1 Sam 30:25; Mic. 6:16). The same Hebrew terms translated as "statute" are sometimes translated as "decree," "policy," or "ordinance."

STEADFAST, STEADFASTNESS Steadfastness is the quality of firmness or stability. Paul told the Colossians that he was delighted to see their discipline and steadfastness in the faith (Col. 2:5 [KJV: "stedfastness"]). The term is also used in 2 Pet. 3:17 KJV, warning the readers not to fall away from their steadfastness. A steadfast person is firm in belief and has a solid foundation that cannot be shaken. In the NIV, "steadfast" is a quality of one's spirit (Ps. 51:10), heart (Pss. 57:7; 108:1; 112:7), ways (Ps. 119:5; Prov. 4:26), or mind (Isa. 23:6). Peter assures his readers that God will make them "strong, firm and steadfast" (1 Pet. 5:10).

STEAL *See* Robbery.

STEEL An alloy consisting mostly of iron with a carbon content of between 0.2 percent and 2.1 percent. The oldest known steel production dates to the second millennium BC. The KJV three times translates the Hebrew word *nekhushah* as “steel” (2 Sam. 22:35; Job 20:24; Ps. 18:34; cf. *nekhoshet* in Jer. 15:12), although these passages probably refer instead to copper or “bronze” (NIV).

STEPHANAS The head of a household in Corinth whose members were the first converts in the region of Achaia (1 Cor. 16:15). They were baptized by Paul (1:16) and became ministers to the Christians in Corinth. They gave themselves to the advance of the gospel and labored diligently (16:16). Paul encouraged the Corinthian Christians to submit to these Christian laborers, including Stephanas himself (16:16, 18). He, along with Fortunatus and Achaicus, probably brought a letter from the Corinthians to Paul (7:1) and may also have carried the letter that we know as 1 Corinthians back to Corinth. The three men refreshed the spirits of both Paul and the congregation there (16:17–18).

STEPHEN Because of rapid growth in the early church, the apostles found it necessary to delegate tasks to others. Stephen was first named and chosen by the Jerusalem church as one of seven men whose task was to help distribute food equitably among the widows, especially the Greek-speaking widows, of the church. He is described as “a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 6:5) and “full of God’s grace and power” (6:8).

Stephen became the first known Christian martyr after a strange trial in front of the Sanhedrin. His defense focused on a review of Jewish history, climaxing in the claim that Israel had always opposed and persecuted God’s messengers and now had betrayed and murdered their own Messiah, “the Righteous One” (Acts 7:51–53). The Sanhedrin responded in rage and took Stephen out of the city to stone him. As he was being stoned to death, Stephen saw Jesus standing at the right hand of God, asked him to receive his spirit, and then sought forgiveness for his killers in a prayer similar to one that Jesus prayed (Acts 7:59–60; cf. Luke 23:24).

The persecution resulting from Stephen’s stoning scattered the Jerusalem church, providing further opportunities for evangelism. Saul of Tarsus is first mentioned in this account, as witnessing and approving Stephen’s death (Acts 7:58; 8:1).

STEWARDSHIP The management of available resources in the recognition that God is the owner and provider of all things. The Bible is clear that God is the maker and owner of all things. The psalmist wrote, “The earth is the LORD’s, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it” (Ps. 24:1). God told Job, “Everything under heaven belongs to me” (Job 41:11). In the same way, God says, “The silver is mine and the gold is mine” (Hag. 2:8). Stewardship is based upon the principle that God is the maker of all things. Since God is the creator and owner of all things, God’s followers are charged with managing what he has given.

The term “steward” is used in the OT to refer to Joseph’s steward (Gen. 43:19; 44:1, 4) and to Arza, who was the steward of Baasha’s son Elah, who reigned over Israel (1 Kings 16:9 KJV). The steward was the manager who oversaw all household operations. Having a great deal of responsibility, the slave or servant in this position had to be someone whom the owner trusted. Jesus used similar terms in referring to a household manager in some of his parables (Matt. 20:8; Luke 16:1, 3). The concept of stewardship is applied to the believer as God’s servant. Believers are stewards for God in the sense that they manage God’s resources in this world.

The biblical concept of stewardship begins with Adam and Eve being charged with the responsibility of caring for the creative work of God (Gen. 2:15). In the garden of Eden, humankind was given the responsibility to care for the earth, manage it, and have dominion over it. On an individual level, all that Christians possess is intended to be used for God's purposes and glory. Biblical stewardship involves more than financial resources, although certainly those are included. Proper stewardship involves managing every resource (time, talent, finances, opportunity) under the leadership of God, who owns it all.

Regarding financial matters, the Bible teaches that a tithe (one-tenth) of one's income should be returned to God as a reminder that all one has comes from him (Lev. 27:30). The OT concept of the tithe is assumed by Jesus in Matt. 23:23 when he rebukes the scribes and the Pharisees for tithing and yet neglecting more important things such as justice and mercy. However, the tithe is not frequently mentioned in the NT. Rather than focusing on tithing, the NT focuses on the attitude of the believer in giving. Believers are encouraged to give sacrificially (Mark 12:41–44; Acts 2:44–45). In addition, Paul stresses giving in love with generosity (2 Cor. 9:6–8). Giving to others in need is a reflection of trust that God will provide for our own needs as we give to meet the needs of others. God expects that everything that one has will be used in ways that honor him.

STOCKS A device used for punishment. Stocks are large wooden frames with holes for a person's arms and legs, which are clamped, thus immobilizing the prisoner. Jeremiah was put into stocks (Jer. 20:2–3; 29:26), and Job uses stocks (shackles) to symbolize suffering (Job 13:27; 33:11). In NT times, Roman stocks had a number of holes designed to force the prisoner's legs apart. Paul and Silas were imprisoned and put in stocks (Acts 16:24–26).

STOICISM *See* Philosophy in the New Testament.

STONE A mineral cluster or rock. Although the terms "rock" and "stone" are occasionally used synonymously, "rock" usually refers to a large geological formation such as a cliff, cave, outcropping, or bedrock, while "stone" is preferred when the rock is small enough to be fashioned or handled by human beings. "Stone" can also function as an adjective, referring to a material made of stone, or as a verb, referring to the casting of stones.

Rocks and stones were found naturally on the ground (Job 8:17; Ps. 91:12; Isa. 5:2; Mark 5:5; Luke 3:8). They could be heaped or piled up as a sign of disgrace (Josh. 7:26; 8:29; 2 Sam. 18:17), as a marker or memorial (Gen. 31:46–50), or as an altar (Exod. 20:25). A single rock or stone could also be used as a place marker (Gen. 28:22; 35:14, 20; 1 Sam. 7:12), especially standing stones (Deut. 27:2–8; Josh. 4:3–9). Large stones could also be used to cover a well (Gen. 29:2–3) or to seal a cave or tomb, such as at the tombs of Lazarus (John 11:38–39) and of Jesus (Matt. 27:60; Mark 16:3–4).

Stone was used as a construction material, particularly for the temple (1 Kings 5:15–18; 1 Chron. 2:22; Ezra 5:8; Hag. 2:15; Mark 13:1–2). Stone was used in a building's foundation and for the cornerstone or capstone (1 Kings 5:17; Jer. 51:26; Isa. 28:16), as well as for the walls (Hab. 2:11). Psalm 118:22 refers metaphorically to the stone rejected by the builders becoming the cornerstone. In the NT, this is interpreted as referring to Jesus (Matt. 21:42; Mark 12:10; Luke 20:17; Acts 4:11; 1 Pet. 2:7; cf. Eph. 2:20). Stone could also function as a writing material (Josh. 8:32), such as the tablets on which the Ten Commandments were inscribed (Exod. 24:12; Deut. 9:9–11; 1 Kings 8:9; cf. 2 Cor. 3:3, 7). Stone was also carved, although at Sinai the Israelites are instructed not to use cut or "dressed" stones when constructing an altar (Exod. 20:25; cf. Josh. 8:31). The phrase "carved stone" refers specifically to idols, since stone was one material used for crafting false gods (Lev. 26:1; cf. Deut. 4:28; 29:17; 2 Kings 19:18; Isa. 37:19; Rev. 9:20); the term “stone” itself can therefore be used to refer to an idol, especially in the phrase “wood and stone” (Jer. 3:9; Ezek. 20:32).

Stones were used as a weapon or instrument of destruction, whether thrown by hand (Num. 35:17, 23) or flung with a sling (Judg. 20:16; 1 Sam. 17:40, 49–50; Prov. 26:8). The verb “to stone” refers to the throwing of stones at an individual, which typically functioned as an official manner of execution (Exod. 19:13; 21:28–29; Deut. 21:20–21; 1 Kings 21:13–15; John 8:5; Acts 7:58–59), although it was at times the action of an angry crowd (Exod. 17:4; 1 Kings 12:18; cf. John 8:59).

The phrases “precious stones” and “costly stones” refer to gems (2 Sam. 12:30; Esther 1:6; Isa. 54:12; 1 Cor. 3:12). Gems were used as a display of wealth or honor (1 Kings 10:2, 10–11; 2 Chron. 32:27; Ezek. 27:22) and for decoration (1 Chron. 3:6; Rev. 17:4; 18:16). The two stones on the high priest’s ephod and the twelve precious stones on his breastpiece represented the twelve tribes (Exod. 25:7; 28:9–12, 17–21), a symbolism echoed in the twelve types of precious stones adorning the foundations of the new Jerusalem (Rev. 21:19–20).

Rocks and stones are used often in metaphors or similes (e.g., hard as a rock, still as a stone). They can represent something that is common (1 Kings 10:27; Job 5:23; Matt. 3:9; 4:3), strong (Job 6:12), hard (Job 38:30; 41:24), heavy (Exod. 15:5; Prov. 27:3), motionless (Exod. 15:16), or immovable (Zech. 12:3). A “heart of stone” describes coldheartedness (Ezek. 11:19; 36:26). A “stumbling stone,” which is literally a stone that causes one to stumble (Isa. 8:14), is used in the NT as a metaphor for an obstacle to faith in Jesus (Rom. 9:32–33; 1 Pet. 2:8).

STONE QUARRIES *See* Shebarim.

STONING Stoning is the most common method of capital punishment in the OT and is often prescribed by the law (Lev. 20:2; Num. 15:32–36; Deut. 13:1–10; 17:2–5; 22:24). It requires that the primary witnesses against the accused be the first to take up stones, although often the “entire assembly” participates in the stoning (Lev. 24:14, 16; cf. Deut. 21:21). In the NT, Jesus uses the attempted stoning of a woman caught in adultery as an object lesson in mercy (John 7:53–8:11). While the Romans used crucifixion as a means of execution, the Jewish authorities continued to use stoning, as in the case of Stephen (Acts 7:54–60). *See also* Capital Punishment; Crimes and Punishments.

STOOL Exodus 1:16 refers to a “delivery stool” (NIV), a translation of the Hebrew *’obnayim*. This may refer to an object or an arrangement of stones or blocks set side by side on which a woman sat to give birth. The same Hebrew word in Jer. 18:3 refers to a potter’s wheel. The “footstool” is associated with thrones of ancient rulers and symbolized power or authority (Isa. 66:1; Heb. 10:13). In 2 Kings 4:10 the stool is a simple chair.

STOREHOUSE, STORAGE CITY Towns or cities where royal tribute or taxes (paid in kind), provisions, and weapons were stored for use by the government or at the government’s discretion, especially in time of famine or war. Storage cities are a hallmark of centralized government, as seen during Israel’s monarchy (1000–586 BC). Over thirty-five tripartite pillared buildings have been discovered at over twelve different archaeological sites within the Levant, including Hazor, Megiddo, Tel Beersheba, and Beth Shemesh. These buildings probably were used as storehouses, though other theories exist. Over 150 pottery vessels were recovered in such buildings at Tel

Beersheba, and similar buildings uncovered at Beth Shemesh were identified by the Grant excavations as Iron Age storehouses. Pithom and Rameses were two of Pharaoh's storage cities in Egypt (Exod. 1:11). During the united monarchy, Solomon had storage cities throughout Israel (1 Kings 9:19; 2 Chron. 8:4–6). Storehouses in Naphtali were destroyed by Ben-Hadad I (2 Chron. 16:4). Jehoshaphat built storage cities throughout Judah (2 Chron. 17:12), and Hezekiah's storage cities helped him to prepare for ensuing war (32:28). Storage jars with the stamped inscription *lmlk* ("to/for the king") have been found throughout Judah, likely remnants of the provisions that once filled Hezekiah's storehouses.

STORK A long-legged, long-necked, long-billed bird, over three feet tall, that nests high up in trees or on ledges (Ps. 104:17). The stork is a strong flyer (Job 39:13; Zech. 5:9), and two species, the white stork and the black stork, migrate over Israel (Jer. 8:7). Job 39:13–17 could also refer to the stork's care for its young; the Hebrew word for "stork," *khasidah*, may be derived from *khesed*, "kindness" or "faithfulness." Storks are listed as unclean birds (Lev. 11:19; Deut. 14:18).

STRAIGHT STREET After Saul was blinded by light from heaven, he stayed in the house of Judas on Straight Street in Damascus (Acts 9:3–9, 11). There Ananias, sent by the risen Christ, laid his hands on Saul, who regained his sight (9:10–18). The general course of Straight Street is still identifiable in modern Damascus.

STRANGER *See* Foreigner.

STRAW Cut pieces of wheat or barley stalks used for animal food (Gen. 24:25, 32; Judg. 19:19; 1 Kings 4:28; Isa. 11:7; 65:25). Chemicals from straw used in making bricks make them more compact and prevent cracking (Exod. 5:7, 10–13, 16, 18). Straw is highly flammable and is used in images of God's judgment (Isa. 5:24; 1 Cor. 3:12–13).

STREETS Streets facilitated transportation within a community both in joining residential and public buildings for daily tasks and by linking city fortifications for the timely deployment of troops during a siege. In most large cities, a peripheral street ran along the inside of the city wall, primarily serving for quick defensive access to the wall ramparts. Additional streets bisected the residential and public quarters of the city's interior. Larger main streets, as well as city gates, served as main places of commerce in ancient cities. Main streets typically led to the center of the city or to any important structures, such as palaces or temples.

The NT period saw a clear dichotomy between Jewish cities and those of Greek or Roman influence. Greco-Roman cities typically were well planned and rectilinear and included colonnaded streets. These typical "main" streets were lined with continuous rows of columns supporting a roof, originally developed to provide shade for marketplaces. Commerce took place under these colonnades or in public plazas. Colonnaded streets were paved and contained sidewalks for pedestrians and furnishings, such as statues of deities. Jewish cities, however, had no formal plan. Rather than being laid out in structured quarters divided by grids of neatly arranged streets, buildings in Jewish cities were constructed randomly over time. Roads were constructed later on and built around existing clumps of buildings as needed.

In the Bible, streets—along with squares and alleys—are often symbolic of public places. In the streets people call out in proclamation (2 Sam. 1:20; Esther 6:9) or in search of others (Song 3:2; Jer.

5:1; Matt. 22:9–10; Luke 14:21), or they wail in grief and distress (Ps. 144:14; Amos 5:16). On the street corners idolaters flaunt worship of false gods (Jer. 44:17; Ezek. 16:25) and hypocrites flaunt their piety (Matt. 6:2, 5). When a city is conquered or punished, the dead and destitute lie in the streets (Isa. 5:25; Lam. 4:5; Ezek. 11:6) or the streets are entirely deserted (Jer. 33:10; Zeph. 3:6). But when a city prospers, the streets are rebuilt (Isa. 58:12) and are filled with playing children (Zech. 8:4–5). Streets are also described as dusty and muddy (2 Sam. 22:43; Lam. 2:21; Mic. 7:10; Zech. 10:5), requiring the washing of feet (cf. John 13).

STRIPES *See* Scourge.

STRONG DRINK A traditional translation in the KJV for terms (Heb. *shekar*; Gk. *sikera*) referring to intoxicating or fermented drinks and beers other than wine. The NIV generally translates the terms as “fermented drink” or “beer.” Isaiah graphically described the effect of strong drink on excessive drinkers (Isa. 28:7), and Hannah defended herself against Eli’s accusation of drunkenness (1 Sam. 1:14–15). Excessive drinking generally was condemned (Prov. 20:1; Isa. 5:11). Although a fermented beverage was allowed in the sacrificial meal as a drink offering (Num. 28:7; Deut. 14:26), it was forbidden to ministering priests and Nazirites (Lev. 10:9; Num. 6:3; cf. Luke 1:15). Kings and princes were not to drink it, lest it lead them to forget the law and pervert justice (Prov. 31:4–5).

Relief panel from the lid of a Roman sarcophagus, showing the reduction by boiling of newly pressed wine to make a thicker brew

STUBBLE The stump of various cultivated grain such as wheat, oats, and barley that protrudes from the ground after harvest. While enslaved in Egypt, Israel was forced to use stubble as straw for making bricks (Exod. 5:12), an exceedingly difficult task. Stubble burns very quickly (Joel 2:5; Nah. 1:10) and is of negligible value, hence its use in Scripture as an image of God’s complete destruction of evil and evildoers alike (Exod. 15:7; Isa. 47:14; Obad. 18; Mal. 4:1). *See also* Chaff; Straw.

STUMBLING BLOCK In the OT, this image is used to convey the concept of a “stumbling block” in a literal (Lev. 19:14) or figurative (Jer. 6:21) sense. In the NT, the image is used as a messianic reference—Christ as a stumbling block (Rom. 9:32–33; 1 Cor. 1:23; 1 Pet. 2:8). This rendition of messianic expectation plays off the Isaianic presentation of God as a stumbling block to his faithless people. The NT Greek words that are translated as "stumbling block" (*skandalon*) or "to cause to stumble" (*skandalizō*) have either a christological or a moral application.

SUAH The firstborn of the eleven sons of Zophah, an Asherite (1 Chron. 7:36). This full genealogy contrasts the minor character of the tribe of Asher, Jacob's son by Zilpah, Leah's handmaid (Gen. 30:12–13).

SUBMISSION, SUBORDINATION The act of yielding or consenting to the authority of another, voluntarily or involuntarily; personal deference, compliance, or humility toward another; to become subject to. Submission incorporates obedience, and in certain usages the terms are synonymous. However, "obedience" indicates compliance with directions or guidance, while "submission" describes one's subservient posture toward another. Submission within a formalized hierarchy is subordination—for example, Jesus' relationship to the Father.

Scripture presents submission in two ways: as the translation of a number of specific Hebrew and Greek terms that convey an aspect of the concept, and as a general portrait of relationships—for example, patriarchs and prophets before the Lord, or demons toward Jesus. Sometimes, the presentation is negative, as in a refusal to submit.

In the OT, the use of the word "submission" (or its derivatives) in the major English versions is primarily a function of translator preference. In fact, Gen. 16:9, the angel's instructions to Hagar, is the sole instance where "submit" is broadly agreed to be the best translation of the underlying Hebrew. Elsewhere, the NIV and at least one other version use forms of "submission" to interpretively translate Hebrew expressions meaning the following: "become a slave to" (Gen. 49:15); "serve" (2 Chron. 30:8); "have a relationship with" (Job 22:21); "quickly stretch out hands" (Ps. 68:31); "give over to" (Ps. 81:11); and "give the hand to" (Lam. 5:6).

In the NT, "submission" (along with its derivatives and, often, "to be subject to") appears only in Luke and the epistles, and it translates forms of four different Greek roots.

1. *Dogmatizō* appears once: "Why . . . do you *submit* to rules?" (Col. 2:20). It includes the aspect of obligation to something that has been decreed.

2. *Hypeikō* appears once: "Obey your leaders and *submit* to them" (Heb. 13:17 NASB, NRSV). Here, obedience is specifically distinguished from submission.

3. *Hypotagē* appears four times as "submission." In Gal. 2:5; 1 Tim. 2:11; 3:4 it indicates the main understanding: subordinate posturing toward superiors; in 2 Cor. 9:13, however, it refers to obedience to a decree, in this case confession of the gospel.

4. *Hypotassō* is by far the most significant root. It appears almost forty times in the NT; about half of these occurrences can be translated using a form of "submission" (or "to be subject to"). It is used to convey the subordination of children to parents (Luke 2:51); demons to the seventy-two missionaries (Luke 10:17, 20); sinners to God's law or righteousness (Rom. 8:7; 10:3); people to governing authorities (Rom. 13:1, 5; Titus 3:1; 1 Pet. 2:13); believers to one another (1 Cor. 16:16; Eph. 5:21); wives to husbands (1 Cor. 14:34; Eph. 5:22, 24; Col. 3:18; Titus 2:5; 1 Pet. 3:1, 5); slaves to masters (Titus 2:9; 1 Pet. 2:18); angels, authorities, and powers to Jesus (1 Pet. 3:22); believers to God (Heb. 12:9; James 4:7); younger men to elders (1 Pet. 5:5).

A few additional uses of "submission" in some translations have other primary meanings: "turn in for inspection" (Gal. 2:2 NASB); "reverence" (Heb. 5:7 NIV, NRSV); and "open-mindedness" (James 3:17 NIV).

Vivid portraits of submission conveying the concept without invoking the specific vocabulary include Abraham’s submission to God (Gen. 12:1–4; 17:1–27; 21:4; 22:1–19); Moses at the burning bush (Exod. 3:1–4:17); Joshua toward God (Josh. 24:29); prophets toward God (1 Sam. 3:10; Isa. 6:8; Hos. 1:1–3); Jesus’ submission to the Father (Matt. 26:39, 42, 44; Mark 14:35–36, 39; Luke 2:49; 22:42); Paul’s submission to Jesus (Rom. 1:1; Titus 1:1); believers doing the will of the Father (Matt. 12:50; 21:28–32); the prodigal son toward his father (Luke 15:18, 21); believers toward Jesus (John 12:26; 14:21, 23–24; 15:10); husbands and wives toward each other (1 Cor. 7:3–5; 11:11); believers humble before one another (Rom. 12:10; Phil. 2:3–4); and the bowing of every knee to Jesus (Phil. 2:10–13).

SUBURBS Surrounding land or smaller hamlets on the outskirts of a city or town. The ASV and the KJV favor “suburbs” as a translation for several Hebrew words rendered as “pasturelands,” “territories,” “villages,” or “towns” in more contemporary versions. See Josh. 21; 1 Chron. 6:54–81.

SUCATHITES Descendants of Caleb, one of the families of the scribes that lived in the town of Jabez, in the territory alloted to Judah (1 Chron. 2:55).

SUCCOTH *See* Sukkoth.

SUCCOTH BENOTH *See* Sukkoth Benoth.

SUFFERING The Bible has much to say about suffering. While in the OT suffering is regularly an indication of divine displeasure (Lev. 26:16–36; Deut. 28:20–68; Ps. 44:10–12; Isa. 1:25; cf. Heb. 10:26–31), in the NT it becomes the means by which blessing comes to humanity.

The Bible often shows that sinfulness results in suffering (Gen. 2:17; 6:5–7; Exod. 32:33; 2 Sam. 12:13–18; Rom. 1:18; 1 Cor. 11:27–30). Job’s friends mistakenly assume that he has suffered because of disobedience (Job 4:7–9; 8:3–4, 20; 11:6). Job passionately defends himself (12:4; 23:10), and in the final chapter of the book God commends Job and condemns his friends for their accusations (42:7–8; cf. 1:1, 22; 2:10). The writer makes clear that suffering is not necessarily evidence of sinfulness. Like Job’s friends, Jesus’ disciples assume that blindness is an indication of sinfulness (John 9:1–2). Jesus rejects this simplistic notion of retributive suffering (John 9:3, 6–7; cf. Luke 13:1–5).

The prayers of suffering people are expressed in the sixteen communal and thirty-seven individual laments in the book of Psalms. Within the laments the writers describe their problems, express feelings, make requests, ask questions (“How long, LORD?” [13:1]; “Why have you forsaken me?” [22:1]), and lodge complaints against God (“My eyes fail, looking for my God [69:3]), enemies (“You have made us an object of derision to our neighbors, and our enemies mock us” [80:6]), and even themselves (“I am a worm and not a man” [22:6]).

The NT writers reveal that Jesus’ suffering was prophesied in the OT (Mark 9:12; 14:21; Luke 18:31–32; 24:46; Acts 3:18; 17:3; 26:22–23; 1 Pet. 1:11; referring to OT texts such as Ps. 22; Isa. 52:13–53:12; Zech. 13:7). The Lord Jesus is presented as the answer to human suffering: (1) Through the incarnation, God’s Son personally experienced human suffering (Phil. 2:6–8; Heb. 2:9; 5:8). (2) Through his suffering, Christ paid the price for sin (Rom. 4:25; 3:25–26), so that believers are set free from sin (Rom. 6:6, 18, 22) and helped in temptation (Heb. 2:18). (3) Christ Jesus intercedes for his suffering followers (Rom. 8:34–35). (4) Christ is the example in suffering (1 Pet. 2:21; 4:1; cf. Phil. 3:10; 2 Cor. 1:5; 4:10; 1 Pet. 4:13), and though he died once for sins (Heb. 10:12), he continues to suffer as his church suffers (Acts 9:4–5). (5) Christ provides hope of resurrection (Rom. 6:5; 1 Cor. 15:20–26; Phil. 3:10–11) and a future life without suffering or death (Rev. 21:4).

There are many NT examples of suffering believers (John 15:20–21; Acts 4:3; 5:18; 7:57–60; 8:1–3; 12:1–5; 14:19; 16:22–24; 18:17; 2 Cor. 6:4–5, 8–10; Heb. 10:32; 1 Pet. 5:9; Rev. 2:10). Suffering is part of God's plan for his people (Acts 9:16; 1 Thess. 3:2–4) and is part of what it means to be a follower of Christ Jesus (Acts 14:22; Rom. 8:17; Phil. 1:29; 1 Pet. 2:21; 4:12).

The NT writers repeatedly mention the benefits of suffering, for it has become part of God's work of redemption. The suffering of believers accompanies the proclamation and advancement of the gospel (Acts 5:41–42; 9:15–16; 2 Cor. 4:10–11; 6:2–10; Phil. 1:12, 27–29; 1 Thess. 2:14–16; 2 Tim. 1:8; 4:5) and results in salvation (Matt. 10:22; 2 Cor. 1:6; 1 Thess. 2:16; 2 Tim. 2:10; Heb. 10:39), faith (Heb. 10:32–34, 38–39; 1 Pet. 1:7), the kingdom of God (Acts 14:22), resurrection from the dead (Phil. 3:10–11), and the crown of life (Rev. 2:10). It is an essential part of the development toward Christian maturity (Rom. 5:3–4; 2 Cor. 4:11; Heb. 12:4; James 1:3–4; 1 Pet. 1:7; 4:1).

Suffering is associated with knowing Christ (Phil. 3:10); daily inward renewal (2 Cor. 4:16); purity, understanding, patience, kindness, sincere love, truthful speech, the power of God (2 Cor. 4:4–10); comfort and endurance (2 Cor. 1:6); obedience (Heb. 5:8); blessing (1 Pet. 3:14; 4:14); glory (Rom. 8:17; 2 Cor. 4:17); and joy (Matt. 5:12; Acts 5:41; 2 Cor. 6:10; 12:10; James 1:2; 1 Pet. 1:6; 4:13). Other positive results of Christian suffering include perseverance (Rom. 5:3; James 1:3), character and hope (Rom. 5:4), strength (2 Cor. 12:10), and maturity and completeness (James 1:4). Present suffering is light and momentary when compared to future glory (Matt. 5:10–12; Acts 14:22; Rom. 8:18; 2 Cor. 4:17; Heb. 10:34–36; 1 Pet. 1:5–7; 4:12–13).

Throughout the Bible, believers are instructed to help those who suffer. The OT law provides principles for assisting the poor, the disadvantaged, and the oppressed (Exod. 20:10; 21:2; 23:11; Lev. 19:13, 34; 25:10, 35; Deut. 14:28–29; 15:1–2; 24:19–21). Jesus regularly taught his followers to help the poor (Matt. 5:42; 6:3; 19:21; 25:34–36; Luke 4:18; 12:33; 14:13, 21). It is believers' responsibility to show mercy (Matt. 5:7; 9:13), be generous (Rom. 12:8; 2 Cor. 8:7; 1 Tim. 6:18), mourn with mourners (Rom. 12:15), carry other's burdens (Gal. 6:1–2), and visit prisoners (Matt. 25:36, 43). *See also* Servant of the Lord.

SUFFERING SERVANT *See* Servant of the Lord.

SUICIDE One of the first people in the Bible to die by his own hand was Saul, the first king of Israel. Due to his jealousy and concern for dynasty, he developed an increasingly irrational personality. When it became clear that his final battle was lost, Saul fell on his own sword rather than be sport for the Philistines (1 Sam. 31:4). Another suicide in the Bible is committed by Ahithophel. He was David's son Absalom's adviser when Absalom conspired to usurp the throne from his father. Ahithophel's counsel, as long as it was followed, brought Absalom success: "The advice Ahithophel gave was like that of one who inquires of God" (2 Sam. 16:23). But when his counsel was not followed, Ahithophel went home, set his house in order, and hanged himself (2 Sam. 17:23). Perhaps, like Saul, he did not want to fall into his enemy's hands. Zimri also committed suicide (1 Kings 16:15–19). He assassinated Elah and seized the kingship. But when it became clear that he would not enjoy the patronage of Israel, and that Omri was to be king, he set his own citadel on fire and burned with it. A notorious suicide in the NT is that of Judas, who, filled with regret after Jesus' condemnation, hanged himself (Matt. 27:5).

It is notable that Job, in all his sufferings, never considered suicide. Instead, he cursed the day of his birth; that is, he despised God’s purposes for his life. Perhaps that is the closest that a wise person can come to suicide while yet retaining wisdom.

SUKKIIM, SUKKIIMS *See* Sukkites.

SUKKITES One of three tribes that fought in the army of King Shishak of Egypt (2 Chron. 12:3 [KJV: “Sukkiims”; NRSV: “Sukkiim”]). The Libyans, the Cushites, and the Sukkites fought for Pharaoh when he invaded Judah and attacked Jerusalem in the days of King Rehoboam (c. 926 BC).

SUKKOTH **(1)** A city east of the Jordan River, close to the place where the river meets the Jabbok. The city is identified with Tell Deir Alla. Sukkoth is where Jacob erected “shelters” (Heb. *sukkot*) for his livestock (Gen. 33:17). It is one of the places allotted to the tribe of Gad by Moses (Josh. 13:27), and it suffered the wrath of Gideon for refusing provisions to Gideon’s band in their pursuit of the Midianites (Judg. 8:5–9, 13–17). **(2)** A location in the Egyptian Delta where the Israelites paused in their flight from Egypt (Exod. 12:37; Num. 33:5). **(3)** The Jewish name for the Festival of Tabernacles, which commemorates the time in the wilderness when the Israelites lived in temporary shelters (Heb. *sukkot*).

SUKKOTH BENOTH A deity worshiped by the Babylonians who were resettled into Samaria after the fall of Babylon to Assyria in 689 BC. In Hebrew the name means “shelters of daughters,” alluding to the involvement of sexual rites in the worship of this deity (see 2 Kings 17:30). No Babylonian deity by this name is known, but the name may refer to Sarpanitu, the consort of the Babylonian god Marduk. Another possibility is that it is connected to the earlier Sumerian god Sakkud, who may also be the “Sakkuth” of Amos 5:26 (NIV mg.).

SULFUR A solid, nonmetalic, combustible mineral substance found in major deposits in the Near East. Volcanic eruptions emit burning sulfur, and this image suggests agonizing destruction (Deut. 29:23; Job 18:15; Ps. 11:6; Isa. 30:33; Ezek. 38:22; Luke 17:29). Also referred to as brimstone, burning sulfur is portrayed throughout the OT as an element of divine judgment; it is first mentioned in the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. 19:24). Revelation picks up the language of burning sulfur to describe the terrors of God’s final judgment (14:10; 19:20; 20:10; 21:8).

SUMER, SUMERIAN A geographical region in Mesopotamia south of the city of Nippur, Sumer is a site approximately seventy miles south of Baghdad on the banks of the Euphrates River. Sumer constitutes the southern portion of Babylonia, an area stretching as far north as Sippar. As such, in cuneiform documents, “Sumer” often occurs in tandem with “Akkad,” a term designating the northern portion of Babylonia.

The attributive adjective “Sumerian” is used in several historical and administrative texts to refer to a people coexisting among Akkadians and Gutians in southern Babylonia.

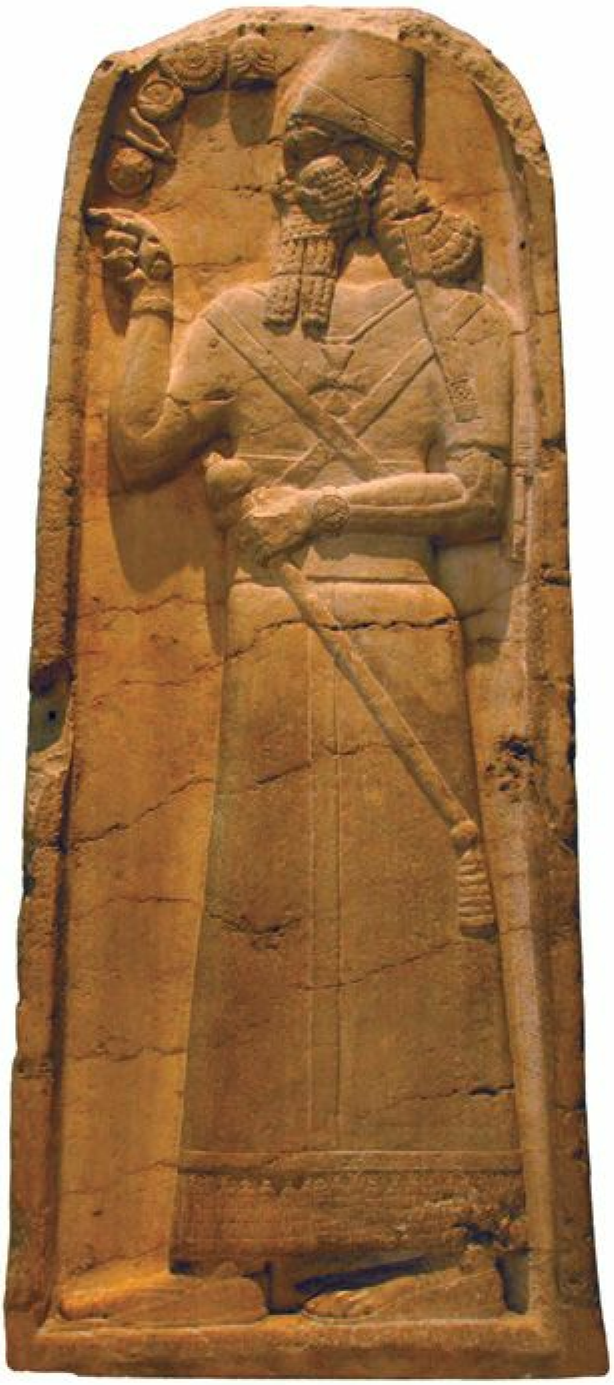
The language of the Sumerians is a linguistic isolate; there is no known related language. The fact that the earliest names for places in Babylonia are not Sumerian suggests that the Sumerians were not indigenous to the area. Speculations, with basis in literary and historical documents, place the origins of the Sumerians variously in the Indus region and Dilmun (approximately present-day Qatar). The earliest texts in Sumerian would place the presence of this group in southern Mesopotamia by the late fourth millennium BC.

The Sumerians, in the earlier stages of their political development, were organized as individual city-states, each under the auspices of a distinct deity of the Sumerian pantheon. The list of cities includes Uruk, Lagash, Eridu, Kish, Larsa, and Ur. Each city-state was under a governor (*ensi*), representing the perceived interests of a deity. External threats and internal competition led to the emergence of kings (*lugal*) exercising hegemony over other city-states. Kish was of prominence in such capacity in early third millennium BC. Enmebaragesi, a ruler of Kish, established Nippur as the home of Enlil, a leading deity of the Sumerian pantheon. In subsequent years Uruk, Lagash, and other cities wrestled hegemony away from the hands of Kish. A Semitic ruler, Sargon I of Agade, conquered Sumer around 2360 BC; the Gutians subsequently took control of the region. A Sumerian renaissance, however, occurred under the leadership of Ur by the beginning of the second millennium. It was in this period that the multilevel temple complex of Ningal and Nanna, the ziggurat, was constructed. The system of irrigation was expanded, and achievements in literature, art, and architecture reached new heights. Under the eye of Shulgi, a ruler from the period, extensive reforms were undertaken in administrative and economic policy, substantially strengthening the stability and influence of Sumer. Toward the middle of the second millennium, Elamite aggression and the rise of Babylonia brought an end to Sumerian political independence.

There is a consensus that “Shinar” in the OT is derived from an Akkadian term for “Sumer.” The use of this term in the context of Israel’s exile (see NIV mg. for Isa. 11:11; Dan. 1:2; Zech. 5:11), however, suggests that it refers to the geographical region of Babylonia as a whole (so the NIV). Connotations of displacement, geographical and cultural, and religious heterodoxy (Gen. 10:10; 11:2), from an Israelite perspective, accrue to the term.

SUN The sun was worshiped as a god or goddess in all the nations around Israel in OT times, and the polemic against sun worship in Deut. 4:19; 17:3; Jer. 8:2; Job 31:26–28 suggests that sun worship also made inroads into Israel. By way of contrast, the OT attests to the sun’s created status (Gen. 1:16) and counts it as subject to God’s control (e.g., Josh. 10:12–13).

In the OT, the sun often is associated with and symbolic of life (e.g., Eccles. 7:11; cf. Ps. 58:8) or justice (Ps. 19:6; Job 38:13; Mal. 4:2; cf. 2 Sam. 23:3–4). The darkening of the sun is presented as a sign of judgment heralding the day of the Lord (Isa. 13:10; Ezek. 32:7; Joel 2:10, 31; 3:15; Amos 8:9; Matt. 24:29; Mark 13:24; Rev. 6:12; 9:2), which many associate with the darkness that fell during the crucifixion (Matt. 27:45; Mark 15:33; Luke 23:44).



A stela showing the Assyrian king Shamsi-Adad worshiping. The large cross on his chest is a symbol of the sun god.

SUNDAY *See* Lord’s Day.

SUNDIAL An instrument for measuring time based on the position of the sun. The horizontal sundial employs a common design whereby a gnomon, the vertical shadow-casting object, sits perpendicular to a plane with calibrated scale markings. When properly positioned relative to true north, the shadow indicates time of day. The OT references (2 Kings 20:9, 11; Isa. 38:8) sometimes translated “sundial” are inferred from the Hebrew, which literally refers to the shadow across a staircase, moving step by step as the day progresses.

SUPERSCRIPTION A heading applied to the beginning of some psalms. These superscriptions may refer to people, historical circumstances, musical aspects, or classifications. The precise meaning of many of the terms in the superscriptions is unclear.

Fifty-five psalms are said to be for the music director and are also identified as a psalm of David, of Asaph, or of the sons of Korah (e.g., Pss. 11; 44; 75). Other persons mentioned by name include Solomon, Moses, Ethan, Heman, and possibly Jeduthun (Pss. 39; 62; 72; 77; 88; 89; 90; 127). These associations do not necessarily indicate authorship. Historical references suggest a background for understanding a psalm, but they are not necessarily original. The main classifications are “song” (*shir*), “psalm” (*mizmor*), and *maskil* (translation uncertain). Additionally, they may have information about tunes, styles, or instruments, though the specifics are now unknown.

SUPERSTITIOUS Generally, superstitious behavior refers to unsubstantiated, irrational belief in the efficacy of unrelated practices or events to foretell the future, ensure good outcomes, or ward off trouble. However, the OT places superstitions such as divination, sorcery, omens, witchcraft, mediums, spiritists, and seances in the same category as human sacrifice. They are condemned as detestable practices before God because they involve appeasing or seeking guidance and protection from idols or the forces of darkness rather than from the living God (Deut. 18:10–12; 27:15; 2 Kings 21:2; Ezra 9:11).

In the NT, the Greek word sometimes translated “superstition” is *deisidaimonia*, which can mean either “religion” or “superstition,” depending on context (Acts 25:19).

SUPH A place in the wilderness in the plains of Moab where Moses read and explained the law to the Israelites before they entered the promised land (Deut. 1:1). Described as “east of the Jordan in the wilderness—that is, in the Arabah—opposite Suph,” the exact location is uncertain. It may be identified with Suphah.

SUPHAH The area in which Waheb is located, near the border of Moab near the valley of the Arnon River and associated with the years of the wilderness wandering in Israel’s history (Num. 21:14). Contrary to the KJV, the term is not to be equated with the Red Sea. It probably is identical with Suph of Deut. 1:1.

SURETY The practice of a borrower putting up collateral to guarantee the repayment of a loan. The practice served the purpose of protecting a creditor against a debtor’s inability to pay. A borrower who does not have the collateral or is not sufficiently solvent may call on a generous friend to act as surety (Prov. 6:1–5).

SUR GATE A gate in Jerusalem that provided access to the temple precincts from the royal palace. In Hebrew, *sur* means “to turn aside” or “to depart.” “Sur Gate” is used in 2 Kings 11:6, whereas 2 Chron. 23:5 prefers “Foundation Gate.” At this gate, the priest Jehoiada stationed soldiers as security during Josiah’s coronation.

SUSA Occupied as early as 4000 BC, Susa is about two hundred miles east of Babylon. The Hebrew name for the city, *shushan*, means “lily,” but the name’s proper origin is in the similar sounding “Shush,” which may be traced to In-Shushinak, the high god of the Elamites. Susa is mentioned in Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, and Daniel. Nehemiah served at Artaxerxes I’s palace at Susa (Neh. 1:1, 11; 2:1). A substantial portion of the book of Esther takes place at Susa. Ezra 4:9–10 reports that people from Susa were deported by the Assyrian king Ashurbanipal, and Dan. 8:2 identifies Susa as the setting of Daniel's vision.

Susa first saw fame as the capital of Elam, from which a number of early texts were recovered, including the law code of Hammurabi. After being destroyed by Ashurbanipal of the Assyrians (c. 640 BC), Susa was rebuilt and eventually rose to its apex in the Persian Empire under Darius (521–486 BC). It served as a capital alongside Persepolis, Ecbatana, and Babylon. After surrendering to Alexander the Great (c. 331 BC), who would soon conquer the entire Persian Empire, Susa remained significant but began a slow decline. Part of its site remains occupied by the city of Shush in the Khuzestan province of Iran.

SUSANCHITES *See* Susa.

SUSANNA **(1)** A woman healed by Jesus who supports him and his disciples in their ministry, probably both financially and through service (Luke 8:3). **(2)** The heroine of the book of Susanna, one of the Additions to Daniel in the OT Apocrypha. In the story, she is falsely accused of adultery by two elders and successfully defended by Daniel.

SUSI The father of Gaddi, who was the representative of the tribe of Manasseh among the twelve spies sent by Moses to scout the land of Canaan (Num. 13:11).

SUZERAIN, SUZERAINTY TREATY *See* Covenant.

SWADDLING CLOTHES Newborn infants were wrapped in strips of cloth to keep them clean and warm and to help their limbs grow properly. Mary displayed her maternal care for the infant Jesus by wrapping him in cloths (Luke 2:7, 12). Ezekiel refers to the practice when speaking of God's care for the rescued Israel (Ezek. 16:1–7).

SWALLOW The Hebrew word for "swallow," *deror*, which may include martins and swifts, is derived from a word meaning "free." Almost constantly in agile flight hunting for insects, swallows nest under ledges of rock or on buildings. In Ps. 84:3–4 the swallow's nesting instinct portrays the worshiper's desire to "dwell" in God's temple and presence, while in Prov. 26:2 its ceaseless flitting pictures "an undeserved curse."

SWAN The KJV translates the unclean bird *tinshemet* as "swan" (Lev. 11:18; Deut. 14:16). However, this word probably refers to an owl, as in the NIV and most other modern translations. Swans are almost unknown in Israel.

SWEAR *See* Oaths.

SWIFT The Hebrew word for "swift," *sus*, may also include swallows and martins. Like them, swifts are fast, agile flyers that nest under ledges. Apart from one species of martin, all birds of this type found in Israel are migratory (Jer. 8:7). The swift's calls include twittering and a high-pitched scream (Isa. 38:14).

SWINE Pigs were widely domesticated in the ancient Near East, and in biblical times they probably resembled the wild European boar, which still existed in the forests (Ps. 80:13). These animals would have been brown or gray and much hairier than modern domestic breeds, the boars having tusks and the piglets stripes. In Israel, however, pigs were regarded as one of the most unclean of all creatures, both ritually (Lev. 11:7; Deut. 14:8; Isa. 65:4; 66:3, 17) and physically (2 Pet. 2:22). To associate anything of value with swine subjected it to ridicule and rendered it worthless (Prov. 11:22); it was wasteful and abhorrent (Matt. 7:6). The presence of herds of domesticated pigs became a mark of Gentile territory, and when Jesus once cast out some demons in such an area, he allowed them to enter swine, which promptly drowned themselves in the lake (Mark 5:1–20 pars.). Thus, when the prodigal son in Jesus' parable ends up herding pigs, this represents the most degrading occupation an Israelite could imagine (Luke 15:15–16).

SWORD A close-quarters offensive weapon designed for slashing (cf. "the edge of the sword" [Josh. 8:24; 10:30 NRSV]), stabbing (e.g., Ps. 37:15), or both. The OT Hebrew word *khereb* encompasses many kinds of swords, including short swords or daggers (Judg. 3:16). In the NT, a distinction is made between the double-edged sword that was perfected in the Roman *gladius*, a weapon designed for deep penetration in stabbing (e.g., Luke 2:35), and the more common short sword or dagger. Appearing in accounts of wars and figures of speech, the sword is the most frequently mentioned weapon in the Bible. Swords were made of bronze or iron and could be ceremonial in use. Early swords were often sickle-shaped, as seen on Egyptian reliefs, and were also a badge of rank. The outer edge of the curve was sharpened. This style of sword is probably to be understood in Josh. 10:28–39. Later, particularly among the Sea Peoples, straight iron swords appear, such as have been found in burials in the Philistine territory. This style of sword is probably intended in Ps. 149:6. In early Israel a sword, especially one made of iron, was a rare and prized weapon representing the best technology of its kind (1 Sam. 13:19, 22; 17:45–50). Later, short swords were common enough that they could be obtained for defense (Luke 22:36–38).

The sword often functions as a terrifying symbol of warfare, death, and utter destruction—often expressions of God's judgment (Gen. 3:24; Deut. 13:15; 20:13; Josh. 6:21; Jer. 6:25; Rev. 6:4, 8). Yet it could also represent power and consequent victory (Lev. 26:7–8; Ps. 149:6). Metaphorically, the sword is associated with imagery connected to the mouth: it eats and is satisfied (Deut. 32:42; Isa. 1:20; 34:6); tongues or teeth may be like swords (Pss. 57:4; 64:3; Prov. 12:18; 30:14); words are like swords (Eph. 6:17; Heb. 4:12; cf. Rev. 1:16; 19:21).

SYCAMORE The sycamore tree of the biblical text has no relation to the sycamores of the West. Instead, the sycamore was a type of fig tree that produced fruit and as such was planted in orchards and harvested for its produce (Ps. 78:47; Amos 7:14). Apparently, it was a very common type of tree in Israel and was a good resource for the poor for both food and wood (1 Kings 10:27; Isa. 9:10). The most famous reference to a sycamore in the Bible is to the one that Zacchaeus climbs in order to catch a glimpse of Jesus as he passes by (Luke 19:4). *See also* Dresser of Sycamore Trees.

SYCHAR A town in Samaria where Jesus asked a Samaritan woman for a drink as she drew water from nearby Jacob's Well (John 4:5). Sychar is commonly identified as the modern village of 'Askar on the shoulder of Mount Ebal and opposite Mount Gerizim. Sychar lies about a mile from ancient Shechem. The region is saturated with underground springs, which make it a convenient stopping place for tired and thirsty travelers (John 4:6). Jacob apparently gave this plot of land to his son Joseph (Gen. 48:22; John 4:5), and eventually it became the most important Samaritan city.

SYENE Called “Aswan” in the NIV and mentioned in prophecies against Egypt, this southern Egyptian village (modern Aswan) is located on the east bank of the Nile, just north of the first cataract of the Nile, at the southern border of ancient Egypt (Ezek. 29:10; 30:6). Aswan was valued for its granite quarries, whose stones were called “syenite.” Syene’s fate was closely tied to nearby Elephantine Island.

SYMBOL A symbol is that which stands for something beyond itself. It is usually something material that represents something immaterial, either visually or conceptually. The implied comparison that a symbol presents is far more universal in association than that of a metaphor. The Bible is replete with symbols, using a person, place, number, action, event, object, or image to point beyond itself to reality. As such, symbol is a powerful vehicle of communication, and it is a common feature of all religions. But a symbol may not always reveal the significance to which it refers, since the reality that it represents may not always be apparent. A symbol is conditioned by the culture, history, and context in which it is situated and is capable of multiple meanings. Thus, to fully appreciate the significance that a symbol connotes, interpreters must pay careful attention to its linguistic and cultural-historical background.

Examples of the symbolic presence of God are plentiful in the Bible. In the OT, the rainbow was viewed as a symbol of God’s covenantal promise to preserve his created being (Gen. 9:13). The bronze serpent made by Moses symbolized God’s healing and wisdom (Num. 21:9). In Israelite worship the altar symbolized the meeting place of God; the ark, the presence of God; and the temple, the divine abode. Similarly, priestly vestments were symbolic, from the rope to the ephod to the turban, which made the priest himself the extension of God’s presence. In the NT, Christ’s incarnation made visible the presence of God. Christ is not a symbol, for he is the image of God. Many Christians understand the Lord’s Supper to symbolize Christ’s presence. The cross and the fish (*ichthys*, which in Greek is an anagram for “Jesus Christ, Son of God, Savior”) are two remarkable symbols, both representing the Christian faith in church history.

Symbolic actions are common in the Bible. Certain actions introduce new meaning beyond their immediate contexts. In the OT, for example, an Israelite slave allowed his owner to pierce his ear to symbolize his total and permanent slavery (Exod. 21:6). Also, the surrendering of a shoe symbolized the surrendering of all personal rights of inheritance (Ruth 4:7). In the OT, circumcision was a symbol of the covenant that God made with Abraham (Gen. 17:1–14) and of initiation into the covenant community (Ezek. 28:10; 31:18; 32:19). In the NT, this symbolic meaning is described by new actions. Water baptism had become a ritual symbol of the new covenant (Col. 2:11) and of incorporation into the Christian community (1 Cor. 12:13). Also, the prophetic messages were told in symbols. The prophets performed actions to reveal the will and message of God (Isa. 20:2; Jer. 13; Ezek. 4:1–3; Acts 21:10–11). In the NT, the miracles of Jesus were not simply deeds of sympathy; they demonstrated the coming of the kingdom of God (Luke 9:11).

SYNAGOGUE A transliteration of the Greek word *synagōgē*, meaning “gathering, assembly, meeting.” In English, the word “synagogue” refers either to a Jewish congregation or to the place where that congregation meets. Synagogues of the biblical era functioned as both religious and civic centers for the Jewish community.

ORIGINS

The origin of synagogues is uncertain. The earliest archaeological evidence is from Egypt in the third century BC, consisting of inscriptions and a papyrus letter. The oldest architectural find is from the island of Delos in the Aegean Sea, although whether this was constructed as a synagogue or redesigned into one is unknown, as is whether it was Jewish or Samaritan. The oldest structures yet found in Israel consist of two rooms at Qumran and the synagogue at Gamla, which date from the late first century BC. In Capernaum, the basalt synagogue was built by a Gentile centurion for the community in the first century AD (Luke 7:1–5).

By that time, synagogues were well attested in Israel, elsewhere in the Roman Empire, and in Egypt (Matt. 4:23; Luke 4:44; Acts 9:2; 17:10, 16–17; 18:8, 19). Synagogues were found wherever there were communities of Jews, in cities and rural areas alike. Especially in Diaspora settings or remote locations, they were the heart of Jewish life. Several hypotheses have been suggested to account for their apparently sudden appearance.

Ruins of the synagogue at Arbel

Some believe that synagogues were developed during the Babylonian captivity as the response of the exile community to the destruction of their temple and sacrificial system. Despite these enormous losses, the Jews still had the Torah, and from that point forward worship and prayer based on the reading and studying of the Scriptures, which could be done locally, began to gain ascendancy. Critics of this idea, however, point out that while it makes sense, there is no direct evidence to support it.

Others think that the spread of Hellenism in the second century BC precipitated a crisis of identity among Jews. For example, 1 Maccabees reports with distress that some Jews had abandoned the covenant and teamed with the Hellenists, even going so far as to build a Greek-style gymnasium in Jerusalem (1:11–15). Thus, the thought is that synagogues were a form of resistance to the overwhelming and perversely appealing cultural changes of the day.

More recently, it has been suggested that synagogues were the gradual successors to functions that had previously taken place at city gates. First-century synagogues served a wide range of functions for the community. Throughout Israel's prior history, however, these same activities—assembly, legal, social, educational, and religious—had taken place at the city gate (Deut. 12:15; 2 Sam. 15:2; 2 Kings 23:8; Neh. 8:1–8). The Gamla synagogue sits against the east city wall next to a probable gate, and its location could be evidence of the slow development of the synagogue as city gates changed from multipurpose facilities to portals of ingress and egress.

FIRST-CENTURY SYNAGOGUES

First-century synagogues served as integrated centers supporting Jewish life. Regular communal reading and exposition of Scripture, including teaching and discussion of the law and transmission of its complex associated traditions (Luke 4:16; Acts 13:14–15), occurred there. Although formal liturgical rites evolved after the destruction of the temple in AD 70, synagogues were places of prayer in the first century (Matt. 6:5). Synagogues also served as courtrooms and places where crimes were punished (Acts 22:19), as well as locations for common meals and festivals (see Acts 6:2).

Synagogues were administered by local community leaders, including a president and a board (Acts 13:15). Synagogue leaders named in the NT include Jairus (Mark 5:22; Luke 8:41), Crispus (Acts 18:8), and Sosthenes (Acts 18:17). The role of the leader was to preside over services, to rule as the judge in court cases, to represent the community, and often to act as a patron. The board served in an advisory role and assisted with teaching. A scribe maintained community records and taught.

Congregations included Pharisees, who advocated strict adherence to the law, although they were chided by Jesus for their false piety (Luke 11:42–44). Women participated in the synagogue along with the men, and in some cases they were financial donors (cf. Luke 8:3). God-fearing Gentiles were welcomed (Acts 17:17). In Jerusalem, synagogues included both Hebrews and Jews from the Diaspora (Acts 6:1, 9).

A synagogue could be a designated room in a house or a discrete building. Most of the better archaeological evidence is later than the first century and reveals more clearly religious intentionality in design than may have been characteristic earlier. This evidence includes the door facing Jerusalem, artistic temple motifs, a niche for the Torah scrolls, and perimeter bench seating around an open central hall.

THE SYNAGOGUE IN THE BIBLE

Since synagogues were institutions with a documented history no earlier than the third century BC, they are not mentioned in the OT. The Greek word from which the English one is derived does appear frequently in the LXX, but always with a general reference to a gathering, assembly, or meeting.

Rabbinic history (but not Scripture) makes reference to the "Great Synagogue," meaning a group of men who transmitted traditions from the prophets to the earliest named rabbinic teachers. It is loosely based on Neh. 8–10, which describes the prayers and actions of the Jewish leaders who had returned from exile.

Synagogues frequently were locations of the teaching and healing ministry of Jesus. He began preaching the kingdom of God, teaching, and performing healing miracles in Galilean synagogues (Matt. 4:23; 9:35; 12:9; 13:54; Mark 1:21–29, 39; 3:1; 6:2; Luke 4:15–38, 44; 6:6–11; 13:10–17; John 6:59; 18:20). Later, the apostle Paul customarily initiated his mission work in the local synagogue at each of his destinations (Acts 9:19–20; 13:5, 14–15; 14:1; 17:1, 10, 17; 18:1–8; 19:8).

The last (and, from a twenty-first-century perspective, most controversial) use of the word "synagogue" in Scripture is the difficult phrase "synagogue of Satan" (Rev. 2:9; 3:9), which must be read in its context. This was written in response to the significant persecution in Asia Minor of the churches at Smyrna and Philadelphia by Jews who were in collusion with the Roman authorities. They were falsely accusing Jewish and Gentile Christian believers, creating unspeakable suffering for them. This phrase, intended to encourage Christian perseverance, implies that the churches in view represented true Israel, while their accusers were false Jews. Similar language was used by the covenant-keeping community in Qumran when, in the DSS, it referred to apostate Jews as a "congregation of Belial" and an "assembly of hypocrites" (1QH^a 10:22; 15:34).

SYNOPTIC GOSPELS In NT studies, "Synoptic" refers to the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, which, due to their similarities, can be compared side by side (synoptic = seeing together). Although coined earlier, the term "Synoptic" did not become the commonly used reference to the first three Gospels until the nineteenth century.

Synoptical comparisons reveal texts that are similar in wording (e.g., Matt. 19:13–18 // Mark 10:13–16 // Luke 18:15–17), order (e.g., Matt. 12:46–13:58 // Mark 3:31–6:6a // Luke 8:19–56), and parenthetical material (e.g., Matt. 9:6 // Mark 2:10 // Luke 5:20). Most interestingly, the Synoptics agree in their quotation of the OT even when they differ from the Hebrew OT text itself (compare Matt. 3:3 // Mark 1:3 // Luke 3:4 to Isa. 40:3). Beyond such similarities, significant differences prevail that raise difficult questions. How, for example, could Mark escape any reference to the Sermon on the Mount (including the Lord's Prayer), which holds such a prominent position in Matthew?

Relationships among the three Gospels. Due to these and other factors, multiple theories on the Synoptic Gospels' relationship to one another have arisen. Yet none have found universal acceptance. Historically, based primarily on Augustine's claim, the church affirmed Matthew as the first Gospel, with Mark as his abridgment and Luke as employing both. The German text critic J. J. Griesbach developed this thesis of Matthean priority in his 1774 *Synopsis*, arguing that Luke was the first to use Matthew, and Mark was drawing from both. The Griesbach Hypothesis continues to have advocates.

Matthew covers the substance of 97.2 percent of Mark's 661 verses, while 88.4 percent reappear in Luke. Although such statistics could be explained as Mark's combination and abbreviation of Matthew and Luke, in fact Matthew generally shortens Mark where they cover the same material. In search of explanations that better validate the evidence, NT scholars proposed the Two Source Hypothesis, arguing that Mark wrote first, and that Matthew and Luke drew from Mark and from another, unknown source (which scholars call "Q," from German *Quelle*, meaning "source"). H. J. Holzmann gave significant credence to this theory in 1863, and after B. H. Streeter's persuasive publication in 1924 it became the leading theory. Rather than the reverse, it seems easier to understand Matthew and Luke as expansions of Mark's narrative, just as evidence suggests that they "cleaned up" Mark's poorer Greek and more difficult readings. Furthermore, although Matthew and Luke often disagree with each other both verbally and in their order of events, they rarely agree with one another against Mark. This suggests that in the triple tradition (passages in all three Synoptic Gospels), Matthew and Luke are not borrowing from each other but are independently using Mark.

The suggestion of the unknown source Q (which could be either written or oral) proved necessary to make sense of the significant agreements between Matthew and Luke in material not covered by Mark. Streeter suggested further that the material that was unique to Matthew and Luke respectively came from sources designated as "M" and "L."

Although the Two Source Hypothesis remains the working theory preferred by most scholars, others claim that the issue is far from unresolved. To reconstruct the precise development of the Synoptic Gospels has proven extremely difficult. Each Gospel may have been influenced by a variety of sources. Rather than being well defined, the process likely was fluid, bringing together commonly known and accepted memorizations of specific Jesus sayings, repeated retellings of specific sequences of events (shorter and longer) that had turned into strings of established tradition among early churches, written records made by disciples such as Matthew, oral preaching of apostles such as Peter, accounts possibly from Mary the mother of Jesus (cf. Luke 2:19), and other things.

Mark's Gospel has historically been considered a written condensation of Peter's preaching, but as C. H. Dodd showed in his 1936 *Apostolic Preaching and Its Developments*, Mark shaped his Gospel according to a common apostolic pattern observable in the speeches in Acts. Except for a few parables and the action-filled apocalypse in chapter 13, Mark's Gospel consists almost exclusively of descriptive narrative that delineates the power and purpose of Jesus, the Son of God. Mark is *kerygma*, preaching about Jesus. Q, or the material common to Matthew and Luke absent in Mark, consists almost exclusively of teaching material, Jesus sayings. It is *didachē,* teaching from Jesus.

Distinctives of each Gospel. Griesbach's "synoptic" approach of placing these three Gospels side by side for comparison has prompted new scholarly approaches such as redaction criticism and has provided beginning students with a helpful way to recognize specific emphases of each Gospel. As noted above, Mark is a fast-paced narrative ("immediately" occurs nine times in chap. 1 alone) with vivid picturesque detail (e.g., 14:51–52). Matthew writes for a Jewish audience. He weaves his narrative around five major teaching discourses (chaps. 5–7; 10; 13; 18; 24–25) while highlighting Jesus' relationship to Abraham (chap. 1), his mission to "the lost sheep of Israel" (chaps. 10; 15), and his birth and death as the "King of the Jews" (chaps. 2; 27) and using the Jewish expression "kingdom of heaven." Luke, while portraying the comprehensive scope of Jesus' mission by relating Jesus directly to Adam and God (3:38) and placing the events in secular history (chap. 2), reveals a special interest in the downtrodden (women, poor, children, Samaritans), prayer (nine prayers), the Holy Spirit, and joyfulness.

SYNTYCHE One of two Christian women residing in Philippi whom Paul identifies as coworkers in the ministry of the gospel (Phil. 4:2–3). In response to an apparent conflict between her and the other woman, Euodia, Paul exhorts them to live in Christian harmony (Phil. 4:2).

SYRACUSE A Greek colony on the eastern coast of Sicily that eventually grew to be a rich and powerful city. Captured by Rome in 212 BC, it later became a Roman colony. After Paul's shipwreck and subsequent three-month stay at Malta, he eventually resumed his voyage to Rome, sailing now upon an Alexandrian ship. The ship stopped at Syracuse for three days before continuing the journey (Acts 28:11–13).

SYRIA The Syrian-Arabian Desert is located within the hollow of the Fertile Crescent. "Syria" refers to a west Asian Semitic culture along with its distinct language, Syriac. However, Syria also was known as a province of the Roman Empire. Syrian Antioch became an important center of early

Christianity. The city was located on the Old Silk Route, the international trade route along the Mediterranean Sea that extended through central Asia to China.

HISTORY

Little was known about the earliest history of Syria and Palestine before the discovery of the Ebla texts, a huge archaeological find of over fifteen thousand cuneiform tablets with names, inscriptions, and stories, dated around 2250 BC and written in Sumerian script. Ebla (Tel Mardikh) is located along the main road to Aleppo in northern Syria. The data from this discovery continues to be interpreted by scholars today.

At the dawn of history, Syria was inhabited largely by a Semitic population that endured numerous invasions by other Semitic peoples from the surrounding area. The Phoenicians, along with the Canaanites, entered the area in the third millennium BC, and the Hebrews and the Arameans in the second millennium BC. In 1600 BC the Egyptians conquered Phoenicia and Palestine. Finally, under Thutmose III, Syria came under Egyptian suzerainty.

In the following centuries, both the Hittites and the Assyrians attempted to invade Syria and caused military and political upheaval. During that same time, the Arameans were slowly establishing their kingdom in northern and central Syria and part of Mesopotamia. By the eleventh century BC, Damascus was established as the capital of the principal kingdom. The Arameans built a large temple to their idol god, Hadad, in Damascus. The dialect spoken in the vicinity of Damascus, more precisely in the regions of Edessa, was called “Syriac.”

Many wars with the Assyrians took place in subsequent centuries and finally resulted in the defeat of the Syrians around 700 BC. Nebuchadnezzar next led the Babylonians through the Orontes Valley and defeated the Assyrians. The Babylonians ruled over Syria for the next half century. The Persians, who assumed power next, ended the Semitic rule of Syria and established their capital in Damascus.

Alexander the Great conquered the Persians in 333 BC. Subsequently, Greek culture burgeoned throughout Syria, especially in the coastal areas. Seleucus, one of Alexander’s generals and then successors, founded a dynasty that left a large imprint on Syria. The Seleucids remained Greek in language and culture and exercised autocratic rule. The most notorious Seleucid ruler, from a Jewish perspective, was Antiochus IV Epiphanes (r. 175–164 BC). Using Syria, and specifically Antioch, as a military hub, Antiochus IV attempted to control and Hellenize Palestine. The Jews resisted, which resulted in the Maccabean Revolt and Jewish independence.

The Seleucid dynasty experienced pressure by the Nabateans from their kingdom centered at Petra, in current-day Jordan. Syria continued to decline over the next century until the arrival of the Romans, who made it a Roman province in 64 BC. Under the Roman emperor Hadrian, Syria flourished in terms of trade and prosperity.

MAIN CITIES OF SYRIA

Ancient Antioch, more specifically known as Antioch-on-the-Orontes, was one of the major cities in Syria. Located in the coastal region of ancient Syria, it was centrally situated along the river Orontes. The city lay at the crossroads between the Euphrates to the east and the Mediterranean coastline to the west, and between Asia Minor to the north and Palestine to the south. Antioch also lay in close proximity to a harbor. In terms of roads, one of the main ones into the city led at the northeastern end to Beroea, whereas the road at the southern end of the city led to Daphne and Laodicea-ad-Mare.

In ancient times, the suburb Daphne, to the south of Antioch, was an important place due to springs and religious temples found there. Since this suburb stood at a higher elevation than Antioch, the springs at Daphne supplied the city of Antioch with water. An abundant water supply, due to water sources such as the springs of Daphne, was one of the main reasons why Seleucus chose to build a large city in the Plain of Antioch.

Edessa and Dura-Europos likewise were important cities during the first two centuries AD. Edessa was located to the northeast of Antioch in Syria, whereas Dura-Europos was located to the southeast of Antioch. East of Antioch lay an ancient road that connected the city with Edessa. Edessa, in turn, was located at the junction of various ancient routes that connected the city with the western Syrian area and beyond.

The remains of the synagogue at Dura-Europos, Syria

EARLY SYRIAN CHRISTIANITY

As many as one million Jews may have lived in all of Syria during the early part of the first century AD. Jews had been encouraged by the Seleucids to settle in Antioch. During the Maccabean wars, Jews had fled to both Antioch and Edessa. The exact date of the arrival of the first Jesus followers in

Antioch remains unknown. However, by the end of the second century AD, Christianity had spread to cities along the Old Silk Route and beyond. In the book of Acts, a persecution is described following the execution of Stephen that scattered believers in Jesus to places as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch (Acts 11:19). These scattered believers dispersed Christian beliefs chiefly among the Jews. Yet some of these believers from Cyprus did speak to the Hellenists as well, which caused many to become Christians (11:19–21). During the incipient years of Christianity, Barnabas and Paul resided for a year in Antioch. During that time, the 40s of the first century, followers of Jesus in Antioch were first called "Christians" (11:22–26). Antioch subsequently became Paul's home base for missionary journeys. The major trade routes of the city facilitated the spread of Christianity into the greater Syrian-speaking world, with Edessa becoming another important Christian center.

Language and translations were an important part of the spread of Syriac Christianity. The earliest Christian texts extant in Syriac are the Scriptures and *Odes of Solomon*. The Syriac Bible is known as the Peshitta. Syrian Christianity developed distinctly and was overtly Jewish in expression.

According to legend, the apostle Thomas spread the news of Jesus to the Far East. The traditional Syrian view is that Thomas was sent by Christ to India, where he planted churches and was martyred for the cause of Christ.

SYROPHOENICIAN This term (Gr. *syrophoinikissa*) occurs only in Mark 7:26 (cf. NIV: "born in Syrian Phoenicia") and designates an inhabitant of Syrophoenicia. Mark 7:26 specifies the woman as a Syrophoenician by lineage and also calls her a "Greek." Matthew 15:22 calls the same woman a "Canaanite" (which corresponds to the Phoenicians' definition but may also be understood as a general term including the early inhabitants of Phoenicia; cf. Num. 13:29) in order to highlight a contrast: this descendant of prototypical idolaters (Deut. 7:1–6; Ezra 9:1) exhibited more faith than most of Israel. In light of the two texts, it seems that the woman was a Greek-speaking member of the Phoenician people, still recognized by Jews as Canaanites.

Phoenicia was so called by the Greeks because of its famed trade in purple-red dye (Gr. *phoinix*). Phoenicia, a coastal region that included Tyre and Sidon, had been incorporated into the Roman province of Syria before NT times. The term "Syrophoenician" distinguished Phoenicians from Syria from those who lived near Carthage in North Africa and were called "Lybophoenicians" (cf. Strabo, *Geogr.* 17.3.19). Syrophoenicia was officially designated a separate district within the province of Syria in AD 194.

SYRTIS Two large and dangerously shallow bays of the Mediterranean Sea to the north of Africa, into which the sailors were afraid of being blown by the storm on Paul's trip to Rome (Acts 27:17). The larger is today's Gulf of Sirte (or Sidra) near Libya, and the lesser is today's Gulf of Gabes near Tunisia.

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TAANACH Taanach has been confidently identified as Tell Ta’annek, located in the Jezreel Valley, five miles southeast of Megiddo. The mound is imposing, covering eleven acres and rising well over one hundred feet above the valley floor.

The site was explored by Ernst Sellin between 1902 and 1904 and by Paul Lapp in 1963, 1966, and 1968. The second expedition located remains from the Early Bronze Age II–III (3000–2200 BC). The site continued to be occupied through the OT period. It was reused by Arab forces in the eleventh and twelfth centuries AD.

Although no large-scale architectural structures were found there, it had many fortresses and cisterns. Notable among the ruins is a cache of thirteen Akkadian tablets dated to the fifteenth century BC. They were letters and lists of administrative names.

Taanach is mentioned for the first time in an inscription at Karnak of Pharaoh Thutmose III, who included it among cities conquered on his first campaign into Asia in 1468 BC. It was also mentioned as defeated by Shishak I in 918 BC.

The king of Taanach was one of many defeated by Joshua, though the city itself was not said to have been taken (Josh. 12:21). While at first associated with Asher and Issachar, Josh. 17:11 and 1 Chron. 7:29 say that eventually it was given to Manasseh, and Josh. 21:25 lists it as a city of Manasseh given to the Levites (along with Gath Rimmon).

During the period of the judges, Taanach was the site of a major battle between forces led by Barak and Deborah and those led by the Canaanite Sisera. The former were victorious, and this led to liberation from Canaanite oppression for a period (Judg. 5:19). During the time of Solomon, Taanach became a capital of one of the administrative districts formed by the king in order to provide supplies one month a year to the court (Baana son of Ahilud was the administrator [1 Kings 4:12]).

TAANATH SHILOH A village identified with modern Khirbet Ta’na el-Foqa, seven miles southeast of Shechem. The village is named as part of the northern boundary of the tribe of Ephraim (between Mikmethath and Janoah) in Josh. 16:5–9.

TABALIAH The third son of Hosah, a descendant of Merari. He was a Levite assigned to be a gatekeeper after the exile (1 Chron. 26:11).

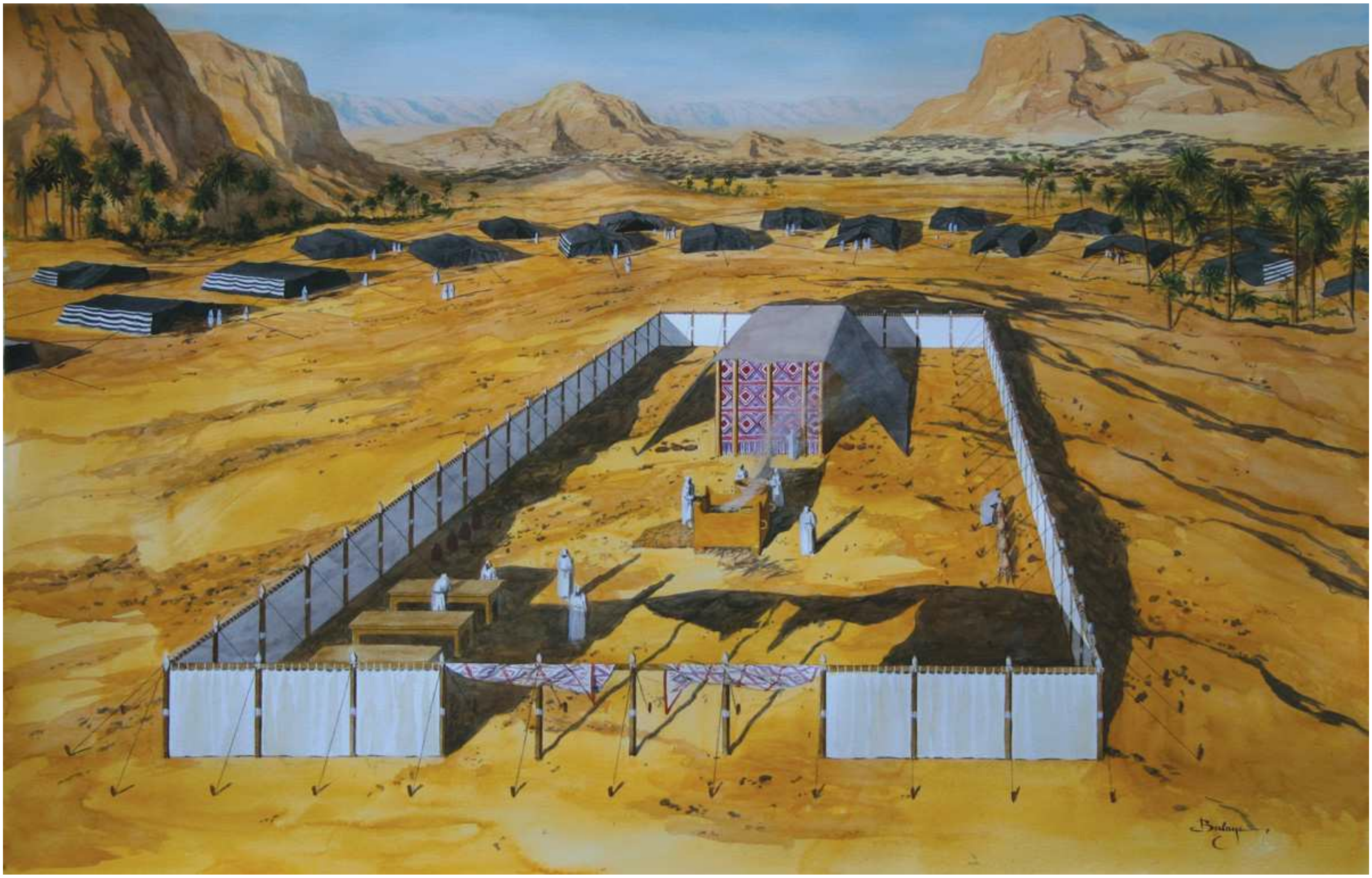
TABBAOTH One of the ancestors of the temple servants (Nethinim) who returned to Jerusalem after the Babylonian captivity under the leadership of Zerubbabel in 539 BC or soon after (Ezra 2:43; Neh. 7:46). The fact that many of the names in the list are foreign has led to the belief that they were originally prisoners of war who were pressed into service to perform menial tasks as they assisted the Levites.

TABBATH A site in the mountains of Gilead toward which the Midianites fled after Gideon’s surprise attack (Judg. 7:22). The exact location is speculative because it is dependent on the location of other sites that are debated.

TABEEL **(1)** The father of a person whom the kings of Israel and Aram wanted, in a coup attempt, to make king in Judah in place of Ahaz (Isa. 7:6). The exact identification of Tabeel is uncertain. It is probable that the original form of this name, which meant "God is good," was mockingly respelled in the Hebrew text to the similar sounding "not good." **(2)** A Samaritan official who, with several colleagues (Ezra 4:7), wrote a letter to the Persian king Artaxerxes to persuade him to stop the rebuilding of Jerusalem by the returnees from exile.

TABERAH A location, whose name means "burning," along the wilderness route of the exodus. The name recalls the anger of God, who sent out fire and burned the outer edges of the camp because of the Israelites' complaining (Num. 11:3; Deut. 9:22).

TABERNACLE, TENT OF MEETING "Tabernacle" in Hebrew (*mishkan*) is a general word for a tent or a dwelling. In the Pentateuch particularly, "tabernacle" most often refers to the special dwelling place of God among the Hebrew people during their wandering through the wilderness. The tabernacle was the abode of God's glory before the building of Solomon's temple in Jerusalem. The detailed description of the tabernacle and its construction comprise more than one-third of the book of Exodus (chaps. 25–40), signifying its theological importance to the life of God's people before the forming of the nation-state of Israel.



Artist's rendering of the tabernacle at Sinai

The final biblical description of the tabernacle was committed to writing probably during the period of Israel's exile in Babylon (587–537 BC). The exile of the Israelites was a time of spiritual wilderness in which Israel was a people bereft of their sanctuary, seemingly bereft of God's presence. The vivid descriptions of the tabernacle in the Pentateuch reflect both nostalgia for the temple and identification with the wilderness generation. This experience likely provided the impetus for writing and preserving oral and written traditions about the tabernacle. The descriptions of the wilderness sanctuary in the texts of the OT enabled a vivid re-creation of the tabernacle in the mind's eye.

The detailed command of God to build the tabernacle in Exod. 25–30 is part of a larger dramatic narrative. While Moses is on the mountain of God receiving the instructions for the tabernacle, the Hebrews have embarked on a festival of revelry and worship, offering sacrifices to a golden calf, constructed during Moses' absence (32:1–19). Moses is furious and smashes the tablets of the Ten Commandments on the ground, and yet he returns to the mountain to intercede for the people. God punishes the people with a plague but does not destroy or abandon them completely, for "the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness" (34:6) renews covenant with the people, and Moses again returns from the mountain with the Ten Commandments (34:27–29). Exodus 35–40 then recounts the careful obedience with which the people adhere to God's command to build the tabernacle, assiduously following the instructions given in Exod. 25–30.

The description of the tabernacle given in the text is of an ornate sanctuary within a tent structure situated at the very center of Israel's camp. The tabernacle thus took the place of the tent of meeting described in Exod. 33:7–11, which was pitched outside the camp. However, the terms "tabernacle" and "tent of meeting" appear to be used synonymously in the Pentateuch after the construction of the tabernacle was completed. According to the text, the dimensions of the tabernacle were as follows: 150 feet long, 75 feet wide, and 7.5 feet high (Exod. 27:18). Around the exterior of the tabernacle was an outer courtyard where an altar for burnt offerings stood at the entrance to the tent of meeting, as well as a basin filled with water for the ritual purifications of the priests. Within the outer enclosure of the tabernacle stood a lampstand, an incense altar, and a table where the bread of the Presence was placed. Within the temple was a second enclosure, the holy of holies, where the ark of the covenant was placed beneath the wings of the golden cherubim.

Various kinds of priests served to care for the tabernacle and its offerings, utensils, and equipment. Aaron and his sons were ordained as ministering priests, who offered sacrifices on behalf of the people (Lev. 8–9). The descendants of Levi were appointed as assistants to Aaron and his sons, divided according to various tasks in the care of the tabernacle and its effects. The work of the Kohathites was "the care of the most holy things" (Num. 4:4), carrying the golden altar, the table of the Presence, various utensils, and vessels. The work of the Gershonites was to carry the curtains of the tent, its ropes, and other equipment (4:21–28). The work of the Merarites was to carry "the frames of the tabernacle, its crossbars, posts and bases, as well as the posts of the surrounding courtyard with their bases, tent pegs, ropes, all their equipment and everything related to their use" (4:31–32).

The commandments for building the tabernacle parallel the giving of the law to Moses: one shaped the people's worship, and the other shaped the people's ethic of living. The precise detail of the tabernacle's construction emphasized the wondrous and dangerous power of God's presence within the tent. After the building of the tabernacle, God no longer dwelled on a distant mountain but now resided perilously close in holy otherness. The assiduous ordering of the temple worship provided stability and structure to the people's sojourning in a strange land, which was a time of uncertainty and struggle. Indeed, the tabernacle served as a tangible reminder of God’s presence and promise traveling alongside God’s people.

TABITHA The Aramaic equivalent of the Greek name “Dorcas” (both mean “gazelle”). A Christian who lived in Joppa, she was well known for her good deeds. She became ill and died, and Peter, having heard the news, came and raised her from the dead (Acts 9:36–42).

TABLE From the Latin word *tabula* (“board”), “table” first denoted any flat surface, but especially one of wood or stone used for writing (Exod. 20:2–17). The Ten Commandments were originally inscribed upon two tables of stone. Eventually “table” in this sense was replaced by “tablet” (*see* Tablet).

Tables were used for eating, working, and displaying objects: domestic tables (Judg. 1:7; 1 Sam. 20:29), temple tables of Yahweh (2 Chron. 4:8; Ezek. 40:39–43) or of heathen gods (Isa. 65:11), the “LORD’s table” (Mal. 1:7, 12), and the table for the bread of the Presence in the sanctuary (Exod. 25:23–30; 1 Kings 7:48; Heb. 9:2).

Tables found in the ancient Near East usually stood no more than eighteen inches high. Most were made of wood (2 Kings 4:10), but the wealthy had tables of ornate stone. It was a great honor to be invited to eat at or be given food from the king’s table (2 Sam. 9:7, 10–13; 1 Kings 2:7; 4:27; Dan. 1:5). The custom of the rich reclining on couches around a low table (Amos 6:4; cf. 3:12) became commonplace in NT times. Although dining at a table was customary (Luke 22:21; Acts 6:2), to eat under the table was for dogs and the despised (Judg. 1:7; Matt. 15:27; Mark 7:28; Luke 16:21). Money changers used tables as stands where money was exchanged (Matt. 21:12; Mark 11:15).

Figuratively, “table” was used to represent the meal on which it was served. In the ancient Near East, eating with others expressed intimate fellowship and trust, yet Jesus shared table fellowship with Judas (Luke 22:21). At the Lord’s Table (i.e., Communion, Eucharist), Jesus is the host, who invites us to remember him as we eat (1 Cor. 10:21; 11:23–26). The imagery of a banquet table of thanksgiving is used to depict God’s provision for his people (Pss. 23:5; 78:19).

TABLE OF NATIONS The genealogy of Noah’s sons in Gen. 10:1–32, which includes not only individuals but also names of places and nations.

Context and purpose. The Table of Nations follows the account of Noah and his sons after they emerged from the ark, developing the theme that from these three sons “came the people who were scattered over the whole earth” (Gen. 9:19). The story of the tower of Babel (11:1–9), placed after the Table of Nations, also continues the theme of the scattering of the earth’s population, showing that it occurred as a judgment from God. Thus, the purpose of the Table of Nations in Gen. 10 is to detail how Noah’s family multiplied and populated the earth as God intended, as well as to explain how this one family eventually scattered into a world consisting of many languages, tribes, and nations.

Although the chapter is presented as a genealogy of Noah’s family, it is not a “linear” genealogy, listing one descendant per generation with the primary purpose of tracing ancestry (as in Gen. 5; 11), but is rather a “segmented” genealogy, listing multiple individuals of the same generation with the goal of identifying political, geographic, and ethnic affiliations.

Structure and content. Although Gen. 10 first lists Noah’s sons as Shem, Ham, and Japheth, the genealogy proper commences with Japheth (vv. 1–5), then Ham (vv. 6–20), with Shem at the end (vv. 21–31). This arrangement highlights the importance of Shem’s line and foreshadows Gen. 11, which reveals that Abram was descended from Shem. Each section ends with a similar statement summarizing how each family has been categorized by its clans, languages, territories, and nations (10:5, 20, 31).

The Table of Nations lists fourteen Japhethites, some from northern Iran (Madai = Media), Turkey (Javan = Ionians), and the Mediterranean islands (Elishah in Cyprus). Among Ham's thirty-one descendants are people from Ethiopia (Cush), Libya (Put), Egypt (Mizraim), and Canaan. The twenty-six Shemites include some from Babylonia (Elam), Assyria (Ashur), and the Arabian Peninsula (Joktan).

TABLET Tablets as rigid flat sheets (plate, pad, or slab) made of stone, clay, wood, and perhaps bronze, gold, and lead are mentioned in the Bible. The Sumerians produced written documents and primers on clay tablets as early as 2500 BC. Three meanings can be applied: (1) the stone tablets, and their replacements, on which God wrote the Ten Commandments given to Moses at Mount Sinai (Exod. 24:12; 34:1–4, 27–29; Deut. 10:1–5; Heb. 9:4); (2) ordinary writing tablets made of clay or wood (Ezek. 4:1; Luke 1:63); (3) figuratively, a tablet of the heart, on which God's law is written (Prov. 3:3; 7:3; Jer. 17:1; 2 Cor. 3:3).

TABOR A mountain in Lower Galilee, southwest of the Sea of Galilee and north of the Hill of Moreh and Mount Gilboa. Tabor's strategic location and ease of fortification led to it becoming a location of military note throughout history, including its fortification by Josephus during the Jewish revolt. In Judg. 4:1–15 Deborah tells Barak to go to Mount Tabor and then to lead an attack from Tabor upon Sisera's men, who are then routed. In Judg. 8:18 Mount Tabor is also mentioned when Gideon confronts and kills Zebah and Zalmunna, two kings of Midian. Hosea uses the phrase "a net spread out on Tabor" to illustrate his judgment against Israel (Hos. 5:1).

The “great tree of Tabor” (KJV: “plain of Tabor”; NRSV: “oak of Tabor”) refers to a place where Samuel instructed Saul to meet three men who were on their way to Bethel (1 Sam. 10:3). *See also* Oak of Tabor.

TABRET *See* Timbrel.

TABRIMMON The son of Hezion and the father of King Ben-Hadad of Syria (1 Kings 15:18).

TACHES Ten times in Exodus the KJV translates the plural of the Hebrew word *qeres* as “taches,” referring to the hooks or clasps that joined the individual curtains of the tabernacle into one unit (Exod. 26:6 [2×], 11 [2×], 33; 35:11; 36:13 [2×], 18; 39:33).

TACHMONITE *See* Tahkemonite.

TACKLING In the KJV, apparatus on a ship used to work the sails and handle cargo (Isa. 33:23 [NIV: “rigging”]; Acts 27:19 [NIV: “tackle”]). During a storm, some gear was thrown overboard to lighten the ship carrying the apostle Paul (Acts 27:18–19), though probably not the tackle or rigging, since the sailors later were able to raise the ship’s foresail (27:40).

TADMOR A city built in the Syrian Desert between Mari and Damascus. It was fortified by Solomon, probably as part of his control of the important trade routes between Palestine and Mesopotamia (2 Chron. 8:4). Some Hebrew manuscripts read “Tamar” in 1 Kings 9:18 as “Tadmor” (so also the NIV). The site was renamed “Palmyra” during the Hellenistic period and was destroyed by the Romans in the third century AD.

TAHAN **(1)** The third son of Ephraim, ancestor of the Tahanite clan (Num. 26:35). The parallel list in 1 Chron. 7:20 reads “Tahath.” **(2)** An ancestor of Joshua (1 Chron. 7:25).

TAHANITES Clan of the descendants of Tahan, third son of Ephraim (Num. 26:35).

TAHAPANES *See* Tahpanhes.

TAHASH The third of the four sons of Nahor and his concubine Reumah (Gen. 22:24).

TAHATH **(1)** A Levite, the son of Assir and an ancestor of Samuel (1 Chron. 6:24, 37). **(2)** An Ephraimite, the son of Bered (1 Chron. 7:20). **(3)** An Ephraimite, the son of Eleadah (1 Chron. 7:20). **(4)** An encampment of the Israelites during the wilderness wandering of the exodus (Num. 33:26–27).

TAHCHEMONITE *See* Tahkemonite.

TAHKEMONITE Family name of Josheb-Basshebeth, chief of David’s mighty warriors (2 Sam. 23:8). If his ancestor Hakmoni is mentioned in 1 Chron. 27:32, then the form Hakmonite (1 Chron. 11:11) is probably correct.

TAHPANHES A Hebrew transliteration of an Egyptian place name for an outpost bordering Sinai (see Jer. 2:16; 46:14). The word means “the fortress of Penhase” or “the house of the Nubian.” Penhase was a Theban general who quelled a rebellion in the Nile Delta (eleventh century BC). After the destruction of Jerusalem, a group of Israelites desired to escape to Tahpanhes. Jeremiah counseled against this, warning that Nebuchadnezzar would eventually reach Tahpanhes, and prophesying that if the people remained in the land, God would grant them mercy. However, the Jews did not listen and fled to Egypt, taking Jeremiah with them. It was in Tahpanhes that Jeremiah finished out his prophetic career (Jer. 42:19; 43:7–9; 44:1). Ezekiel also included this city in his oracle against Egypt (Ezek. 30:18 [NRSV, KJV, ESV: “Tehaphnehes”]). The site of the city is associated with Daphnai (Tell Defneh, near Lake Manzaleh in the northeast Delta).

TAHPENES An Egyptian queen whose sister was the wife of the Edomite king Hadad, an enemy of David and Solomon. Tahpenes weaned Hadad’s son (her nephew) Genubath in the house of Pharaoh in Egypt (1 Kings 11:19–20).

TAHREA The third of the four sons of Micah, he was a descendant of King Saul (1 Chron. 9:41). In 1 Chron. 8:35 his name is spelled “Tarea.”

TAHTIM HODSHI One of the regions listed in David’s census. David sent Joab and his army commanders to take a census of the fighting men of Israel. After traveling through Jazer, the men went on to “Gilead and the region of Tahtim Hodshi” and then moved on to Dan Jaan and Sidon (2 Sam. 24:5–6).

TALENT *See* Weights and Measures.

TALITHA CUMI The KJV and RSV rendering of Jesus’ words in Mark 5:41 to Jairus’s daughter. The NIV, following a different manuscript tradition, reads “*Talitha koum.*” The underlying Aramaic phrase, *talyetha’ koumi*, literally means “Little girl, get up!” Mark’s addition of “I say to you” in his paraphrase accurately conveys the sense of the command. Matthew and Luke also record Jesus’ healing of Jairus’s daughter (Matt. 9:23–26; Luke 8:49–56), but only Mark includes the Aramaic words that Jesus spoke.

TALITHA KOUM *See* Talitha Cumi.

TALMAI **(1)** One of three Anakite leaders (with Ahiman and Sheshai), mentioned first in the account of the spies’ mission to the promised land in the region around the city of Hebron (Num. 13:22). One of the spies, Caleb, drove them out of the region (Josh. 15:14). However, they must have repossessed the area because they are also described as having been driven from the area by the men of Judah after the death of Joshua (Judg. 1:10). **(2)** King of Geshur (a region in the lower Golan Heights), whose daughter Maakah married David. This marriage sealed a political alliance, but David and Maakah’s son Absalom fled to Talmai for refuge after he killed David’s firstborn son, Amnon (2 Sam. 3:3; 13:37; 1 Chron. 3:2).

TALMON **(1)** A priestly gatekeeper at the time of the early postexilic period (Ezra 2:42; Neh. 7:45). He and his associates were stationed on the east at the King’s Gate (1 Chron. 9:17). **(2)** A priestly gatekeeper at the time of Ezra and Nehemiah (Neh. 11:19; 12:25).

TALMUD Etymologically, *talmud* is a noun built on the verbal root *lmd*, which can mean either "teach" or "learn." Thus, *talmud* is an abstract noun meaning "study" or "learning," which can be used in any of several different senses in rabbinic literature. In some cases, *talmud* refers specifically to the body of instruction received from one's predecessors, and in other cases it may be used to refer to the collected teachings of an individual scholar. Most important, however, *talmud* occurs as a proper noun referring to the much larger body of teaching compiled during the third to fifth centuries AD and comprising the comments and discussions of the Amoraim (rabbinic teachers who flourished between AD 200 and 500) regarding the various halakic (legal) teachings laid out in the Mishnah (compilation of oral legal tradition codified around AD 200). Thus, the Talmud is in many respects a kind of commentary on the Mishnah, although it must be noted that a good deal of additional material, not related in any strict sense to the content of the Mishnah, has been included, particularly in the Babylonian tradition. In fact, there are two distinct Talmuds, each one developed in the geographical region for which it is named: the Babylonian Talmud (in Hebrew "Talmud Bavli," which has been widely acclaimed as authoritative, almost since its completion) and the Palestinian Talmud (in Hebrew "Talmud Yerushalmi," also called "Talmud of the Land of Israel" or "Talmud of the West").

The Babylonian Talmud is by far the longer of the two compilations. Like the Mishnah, it is divided into six "orders," each one loosely organized around a particular area of legal or exegetical concern. The orders are designated as follows: *Zera'im* ("Seeds"), *Mo'ed* ("Appointed Seasons"), *Nashim* ("Women"), *Neziqin* ("Damage"), *Qodashim* ("Holy Things"), and *Teharot* ("Cleannesses"), and each order is subdivided into several more specific topics. Thus, for example, the Babylonian Talmud for the order *Mo'ed* is comprised of the following subsections (tractates): *Shabbat*, *Eruvin*, *Pesahim*, *Yoma*, *Sukkah*, *Betzah*, *Rosh HaShanah*, *Ta'anit*, *Sheqalim*, *Megillah*, *Mo'ed Qatan*, *Hagigah*. In modern editions, each subsection is arranged so that individual paragraphs from the Mishnah are followed by the portion of the Talmud that forms the commentary on it. To aid in reading, the talmudic material is usually headed by the individual sentences of the mishnaic paragraph in question.

In the Babylonian tradition, the material included with any particular section of the Mishnah is sometimes much more expansive than the corresponding sections of the Palestinian tradition. At least two explanations may be offered for this phenomenon. First, the Babylonian academies were in existence for longer than the academies of Palestine. For that reason, the Babylonian Talmud was redacted over a longer period of time than the Palestinian, and as a result it contains more material. Second, no independent body of haggadic (narratival, nonlegal) literature developed in Babylon as it did in Palestine. For that reason, haggadic material has been included in the Babylonian Talmud where it may have been regarded as unnecessary in the Palestinian tradition.

The Palestinian Talmud is shorter than the Babylonian Talmud, both in terms of its total number of pages and in terms of the proportion of mishnaic material that it addresses. For example, the fifth order of the Palestinian Talmud (*Qodashim*) is no longer extant, and several subsections from *Mo'ed*, *Neziqin*, and *Teharot* are likewise missing. This is because large sections of the Palestinian tradition appear to have been lost at a very early stage in the process of textual transmission. Thus, the first printed edition of the Palestinian Talmud ends with this pronouncement: "To this point, we have found what is contained in this Talmud, and we have endeavored in vain to obtain the missing portions."

The Babylonian Talmud embodies the rabbinic tradition of rich and diverse reflection on Torah, and so in contemporary Judaism it remains of unquestioned value and authority for religious practice and Jewish identity.

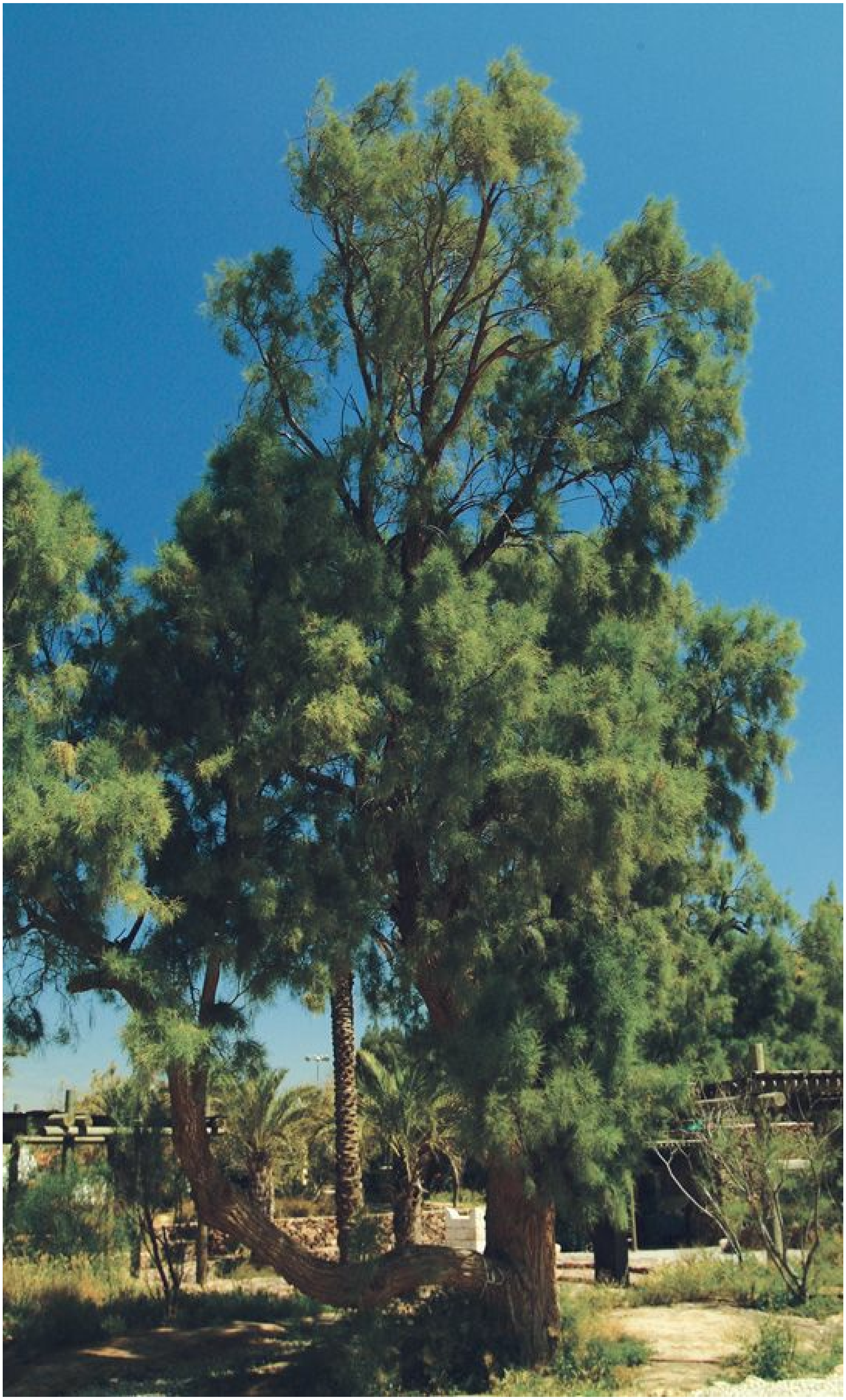
TAMAH *See* Temah.

TAMAR **(1)** Judah's daughter-in-law who bore him twin sons, Perez and Zerah, thus carrying on the family of Judah (1 Chron. 2:4). In Gen. 38, Tamar, after being married to Judah's first son, Er, and then his second son, Onan (both killed by God for their wickedness), was to marry Judah's third son, Shelah, according to Israelite custom. Afraid that Shelah too would die, Judah resisted this duty and instructed Tamar to live as a widow at her father's house.

When Tamar saw that she would not be allowed to marry Shelah, she disguised herself as a prostitute and was approached by Judah. Providing her with a pledge, Judah impregnated Tamar. Tamar, when found to be pregnant, was accused of acting unscrupulously. But upon revealing Judah's pledge, Tamar was declared by Judah to be "more righteous than I" (Gen. 38:26). Tamar is mentioned later in Scripture in a blessing (Ruth 4:12) and holds a place in the genealogy of Jesus (Matt. 1:3).

(2) The daughter of King David who was raped by her half brother, Amnon. The violence done to Tamar was later avenged by her brother Absalom, who killed Amnon (2 Sam. 13). **(3)** The beautiful daughter of Absalom (2 Sam. 14:27), perhaps named after her aunt. **(4)** A location on the southeastern boundary of Judah (Ezek. 47:18–19; 48:28). This may be Hazezon Tamar (Gen. 14:7), which became En Gedi (2 Chron. 20:2). *See also* Baal Tamar.

TAMARISK A small shrub or tree with tiny leaves and slender branches common in desert regions and useful for shade or wood. Abraham planted a tamarisk tree as a sign of his covenant with Abimelek (Gen. 21:33). Tamarisks were also used as landmarks identifying the locations where Saul and his officials met during his pursuit of David (1 Sam. 22:6) and where the bones of Saul and Jonathan were buried at Jabesh (31:13). Tamarisk fruit was the possible source of the manna that the Israelites ate in the wilderness.



A tamarisk tree

TAMBOURINE *See* Timbrel.

TAMMUZ A Babylonian deity. Yahweh, the God of Israel, revealed the extent of Judah’s apostasy to Ezekiel in several visions, including one in which he sees women “mourning the god Tammuz” (Ezek. 8:14). The seemingly enigmatic reference was a clear accusation of idolatry and lack of trust in Yahweh. In the mythology, Tammuz (Babylonian Dumuzi) dies, and his wife, the goddess Inanna, descends to the netherworld to bring him back. In his absence the land is distressed and lacks fertility (winter), but his return brings restoration (spring). Women wept over his departure in an annual ritual.

TANACH *See* Taanach.

TANHUMETH A Netophathite who was the father of Seraiah. This son was a captain of the armies who remained in Judah when Gedaliah was appointed governor by the conquering Babylonians (2 Kings 25:23; Jer. 40:8).

TANIS *See* Zoan.

TAPHATH A daughter of King Solomon and the wife of Ben-Abinadab, Solomon’s administrator of Naphoth Dor, one of the twelve districts providing monthly food and provisions for the king’s household (1 Kings 4:11).

TAPPUAH **(1)** The second of the four sons of Hebron, a member of the clan of Caleb (son of Hezron) in the tribe of Judah (1 Chron. 2:43). **(2)** A town in the northern Shephelah, in one of the districts of Judah (Josh. 15:34). The modern village of Beit Natif, west of Bethlehem, has been suggested as a possible location. **(3)** A town that formed the northern border of Ephraim (Josh. 16:8). Although the town belonged to Ephraim, the land of Tappuah apparently belonged to Manasseh (Josh. 17:8). **(4)** Some versions (e.g., NLT) emend “Tiphsah” to “Tappuah,” the town in the territory of Tirzah that King Menahem destroyed (2 Kings 15:16). It probably should not be identified with the Tappuah of Josh. 16:8 because of its identification in 2 Kings 15:16 with Tirzah, which would be too far from Ephraim. *See also* Beth Tappuah; En Tappuah; Tiphsah.

TAR *See* Bitumen.

TARAH *See* Terah.

TARALAH A city in the territory allotted to Benjamin (Josh. 18:27). The exact location is unknown, but it likely was situated northwest of Jerusalem.

TAREA The third of the four sons of Micah and a descendant of King Saul (1 Chron. 8:35). In 1 Chron. 9:41 his name is spelled “Tahrea.”

TARES Weeds (also called “darnel” or “cockle”) that resemble wheat until the ears of grain appear. Tares are used as a figure for unbelievers in the parable of the tares/weeds (Matt. 13:24–30, 36–43).

TARGUM A translation of the Hebrew OT into Aramaic. In the period of the exile and thereafter, Aramaic was the dominant language of the ancient Near Eastern world. This is the everyday language that Jews ultimately adopted, and so the need arose to translate the OT into this new language. The verbal form of "Targum" means "to translate" or "to explain," and an early example of this perhaps is found in Neh. 8:8, where the law was read to the postexilic community in Hebrew and "translated" or "explained" to the people. There are numerous Targumim that date from before the time of Christ into the medieval period. As translations, some of these Targumim also include extraneous material aimed at explaining the text itself. For example, the Targum to the Pentateuch known as Targum Pseudo-Jonathan is roughly twice the length of the Hebrew version. This attests to the explanatory function of the targumic traditions. The Targumim are also an important component of NT study, as they help us glean insights into the Judaism of Jesus' day.

TARPELITES In Ezra 4:9 the KJV transliteration of the Aramaic term *tarpelaye'* in the list of officials who sent a letter against Jerusalem to Artaxerxes. Some modern versions translate the word as "officials" (e.g., ESV, NRSV; NIV: "administrators"), while others describe them as people from Tripolis (e.g., HCSB, MSG).

TARSHISH The Hebrew word *tarshish* refers to a precious stone (NIV: "topaz"; Exod. 28:20; Ezek. 1:16). The name of the stone probably comes from its place of origin (see #4, below). "Tarshish" is also used as a name. **(1)** A son of Javan, grandson of Japheth, and great-grandson of Noah (Gen. 10:4; 1 Chron. 1:7). **(2)** A son of Bilhan, grandson of Jediael, and great-grandson of Benjamin (1 Chron. 7:10). **(3)** One of the seven princes of Persia and Media who had access to the presence of King Ahasuerus and advised him to put away Queen Vashti because of her refusal to obey the king's command to appear before the banquet (Esther 1:14).

(4) A place frequently mentioned in the OT. Solomon engaged in trade with Tarshish (1 Kings 10:22 NRSV, NASB; 2 Chron. 9:21 NRSV, NASB), and it is described as a source of precious metals such as gold and silver (Jer. 10:9; Ezek. 27:12). Its location is unknown, but it is associated with islands (Ps. 72:10 NRSV, NASB) and with Jonah's flight by ship from Joppa on the Mediterranean (Jon. 1:3). Both Tartessus in southwest Spain and the island of Sardinia have been suggested as possible sites.

The phrase "ships of Tarshish" (Ps. 48:7; Isa. 23:1) may refer to a fleet originating from Tarshish or more generally to a type of seaworthy merchant vessel. It is thus sometimes translated by the NIV as "trading ships" (1 Kings 10:22; 22:48).

TARSUS The capital of the Roman province of Cilicia and the birthplace of Paul (Acts 9:11; 21:39; 22:3). When some Hellenistic Jews sought to kill Paul in Jerusalem, he was sent to Tarsus for his safety (9:30). Barnabas, who had been sent by the Jerusalem church to Antioch, went from there to Tarsus looking for Paul, found him, and brought him back to Antioch (11:25).

TARTAK A deity worshiped by the Avvites, a people whom the Assyrians sent to resettle Samaria after the Israelites were deported (2 Kings 17:31). "Tartak" probably is an intentional corruption of the name "Atargatis," the Syrian fish-goddess (as she was sometimes depicted) and consort of Hadad.

TARTAN The title of a high position in the Assyrian army (2 Kings 18:17 NRSV), perhaps a "commander-in-chief" (ESV) or "supreme commander" (NIV) (Isa. 20:1).

TARTARUS In Greek and Roman mythology, Tartarus is a place in Hades or the underworld where the wicked are sent for punishment. The name “Tartarus” appears in some English versions of 2 Pet. 2:4 (e.g., HCSB; see NIV mg.) based on a transliteration of the Greek term, but most translations render it as “hell.” This verse describes the place where God sent the angels when they sinned, likely alluding to the imprisonment of angels in Tartarus recounted in *1 Enoch* (esp. 20.2). *See also* Hell.

TASKMASTER An overseer appointed by Pharaoh to enslave the Israelites after the death of Joseph’s generation. The taskmasters (NIV: “slave drivers”) failed to stunt the Israelites’ population growth (Exod. 1:12), but they did make life miserable for the Israelite slaves (3:7; 5:13).

TASSELS *See* Fringes.

TATNAI *See* Tattenai.

TATTENAI A Persian governor of the lands east of the Euphrates during the reign of Darius I, as attested by a cuneiform text from 502 BC. In 1 Esdras 6–7, he is called “Sisinnes.” Together with Shethar-Bozenai and other officials, Tattenai wrote to Darius to inquire whether the Jews had permission to rebuild their temple (Ezra 5:6–17). Darius ordered not only to allow the Jews to rebuild but to help provide whatever the priests required (6:1–12). Tattenai and his associates dutifully followed Darius’s instructions (6:13).

TAVERNS, THREE *See* Three Taverns.

TAX COLLECTOR In the Roman Empire, tax collectors (KJV: “publicans”) were employed to help collect taxes in the provinces. People bid for the job of tax collector, and they were compensated by collecting more than the required tax from the people. Tax collectors were despised by Jews as greedy because of the excessive profits they reaped. They also were counted as traitors because they worked for the Romans. In the NT, tax collectors often are associated with Gentiles and sinners (Matt. 5:46–47; 11:19; 21:32).

Jesus was criticized by the Jewish leaders for eating with “tax collectors and sinners” (Matt. 9:11). Jesus welcomed and taught tax collectors (Luke 5:29; 15:1). Matthew, one of Jesus’ disciples, was a tax collector (Matt. 10:3). Zacchaeus was a “chief tax collector,” which probably indicates that he was contracted with the Romans to collect taxes over a specific area, and he supervised others who did the actual collecting (Luke 19:2).

TAXES Taxes in Scripture encompass both religious obligation to God to meet the funding requirements of the temple and payments to secular authorities, foreign and domestic. Several words and phrases express the concept in the Bible. In the OT these include the following: (1) *Ransom* was the temple tax commanded by God, based on a census of Israel (Exod. 30:11–16). It resulted in atonement for the taxpayer and avoidance of a plague on Israel. (2) *Tribute* was a divinely commanded offering in support of the cultic priesthood. The example in Num. 31:28–30 specifically addresses spoils of war. (3) *Levy* was a monetary assessment of silver and gold imposed by a superior authority (e.g., Pharaoh Necho) to a subjugated one (e.g., Israel) (see 2 Kings 23:33–35). (4) *Tax* was a compulsory payment to an authority. The example in 2 Chron. 24:6, 9 refers to the aforementioned ransom. A second usage of the underlying Hebrew, appearing in Amos 5:11, refers to taxes on the poor by corrupt leaders in the northern kingdom.

Additionally, four different words in Aramaic, the original language of Ezra, indicate governmental revenues (Ezra 4:13, 20; 6:8; 7:24). These words are variously translated as “taxes,” “tribute,” “duty,” “revenue.” The shades of difference in meaning among them are unclear.

These Tyrian shekels from the Ussfiyeh hoard were probably collected to pay the temple tax in Jerusalem.

The NT discusses taxes in several passages. The most comprehensive is Matt. 17:24–27, Jesus’ discussion of the temple tax with Peter, ending with the account of the four-drachma coin in the mouth of the caught fish. Here, three of the four NT Greek words for taxes are employed. (1) *Didrachmon* in v. 24 is the “temple tax” (NIV, NRSV), the OT “ransom to the LORD” defined above. By the first century AD, the amount was fixed at two drachmas, equivalent to wages for two long days of common labor. (2) *Telos* comes first in the word pair translated “duty and taxes” in v. 25 and is the generic word in the NT for taxes. It also occurs in Rom. 13:7, where it is translated “revenue.” (3) *Kēnsos* occurs second in the same word pair in v. 25 and refers to the direct poll tax on male adults. It also appears in Mark 12:14; Matt. 22:17–19, both addressing the question of paying taxes to Caesar. (4) The remaining Greek word, *phoros*, is found in Luke 20:22; 23:2; Rom. 13:6–7. This term refers specifically to a tribute tax paid by a subjugated nation to a superior authority—for example, the tax owed by Israelites to Caesar.

TEACHING *See* Education.

TEARS *See* Grief and Mourning.

TEBAH **(1)** The oldest of four sons of Nahor by his concubine Reumah (Gen. 22:24). **(2)** A town that had belonged to King Hadadezer of Zobah, from which David took a large quantity of bronze after defeating the king (1 Chron. 18:8). Some versions follow the Hebrew text, which has the variant name “Tibhath” (NRSV, NASB, ESV, KJV), while others substitute “Tebah” (NIV, NLT).

TEBALIAH *See* Tabaliah.

TEBETH The tenth month of the Hebrew calendar (December–January) (Esther 2:16).

TEETH OT law considered the loss of a tooth or an eye equally serious (Exod. 21:24, 27; Lev. 24:20; Deut. 19:21; Matt. 5:38–39). Perfect, clean, white teeth are a mark of beauty (Song 4:2; 6:6). When nations or people destroy, it is with sharp teeth (Deut. 32:24 [NIV: “fangs”]; Job 29:17; 41:14; Ps. 57:4; Prov. 30:14; Joel 1:6). The psalmist calls upon Yahweh “to break the teeth” of the wicked (Pss. 3:7; 58:6). Hell, described as a place of “weeping and gnashing of teeth” (Matt. 8:12; 13:42; 22:13; 24:51; 25:30; Luke 13:28), graphically pictures the suffering reserved for those outside the kingdom of God.

TEHAPHNEHES *See* Tahpanhes.

TEHINNAH A Judahite, a son of Eshton and the “father” of the city Ir Nahash (1 Chron. 4:12).

TEIL TREE The KJV translation of the Hebrew word *’elah* in Isa. 6:13. More-recent versions translate the term as “oak” or “terebinth.” *See also* Plants; Terebinth.

TEKEL *See* Mene, Mene, Tekel, Parsin.

TEKOA A town in the territory of Judah about 7.5 miles south of Bethlehem, perhaps at the modern site of Khirbet et Tuqu’. Tekoa is associated with the Hezronites (1 Chron. 2:24; 4:5), as the son of Hezron (who was Judah’s grandson) was the leader, or “father,” of Tekoa. Jeremiah 6:1 indicates that it was south of Jerusalem. The Greek translation of Josh. 15:59 may refer to Tekoa in association with Bethlehem. Rehoboam included it in a line of defensive fortifications (2 Chron. 11:6).

Tekoa was the birthplace of Ira, one of David’s mighty warriors (2 Sam. 23:26). It is better known as the birthplace of Amos, the shepherd and caretaker of sycamore-fig trees turned prophet to the northern kingdom of Israel (Amos 1:1; 7:14). Tekoa also was the origin of a wise, or skilled, woman whom Joab recruited as part of petitioning David to restore Absalom after he had killed Amnon (2 Sam. 14).

Site of biblical Tekoa. The Palestinian town of Tuqu’ is in the background.

TEKOITE A person from Tekoa, a village south of Bethlehem, including Ira the warrior (2 Sam. 23:26), Amos the prophet (Amos 1:1), and Joab’s wise woman (2 Sam. 14:1–20).

TEL *See* Tell.

TEL ABIB *See* Tel Aviv.

TELAH An ancestor of Joshua, he was an Ephraimite, the son of Resheph, and the father of Tahan (1 Chron. 7:25).

TELAIM A city in southern Judah, perhaps near Edom, where Saul summoned and numbered his troops before attacking the Amalekites (1 Sam. 15:4). The LXX reads “Gilgal,” but this may be an example of the tradition of changing the name of a place to a location more readily associated with the hero. *See also* Telem.

TEL ASSAR A city of “the people of Eden” whose destruction was alluded to in Sennacherib’s letter to Hezekiah. Sennacherib’s letter serves both to warn and to mock Hezekiah in order to sway him toward surrender and away from faith in God (2 Kings 19:9–13).

TEL AVIV A town “near the Kebar River” where Ezekiel stayed with Babylonian exiles for seven days. The experience seemed deeply moving to him: “I sat among them for seven days—deeply distressed” (Ezek. 3:15). The location of the biblical Tel Aviv and the Kebar River are unknown.

TEL DAN INSCRIPTION In 1992 and 1994 fragments of an inscription were discovered in secondary usage in the Israelite gate complex at Dan. Dating from the ninth century BC, the text is in Aramaic and represents the king of Damascus, whose god was Hadad. He claims responsibility for killing Jehoram of Israel and Ahaziah of the “house of David.” The inscription gives credit for the demise of these kings to the king of Syria, even though the biblical text indicates it was Jehu (2 Kings 9:14–29). This is not unusual for ancient Near Eastern inscriptions; the king of Syria may have thought of Jehu as a vassal. The inscription does mention Jehu son of Omri at the end. While it has been claimed by a minority of scholars that “house of David” should be read as “house of the beloved,” the latter reading does not fit the militaristic context.

TELEM **(1)** A Levite gatekeeper, contemporary of Ezra, among those who married foreign women (Ezra 10:24) and then sent them away after the captivity. **(2)** An alternate form of “Telaim,” a city in southern Judah, near the border with Edom (Josh. 15:24). *See also* Telaim.

TELHARESHA, TELHARSA *See* Tel Harsha.

TEL HARSHA One of the Babylonian towns where Judahites settled during the exile (Ezra 2:59; Neh. 7:61). The exiles from these towns came up in order to return to Judah with Nehemiah (Ezra 2:1–2; Neh. 7:6). Upon returning to Israel, some of its residents were unable to prove that they were descended from Israel. The location is unknown, but it probably is south of the city of Babylon, between the Tigris and the Euphrates rivers.

TELL A settlement in the form of a mound. A tell (or tel) is the result of successive levels of structures built on the same location. The word is a common component of place names.

TELL EL-AMARNA *See* Amarna.

TEL MELAH An unknown location in Babylon from which some exiles returned to Judah in 539 BC or soon after, some of whom are listed as being unable to establish their genealogical connections to Israel (Ezra 2:59; Neh. 7:61). The name “Tel Melah,” meaning “salt ruin,” may indicate the kind of place where they lived in Babylon. The geographer Ptolemy identified it as Thelma near the Persian Gulf.

TEMA **(1)** A son of Ishmael (Gen. 25:15; 1 Chron. 1:30) who was associated with an oasis city of the same name. **(2)** An important commerce city/oasis in northern Arabia at the crossroads of three important trade routes (Job 6:19). The city is mentioned by both Isaiah (Isa. 21:14, possibly concerning Tiglath-pileser III) and Jeremiah (Jer. 25:23, perhaps in reference to Nebuchadnezzar). Nabonidus, the last Chaldean or Babylonian king, made the city his headquarters for ten years (553–543 BC) and left his son, Belshazzar, to rule in Babylon in his place (Dan. 5). The oasis is identified as modern Teima, about 220 miles southeast of Aqaba.

TEMAH One of the ancestors of the temple servants (Nethinim) who returned to Jerusalem after the

Babylonian captivity under the leadership of Zerubbabel in 539 BC or soon after (Ezra 2:53; Neh. 7:55). The fact that many of the names in the list are foreign has led to the belief that they were originally prisoners of war who were pressed into service to perform menial tasks as they assisted the Levites.

TEMAN **(1)** The first of the five sons of Eliphaz, a grandson of Esau, and a chief among the Edomites (Gen. 36:11; 1 Chron. 1:36). **(2)** A location in Edom (derived from the personal name?) sometimes but uncertainly identified with modern Tawilan near Petra. It was known as a center of wisdom (Jer. 49:7), and Job's friend Eliphaz, not to be identified with the earlier person of the same name, was a wise man from Teman (Job 2:11). As a city in Edom, Teman sometimes was the object of judgment oracles (Jer. 49:20; Ezek. 25:13; Amos 1:12; Obad. 9). Habakkuk remembers the march of God up from Teman, perhaps thinking of the wilderness wandering (Hab. 3:3).

TEMANITE The clan name for the descendants of Teman or the inhabitants of Teman (Gen. 36:34; 1 Chron. 1:45). One of Job's friends, Eliphaz, was a Temanite (Job 2:11). Teman, in the southern area of Edom, had a reputation for wisdom (Jer. 49:7).

TEMENI A Judahite, the third of four sons born to Ashhur and Naarah (1 Chron. 4:6).

TEMPERANCE *See* Self-Control.

TEMPLE OF JERUSALEM *See* Jerusalem Temple.

TEMPLES, PAGAN *See* Gods, Pagan; High Places.

TEMPTATION In English, a distinction between the words "temptation," "test," and "trial" (or "tribulation") seems apparent. However, the biblical Greek noun *peirasmos* and verb *peirazō* translate these nouns and their related verbs, leaving context alone to determine meaning. In the understanding of the Scripture, temptation relates directly to test and trial.

Negatively, English Bibles choose "temptation" and "tempt" as the fitting translation for *peirasmos* and *peirazō* respectively. The devil, or Satan, is the origin; the purpose is to encourage sin and devastate human relationship with God (Matt. 4:1 pars.; 1 Cor. 7:5; Gal. 6:1; 1 Tim. 6:9; James 1:13). Satan personifies this purpose as the tempter (Matt. 4:3; 1 Thess. 3:5).

Positively, the English word "test" seems fitting. God tests his people to reveal the quality of their faith commitment (Gen. 22:1; Exod. 15:25; Judg. 2:22; Gal. 4:14). When God tests his enemies, it results in a hardening of their hearts (Exod. 14:4). When God tests his own people, it may look like judgment (Isa. 6:9–10; cf. Mark 6:52; Heb. 3:8; 4:7). The NT sees a direct link between the words *peirazō* and *dokimazō* ("to test, prove, approve") and uses one to explain the other (2 Cor. 13:5–7; James 1:2–3, 12).

Neutrally, "trial" (or "tribulation") translates the meaning. People may face trials in their Christian walk (Acts 20:19; 2 Cor. 8:2; James 1:2, 12; 1 Pet. 1:6) that may or may not lead to sin (Matt. 26:41; cf. Dan. 12:10). The sixth petition of the Lord's Prayer (Matt. 6:13 // Luke 11:4) presupposes the understanding that God is sovereign over all human circumstances and therefore has the power to protect from trials that may lead to temptation and fall. Jesus' prayer in Gethsemane follows the same supposition (Mark 14:38).

This interconnectedness in the biblical understanding between temptation, test, and trial helps to explain some inherently difficult texts. There can be no sharp distinction made between temptation and test; God may use someone’s tribulation as a test to affirm faith, while Satan uses the same as an avenue for temptation to commit sin. A prime OT example of such interconnectedness is the parallel texts in 2 Samuel and 1 Chronicles that describe David as both tested by God (2 Sam. 24:1) and tempted by Satan (1 Chron. 21:1) in regard to taking a census of Israel.

When humans tempt/test God, they provoke him to prove his power (Exod. 17:1–7) by acting as if he does not exist (Ps. 14:1). God’s firm prohibition against this (Deut. 6:13–16) exposes it as a violation of his relationship with humans (Matt. 4:7; Acts 5:9; 15:10).

TEMPTATION OF JESUS The most focused narrative of Jesus’ temptation follows his baptism, but the Gospels have not isolated Jesus’ temptations to this one event. Rather, as Mark 8:33; Luke 22:28, and other texts indicate, Jesus knew temptations throughout his ministry (cf. Heb. 2:18; 4:15). References in John’s Gospel, which has no account of Jesus’ temptation in the desert, suggest the same (John 6:15; 7:1–4).

All three Synoptic Gospels place the temptation narrative immediately following Jesus’ baptism. Discussions of whether this event was actual or merely visual, one that Jesus described to his disciples or one that they created from miscellaneous sayings after Jesus’ death to parallel Deut. 8:2, will undoubtedly continue. As the Synoptics recount the event, Mark reduces it to one verse (Mark 1:13), whereas Matthew and Luke give full accounts, delineating in three acts the struggle between Jesus and Satan. Matthew and Luke recount these acts in a different sequence, possibly due to Luke’s interest in Jerusalem and the temple or to his desire to use Ps. 106 as his outline (manna, golden calf, testing God [cf. Luke 4:1–13]). Matthew portrays a progression climaxing in a display of Satan’s true character, after which Jesus ends Satan’s attack and sends him away with a clarifying quote from Deut. 6:13: “Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only” (Matt. 4:1–11). Opposite the first Adam, who gave in to the temptation to stop trusting God, the second Adam, Jesus, conquered his temptation with an affirmation that worship of God should remain undivided.

The placement of Jesus’ temptation at the outset of his ministry, immediately following his baptism, speaks to the significance of the event. All three Synoptics emphasize that God’s Spirit led Jesus to the desert to be tempted by the devil. There is no sharp distinction between testing and temptation; God uses Satan’s temptation to test Jesus. The desert setting as the preparatory proving ground for extraordinary usability in God’s kingdom follows the general wilderness motif that runs through Scripture (e.g., Abraham, Moses, Israel) and places Jesus squarely in the center of God’s salvation history. Jesus fulfills God’s messianic promise.

Introducing two of the three temptations by an affirmation of Jesus’ divine sonship gives the event a strong messianic character (Satan’s statements are better understood as affirmations [“*Since* you are the Son of God . . .”] than as questions [“*If* you are the Son of God . . .”]). Since Jesus knows that he is the Son of God, he is tempted to disobey for his own benefit (cf. Gen. 3:4–6).

No reader familiar with the stories of the OT can miss the way Jesus’ temptations parallel major OT events. Not only does the devil try to lure Jesus to satisfy his personal needs by a misuse of his power, as becomes obvious from Jesus’ answer quoting Deut. 8:3, but also he entices Jesus to display a power that replicates God’s manna miracle in the desert. Furthermore, the connection between this first temptation to eat what he is not supposed to eat and the original temptation to eat the forbidden fruit (Gen. 3) seems too obvious to miss.

Jesus’ second temptation in Matthew (Luke’s third) portrays Satan bringing Jesus to the highest point of the temple to overlook Kidron Valley, where a fall meant certain death. From here, the devil quotes Ps. 91:11–12, giving scriptural basis for his trap. The symbolic character of this setting proves powerful. Satan challenges Jesus to test God's faithfulness to his word in the context of the temple. If Jesus cannot trust God's promise to protect his people even in the temple, then his very mission proves void. Again, the reference to the original temptation, Satan (mis)quoting God in God's own setting, sets the stage for the portrayal of Jesus' answer. Unlike the first Adam, Jesus unravels Satan's scheme by exposing the mistake of confusing God's promise to protect those who stumble and fall with a deliberate act designed to force God's hand. Such would be to test (tempt) God, which Scripture explicitly forbids (Deut. 6:16). Whether Jesus quoting Deut. 6:16 speaks directly to his own self-understanding is uncertain but unlikely.

The southwestern corner of the Temple Mount, sometimes suggested as the pinnacle of the temple where Jesus was tempted by Satan

Matthew ends his temptation account with Jesus on a high mountain, overlooking the kingdoms of the world, where Satan offers world authority in exchange for Jesus' worship. There is no reflection on whether these kingdoms were Satan's to give, and no explicit naming of Jesus as God's Son (although a subtle reference to Ps. 2 is likely to echo in the reader's mind [see Matt. 3:17]). Matthew's reference to a mountain (Matt. 4:8), which Luke does not mention (Luke 4:5), corresponds to his mountain motif and functions here to parallel the location of Jesus' discipleship commission to bring God's kingdom to all nations (Matt. 28:16–20), causing them to transfer their worship to God.

Rather than worshiping Satan, Jesus conquers Satan's temptations and, as the second Adam, brings the nations back to the worship of God (Matt. 4:10).

TEN COMMANDMENTS The Ten Commandments are also identified as the Decalogue, meaning the "Ten Words." These commands are part of the Bible's legal literature revealed by God to his people Israel. They are the words of the covenant (Exod. 34:28) and define Yahweh's covenant relationship with Israel. Some biblical laws are conditional and written in the style of case law, which employs an "if . . . then" personalized format (most of Exod. 21:2–22:17; Deut. 21:18–19; 22:6–9; 23:21–25; 24:10–12). Other laws are stated in absolute terms: "you shall . . ." or "you shall not . . ." (Exod. 22:18–23:19). The latter, second-person format characterizes the Ten Commandments (Exod. 20:1–17; Deut. 5:6–21).

The Ten Commandments were revealed at Mount Sinai after the exodus from Egypt and prior to the conquest of the land (Exod. 20:1–17). These laws were restated with some variation to a second generation of Israelites approximately thirty-eight years later in Moab, east of the Jordan River (Deut. 5:1–5). Because the postexodus generation refused to believe God and enter the land, they experienced the wrath of God, which brought their demise over a thirty-eight-year period. God then renewed his covenant with the succeeding generation and made preparations for them to enter the promised land (Deut. 2).

The Ten Commandments are prefaced with a staggering manifestation of God (Exod. 19) that accentuates his awesome character. This theophany revealed the transcendent God, who speaks his word to his people from heaven as the Great King. At this point in redemptive history, Israel was established as an independent nation, and the mediatorial role of Moses was confirmed (Exod. 19:9). The declaration of divine law does not mean the absence of grace. The grace of redemption in the exodus preceded the statement of law at Sinai. In both Exodus and Deuteronomy, the Decalogue is prefaced by God's statement: "I am the LORD your God" (Exod. 20:2; Deut. 5:6) to underscore the importance of relationship.

In Deuteronomy, the Ten Commandments function within the overall suzerainty treaty structure used by Moses to organize the book. This structure is common in the ancient Near East, and the biblical material bears some similarity to Hittite treaties. In suzerain treaties, the servants (vassals) are obligated to fulfill the will of the king (suzerain), which is reflected in Deut. 4:44–11:32. As in Exodus, the Decalogue of Deuteronomy (5:6–21) is a summary of the will of God.

The Decalogue contains mainly negative commands. There are two positive commands, those enjoining remembrance of the Sabbath (Exod. 20:8; Deut. 5:12) and honor for parents (Exod. 20:12; Deut. 5:16). The commands vary in length, style, and content. Some commands include motivational or explanatory statements. The first four commands of the Decalogue refer to humans' relationship with God, and the remaining six refer to humans' relationships with one another, especially with fellow covenant partners.

The Decalogue is the basis for understanding all other OT laws. The prophets used the Ten Commandments as a basis of appeal to the nation. Often, the prophetic message of the Major Prophets and the Minor Prophets is an exposition of Israel's failure to conform to the will of its Great King declared in the law along with an appeal to return to his gracious ways.

TENDERHEARTED The KJV uses "tenderhearted" in 2 Chron. 13:7 to translate the Hebrew phrase *rak-lebab*, meaning "weak of heart, timid" (NIV: "indecisive"), and in Eph. 4:32 to translate the Greek word *eusplanchnos*, meaning "compassionate."

TENON In Exod. 26:17, 19; 36:22, 24 some versions (KJV, NASB, ESV) use “tenon” to translate the Hebrew word *yad* (“hand”), employed in these verses to indicate projections made to fit into a mortise or socket to create a joint. The NIV uses “projection,” and the NRSV uses “peg.”

TENT In the ancient Near East, tents were used as shelters, particularly for nomadic peoples (Gen. 13:5, 18), seminomadic herders (Song 1:8), wealthy travelers or caravans, and military encampments (2 Kings 7:5–8). Tent coverings could be made of fabric (often woven from goat hair [e.g., Exod. 26:7]) or animal skins. Poles, pegs, and ropes were used to raise the tent and hold it in place (Isa. 33:20; 54:2). Tents were used both as dwellings (Gen. 4:20) and as meeting or worship spaces (2 Sam. 6:17). The term “tabernacle” also refers to a tent structure (e.g., Job 18:6 KJV), especially to the tent God inhabited from the time of the exodus until Solomon built him a more permanent dwelling (*see* Tabernacle, Tent of Meeting). A tent is used as a metaphor for the sky or the heavens (Pss. 19:4; 104:2; Isa. 40:22) and often symbolizes protection or habitation (Job 18:14; 22:23; Ps. 61:4). In the NT, the image of a tent is used figuratively of human flesh and earthly existence (2 Cor. 5:1–4; 2 Pet. 1:13; cf. John 1:14; *see also* Shekinah). Paul was a tentmaker by trade, as were Priscilla and Aquila (Acts 18:2–3). *See also* Pavilion.

TENTMAKER *See* Tent.

TENT OF MEETING *See* Tabernacle, Tent of Meeting.

TERAH **(1)** The father of Abram (Abraham), Nahor, and Haran (Gen. 11:24–32). After Haran’s death in Ur, Terah and family traveled to the city of Harran, where Terah died at the age of 205. He was a pagan (Josh. 24:2), perhaps a moon worshiper, for his name is related to the Hebrew word for “moon,” and Ur and Harran are known ancient centers of moon worship. Abram only moved after his father died (Acts 7:4), suggesting that Abram, though listed first among the sons, was not the oldest son, being only seventy-five at the time (Gen. 12:4). **(2)** An Israelite wilderness encampment (Num. 33:27–28).

TERAPHIM Teraphim are household idols that varied in size and purpose. Rachel hid them from Laban by sitting on them (Gen. 31:19–35). It is clear that Laban valued them highly, possibly because of their perceived powers of divination (30:27). When David fled from Saul’s men, Michal put teraphim in his bed with goats’ hair at the head (1 Sam. 19:11–16), indicating substantial size and raising the question as to why David possessed teraphim. The details of both incidents suggest that these objects were viewed by the authors with contempt.

Teraphim were associated with false worship and divination (2 Kings 23:24; Ezek. 21:21; Zech. 10:2). When Samuel condemned Saul’s disobedience, he likened teraphim to the sin of divination (1 Sam. 15:23). The Ephraimite Micah’s shrine included an ephod and teraphim (Judg. 17:5; 18:14–31). Hosea also linked teraphim with the ephod (Hos. 3:4) in the list of cultic and national icons of which Israel would be deprived.

TEREBINTH A tree species used to translate the Hebrew *ʾelah*, often translated as “oak.” Both the oak and the terebinth are large trees that live a very long time. Under this type of tree Jacob buried the idols of Laban’s household (Gen. 35:4), God appeared to Abraham (Gen. 18:1), the angel of the Lord appeared to Gideon (Judg. 6:11), the bones of Saul and his sons were buried (1 Chron. 10:12), and various pagan gods were worshiped (Hos. 4:13; Ezek. 6:13).

TERESH One of the two eunuchs who guarded the doorway of King Ahasuerus of Persia and plotted an assassination of the king that was discovered by Mordecai and reported to Queen Esther, his cousin. After the plot was revealed to Ahasuerus, Teresh and his coconspirator, Bigthana, were executed (Esther 2:21–23).

TERRACE In 2 Chron. 9:11 the KJV translates the Hebrew word *mesillah*, of uncertain meaning, as "terrace." The early Greek and Latin translations understand it to refer to some kind of step, and most modern translations follow that sense (NIV, NRSV, NASB), though the ESV uses "support."

TERROR *See* Fear; Fear of Isaac.

TERRORISTS *See* Assassins.

TERTIUS Tertius addresses the Roman Christians directly in Rom. 16:22 as Paul's amanuensis, the one who "wrote down this letter." He is Paul's only named amanuensis. Tertius's Latin name and first-person greeting to the church at Rome suggest that he was one of their number.

TERTULLUS A lawyer brought by Ananias and some of the elders to Caesarea to present their case against Paul before the Roman governor Felix (Acts 24:1–8). Tertullus's consistent use of "we" language may indicate that he too was a Jew, although it may reflect his professional technique as the Jews' advocate. In his speech, Tertullus begins by flattering Felix and then goes on to portray Paul as a troublemaker, "stirring up riots among the Jews all over the world" (24:5). Being a public nuisance, a disturber of the peace, and a leader of the sect of the Nazarenes were all serious charges in Roman law. However, Paul's subsequent defense proves these charges to be false (24:10–21).

TESTAMENT *See* Covenant.

TESTIMONY In Hebrew the word for "testimony" (*'edut*) has a legal meaning, describing a statement given by an observer of an event in dispute. Sometimes, especially in the book of Exodus, the word can refer to Israelite law (e.g., Exod. 25:16, 21, 22 [NIV: "covenant law"]). In the NT the Greek word *martys* is translated as "witness" or "testimony" and carries the same legal connotation as the OT. Here the context of the testimony is Jesus' life and ministry. This is why those who die for their witness are called "martyrs."

TESTIMONY, ARK OF THE *See* Ark of the Covenant.

TETRARCH The ruler of a fourth part of a realm. At the death of Herod the Great in 4 BC, his kingdom was divided and bequeathed to his three sons. Archelaus, assigned half of the realm (Judea, Idumea, and Samaria), assumed the title of ethnarch. His brothers Herod Antipas and Philip were tetrarchs of Galilee-Perea and Trachonitis/Gaulanitis-Iturea respectively (see Matt. 2:22; Luke 3:1). Herod Agrippa I (Acts 25:13), by the imperial grant of Emperor Claudius, reestablished the kingdom of the Jews in AD 41, thereby terminating tetrachy in ancient Palestine.

TEXTUAL CRITICISM, NEW TESTAMENT NT textual criticism is the science of discerning the reading of the original Greek text of the NT. NT textual criticism is relatively different from the textual criticism of the Hebrew OT, since the two Testaments were copied in substantially different ways, resulting in quite different issues and types of copying problems.

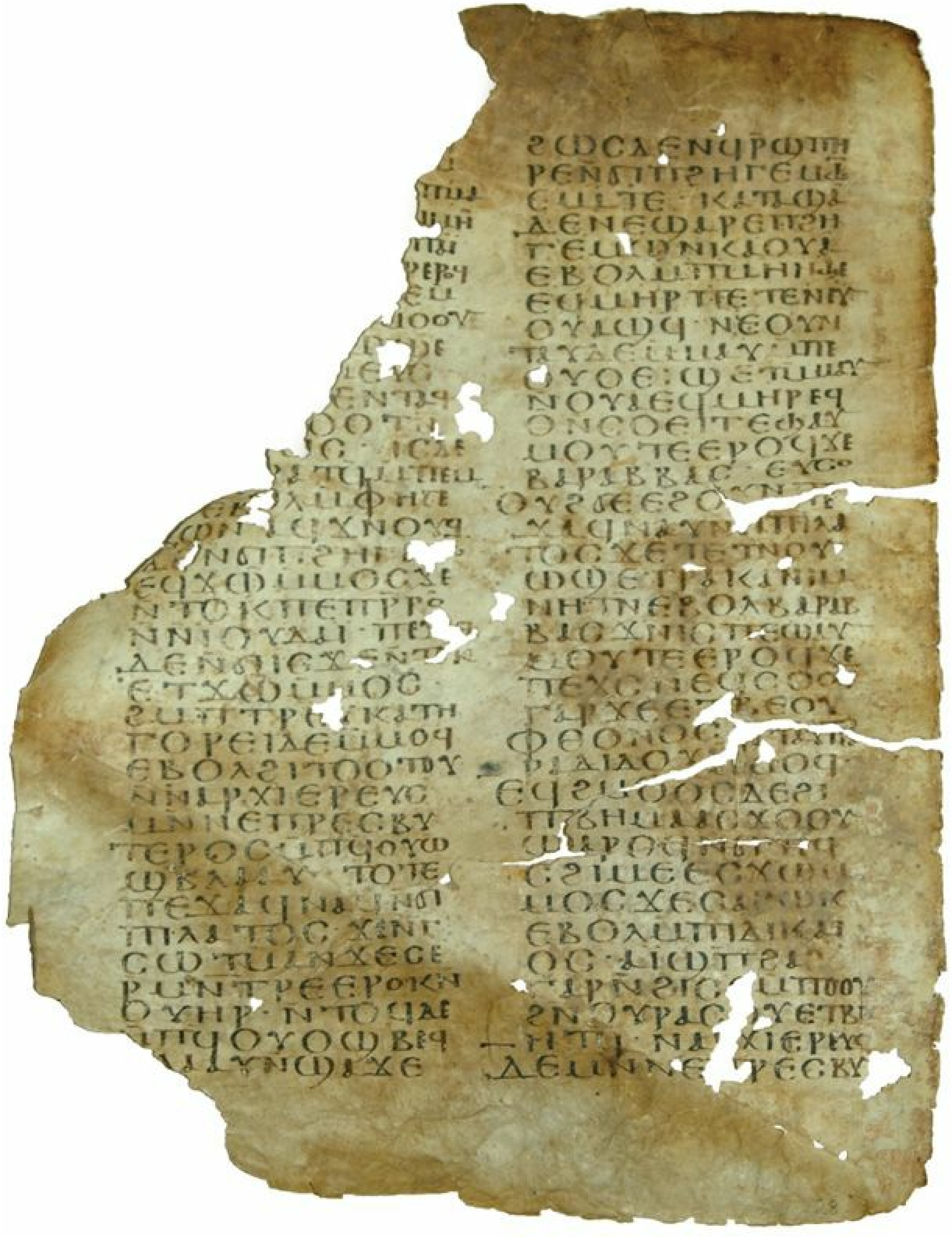
Textual criticism is necessary for two reasons: (1) none of the original texts for any of the books of the NT (the autographs) have survived; (2) all the surviving copies that we do have differ from one another in at least minor ways. NT textual criticism is the discipline of examining all the readings found in the surviving copies (including other early translations and the writings of the church fathers) in order to discern the most-likely original text of the NT.

In many ways there is nothing surprising or unusual about this activity. This same discipline is used in the case of all ancient documents where the original no longer exists and there are multiple, but different, surviving copies. What sets the textual criticism of the Bible apart from the textual criticism of Plato, Aristotle, or any other extrabiblical author is the importance of Scripture. It is absolutely crucial that scholars be as accurate as possible in discerning the words of the Bible. Present-day doctrinal statements about the inspiration and inerrancy of Scripture usually focus on how it is the actual documents written by the original authors of the Bible (the autographs) that were inspired and inerrant, and not necessarily each and every copy or translation that was ever made. At the same time, NT textual criticism provides strong and ample evidence that the standard translations of today are reasonable copies of the original texts and therefore are inspired and authoritative.

Another reality that sets the textual criticism of the Bible apart from the textual criticism of any other ancient document involves the large number of manuscripts containing all or parts of the NT. Aristotle’s writings (384–322 BC) have survived in only five ancient manuscripts, the earliest of which was last copied around AD 1100. Thus, the manuscript support for discerning the proper wording of Aristotle’s writings is five manuscripts, the earliest of which was copied some fourteen hundred years after its original composition. The NT, by contrast, has been preserved in almost 5,500 handwritten Greek manuscripts, the earliest of which may be only decades removed from the actual composition of the NT. In addition, there are tens of thousands of other manuscripts of the NT translated into other languages of the early church (especially Latin, Syriac, and Coptic) and perhaps something like a million quotations and allusions to the NT in the writings of the church fathers. The amount of manuscript support for the Bible is without parallel when compared with any other ancient writing, thus providing a firm foundation for the trustworthiness of the Bible.

NEW TESTAMENT MANUSCRIPTS

If all the surviving Greek manuscripts of the NT from all the museums and ancient-book rooms around the world could be gathered together and examined, there would be a number of obvious differences. For one thing, these manuscripts are written on different materials. The oldest manuscripts include some 116 papyri written on papyrus sheets (made from the stems of a papyrus plant pressed together to make a flat writing surface) and date from as early as AD 125 until the eighth century. Virtually all the rest of the hand-copied manuscripts were written on parchment (leather from animal skins stretched thin) and range in date from the second century to as late as the sixteenth century.



Coptic fragment of the Gospel of Matthew (fifth century AD)

Another significant difference involves the style of handwriting. Here there are two primary categories: uncials (majuscules) and minuscules. The three hundred or so uncial manuscripts were written using an early style of “capital letters” (comparable to hand-printing a text in all capital letters) and range in date from the second century to as late as the tenth or eleventh century, with the majority between the fourth and tenth centuries. The 2,800 or so minuscule manuscripts were written in a later style of semicursive using primarily “lowercase letters” (more comparable to cursive penmanship today) and range in date from the ninth to the sixteenth centuries.

A third basic difference involves the arrangement of the material. In addition to standard biblical texts arranged in regular canonical order, almost half (about 2,200) of the manuscripts of the Greek NT are lectionaries composed of series of short passages designed to be read on a fixed regular schedule, almost like the responsive readings found in many modern hymnals. These range in date from the ninth to the sixteenth centuries and cover the vast majority of the passages in the NT, and thus they constitute another significant source of information about the proper reading of the original text.

Other obvious differences in outward appearance involve the scope of the original work and how well it has been preserved. Only a small number of manuscripts were written to encompass the entire Bible, including the OT (usually the Greek translation called the "Septuagint"), the NT, and frequently various books of the Apocrypha as well. Other manuscripts were designed to include only the NT. However, the vast majority of the surviving Greek manuscripts of the NT originally included only a portion of the NT (due primarily to the cost in materials and labor), most often a collection of the four Gospels, or the Pauline Epistles, or some other smaller subset of the NT. Still another reality is that many ancient manuscripts may have lost pages or the binding may have broken, leaving only incomplete sections of the original manuscript. Some NT manuscripts have survived only in the form of torn fragments, sometimes only a portion of a page in size.

DIFFERENT READINGS

Different readings among these manuscripts fit into two broad categories: unintentional changes and deliberate corrections. Unintentional changes took place when a scribe was genuinely trying to make a good copy and due to simple human error failed to read a letter clearly, did not hear a word clearly (assuming that the text was being dictated aloud), inadvertently wrote a homonym instead of the right word, lost the proper place on the page, or mistakenly assumed that some marginal note on the page belonged in the text. Deliberate corrections were also a recognized part of the work of a scribe whereby a scribe tried to make a text read better or more clearly. Although some of the early church fathers warn of heretics making deliberate changes in the text for theological reasons (actual instances of this are hard to document), sincere Christians sometimes sought to improve the theological clarity or style of the text.

There are various estimates of the number of places where different manuscripts have different readings. If one is taking stock of any and all differences regardless of how minor, then there are more than ten thousand different places in the text that have textual problems. The Textus Receptus, or Majority Text (underlying the KJV translation), has some five to six thousand differences from the Greek texts underlying most other, more recent English translations, although most of these are minor differences in word order, spelling, and so forth and make no practical difference in content. The standard scholarly United Bible Societies Greek NT includes a discussion of something like 1,440 sets of variant readings that were deemed sufficiently significant for inclusion in the critical apparatus. A contemporary translation such as the NIV lists over a hundred specific instances of textual uncertainty in the NT of sufficient significance to provide a possible alternative translation.

Still another question involves the theological significance of these differences among the surviving manuscripts. Although this can be a potentially threatening topic, it should be noted at the beginning that no area of Christian doctrine stands or falls because of possible textual problems. The entire foundation of theology is firm and certain. Nevertheless, there are perhaps several dozen places where textual differences have definite implications for either doctrine or practice. For example, does 1 Tim. 3:16 help establish the deity of Christ by referring to Christ as "God" (KJV), or is “he” (most modern translations) the correct reading? Or when we quote the Lord’s Prayer, should we include the final words “For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen” (from the KJV)? Or, for still another issue, is it proper to preach and teach from the resurrection stories in Mark 16:9–20 or the story of the woman caught in adultery in John 7:53–8:11 (both of which are absent from early and reliable manuscripts)? English versions answer these questions differently.

However, a large number of textual problems are more minor in nature and involve little if any practical differences in application. For example, in 1 John 1:4 was John focusing on “your” joy or “our” joy? But by far the largest category involves textual differences that make no discernible differences at all in our English translations. Examples include differences in Greek word order, a choice between certain Greek tenses, similar grammatical constructions, the usage of synonyms, and some spelling differences. Differences in this final category are so minor that often they cannot be detected in English translations.

DIFFERENT FAMILIES OR TEXT TYPES

Another difference involves the “text type,” or family of manuscripts. Certain manuscripts with similar readings have a family resemblance with other similar manuscripts. The issue here involves patterns of copying errors among these manuscripts. In the late nineteenth century, two British scholars, B. F. Westcott and F. J. A. Hort, developed what they identified as the genealogical method for NT textual criticism. One component of this approach involves the recognition of at least three different “families” of related manuscripts presumably related to three different geographical areas of the early church: Byzantine or Syrian manuscripts (based in Syria or the later Byzantine Empire in Turkey), Alexandrian manuscripts (based in Egypt), and Western manuscripts (based more in Italy and North Africa). This classification system involves generalizations comparable to discerning a person’s nationality and ethnic background by various physical features. Some manuscripts are relatively easy to classify using this system, others are more difficult, and still others turn out to be quite mixed in nature. Yet there is a certain helpfulness to this system.

Certain conclusions can be drawn from this classification system. The vast majority of manuscripts (some 80 to 90 percent) are the Byzantine text type. These include virtually all the minuscules and lectionaries and tend to be relatively later in date. The remaining 10 to 20 percent of the manuscripts tend to be earlier and include the Alexandrian manuscripts, the handful of Western manuscripts, and a good number of early manuscripts that cannot be easily placed in either of these two categories. The Alexandrian readings tend to be briefer and more succinct in style, while the Western readings tend to be more unusual and eccentric, in contrast to the Byzantine ones, which tend to be more polished and harmonizing.

APPLYING TEXTUAL CRITICISM

There are different approaches to NT textual criticism. The two primary ones are (1) the King James/Majority Text approach associated with the KJV, and (2) the contemporary scholarly approach followed by virtually all other standard translations beginning with Westcott and Hort’s *English Revised Version* of 1881. Both approaches are built around an understanding of the history of the text. The Majority Text argument is built on the assumption that the original reading will have been preserved in the largest number of surviving manuscripts, in this case the relatively later Byzantine manuscripts. The contemporary scholarly approach assumes a so-called genealogical method whereby the Majority Text of the Byzantine manuscripts is believed to be the later "offspring" of the earlier Alexandrian and Western manuscripts and therefore more or less irrelevant for discovering the original text. Thus, this method essentially rejects the Byzantine manuscripts in favor of the earlier ones, especially the Alexandrian ones. Manuscripts are still counted and dated, but priority is given to the earlier manuscripts and to readings found in several different text types.

TEXTUAL CRITICISM, OLD TESTAMENT Centuries separate the earliest attested Hebrew manuscripts (MSS) and the canonical form of the biblical text. The transmission of the Hebrew Bible in many ancient and medieval sources reveals differences between the texts; consequently, textual criticism involves the comparison and analysis of those textual differences in both ancient sources and modern printed editions of the OT. Text critics collect from MSS and other textual witnesses all the details in which these texts differ from one another and then evaluate those differences to arrive at the most accurate original reading. Some of these differences were created in the course of textual transmission, while others are the result of scribal additions and the processes that created readings and texts over the centuries. In many cases, these differences are minimal and exert no significant theological or interpretational influence on the text itself.

GOALS AND ASSUMPTIONS

The text critic seeks to recover the processes of the text's written transmission so as to restore it not to the most ancient form or earliest literary strand of the biblical corpus, nor to the earliest attested textual form, but rather to the copy that contained the finished literary product and that stood at the beginning of the textual transmission process. Consequently, the text critic accepts the notion of a single, authentic text (*Urtext*) from which all extant MSS of a specific book have evolved rather than the existence of ancient parallel texts. Text critics identify and resolve textual errors in the text by revealing the history of their emergence, explaining how those errors or inconsistencies occurred. They consider and evaluate deviant or differing readings from the textual apparatus (notes written at the bottom of the printed critical versions) of the Masoretic Text (MT), such as *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* and R. Kittel's *Biblia Hebraica*. Textual scholars remove or correct readings from extant or existing final forms of MSS and sometimes, in the absence of manuscript evidence, conjecturally emend or "suggest translational alternatives" for the text when the extant evidence defies a reasonable or clear reading. The most recent work by the Hebrew University Bible Project (HUBP) eliminates all scholarly conjectures proposed without manuscript evidence from its consideration in the text-critical process.

Discrepancies between textual witnesses to the OT include differences in book, chapter, and verse divisions, as well as layout and chapter sequence. The nature of scribal transmission assumes that although the scribes carefully copied the sacred texts, errors occasionally occurred. These textual corruptions may be unintentional, such as the reduplication of a letter or a word, confusion between letters that resemble one another, wrong word divisions, incorrect vocalization, or the accidental reversal of two letters. Occasionally a word may have been omitted, or words from marginal or interlinear comments (called a "gloss") may have been inserted in the main text. In the case of intentional corruptions or alterations, scribes attempted to harmonize the morphology or grammar of a text, give explanations (also called "conflation"), incorporate material from parallel passages, substitute euphemistic words or phrases in place of offensive material, and, rarely, alter the texts theologically when the original wording seemed disrespectful to God.

TEXT FAMILIES AND TRANSLATIONS

Some scholars theorize that the Hebrew MSS evolved from three local textual families arranged geographically, though more-recent scholarship seems to refute this view as simplistic. According to this theory, during the fifth century BC two local texts developed independently of each other in Babylon and Palestine. A third, the Alexandrian family, broke off from the Old Palestinian text and eventually served as the “source” or “model” for the translation of the Septuagint (LXX) between 250 BC and AD 150. The Samaritan Pentateuch resulted from the Palestinian family and, combined with the Babylonian tradition, formed the official corpus of the Pentateuch and the Former Prophets. The corpus of the Latter Prophets derived solely from the Palestinian text. This combination of texts formed the authoritative basis for the MT. The Leningrad Codex (AD 1009) is the oldest preserved complete Hebrew Bible, providing one of the best examples of the MT. The 1947 discovery of the Qumran scrolls gave text-critical scholars access to customary scribal activity and affirmed the existence of pluriform, or multiple, text types. These scrolls, transmitted during the third through first centuries BC, represented all the OT books except Esther and provided a Hebrew text witness that reinforced the relative veracity of the MT.

Ancient translations, such as the LXX, provided the source text from which the Old Greek, Lucian, Eusebius, and other Greek versions developed. In addition, the LXX formed the basis of the Old Latin, Vulgate, and Syriac versions as well as the Targumim. The importance of the elementary text-critical principle “Texts do not count, they weigh,” which forms the basic assumption when evaluating textual witnesses and comparing potential readings, becomes clearer in light of these developments. For example, a text critic would consider a reading in a Qumran witness as the equivalent or superior to readings attested in the LXX and its offspring texts.

WEIGHING VARIANT READINGS

A consideration of variant readings involves all Hebrew and reconstructed details that differ from an accepted form of the MT, including additions, subtractions, letter and word differentiation, differences in word division, vocalization (or pronunciation), and word sequence. Scholars denote the MT as the *textus receptus*, or “received text,” which forms the translation base then of the Hebrew Scriptures. In some cases, critics of the OT believe that the MSS and versions reflect varying stages or versions in the editing of a final text. For example, 2 Sam. 22 and Ps. 18 are parallel texts in slightly different forms. Text critics acknowledge the existence of alternate forms of identical texts that were equally acceptable to the ancient poet by assuming that during the time of the OT, authors modernized or contemporized texts in an appropriate manner. One text does not have to be superior to the other; instead, both are legitimate, as in the case of Isa. 2:2–4 and Mic. 4:1–5.

OT text critics explore explanations for contradictory or different readings among text traditions, evaluate the weight of the textual evidence, and analyze a host of readings to determine which reading best explains the others or harmonizes with the literary evidence. In addition, text scholars ask whether a particular reading is grammatically acceptable and whether the word or phrase fits into the syntactic context of the sentence and the scope of the wider passage. In the absence of evidence to the contrary, text critics generally prefer the shorter reading because throughout history texts have a tendency to expand. In addition, when the MT and all other witnesses offer a text that is unobjectionable, makes sense, and has been preserved without a variant, scholars often assume that it is the “original text” preserved by the tradition and should be accepted. Furthermore, in the case of two alternative readings, if an explanation is available as to the manner in which one of these may have arisen from the other, then scholars consider the explicable reading as the weaker of the two.

The complexity of the text-critical enterprise, particularly when applied to the Hebrew Scriptures, requires a combination of intuition, skill, experience, careful attention to detail, and facility in cognate languages. The absence of extrabiblical Hebrew texts makes the OT textual analysis more difficult, since the scholar has a limited corpus of material from which to draw conclusions. OT text criticism is an ongoing process that will engage biblical scholars for years to come.

TEXTUS RECEPTUS The Textus Receptus (or Received Text) became the standard Greek text of the NT from its original development by Erasmus in the early sixteenth century until the mid-nineteenth century and was used by virtually all the translations made during this period, including the King James (Authorized) Version.

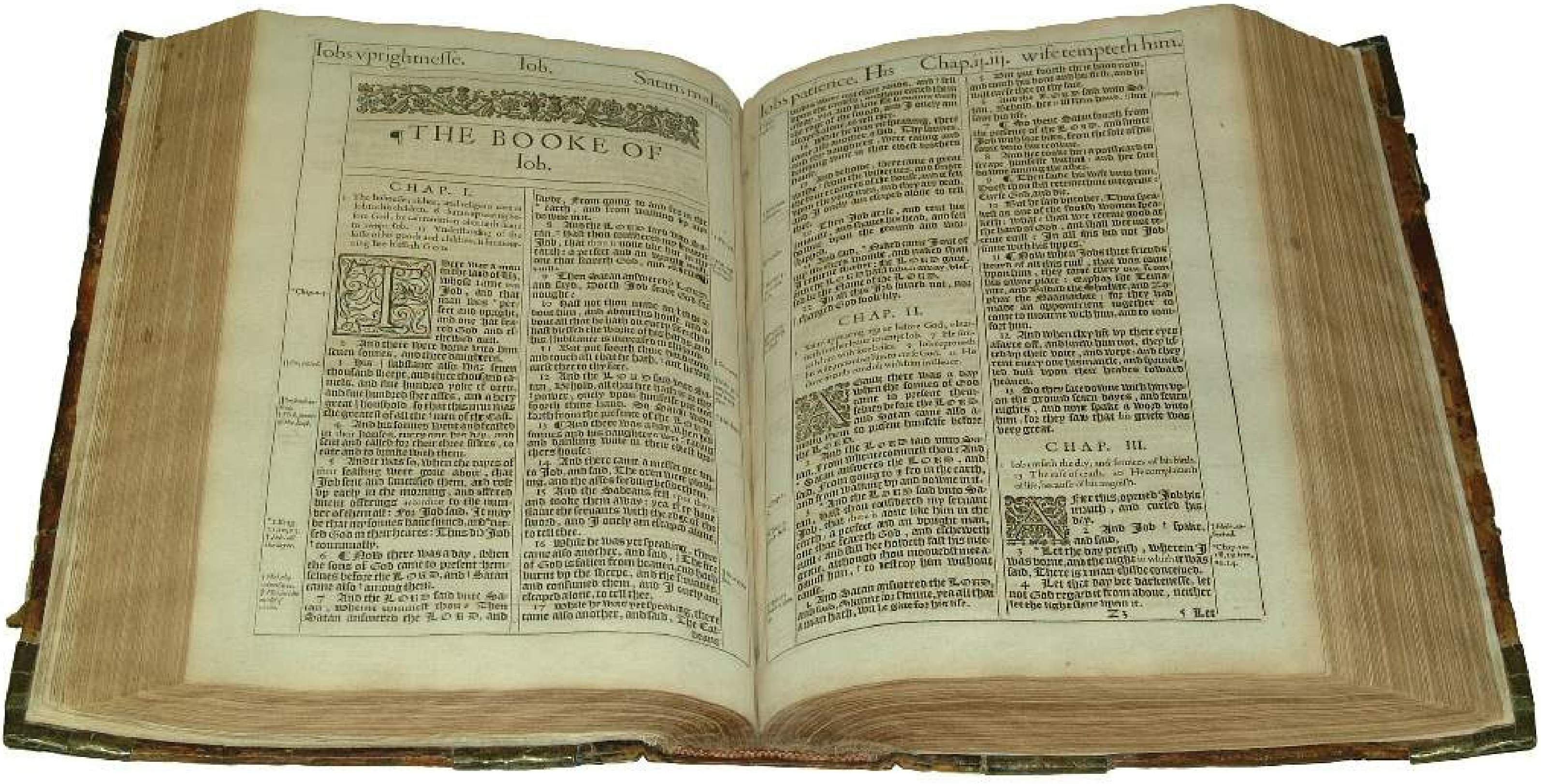
DEVELOPMENT

Although the NT was originally written in Greek, Latin soon became virtually the sole language of the Roman Empire. By the fourth century, the Greek language was increasingly limited to the eastern or Byzantine area of the church. By the Middle Ages, both a knowledge of Greek as well as the actual possession of Greek manuscripts largely disappeared from the Western world. It was only with the Renaissance that a knowledge of Greek was revived and Greek texts from the East became available again. This reemergence of Greek, combined with the new technology of Gutenberg's printing press, made possible the Greek text known today as the Textus Receptus.

The Renaissance scholar Erasmus published the first printed Greek NT in 1516. Erasmus based most of his work on two manuscripts of the Gospels and one of Acts and the Epistles. He compared these with two or three others that he happened to have. In one of the quirks of history, he ran into a problem with the last six verses of Revelation, where his one manuscript that included Revelation was missing the last page. In order to meet his publishing deadline, Erasmus translated the last six verses of Revelation into Greek himself from the popular Latin Vulgate, producing a totally unique text for these verses.

Another interesting aspect of Erasmus's work is that he did not find the words "the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. And these three bear witness in earth" (KJV) in any manuscript he had of 1 John 5:7–8. These words had found their way into the Latin Vulgate and were well known in Erasmus's day. People objected, and in an unguarded moment, Erasmus responded that if he could find a single Greek manuscript with those words, he would include them in his next edition. Before long, someone had a Greek manuscript produced expressly for Erasmus that included these words. (Scholars currently date this manuscript to around 1520, the exact date of this controversy.) To honor his promise, Erasmus included these words in the next edition despite his clear misgivings about the dubious origin of these words. These words have continued to this day in the Textus Receptus, and in English translation in the King James Version and the New King James Version.

For almost four hundred years, Erasmus's Greek text went through many editions as the standard Greek text of the NT. In one of these printings, two Dutch publishers, the Elzevir brothers, included a sales blurb in the Latin preface of their second edition of 1633 containing the words "Textus Receptus" ("received text"). Thus, this text originally published by Erasmus eventually came to be known as the Textus Receptus. Although Erasmus's methodology was hurried and somewhat haphazard, the text that he produced was in substantial harmony with the vast bulk (80–90 percent) of all Greek manuscripts (or what today is often called the "Majority Text").



A copy of the 1611 version of the King James Bible

RISE OF OTHER GREEK EDITIONS

As the centuries went by, hundreds of other manuscripts of the Greek NT were discovered. One of the most interesting stories here involves a German scholar, Constantin von Tischendorf, who discovered the now well-known Codex Sinaiticus as it was slowly being used up, a page at a time, to start the kitchen fires at the monastery of St. Catherine on Mount Sinai. Scholars have wrestled with the question of how to explain the discrepancies between the new manuscripts, especially the 10 to 20 percent that disagreed with the traditional text.

The death knell for the widespread acceptance of the Textus Receptus took place largely through the work of two British scholars, B. F. Westcott and F. J. A. Hort, although in many ways they actually were building on the work of others. Westcott and Hort were part of a group organized to revise the King James Version that produced the English Revised Version of 1881 and the corresponding American Standard Version of 1901. However, their main contribution was to popularize an altogether different approach to textual criticism.

Westcott and Hort developed a genealogical methodology based on a classification of Greek manuscripts into three families: 80 to 90 percent of the manuscripts are Byzantine or Syrian manuscripts (presumably related to the Byzantine area of the ancient world), 10 to 20 percent are Alexandrian manuscripts (associated with Egypt), and a handful are Western manuscripts (related to the central and western Mediterranean). Then they constructed a genealogical family tree to help them understand the relationships among these three families of manuscripts. Their conclusion was that the Byzantine manuscripts underlying the Textus Receptus were the offspring of the earlier Alexandrian and Western manuscripts and therefore virtually irrelevant for discovering the original reading of the Greek NT. They also concluded that the Western manuscripts were more idiosyncratic and therefore less relevant as well, thus leaving them with the conclusion that the original readings are most apt to be found in the Alexandrian manuscripts. Westcott and Hort’s work lies at the foundation of our modern critical Greek New Testaments and almost all of our modern English translations (the exception being the New King James Version).

Since the time of Westcott and Hort, NT textual scholars have often employed an eclectic methodology, which, although not built on the exact same theory as Westcott and Hort’s, makes similar assumptions (including that the Textus Receptus is late and unreliable) and usually produces similar results. A small minority of scholars continues to advocate a Majority Text approach, arguing that the original reading is most likely to be preserved in a numerically larger number of manuscripts, thus producing a text similar to the Textus Receptus. A few have even gone so far as to argue for a “King James only” approach, as if the King James Version is more inspired than any other translation or even than the underlying Greek text.

THADDAEUS One of the twelve apostles (Matt. 10:3; Mark 3:18). Thaddaeus was also called “Judas son of James” (Luke 6:16; Acts 1:13) or “Judas (not Judas Iscariot),” whose only recorded words appear in John 14:22.

THAHASH *See* Tahash.

THAMAH *See* Temah.

THAMAR *See* Tamar.

THANKSGIVING A response of grateful people toward a gracious God. In the OT, thanksgiving is conspicuously absent from the patriarchal narratives, where the characters often appear ungrateful. Thanksgiving appears in the Pentateuch only in Lev. 7:12–15, where thanksgiving is one kind of fellowship offering given in public worship, usually for deliverance from peril. Thanksgiving becomes a prominent exhortation in the Psalter, where it occurs over fifty times. Worshipers are encouraged to thank God (in public worship) for deliverance from the physical perils common to being outside the safety of one’s community (Ps. 107) and from perils within (Ps. 103). Later, prophets (Isa. 51:3; Jer. 30:19), the Chronicler (1 Chron. 23:30), and twenty-eight other psalms speak of thanksgivings by offering songs rather than sacrifices. Thanksgiving, however, is still in the context of public (cultic) worship.

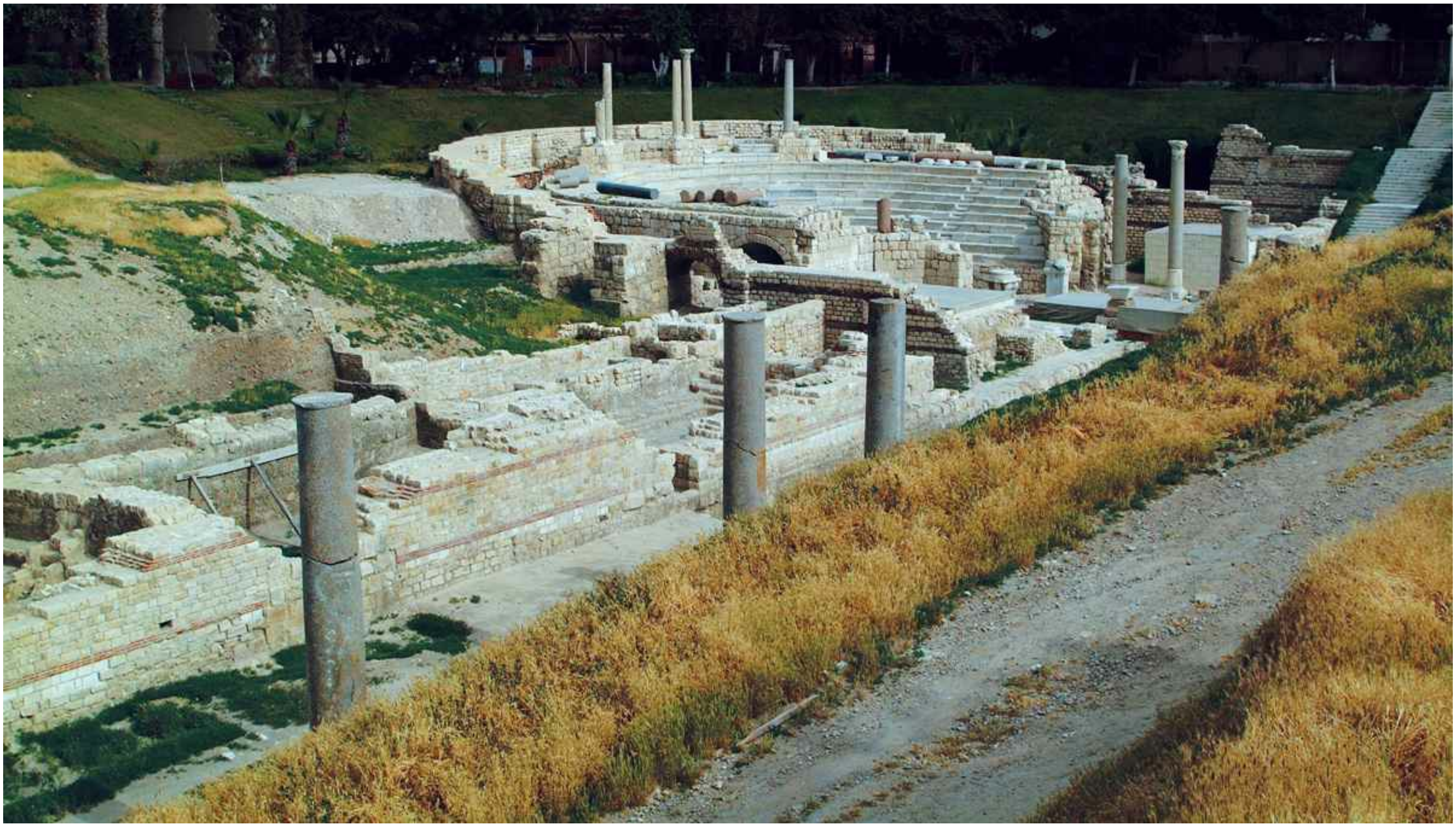
Later Jewish literature expanded expressions of thanksgiving outside a sacrificial context to include the individual or family at home before each meal (*b. Ber.* 35a). Similarly, Jesus offers thanks before a meal (Matt. 15:36; 26:27).

The other major occurrences of thanksgiving in the NT are found in Paul’s letters. While Greco-Roman letters occasionally began with thanksgiving to a deity for providing health or safety, Paul offered far longer and more frequent thanksgivings than any known writer. Thanksgiving must be considered one of the distinguishing characteristics of Paul’s writings and teachings. Both OT and NT examples and teachings indicate that thanksgiving to God is expressed in front of others and not merely in silent individual prayers to God.

THARSHISH *See* Tarshish.

THEATER A large building or arena that housed entertainment, public hearings, and other public venues. Though rarely mentioned in the Bible, theaters were a major fixture in Greco-Roman culture.

The Greek word *theatron*, from which the English word "theater" developed, appears twice in Acts 19:29–31, when Paul's traveling companions, Gaius and Aristarchus, are thrust into the center of a riot at the theater in Ephesus. The only other occurrence of *theatron* in the Bible is in 1 Cor. 4:9, where Paul speaks metaphorically of the apostles as a "spectacle" before the world, angels, and people. Also, the related verb *theatrizō* ("to shame publicly") occurs once in Heb. 10:33, where the author recounts the trials of the faithful.



The Greek theater at Alexandria, Egypt

Theaters were brought to Palestine with the coming of Greek culture. According to Josephus, Herod the Great had built both a theater and an amphitheater in Jerusalem, which apparently caused some discontent among the Jewish leaders. But despite the idolatry, violence, and lewdness of the theaters, their influence was widespread. Even Paul quotes from the Greek comedy *Thais* (1 Cor. 15:33). Every major ancient city had a theater, as did many smaller cities as well. They typically were built into a hillside to save on construction costs. Most were semicircular with terraced seating and a stage backdropped by a large decorated structure. Many of these ancient landmarks can still be seen throughout the Mediterranean region.

THEBES This town is now modern Luxor in Egypt, about three hundred miles south of Cairo. Second only to Memphis in importance and size, it first emerged as significant around 2000 BC. Known as "the City" and "the city of Amon" (an Egyptian deity), it was sacked by the Assyrians in 663 BC (cf. Nah. 3:8, 10), and further judgment was predicted (Jer. 46:25–26; Ezek. 30:14–16).

THEBEZ A fortified city of Manasseh near Shechem. After burning down the tower of Shechem, Abimelek attacked Thebez, where a certain woman dropped an upper millstone on his head, cracking his skull and critically injuring him (Judg. 9:50–54). He then ordered his armor-bearer to kill him for fear that a woman be credited with his death.

THEFT *See* Crimes and Punishments; Robbery.

THELASAR *See* Tel Assar.

THEMNATHAH *See* Timnah.

THEOCRACY A form of government that acknowledges God's kingship. God functions as the ultimate king in every era of biblical history, regardless of the form of human government.

In the book of Deuteronomy, theocracy is indicated in affirmations that Yahweh is Israel's commander in chief. Yahweh goes before his people and fights battles on their behalf (1:30, 33; 3:22; 7:1, 22–24; 9:3–5; 11:23). An important passage that anticipates the monarchy prescribes that God chooses the human king (17:15). That king should neither turn the people back to Egypt nor amass horses, wives, or riches (17:16–17). Rather, the king is to keep God's law with him and must "read it all the days of his life so that he may learn to revere the LORD his God and follow carefully all the words of this law . . . and not consider himself better than his fellow Israelites" (17:19–20).

The book of Judges recounts a series of leaders who fail to uphold the theocratic ideal of Deuteronomy. Both the tribes and leaders repeatedly "did evil in the eyes of the LORD" (2:11; 3:7, 12; 4:1; 6:1; 10:6; 13:1). The closing chapters of Judges state, "In those days Israel had no king; everyone did as they saw fit" (17:6; 21:25; cf. 18:1; 19:1). These refrains show that Israel needs a human king who will help the people to do what is right (rather than evil) "in the eyes of the LORD." Israel must maintain theocracy if it is to avoid foreign oppression.

The same issue is at stake in the account of Saul's rise to kingship. The Israelites' request for a king is problematic not only because they desired to be like "all the other nations," but also because they desired a human king who would go before them and fight their battles (1 Sam. 8:5, 20). By asking for a king who would serve in the role of commander in chief, they effectively supplant Yahweh and reject theocracy (1 Sam. 8:7; 10:19; 12:12). In keeping with Deuteronomy, Samuel explains that both king and people are to fear, serve, and obey Yahweh if they are to experience blessing (1 Sam. 12:14–15, 25; cf. Deut. 17:19–20). Since Saul has failed to uphold theocracy, God rejects him as king (1 Sam. 13:14; 15:11, 23, 26–28, 35) and seeks out a man who meets his own criteria for kingship (13:14; cf. 15:28). That David has a proper perspective on God's authority is evident in statements such as "the battle is the LORD's" (1 Sam. 17:47). David especially acknowledges God's kingship by installing the ark in Jerusalem and desiring to build the temple (2 Sam. 6–7), actions that lead to the Davidic covenant (7:4–17).

The Davidic covenant is foundational for a biblical theology of God's kingdom. Numerous psalms are devoted to God's kingship (Pss. 2; 20; 21; 47; 93; 145), and eschatological prophecies reveal much about the messianic king/kingdom (Isa. 9; 11; Jer. 23; 30; 33; Ezek. 37; Dan. 2; 7; 9; Mic. 5; Zech. 9; 14). The NT shows that God's kingdom has arrived in part at the first coming of Jesus but awaits its full consummation at his second coming (Matt. 3:17; 12:28; Mark 1:14–15; Luke 17:20–21; Acts 1:6–8).

THEOLOGY, BIBLICAL *See* Biblical Theology.

THEOPHANY An appearance by God. The word "theophany" is not found in the Bible; however, by the early fourth century AD, the term had come to be used in reference to God. Eusebius, bishop of Caesarea at that time, uses the term (Gk. *theophaneia*) in reference to God's appearances to people as these are recounted in Gen. 18:1–5, 25; 32:28–30; Exod. 3:4–6; Josh. 5:13–15 (*Hist. eccl.* 1.2.10). This meaning of "theophany," referring to the biblical phenomenon of God's appearing, is the sense of the word considered here.

"Theophany" is a compound word, related to the Greek words *theos* (usually translated as "god" or "God") and *phainō* (often translated as "to appear"). The Bible says in many places that God "appeared" (e.g., Gen. 12:7; 17:1; 18:1; 26:2, 24; 35:9; 48:3; Exod. 3:16; 4:5; Deut. 31:15). For example, Gen. 18:1 says that "the LORD appeared" to Abraham. Several other passages say that people saw God (Gen. 32:30; Exod. 24:10; Isa. 6:1). For example, Isa. 6:1 says that Isaiah "saw the LORD." "Appeared" and "see" usually reflect different forms of the same Hebrew verb.

Closely related to these appearances are statements describing God's presence and glory within a cloud and at God's tent or temple. During the exodus of Israel from Egypt, "by day the LORD went ahead of them in a pillar of cloud," leading them (Exod. 13:21). When Moses later constructs the tabernacle or tent of meeting, a cloud covers it, and the glory of God fills the tabernacle (40:34). God typically speaks to Moses from the tabernacle (Exod. 33:7–9; Num. 1:1; 7:89).

Later, when the temple is dedicated, "the cloud filled the temple of the LORD" (1 Kings 8:10). This cloud is associated with God's glory, and where God says he would dwell (8:11–12). In the book of Ezekiel, God forsakes the temple because of the sins of Israel, so the cloud and God's glory depart (Ezek. 10:4). Throughout the Bible, the local presence of God is regularly indicated by the tabernacle and later by the temple, for this is the place where all offerings are given to God, and where people come before God.

In the Bible, an appearance by God does not limit God to one place. Solomon says during the dedication of the temple that even heaven cannot contain God, much less the temple that Solomon has built (1 Kings 8:27). God's omnipresence is likewise expressed by the psalmist (Ps. 139:7–8).

God does not always appear in the same form in theophanies. The angel of the Lord appears in the fire of a burning bush, saying that he is the God of Abraham (Exod. 3:2–6). Elsewhere, the angel of the Lord is described as a man, but then ascends to heaven in the flame of an altar (Judg. 13:3–13, 20). John describes God sitting on a throne (Rev. 4:2; 5:1). In other passages God is locally present and speaks, yet without explicitly appearing, which might be classified as a theophany (Num. 22:9, 20; 23:16; Mark 1:11; 9:7; John 12:28).

Despite these examples of theophanies, some biblical passages state that people cannot see God. However, these passages may refer to practical human limitations rather than any inherent characteristic of God himself. In Exodus, for example, God tells Moses that no one seeing God's face can live (33:20). However, God then says that Moses, without seeing God's face, "will see my back" (33:23). The entire passage indicates that God can be seen more fully, but only with fatal results. Several NT passages similarly indicate that God cannot be fully seen (John 1:18; 4:24; 1 Tim. 1:17; 6:15–16; Heb. 11:27).

Just as God dwelled within the tabernacle, at times showing his glory, the NT says that the Word of God was made to dwell in flesh (incarnate) as Jesus Christ and so revealed God's glory (John 1:14). This Word of God is the same word that created all things in Gen. 1 and so is genuinely God (John 1:1–3).

THEOPHILUS The person to whom Luke dedicated both his Gospel and the book of Acts (Luke 1:3; Acts 1:1). The name means “friend of God” or “beloved by God” and was common in the Greco-Roman world. Some have claimed that the name is a symbolic reference to a generic Christian reader, but it is more likely that Luke was addressing his works to a specific individual known to him. The use of the title “most excellent Theophilus” could indicate that he was of high social standing, or it may simply be a greeting that Luke used to indicate respect or admiration.

THESSALONIANS, FIRST LETTER TO THE In 1 Thessalonians the apostle Paul writes to the church shortly after his first visit there to commend it for its faith and faithfulness to the Lord and to note its good testimony through the regions of Macedonia, Achaia, and everywhere else. He instructs it as to certain issues in the Christian life, the future of the believers in the assembly who have already died, and the relation of these believers to Christ’s coming as they continue to quietly work and wait for him.

LITERARY CONSIDERATIONS

The author of the book is the apostle Paul, as noted in the salutation (1:1). The book fits the style and vocabulary of Paul, the church fathers accepted it as Pauline, and the description of the historical background certainly fits what we know from the book of Acts. The book is accepted as Pauline by all but the most skeptical. It was written from Corinth after Timothy met Paul there with a report about the welfare of the church (3:6). Paul had been forced to leave after spending very little time there (a length of three Sabbath days is noted in Acts 17:2), and he was concerned about the well-being of the church. Written around AD 50–52 during the second missionary journey, it may be the earliest of Paul’s letters (except perhaps Galatians). Written in typical epistolary style, the book includes the usual salutation and thanksgiving, body and content, and closing. The tone of the book is congenial. Missing are the sharp and sarcastic statements found in some other letters, particularly Galatians and 2 Corinthians. Paul is truly pleased with the growth of this church, though he does have instruction for it.

HISTORICAL SETTING

The apostle Paul, on his second missionary journey, had been forbidden from preaching the gospel in several areas of Asia Minor, and subsequently he received the Macedonian call to take the gospel across the Aegean. After winning several to Christ and being run out of Philippi (1 Thess. 2:2), Paul and his missionary companions came to the city of Thessalonica, where Paul taught in the synagogue for three Sabbaths. A number of God-fearers and women believed the teaching of Paul, but because of opposition from the Jews (who were jealous), the missionaries left and went to Berea. The Jews in Berea were said to be more open-minded than the Thessalonians, since they were willing to check Paul’s message against Scripture (Acts 17:11). As for the church in Thessalonica, in this initial meeting Paul had been with them a very short time, yet he had much for which to commend them in his letter. Paul evidently returned to teach this assembly again on his third missionary journey, after spending several years in Ephesus (Acts 20:1).

OUTLINE AND CONTENT

I. Greeting and Thanksgiving (1:1–10)

II. Defense of Apostolic Actions (2:1–16)

III. Separation from the Thessalonians and Sending of Timothy (2:17–3:13)

IV. Holy Living and Continued Work (4:1–12)

V. The Lord’s Return Gives the Thessalonians Hope (4:13–5:11)

VI. Closing Comments (5:12–28)

I. Greeting and thanksgiving (1:1–10). As Paul opens the letter, he greets the church and notes his thanksgiving to God for their work and their endurance in the things of Christ (1:2–5). Paul commends these believers on their reception of the gospel and on the imitation of the life and ethic that has flowed from that reception. As a consequence, Paul notes that they themselves are now an example to the other churches (1:6–10).

II. Defense of apostolic actions (2:1–16). Paul notes his apostolic disposition toward the Thessalonians as one of humility as he has taught them the gospel (2:1–12). Paul and his missionary companions do not seek to please human beings, and they do not do what they do for greed, but in fact they work night and day for a living. They have treated the Thessalonians well, insisting that they live in a manner reflective of the kingdom. After accepting the gospel as the word of God (2:13), the Thessalonians have experienced persecution from those who opposed the gospel. These opponents will incur God’s wrath (2:14–16).

III. Separation from the Thessalonians and sending of Timothy (2:17–3:13). In this section, Paul insists that even though he has desired to see the Thessalonians, he has been persistently hindered by Satan (2:17–20). Because of this prolonged absence, Paul had been forced to send Timothy as a messenger. Paul has done this because he had urgently desired to know their spiritual state (3:1–5). When Timothy came back with the report about the faithfulness of the Thessalonians, Paul had rejoiced and given thanks (3:6–10). Paul notes that their longing to see him has been a joyful thing to him, and he is glad to know of their disposition toward him. Paul concludes as he prays for their increased love and holiness (3:11–13).

IV. Holy living and continued work (4:1–12). Paul notes that the Thessalonians have been living ethically, but that he wants to remind them to do so more and more. They are to live their lives in sanctification and honor instead of sexual immorality (4:1–8). They should love one another and continue to live in the quietness and peace of regular work (4:9–12). Though the Lord will soon come, this is no reason to abandon work. Paul instructs them to continue working hard so that they will not be in need as they watch and wait for Christ (a problem continuing into 2 Thessalonians [3:10–11]).

V. The Lord’s return gives the Thessalonians hope (4:13–5:11). In order to correct another misunderstanding about the Lord’s coming, Paul turns to the issue of the believer’s future hope. Some of the church members had been confused about the destiny of the believers now deceased. Paul instructs them that at the coming of the Lord those who have died will be raised to meet the Lord with the living (4:13–18). This should be a matter of comfort to the believers. As to the time of Christ’s coming, Paul notes that it will be sudden and unknown (5:1–2). The unbelievers will be unaware as sudden destruction comes upon them (5:3). But believers, who are sensitive to the life of Christ and his coming, should not be caught off guard when he comes. This expectation should have an impact on the way they live now (5:4–9). In any event, whether the believers are still alive or are deceased in Christ, both will come together in him at his coming (5:10).

VI. Closing comments (5:12–28). In the last section, Paul gives final ethical instructions to the church. The church should highly esteem those in leadership because they are working hard. In a final word about prayer, thanksgiving, and the Holy Spirit's work in the believer, Paul concludes that the believers should shun every form of evil. He instructs that the letter be read to all the believers.

Ruins at Thessalonica

THESSALONIANS, SECOND LETTER TO THE Paul's second letter to the Thessalonians addresses a church troubled by an overly realized eschatology. Whereas at the time of the first letter the Thessalonians were expecting the imminent return of Christ (1 Thess. 5:6), by the time of the second letter some believed that Christ had already come (2 Thess. 2:2). Because of this, some were being drawn from their work into idleness (2 Thess. 3:6). Paul's purpose, then, was to correct their eschatology, restore them to their tasks, and rebuild their confidence in Christ. He does this both by emphasizing Jesus Christ as Lord (the letter is uniquely consistent in the NT in applying the title "Lord" [Gk. *kyrios*] to Jesus) and by describing two apocalyptic events that must happen before the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ: the great apostasy and the appearance of the man of lawlessness (2 Thess. 2:3). Scholars have noted that Paul most often refers to Jesus as Lord in hortatory and eschatological passages. Indeed, though brief, 2 Thessalonians emphasizes exhortation and eschatology.

LITERARY CONSIDERATIONS

Authorship and the question of pseudonymity. As early as AD 110, Polycarp of Smyrna alluded to 2 Thessalonians in his letter to the Philippians (Pol. *Phil.* 11:4), and both Marcion and the Muratorian Canon refer to the epistle. It was known to Ignatius, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, and Tertullian. In the modern era, beginning at the end of the eighteenth century, the Pauline authorship of the epistle was questioned, first by J. E. C. Schmidt, then by F. C. Baur, and more fully by W. Wrede, who dated the letter to a little before the date implied in Polycarp's letter.

Comparison of 1 and 2 Thessalonians. The case for pseudonymous authorship depends largely on a comparison between 1 Thessalonians and 2 Thessalonians. The letters share a number of similarities in language, style, and content, including similarly worded salutations (1 Thess. 1:1; 2 Thess. 1:1–2), expressions of thanks (1 Thess. 1:2; 2:13; 3:9; 2 Thess. 1:3; 2:13), intercessory prayers (1 Thess. 3:11; 2 Thess. 2:16), references to the broad reputation of the Thessalonian church (1 Thess. 1:1–10; 2 Thess. 1:3–4), the persecution of the Thessalonian church (1 Thess. 2:14–16; 2 Thess. 1:5–10), divine election (1 Thess. 1:4; 2 Thess. 2:13), references to a personalized antagonist ("Satan" in 1 Thess. 2:18; "the evil one" in 2 Thess. 3:3), the exhortation to avoid idleness (1 Thess. 4:11–12; 5:14; 2 Thess. 3:7–13), a common concern for the parousia and its anticipation (1 Thess. 4:13–5:11; 2 Thess. 2:1–11), and a number of stylistic resemblances (cf. 1 Thess. 3:11 with 2 Thess. 2:16; 1 Thess. 4:1 with 2 Thess. 3:1; 1 Thess. 5:23 with 2 Thess. 3:16).

In addition to resemblances, advocates of pseudonymous authorship have perceived some deep discontinuities between the letters. The question, then, is to devise a theory to explain both types of features (see below). In 1 Thessalonians the parousia is depicted as an imminent event that could occur at any moment, "like a thief in the night" (1 Thess. 5:2), whereas in 2 Thessalonians the basic supposition is that the end will come not unexpectedly but only following the series of public events described in 2 Thess. 2:3–4. The imminent tone of 1 Thessalonians can be compared to that of 1 Corinthians (an undisputedly Pauline letter), while the attitude of 2 Thessalonians and its acceptance of an indefinite delay of the parousia find no obvious parallel in the other letters widely accepted as written by Paul, but have been described as best fitting a context in the last quarter of the first century, within the milieu of eschatological debate that gave rise to two other disputed Pauline letters, Ephesians and Colossians. Although we should not facilely harmonize the differences between the letters, neither should we overstate the imminence of eschatological expectation in 1 Thessalonians, where, as in 2 Thessalonians, Paul reminds his readers that in fact they will not be surprised by the parousia (1 Thess. 5:4)—although, admittedly, less apocalyptic detail is given than in 2 Thessalonians. Moreover, both letters give ample attention to life in the period of eschatological anticipation (2 Thess. 3:1–16), particularly to the temptation to idleness (1 Thess. 4:11–12; 5:14; 2 Thess. 3:7–13).

In 2 Thess. 2:2 the author warns against letters circulating in Paul's name but falsely attributed to him. As proponents of the pseudonymous authorship of 2 Thessalonians have pointed out, this problem is unlikely to have arisen during the lifetime of Paul himself, as he would have been able to discredit such letters. Also, the handwritten signature at the end of the letter (2 Thess. 3:17 [the rest of the letter would have been dictated to a secretary, as in Rom. 16:22]) and the special emphasis placed on it (compared to 1 Cor. 16:21; Gal. 6:11; and in a disputed Pauline letter, Col. 4:18) have been taken as indicating an attempt to deceive, or at least as consistent with what a pseudonymous author would have deemed necessary to pass off the letter as the work of the famous apostle. Of course, this argument depends on the fact that Paul actually did sign some of his genuine letters in this way, though 2 Thess. 3:17 does admittedly go beyond the other examples listed as a plea for authenticity, even to the point of raising suspicion. On the other hand, if falsely attributed letters were being passed around in Paul's lifetime, the extra emphasis on his personal mark would be called for.

Finally, some have described a shift in tone between the two letters, from joyfulness to somberness. Supposing that 2 Thessalonians was written some years after 1 Thessalonians and the death of Paul, this has been taken as a reflection of eschatological disappointment during the interim and a readjustment of expectations to the reality of a longer-than-anticipated delay in the parousia. However, the difference in tone, as well as the difference in theological emphasis noted above, might simply reflect differences in the sets of circumstances that occasioned the two letters, and the tone of both letters could be construed as coming from the mind of a single author.

Relationship between 1 and 2 Thessalonians. Considering similarities and differences together, the proponents of pseudonymous authorship judge the theological, linguistic, and stylistic differences to be substantive and real and to reflect both a significant lapse in time and the work of two distinct authors. In this view, the long list of resemblances indicates only that 2 Thessalonians is a rather studied imitation of 1 Thessalonians. If Paul wrote both letters, why would he have repeated so much of his earlier letter in the second and done so within a relatively short span of time? As alternatives to the theory of pseudonymous authorship, several proposals have been advanced to explain this unexpected behavior, including the notions that the letters were addressed to two groups within the city of Thessalonica (Jewish and Gentile); that each letter reflects the differing authorial contributions from the three senders of both letters (Paul, Silas, and Timothy [1 Thess. 1:1; 2 Thess. 1:1]); that one of the letters was addressed privately to a restricted group within the community; that 2 Thessalonians was written not shortly after 1 Thessalonians but rather following a second visit to Thessalonica (see Acts 20:1–2), during which developments not recorded in Acts would have set the stage for the distinctive emphases of the second letter; or that reversing the chronological priority of the letters so that 2 Thessalonians preceded 1 Thessalonians provides a scenario in which the Pauline authorship of 2 Thessalonians can plausibly be maintained. At present, the authorship of 2 Thessalonians remains a matter of dispute among biblical scholars.

Theological considerations. Apart from the internal evidence discussed above, the theory of pseudonymous authorship raises theological questions. How does the possibility that Paul did not write the letter bear on the authority of this letter as Scripture? Is the intent to deceive as to the authorship of the letter consistent with the belief that the letter was divinely inspired by a holy God? In terms of its history of reception, 2 Thessalonians has the highest pedigree and, as noted above, was alluded to as early as the first part of the second century. The Pauline authorship of the book and its status in the canon do not seem to have been a matter of dispute in antiquity. Responding to critical assessments of the book's authorship and date in the modern era (and more broadly to assessments of other "disputed Pauline letters"), some evangelical theologians and biblical scholars have argued that epistolary pseudepigraphy was not considered respectable in antiquity; that is, such a practice was considered tantamount to forgery and an intent to deceive. The early church would not have knowingly accepted into the canon any letter known to have been pseudepigraphically authored and promulgated. In light of this reconstruction of ancient attitudes, the proposal of pseudonymity in the case of 2 Thessalonians and other supposedly Pauline letters becomes a significant theological problem.

In addressing this issue, it should be noted that the concept of authorship was and is somewhat flexible. Paul did not likely write with his own hand any of the letters in the NT, apart from adding his signature at the end of 1 Corinthians, Galatians, and possibly 2 Thessalonians and Colossians. In each instance the degree to which the scribe or amanuensis contributed to the wording or content of each letter (see Rom. 16:22) is unclear. In the case of 2 Thessalonians and some other Pauline

Epistles, the letter originated from a group of three associates: Paul, Silas, and Timothy. It is unclear to what extent Silas and Timothy should be considered as having made an authorial contribution to the letter. Admittedly, the theory of pseudonymous authorship of 2 Thessalonians goes far beyond any of these cases, since, as generally articulated, it involves dating the letter to the last quarter of the first century, at least ten years or so after the death of Paul. In terms of the theological problem described above, a letter authored in Paul's name under such circumstances represents a qualitatively different scenario than one written by associates during his lifetime yet ultimately knowingly authorized and sent (and signed) by the apostle himself. Still, the range of meanings entailed in the concept of "authorship" should lead to circumspection in evaluating the theological implications of the theory of pseudonymous authorship. Reducing this theory to the possible element of deception may risk oversimplifying and even demonizing the motivations and aims of the pseudonymous author. (*See also* Pseudepigraphy, Pseudonymity.)

Date. As is obvious from the foregoing discussion of authorship, the date of 2 Thessalonians is bound up in the question of authorship. If Paul wrote 2 Thessalonians, it would have to have been prior to his death in the mid-60s. First Thessalonians was likely written around AD 50, and 2 Thessalonians may have been written shortly thereafter, if it was written prior to Paul's second visit to the region of Macedonia (Acts 20:1–2), during his time in Corinth (18:1–5) or Ephesus. A second visit to the city is not mentioned in 2 Thessalonians, and in contrast to the evidence of Acts 18:5 regarding the second missionary journey of Paul, we cannot with certainty place the three authors of 2 Thessalonians (Paul, Timothy, and Silas) together at a later date. Advocates of pseudonymous authorship usually date the letter to the last quarter of the first century in order to allow some time for the supposed development in eschatological expectation between the two letters, and probably also for the collection of Paul's letters in later years to provide the background for the reference in 2 Thess. 3:17 to "all my letters." At any rate, it should be dated prior to the composition of Polycarp's letter to the Philippians around AD 110.

If pseudonymous authorship is accepted, then two passages in the letter that refer to events after Paul's death may bear on a more precise dating of the composition. First, the reference to "God's temple" in 2 Thess. 2:4, if it refers to the temple in Jerusalem, would suggest a date prior to AD 70, when that edifice was destroyed. Second, some have argued that the reference to the revelation of the "man of lawlessness" in 2 Thess. 2:3 refers to an expectation that the emperor Nero was to come back from the dead. This would suggest a date after Nero's death in AD 68. Both passages can be explained in other ways: the figure of God's temple continued to be invoked symbolically after AD 70, and the "man of lawlessness" is obscure enough to inspire caution in too quickly identifying him with a historical person.

OUTLINE

I. Introductory Greeting and Thanksgiving (1:1–12)
    A. Greetings from Paul, Silas, and Timothy (1:1–2)
    B. Thanksgiving (1:3–10)
    C. Prayer (1:11–12)

II. The Coming of Christ (2:1–12)
    A. Warnings against reports that Christ has come (2:1–2)

    - B. The man of lawlessness and the great apostasy must come first (2:3–7)
    - C. God will ensure the destruction of both through Christ (2:8–12)
- III. Exhortations (2:13–3:15)
    - A. Thanksgiving and prayer (2:13–3:5)
    - B. Exhortation to avoid idleness in themselves and in others (3:6–15)
- IV. Closing Prayer and Benediction (3:16–18)

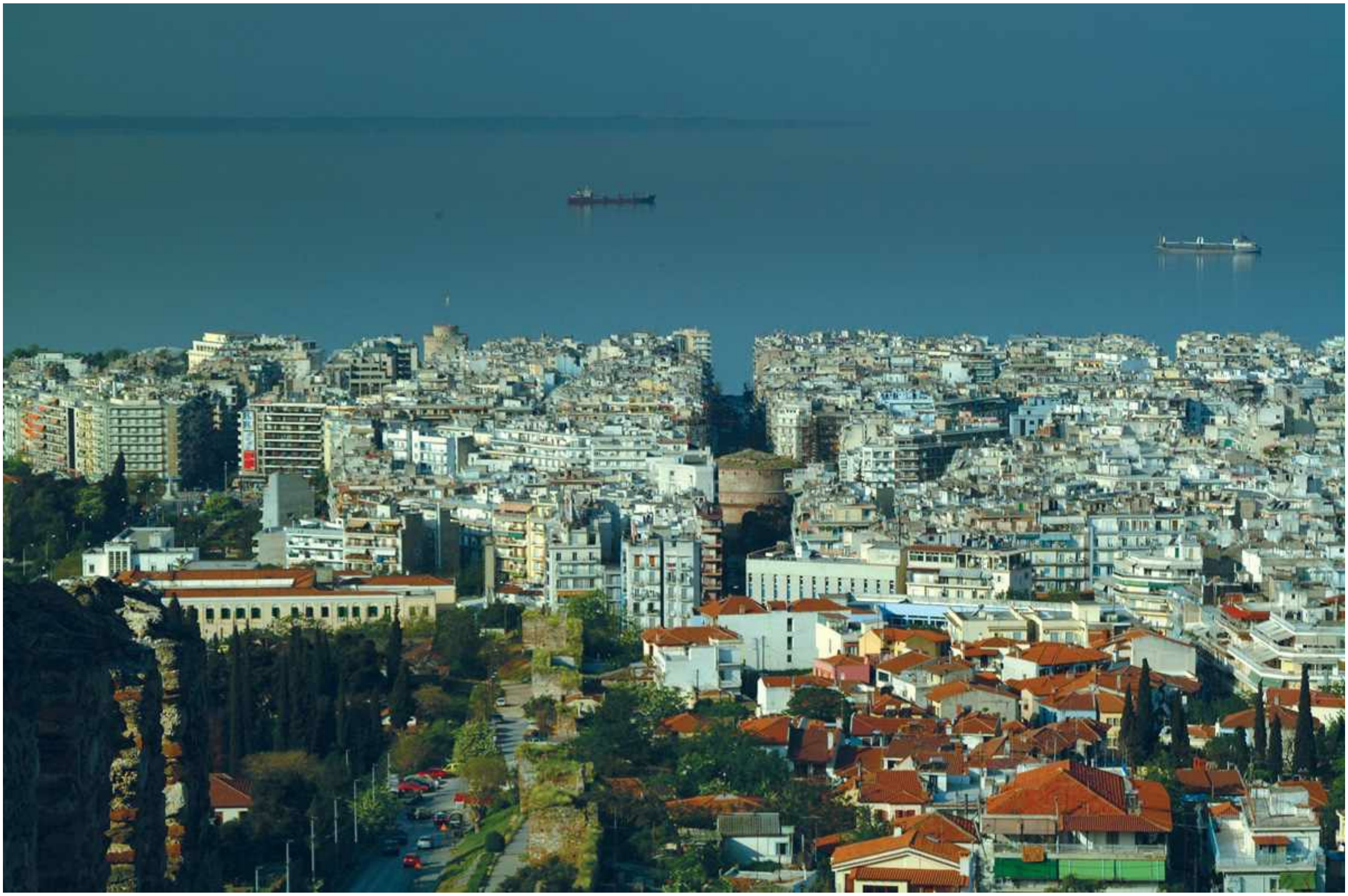
THESSALONICA Founded in 315 BC by the general Kassandros, the city of Thessalonica is located on the eastern coast of Macedonia, on the western shore of the Aegean Sea. The city was well situated for trade, both as a port for seagoing trade vessels along the Aegean and for land trade along the Via Egnatia. The city is approximately 77 miles from Philippi, also on the Via Egnatia, and 320 miles from Athens in the south of Greece. No doubt the apostle Paul traveled from Asia Minor to Philippi to reach several major cities on this route, going through Amphipolis and Apollonia to come to Thessalonica, where the Via Egnatia then turns westward.

Paul had not been well received by many in the city of Philippi, and after being escorted out of town there, he made his way to Thessalonica (Acts 17:1). As was his custom, he went to the synagogue of the Jews. Paul planted a church here after preaching only a few weeks. Though it is not certain from the account in Acts 17 just how long Paul spent in Thessalonica, the text leaves the impression that his time there was short, cut off due to opposition.

After Paul was ill treated in Thessalonica, he went to Berea. According to Luke, the Jews in Berea were more noble than those in Thessalonica because they were willing to search the Scriptures and test what Paul was saying to them (Acts 17:11). In fact, the Jewish leaders in Thessalonica were so upset by the message of Paul that they followed Paul and company to Berea to stir up trouble there (17:13).

Because his visit had been cut short, Paul was concerned about the spiritual condition of the church. After sending Timothy to check on their welfare, he was elated to find this church walking faithfully.

The two final references in the NT to Thessalonica note that Paul was sent a gift from those in the church of Philippi when he was in Thessalonica (Phil. 4:16), and when Demas abandoned Paul, Demas then went to Thessalonica (2 Tim. 4:10).



Modern Thessaloniki (Thessalonica)

THEUDAS A political agitator, quite likely a messianic pretender, mentioned by the Pharisee Gamaliel in Acts 5:36. At some time prior to AD 6 Theudas gathered a group of four hundred men, but soon he was killed and his followers were dispersed. This may have occurred in the aftermath of Herod the Great's death in 4 BC. The Jewish historian Josephus also mentions a magician named "Theudas," who led a band of followers to the Jordan River sometime in AD 44–46 (*Ant.* 20.97–99). He and many of his supporters were killed by the Romans.

THIEF *See* Crimes and Punishments; Robbery.

THIMNATHAH *See* Timnah.

THIN WORK *See* Hammered Work.

THOMAS One of Jesus' original twelve apostles (Matt. 10:3; Mark 3:18; Luke 6:15), referred to as "Didymus," meaning "twin" (John 11:16; 20:24; 21:2). The infamous title of "Doubting Thomas" comes from his refusal to believe in Jesus' resurrection. Thomas said, "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe" (John 20:25). A week later the risen Jesus again appeared to the apostles, including Thomas.

Thomas's response was "My Lord and my God!" (John 20:28). Despite his previous disbelief in Jesus' resurrection, Thomas was present with the other apostles in the upper room (Acts 1:13).

THORN IN THE FLESH An unspecified hardship suffered by the apostle Paul, which he refers to in 2 Cor. 12:7. Paul calls this ailment "a messenger of Satan" sent to "torment me." He also says that he had prayed three times for God to take it away from him, but to no avail (2 Cor. 12:8).

Paul recognized that this "thorn in the flesh" was sent from God to keep him from being conceited after he had received "surpassingly great revelations" (2 Cor. 12:7). The thorn was a positive thing in that it caused him to turn to God and specifically to God's grace as a source of power for his life. When Paul asked God to take the thorn away, God responded, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness," and so Paul concludes, "I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me" (2 Cor. 12:8–9).

It is not known specifically what this thorn in the flesh was. Some conjecture that it may have been an eyesight problem, since Paul says in Gal. 4:15 that the Galatians loved him so much that they would have torn out their eyes and given them to him, and in Gal. 6:11 he mentions that he is writing with large letters. This uncertainty concerning the identity of Paul's thorn in the flesh is not a bad thing, since it allows the application of the principle of dependence on God to various kinds of suffering and hardship.

THREE TAVERNS The last stop on Paul's recorded trip to Rome (Acts 28:15). Three Taverns lay on the Mediterranean coast of Italy, about twenty-five miles southeast of Rome. Roman Christians traveled down to Three Taverns when they learned of Paul's presence nearby.

THRESHING, THRESHING FLOOR Threshing is the process of removing grain kernels from their stalks. In ancient times, threshing usually was done on a threshing floor. The floor was a compacted surface where the grain was beaten by hand, trodden on by an animal, or crushed by a wheel or sledge. Once crushed, the material was winnowed to separate the light stalk from the heavy grain. During the harvest, the threshing floor was the center of harvesting activity and often a place to spend the night (Ruth 3:3–6). According to 1 Chron. 21:18–28, David purchased a threshing floor in Jerusalem for the future location of the temple. In Luke 3:17; Matt. 3:12 the threshing floor serves as a judgment metaphor warning people to be not the stubble that is burned but the grain that is saved. *See also* Threshing Sledge.

THRESHING SLEDGE A wooden slab with stones or iron teeth embedded in the bottom that was dragged across grain spread on a threshing floor in the process of threshing. Araunah offered his sledge as firewood for David's offering (2 Sam. 24:22). Threshing with the sledge became a figure for victory (Isa. 41:15) and brutality (Amos 1:3). *See also* Threshing, Threshing Floor.

THUMMIM *See* Urim and Thummim.

THUTMOSE The name of four Eighteenth Dynasty Egyptian pharaohs from Thebes. This dynasty forced out the Hyksos invaders and reunified Egypt (cf. Ahmose I [c. 1580 BC]). The name "Thutmose" means "born from Thoth," a powerful idol-god who communicated the sun god Re's will to human beings.

Statue of Thutmose III (fifteenth century BC)

Both Thutmose III and his son Amenhotep II are posited as the possible pharaoh for an early-date exodus. Thutmose III was the sixth pharaoh of the Eighteenth Dynasty. His reign lasted fifty-four years (twenty-two coreigning with Hatshepsut), 1479–1425 BC (or c. 1497–1443 BC). Thutmose III was a warrior pharaoh and led Egypt to great prosperity and might. He campaigned in Syria-Palestine and fought a famous battle at Megiddo. He was also a great builder. His eldest son died, and he was succeeded by another son, Amenhotep II.

THYATIRA Modern-day Akhisar, located about thirty-five miles southeast of Pergamum on a flat plain between Lydia and Mysia, and without natural defenses.

The city was noted for having the richest concentration of trade guilds in Asia Minor, especially clothiers, linen workers, wool merchants, and dyers. Red dye was locally derived from the madder root. Purple, the only naturally colorfast dye in antiquity, came from murex shells and was coveted by the wealthy. Lydia, Paul's disciple and host in Philippi, was a dealer in purple cloth from Thyatira (Acts 16:14). Thyatira's other significant guilds included bakers, tanners, potters, coppersmiths, and slave traders.

The fourth of the seven churches of Revelation, Thyatira is commended for its good deeds but is criticized for tolerating the false teacher Jezebel (Rev. 2:18–29).

TIAMAT In Babylonian mythology (particularly the *Enuma Elish*), Tiamat is a goddess, the personification of the salt waters. The gods are the offspring of Tiamat and Apsu, the underground freshwaters. Disturbed by the behavior of the gods, Apsu decided to destroy them, but they killed him first. When Tiamat tried to take vengeance, Marduk, the god of Babylon, killed her and made the earth and sky from her body. The fighting among the gods shows that the gods are not good, and no god is all-powerful, typical traits of polytheism. Fighting against watery chaos was a common motif in the ancient Near East (e.g., Pss. 89:10; 74:14; 104:26).

TIBERIAS A city founded on the western coast of the Sea of Galilee in AD 20 by Herod Antipas to replace Sepphoris as the new capital of Galilee. It was the administrative center of one of the five toparchies in Galilee. The city was named after the Roman emperor Tiberius, the successor of Augustus. The Gospel of John mentions Tiberias only in passing, noting that people from Tiberias traveled in boats to search for Jesus (John 6:23; cf. references to the Sea of Galilee as the "Sea of Tiberias" in John 6:1; 21:1). Herod built the city on top of a gravesite, rendering it unclean, and he had to compel people to settle there. He included non-Jews, poor people, and former slaves as part of its inhabitants.

Tiberias was a cosmopolitan city but still in its infancy of Hellenization. The city was governed by a *polis*, or council of six hundred men, administered by a group of ten, and headed by an elected leader called an "archon." It had an agora, stadium, prayer house, and palace. According to rabbinic literature, the city was known for its fishing industry and textile production (*y. Pesaḥ* 4.2; *b. Sukkah* 20b). During the First Jewish Revolt, Josephus made Tiberias the base for his defense of Galilee (Josephus, *J.W.* 2.572–73), and Vespasian spared the city when it surrendered without resistance (Josephus, *J.W.* 3.453–61).

TIBERIUS CAESAR The Roman emperor during the time of Jesus' ministry, he reigned in the years AD 14–37. Tiberius was adopted by his predecessor, Augustus, in an act that paved the way for Tiberius to ascend to the headship of the empire. All references to "Caesar" in the Gospels are to Tiberius (except Luke 2:1). The first mention of Tiberius states that the ministry of John the Baptist was taking place "in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar" (Luke 3:1). It is noteworthy that each of the remaining Gospel references to Tiberius concerns the issue of paying taxes. All three Synoptic Gospels give an account of a debate between Jesus and certain religious leaders about paying taxes to Caesar, with Jesus indicating that they indeed should be paid (Matt. 22:15–22; Mark 12:13–17; Luke 20:20–26). In contrast, when Jesus is later on trial before Pilate, the assembled crowd alleges that Jesus opposed the payment of taxes to Tiberius Caesar (Luke 23:2).

TIBHATH The city where David took a great amount of spoils of bronze, which Solomon later used in the temple (1 Chron. 18:8). The city is called "Betah" in the parallel account (2 Sam. 8:8 NASB, NRSV, KJV; see NIV mg.). Some scholars associate it with Tebah (Gen. 22:24), and the NIV uses

"Tebah" in both 1 Chron. 18:8 and 2 Sam. 8:8. *See also* Tebah.

TIBNI The son of Ginath. After the death of King Zimri of Israel, Israel split into two factions, the stronger one supporting Omri for the throne of Israel, the other supporting Tibni (r. 882–878 BC). After four years of struggle, the rivalry ended with Tibni's death (1 Kings 16:21–22).

TIDAL The king of Goyim, one of four kingdoms that raided Canaan during the time of Abraham (Gen. 14:1, 9). After they plundered the region and kidnapped Lot, Abraham successfully defeated them and regained what they had taken. His name has been connected with the name of four Hittite kings (Tudhaliya). *See also* Goyim.

TIGLATH-PILESER III The founder of the Neo-Assyrian Empire (r. 744–727 BC), Tiglath-pileser (in the Bible, also known as "Pul") annexed conquered territories and started the practice of deporting populations to minimize national sentiments of resistance. He took tribute from Menahem (2 Kings 15:19–20), captured the Transjordan and other tribes of Israel (1 Chron. 5:26; 2 Kings 15:29), and conquered Babylon. King Ahaz of Judah appealed to him for help and paid him tribute.

Relief of Tiglath-pileser III

TIGLATH-PILNESER A variant of "Tiglath-pileser," the name of an Assyrian king. The variant occurs only in 1–2 Chronicles (1 Chron. 5:6, 26; 2 Chron. 28:20), where many versions substitute "Tiglath-pileser." *See also* Tiglath-pileser III.

TIGRIS RIVER *See* Euphrates and Tigris Rivers; Rivers and Waterways.

TIKVAH **(1)** The father of Shallum, husband of Huldah the prophetess (2 Kings 22:14). In 2 Chron. 34:22 the name is “Tokhath.” **(2)** The father of Jahzeiah, one of the four men who opposed the call to put away foreign wives after the return from exile (Ezra 10:15).

TIKVATH *See* Tokhath.

TILON The fourth of the four sons of Shimon, from the tribe of Judah (1 Chron. 4:20).

TIMAEUS The father of the blind beggar Bartimaeus, whom Jesus healed at Jericho (Mark 10:46).

TIMBREL A small, handheld musical instrument, probably a small hand drum that may have had bells or small pieces of metal around its perimeter. It was used as part of the music and dancing that accompanied festivals (Isa. 5:12), farewells (Gen. 31:27), worship (Pss. 81:2; 149:3; 150:4), songs of triumph (Exod. 15:20), prophetic ecstasy (1 Sam. 10:5), and the procession of the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem (2 Sam. 6:5). Some English versions (e.g., KJV, ESV, NRSV) use the terms “tabret” and “tambourine.” *See also* Music, Instruments, Dancing.

TIME, MEANING OF Time refers to both the real and the perceived passage of events in sequence. It is important to note that “perceived” and “real” need not be the same. For example, Jacob worked for seven years in order to marry Rebekah, “but they seemed like only a few days to him because of his love for her” (Gen. 29:20 [cf. 2 Pet. 3:8]). Jacob’s perception of time clearly was distinct from the real period of time that passed.

The Biblical Concept of Time

Time, as the sequential ordering of events that occur in space, pervades both human life and the biblical record of God’s dealings with the universe. The Bible recounts God’s plan for his creation, a plan with a beginning and an end, between which elements of the plan unfold in chronological sequence throughout history. The biblical concept of time is distinct from the cyclical concept found in some other religions, both in the ancient Near East and elsewhere. History thus moves toward a divinely predetermined goal through divinely appointed events that occur in sequence at appointed times according to God’s plan. Since God’s purposes for creation are expressed through time, the major points in his plan are apparent in a broad chronological sweep, beginning with creation, ending with judgment and the new creation, and centered upon the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus (cf. Mark 1:15).

That God acts within history to bring about his purposes is highlighted by the use of temporal language to make reference to events that have taken place in the past (Exod. 12:1–3) and are yet to take place (in particular through the use of expressions such as “the last day[s]” in, e.g., Isa. 2:2; Jer. 23:20; John 6:39–54). The emphasis therefore is not on some spiritual or otherworldly domain in which specifically religious experiences and events take place, a domain distinct from the physical world in which we live. Rather, the emphasis is on the way in which God directs and shapes history in order to bring about his purposes.

Furthermore, the Bible acknowledges that all events in history fall within the purview of God’s sovereignty through the acknowledgment that there is an appropriate time appointed for them (Eccles. 3:1–11; Ps. 31:15). God’s sovereignty over time extends to the future, and thus the prophets announce the future actions of God at certain times (Isa. 60:22; Ezek. 22:3; 30:3; Dan. 8:17). More specifically, definite times for the end and final judgment are established (Matt. 8:29), although the timing of the end is known only to the Father (Matt. 24:36; Mark 13:33).

Modern science treats time and space as related and essential components of the physical universe and thus of God’s creation. Since, therefore, time is created, it is not thereby immediately clear precisely what God’s relationship to time is, nor is this an issue directly addressed in the Bible. Although it is common to insist that since time is part of creation, God exists outside of time, it is not possible to deduce from this observation alone that God exists without some analogous notion of time within a divine frame of reference. Nor is the question readily resolved by appeal to biblical texts, for although a number of passages reflect upon God’s knowledge of the end from the beginning and speak of God predestining and foreknowing (terms that implicitly have temporal connotations), these can be read as either reflecting God’s interaction with the temporal aspect of the created universe or as divine accommodation to human language in order to communicate correctly with temporal human beings throughout history. Consequently, no definitive answer to these philosophical questions is available, and so proposals relating to the issue cannot be judged to provide certainty in these matters. All that can be said with certainty is that the Bible presents certain propositions that affirm time’s subservience to God.

MEASURING TIME

The Bible makes reference to a variety of different measurements of periods of time. These include Jubilees (Lev. 25:10), generations (Deut. 2:14), Sabbath years (Lev. 25:4), years, months, days, and hours. There are no shorter periods of time described by any defined measures in the Bible, reflecting a culture in which timekeeping was not dominated by devices that afforded such determinations (although terms for nonspecific short periods of time do exist, such as *rega’*, a “moment” [Exod. 33:5; Isa. 26:20]).

A number of passages appear to suggest that a day was considered to begin in the morning and end the following morning (e.g., Deut. 28:66–67; 1 Sam. 30:12; Isa. 28:19; Jer. 33:20). However, there are also texts that seem to suggest a different division of days, specifically the creation account of Gen. 1 (but see also Gen. 19:34; Lev. 7:15; Judg. 19:4–9; 1 Sam. 19:11). Nehemiah 13:19 has the day begin at sunset. By NT times, a full day generally was reckoned as beginning at sunset.

Days were also divided into parts. The Mesopotamian system for dividing the night into three watches appears paralleled in Exod. 14:24; Judg. 7:19; 1 Sam. 11:11, although by NT times the night was divided into four watches, paralleling the Roman and Egyptian practice (Matt. 14:25; Mark 13:35). More precise, shorter divisions of time tended to be later innovations; for example, the OT does not typically use an hour as a measure of time. Nonetheless, there were in the ancient world means by which shorter periods could be measured, such as sundials and water clocks, examples of which can be found dating to the second millennium BC in Mesopotamia and Egypt. The only possible reference to such a device in the Bible appears in Isa. 38:8, where the “stairway of Ahaz” is thought by some to have been used to measure time in some way.

When the LXX uses the Greek word *hōra*, it refers not to a period of sixty minutes, but usually to a point in time (e.g., Exod. 9:18). In other early Greek literature the term can refer to a variety of periods of time, including a season and a year. By the NT period, however, the division of the day into twenty-four hours had become normative (cf. John 11:9), and the NT makes numerous reference to times based on the hour of the day.

The week was a well-established measure of time, reflected in the creation story as well as in the celebration of the Sabbath. Months were based on a lunar calendar (the Hebrew words for “month,” *yerakh* and *khodesh*, are also used to refer to the moon) (*see* Calendar). Beyond years, the Bible also uses generations as a measure of the passage of time. Finally, other measures less readily associated with specific periods of time are used in the Bible, in particular in some apocalyptic prophetic texts such as Daniel.

ETERNITY

"Eternity" is another time-related concept that occupies an important place in the Bible. The modern scientific realization that time is part of creation has strengthened the notion, long affirmed by various philosophies, that "eternity" represents that which is outside time and apart from it and so is particularly associated with God's existence. In contrast to this, however, when the Bible makes reference to "eternity," it invariably has a temporal aspect, referring either to the distant past, the distant future, or else the entire expanse of time from distant past to distant future (e.g., Exod. 15:18; Ps. 9:5; Mic. 4:5). What is clear, however, is that God's relationship to the temporal aspect of the universe does reflect that of one who is outside the constraints of that time (e.g., Ps. 90:2; 2 Pet. 3:8).

TIMEUS *See* Timaeus.

TIMNA **(1)** A concubine of Eliphaz (Esau's son by Adah) and the mother of Amalek (Gen. 36:12; 1 Chron. 1:36 may also refer to this woman). **(2)** A sister of Lotan and daughter of Seir the Horite (Gen. 36:22; 1 Chron. 1:39). She may be identical with the Timna of Gen. 36:12. Seir fathered the inhabitants of Edom who preceded Esau (Gen. 36:20). **(3)** An Edomite chief (Gen. 36:40; 1 Chron. 1:51), perhaps descended from Eliphaz (cf. 1 Chron. 1:36). Alternatively, the references in Gen. 36:40–43 (// 1 Chron. 1:51–54) may pertain to geographical areas occupied by Esau's clan.

TIMNAH **(1)** A town assigned to Judah located on the northern boundary of Judah between Beth Shemesh and north of Ekron. It is the same Timnah originally assigned to Dan (Josh. 15:10; 19:43). In the time of judges it belonged to the Philistines, and here Samson took his first wife (Judg. 14). In the time of King Ahaz it belonged to Judah but was taken by the Philistines (2 Chron. 28:18). It is identified as modern Tell el-Batashi, three miles south of Gezer, or Khirbet Tibneh (two miles southeast). **(2)** A village in the southern hill country of Judah located southeast of Hebron and stated to be near Gibeah (Josh. 15:57). This is where the patriarch Judah met his disguised daughter-in-law, Tamar, on the way to Timnah (Gen. 38:12–14).

TIMNATH *See* Timnah.

TIMNATH HERES, TIMNATH SERAH Two names for the town given to Joshua as an inheritance after the Israelites had divided the land into tribal allotments. Joshua had specifically requested Timnath Serah, and he built up the town and settled there (Josh. 19:49–50). After Joshua had passed away, he was buried at Timnath Serah. The town is said to be located "in the hill country of Ephraim, north of Mount Gaash" (Josh. 24:30; Judg. 2:9). The spelling in Judges, "Timnath Heres," means "territory of the sun" and is likely the original form.

TIMNITE An inhabitant of or person from the town of Timnah. Samson's father-in-law was a Timnite (Judg. 15:6). The town was located in the tribe of Judah and was on the Israelite and Philistine border.

TIMON One of the seven men chosen to help with food distribution in the Jerusalem church (Acts 6:1–6). Tradition suggests that he was among the seventy disciples whom Jesus sent out (cf. Luke 10:1), a bishop of Bostra in Arabia, and a martyr at Basrah.

TIMOTHY One of Paul's faithful companions who proved himself as a valuable coworker (e.g., 1 Cor. 4:17; 16:10; Phil. 2:19–24). Many think that Timothy responded to Paul's preaching during the first missionary journey, explaining the frequent references to Timothy as Paul's "son" (1 Cor. 4:17; Phil. 2:22; 1 Tim. 1:2; 2 Tim. 1:2). Paul circumcised Timothy because he had a Greek father and Jewish mother. He ministered with Paul from the second missionary journey (Acts 16) to late in Paul's life (2 Timothy), probably about twenty years. Timothy is not mentioned in much of Acts 16, an expression of Luke's deference to the most prominent members of the missionary team, Paul and Silas. In Acts 19:22 Luke refers to Timothy as Paul's "helper," one who serves. This designation and Luke's silence in Acts 16, however, should not be taken to mean that Timothy, who clearly has a subordinate role to Paul, had menial roles and functions.

Titles and ministry assignments demonstrate Timothy's important role in Pauline mission. Paul calls Timothy a "brother" (2 Cor. 1:1; Col. 1:1; 1 Thess. 3:2; Philem. 1), "my co-worker" (Rom. 16:21), a "co-worker in God's service" (1 Thess. 3:2 [textual variant: "servant of God"]), and "servant of Christ Jesus" with Paul (Phil. 1:1) and refers to him metaphorically as a "soldier" and "hardworking farmer" (2 Tim. 2:3, 6). Paul probably includes Timothy among the "apostles of Christ" in 1 Thess. 2:6, a reference to his role as a qualified ambassador of the gospel, not as an apostle in the technical sense. Paul sent Timothy out on ministry assignments to difficult places (e.g., Thessalonica and Corinth [see 1–2 Timothy]).

Apparently, Timothy worked alongside Paul a great deal of the time and was well respected in many locations, because Paul identifies Timothy as cosender of six letters: 2 Corinthians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians, and Philemon. He was also with Paul during the writing of Romans and 1 Corinthians. Mentioned as released from prison in Heb. 13:23, he was an acquaintance of the author of Hebrews.

TIMOTHY, FIRST LETTER TO First Timothy, along with 2 Timothy and Titus, is known as one of the apostle Paul's Pastoral Epistles. These letters have earned this designation because they were addressed to pastors and deal with particular problems that they were facing in their respective churches. This letter was addressed to Timothy, whom Paul affectionately called "my son," most likely because the apostle had led him to faith in Christ (1:18; cf. 1:2). At Paul's urging, Timothy took on the role of providing leadership to the church in Ephesus (1:3), which had been infiltrated by false teachers (1:3–4). Paul wrote this letter to Timothy, instructing him to rebuke the false teachers in the church and to fight the good fight of faith (1:18). The apostle concisely summarized the major theme of this letter by saying, "I am writing you these instructions so that . . . you will know how people ought to conduct themselves in God's household, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth" (3:14–15).

AUTHORSHIP AND DATE

The authenticity of the Pastoral Epistles has been questioned more than that of any of Paul's other letters. This is due to differences in style and theology as well as the difficulty in establishing their place in the travels of Paul in Acts. The letters, it is presumed, were written by a disciple of Paul after his death and were meant to be a "testament" honoring the memory of Paul.

Despite these claims, there is not enough evidence to overturn Pauline authorship. Differences in theology can be accounted for by the different circumstances addressed. Stylistic differences may have arisen from Paul's use of an amanuensis (scribe) to write the letter, a common practice in the ancient world (see Rom. 16:22). In terms of their time of writing, the Pastorals were likely written after Paul's first Roman imprisonment and so after the narrative of Acts. Paul expected to be released (Phil. 1:25; 2:24), and it is likely that his Jewish accusers never made the long and arduous trip from Jerusalem to Rome.

Evidence in support of Pauline authorship can also be found: (1) The many personal comments to Timothy (cf. 2 Tim. 4:13) show that the letters are either authentic, or blatant forgeries, not "testaments" honoring the memory of Paul. (2) All of Paul's key theological themes appear in the Pastorals. (3) Paul makes negative statements about himself that a disciple writing to honor Paul is unlikely to have made, for example, referring to himself as the "worst" of sinners (1 Tim. 1:15).

First Timothy was likely written between AD 63 and 66, after Paul's release from his first imprisonment in Rome (AD 62–63; cf. 3:14; Acts 28:30–31).

Remains of the temple of Domitian at Ephesus. False teaching was a problem that Timothy needed to address as a leader of the church in Ephesus.

RECIPIENT

Timothy came from the city of Lystra in Asia Minor (modern-day Turkey). His father was Greek and his mother Jewish (Acts 16:1). Eunice, his mother, and Lois, his grandmother, brought him up under the influence of the Jewish religion (2 Tim. 1:5; 3:14–15). Timothy gained a good reputation among the local believers, so Paul added him to his missionary team (Acts 16:2–3). He accompanied Paul during his second and third missionary journeys (Acts 16:3; 17:14; 18:5; 19:22; 20:4). Paul listed Timothy as the coauthor or cosender in several of his letters (2 Cor. 1:1; Phil. 1:1; Col. 1:1; 1 Thess. 1:1; 2 Thess. 1:1; Philem. 1) and included him in the greetings that he sent to the church in Rome (Rom. 16:21). In addition, the apostle sent his protégé as a messenger to Thessalonica (1 Thess. 3:1–6), Corinth (1 Cor. 4:17; 16:10), and Philippi (Phil. 2:19, 23). Because Timothy was by nature shy and timid, Paul had to exhort him to use his gifts and to boldly carry out his ministry (1 Cor. 16:10; 1 Tim. 4:12; 5:23; 2 Tim. 1:6–7).

BACKGROUND AND OCCASION

During his third missionary journey, Paul warned the Ephesian church that false teachers would arise from their midst (Acts 20:30). After his first imprisonment in Rome (cf. Acts 28:16, 20, 30), the apostle accompanied Timothy to Ephesus (1 Tim. 1:3). They discovered that certain teachers were spreading “false doctrines” in the church. According to 1 Timothy, these false teachings included a morbid interest in myths, old wives’ tales, and genealogies. Some were promoting controversies, meaningless talk, incorrect teaching of the law, abstinence from marriage and certain foods, and ungodly gossip (1:3–7; 4:3, 7; 5:13; 6:4–5). These false teachers also attempted to secure financial gain by promoting their doctrines (6:3–5). Paul hoped to visit Ephesus again (3:14), but in the meantime he wrote this letter instructing Timothy and the church leadership to correct these problems (1:3–4; 3:15).

Paul’s instructions to Timothy were not only to defend the church from false teachers but also to give guidelines on the proper behavior for men and women in the church (2:1–15). He gave Timothy standards for selecting godly leaders (3:1–16) and practical advice on dealing with various age groups in the church (5:1–20). Throughout the book Paul exhorts his young protégé and the church to lead a holy life (1:18; 2:8–15; 4:12–16; 6:6–8, 11–14, 20).

OUTLINE

I. Introduction (1:1–2)

II. Warning about False Teachers and Exhortation to Keep the Faith (1:3–20)
    A. False teaching and false teachers of the law (1:3–11)
    B. Paul, an example of God’s grace (1:12–17)
    C. Exhortation to keep the faith in the midst of apostasy (1:18–20)

III. Prayer and Proper Behavior in the Church (2:1–15)
    A. Prayer in the church (2:1–7)
    B. Men and women in the worship service (2:8–15)

IV. Qualifications for Church Leaders (3:1–16)
    A. Qualifications for elders (3:1–7)
    B. Qualifications for deacons (3:8–13)
    C. The purpose behind Paul’s instructions (3:14–16)

- V. Correction of False Teaching (4:1–16)
    - A. Apostasy and false teaching (4:1–5)
    - B. Exhortation to confront apostasy (4:6–16)
- VI. Responsibility toward Various Groups in the Church (5:1–6:19)
    - A. Relating to men and women in the church (5:1–2)
    - B. Responsibility toward widows (5:3–16)
    - C. Responsibilities toward elders (5:17–25)
    - D. Responsibility of slaves toward their masters (6:1–2)
    - E. Contrasting corrupt teachers with true godliness (6:3–10)
    - F. Pursuing the life of faith (6:11–16)
    - G. Instructing the wealthy (6:17–19)
- VII. Closing Admonition and Benediction (6:20–21)

TIMOTHY, SECOND LETTER TO Paul's second letter to Timothy is one of his three Pastoral Epistles (together with 1 Timothy and Titus). In this letter the apostle reminds Timothy of his call to ministry, encourages him to endure suffering for the sake of the gospel, exhorts him to pursue personal godliness, warns him of false teachers and evil persons, and urges him to give himself completely to the ministry of the word. In short, Paul exhorts his protégé to fulfill his ministry. The overall message of the book can be summed up in Paul's call for Timothy to be a "good soldier of Christ Jesus" (2:3) who fights the "good fight" of faith (4:7). In the benediction, Paul's use of the plural "Grace be with *you* all" indicates that the apostle's words are directed not only to Timothy but also to the whole church (4:22).

RECIPIENT

See Timothy, First Letter to.

AUTHORSHIP AND DATE

The book of Acts closes with Paul experiencing house arrest in Rome around AD 62/63. By the time he wrote his first letter to Timothy, he had already been freed from that imprisonment (cf. Acts 28:30–31; 1 Tim. 3:14). However, when he wrote 2 Timothy, he was again in prison, but this time he was bound in chains, facing prosecution, and aware of his impending execution (2 Tim. 1:8, 16; 2:9; 4:6, 16). The second letter to Timothy was written during this period of his second imprisonment in Rome, just prior to his execution in about AD 67. Paul identifies himself as an apostle and the author of 2 Timothy in the first verse of the letter. (On the disputed authorship of the Pastoral Epistles, *see* Timothy, First Letter to.)

BACKGROUND AND OCCASION

At the time of writing, Paul was languishing in prison. In this second letter to Timothy, he notifies the church that the preliminary phase of his trial has already taken place, and that many colleagues who have been unwilling to stand by his side have deserted him. Others apparently left him for ministry purposes. Luke alone remained with Paul, who was facing what he thought to be his imminent execution (4:6–8, 10–16).

Paul wrote this letter for the following reasons:

1. He was lonely and wanted to see Timothy (1:4; 4:9, 21).

2. During the reign of the emperor Nero, persecutions had broken out. Paul wanted to encourage Timothy and the church to remain true to Christ and be prepared to suffer for the sake of the gospel (1:8; 2:3, 11–12).

3. Paul wanted to warn Timothy and the church about false teachers and evil persons (1:14; 2:14, 16–18, 23; 3:1–9, 13; 4:3–4).

4. Paul wanted to encourage Timothy to fulfill his ministry (1:6–8, 13–14; 2:1–3, 14–15, 22–24; 3:14; 4:5).

5. Paul wanted to instruct the church through this letter to Timothy. He employs the plural form of “you” in 4:22b, indicating that his words were addressed not only to Timothy but also to the whole church.

6. Paul wanted to communicate to Timothy and the church his impending execution (4:6–8).

OUTLINE

I. Introduction (1:1–2)

II. The Exhortation to Persevere in Ministry in Spite of Persecution (1:3–2:13)
    A. Thanksgiving for Timothy and encouragement to boldly employ his gift (1:3–7)
    B. Encouragement for Timothy to suffer for the gospel without shame (1:8–12)
    C. Paul’s exhortation for Timothy to be faithful in his ministry (1:13–14)
    D. Examples of faithfulness and desertion (1:15–18)
    E. An exhortation to perseverance and promise of reward (2:1–13)

III. The Behavior Expected from a Servant of God (2:14–26)
    A. A call to accurately teach the word and to avoid worldly teachings (2:14–19)
    B. Exhortation to personal purity in life and ministry (2:20–22)
    C. Instruction to be gentle when correcting those in error (2:23–26)

IV. Warning about the Coming Apostasy (3:1–4:5)
    A. Characteristics of people in the last days (3:1–9)
    B. A reminder of Paul’s example and the value of the Scriptures (3:10–16)
    C. Paul’s charge to be faithful in preaching in view of the coming apostasy (4:1–5)

V. Paul’s Personal Situation (4:6–18)
    A. Paul’s impending execution, his faithfulness and reward (4:6–8)
    B. The faithfulness of Paul’s friends and the unfaithfulness of his enemies (4:9–16)
    C. The faithfulness of the Lord (4:17–18)

VI. Closing Greetings (4:19–22)

TINKLING ORNAMENTS Anklets of silver or gold, listed among luxuries in the KJV of Isa. 3:18

(NIV: "bangles"). These chains worn above the ankles, probably ornamented with bells, tinkled as the women walked. God's removal of these, along with other ostentatious adornments (Isa. 3:18–23), represents his promise to humiliate those in Judah who have oppressed the poor.

TIPHSAH **(1)** A city on the west bank of the Euphrates River, about seventy miles south of Carchemish. This important river crossing was the northeastern limit of Solomon's kingdom (1 Kings 4:24). **(2)** The site of a savage slaughter by Israelite King Menahem (2 Kings 15:16). The earliest Greek translation suggests a corruption and reads "Tappuah" (REB, RSV, TEV); however, the LXX reads "Tirzah."

TIRAS The last of the seven sons of Japheth and the clan name of his descendants (Gen. 10:2; 1 Chron. 1:5). These descendants are thought to be part of the Sea Peoples (known as the Turscha in Egyptian inscriptions) who sailed and attacked throughout the Aegean and the eastern Mediterranean.

TIRATHITES One of the clans of scribes at Jabez, along with the Shimeathites and the Sucathites. They were Kenites descended from Hammath (1 Chron. 2:55).

TIRE In Ezek. 24:17, 23 the KJV translates the Hebrew word *pe'er* as "tire," referring to a turban (NIV, NRSV).

TIRHAKAH The Egyptian pharaoh (r. 690–664 BC) who aided King Hezekiah's campaign in Judah against the Assyrian king Sennacherib (2 Kings 19:9; Isa. 37:9). His title "king of Cush" reveals his Nubian (Sudanese) roots.

TIRHANAH One of the sons of Caleb and his concubine Maakah (1 Chron. 2:48).

TIRIA The third of the four sons of Jehallelel, a descendant of Judah (1 Chron. 4:16).

TIRSHATHA The official title used for the Persian governor in Judah. The KJV transliterates the Hebrew, but most modern translations, like the NIV, give the reading "governor" (Ezra 2:63; Neh. 7:65, 70; 8:9; 10:1).

TIRZAH **(1)** Joshua conquered the city of Tirzah (Josh. 12:24), which then was inherited by the half-tribe of Manasseh in its Cisjordan territory. The city became important as the capital of the northern tribes after Israel divided between north and south. Jeroboam's son died in Tirzah, and Baasha, Ehud, and Zimri ruled Israel from there (1 Kings 14:17; 15:33; 16:6, 15). When Omri became king, he built the city of Samaria, and six years into his reign he moved the capital to there (1 Kings 16:23).

The Bible treats Tirzah again as politically important only in the last failing years of the northern kingdom, in connection with Menahem (2 Kings 15:14–16). The city enjoyed a reputation for particular beauty, and it is used in Song of Songs as a positive comparison with the young woman: "You are as beautiful as Tirzah, my darling, as lovely as Jerusalem, as majestic as troops with banners" (Song 6:4).

(2) One of the five daughters of Zelophehad (Num. 26:33; Josh. 17:3), who died with no sons. His daughters successfully lobbied the leaders of Israel for a share of the family inheritance (Num. 27:1–11).

TISHBITE The only Tishbite listed in the Bible is the prophet Elijah (1 Kings 17:1; 21:17, 28; 2 Kings 1:3, 8; 9:36). Tishbe was located in Gilead, which is in Transjordanian Manasseh. Perhaps there is a connection between Tishbe and the storm god Teshub, with Elijah being the anti-Teshub.

TITHE An offering of a tenth of the whole. Abram gives Melchizedek a tenth (Gen. 14:20; Heb. 7:2–9), and Jacob promises God a tenth (Gen. 28:22). These occasions reflect a practice already established in patriarchal times.

Under Moses, Israel is to give God a tithe of all its crops, flocks, and herds (Lev. 27:30–32). These tithes are received by the Levites for their sustenance; they in turn tithe from all that they have received (Num. 18:25–32). Deuteronomy specifies a yearly tithe eaten by the worshipers and every three years a storehouse tithe to provide for the Levites and for aliens, the fatherless, and widows (Deut. 14:22–29). Hezekiah (2 Chron. 31:5–8) and, later, Nehemiah (Neh. 10:37–38; 12:44–47; 13:10–13) reestablish this system. Malachi warns against slackness in tithing (Mal. 3:8–10).

Amos uses irony to underline that tithing cannot replace righteousness (Amos 4:4). Similarly, Jesus condemns scribes and Pharisees for neglecting justice, mercy, and faithfulness while tithing meticulously; instead, they should practice all of these (Matt. 23:23; cf. Luke 11:42; 18:11–12).

TITIUS JUSTUS *See* Justus.

TITTLE *See* Dot.

TITUS Paul’s long-term coworker from the ministry in Antioch (Gal. 2:1, 3; cf. Acts 13:1–5) to near the time of Paul’s death. He became a living object lesson, confirming that the gospel did not require the circumcision of Gentile Christian men (Gal. 2). Though a subordinate of Paul, Titus was Paul’s valued partner and fellow worker in the gospel (2 Cor. 8:23) who shared the same ministry pattern and values (12:18). Paul must have considered Titus a trusted colleague, since Titus became responsible for the collection intended for the poor in Jerusalem (2 Cor. 8:6) and was the courier of a letter to the problem-filled church in Corinth, 2 Corinthians (8:16–17). Later, Paul left Titus in Crete to complete important work there (Titus). Titus went on to minister in Dalmatia (2 Tim. 4:10) at some subsequent time.

TITUS, CAESAR The Roman general who conquered Jerusalem in AD 70 and later reigned as emperor of the Roman Empire (r. AD 79–81). His father, Vespasian, preceded him as emperor (r. AD 69–79), while his brother Domitian succeeded him in the role (r. AD 81–96). These three rulers are commonly referred to as the Flavian dynasty, a designation deriving from their family name, “Flavius.” Titus distinguished himself relatively early in life through his military service in Germany and Britain. Roman historians tell the story of him saving the life of his father during this period. His first wife died soon after the marriage, and Titus quickly remarried, though this second marriage was also brief, ending in divorce.

Both Titus and his father were military commanders during the Roman campaign to put down the revolts in Judea, beginning in approximately AD 66. Vespasian was the supreme commander in the conflict, but when he departed for Rome in AD 69 to become emperor, Titus filled his father’s role as military leader in the region. In the spring of AD 70, Titus began an attack on Jerusalem, and within a few months his forces had taken complete control of the city, destroying the temple in the process. Aspects of this incident are reflected in the speech of Jesus known as the Olivet Discourse (Matt. 24;

Mark 13; Luke 21). As emperor, Titus generally was well respected by his contemporaries for his accomplishments, and Roman historians looked upon his brief reign with favor.

TITUS, LETTER TO The Epistle to Titus, along with 1–2 Timothy, is among the Pastoral Epistles. These three letters from the apostle Paul are his instructions to the young pastors Timothy and Titus.

Somewhat surprisingly, Titus is not mentioned in Acts, but he often appears in the letters of Paul. He is Paul's "partner and co-worker" (2 Cor. 8:23). He may have carried the "sorrowful letter" from Paul to the Corinthians (2:4) and probably was instrumental in the reconciliation between Paul and that church (7:6–7). Paul also entrusted him with collecting funds from the Corinthians for the Jerusalem church. Paul took the uncircumcised Titus with him to Jerusalem, where he became a demonstration of freedom in Christ (Gal. 2:3). Paul calls him "my true son in our common faith" (Titus 1:4), probably indicating that Titus was converted to Christianity by Paul himself. On the question of Paul's authorship of the Pastoral Epistles (1–2 Timothy and Titus), *see* Timothy, First Letter to.

The remains of the sixth-century AD Basilica of St. Titus in Gortyna, a prominent city in Crete during the time of Titus

OCCASION

Following his imprisonment recorded in Acts 28, Paul traveled with Titus, evangelizing Crete. As we see from Paul's letter to Titus, although churches had been established, the work of appointing leaders was unfinished (1:5). Paul's letter conveys his authority to Titus in both choosing elders and rebuking the rebellious (2:15). There was much rebellion to deal with (1:10), which Paul contrasts sharply with righteous living. That Paul entrusted the work of confronting the "circumcision group" to Titus is significant, given Titus's role as a model of Christian freedom earlier.

CONTENT

Paul's greeting and self-identification are more expansive here than in any of his letters except Romans. He emphasizes that his apostleship and ministry lead to godly living, based on the knowledge of truth (1:1–2). Paul has been entrusted to preach by God; he now reinvests that trust in Titus and reminds Titus that his primary job is to establish leadership in the churches of Crete.

Paul lays out guidelines for elders, which focus on ethical living, evidence of leadership qualities, and a vigorous faith that may encourage others (1:6–9). These characteristics are important because the leaders will be required to stand up to many in the church who are rebellious, ruinous, and in need of rebuke (1:10).

The rebellious people on Crete probably are Judaizers, teaching against Paul's instruction and enriching themselves in the process. They are to be rebuked, so as to bring them back into correct doctrine (1:13–14). However, after two rebukes, continuing offenders should be ignored; they are apostate (3:10–11).

The remedy for the false teaching is sound doctrine and holy living, so that the opposition has no valid criticism. Titus must set an example for all with his integrity, seriousness, and soundness of speech (2:7–8). This is made possible by the grace of God, which enables people to live "self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age" (2:12). We have been redeemed from wickedness and purified to be a people of God's very own (2:14).

Titus must take complete charge of the church, allowing no one to marginalize him or limit his authority (2:15). In fact, the church needs to submit to all levels of authority in peace and humility (3:1–2). Paul reminds Titus that all were once as rebellious and divisive as the opposition; it is only the kindness and love of God that save and cleanse, changing the rebellious into heirs of eternal life (3:3–7).

Putting emphasis on these thoughts will keep the church focused on godly living, while arguing about minor points will be divisive and worthless. People who do the latter should be marginalized and rejected (3:8–11). This is a closing inclusio from Paul's mention of the knowledge of truth leading to godly living (1:1).

Paul concludes with practical communications to Titus. Zenas and Apollos are likely the ones who brought the letter, and Paul encourages Titus and his church to assist them as a lesson to the church and a blessing for the travelers.

OUTLINE

I. Greeting and Purpose (1:1–5)

II. Appropriate Characteristics of Elders (1:6–9)

III. False Teachers (1:10–16)

IV. Proper Christian Living (2:1–3:2)

V. We Are Saved by Grace (3:3–8)

VI. Warnings about Divisions (3:9–11)

VII. Concluding Thoughts (3:12–15)

TIZITE A title designating a place of origin or habitation describing Joha, one of David's mighty warriors (1 Chron. 11:45). The location of this place of origin in the Transjordan is unknown.

TOAH A Levite in the Kohathite clan, from which David designated temple musicians. He was the son of Zuph and an ancestor of Samuel (1 Chron. 6:34). The parallel list reads "Nahath" (1 Chron. 6:26), and 1 Sam. 1:1 gives the name as "Tohu."

TOB A land located in southern Hauran to which Jepthah fled from his half brothers and where the elders of Gilead found him (Judg. 11:3, 5). Tob supplied twelve thousand warriors to the Ammonite king Hanun in an unsuccessful campaign against David (2 Sam. 10:6–8). Some scholars identify the location as modern et-Taiyibeh, about twelve miles east of Ramoth Gilead, between Bozrah and Edrei, near the source of the Yarmuk River.

TOB-ADONIJAH One of the Levites who instructed the people of Judah about the law under King Jehoshaphat (2 Chron. 17:8). The name is likely a scribal incidence of dittography, combining the previous two names in the list, "Adonijah" and "Tobijah."

TOBIAH **(1)** An ancestor of a family that could not prove its Israelite lineage after the exile (Ezra 2:60; Neh. 7:62). **(2)** An Ammonite, perhaps governor, who resisted Nehemiah's efforts to rebuild Jerusalem's walls (Neh. 2:10, 19; 6). He and his associates Sanballat and Geshem appealed to the Persian king but ultimately were unsuccessful. Even later, Nehemiah deposed a priest, Eliashib, who was renting rooms at the temple to Tobiah (13:4, 7). Many believe that the Tobiah family mentioned in the Lachish ostraca and even later extrabiblical sources are people connected with his family.

TOBIJAH **(1)** One of the Levites sent out by Jehoshaphat to instruct the people about the law (2 Chron. 17:8). **(2)** One of three exiles who had returned from Babylon and from whom Zechariah received gold and silver to form a crown for the high priest Joshua, to be placed in the temple as a memorial (Zech. 6:9–14).

TOCHEN *See* Token.

TOGARMAH **(1)** The third of Gomer's three sons and a grandson of Japheth (Gen. 10:3; 1 Chron. 1:6). **(2)** Beth Togarmah was a region inhabited by the descendants of Togarmah; it was known for its war horses (Ezek. 27:14; 38:6). *See also* Beth Togarmah.

TOHU The son of Zuph and the father of Elihu, he was an ancestor of Samuel (1 Sam. 1:1).

TOI *See* Tou.

TOKEN **(1)** A village in the territory of the descendants of Simeon (1 Chron. 4:32 [KJV: "Tochen"]). The location is unknown. **(2)** In the KJV, "token" is used to indicate what is, in most modern translations, a "sign" (e.g., Gen. 9:12–17; Ps. 86:17; Mark 14:44).

TOKHATH The father-in-law of the prophetess Huldah (2 Chron. 34:22). In 2 Kings 22:14 the name is “Tikvah.”

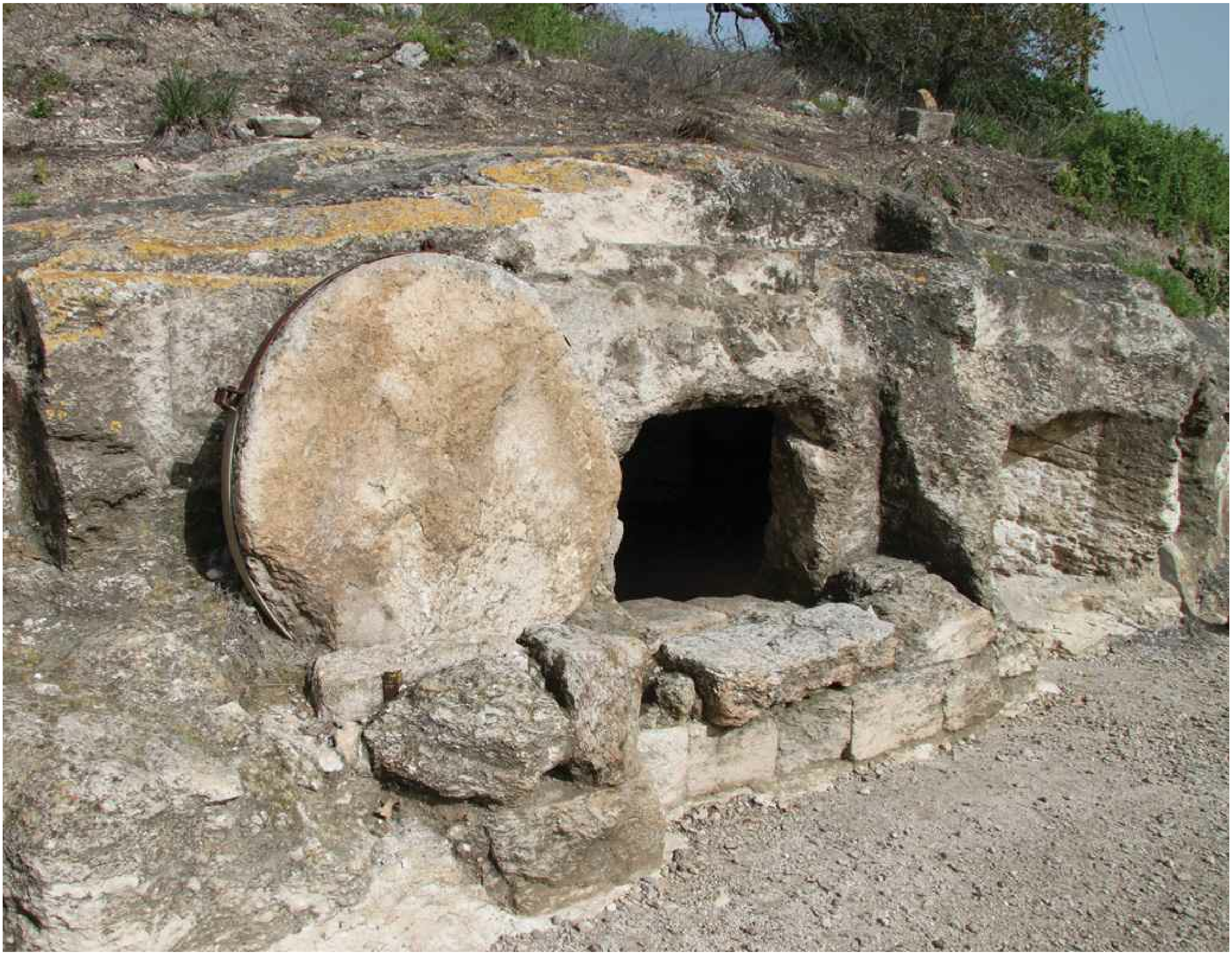
TOLA **(1)** One of the four sons of Issachar, he was the ancestor of the Tolaite clan and of 22,600 warriors during the reign of David (Gen. 46:13; Num. 26:23; 1 Chron. 7:1–2). **(2)** A minor judge from the tribe of Issachar. He was the son of Puah and lived in Shamir, in the hill country of Ephraim. He ruled for twenty-three years (Judg. 10:1–2).

TOLAD A town in the territory of Simeon (1 Chron. 4:29). In Josh. 15:30; 19:4 the town is called “Eltolad” (Josh. 15:30; 19:4).

TOLAITE The clan of Issachar descended from Tola (Num. 26:23–25).

TOLL *See* Tax Collector; Taxes; Tribute.

TOMB OF JESUS Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John explain that Joseph of Arimathea, “a prominent member of the Council” (Mark 15:43), the Sanhedrin, directed the process of taking Jesus’ body from the place of crucifixion to his own tomb, a “tomb cut in the rock, one in which no one had yet been laid” (Luke 23:53). Since Joseph was a “rich man” (Matt. 27:57), he could afford a stone tomb of this type. All the Gospel writers indicate that the tomb had a stone at its entrance, a common feature of such tombs; both Matthew (27:60) and Mark (16:4) underscore the size of the stone.



A rolling-stone tomb similar to the one Jesus would have been laid in

Matthew provides unique details about Jesus' tomb in an effort to defend the authenticity of Jesus' resurrection. Only Matthew records that Pilate, in deference to the Pharisees, assigned a guard of soldiers to secure the tomb. He also notes that the soldiers put a seal on the tomb (27:62–66), not a sealant but rather an official Roman insignia, to indicate that no one should disturb the tomb. Also, Matthew alone explains the alibi that the Jews devised when these attempts to secure the tomb proved unsuccessful (28:11–15).

On the morning of Jesus' resurrection, some women, including Mary Magdalene, were the first to enter the tomb and note that Jesus' body was no longer there (Mark 16:1–6; John 20:1–2). John records that Peter and another "disciple, the one Jesus loved" (likely John himself) also entered the tomb (20:2–8), the latter doing so only after "he bent over and looked in at the strips of linen lying there" (20:5). The low entrance that this statement implies is a known feature of rock-hewn tombs from this time period.

Two main sites in Jerusalem have been proposed as the location of Jesus' tomb. The site on which the Church of the Holy Sepulchre sits is favored by archaeologists because of its early traditional attestation. The Garden Tomb presents more visible features that could correlate with the biblical accounts but lacks traditional attestation.

TONGS Pure gold instruments among the articles of tabernacle and temple equipment (1 Kings 7:49; 2 Chron. 4:21). They are associated with the lampstand. In Isa. 6:6, a seraph uses tongs to take a burning coal from the altar.

TONGUE The word "tongue" has several senses in both Testaments. In the OT, *lashon* refers to the physical organ (Judg. 7:5; Job 20:12; 41:1), the physical tongue that creates speech (2 Sam. 23:2; Job 6:30), and the physical organ in reference to individuals as they profess before God (Isa. 45:23; cf. Rom. 14:11; Phil. 2:11).

The word "tongue" frequently refers to language (Gen. 10:5; Neh. 13:24; Isa. 28:11; cf. 1 Cor. 14:21). Related to this, the word refers to speech as deceitful (Ps. 52:2), as speaking strife (31:20 KJV, RSV), or as that which praises God (35:28). The tongue sings (Ps. 51:14) and extols (66:17).

The tongue is able to produce very powerful speech that can bring life and death (Prov. 18:21). To guard one's speech is to be trouble-free (21:23). Soft and forbearing speech is persuasive and wins the day rather than aggravates (25:15). Flattering speech seems favorable but will be disregarded in the end (28:23).

The speech of God is a consuming fire (Isa. 30:27). The mute will have speech when all things are set right in the eschaton (35:6).

In the OT, the word "tongue" is used in parallel with several other words. The physical organ is parallel to lips (Ps. 12:4), mouth (Job 33:2; Pss. 10:7; 50:19), or throat (Ps. 5:9, where the tongue is the source of flattery).

A similar Hebrew word, *sapah*, has several senses, among them "lip" (and so also often of the edge or shore of a body of water), and can refer to the language produced by lips. It is sometimes placed in parallel with *lashon* (Ps. 12:4).

In the NT, the word *glōssa* refers to the physical organ (Mark 7:33–35) and language (Acts 2:11; 1 Cor. 14:21 [*heteroglōssos*]) and can refer to the miraculous gift of languages (Mark 16:17; Acts 2:4; 10:46; 19:6; 1 Cor. 12–14). Luke also uses the word in the unusual description of the gift of languages coming on the disciples—tongues of fire resting on each one of them (Acts 2:3).

Finally, James, writing in the style of OT wisdom literature, notes that an uncontrolled tongue—unbridled speech—is not indicative of the people of God (James 1:26–27) and is ultimately destructive (3:5–10). *See also* Speech Impediment.

TONGUES, GIFT OF *See* Gift of Tongues.

TOOLS Implements utilized for the purpose of craftsmanship in some manner, whether in agriculture, commerce, or artistry.

MATERIALS

It can be assumed that early Israelites used tools made of wood, bones, and ivory for the handles, and stone for the working part of the tool. Stone tools were utilized for pounding, grinding, and cutting. Many examples of stone tools have been discovered throughout the ancient Near East. Early farmers and workers used some of the more basic tools, such as hammers, pestles, knives, and chisels.

Some tools were used almost exclusively for the construction of other tools. Spherical instruments made out of diorite or some other very hard substance were used to fashion an instrument into a usable shape. Thanks to their hardness and round shape, they rarely splintered and could be used with reasonable force.

Only certain types of stone could be turned into a cutting utensil. The stone had to have both a requisite hardness and a crystalline nature to be transformed into a blade. Only chert and flint meet such criteria, but only flint was readily available to the nomad, being found in the form of nodules and small cobbles in deposits of limestone. Because of flint's brittleness, the artisan had to take great care in the amount of pressure applied in making a knife. The fact that so many examples of flint knives are no larger than a few centimeters suggests that this was easier said than done. Flint knives were used by the Israelites in sacred rituals, including circumcision (Josh. 5:2).

Metals began to be used for utensils at roughly the same time Israel entered the promised land. Bronze, an alloy of copper and tin, was used for weaponry and for everyday utensils. The molten alloy was poured into molds made from stone and then shaped and formed by a smith. A similar process was used for iron in the periods following the institution of the monarchy. Early Israel apparently had few if any blacksmiths capable of such work, since the Scriptures record that the Israelites went to the Philistines for production of their iron tools (1 Sam. 13:19). Even after the advent of alloys, however, there seems to have been a preference for the more primitive flint knives, especially in sacred ceremonies, possibly because flint maintained a sharper edge longer, or perhaps because there was a certain taboo associated with the mixing of metals. The application of the profane to the sacred would have rendered the ceremony unfit for God.

TYPES OF TOOLS

Knives. Knives were made in various sizes. The smallest version is referred to in Jehoiakim's destruction of Jeremiah's manuscript in Jer. 36:23 (some English versions distinguish it as a "scribe's knife" [NIV] or "penknife" [NRSV]). This same knife (Heb. *ta'ar*) also was used for shaving (Num. 6:5) and appears in imagery related to sharpness or exactness (Ps. 52:2; Isa. 7:20). Between six inches and a foot long would have been the more normal length of knives used for everyday tasks such as butchering (Gen. 22:6).

Agricultural tools. The plow came in various sizes and forms. In the more fertile areas, plowshares were unnecessary, and a smaller utensil similar to a hoe was used simply to break up the topsoil (1 Sam. 13:21). The instrument also was used on more uneven terrain, where a typical animal-drawn plowshare would not work. It was actually this instrument that would have been turned into a weapon of war or, in the case of everlasting peace, transformed back into a farming utensil (Isa. 2:4; Mic. 4:3). In more arid regions, where the soil was more hardened and difficult to break up, the larger plowshare was used. In a fashion well known in the Western world, the larger plowshare was harnessed to a beast of burden and guided through the farmer's field to prepare the land for sowing.

Harvesting involved the utilization of various tools. Grain was first cut with a sickle (Jer. 50:16). In the ancient Near East, the sickle handle typically was short and could be held in one hand. The blade usually was composed of a jawbone or curved shaft fitted with pieces of flint or other sharp objects. As an instrument of harvest, the sickle also became a picture of judgment and ingathering (Joel 3:13; Mark 4:29). For harvesting grapes, a pruning hook, which was very similar in appearance to a sickle but smaller, was used (Isa. 2:4).

Hand tools. Several small hand tools were similar to their modern expressions but were used for different purposes. An awl is used to bore holes. In the ancient Near East, this tool was made of stone, bone, or metal. One of the more distinctive uses for this tool in ancient times was to pierce ears (Exod. 21:6; Deut. 15:17). Saws were made with a wooden handle on either one end or both ends. An ancient tradition says that Isaiah was sawn in two (cf. Heb. 11:37). Axes were used for felling trees (Deut. 19:5; Matt. 3:10) but also for cutting stones and removing them from quarries (1 Kings 6:7). Early models were crafted from stone, but by the time of Israel's nationhood the implement was almost always made of iron. This is demonstrated at places where an ax head is referred to with *barzel*, the Hebrew word for "iron" (Deut. 19:5; 2 Kings 6:5).

Construction and craftsmanship tools. When it came to building and craftsmanship, the Israelites again used instruments quite similar to those employed by modern counterparts. The Israelites used hammers (Isa. 44:12) made of stone, with wooden handles, for large construction jobs. They also had several types of chisels and other carving utensils (Exod. 32:4; Deut. 15:17). For hammering these chisels and carving utensils, a large wooden mallet, similar to those used by craftspeople today, probably was used. A plumb line was used for ensuring that walls were straight. This simple device consisted of a length of string with a weight tied to the end. The plumb line was held up against a wall as it was being built in order to determine if the wall was consistently vertical. As such, it served as an appropriate image for whether Israel was straight in relation to its covenant with God (Amos 7:7–9). Potters used a pottery wheel (Jer. 18:3), and weavers used a loom with a web in order to create intricate patterns of cloth (Judg. 16:13–14). Blacksmiths used bellows, tongs, and hammers designed especially for their work (Isa. 44:12).

By the time of the NT, artisans were far more dependent on iron for most of their tools. Advances in smelting and in the manipulation of the alloys allowed the crude iron of previous eras to begin approaching the tempered steel of the Middle Ages. This permitted more flexibility in how utensils such as hammers could be used and allowed for more effective chisels to be created. As a result, craftsmanship in stone, marble, and other hard surfaces became more prevalent, and ossuaries, statues, and building facades became more ornate and intricate in design. Multiple examples of such craftwork have been unearthed in archaeological digs.

TOPHEL One of the sites that the author of Deuteronomy uses to help orient the reader in regard to the place where Moses shared the law with the Israelites (Deut. 1:1). The location and identification of Tophel is still uncertain, but some believe that it is associated with et-Tafileh, a site in Jordan between Kerak and Petra.

TOPHETH Topheth, whose name is associated with the Hebrew word for "spit," was located in the Valley of Ben Hinnom to the immediate southwest of Jerusalem. At times, it served as the city dump, where trash was burned. In the NT period, the valley was known as Gehenna, which was associated with hell. Josiah had destroyed this place because it was the location of the false worship of the foreign god Molek (2 Kings 23:10–11), but the idolatrous worship site must have been rebuilt. In the time of Jeremiah, some Israelites performed child sacrifice in this location, so the prophet announced judgment against them (Jer. 7:30–34; 19:6–15).

TORAH The Hebrew word *torah* most broadly means "teaching" or "instruction." In the OT, *torah* most commonly refers to the collection of teachings divinely revealed to Moses by God. This collection of teachings preserved in the Pentateuch became authoritative and binding, not only for the community of Hebrews wandering in the Sinai Desert, but also for each successive generation with whom the covenant with Yahweh was renewed (Exod. 24; Deut. 4:5–14, 44).

THE *TORAH* OF MOSES

Thus, *torah* occurs often in combination with Moses' name ("*torah* of Moses"), particularly in the Pentateuch, the Deuteronomistic History (Deuteronomy, Joshua through Kings), and Ezra, Nehemiah, and Chronicles. Perhaps the use of Moses' name in this way emphasizes the authority of the teachings by reminding readers of their connection to him. In the prophetic literature and Psalms, however, *torah* is more commonly used in combination with the special name for God revealed to Moses at the burning bush ("*torah* of Yahweh"). Perhaps the use of Yahweh's special name in this case emphasizes the divine nature of the teachings given to Moses by God.

The meaning of *torah* in the OT is not uniform, however, and encompasses a range of related meanings. *Torah* sometimes refers to a more specific set of teachings within the corpus of Mosaic instructions. In some cases, *torah* seems to refer only to the Ten Commandments (Exod. 24; Deut. 4:44). In other cases, particularly in Leviticus and Numbers, *torah* can refer to a specific instruction pertaining to the people's worship and service to God. For example, the specific regulation for how to carry out a burnt offering is a *torah* for the burnt offering (Lev. 6:9), and the instruction for how to carry out a Nazirite vow is a *torah* for the Nazirite vow (Num. 6:13).

A great deal of the Mosaic teaching in Exodus through Deuteronomy focuses on the community's worship, offering specific instruction on things such as offerings, sacrifices, the distinction between clean and unclean, as well as instructions for constructing the ancient sanctuary, the tabernacle. Because the Levitical priests were leaders in the Israelite community's worship, they were specifically charged with careful transmission and interpretation of *torah* (2 Kings 22:8; Mal. 2:7–8). Indeed, Levitical priests held an authoritative position in the Israelite community with regard to interpretations of *torah*. Accordingly, sometimes *torah* refers to a decision rendered by a priest, on behalf of Yahweh, when the application of an individual instruction is unclear. For example: "This is what the LORD Almighty says: 'Ask the priests what the law [*torah*] says: If someone carries consecrated meat in the fold of their garment, and that fold touches some bread or stew, . . . does it become consecrated?' " (Hag. 2:11–12 [cf. Deut. 17:8–13]). Priests who fail in their duties of transmission and interpretation of *torah* are charged with doing "violence to the law [*torah*]" and corrupting the people (Zeph. 3:4; see also Jer. 2:8; Ezek. 7:26; 22:26; Hos. 4:6).

OTHER USES OF *TORAH*

Torah can also be a more general term for the direct command of God, apart from the teachings of Moses. For example, God said of Abraham that he "obeyed me and did everything I required of him, keeping my commands, my decrees and my instructions [*torot*]" (Gen. 26:5). Since Abraham died before the time of Moses, this reference to *torah* likely emphasizes Abraham's faithful obedience to God's specific instructions to him (cf. Gen. 12:1–4; 15:1–21).

Particularly in the prophetic literature, *torah* often refers to the standard of behavior with which Israel will be judged: "The people have broken my covenant and rebelled against my law [*torah*]" (Hos. 8:1 [cf. Isa. 1:10; 5:24; 8:16, 19–20; 30:9; Zech. 7:12]). In the prophetic texts, *torah* is often the basis for God's indictment of the people, and yet *torah* also holds promise for the redemption of God's people, when "I [God] will put my law [*torah*] in their minds and write it on their hearts" (Jer. 31:33).

In the book of Proverbs, *torah* usually refers to instructions given by a parent to a child: "Listen, my son, to your father's instruction and do not forsake your mother's teaching [*torah*]" (1:8). In this case, *torah* represents practical parental wisdom to direct everyday living. While the use of *torah* in Proverbs is not directly associated with the Mosaic teachings in the Pentateuch, the content of the teaching (*torah*) of the parent to the child in Proverbs is in alignment with the teachings of Moses to the Israelite community, particularly with the Ten Commandments. Indeed, parental instruction (*torah*) in the book of Proverbs includes a prohibition against dishonoring one's parents (1:8; 10:1), violence or murder (1:11–12; 3:29), stealing (1:13; 10:2), adultery (2:16–19; 5:3–20), and lying (3:30; 6:12–15).

Overall, *torah* is presented not as a stale collection of restrictive rules in the OT, but rather as a joy and a delight: "The law [*torah*] of the LORD is perfect, refreshing the soul. The statutes of the LORD are trustworthy, making wise the simple. The precepts of the LORD are right, giving joy to the heart. The commands of the LORD are radiant, giving light to the eyes. . . . They are sweeter than honey" (Ps. 19:7–10). *See also* Law.

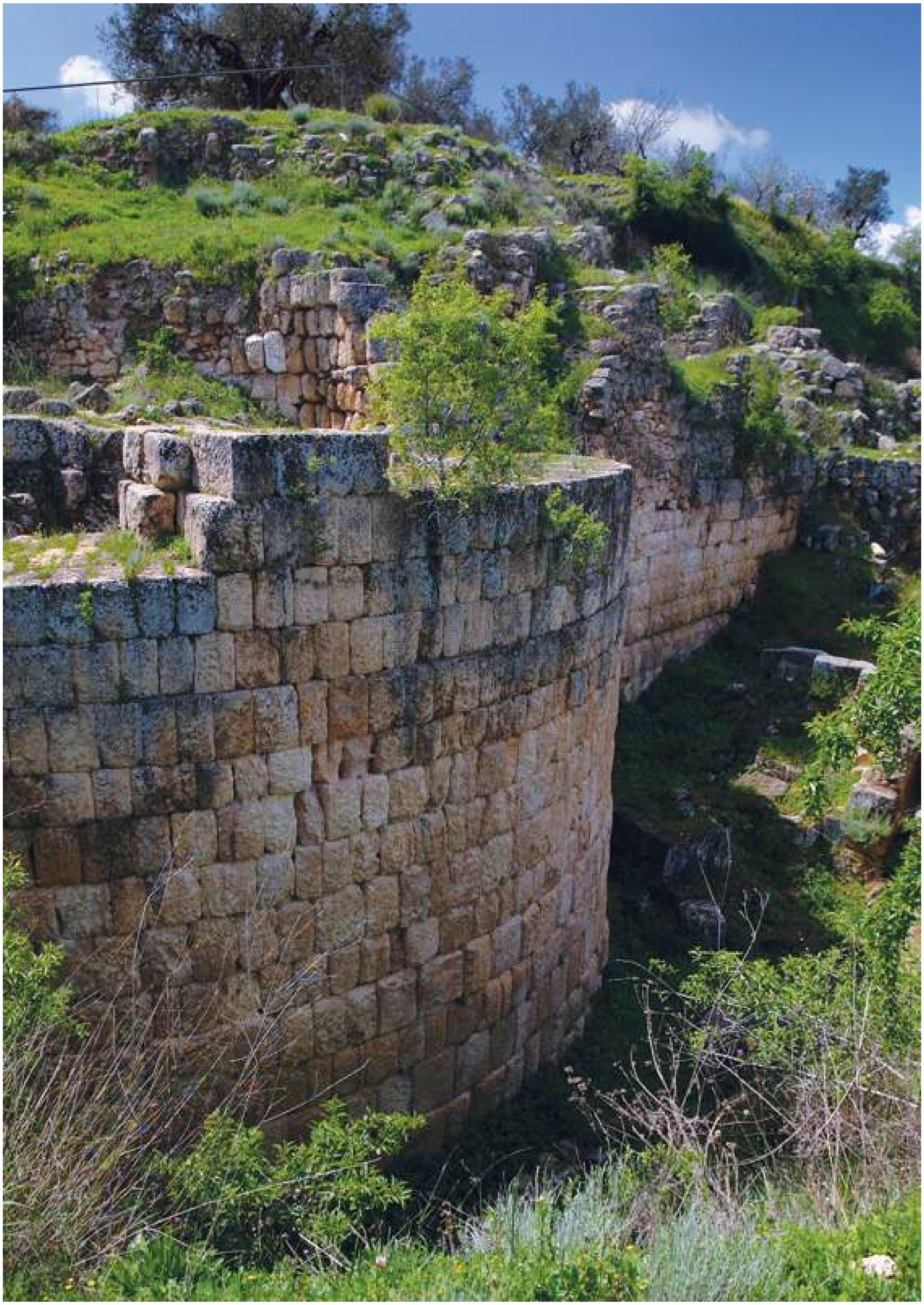
TORCH A highly combustible wooden stick, or an absorbent combustible material tied on the end of one and ignited. A torch can signify Yahweh's covenant commitment (Gen. 15:17), be used to win an incredible victory (Judg. 7:16), picture revenge (Judg. 15:4), and assure Zion's redemption (Isa. 62:1); it can describe four heavenly creatures (Ezek. 1:13), Jerusalem as God's instrument (Zech. 12:6), an angelic warrior (Dan. 10:6), and a large star (Rev. 8:10). Soldiers and guards carried torches to find Jesus in the garden at night (John 18:3).

TOSEFTA The Tosefta, from a Hebrew word meaning "to add," incorporates additional halachic (oral legal) and narrative materials that are not in the Mishnah, rabbinic Judaism's initial compilation of legal materials (halakah). The Tosefta follows the same organizational principle as the Mishnah, containing six orders, each one further divided into tractates, most of which parallel those in the Mishnah. The relationship between the Mishnah and the Tosefta is complex, but the following observations can be made: (1) some halakot and narratives are the same in the two texts; (2) the Tosefta adds new material to the basic Mishnah text; (3) in many places the meaning is the same, but the style and the vocabulary are different; (4) the Tosefta covers additional topics that are not evident in the Mishnah or are only indirectly mentioned.

TOU The king of Hammath who sent his son Joram to bring tribute to David after the defeat of their common enemy, Hadadezer, the king of Zobah. He is called "Toi" in 2 Sam. 8:9–10 (NIV: "Tou"), "Tou" in 1 Chron. 18:9–10.

TOW In three places the KJV uses the word "tow" to translate Hebrew words (*n'oret*, *pishtah*) that refer to a fibrous stick that became highly flammable when peeled apart and used for tinder (Isa. 1:31). It was used as a torch and a wick for oil lamps (Isa. 43:17) and metaphorically as a symbol of weakness and temporality (Judg. 16:9).

TOWER Towers (or watchtowers) were circular or square stone structures, measuring about twenty-five feet in diameter, built at the corners of a wall (Jer. 31:38; cf. 2 Chron. 14:7; 26:9). They could be referred to as fortified citadels of a city (2 Kings 17:9; 2 Chron. 14:6; 26:9, 15; Neh. 3:1), strongholds (Judg. 9:51), or fortresses (2 Chron. 27:4). As a defense system, they provided enhancement to city walls and gates. Arrows and projectiles could be fired at enemies scaling the walls. As a communications system, they often served as signal stations where guards could watch for approaching enemies (2 Kings 9:17; 17:9; Isa. 21:12).



The ruins of a tower from the Hellenistic period in Sebaste (Samaria), Israel

TOWER OF BABEL A tower whose construction was begun in a town on the plain of Shinar (Gen. 11:1–9), although it is never actually called the "tower of Babel" in the Bible. The name "Babel" (Gen. 11:9) is likely a pun involving the Akkadian word for "gate of god" and the Hebrew word for “confuse.” Some scholars believe that “Babel” alludes to the city of Babylon. Most ancient structures described as towers would have been ziggurats, which are terraced pyramids with steps. Ziggurats were designed to be places where the gods could access land, much like a staircase. Interestingly, the builders’ plan in Gen. 11:1–9 actually worked, since God did come down into the city; however, they did not anticipate the consequences of their actions. Some commentators have suggested that this story is an etiology explaining the beginning of languages.

TOWER OF THE HUNDRED A fortified tower in Jerusalem mentioned twice in Nehemiah, once in the restoration of the wall (3:1) and again in the procession for its dedication (12:39). It is associated with the Tower of Hananel, which Jer. 31:38 and Zech. 14:10 confirm is located on the north side of Jerusalem, near the Fish Gate. Based on the name, it is likely that a substantial number of troops were placed here to guard the Fish Gate.

TOWN *See* Cities and Urban Life.

TRACONITIS, TRACHONITIS One of the five Roman provinces northeast of the Sea of Galilee, which was the northeastern extent of the kingdom of Herod the Great. The name “Traconitis” refers to the “rough, rocky” topography of this extremely desolate region. It was deeded to Herod the Great on the condition that he control the local bandits. Following Herod’s death in 4 BC, Traconitis was passed on to Herod Philip (Luke 3:1), brother of Herod Antipas. It later became a part of the Roman province of Syria.

TRADE *See* Commerce.

TRADITION The English word “tradition” refers both to a process of transmitting information from generation to generation and to the content that is thus transmitted. Tradition can be oral or written, and in the context of theology and biblical studies it constitutes a form of religious authority and a means of legitimating customs and beliefs. Much of the biblical data concerning tradition, which comes primarily from the NT, is connected with the verbal notion of “passing (something) on” or, conversely, “receiving (something).” There is also a noun meaning “tradition.” The writings of the NT are neither for nor against traditional authority per se as a form of religious authority, but instead display a range of attitudes toward tradition and traditions.

JESUS’ CRITIQUE OF JEWISH TRADITION

On one occasion, Jesus sharply rebuked the Pharisees and teachers of the law for “setting aside the commands of God in order to observe your own traditions” (Mark 7:9 [cf. Matt. 15:1–20]). The context of this remark is a dispute between Jesus and his interlocutors that arose when Jesus’ disciples were observed eating with unwashed hands. According to the Pharisees (as reported by Matthew and Mark), this requirement was a “tradition of the elders” (Mark 7:5). Jesus, however, distinguished between human traditions and the word of God, and he accused the Pharisees of adhering to the former even when this conflicted with observance of the latter. Later written rabbinic sources posited two streams of normative tradition, both going back to Moses and Mount Sinai: the written law and the oral law. This distinction, or one like it, may lie behind Jesus’ dispute with the Pharisees and the teachers of the law. It is important to note that Jesus’ criticism of tradition is not simply formal (i.e., opposition to traditional authority as such) but is substantive, in that the Pharisees were guilty of following traditions that prevented them from observing the commands of Moses: “You nullify the word of God by your tradition that you have handed down. And you do many things like that” (Mark 7:13). The memory of Jesus’ antitraditional posture was later invoked by the opponents of Stephen, who said, “We have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place and change the customs Moses handed down to us” (Acts 6:14).

Such a negative view of tradition is also evident in Col. 2:8, where the apostle warns against captivity to “hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the elemental spiritual forces of this world rather than on Christ.” The subsequent discussion elucidates to some extent the content of the traditions that threatened to displace the primary orientation of the believer to life in Christ (2:6–7); these include circumcision “performed by human hands” (2:11), rules about eating, drinking, Sabbaths, and holidays (2:16), and rules of asceticism designed to restrain “sensual indulgence” (2:23). Interestingly, while Jesus set up an antithesis between the traditions of the elders and the law of Moses, Col. 2:14 appears to identify “the charge of our legal indebtedness” with the system that depends on human tradition rather than on Christ.

The situation represented by Col. 2:8–23 (dependence on tradition versus dependence on Christ) finds a similar expression in Paul’s autobiographical account in Gal. 1:11–24. There, Paul assures his audience that the gospel he preached “is not of human origin” (v. 11). Invoking the vocabulary of tradition, he continues, “I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it; rather, I received it by revelation from Jesus Christ” (vv. 12–13). Paul goes on to flesh out this antithesis between revelation and tradition, particularly as it applies to his apostolic claims: he is not against religious tradition as such, since he was formerly “zealous for the traditions of my fathers” (v. 14). Nonetheless, the radically nontraditional authority of his gospel is underscored by the fact that he did “not consult any human being” (vv. 16–17, 19). Of course, it is not likely that Paul would desire to undermine tradition per se, as he would himself rely on it as a means of propagating his own gospel. Indeed, he had already warned the Galatians against departing from the tradition that they had accepted from him (1:9) (see the discussion of 1 Cor. 15:1–11 below).

POSITIVE ATTITUDES TOWARD TRADITION

In contrast to Jesus’ critique of the traditions of the elders observed by the Pharisees, a number of NT texts present the transmission of traditions in a positive light. Chief among these is Paul’s discussion in 1 Cor. 15:1–11 of the gospel he preached in Corinth. In this text, he speaks of his own reception of the tradition (“For what I received” [v. 3]), his transmission of the tradition to the Corinthians (“I passed on to you as of first importance” [v. 3]), and the church’s reception of the tradition (“I want to remind you of the gospel . . . which you received” [v. 1]). What follows, the content of the tradition, is a summary of the events of the death and resurrection of Christ according to the Scriptures and his postresurrection manifestation to the apostles, including Paul himself (vv. 3–7). Previously in 1 Corinthians, Paul had commended his audience for their fidelity to tradition: “I praise you for . . . holding to the traditions just as I passed them on to you” (11:2). To return to the discussion of Gal. 1 and Paul’s radical break with tradition: for Paul, the revelation of Christ stood outside the prior stream of tradition in which he had been raised, but subsequently it became a new tradition to be passed on and to be held with as much zeal as the old (see Acts 16:4; Rom. 6:17; 1 Cor. 11:23; Phil. 4:9; 1 Thess. 2:13; 4:1–2; 2 Thess. 2:15; 3:6).

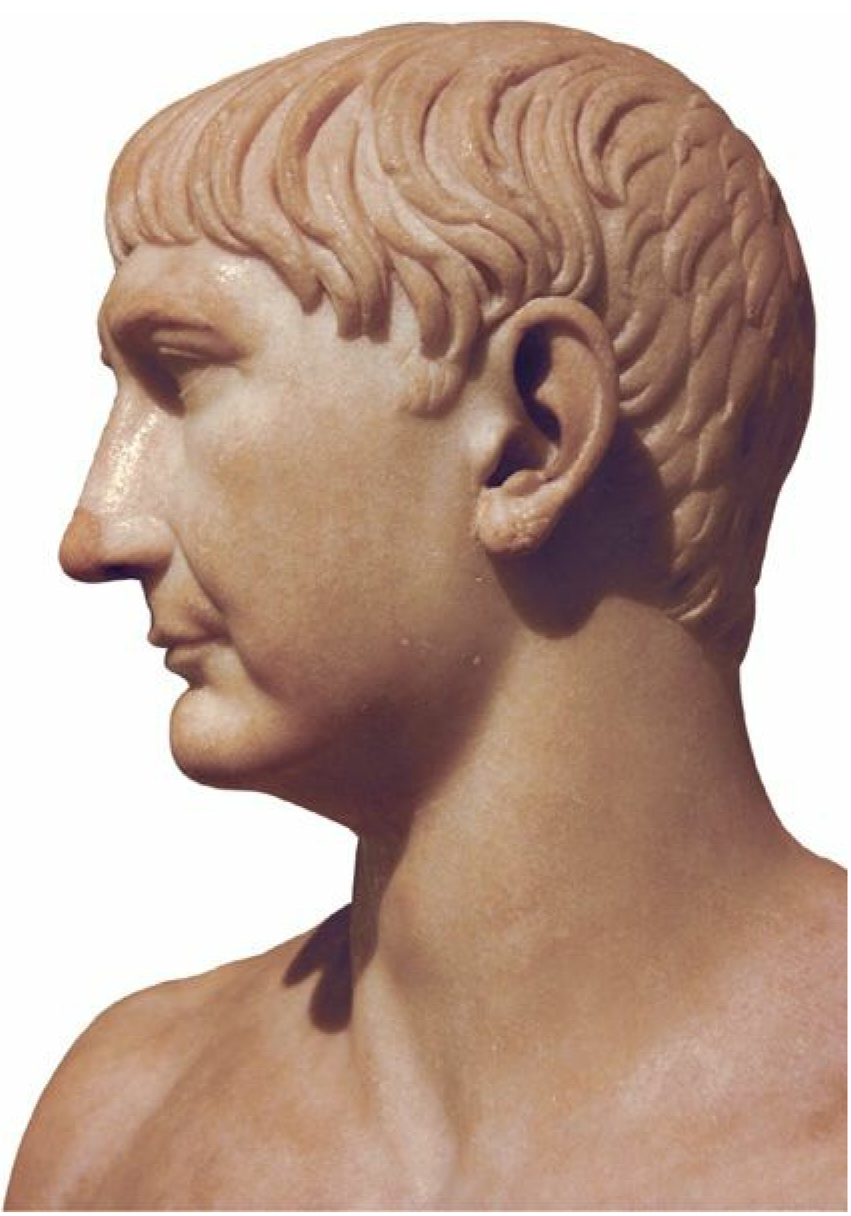
Like Paul, other NT writers appeal to traditional authority as a means of passing on the faith. Jude urges his readers to “contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to God’s holy people” (Jude 3 [cf. 2 Pet. 2:21]). Luke’s credentials as a historian include his faithful transmission of the account of things “just as they were handed down to us by those who from the first were eyewitnesses and servants of the word” (Luke 1:2). Like Paul, Luke asserts the authority of the traditional process while also recognizing that the transmitted tradition had a historical inception in recent memory (in this case, the testimony of eyewitnesses to the life of Jesus). In other words, the appeal is not simply to traditional teaching per se, as if “old” is intrinsically better than “new”; rather, the story of Jesus, as new as it is in history, becomes a matter of tradition once it has occurred and been testified to by eyewitnesses.

TRADITION AND PROTESTANTISM

In broad terms, each of the three great “religions of the book” (Judaism, Christianity, Islam) recognizes theologically normative streams of postscriptural (or extrascriptural) tradition in addition to their sacred books. During the Reformation, Protestant theologians sought to introduce a number of corrections to medieval theology under the banner of a return to “Scripture alone” (*sola Scriptura*). In response, Catholic theologians asserted the authority of Scripture, tradition, and the magisterium (the teaching of the church). All living traditions, of course, pragmatically rely on multiple forms of religious authority. As a result of this history, “tradition” has come to stand for an illegitimate or at least suspect form of religious authority in some strands of Protestant thought, wherein a radical biblicism is professed in contrast to a celebration of tradition and traditions.

TRAIN **(1)** The trailing skirt of a robe or outer garment (Isa. 6:1). It usually denoted favor, wealth, and/or power (Exod. 28:33; Ps. 68:18). **(2)** To prepare through instruction and practice for war (Isa. 2:4) and/or life (Prov. 22:6; 1 Tim. 4:7).

TRAJAN The Roman emperor in the years AD 98–117, his full name was “Marcus Ulpius Traianus.” His military conquests resulted in great expansion of the Roman Empire. In AD 112 Trajan advised the Roman governor Pliny concerning the proper means of dealing with Christians in the province of Bithynia. He instructed the governor to withhold punishment from those who agreed to renounce or deny their status as Christians. Such denial or renunciation could be demonstrated, according to Trajan, by sacrificing to the Roman gods (something that true Christians would not do).



Bust of the Roman emperor Trajan

TRANCE Trances are mentioned three times in the Bible, all in the book of Acts (10:10; 11:5; 22:17; the KJV rendering of “trance” in Num. 24:4, 16 is an interpolation). Like the English word “trance,” the underlying Greek word, *ekstasis*, speaks of an altered state of consciousness; in the two biblical examples of *ekstasis*, God communicated to humans in this state. Different Greek words are used both for “dream” (*enypnion*, *onar*) and “vision” (*horama*, *horasis*).

In a trance, Peter saw a sheet descending from heaven, filled with unclean animals (Acts 10:10–17; recounted in 11:5–17). The Lord explained to him in the trance that it was permissible for him, as a Jew, to associate with the Gentile Cornelius (10:28–29). Paul also experienced a trance; in his case, he was in the temple when the Lord warned him to leave Jerusalem (22:17–21). In both of these cases, the recipients of God’s message were able to respond to God and were not merely passive (10:14; 22:19–20).

TRANSFIGURATION The event in which Jesus’ inward, hidden glory became visible for his inner circle of disciples (Peter, James, John) to see. The episode is recorded in Matt. 16:28–17:8; Mark 9:1–8; Luke 9:27–36 and is alluded to in 2 Pet. 1:16–21. The Gospel episode may be summarized as follows: Immediately after Peter confessed that Jesus was the Christ, Jesus predicted that some of his disciples would not see death until they tasted of the kingdom of God. Some six days later (Luke rounds it off to eight days [Luke 9:28]), Jesus took Peter, James, and John to a mountaintop (traditionally identified as Mount Tabor, though Mount Hermon may be more likely since it was close to Caesarea Philippi, the place of Peter's confession). There, suddenly, the inward, hidden glory of Jesus shone through his body, and he was seen conversing with Moses and Elijah. Peter wanted his companions to build booths, temporary shelters, to prolong the visit of the three heavenly personages: Moses, the representative of the law; Elijah, the representative of the prophets; and Jesus, the Messiah. But God the Father mildly rebuked Peter, announcing that Jesus is his beloved Son; he is the preeminent one, the one who should be heard.

Second Peter 1:16–21 simply says that Peter was an eyewitness of the transfiguration, and that the divine voice that he heard proclaiming Jesus to be the Son of God is the same voice speaking through him in his letter confirming that the second coming of Christ will truly happen.

Four prophetic themes emerge from the transfiguration episode.

1. Some of the disciples did indeed taste of the kingdom of God during their lifetime, for the transfiguration provided for them a foretaste of the glorious splendor that will accompany Christ at his second coming.

2. Moses and Elijah conversing with Jesus on the mountain perhaps indicates that the law (Moses) and the prophets (Elijah) find their fulfillment in Jesus the Messiah.

3. In Luke's Gospel the transfiguration itself conveys a prophetic word: Jesus was to suffer and die and then enter heavenly glory. Luke 9:31 says that Moses and Elijah were conversing with Jesus about his "exodus" (NIV mg.) in Jerusalem—that is, his death and resurrection, the basis of a new exodus for the people of God. This is confirmed by Jesus' instruction to his disciples as they descended the mountain of the transfiguration that they should tell no one what they had seen until he rose from the dead (Matt. 17:9; Mark 9:9; cf. Luke 9:44). This theme of suffering fits a threefold pattern that occurs especially in Mark's Gospel: (1) Jesus predicts his upcoming death in Jerusalem (8:31; 9:9, 31–32; 10:33–34); (2) his disciples in one way or another reject the truth that Jesus came to be a suffering Messiah (8:32–33; 9:10–11, 33–34; 10:35–41); (3) Jesus corrects his disciples' misunderstanding/rejection of the suffering nature of his messiahship (8:34–38; 9:12–13, 35–37; 10:42–45). The message in all of this is clear: first the sufferings of the cross and then the glory of the kingdom. This would be true for both Jesus and his disciples.

4. The presence of Elijah at the transfiguration also confirmed the disciples' recent conclusion that Jesus was the Messiah. According to Mal. 4:5, Elijah was to be the forerunner of the Messiah. Jesus agreed, pointing out to the three disciples that Elijah had indeed come in the person of John the Baptist and that he himself, like John, would first suffer before entering into the glory of the messianic kingdom.

TRANSGRESSION The violation of a law or code. The Hebrew word translated "transgression" in the NIV can also mean "revolt" or "rebellion." Various Greek words are translated "transgression(s)" in the NIV, all of which denote a deliberate violation of the law (Rom. 4:7, 15; 11:11–12; Gal. 3:19; Eph. 2:1, 5). *See also* Sin.

TRANSJORDAN The stretch of land east of the Jordan River extending from Mount Hermon in the north to the Gulf of Aqaba in the south, including the biblical areas of Bashan, Gilead, Ammon, Moab, and Edom. The area is roughly that of the modern country of Jordan. The word "Transjordan" is not found in the Bible but is derived from variations of the Hebrew *’eber hayyarden* (e.g., Deut. 1:1) and the Greek *peran tou Iordanou* (e.g., Matt. 4:25). The NIV variously translates these phrases as “east of the Jordan,” “across the Jordan,” “beyond the Jordan,” “near the Jordan,” “along the Jordan,” and “on the other side of the Jordan.” Occasionally these phrases also refer to the area west of the Jordan.

DESCRIPTION

Transjordan is a high plateau that in general rises in height from north to south, although Mount Hermon, as part of the Anti-Lebanon range, does mark the highest point of elevation at 9,230 feet above sea level. The plateau, bounded by the Sea of Galilee, the Jordan Rift Valley, the Dead Sea, and the Arabah in the west and the desert to the east, is intersected by numerous streams running east to west that have cut deep gorges as they run toward the Jordan. A main trade route, known as the King’s Highway, ran through Transjordan in biblical times, connecting the Gulf of Aqaba and western Arabia with Damascus in the north (Num. 20:17; 21:22).

The area of Bashan, with mountains to the north, is largely a fertile plain known in the OT for its well-fed cattle and large oak trees (Ps. 22:12; Isa. 2:13; Ezek. 27:6). South of Bashan, between the Yarmuk and the Jabbok (modern Nahr ez-Zerqa) rivers, the hills of Gilead rise to more than three thousand feet and were known for their rich pastureland (Num. 32:1). Although Gilead’s boundaries are defined here as between the Yarmuk and the Jabbok, it should be noted that in the OT “Gilead” occasionally referred to a region extending beyond these two rivers. This larger area is also roughly equivalent to the district called “Perea” by the first-century AD Jewish historian Josephus. South of Gilead, between the Jabbok and the Arnon (modern Seil el-Mojib) rivers lay the country of Ammon, although the political borders of this region were also somewhat fluid. Between the Arnon River and the Zered River (probably modern Wadi el-Hesa) lay the country of Moab, with a well-watered plateau rising to about 3,200 feet. This area was highly suitable for raising sheep (2 Kings 3:4). From the Zered River southward to the Gulf of Aqaba, the mountains of Edom rise to about 5,500 feet above sea level.

HISTORY

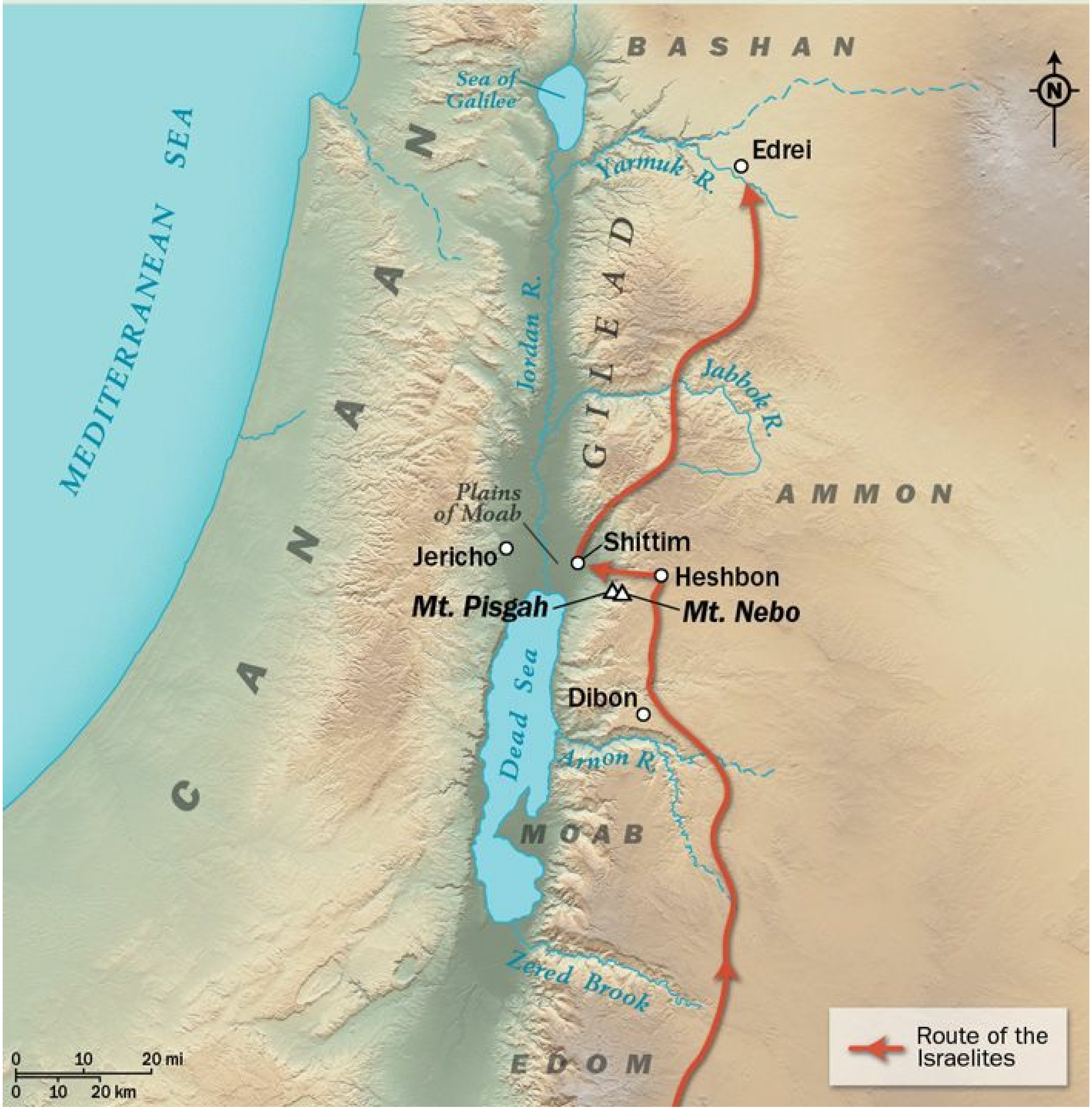
Biblical mention of Transjordan begins in Gen. 13, when Lot saw the fertile valley of the Jordan and chose to settle in Sodom. Although Sodom’s exact location is unknown, it may have been near the Dead Sea. Similarly, the battle of five kings against Kedorlaomer and his allies, which took place in the Valley of Siddim, may have been located near the south end of the Dead Sea (Gen. 14). Later, Jacob’s flight from Laban took him to the hill country of Gilead and eventually to the bank of the Jabbok River, where he wrestled with the angel (Gen. 31:22–25; 32:22–32).

Transjordan took center stage in the events following Israel’s exodus from Egypt. When the Israelites left Kadesh Barnea in Sinai, Moses requested passage through Edom on the King’s Highway, but the Edomite king refused (Num. 20:14–21). So the Israelites took a more easterly route, along the edge of the desert bordering Transjordan, thus bypassing both Edom and Moab (Num. 21). When they reached the Arnon River and attempted to rejoin the King’s Highway, Sihon king of the Amorites refused them passage and engaged them in battle, only to lose his territory to the Israelites (Num. 21:21–32). The Israelites continued farther north to Bashan, where they fought successfully against Og king of Bashan and claimed his land as well (Num. 21:33–35). When Balak king of Moab heard news of Israel’s victories, he feared for his own country and hired Balaam to curse Israel.

However, by God’s prompting, Balaam blessed Israel and cursed Moab instead (Num. 22–23).

Before Israel crossed the Jordan to enter Canaan, the tribes of Reuben and Gad, which owned large numbers of livestock and were impressed by the rich pastureland of Gilead, requested that the land east of the Jordan be given to them (Num. 32:1–5). Thus, Reuben took possession of Ammon north of the Arnon River (Josh. 13:15–23), Gad’s tribe settled the northern parts of Ammon into Gilead (13:24–28), and the half-tribe of Manasseh settled in the hills of Gilead northward through Bashan (13:29–31).

ISRAEL'S ROUTE THROUGH THE TRANSJORDAN


BASHAN
Sea of Galilee
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
CANAAN
Edrei
Yarmuk R.
GILEAD
Jordan R.
Jabbok R.
AMMON
Plains of Moab
Shittim
Jericho
Heshbon
Mt. Pisgah
Mt. Nebo
Dead Sea
Dibon
Arnon R.
MOAB
Zered Brook
EDOM
0 10 20 mi
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Route of the Israelites
N

Despite the Israelites’ victories over Sihon and Og and their settlement of Transjordan, hostilities continued between Israel and the remaining inhabitants of the land. Jephthah, for example, a Gileadite, fought successfully against the Ammonites, who wanted their land returned to them (Judg. 11:1–34). Saul also successfully fought the Ammonites when they threatened the town of Jabesh Gilead (1 Sam. 11:1–14). Saul's courage won the gratitude of the town's inhabitants, and it was they who later recovered Saul's body from Beth Shan after the Philistines killed him (1 Sam. 31:7–13). During David's reign, Israel's territory was expanded throughout Transjordan from Damascus in the north and through Edom in the south (2 Sam. 8:1–14).

Solomon's reign and the period of the divided kingdom saw ongoing struggles for control over the regions of Transjordan. Damascus, for example, gained independence during Solomon's reign (1 Kings 11:23–25), and later Hazael of Syria (r. 842–806 BC) extended the Aramean Empire through Bashan and into Gilead (2 Kings 10:32–33). Later Jehoash and Jeroboam II of Israel were able to recapture this territory (2 Kings 13:25; 14:28). And when Ahab of Israel died, Mesha of Moab, who had been paying tribute to Israel, rebelled. This rebellion prompted Jehoram of Israel to invade and attempt to reassert control over Moab, but he was unsuccessful (2 Kings 3).

In 733/732 BC the Assyrian king Tiglath-pileser III annexed the northern parts of Transjordan, while Ammon, Moab, and Edom remained semiautonomous, likely paying tribute. The Babylonian and Persian empires also extended throughout Transjordan.

During the Hellenistic and Roman periods (332 BC–AD 324), Transjordan was controlled by the Ptolemies (c. 333–198 BC), the Seleucids (c. 198–153 BC), the Hasmoneans (c. 153–63 BC), and then the Romans. This era saw the emergence of the Decapolis, a confederation of ten cities settled by Greeks, nine of which were located east of the Jordan. The Romans continued dominance through the Byzantine period (AD 324–638).

The region of Transjordan is mentioned a few times in the NT in connection with Jesus' ministry. The Gospels note that Jesus' travels took him across the Jordan (Matt. 19:1–2; Mark 10:1), and that among the crowds who followed him were many from the Decapolis and beyond the Jordan (Matt. 4:25; Mark 3:8). Although the location of his healing of the demoniac is uncertain, in the country of either the Gadarenes (Matt. 8:28) or the Gerasenes (Mark 5:1; Luke 8:26), it was in the Decapolis region that the healed man proclaimed what Jesus had done for him (Mark 5:20).

TRANSLATE To communicate the meaning of a text (oral or written) from one language in another. At the time of Ezra, Levites read from the Hebrew "Book of the Law of God," conveying the "sense" in Aramaic (Neh. 8:1–8). By the first century, Aramaic portions of the Law and the Prophets (Targumim) were read in Palestinian synagogues, and a larger collection, traditionally called the "Seventy" (Septuagint), was translated into Greek in Alexandria, Egypt. These translations range from literal to periphrastic, but with the aim of fidelity to the original. The Gospels occasionally translate Jesus' Aramaic sayings (e.g., Mark 5:41; John 1:42).

TRANSPORTATION AND TRAVEL Until the twentieth century, traveling farther than a week's distance from home was dangerous and expensive. We should not overstate the difficulty or risks of travel then, but certainly it was unlike today. Since virtually every region had its own currency, travelers carried cash and were at risk from thieves, money changers, innkeepers, slavers, and others who preyed upon travelers, as well as from the natural dangers of storms, floods, early snows, and so forth. Outside of cities, there was little law enforcement for the typical traveler (Ezra 8:22). Family was often one's only defender against injustice (Gen. 14:12–16; Ps. 127:3–5).

For travelers in the biblical world, improvement was slow and gradual. During the time of the patriarchs, travelers faced poor roads, bandits, and no security other than what they could provide themselves (Gen. 14:14). Later Assyrian documents complain of difficult roads. Sargon II (r. 722–705 BC) boasted, “I advanced over inaccessible paths (in) steep and terrifying places” (*ARAB* 2:25–26). Sennacherib (r. 705–681 BC) tells of having to travel on foot because the road was too steep for his litter (*ARAB* 2:122–23). Persian roads improved modestly, but Herodotus probably is exaggerating the improvements (*Hist.* 8.98), as Xenophon seems to indicate (*Anab.* 1.2.25). Many sources speak of bandits (Ezra 8:31; Hos. 6:9). Thus, safe travel or good roads became a metaphor for peace. When ancient kings bragged, it often was about roads they had built or how the roads were now safe. The arrival of the kingdom of God was symbolized by repairing the road (Isa. 40:3–5; Luke 3:4–6).

Major improvements came with the Roman Empire. For the first (and last) time, a traveler could go from the Euphrates to Egypt to Britain on well-policed roads and sea lanes under one’s own government. Enforced law and standardized, trustworthy coinage had distinct advantages (Isa. 33:8; Matt. 22:15–22).

Running empires required traveling. Envoys (Jer. 27:3), tax collectors (Dan. 11:20), and overseers (1 Kings 5:13–17), as well as armies, moved about on imperial business. While farmers and local merchants traveled limited distances to sell their wares (usually to the closest large city), fortunes could be made by the more adventuresome merchant willing to take the greater risks of traveling farther distances (Gen. 37:28; 1 Kings 10; Job 6:19; Prov. 31:14; Isa. 23:8; Matt. 13:45). The ancient world also saw individuals doing a great deal of local travel (less than sixty miles), usually connected to business (Prov. 31:14), religious festivals (1 Sam. 1; John 10), and family (Gen. 50:1–14; 2 Kings 8:29; Luke 1:39; John 2:1); often the three were woven together.

Travel in the ancient world was by sea or land. Except for the wealthy, this meant booking passage or walking. Sentimental images of a pregnant Mary riding a donkey to Bethlehem or of the apostle Paul doing missionary travels on horseback are likely fiction. Although there is some evidence of women traveling on donkeys (Josh. 15:18; 1 Sam. 25:20, 23; 2 Sam. 16:1–2), the stories are of prominent women or unusual occasions; it should not be assumed to be normative. Obviously, the infirm rode when required to travel, but they preferred not to travel (2 Sam. 19:26–37). The wealthiest used private transport (Acts 8:27–28). We have references to travel by donkey, mule, camel, horse, cart, litter, and chariot, but ordinary people walked. Typically, a good day’s walk was twenty miles; sea travel was by daylight and averaged roughly the same. Calculating how long it took someone to travel, though, is not merely a matter of math. Both sea and land travelers were fair-weather travelers, usually between June and September. On a long journey, one had to plan where to “winter.” Ancient travelers had to make their travel plans around the seasons.

TRAVEL BY LAND

Roads. Until the Romans, a “road” was merely a cleared path. They were ungraded and often impassable in wet weather. Nonetheless, they followed a distinct route, marked by “guideposts” (Jer. 31:21). In the ancient world, major roads ran east-west from Syria into Mesopotamia. North-south roads connected Syria to Egypt, through Palestine. The Assyrian army invaded Israel by traveling west on the road as far as Syria and then turning south. The battles fought in Gen. 14 were to control the north-south road (and thus trade). Solomon built wealth by controlling this trade (2 Chron. 9:14). Three major roads ran north-south through Israel. (1) The King’s Highway (Num. 20:17) ran through the eastern region, from Damascus through the eastern highlands of the Transjordan and down to the Gulf of Aqaba, where Solomon maintained a port (2 Chron. 8:17). (2) The central (or Sinai) road ran from Sidon south to Tyre, Akko, Shechem, Jerusalem, Hebron, Beersheba, Kadesh Barnea, into the Negev, and on to Egypt. (3) The Sea Road (Via Maris) ran from Damascus to Hazor through the Valley of Jezreel (the Plain of Esdraelon through the Megiddo Pass), down the coast of Israel through Gaza and into Egypt. Taking Megiddo meant controlling this road and the trade. The Egyptians (Thutmose III) defeated the Canaanites and took this road around 1468 BC. David captured it about 1000 BC. Josiah died defending this road against the Egyptians (Necho II) in 609 BC.

The Greeks extended a major road connecting through Asia Minor to the ancient road running into Mesopotamia. The Romans built roads of flat stone placed upon foundations. Parts of these roads are still in use today. From Rome they built to the sea (Via Ostiensis, Via Portuensis), to the south (Via Appia), to the west (Via Aurelia), to the north (Via Flaminia), to the Adriatic (Via Salaria, Via Valeria), and to the east (Via Ignatia) connecting Rome to Greece and thus to the rest of the biblical world.

Lodgings. Land travel necessitated lodgings. The wealthy near Rome often had homes along the common routes that they plied. Slaves ran ahead to announce that the master was coming. Friends and those on the master's business likely used these homes as well when traveling. When off the normal route, an aristocrat traveled with a retinue of servants, wagons, and tents to enable a well-equipped (and secure) camp each evening. The ordinary traveler had no extra homes or entourages. Groups large enough for safety could camp near town. Individuals relied upon hospitality in town. Those individual travelers unfortunate to lack any kinship with townsfolk often had no recourse but inns. Petronius (*Sat.* 94–97) tells a seamy story of misadventures in the roadside inns of his day. Archaeology and literature describe ill-kept dumps involving disreputable proprietors, questionable guests, and plenty of loose morals. Ancient Hebrews and early Christians emphasized hospitality (Gen. 19:1–2; Judg. 19:11–20; Rom. 12:13; 1 Pet. 4:9; 3 John 8).

Distance and duration. Using the distances between ancient stopping places, travel records, and comments in literary sources, scholars generally agree that a normal walking traveler could expect to cover twenty miles in a day. Peter's trip from Joppa to Caesarea (about forty miles) took two days (Acts 10:23–30). Travelers using beasts of burden generally covered the same distance. Chariots averaged a bit better, perhaps twenty-five to thirty miles per day. Whether they actually traveled farther or just stopped earlier for the night is debatable. Horseback was intended for speed and could easily average fifty miles per day. Yet we must avoid the mistake of calculating travel time between places by simple math. While such calculations generally hold true for one- or two-day journeys (Acts 10), longer journeys encountered delays. Towns along main roads were commonly spaced a day's walk apart. Yet it is unwise to assume that a traveler always left the next morning after an overnight stay. Jesus warned his traveling preachers against such rudeness (Luke 10:5–7). Moreover, the host likely provided the food supplies and extra funds for the traveler's next walk (3 John 5–8; *Did.* 11.5–6). Certainly, Jewish travelers were affected by Sabbaths and feasts. Not only would they not travel on those days, but also they likely would delay or rush to reach a particular location (Acts 20:2–5, 16; 1 Cor. 16:8). Ancients traveled according to a different tempo than modern Westerners.

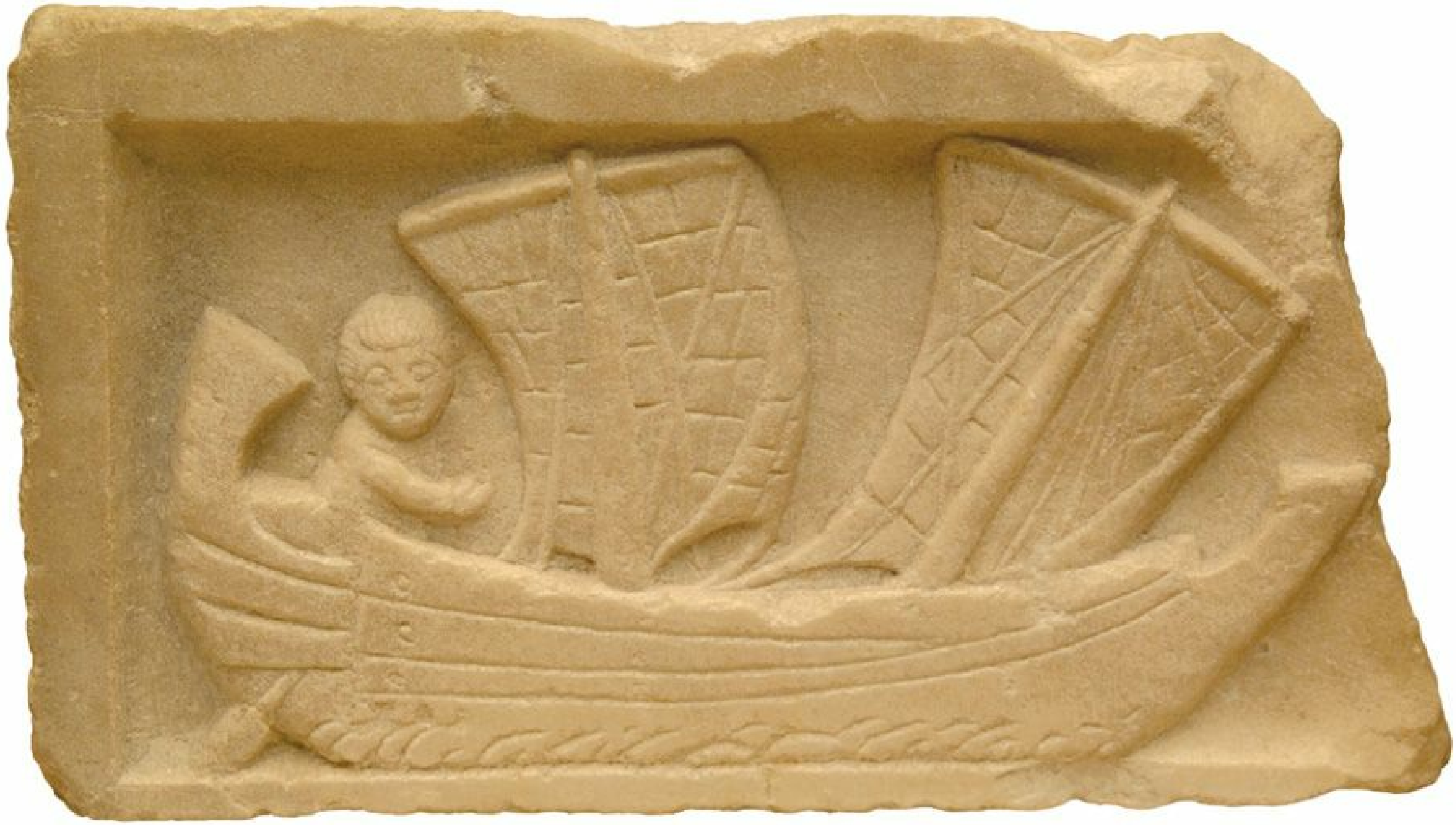
Seasons caused more serious delays. When traveling season ended, travelers were forced to spend the winter wherever they were at that time. If possible, they did not leave this to chance but rather planned where to "winter" (Jer. 36:22; Acts 27:12; 1 Cor. 16:6; Titus 3:12). Terrain was a serious consideration. Mountain passes and river fords were obvious factors, and ancients often took the easier (or safer) though longer path. Hence, there were three roads leading from Perga to Pisidian Antioch, the longest (western) being the safest and easiest. Uphill journeys, snow-blocked passes, and flash floods slowed ancient travelers, sometimes stranding them longer than their planned supplies would last (2 Cor. 6:5).

Traveling in groups. Since travelers carried money, they avoided traveling alone or in very small groups. (The so-called wise men of Matt. 2:1–12 almost certainly would have been waylaid had there been only three of them.) Commonly, travelers gathered in the agora (marketplace) early in the morning looking for fellow travelers heading their way, thus making traveling companions of those with whom they might not normally associate (Luke 9:57; 14:25). It was also common for travelers to join others along the road (Luke 24:13–16; Acts 8:27–30).

Travel by Sea

Ships. Almost all ancient ships were wooden. A "fast ship" was not necessarily a sleeker mode, but a dry one. Ideally, ships were stored out of the water during winter. Waterlogged ships were naturally slower.

No biblical empire was worth its salt unless it had naval supremacy in the Mediterranean Sea. Sailing vessels were at the mercy of the wind, so military ships meant galley ships. Rowing allowed captains to move without the wind. Today, we tend to imagine rowers like the "galley slaves" of the Middle Ages. Ancient rowers, however, were honored soldiers. Ships rammed each other in battle, and skill at the oar often meant the difference between victory and death. Once the enemy was rammed, rowers sprang up from their oars and fought hand to hand.



Marble relief of a small trading vessel known as a corbita, which would have sailed close to the coast as it went from harbor to harbor (AD 200)

Piracy and commerce. No one could claim dominance of the sea without controlling piracy. The

Roman navy, for the first time in history, managed to virtually eliminate piracy. Roman archers and slingers rained destruction as they drew near pirate vessels. Catapults later were added for heavy artillery. Finally, firepots slung out on long poles set fire to the enemy's ship, which the Romans then rammed and boarded.

With the taming of the Mediterranean, commercial shipping exploded in growth. Transporting cargo, passengers, and dispatches became profitable business. Smaller ships (like a Galilean fishing boat) depended upon oars, with a small sail as an auxiliary. Larger merchant ships depended more on sails. Sailing ships, with favorable winds, probably averaged between two and four miles per hour, but only half that with unfavorable winds. Ancient ships hugged coastlines and avoided bad weather.

Common cargo ships carried an average of about 250 tons of cargo and/or passengers and ranged from 70 to 150 feet in length. Those carrying 350 to 500 tons were considered large but not rare. It is thought that the grain ships in Paul's day (as in Acts 27) routinely were three-decked, 180 feet long, carried 1,300 tons, and took over a week to unload.

Traveling by ship. Although cargo ships also carried passengers, some ships were primarily for passengers. Josephus, on an unsuccessful attempt to sail to Rome, was on a ship with six hundred passengers (Josephus, *Life* 15). Sallust, a Roman historian, mentions a cohort (about 600 men) traveling on one transport ship (*Hist.* 3.8). Paul's ship to Rome had 276 aboard (Acts 27:37). Acts gives the impression that this ship left too late in the season. Aside from those compelled by Rome, likely only the brave or the desperate would book such passage. Thus, we should not assume that the ship was fully booked.

Like land travel, however, sea travel also was restricted by season. In the eastern half of the Mediterranean, the wind blows from the northwest toward the southeast persistently from June to September, marking the favorable sailing season. Vegetius (*Mil.* 4.39) writes, "From the 6th day before the kalends of June [May 27] until the rising of Arcturus, that is until the 18th before the kalends of October [Sept. 14], is believed to be the safe period of navigation. . . . From then up to the 3rd before the ides of November, navigation is uncertain. . . . From the 3rd before the ides of November to the 6th before the ides of March, the seas are closed." Many ancient writers indicated that sea travel in the winter was trecherous.

A person traveling by sea went first to the docks to inquire about ships headed to the desired destination. Harbor managers, dockhands, sailors, or others pointed inquirers toward appropriate ships. After negotiating with a particular ship's purser, whose job was to book passengers (and guard against stowaways), a passenger was told what day and time to be aboard. The lowest level of ships held the ballast (usually sand or stone) and the bilgewater. Decking over it held cargo. Some ships berthed the cheapest passengers in this area, what we now refer to as steerage (Lucian observes that such passengers were "not even able to stretch their legs on the bare boards alongside the bilgewater" [*Jupp. trag.* 48]). Larger freighters had another deck above this that may have housed some passengers. In general, however, travelers in Paul's day (like all travelers up until modern times) camped above deck (some with tents). Only the very wealthy rented cabins (P.Zen. 10). Shipwrecks and pirates were not the only dangers. A man cautioned his wife, "When you come, bring your gold ornaments, but do not wear them on the boat" (P.Mich. 3.214 [see also 8.468]). Then as now, tossing someone overboard left a clean crime scene (Jon. 1:15; cf. Acts 20:3).

SUMMARY

Most biblical characters, like their peers, rarely traveled far from home. It is commonly estimated that Jesus' ministry encompassed a distance no greater than one hundred miles from his home. His apostles, though, took advantage of the travel benefits of the Roman Empire. Paul was a far more experienced traveler than most, both by land and sea (Acts 27:9–10, 30–32), although he appears to have pushed the limits of safety on occasion. He mentions “sleepless nights and hunger” (2 Cor. 6:5) as well as being “in danger from rivers” and bandits (2 Cor. 11:26). In addition to what is reported in Acts 27, Paul was shipwrecked at least three other times (2 Cor. 11:25). Whether by land or sea, travel in ancient times was not for the fainthearted.

TRAPPER *See* Fowler.

TRAVEL *See* Transportation and Travel.

TREASURE, TREASURY Treasure was stored in the Jerusalem temple and palace (Josh. 6:24) and was collected from the spoils of war (Josh. 6:19), from offerings (2 Kings 12:4; Mark 12:41), and from royal gifts (2 Kings 12:18; 1 Chron. 29:3). The temple treasury contained gold, silver, other metals, and precious stones (1 Chron. 29:8). Treasuries also housed written records (Ezra 6:1). Treasure was stored in the small rooms that surrounded the sanctuary (1 Chron. 28:12; see also Jer. 38:11) and was guarded by Levites (1 Chron. 9:26). Several treasurers are named (1 Chron. 9:26; 26:20, 22; 2 Chron. 25:24). The Ethiopian eunuch who met Philip was a treasurer in the court of the Kandake (Acts 8:27). The treasury funded repairs to the temple (2 Kings 12:7; Ezra 7:20).

Invading kings frequently raided the temple treasury, including Shishak of Egypt (1 Kings 14:26), Jehoash of Israel (2 Kings 14:14), and finally Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon (2 Kings 24:13; Dan. 1:2), as foretold by Jeremiah (Jer. 15:13). On other occasions, the kings of Judah drew money from the treasury to make tribute payments to foreign rulers (1 Kings 15:18; 2 Kings 12:18; 16:8; 18:15). “Treasury” can also refer to a private account (Prov. 8:21).

Jesus taught that his followers should store up their treasures in heaven and not on earth (Matt. 6:19–21). Earthly treasures will be destroyed over time or perhaps even stolen. In this vein, he urged the rich young ruler to sell his possessions so he might have “treasure in heaven” (Matt. 19:21).

TREATY *See* Covenant.

TREE OF LIFE In Gen. 2:9 the tree of life is at the very center of the lush landscape of the garden of Eden. In Gen. 3:22–24 the man and the woman are exiled from the garden as a consequence of their disobedience, but more specifically they are barred from the immortality granted by eating the fruit of the tree. Humankind “must not be allowed to reach out . . . and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever.” A tree granting youth into old age is an image found also in other ancient Near Eastern literature (see the Epic of Gilgamesh) and in iconography of the ancient Near East, in which humans and animals are depicted reaching out to grasp for the tree or its fruit.

In the book of Proverbs the tree of life is a symbol of that which brings joy in life: wisdom (3:18), righteousness (11:30), “a longing fulfilled” (13:12), “a soothing tongue” (15:4). In Revelation the tree represents the reversal of the consequences of humankind’s disobedience in the garden. Eternal life is now again offered to those who persevere in Christ (Rev. 2:7; 22:14). And in Rev. 22:2 the tree of life is part of the scenery of the new Jerusalem. Its branches span over the river of the water of life, and its leaves are imbued with healing for the nations (cf. Ezek. 47:12). *See also* Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.

TREE OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOOD AND EVIL In Gen. 2–3 the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and the tree of life are the centerpiece of the verdant landscape of the garden of Eden. Before the formation of the woman, the man is explicitly commanded not to eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for the ensuing result would be death (2:16–17). Thus, the tree of knowledge is contrasted with the tree of life, whose fruit is imbued with immortality (3:22). Under the influence of the serpent's persuasion, the woman describes the fruit of the tree as "desirable for gaining wisdom," and the effect of eating the fruit upon the man and the woman was that "the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked" (3:6–7). The "knowledge of good and evil" represented by the fruit of this tree is a wisdom of humankind's own fashioning, a law independent of the revealed will of God in the commandment not to eat of the fruit. The consequence of eating the fruit is shame and banishment, not only from the garden itself, but also from the eternal life provided by the tree of life. *See also* Tree of Life.

TREES *See* Plants.

TRIAL OF JESUS Prior to his crucifixion, Jesus was subject to a Jewish pretrial examination and a formal trial before the Roman governor Pontius Pilate.

In the Gospels the primary components of this judicial process are (1) a private inquiry made by Annas (John 18:13–24); (2) an examination before the Sanhedrin (Matt. 26:57–68 // Mark 14:53–65 // Luke 22:54–71); (3) a hearing before Pilate (Matt. 27:11–14 // Mark 15:2–5 // Luke 23:2–5 // John 18:29–38); (4) a hearing before Herod Antipas (Luke 23:6–16); and (5) Pilate's verdict (Matt. 27:24–26 // Mark 15:15 // Luke 23:24–25 // John 19:16).

REASONS FOR TRIAL AND HISTORICITY

The reasons for the hastily devised trial are complex and are rooted in the particular socioreligious environment of Jerusalem at Passover. Jesus' triumphal entry and his demonstration in the temple were provocative actions that implied his messianic authority. The Judean leadership was fearful that Jesus would create a furor when close to a million Jewish pilgrims were in the environs of Jerusalem at Passover. In this incendiary atmosphere a messianic claim could prompt riots and revolution and force the Roman authorities to intervene militarily, resulting in a reorganizing of authority among the Judean aristocracy (a fear verbalized in John 11:47–53).

The historicity of the trial is questioned on a number of fronts. Would the high priest really convene an emergency nocturnal session of the Sanhedrin to do away with Jesus? Perhaps so, if the situation was desperate enough! A nocturnal hearing would allow Jesus to be tried by the Roman authorities first thing in the morning and to have Jesus taken care of before most Jerusalemites and pilgrims were awake and aware of what was going on. Another primary objection is that there were no Christian witnesses present to relay accounts of the proceedings, especially the private hearings. But one can respond by suggesting that there was probably a desperate curiosity among Jesus' followers and the crowds in general about what actually took place at the proceedings. Besides the fact that part of the trial took place in public, more information would have been available from attendants, guards, council members, and even from sympathizers with Jesus such as Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea. No one was sworn to secrecy over what transpired. What seems certain is that Jesus had a pretrial hearing with the Sanhedrin and a formal trial before Pilate.

THE JUDICIAL PROCESS

During the judicial processes a number of allegations were raised against Jesus. (1) *Being a false prophet who was leading the nation astray* (Matt. 27:63–64; Luke 23:2, 14). The background to this accusation derives from Deut. 13; 18, concerning false prophets and diviners who lead the nation into idolatry and make false prophecies. This charge is made explicit in the Babylonian Talmud: "Jesus was hanged on the eve of Passover. . . . He is going forth to be stoned because he practiced sorcery and enticed and led Israel astray" (*b. Sanh.* 43a [cf. 107b]). (2) *Speaking against the temple* (Matt. 26:61; Mark 14:58). What is "false" about the witnesses against Jesus is not that Jesus did not speak and act against the temple (see Matt. 23–24; Mark 13; Luke 21), but that their testimony did not agree and that they misunderstood Jesus to be saying that he would rebuild another temple of a kind similar to the first. (3) *Forbidding the payment of taxes* (Luke 23:2). (4) *Blasphemy for claiming to be the Son of God* (Matt. 26:65; Mark 14:64). (5) *Claiming to be the king of the Jews* (Mark 15:2; John 18:33).

According to the Fourth Gospel, Jesus initially was led to Annas, at which time he was briefly interviewed about "his disciples and his teaching" (John 18:19). Annas was the father-in-law of Caiaphas and had been the high priest previously (AD 6–15). High priest evidently was a lifetime office, which is why Annas was still addressed as "high priest" (John 18:22–23).

Jesus again was led out, this time to Caiaphas the current high priest. At this point Jesus had a "night trial" before Caiaphas (an act of questionable legality, according to rabbinic law). The basic flow of events includes Caiaphas conducting a cross-examination of Jesus (Matt. 26:59–66; Mark 14:55–64; Luke 22:67–71; John 18:24), Jesus being beaten and abused by his captors (Matt. 26:67–68; Mark 14:65; Luke 22:63–65), and then the Sanhedrin convening at dawn to ratify the night proceedings against Jesus (Matt. 27:1; Mark 15:1; Luke 22:66–71; John 18:28). During the proceedings a number of accusations were brought against Jesus, but the climax was Jesus' response to the high priest that he would see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven, which combines Dan. 7:13 with Ps. 110:1. The notion that Jesus would share the divine throne with God was deemed blasphemous by the high priest and settled and exceeded the messianic question put to Jesus. The participants of the proceedings condemned Jesus as "worthy of death" (Matt. 26:66; Mark 14:64).

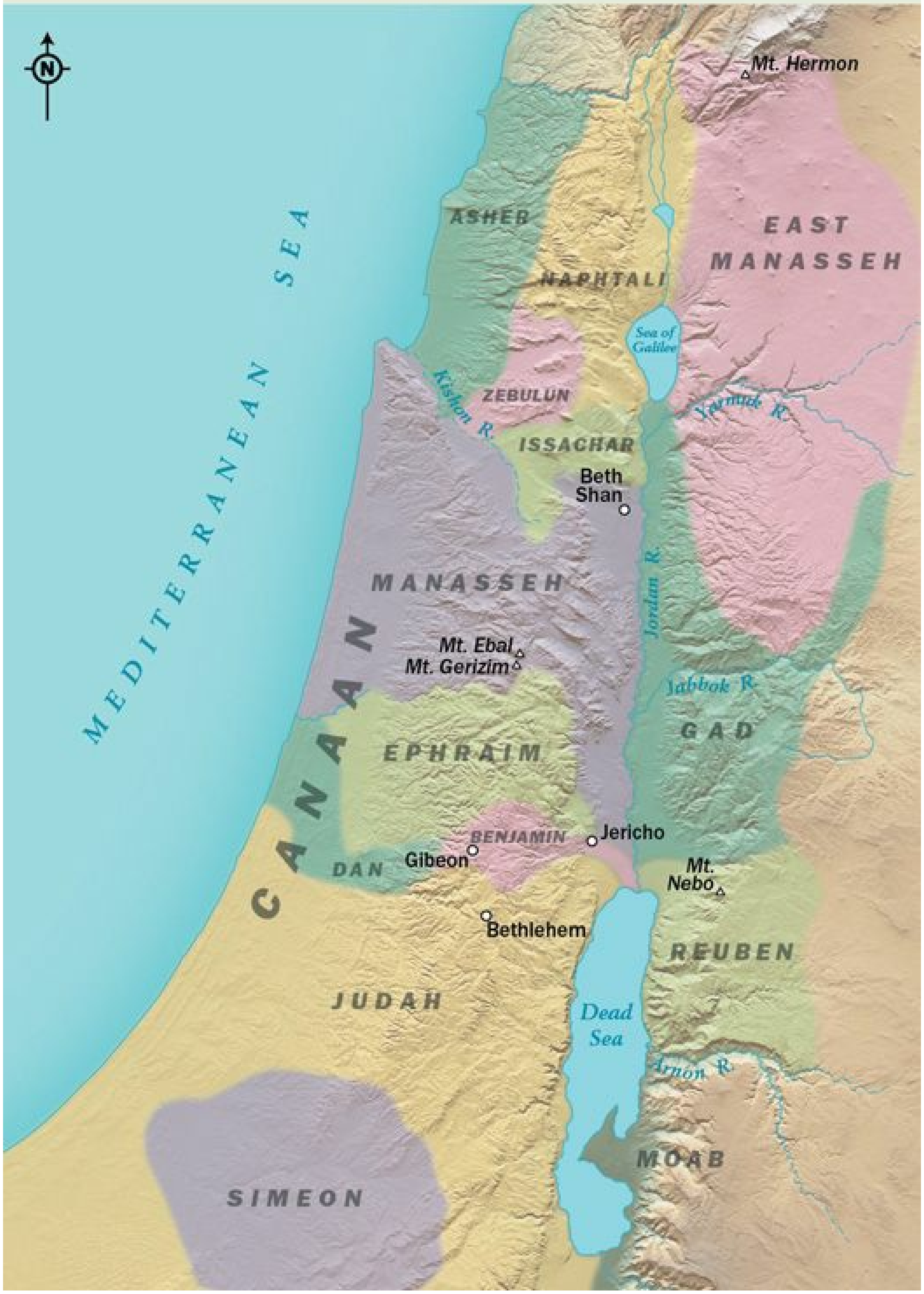
The gathering of the Sanhedrin probably is not a second trial, but more likely it is for the purpose of ratifying the charges made against Jesus. The decision of the Sanhedrin was that Jesus be handed over to Pilate (Matt. 27:2; Mark 15:1; Luke 23:1; John 18:28) for execution, as the Judean leadership did not have the right to exercise the death penalty without official approval (John 18:31). Since blasphemy was not a capital crime under Roman law, however, the delegation emphasized the political nature of Jesus' message in order to secure the death penalty. Before Pilate, Jesus was charged with a number of offenses, including leading the nation astray, forbidding payment of taxes to Caesar, and claiming to be a king (cf. Luke 23:2). The main features of this segment of the proceedings are the following: (1) Jesus is charged with making kingly claims; (2) Pilate proposes to release Jesus to the Judean crowd as their king, but the crowd chooses Barabbas instead; (3) Jesus is handed over for execution, before which he is mocked and ruthlessly beaten by the Roman soldiers. In all accounts Pilate is portrayed as feeble and self-interested, and his apparent sympathy for Jesus was born out of his habitual opposition to the designs of the high priest.

From a theological perspective, the trial narratives demonstrate that the kingdom of God comes through the kingship of the crucified, and that Jesus is the Suffering Servant of Isa. 53, who was led like a lamb to the slaughter and pierced for our transgressions.

TRIBES OF ISRAEL

SONS OF JACOB

Genesis 29–30, 35 records the birth of the sons of Jacob, which provides a covenantal and family basis for the later confederation of a dozen independent tribes of Semitic peoples. They shared a common history, culture, religion, and set of traditions that served for a time to bind them together as a single nation. According to the family records, the tribes were named after their forebears, who were born in the following manner. Jacob’s first (and unloved) wife, Leah, bore Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah, in that order. Then his beloved Rachel gave him her maid Bilhah, who bore Dan and Naphtali. Leah’s maid then bore Gad and Asher. Then Leah bore Issachar and Zebulun. Finally, Rachel bore Joseph and Benjamin. At root, the later history of the tribes is a family history, traceable to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Thus, the story of the tribes begins in the early second millennium BC.


THE TRIBAL ALLOTMENTS

N
Mt. Hermon
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
ASHER
NAPHTALI
EAST MANASSEH
Sea of Galilee
Kishon R.
ZEBULUN
Yarmuk R.
ISSACHAR
Beth Shan
MANASSEH
Jordan R.
CANAAN
Mt. Ebal
Mt. Gerizim
Jabbok R.
GAD
EPHRAIM
BENJAMIN
Jericho
Gibeon
DAN
Mt. Nebo
Bethlehem
REUBEN
JUDAH
Dead Sea
Arnon R.
MOAB
SIMEON

Genesis was written at a period considerably after the time of the patriarchs, and thus written with the awareness that the characterizations of the patriarchs reflected in some way the temperament of the individual tribes. The first story told about the actions of Jacob’s sons is how Simeon and Levi took terrible vengeance on the city of Shechem for the rape of their sister Dinah. This brought about Jacob’s rebuke. Jacob feared that this action would bring further retaliation upon his family (Gen. 34). The history of the patriarchs comes to its high point in the story of Joseph, an account that spans Gen. 37–50. Joseph was the brother revealed in dreams to be elected by God to rule. His brothers’ jealousy led them to seek to rid themselves of him. Reuben, the firstborn, is characterized as being the responsible one, wanting to do him no harm. But in Reuben’s absence, Judah led the others in selling

Joseph into slavery. God was with Joseph, however, and through a series of events God made Joseph the leader of Egypt, fulfilling the prophetic dreams.

Genesis connects this family story with later tribal history. As prophetic dreams revealed Joseph's destiny to rule over Egypt, Jacob's blessing in Gen. 49 reveals the destiny of the later tribes. Reuben lost his double-portion inheritance of the firstborn due to his dishonoring his father (Gen. 35:22). This honor is tacitly conferred on Joseph in Gen. 48. Jacob said that Levi would be dispersed among Israel. As the priestly tribe, Levi inherited no land. Judah was predicted to be the tribe of kings.

WILDERNESS AND CONQUEST

In the wilderness wanderings of Israel, the campsite was organized by tribe (Num. 2). At its center was the tabernacle. The tribe of Levi formed an inner circle that surrounded it. At the entrance to the tabernacle (facing east) were the priests, the sons of Aaron. The other divisions of Levi were the Merarites, the Gershonites, and the Kohathites. These together formed the inner circle that guarded the holy place. Levi was the holiest tribe of Israel, the only tribe allowed to maintain and service God's dwelling place. The outer perimeter of the encampment was formed by twelve tribes (the tribe of Joseph counted as two). The eastern front was dominated by Judah and included Issachar and Zebulun. Dan, Asher, and Naphtali were to the north; Reuben, Simeon, and Gad to the south; and to the west were Joseph (Ephraim and Manasseh) and Benjamin.

When the people were on the move, the priests went in the front carrying the ark of the covenant, following the pillar of cloud. When it came to rest over a place, there the priests would set down the ark. Behind them followed Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun. After them came the Gershonites and the Merarites, carrying the bundled tabernacle, which they set up around the ark when the people made camp. Reuben, Simeon, and Gad took their places. Then came the Kohathites, who carried the furnishings and vessels for the tabernacle. Next followed Joseph (Ephraim and Manasseh) and Benjamin. Finally, as a rearguard, came Dan, accompanied by Asher and Naphtali (Num. 10:11–33).

Once their sojourn in the wilderness was over, the Israelites began to conquer the land of Canaan. Joshua allotted portions of land to each tribe (Josh. 13–21). The descendants of Joseph constituted two tribes, Manasseh and Ephraim. Each of those two received an inheritance; thus, Joseph can be said to have received a double portion as though firstborn. The Jordan River formed a natural border down the middle of the land. To its east were parts of Manasseh, Gad, and Reuben. The other tribes were to the west. The southernmost tribe was Judah. Within Judah was Simeon, which over time was absorbed into Judah. Levi had no land for an inheritance, since Yahweh was Levi's inheritance—fulfilling Jacob's prophecy of Levi and Simeon being scattered throughout Israel. Immediately north of Judah were Dan and Benjamin. The remaining tribes were more northern still. So that they would not forget Yahweh, the tribes across the Jordan built an alternative altar, not for sacrifice but rather as a reminder of the true and living God (Josh. 22).

JUDGES

The history of the conquest underscores the fact that the tribes failed to drive out the inhabitants of the land completely. Many cities remained centers for non-Israelite culture and religion. "When Joshua had grown old, the LORD said to him, 'You are now very old, and there are still very large areas of land to be taken over'" (Josh. 13:1). Judges 1 lists many peoples that continued to live alongside the Israelites.

Some of these peoples became incorporated into the mix of tribes. Rahab and her family from

Jericho became integrated into the tribe of Judah (Josh. 2–6). The Gibeonites were a Canaanite people group who were incorporated into Israel (Josh. 9). Ruth the Moabite married into Judah (Ruth 4). Uriah the Hittite is an example of a Canaanite who was fully naturalized, to the extent that he kept himself ceremonially pure and fought in God's holy wars for Israel (2 Sam. 11:11).

The book of Judges records the relative success or failure of each tribe to subdue and settle its own territory, and Judah consistently stands out as superior in this respect. Judges 1:2 puts Judah first. Judah provided leadership and support to Simeon, helping it to fulfill its own calling (1:17). After describing Judah's success, Judg. 1 delineates the other tribes' failures.

Two stories at the end of Judges illustrate the character of Judah in this period. Whenever Bethlehem and the other cities of Judah are the setting, sojourners and others are treated hospitably, have no fears, and prosper. This is true also of the book of Ruth. But when folk travel elsewhere—to Moab or north to Ephraim or Benjamin—they meet only trouble. Ephraim provided no protection to Micah when the lawless Danites overran his house (Judg. 18). Moab brought only famine, barrenness, and death (Ruth 1).

But the worst case of all is the Benjamite city of Gibeah (Judg. 19–20). There, the sin of Sodom was repeated as men surrounded the host's house and demanded the sojourner. All Israel took up arms to destroy the wicked city and to punish the wicked tribe. As in the first two verses of Judges, God appointed Judah to the leadership position (Judg. 20:18). Judah then did to Benjamin what God had done to Sodom, almost wiping out the tribe.

UNITED KINGDOM

Nevertheless, when the tribes came together and demanded a king, the first king whom God gave them, Saul, was from the tribe of Benjamin (1 Sam. 9:17). Benjamin was situated midway between Judah of the south and the northern tribes. Saul was successful in leading the army of Israel, and for a time he enjoyed God's blessing. But in the end, God rejected him and sent Samuel the prophet to anoint a Bethlehemite, David, to become the next king. However, upon Saul's death, his son Ish-Bosheth (Ishbaal) claimed the throne (2 Sam. 2:8–9), around 1011 BC.

There followed a bitter civil war between the house of Saul, backed by the northern tribes, and the house of David, backed by Judah. After seven years, David had grown stronger and Ish-Bosheth weaker, until at Hebron David was finally acknowledged as king of all Israel (2 Sam. 5:3). David's throne would last for centuries, until the destruction of Jerusalem. In the NT, David's greater son Jesus inherited the throne. Thus, Jacob's prophecy that the tribe of Judah would hold the scepter was fulfilled.

The northern tribes did not forget that they had once fought against David. David was caught in a scandal when his troops were in battle, and this may have further lessened their loyalty to him (2 Sam. 12). When his son Absalom rebelled and proclaimed himself king, the northern tribes once more allied themselves against David, and another civil war ensued. Although David won back his throne, the dissatisfaction of the northern tribes with the house of David continued (2 Sam. 15–19).

After David died, Solomon inherited his throne (971 BC). Throughout his reign, Solomon placed burdens on the tribes. He divided his kingdom into administrative districts that did not exactly correspond to the tribal territories. Dan and Zebulun were folded into other territories, and Asher seemed to have been ceded to Phoenicia (1 Kings 4). Thus, Solomon's kingdom systematically weakened tribal identities. He laid a levy upon the tribes of Israel of thousands of men to provide a labor force for his building projects (1 Kings 5). Solomon built and consecrated the temple, and Jerusalem thus became both the political and religious center of the nation. The price for this, however, was the exacerbated discontent of the northern tribes.

Upon Solomon’s death, the tribes confronted his son Rehoboam with a demand to lighten Solomon’s “harsh labor and . . . heavy yoke” (1 Kings 12:4). Rehoboam foolishly replied, “My father made your yoke heavy; I will make it even heavier. My father scourged you with whips; I will scourge you with scorpions” (1 Kings 12:14). The northern tribes finally abandoned David’s house and thus became an independent political and religious state (931 BC).

DIVIDED KINGDOM

Throughout the period of the divided kingdom, tribal identities became less important, for their loyalties were now dominated by the reigning king of either nation. The border between the northern and the southern kingdoms was more or less a straight line, from Joppa on the west near the Mediterranean, to the upper tip of the Dead Sea. This cut through Dan, Ephraim, and Benjamin, leaving Simeon surrounded by Judah. Jerusalem was just south of the border. The first king of the north, Jeroboam, placed golden calves just north of the border, in Bethel, and also at the northern end of his kingdom, in the city of Dan. These served as cultic alternatives to the temple in Jerusalem for the duration of the northern kingdom. He also modified the law of Moses to allow for non-Levitical priests and a different liturgical calendar. The northern kingdom was called “Israel” (its capital was Samaria), and the southern kingdom was called “Judah” (1 Kings 12:25–33).

For half a century war ensued between the two kingdoms. The two formed an alliance during the reigns of Ahab and his sons. King Ahab of Israel gave his daughter Athaliah to be married to King Jehoshaphat’s son Jehoram. Together the kingdoms fought against common enemies, such as Syria and Moab. They successfully turned back the superpower of the day, Assyria.

Under King Ahab and his wife Jezebel, Baal worship was aggressively promoted at the expense of traditional Yahwism. During this period Elijah and Elisha called the people back to the God of their ancestors, but with little success (1 Kings 17–2 Kings 13). A small group of faithful worshipers called the “sons of the prophets” did remain true to Yahweh, but most of Israel abandoned him. Hosea and Amos later also warned Israel, but their calls went unheeded. Ahab and Jezebel’s daughter Athaliah married Jehoram, and both of them promoted Baal worship in Judah just as in Israel. Thus, the people of Yahweh had become the people of Baal. Jezebel’s son Joram ruled Israel upon Ahab’s death, and Athaliah’s son Ahaziah ruled Judah upon Jehoram’s death.

Elisha secretly anointed one of Joram’s generals, Jehu, to bring the Omride dynasty to an end in Israel and to become the next king (2 Kings 9). Jehu killed both kings and Jezebel, and he destroyed all remnants of Ahab’s family. He also slaughtered the worshipers of Baal: “so Jehu destroyed Baal worship in Israel” (10:28). Upon the death of her son the king, Athaliah seized the throne and did to David’s house what Jehu had done to Ahab’s: she had every family member killed.

But one infant survived: Joash. He was secretly raised in the temple of Yahweh until he was seven years old. Then his supporters proclaimed him king. Athaliah cried out, “Treason! Treason!” (2 Kings 11:14), and the priest Jehoiada had her put to death. The place and objects of Baal worship were destroyed, ending state-sponsored Baalism in Judah (11:17–18).

FALL OF BOTH KINGDOMS

After both kingdoms’ period of infatuation with Baal (under the domination of the Omrides), their history as nations continued to their final fall. In Israel, the people never gave up Jeroboam’s perversion of the law of Moses. In Judah, kings varied widely in their regard for the law of Moses;

sometimes they were faithful, sometimes very unfaithful. Meanwhile, Assyria was a constant threat. During the reign of the good king Hezekiah, Judah was overrun by the forces of the Assyrian king Sennacherib. God miraculously delivered Jerusalem (2 Kings 18). However, there was no such deliverance for Israel. Samaria was besieged for three years and finally taken (722 BC). Most of the population was deported (17:5–18). Other people groups were transplanted there who learned the law of Moses and feared Yahweh along with their own gods (17:24–41).

At this point in their history, only Judah remained as a political entity; the northern tribes of Israel were lost. After the faithful king Hezekiah, Judah's next significant king was Manasseh. He is described in 2 Kings as the king most offensive to God. To categorize him, it was not enough to compare him unfavorably with David (see 2 Kings 14:3) or to equate him with Ahab and Jezebel (see 8:18). Rather, Manasseh was compared to the pagan nations that Joshua had driven out of the land, which were destroyed because of their wickedness. Manasseh was the last straw. Because of his complete abandonment to idolatry, God determined to make an end of Jerusalem (21:11–15).

Yet still the judgment was delayed. Two years after Manasseh's death, Josiah reigned on the throne of David, and early in his career the Book of the Law was rediscovered in the temple. Josiah called for national repentance, and for a time Judah got rid of its idols and returned to God (2 Kings 23). But this repentance was relatively short-lived.

Josiah was the last good king of Judah. God sent Judah prophets such as Jeremiah, but they went unheeded. In the end, God sent King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon up against his own beloved city, Jerusalem. Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed, many of its people killed, and most of those who were left carried into exile to Babylon.

EXILE AND RESTORATION

The fall of Jerusalem in 586 BC essentially ended the existence of the tribes as independent political entities. For the remainder of their history they were, almost without exception, under the heel of great foreign powers. At this point, they were called "Jews." Nebuchadnezzar conscripted some of the younger men to serve in his court (Dan. 1). The deportees remained in Babylon until its empire fell to the Medes and the Persians under Cyrus the Great in 539 BC.

Cyrus issued a decree at that time allowing the Jews to return to their ancestral land and rebuild the temple of Yahweh. They began to migrate back to the land of promise and began their efforts to rebuild the temple and the city of Jerusalem. These efforts continued under a succession of Persian kings. Although the Jews were home and able once again to worship God in the way he had specified in the law, Nehemiah lamented that they were little more than slaves, since they were subject to Persia (Neh. 9:36). Gone was the dynasty of David, gone were most of the tribes, and gone was the greatness of days past. The sins of their fathers had brought them to this sad situation.

In the return to the land, the genealogies of the returnees were very important. These preserved family and tribal identities so that their lineages would not be lost. The books that originated in the restoration period preserve these lists (see 1 Chron. 1–9).

Persia and the entire ancient world eventually were conquered by Alexander the Great. His successors divided the land after his death; two generals controlled Syria to the north and Egypt to the south of Palestine. They constantly squabbled over their borders, which included Palestine. Finally, Antiochus IV Epiphanes (r. 175–164 BC), king of Syria, decided to turn Jerusalem into a Greek city. He brought great pressure on the Jews to abandon their faith. Jews found with a copy of the law were killed, and circumcision of infants was forbidden. He ransacked the temple and placed an idol in it. Some Jews abandoned their faith, but others resisted. Finally, Antiochus died, and the Jews for a short time enjoyed independence. Over time, the Roman Empire engulfed Palestine. Herod the Great ruled as king of the Jews for Rome in the years 37–4 BC. Upon Herod’s death, his kingdom was divided among his sons.

NEW TESTAMENT

The Jews in Judea in Jesus’ day had learned to find their national, ethnic, and cultural identity in the law of Moses. They dutifully followed the purity laws, especially in keeping the Sabbath. Their religion was centered on the temple, and they kept Passover and the other prescribed obligations. Although the one remaining tribe, Judah, no longer could boast of a king on the throne of David or even independence, it was a nation whose people thought of themselves as Yahweh’s people. By Jesus’ time, they anticipated that a descendant of David, a Messiah, would arise to restore the lost kingdom of David.

Although the northern tribes were lost, there was some limited continuing awareness of tribal identity in this period. The book of Esther’s Mordecai is from the tribe of Benjamin, and there are a number of references to Benjamin in the intertestamental literature (e.g., 2 Macc. 3:4). Anna the prophetess was from the tribe of Asher (Luke 2:36). Paul knew himself to be from the tribe of Benjamin (Rom. 11:1; Phil. 3:5). He used his knowledge of this fact to help bolster his argument that he was truly a Jew. The Levites also survived the exile, and the priestly caste continued. The kingly and priestly tribes remained, with a few others.

Jesus is presented in Matt. 1 as a direct descendant of David through the line of kings. He is the promised Messiah (John 1:41), the “Lion of the tribe of Judah” (Rev. 5:5). Jesus promised his twelve disciples that some day they would rule over the tribes of Israel (Matt. 19:28). In Christ, the definition of the tribes of Israel had changed. Gentiles were now grafted onto the olive tree of Israel (Rom. 11:17). Revelation 7:4–10 records the number from each tribe who bear the seal of the Lamb. After hearing this, John turned and saw them: they were revealed to be a vast company of the redeemed from every tribe on earth. Thus, the church had spiritually become the twelve tribes of Israel.

In AD 70 the temple was destroyed. Soon afterward, Israel was scattered, not to be a nation again in the promised land until 1948.

TRIBULATION The NT conception of tribulation is perhaps best summarized in Paul’s pastoral reminder, “We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God” (Acts 14:22). The Greek term used here for “hardship” is *thlipsis*.

In the NT, *thlipsis* may refer generally to the sufferings and afflictions that occur in the normal course of human living (John 16:21; Acts 7:11; 1 Cor. 7:28; James 1:27). In its more common and specific usage, “tribulation” relates directly to the experience of the people of God as a consequence of their faithful proclamation of the gospel. Thus, in the parable of the sower, “tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word” (Matt. 13:21; Mark 4:17 ESV).

One of the primary aspects of the biblical view of tribulation relates to the tribulation and suffering of Christ as the pattern for the church (Rev. 1:9). That his followers would suffer tribulation was made explicit by Jesus to his followers in the Farewell Discourse (John 14–17). There he informs them, “In the world you will have tribulation” (John 16:33 ESV).

Closely related to the impending tribulation that confronts all believers is the NT affirmation that the sufferings of Christ serve as the model for the tribulation of the people of God. Jesus thus warns the disciples, “If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first” (John 15:18; cf. 15:20). Paul continues this concept in Col. 1:24 (cf. 2 Cor. 1:5; 4:10–12; Phil. 3:10; 1 Pet. 4:13). The tribulation that the people of God experience serves to equip them in a variety of ways. Most significantly, tribulation results in the transformation of the people of God into the likeness of Christ (Rom. 5:3–5; 2 Cor. 4:8–12).

The book of Acts records the fulfillment of Jesus' warning to his followers: it was because of persecution that the church was scattered (Acts 8:1). Later, Paul notes that he has experienced tribulation (2 Cor. 1:8), as did the church in Thessalonica (1 Thess. 1:6) and the recipients of Hebrews (Heb. 10:33). The reality of "tribulation" is seen in the exhortation of John to the church in Smyrna (Rev. 2:9).

Another important aspect of the tribulations that await the people of God in the NT era is the relationship of tribulation to the kingdom of God (cf. Matt. 24:9–14; Rev. 1:9; 7:14). Many hold to the notion that there will be an intensification of tribulation immediately prior to the return of Christ (Matt. 24:31; Mark 13:24).

The "great tribulation" of Rev. 7:14 has been interpreted in a variety of ways. Some understand this as a future event limited to seven or three and one-half years. Many others, however, associate this event with the tribulation, suffering, and affliction of the people of God throughout the entire era from the resurrection to the second coming. The expression "great tribulation" alludes to Dan. 12:1. The Danielic context incorporates a time of persecution and suffering among the people of God. The use of "tribulation" in Revelation (Rev. 1:9; 2:9–10, 22; 7:14) corresponds with the persecution of the people of God. A comparison with Matt. 24:21 confirms this conclusion. Therefore, regardless of how one reads the "great tribulation" in Rev. 7:14, as present or future reality, it appears that this tribulation refers to the suffering of God's people and not to an exemption from it (cf. John 17:15).

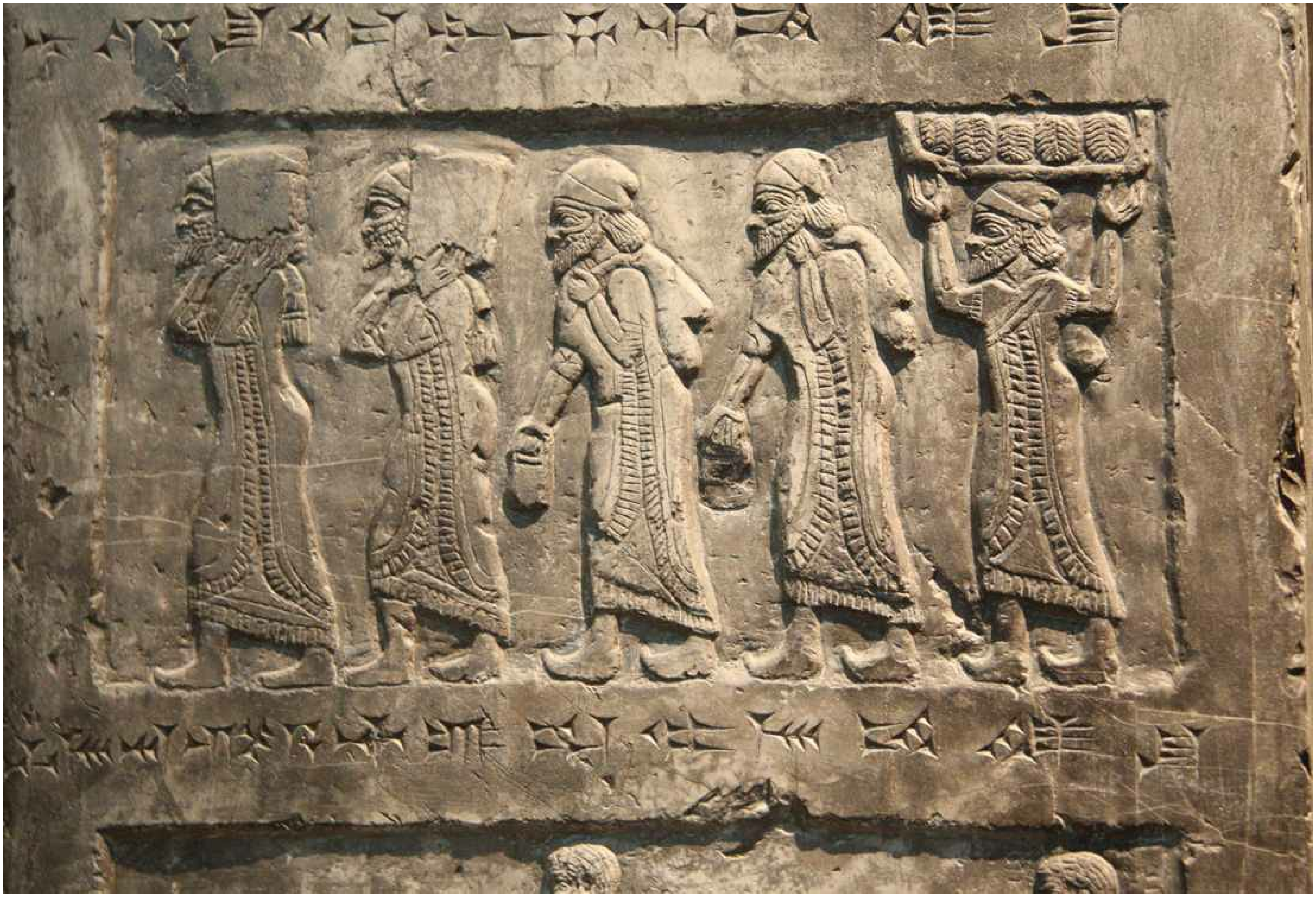
TRIBUNE A high-ranking Roman military officer. Translated "commander" in the NIV, the Greek word *chiliarchos* designates an officer (Lat. *tribunus*) in charge of a cohort, which ideally consisted of six hundred soldiers, including over a hundred cavalry (Mark 6:21; John 18:12; Acts 21:31–33, 37; 22:24, 26–29; 23:10, 15, 17–19, 22; 24:22; 25:23; Rev. 6:15; 19:18). A legion consisted of ten cohorts and typically had four to six tribunes. At the arrest of Jesus (John 18:12), it is likely that only a small detachment from a cohort was present.

TRIBUTE In the ancient biblical world, tribute was a payment made by one state to another, which was a mark of subjugation. The state required to pay the tribute (the vassal) often was a conquered people. The payment could consist of precious metals, currency, commodities, animals, and even human beings. Tribute allowed the sovereign state (the suzerain) to increase residual capital and gain large amounts of valuable materials, at the same time impoverishing and severely weakening the subjugated state (making future rebellions unlikely). Its administration was straightforward: every year the vassal was required to bring tribute to the suzerain. If such a payment was not made, it was a tacit sign of rebellion, and the suzerain sent a military force to punish the rebels.

At times, Israelite kings had occasions to impose tribute on other nations (e.g., 2 Sam. 8:2, 6; 1 Kings 4:21; 2 Chron. 17:11; cf. Ezra 4:20). However, in most instances described in the Bible, Israel appears to be on the other side of the tributary arrangement and makes monetary payments to foreign nations. Some of these instances are clear examples of Israel paying regular tribute payments to their overlord (e.g., Judg. 3:15; 2 Kings 23:33; Ezra 4:13), while others refer to bribes paid to foreign nations in order to secure military assistance against another enemy (1 Kings 15:18; 2 Kings 16:8) or settlement payments made to an attacker in exchange for its withdrawal (2 Kings 12:18;

18:15–16). On other occasions, the wealth of Israel is taken by foreign monarchs as spoils of war rather than as regular tribute (e.g., 1 Kings 14:26; 2 Kings 24:13–14). However, in nearly all these circumstances such payments resulted in Israel being required to give regular tributary payments thereafter to the foreign monarch.

Extrabiblical inscriptions concur with the biblical picture of Israelite kings paying tribute to foreign monarchs. Assyrian inscriptions list many Israelite/Judahite kings (Jehu, Ahaz, Menahem, Hoshea, Hezekiah, and Manasseh) as having brought tribute to Assyria at one time or another during their reigns. Such tributary practices continued under the hegemony of the Babylonians and the Persians (cf. Ezra 4:13, 20; Neh. 5:4).



Relief from the Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser III, showing tribute bearers from Israel (858–824 BC)

TRIGON A musical instrument that was played in the Babylonian court (Dan. 3:5, 7, 10, 15 [NIV: "lyre"; KJV: "sackbut"]). Its exact nature is unknown. Some believe it was a seven-stringed harp with a rich, dark tone; others, that it was a triangular, four-stringed harp that had a high and harsh tone. The underlying Aramaic word is *sabbekha'*. *See also* Sackbut.

TRINITY The biblical writers proclaim that only one God exists, yet they also refer to three persons as "God." The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are all God. Furthermore, these three persons relate to one another as self-conscious individuals. Jesus prays to the Father (John 17). The Father speaks from heaven concerning the Son (Matt. 3:17; Luke 3:22). Jesus vows to send the Spirit as "Advocate" after his ascension, and he will do what Jesus himself did while he was among us (John 16:7–8). The challenge of Christian theology, therefore, is to formulate a doctrine of God that captures all these elements, each of which surfaces in both Testaments.

OLD TESTAMENT

In the OT, evidence for the Trinity appears mostly at the implicit level. Yahweh is called "Father" in Isaiah (63:16; 64:8), Jeremiah (3:4, 19; 31:9), and Malachi (2:10). Isaiah declares, "But you are our Father, though Abraham does not know us or Israel acknowledge us; you, LORD, are our Father, our Redeemer from of old is your name" (Isa. 63:16). Yahweh identifies himself as "Father" implicitly when he claims Israel as his "son" (Hos. 11:1), and the same principle applies to Ps. 2:7, where God declares to his anointed, "You are my son; today I have become your father." These cases do not compare in numbers with the NT evidence, but a person thought of as "God the Father" certainly appears in the OT.

Messianic texts of the OT introduce us to God the Son. In Isa. 9:6 a "child is born" who will be called "Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." The day of "Immanuel," or "God with us," is foreshadowed in Isa. 7:14 (cf. Matt. 1:22), while Isa. 40:3–5 anticipates the appearance of the Lord "in the wilderness" (cf. Matt. 3:3). Daniel sees "one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven" being given "authority, glory and sovereign power" (Dan. 7:13–14). In Ps. 110:1 Yahweh says to David's "Lord," "Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet."

Similarly, the OT seems to distinguish the Spirit of God from Yahweh while implying the Spirit's own personality. Genesis 1:2 makes that case, as does Exod. 31:3, where Yahweh fills Bezalel with the "Spirit of God" (cf. Exod. 35:31; Num. 11:29). In 1 Sam. 16:14 a contrast is made between the "Spirit of the LORD" that leaves Saul and an "evil spirit from the LORD" that torments him; also we find a repentant David pleading that God would not take away his "Holy Spirit" (Ps. 51:11). The Spirit can be put on persons by God, with the result that they prophesy (Isa. 61:1; Joel 2:28–29) and do what pleases him (Ezek. 36:26–27). In the OT, therefore, we see two persons (the Son and the Holy Spirit) who are both God and also distinguishable from one to whom they answer and by whom they are sent.

NEW TESTAMENT

The NT contains abundant evidence for "God the Father," often because of Jesus' teaching. The "Father" appears several times in the Sermon on the Mount (e.g., Matt. 5:16; 6:6–9, 14, 18, 26, 32; 7:11). Matthew 7:21 stands out because of Jesus' reference to "*my* Father who is in heaven," by which he identifies himself as the Son (see also Matt. 15:13; 16:17; 18:10; and Luke 24:49). Paul's greetings normally come from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, as seen in Rom. 1:7: "Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ" (also 1 Cor. 1:3; 2 Cor. 1:2; Gal. 1:1–3; 1 Tim. 1:2; 2 Tim. 1:2). Paul introduces the Father and the Son in 1 Cor. 8:6: "For us there is but one God, the Father, from whom all things came and for whom we live; and there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things came and through whom we live" (see also 1 Cor. 15:24; 2 Cor. 11:31; Eph. 1:3; Phil. 2:22). Other significant texts include Heb. 1:5; 1 Pet. 1:2–3; in the latter, the scattered believers are those "who have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of

God the Father, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, to be obedient to Jesus Christ and sprinkled with his blood. . . . Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ!" The NT evidence for "God the Father" is clear.

Biblical texts that point to the deity of Christ supply evidence for the second claim: the Son is God. Some of the texts listed above say as much, but one can take this case further. In context, John's prologue refers to Jesus as the "Word" and proclaims that he was "with God" and "was God" (John 1:1). Jesus also relates to the Father in ways that imply his own deity, as he declares in John 10:30, "I and the Father are one." After significant doubting, Thomas confesses the deity of Christ in John 20:28: "My Lord and my God!" NT passages that identify Jesus as the "Son of God" point to his deity, as Peter does in Matt. 16:16: "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." Even demons identify Jesus as the Son. They call out, "What do you want with us, Son of God? . . . Have you come here to torture us before the appointed time?" (Matt. 8:29; cf. Mark 5:7). The so-called Christ Hymn of Phil. 2:6–11 puts Jesus on the level with God, saying that he did not consider "equality with God something to be used to his own advantage." The author of Hebrews declares that Jesus is "the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being" (1:3). Colossians 1:15–16 says that Jesus is the "image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation" and the one by whom "all things were created," and Col. 1:19 states that "God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him." According to Titus 2:13, Jesus is "our great God and Savior." The entire sequence of Rev. 4–5 highlights the deity of Christ, culminating in the praise "To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power, for ever and ever!" as both the Enthroned One and the Lamb are worshiped as God (5:13–14).

The NT writers underscore both the deity and the distinctive personality of the Holy Spirit. Jesus is conceived in Mary's womb by the Spirit's power (Matt. 1:18–20), and when Jesus is baptized, the Spirit descends upon him as a dove (Matt. 3:16; Mark 1:10). Jesus drives out demons by the Spirit, and one dare not speak against the Spirit when he does so (Matt. 12:28–32). Luke's Gospel puts added emphasis on the ministry of the Spirit, as we also see in Acts. He empowers various people to praise and prophesy (Luke 1:41, 67) and to be witnesses for Christ (Acts 1:8; 2:4, 17–18, 38). Sinners can lie to the Holy Spirit (Acts 5:3, 9), and the Holy Spirit bears witness along with the apostles to the risen Christ (5:32). In John's Gospel, the Spirit becomes the counselor and teacher of the disciples, reminding them of their Lord's instructions (John 14:26; 16:13). The Spirit brings assurance of sonship (Rom. 8:16) and helps disciples when they pray (8:26). This person even knows the very thoughts of God (1 Cor. 2:11). Accordingly, the Great Commission requires baptism in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (Matt. 28:19). All three members of the Trinity have a part in the advancement of the kingdom, the Spirit no less than the Father and the Son.

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN FATHER, SON, AND SPIRIT

The evidence considered thus far demonstrates that three persons are called "God" in Scripture: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. But the Scriptures also point to a chain of command in their relationship to one another. The Son obeys the Father, and the Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son to apply the work of the cross to the church. This "functional subordination" of the Son to the Father, some might argue, would follow simply from the analogy chosen by God to reveal himself to us. The "Son" would obey his "Father," not vice versa, though they share a common dignity as God, just as a human father and son share a common humanity. But the NT writers expressly tell us that they relate to each other in this way. In Matt. 11:27 (cf. Luke 10:22) Jesus announces, "All things have been committed to me by my Father" (cf. John 3:35; 5:22). The latter transfers authority to the former as his subordinate. The Father even (for a season) knows more than the Son regarding the last days: “About that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father” (Matt. 24:36), though he also dignifies the Son: “For the Father loves the Son and shows him all he does” (John 5:20). The Son’s commitment to please his heavenly Father is a prominent theme of the NT, as Jesus declares in John 5:19: “The Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does.” No text brings out this dependence of the Son upon the Father more clearly than Heb. 5:7–8, where the Son is said to have “offered up prayers and petitions with fervent cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. Son though he was, he learned obedience from what he suffered.” It is debated by theologians whether this functional subordination relates only to the period of the Son’s earthly ministry, or whether it is an eternal subordination.

The Spirit, though equal in personality and dignity with the Father and the Son, proceeds from them to apply the work of the cross and empower the church for ministry. In John 14:26 Jesus says, “The Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.” In John 15:26 Jesus announces that he also sends the Spirit out: “When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father—the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father—he will testify about me.” The Spirit only conveys what he has received: “He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come” (John 16:13). The same “chain of command” appears in John 16:15, where Jesus says, “All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will receive from me what he will make known to you.”

TRINITARIAN HERESIES

The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are God, while being distinguishable persons. The Son obeys the Father; and these two persons of the Trinity send out the Holy Spirit to implement our deliverance from sin. A defensible explanation of the Trinity will respect all these dynamics, taking special care not to illustrate them with misleading images or simply lapse into various forms of polytheism. One of the earliest heresies of the church came from Marcion, a second-century theologian who distinguished the Father of Jesus from the supposedly vindictive God of the OT, which leaves us with more than one God. Later came the heresies of modalism and subordinationism (or Arianism). Modalists claimed that the persons of the Trinity are no more than guises worn by the one person of God. One minute God is the Father, the next he is the Son or the Holy Spirit. Subordinationists such as Arius (died AD 336) went beyond the functionality of the NT’s chain of command, arguing that the Son and the Holy Spirit are not themselves God but are *essentially* subordinate to him. Jehovah’s Witnesses have fallen into this latter error, suggesting that Jesus is “a god” but not the Creator God.

These early heresies pressed the church to refine its understanding of the Trinity. In his response to Marcion’s error, Tertullian coined precise language to describe the persons of the Godhead, so that God’s “threeness” and “oneness” are preserved. He used the Latin term *trinitas* to describe the Christian God and argued that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit share the same “substance.” The Son (also, then, the Holy Spirit) is not simply of “like substance” (Gk. *homoiousios*) with God the Father, but rather is “consubstantial” (Gk. *homoousios*) with him: the Son is God, and so is the Holy Spirit. The Nicene Creed of AD 325 incorporated this explanation and, in so doing, also set aside the idea that either the Son or the Holy Spirit was created by God, as the Arian heresy requires. Nicaea also rejected adoptionism, which regards Jesus as a man whom God promoted by endowing him with supernatural powers.

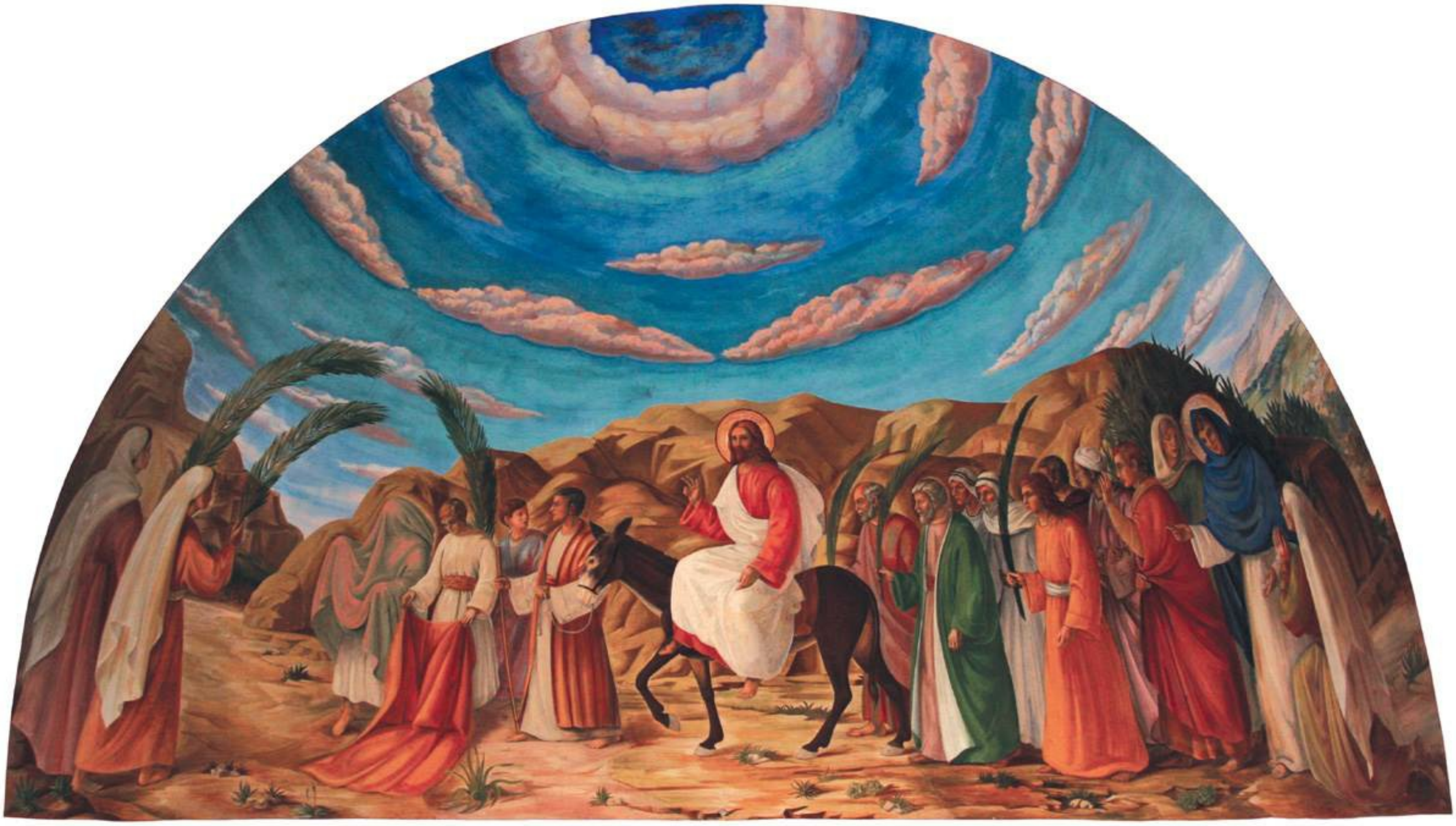
Each of these heresies—plus, say, the strict monotheism of Islam—attempts to relieve the tension seen among the claims that constitute the Trinity; however, orthodox Christians will remember that tensions and paradoxes are not automatic contradictions. No philosopher or theologian has ever expressly demonstrated that the Trinity entails logical nonsense, and Christianity's detractors carry the burden of proof in this case. It is one thing to allege that an idea is contradictory, and quite another thing to show with an argument that it is so. On the positive side, the Trinity must remain a central doctrine of the church because it affects all the others, especially the entire work of redemption. If God is not triune, then Jesus is not God; and if he is not God, then he cannot save us, nor can we worship him as our Lord. The sacrifice that he offers for our sin would not, in that case, be supremely valuable. Consider also the application to us of what Christ has done. If the Holy Spirit is not God, then he cannot speak for God as one who knows perfectly his thoughts and gives us the word of God, our Bible. Scripture indicates that God is triune, and sinners need him to be so.

TRIPOLIS *See* Tarpelites.

TRIUMPHAL ENTRY The occasion on which Jesus entered Jersualem during a Passover celebration shortly before his arrest and crucifixion (Matt. 21:1–11; Mark 11:1–11; Luke 19:28–40; John 12:12–19). Each of the four evangelists emphasizes different aspects of this event. The three Synoptic Gospels include two parts to the story: Jesus sends two disciples to acquire a colt, and he rides the colt into Jerusalem while receiving accolades from onlookers. Luke also adds the brief detail of a complaint from certain Pharisees and Jesus' reply to them (Luke 19:39–40). The Gospel of John, however, differs from these accounts by not including the story of Jesus sending his disciples for the colt. There are other differences among the four as well. For example, Matthew indicates that the disciples were to acquire two animals, while the other Gospels make mention of only one (Matt. 21:2; Mark 11:2; Luke 19:30; John 12:14). Such differences need not lead to undue skepticism surrounding the historicity of the event, as it is likely that each writer focused on different features.

The mode of Jesus' arrival in Jerusalem represented a deeply symbolic action meant to evoke images of a messianic or kingly figure for Israel. Jesus, by entering in the manner in which he did, was providing a messianic demonstration; he was, in effect, claiming to be Israel's long-awaited Messiah. Zechariah 9:9–17 is an important OT passage that functions as background to this issue. This prophetic text speaks of Israel's king coming to his people "lowly and riding on a donkey" (9:9). This connotation would have been foremost in the minds of those present during the entry of Jesus into the royal city who were proclaiming their loyalty to him. Jesus was acting out and thereby fulfilling the prophetic promises of Zechariah, for which the people of Israel had long waited. The words of Ps. 118:26 are echoed in the cries of the jubilant crowd that hailed Jesus as the arriving Messiah of Israel, as their reference to Jesus as "Son of David" reflects an understanding of him as a messianic figure (Matt. 21:9; Mark 11:9–10; Luke 19:38; John 12:13). In all four Gospels the triumphal entry of Jesus into the holy city of Jerusalem reinforces the image of him as the Messiah.

TROAS The primary seaport of the northwestern region of the province of Asia during the NT era, it was located on the Aegean Sea in what is modern-day Turkey. Founded in the fourth century BC, it was named "Alexandria Troas" in honor of Alexander the Great. Paul's vision of a man from Macedonia pleading for Paul to visit his area took place here, prompting the apostle to depart Troas for the region (Acts 16:8–11). In 2 Cor. 2:12–13 Paul refers to this time spent in Troas. A few years later Paul again was in the city, during which time he restored Eutychus after a fall from the third floor of a building (Acts 20:5–12). In 2 Tim. 4:13 Paul asks Timothy to “bring the cloak that I left with Carpus at Troas.”



A painting of the triumphal entry, from the Church at Bethpage

TROGYLLIUM A settlement (modern Santa Maria) on the like-named peninsula of Asia Minor that extends westward toward the island of Samos. The Western text of Acts 20:15 suggests that, at the end of his third missionary campaign, Paul’s ship stopped at Trogyllium before continuing to Miletus.

TROPHIMUS Trophimus is mentioned three times in the NT as an associate of Paul (Acts 20:4; 21:29; 2 Tim. 4:20). In Acts, Luke identifies him as a Gentile Christian from Ephesus who accompanied Paul in delivering the collection to Jerusalem. Paul was falsely accused of bringing a Gentile into the temple because he had been seen with Trophimus in Jerusalem. In 2 Tim. 4:20 Paul says that he left Trophimus sick in Miletus. Since Paul did not pass by Miletus on the way to his Roman imprisonment, this must either be another Trophimus or evidence for a second Roman imprisonment.

TRUMPET *See* Horn; Music, Instruments, Dancing; Shofar.

TRUST *See* Faith, Faithfulness.

TRUTH While a modern understanding of the word “truth” suggests a direct correspondence to fact or reality, Scripture presents truth in broader terms.

Old Testament. The OT not only portrays truth as an honest factual account but also places it within a relationship characterized by faithfulness and reliability. The Hebrew word translated as "truth," *'emet*, also is translated as "faithfulness," "security," "reliability." The word often appears juxtaposed to words that involve a relationship, including "love" (Ps. 26:3), "kindness" (Gen. 24:27), "mercy" (Ps. 40:11), "justice" (Isa. 59:14–15), and "righteousness" (Isa. 48:1). Truth is attributed primarily not to external facts, but rather to a person or community in faithfulness.

Often described as something that belongs to God (Ps. 25:5), truth is associated with his love (26:3). Yahweh is the God of truth (31:5) and is near to all who call on him in truth (145:18). God's truth protects (140:11) and guides (43:3). Following God means walking in his truth (26:3). God speaks the truth (Isa. 45:19) and values truth (Prov. 12:22), and he expects his people to do the same (Prov. 23:23).

Often involving speech, truth is a crucial element for justice in a community, especially in a court setting. A truthful witness gives an honest testimony and brings healing, but a false witness tells lies and brings destruction (Prov. 12:17–18). Yet only the truth will endure (12:19). Truth is needed to make sound judgments (Zech. 8:16). The absence of truth in Israel's society is denounced by the prophets, who declare truth to have stumbled (Isa. 59:14) and even to have perished (Jer. 7:28). In Jer. 5:1 it is said that God will forgive the entire city of Jerusalem if one person is found who deals honestly and seeks the truth (cf. Gen. 18:26–32). No such person is found. Nevertheless, it is God's vision for Jerusalem to be called the "City of Truth" (Zech. 8:3 NASB, NKJV).

Several OT narratives display how truth may not be evident in every relationship. In 1 Kings 22:16 (// 2 Chron. 18:15) King Ahab makes the prophet Micaiah repeatedly swear to be telling God's truth because he (rightly) suspects the prophet of lying. As an Egyptian ruler, Joseph requires his brothers to prove the truth of their words (Gen. 42:16), perhaps keeping in mind the history of his ancestor Abraham's dealings with the Egyptian king (12:10–20). Sometimes the truth of one relationship holds priority over duties involved in another relationship. For example, in Exod. 1:15–21 the Hebrew midwives have a truthful relationship with (Hebrew) babies and with God even as they lie to the king of Egypt.

New Testament. In the NT, truth signifies the gospel (Eph. 1:13) as well as Jesus himself (John 14:6). Whereas Pilate asks, "What is truth?" (John 18:38), the NT answers, "Jesus!" The topic of truth is predominant in the Gospel of John. Jesus is full of grace and truth (John 1:14), tells the truth he heard from God (8:44), and in fact is the truth (5:33). Truth involves action. Whoever lives by the truth comes out of darkness into the light (3:21). Worship of God must be done in spirit and in truth (4:23–24). It is the truth that will set people free (8:32). Jesus calls the Holy Spirit the "Spirit of truth" (15:26), whose role is to guide the followers of Jesus in all truth, speaking what he hears from the Father (John 15–16).

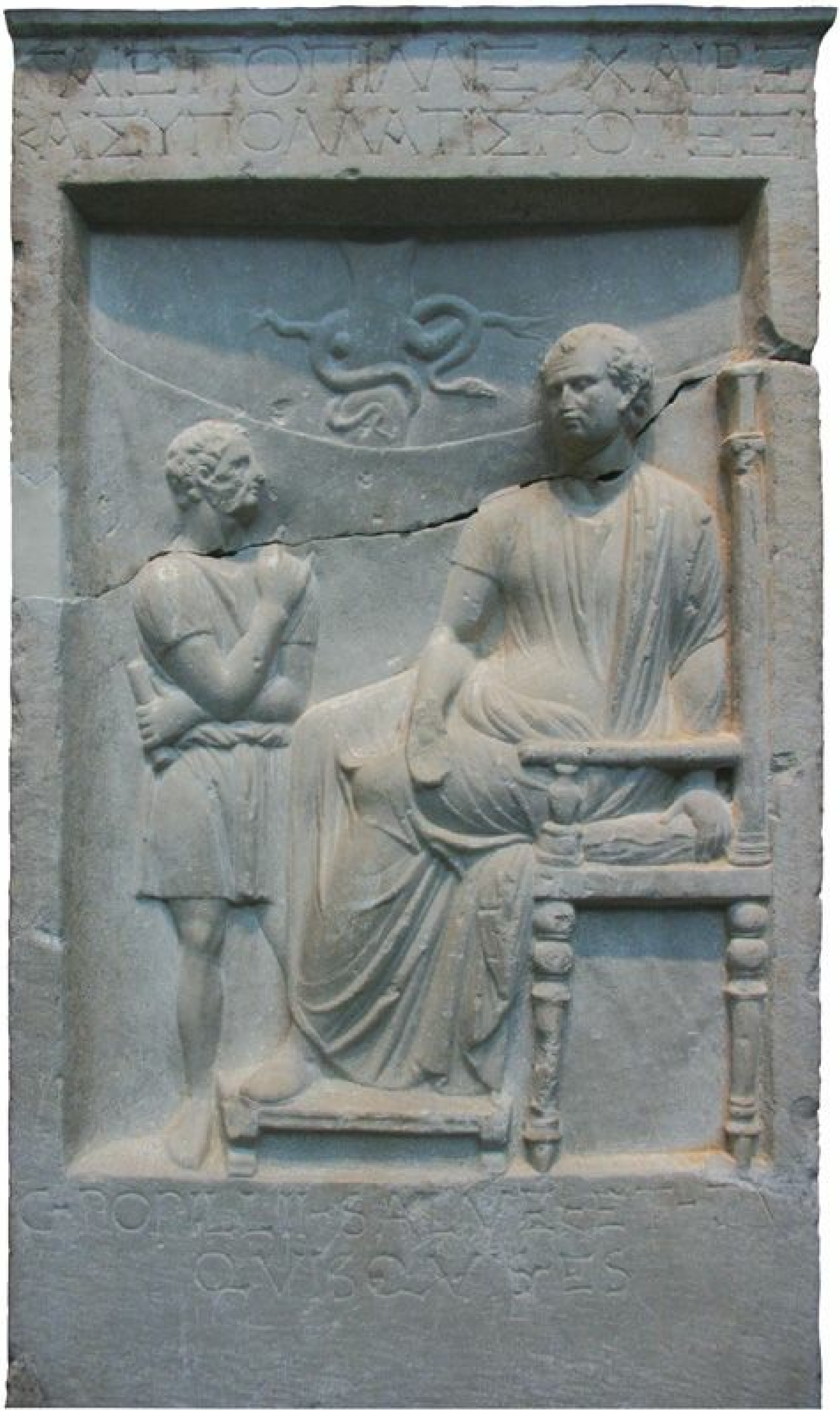
Although the topic of truth is seldom mentioned in the Synoptic Gospels, the phrase "I tell you the truth" is attributed to Jesus seventy-eight times (e.g., Matt. 5:18; 6:2; Mark 8:12; 9:41; Luke 9:27; 23:43; John 1:51; 13:21 NCV), showing it to be a major theme. The apostle Paul reminds the church at Corinth that love rejoices with the truth (1 Cor. 13:6). Truth describes not only knowledge of reality (Acts 24:8) but also the knowledge of Christ (2 Cor. 11:10) as well as the type of life that a follower of Christ should exhibit (Gal. 2:14; Titus 1:1). Truth can be distorted (Acts 20:30), suppressed (Rom. 1:18), and rejected (Rom. 2:8). While truth can involve speech (Eph. 4:15), those who belong to the truth show it by their love (1 John 1:6; 3:18–20).

TRYPHENA AND TRYPHOSA Two women whom Paul asks the Romans to greet on his behalf, noting their hard work in the Lord (Rom. 16:12 [NRSV, ESV, NASB: "Tryphaena"]). Tryphena and Tryphosa are two of several female Christians named in Rom. 16, including Phoebe (v. 1), Priscilla (v. 3), Mary (v. 6), Persis (v. 12), Julia (v. 15), and possibly Junia(s) (v. 7). Both "Tryphena" and "Tryphosa" appear in Roman inscriptions related to the household of Caesar.

TUBAL The fifth of the seven sons of Japheth (Gen. 10:2; 1 Chron. 1:5). Listed in the Table of Nations, he probably is the ancestor of a people in Asia Minor, perhaps Cilicia. Tubal traded slaves and bronze vessels with Tyre (Ezek. 27:13).

TUBAL-CAIN A descendant of Cain through Lamech and Zillah, he is attributed with the invention of metallurgy (Gen. 4:22). By his other wife, Adah, Lamech also fathered Jabal, the father of nomadism and animal husbandry, and Jubal, the father of musicians (Gen. 4:20–21).

TUNIC A simple slip-on garment, knee-length or longer, with or without sleeves, and worn as an undergarment or over other clothing (Gen. 3:21; 37:3; Matt. 10:10; John 19:23).



Funerary relief showing both the slave (standing) and master (seated) wearing tunics (AD 50)

TUNNEL According to 2 Kings 20:20, Hezekiah created a tunnel that brought water into the city of Jerusalem. To do this, he dammed part of the Gihon spring and channeled the water into the city (2 Chron. 32:30). Today the scholarly consensus is that the aptly named Hezekiah's Tunnel is the same tunnel. The tunnel would have served as a way to bring water under Jerusalem's city wall during a time of siege and ensure at least some water supply. In the NT the Pool of Siloam marked the end of the tunnel.

TURBAN A headdress worn especially in the eastern Mediterranean region, made of cloth wrapped around the head. A turban could be worn by men (Job 29:14) or by women (Isa. 3:23 [NIV: "tiara"]; Ezek. 23:15). It was a sign of mourning to remove one's turban (Ezek. 24:17, 23). The high priest wore a unique linen turban, distinct from the headwear of other priests (Exod. 28:4–5, 36–39; 39:28; Lev. 8:9; 16:4). Attached to its front was a golden plate inscribed with "Holy to the LORD." It was specifically described as one of the holy garments that the high priest was to wear at his ordination and on the Day of Atonement. Ezekiel prophesied that because of Israel's profane actions, the high priest's turban, along with the king's crown, would be removed by the Babylonians (Ezek. 21:26).

TURNING OF THE WALL *See* Wall, Angle of the.

TUTOR *See* Custodian.

TWELVE, THE *See* Apostle; Disciple.

TYCHICUS An Asian Christian and trusted friend of Paul, Tychicus occasionally accompanied Paul on his missionary voyages and was frequently sent by Paul to represent him and to deliver his letters to the churches (Acts 20:4; Eph. 6:21; Col. 4:7; 2 Tim. 4:12; Titus 3:12). Paul must have thought very highly of Tychicus, trusting him to minister to the churches and referring to him as "dear brother and faithful servant in the Lord" and "dear brother, a faithful minister and fellow servant in the Lord" (Eph. 6:21; Col. 4:7). Tychicus was likely with Paul while the apostle was imprisoned in Rome (Col. 4:7).

TYPOLOGY A "type" (from Gk. *typos*) can be defined as a biblical event, person, or institution that serves as an example or pattern for events, persons, or institutions in the later OT or in the NT. Typology is based on the assumption that there is a pattern in God's work in the OT and in the NT that forms a promise-fulfillment relationship. In the OT there are shadows of things that will be more fully revealed in the NT. Thus, the OT flows into the NT as part of a continuous story of salvation history. What is promised in the OT is fulfilled in the NT. This can be accomplished through prophetic word or through prophetic action/event. The use of prophetic action/event to predict or foreshadow future actions/events involves typology. Typology is part of the promise-fulfillment scheme that connects the two Testaments.

A number of biblical interpreters note that three primary characteristics of types can be identified. First, there must be some notable point of resemblance or analogy between the type and its antitype. Second, there must be evidence that the type was appointed by God to represent the thing typified. Here one must avoid the two extremes of, on the one hand, saying that a type is a type only when the Scripture explicitly calls it such, and, on the other hand, of finding a type "behind every tree." Third, a type should prefigure something in the future. Thus, antitypes in the NT must present truth more fully realized than in the OT.

Typological interpretation of the OT is different from allegorizing a text. The former restricts itself to the meaning intended by the original author, whereas the latter reads things into the OT passage (usually in connection with messianic prophecy) not initially intended. On the other hand, it should be noted that the OT authors may not always have fully comprehended the long-range fulfillment of their prophecies. Thus, for example, Ps. 22 reveals King David's trials and tribulations that are later viewed by NT authors as applicable to the crucifixion of Christ (e.g., the quotation of Ps. 22:18 in

John 19:24 regarding the soldiers casting lots for Jesus' clothes). David probably did not envision his situation as predictive of the sufferings of the coming Christ. But the Holy Spirit did, and he allowed the Gospel authors to make the connection. Thus, typology is a special form of biblical prophecy, which Jesus seemed to use extensively. Hence, the type is found in the OT, and its antitype occurs in the NT.

More particularly, Jesus seemed to perceive himself as the antitype to all three of the aforementioned possible types. First, Jesus fulfilled in himself persons in the OT who were types. Thus, Jesus is the ultimate David, Solomon, Elijah, Elisha, Jonah, the heavenly Son of Man of Dan. 7, and the Suffering Servant of Isa. 52:13–53:12. Second, with regard to famous OT events, Jesus reenacted the new exodus and passed the test in the new wilderness wanderings (Matt. 4:1–11 pars.), and then he proclaimed a new law from the mountain, as did Moses (Matt. 5–7). Third, Jesus revised or replaced OT institutions such as the sacrificial system and the feasts of Yahweh (most notably Passover) at his death, and at his resurrection he became the new temple of God.

The NT continues Jesus' typological interpretation of the OT, seeing in him the supreme antitype of OT symbolism. Thus, for example, Paul sees Christ as the second Adam (Rom. 5:12–21), whose church is the new Israel, the eschatological people of God (1 Cor. 10:1–13). Matthew perceives Jesus to be the new Moses (Matt. 1–10). Note the following comparisons:

Moses, the Old Testament Type	Jesus, Matthew's Antitype to Moses
Moses was born to deliver his people.	Jesus was born to save his people.
Pharaoh tried to kill the infant Moses.	Herod tried to kill the infant Jesus.
Moses was "baptized" in the exodus.	Jesus was baptized in the new "exodus."
Moses was tempted in the wilderness.	Jesus was tempted in the wilderness.
Moses performed ten plagues.	Jesus performed ten miracles.
Moses received the law on the mount.	Jesus gave a new law on the mount.

Luke understands Jesus to be the new David (Luke 1:32). Hebrews asserts that Jesus has inaugurated the new covenant (chap. 8), the true priesthood (chaps. 7–8; 10), whose death is the fulfillment and replacement of the sacrificial system of the OT (chaps. 9–10). But perhaps the most extensive usage of typology in the NT occurs in Rev. 21–22 (cf. Rev. 19), where the new creation is the antitype of the old creation of Gen. 1–3 (see table 10).

Table 10. New Creation Typology in Revelation 21–22

Genesis 1–3	Revelation 21–22 (cf. Rev. 19)	
Sinful people are scattered.	God's people unite to sing his praises.	19:6–7
The "marriage" of Adam and Eve takes place in the garden.	The marriage of the second Adam and his bride, the church has come.	19:7; 21:2, 9
God is abandoned by sinful people.	God's people (new Jerusalem, bride of Christ) are made ready for God; marriage of the Lamb.	19:7–8; 21:2, 9–21
Exclusion from bounty of Eden.	Invitation to marriage supper of Lamb.	19:9
Satan introduces sin into world.	Satan and sin are judged.	19:11–21; 20:7–10
The serpent deceives humankind.	The ancient serpent is bound "to keep him from deceiving the nations."	20:2–3
God gives humans dominion over the earth.	God's people will reign with him forever.	20:4, 6; 22:5

People rebel against the true God, resulting in physical and spiritual death.	God’s people risk death to worship the true God and thus experience life.	20:4–6
Sinful people are sent away from life.	God’s people have their names written in the book of life.	20:4–6, 15; 21:6, 27
Death enters the world.	Death is put to death.	20:14; 21:4
God creates the first heaven and earth, eventually cursed by sin.	God creates a new heaven and earth, where sin is nowhere to be found.	21:1
Water symbolizes chaos.	There is no longer any sea.	21:1
Sin brings pain and tears.	God comforts his people and removes crying and pain.	21:4
Sinful humanity is cursed with wandering (exile).	God’s people are given a permanent home.	21:3
Community is forfeited.	Genuine community is experienced.	21:3, 7
Sinful people are banished from the presence of God.	God lives among his people.	21:3, 7, 22; 22:4
Creation begins to grow old and die.	All things are made new.	21:5
Water is used to destroy wicked humanity.	God quenches thirst with water from the spring of life.	21:6; 22:1
“In the beginning, God . . .”	“I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end.”	21:6
Sinful humanity suffers a wandering exile in the land.	God gives his children an inheritance.	21:7
Sin enters the world.	Sin is banished from God’s city.	21:8, 27; 22:15
Sinful humanity is separated from the presence of the holy God.	God’s people experience God’s holiness (cubed city = holy of holies).	21:15–21
God creates light and separates it from darkness.	No more night or natural light; God himself is the source of light.	21:23; 22:5
Languages of sinful humanity are confused.	God’s people is a multicultural people.	21:24, 26; 22:2
Sinful people are sent away from the garden.	The new heaven/earth includes a garden.	22:2
Sinful people are forbidden to eat from the tree of life.	God’s people may eat freely from the tree of life.	22:2, 14
Sin results in spiritual sickness.	God heals the nations.	22:2
Sinful people are cursed.	The curse is removed from redeemed humanity, and people become a blessing.	22:3
Sinful people refuse to serve/obey God.	God’s people serve him.	22:3
Sinful people are ashamed in God’s presence.	God’s people will “see his face.”	22:4

TYRANNUS Tyrannus is mentioned in Acts 19:9, where his name is associated with a lecture hall in which Paul held daily discussions in Ephesus after his withdrawal from the synagogue. Tyrannus may have been the owner of the building, the person who lectured there, or the person after whom the building was named. The most widely held view is that Tyrannus was a Christian or a sympathizer who owned a lecture hall made available to Paul. There is some textual evidence (the Western textual tradition) that Paul taught there from eleven a.m. to four p.m., which would have been during the midday break after Tyrannus had dismissed his students.

TYRE AND SIDON Two ancient city-states of the Phoenicians that have a long and well-documented history predating many of the events in the Bible. Genesis 10:15 notes that Sidon was a son of Canaan, likely hinting at the importance of this city for the Canaanites. Several times in the Bible the term "Sidon" or "Sidonians" serves as an alternate name for the Phoenicians or Canaanites and usually refers to the southern part of this northern neighbor. There was much social and political interaction between Sidon and Tyre and the kingdoms of Israel and Judah, including Solomon's marriage to several women from Sidon (1 Kings 11:1) and the Omride dynasty's treaties and intermarriage with the Phoenicians (16:31). For much of the tenth through seventh centuries BC, Israel and the Phoenicians were close economic allies, with Israel providing materials for trade, and the cities of Sidon and Tyre offering the transport of those goods in their famed ships. Like Israel, Sidon and Tyre suffered under the expansions of the Assyrians and the Babylonians. Both Sidon and Tyre often were recipients of the OT prophets' ire. Tyre especially was subject to many prophetic denouncements of which Ezekiel's is an archtype (Ezek. 26:1–28:19). Ezekiel prophesied the total destruction of the city. Both cities had special cultic centers that advocated various versions of Baal worship and attempted to propagate their religion, as demonstrated by the actions of Jezebel, the wife of King Ahab and daughter of the king of Sidon.

Tyre and Sidon continued to be significant cities under Roman rule during the NT period. Jesus went to these two locations and condemned Jewish cities by saying that even the pagan Tyre and Sidon would have repented if they had witnessed miracles he had performed around them (Matt. 11:20–23). Paul also traveled to Tyre, staying there for seven days during a missionary journey (Acts 21:3–4).

TYRIAN A person from Tyre, on the Lebanese Mediterranean coast (1 Chron. 22:4; 2 Chron. 2:14; Ezra 3:7; Neh. 13:16).

TYROPOEON The valley in central Jerusalem that separates the eastern hill of original Jerusalem and the Temple Mount from the higher western hill to which Jerusalem expanded during the Israelite monarchy. At the time of the NT, priests living on the western hill crossed to the Temple Mount by means of a bridge constructed by Herod the Great. "Tyropoeon" does not appear in Scripture, but it was used by the Jewish historian Josephus. The term may mean "cheesemakers," perhaps for commercial activity that took place there. Today the valley is largely filled in by debris from the numerous destructions of the city.

TYRUS *See* Tyre and Sidon.

U

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UCAL *See* Ukal.

UEL A descendant of Bani (Binnui in Neh. 7:15) and a priest during postexilic times. His family returned from exile with Zerubbabel (Ezra 2:10). Listed by Ezra as one guilty of marrying a foreign wife (Ezra 10:34).

UGARIT In 1928 a Syrian peasant farmer stumbled by chance onto a funerary vault of ancient provenance about half a mile from the Mediterranean coastline of Syria and about six miles north of the modern-day city of Latakia. This unforeseen discovery led to an archaeological excavation of Tell Ras Shamra (Cape Fennel) by the eminent French excavator Claude Schaeffer. What Schaeffer's team unearthed was not merely an ancient tomb, but a city complete with palaces, private homes, temples, and streets paved with stone.

Within the first year of excavation, the ruins of Ugarit yielded a cache of clay tablets bearing a cuneiform script in a language hitherto unknown. From these mysterious texts scholars deciphered an alphabetic script written in a West Semitic language related to Canaanite, Arabic, and biblical Hebrew.

THE KINGDOM OF UGARIT

The site of the ancient city of Ugarit, Tell Ras Shamra, is enclosed by two small rivers that flow westward into the Mediterranean Sea. The presence of water ensured the fertility of the surrounding plain; thus a good crop of cereals, grapes, and olives was available to supplement the fishing industry as a local supply of food. The kingdom encompassed about twelve hundred square miles, bounded by the natural geography of the region. To the west of the site lies the Mediterranean, with a port that supplied an important route for international trade. To the south, the east, and the north are mountain ranges, including Mount Zaphon, whose majesty is recorded in Isa. 14:13. Indeed, the name "Zaphon" becomes simply a general word for "north" in biblical Hebrew.

The site of Tell Ras Shamra was occupied as far back as Neolithic times (seventh millennium BC), yet the kingdom of Ugarit properly dates to the second millennium BC. The time of Ugarit's greatest flourishing was the period just prior to its destruction: from the fourteenth to the twelfth centuries BC, during the Late Bronze Age. The prosperity of the kingdom reached its height during this period. Ugarit's coastal access and strategic location as a central hub within the matrix of Late Bronze Age superpowers made Ugarit an important focal point for international trade routes, both maritime and overland. Late Bronze Age Ugaritic society was diverse and cosmopolitan, a feature perhaps best epitomized by its scribal training center, in which tablets bearing inscriptions in several different languages have been discovered.

Around 1200 BC, in approximately the same time frame as the exodus of the Hebrews from Egypt, Ugarit met an untimely demise. (Note that some biblical scholars date the exodus from Egypt during the fifteenth century BC rather than the thirteenth.) Royal documents from the Egyptian and Hittite kingdoms, as well as one from Ugarit, record a concern over a group of invaders known as the Sea

Peoples. The Sea Peoples likely originated in the northwest, leaving their mark on the coasts of Turkey, Cyprus, and the Levant. The descendants of the invading Sea Peoples remained on the coast of Palestine, and the biblical text refers to them as the Philistines. The destruction of Ugarit is attributed to these invaders from the sea. The archaeological remains of Tell Ras Shamra show that many homes were abandoned as invaders set the city on fire. Ugarit burned to the ground sometime between 1190 and 1185 BC.

Archaeological remains of the palace at Ugarit (fourteenth–thirteenth century BC)

THE TEXTS OF UGARIT

More than fifteen hundred Ugaritic texts have been discovered since excavations began at Tell Ras Shamra. The texts are written on tablets with wedgelike markings impressed into the clay by scribes using a triangular-shaped reed stylus. The majority of the texts of Ugarit were found in and around the remains of the royal palace grounds and temples, but some were found in the homes of high-ranking palace administrators and businessmen. The subject matter of these texts is diverse, and the various genres of written material from Ugarit include official letters, administrative and economic texts, scribal training texts, and religious and literary texts. The cosmopolitan character of Ugarit is also reflected in its texts. Among the various tablets discovered, many were written in Akkadian, which was the lingua franca of the Late Bronze Age in this region. Still other texts were written in various ancient Near Eastern languages; Hurrian, Hittite, and Cypro-Minoan, and Egyptian hieroglyphs were found inscribed into some artifacts, as well as upon cylinder seals.

Letters. The letter documents of Ugarit are formal in style with scripted introductions and closings, like most royal letters from the ancient Near East. Two notable examples may be pointed out. The first is a letter from the king of Tyre in Phoenicia (for Iron Age references to the city of Tyre, see Josh. 19:29; 2 Sam. 5:11; Ezek. 28) to the king of Ugarit. The occasion of the letter is the shipwreck of a Ugaritic trade vessel bound for Egypt that crashed on the coastline of Phoenicia after a violent storm. The king of Tyre writes that none of the ship's crew survived, and its cargo was lost at sea. A second epistolary example is a letter written by the king of Carchemish in the Hittite Empire (see Isa. 10:9; Jer. 46:2) to the last king of Ugarit, Ammurapi. The occasion of this epistle is the Hittite king's perceived mistreatment of his daughter who was married to Ammurapi. The letter suggests an impending divorce between the royal couple, detailing the division of their joint property.

Administrative and economic texts. The royal palace and temples provided the driving engine of Ugarit's economy. Many discovered texts shed light upon the kinds of goods and activities that comprised local and international trade. Examples of administrative texts include lists of various towns within the kingdom of Ugarit, tributes that such towns paid to the king in the form of goods or labor service, lists of temple personnel with accompanying salaries, and details of distributed goods to those in royal service. Examples of economic texts include purchase receipts and bills of lading from maritime trade for products such as wool, grains, olives, milk, and metal ore.

Scribal training texts. Among the rich archives of texts at Ugarit, more than one hundred tablets bear witness to scribal training activities scattered throughout the city grounds. Scribes were universally employed by royal empires during the Late Bronze Age, but the sheer number of texts (thousands) found at Ugarit is unusual for a relatively small excavation site. Archives of texts were found in groups throughout the city, and in many of these archives excavators found tablets of special interest, called "abecedaries." An abecedary is a tablet on which the cuneiform alphabet is written. The Ugaritic alphabet contained thirty signs in roughly the same order as the Hebrew alphabet, largely the same in content as the English alphabet. In addition to Ugaritic abecedaries, a Ugaritic-Akkadian abecedary was found in which equivalent phonetic values are given from the Ugaritic alphabet into Akkadian signs. Lexicons, or word lists, also were discovered, listing words from various ancient Near Eastern languages. Indeed, some of the tablets found in the archives are clearly practice tablets used to train scribes: these tablets display clear signs written by a scribal teacher at the top of the tablet, with the less skilled markings of the apprentice scribe written below. Thus, it is likely that Ugarit served as a training center for scribes from all over the ancient Near East, as well as its own.

Religious texts. Two large temples dominate the northern acropolis region of Ugarit: the temple of Baal, the god of fertility, and the temple of Dagon, the god of grain. Mythology was the vehicle of religious expression in the ancient Near East. Stories about the gods communicated something of the gods' purposes and realms of authority. In the mythological literature of Ugarit, the pantheon of gods dwelt on Mount Zaphon, and from the dwelling place of El, the high god, rivers of life-giving water flowed. The name "El" was shared among Semitic languages and religions throughout the ancient Near East, including the OT. The name "El" in the Bible can refer either to a foreign god (e.g., Deut. 3:24: "What god [*'el*] is there in heaven or on earth who can do the deeds and mighty works you do?") or to the God of Israel (e.g., Gen. 49:25; Deut. 7:9; Ps. 68:19–20). In the pantheon of Ugarit, El's female consort was the goddess Asherah (1 Kings 18:19; Judg. 3:7).

El, however, was a more distant god in the religion of Ugarit, and the city's patron god was Baal, the storm god. Baal was associated with fertile fields, abundant crops, and the birth of sons and daughters. The goddess Anat is sometimes described as Baal’s consort, and at other times as Baal’s sister. Anat is the goddess of war, and the epic mythological literature of Ugarit portrays her warfare in rather graphic and gruesome detail. Some scholars claim that Prov. 7:22–23 alludes to Anat’s warfare in the portrayal of the adulterous woman.

Some of the same epithets and accomplishments of Baal found in the religious texts of Ugarit are also attributed to Yahweh in the OT. For example, Baal is called the “Rider of the Clouds” in Ugaritic literature, and a similar description of Yahweh is found in Pss. 68:4 (“Extol him who rides on the clouds”) and 104:3 (“He makes the clouds his chariot and rides on the wings of the wind”). This likely reflects a common ancient Near Eastern concern over the regularity of rain for producing crops, as well as a biblical assertion that Yahweh is superior to Canaanite deities, such as Baal, who claim authority over the forces of nature. Indeed, the OT mocks the impotence of the Canaanite deity Baal to wield power over the forces of nature in narratives such as Elijah versus the prophets of Baal (1 Kings 18:16–45).

Baal is also portrayed in the religious literature of Ugarit as the god who conquered the rival gods Sea (Yam) and Death (Motu). The OT gives similar portrayals of Israel’s God in texts such as Gen. 1:2; Isa. 25:7–8. In Gen. 1:2 God’s Spirit “was hovering over the waters,” “the deep,” or the primordial waters from which God brings to life the created world and all of nature (cf. Job 38:8–11). In Isa. 25:7–8 Yahweh is portrayed as more powerful than death in a text of praise that extols his power by saying that “he will swallow up death forever.” Again the biblical texts rely upon a stock set of religious symbols, language, and imagery common to ancient Near Eastern peoples to portray Yahweh, the all-powerful, one God of Israel.

CONCLUSION

The discovery of Ugarit was an earthshaking event for biblical studies. Scholars have only begun to garner the gems of knowledge hidden within the remains of this lost civilization. The study of the Ugaritic language is invaluable for better understanding biblical Hebrew. Ugaritic sheds light particularly upon rare words and phrases used in the biblical text, as well as upon literary devices and poetic structure, such as parallelism and meter. Furthermore, the study of Ugarit’s religion illuminates the backdrop of Canaanite worship, against which is set the worship of Yahweh in the OT. Ugarit provides for us a snapshot of Late Bronze Age Canaan, the crucible of ancient Near Eastern culture from which the Hebrew Bible was birthed.

UKAL “Ukal” is found only in Prov. 30:1: “This man says to Ithiel, to Ithiel and to Ukal” (NET; see NIV mg.). Although many translations (NET, NASB, NKJV, KJV) treat “Ukal” (also spelled “Ucal”) as a personal name, it may be a form of the verb “to be able,” as in the NIV: “I am weary, God, but I can prevail” (see also NRSV).

ULAI A river or canal near the Persian capital of Susa where Daniel witnessed the revelation of the ram and the goat (Dan. 8:2, 16).

ULAM **(1)** A son of Peresh and the father of Bedan, of the tribe of Manasseh (1 Chron. 7:16–17; GW, NCV identify his father as Peresh’s brother, Sheresh; in the Hebrew and many English versions the text is ambiguous). **(2)** The firstborn son of Eshek, descendant from Mephibosheth, his sons were “brave warriors who could handle the bow” (1 Chron. 8:39–40).

ULLA A descendant of Asher and the father of Arah, Hanniel, and Rizia, three of the "choice men, brave warriors and outstanding leaders" (1 Chron. 7:39–40).

UMMAH A town allocated to the tribe of Asher (Josh. 19:30). Many scholars understand "Ummah" to be a corruption of "Akko," a town in Asher's territory and absent from this list. Otherwise no location is known.

UNCIRCUMCISED *See* Circumcision.

UNCTION *See* Anoint, Anointed.

UNDEFILED *See* Clean, Cleanness.

UNICORN The KJV translates as "unicorn" the Hebrew word *re'em*, referring to a "wild ox" (NIV). The KJV was following the Vulgate's Latin word *unicornis* (Pss. 22:21; 29:6; 92:10; Isa. 34:7; cf. Lat. *rinoceros* in Num. 23:22; 24:8; Deut. 33:17; Job 39:9–10) and the LXX's *monokerōs*. Legends about this fantastic animal flourished in the Middle Ages.

UNITY The idea of unity has always been significant for God's people and their relatedness to one another. In the OT, unity centered on the covenant and on Yahweh, who is the heart of the covenant. In 2 Chron. 30:12 the hand of God was on the people to give them unity to carry out the tasks that had been ordered by the king at God's command. In Ps. 133:1 the psalmist notes the goodness of the unity of the extended family, no doubt also to be extended to the unity of God's people, Israel.

In the NT, unity centers on Jesus Christ, who is the heart of the new covenant. John emphasizes this unity as he records the teaching of Jesus on the relationship of the Father and the Son (John 14). The Father is in the Son, and the Son is in the Father. In John 16 Jesus notes that this is the standard by which oneness is to be compared; the disciples are to be one, just as the Father and the Son are one. There will also be oneness between the triune God and his people as the Holy Spirit comes to reside in the disciples. Unity and its various outcomes are the subject of Jesus' final prayer in the garden (John 17).

In Acts 1 Luke notes that the disciples were unified after the resurrection and ascension as they worshiped and prayed together in the upper room (v. 14 NASB, NET: "with one mind" [*homothymadon*]). Luke uses the same word in Acts 2:46 when he notes the same unity for the early church as they gathered for the sake of worship and praise to God in the temple (cf. 4:24 [unison prayer for power from God]; 5:12 [meeting together at Solomon's Colonnade]; 15:25 [unanimity in a decision to send representatives to Antioch]). Indeed, the story of the beginning of the early church is the story of the fulfillment of Christ's command to be unified. It is sometimes supposed, probably correctly, that the apostles from Jerusalem went to the Samaritan church to lay on hands for the bestowal of the Spirit in order that the long-standing Jewish-Samaritan rift might not destroy the unity of the growing body (see Acts 8:14–17).

In Eph. 4:3 Paul commands the believers to be zealous to keep their unity based in the Spirit as they are bound together by the peace that Christ gives. Later, in 4:13, Paul notes that God has given gifted people to the body of Christ so that the believers may be trained for the ministry of building up that body. This has its goal in the unity of believers and maturity of the faith in the knowledge of Christ—so that the body might be like him. So the unity of believers here is linked to the ubiquitous

NT goal of Christlikeness. This also entails rejecting false teaching (4:14).

UNLEAVENED BREAD Any type of bread made without a leavening agent to make it rise. It developed symbolic value after the exodus (Exod. 12:17–20). Leaven became a symbol of sin and was removed from homes during feasts as a physical reminder of the need to remove sin from one's life. Unleavened bread was also the only acceptable form of bread to be offered as a sacrifice or placed in the tabernacle (Exod. 25:30; Lev. 6:17). *See also* Leaven.

UNNI **(1)** A Levite musician and gatekeeper at the time of David appointed to play the harp "according to *alamoth*" (cf. Ps. 46 superscription), perhaps a tuning, melody, or style (1 Chron. 15:18, 21). **(2)** A Levite singer who returned to Jerusalem with Zerubbabel. He "stood opposite" the singers of thanksgiving, perhaps indicating that he sang responsively (Neh. 12:9). "Unni" is a scribal emendation (Qere) of the name that is written (Kethib) in the MT, "Unno" (NRSV).

UNNO *See* Unni.

UNPARDONABLE SIN *See* Sin, Unpardonable.

UNPLOWED GROUND *See* Fallow Ground.

UPHARSIN *See* Mene, Mene, Tekel, Parsin.

UPHAZ A region well known for its gold (Dan. 10:5 [KJV, NRSV, NASB]; Jer. 10:9), though its location remains uncertain. Some scholars believe that "Uphaz" is a misspelling of "Ophir," a famous gold-bearing region. *See also* Ophir.

UPPER GATE One of the gates of the temple in Jerusalem. The KJV calls it the High Gate. It apparently was also called the Upper Gate of Benjamin (Jer. 20:2). Its location is uncertain, but it apparently faced north (Ezek. 9:2). Second Chronicles 27:3 and 2 Kings 15:35 identify it with a gate of the temple that Jotham rebuilt, but 2 Chronicles 23:20 suggests it (or a similarly named gate) led into the king's palace.

UPPER ROOM A room on an upper story or roof of a building. King Ahaziah's fall through the lattice of an upper room caused his death (2 Kings 1:2). Jesus instructed his disciples to prepare their final meal together in an upper room (Mark 14:15; Luke 22:12). Tradition holds that the disciples met to pray in this room after Jesus' ascension (Acts 1:13). Widows grieved over Dorcas in an upper room until Peter's prayer restored her life (Acts 9:39). Paul revived Eutychus, who had died after dozing off and falling from an upper room to the ground (Acts 20:8–12).

UR **(1)** An ancient Sumerian city that can be identified with modern Tell Muqayyar near the Euphrates River in modern-day Iraq. The site was excavated in the early twentieth century, revealing a long history reaching back to the earliest period of southern Mesopotamian civilization (c. 5000 BC) and stretching to around the third century BC. The most impressive archaeological remains date to the third millennium BC and feature royal tombs (c. 2600–2500 BC) that contained multiple royal treasures including jewelry, gold weapons, and musical instruments, and also a ziggurat (c. 2154–2004 BC). After 2004 BC Ur fell under the control of various external powers and never achieved political independence again.

The four biblical references to Ur mention it as the place of origin of Abraham's family (Gen. 11:28, 31; 15:7; Neh. 9:7). Genesis 11:31–12:9 describes Abraham's journey from "Ur of the Chaldeans" northwest to Harran and then south into Canaan. The name "Ur of the Chaldeans" for the city at the time of Abraham (Middle Bronze Age [2000–1550 BC]) is most likely an anachronism, since the Chaldeans did not arise as a recognizable group until the ninth century BC.

(2) The father of Eliphal, one of David's mighty warriors (1 Chron. 11:35).

Partially reconstructed ziggurat at Ur

URBANUS A prominent Christian in Rome. He was a coworker with Paul and the Christians in Rome in the work of Christ (Rom. 16:9). Some have claimed that Urbanus was a freed slave, since "Urbanus" was a common slave name. This is debated, however, and the epigraphic evidence for Urbanus as a slave name is not conclusive.

URI **(1)** Of the tribe of Judah, he was the son of Hur and the father of Bezalel, the divinely gifted craftsman directed by Moses (Exod. 31:2; 35:30; 38:22; 1 Chron. 2:20; 2 Chron. 1:5). **(2)** The father of Geber, a Gileadite (1 Kings 4:19). **(3)** A gatekeeper in the time of Ezra who pledged to put away his foreign wife (Ezra 10:24).

URIAH **(1)** The ill-fated husband of Bathsheba, with whom David had an illicit affair. His designation as "the Hittite" implies an ethnic tie to the Anatolian Hittite Empire, in modern-day Turkey. David conspired with his military leader Joab to have Uriah murdered in order to cover up the scandal of a child conceived from David's unchecked lust for Bathsheba (2 Sam. 11; 1 Chron. 11:41). **(2)** A priest of Judah, the southern kingdom of Israel, during the reign of Ahaz, he built a new altar in the temple in accordance with the sketch and plan of a foreign altar that Ahaz had seen in Damascus (2 Kings 16:10–16). This is likely the same Uriah referred to in Isa. 8:2–4 as one of two reliable witnesses Isaiah uses to testify to a prophetic oracle written on a tablet. **(3)** The son of Shemaiah from Kiriath Jearim, he joined Jeremiah in prophesying against the city of Jerusalem and the land of Judah during the reign of Jehoiakim. He was persecuted, captured, and put to death by Jehoiakim, and his body was thrown in the burial place of common people (Jer. 26:20–23). **(4)** One of the men who stood with Ezra when he publicly read the law to the people (Neh. 8:4). **(5)** Father of Meremoth, who repaired part of the wall of Jerusalem (Ezra 8:33; Neh. 3:4, 21).

URIEL **(1)** A Kohathite Levite, the son of Tahath (1 Chron. 6:24). **(2)** The chief of the Kohathites who assisted in returning the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem (1 Chron. 15:5, 11). **(3)** From Gibeah, he was the father of Maakah, who was the wife of Rehoboam and the mother of Abijah (2 Chron. 13:2).

URIJAH *See* Uriah.

URIM AND THUMMIM Objects used in the OT for determining the will of God. “Urim” traditionally is taken to mean “light,” while “Thummim” is generally connected with a word for “perfect.”

The size and shape of these objects is unknown. They may have been two disks, each with a shiny side and a dull side. They belonged in the breastpiece of the high priestly garments (Lev. 8:8), and presumably they were drawn out by the priest or thrown down in a particular way in response to a question posed (Exod. 28:30; Num. 27:21) and could give a yes or no answer.

In his farewell blessings, the first thing to come to Moses’ mind in outlining the privileges of the priestly tribe of Levi is the Thummim and Urim (Deut. 33:8).

Their use possibly is involved in the accounts of the progressive splitting of the people into two groups in order to find a guilty person (1 Sam. 14:41). A couple of instances of apparently nonbinary answers may be discerned in 1 Sam. 10:22; 2 Sam. 5:23, though it is not explicitly stated that these involved the Urim and Thummim, and if they did, supplementary questions not explicit in the text may have been asked.

King Saul was unable to secure an answer from God by any of the normal means, including Urim (1 Sam. 28:6), which suggests that an indeterminate answer from the disks was possible, perhaps when the disks presented different faces.

The sacred stones that Hosea mentions as being among the things of which Israel would suffer loss in exile (Hos. 3:4) may be the Urim and Thummim. Ezra 2:63 indicates that at that time no priest with Urim and Thummim was available (cf. Neh. 7:65). Whatever the cause, in postexilic times the use of Urim and Thummim as a means of oracular decisions fell into disuse.

URUK The Sumerian city Uruk (modern Warka; rendered “Erech” in Hebrew) is located on a subsidiary branch of the Euphrates River, forty miles northwest of Ur. It is mentioned in Gen. 10:10 as one of the cities founded by Nimrod in the country of Shinar (Mesopotamia). Information about this city comes from excavations of this site conducted during the mid-twentieth century and comments about the city in Sumerian and Akkadian literature. It was founded around 4000 BC, in the Ubaid period (5500–4000 BC), and continuously inhabited until the end of the Parthian Empire (AD 224). Prominent rulers include the legendary Gilgamesh, from the Sumerian flood story, and Sargon of Akkad (2300–2230 BC), whose birth legend mirrors that of Moses. The city’s most prominent temple was Eanna (“house of heaven”), dedicated to Anu, the sky god, and Inanna/Ishtar, the chief goddess of the pantheon.

USURY The term used in some Bible translations for the practice of charging interest (especially exorbitant interest) on a loan (e.g., Neh. 5:7–11; Ps. 15:5). The OT prohibited charging interest on money loaned to another Israelite but permitted it when loaning money to a Gentile (Deut. 23:19–20). *See also* Interest.

UTENSILS *See* Vessels and Utensils.

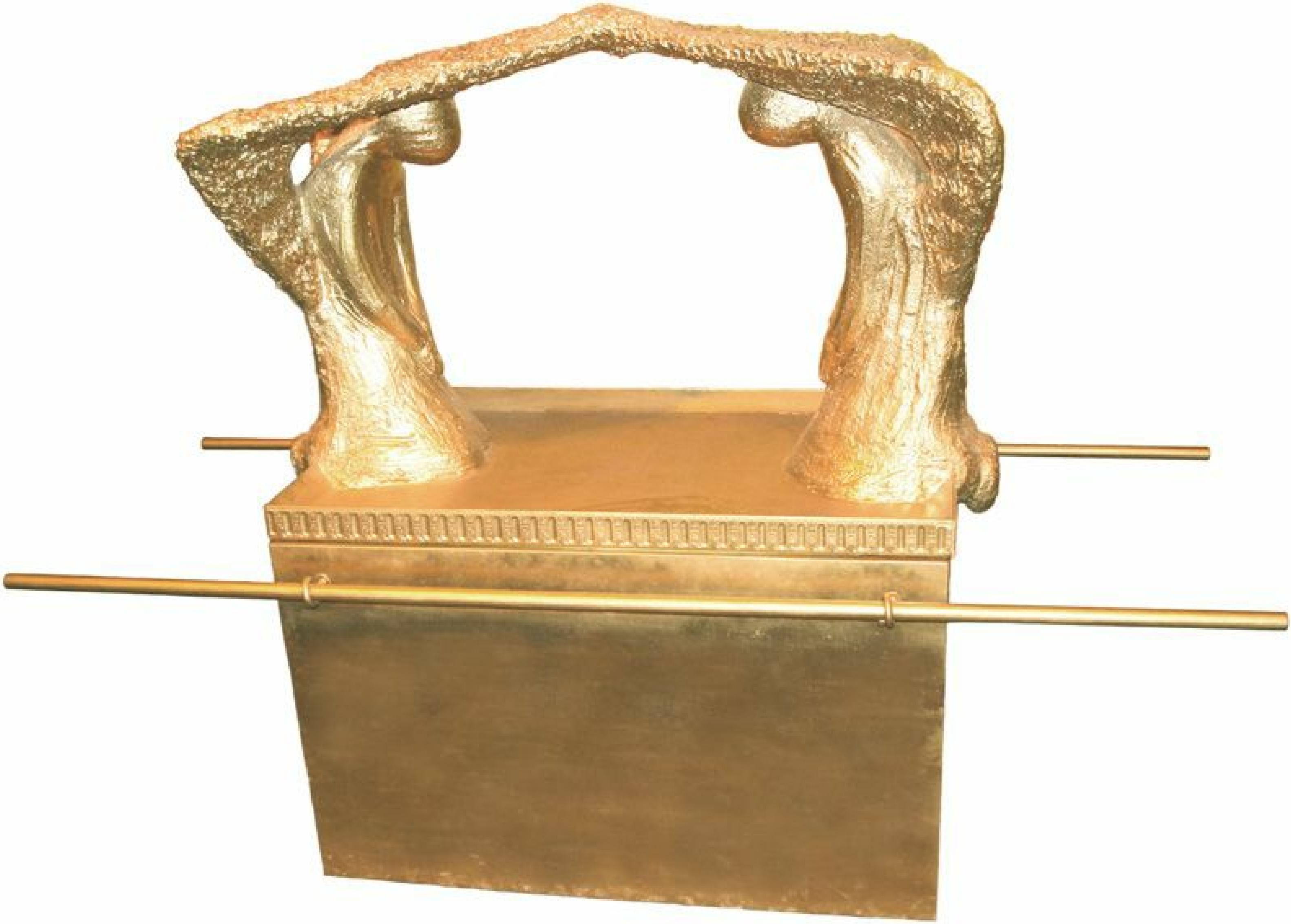
UTHAI **(1)** A descendant of Judah through Perez, Bani, Imri, Omri, and Ammihud who left Babylon and settled in Jerusalem (1 Chron. 9:4). **(2)** A descendant of Bigvai, he was one of the family heads who traveled from Babylon to Jerusalem with Ezra during the reign of Artaxerxes (Ezra 8:14).

UZ **(1)** The homeland of Job (Job 1:1), its location is uncertain. According to Lam. 4:21, the land of Uz is equivalent to Edomite territory (probably also Jer. 25:20). The geographical designations of Job's companions (particularly Eliphaz the Temanite) suggest a setting in Transjordan rather than northern Mesopotamia (Aram). **(2)** The oldest of the four sons of Aram and a grandson of Shem, he appears in the genealogy of the Arameans (Gen. 10:23; 1 Chron. 1:17). **(3)** The son of Abraham's brother Nahor and Milkah, also associated with Arameans (Gen. 22:21). **(4)** The first of the two sons of Dishan son of Seir the Horite, among the people of Seir in Edom (Gen. 36:28; 1 Chron. 1:42).

UZAI The father of Palal, who helped to repair the wall of Jerusalem (Neh. 3:25). "Uzai" is perhaps a short form of "Azaniah" (Neh. 10:9) and may mean "the LORD listened."

UZAL **(1)** The sixth of the thirteen sons of Joktan the son of Eber (Gen. 10:27; 1 Chron. 1:21). **(2)** One of the places that traded with Tyre cited by Ezekiel in a lament over Tyre (Ezek. 27:19; NIV: "Izal"). *See also* Izal.

UZZA **(1)** The owner of a garden where two kings of Judah, Manasseh and Amon, were buried (2 Kings 21:18, 26). **(2)** One of the sons of Gera (perhaps also called "Heglam" [cf. RSV, LXX]), a Benjamite among those forced to move to Manahath (1 Chron. 8:7). **(3)** One of the ancestors of the temple servants who returned to Judah from the Babylonian captivity under the leadership of Zerubbabel in 539 BC or soon after (Ezra 2:49; Neh. 7:51).



Life-size model of the ark of the covenant in the replica of the tabernacle at Timnah, Israel. Uzzah was struck down when he touched the ark (2 Sam. 6).

UZZAH This name is a shortened form of “Uzziah.” **(1)** The son of Abinadab and brother of Ahio. The brothers were guiding the cart on which the ark of the covenant was being transported to Jerusalem. Uzzah touched the ark and was stricken by God (2 Sam. 6:1–11; 1 Chron. 13:7–11). Here, “Uzzah” might be a nickname for the Eleazar of 1 Sam. 7:1. **(2)** The son of Shimei, a Merarite Levite (1 Chron. 6:29).

UZZEN SHEERAH A town founded by Sheerah, who also founded the towns of Upper and Lower Beth Horon, located in southern Ephraim. The name “Uzzen Sheerah” means “ear/corner of Sheerah.” Sheerah was the daughter of Beriah and a descendant of Ephraim (1 Chron. 7:20–24).

UZZI **(1)** The son of Bukki and the father of Zerahiah, listed in Aaron’s and Ezra’s genealogies (1 Chron. 6:6–7; Ezra 7:4). **(2)** A son of Tola, he was one of the family heads in the tribe of Issachar (1 Chron. 7:2–3). **(3)** A son of Bela, he was one of the family heads in the tribe of Benjamin (1 Chron. 7:7). **(4)** The son of Mikri, he was a Benjamite among the returning Babylonian exiles (1 Chron. 9:8). **(5)** A Levitical chief officer chosen to live in Jerusalem (Neh. 11:22). **(6)** The head of the priestly family of Jedaiah (Neh. 12:19). He may be the same person as the Uzzi of Neh. 11:22. **(7)** One of the leaders who participated in the dedication of the Jerusalem wall (Neh. 12:42). He may be the same person as the Uzzi of Neh. 11:22; 12:19.

UZZIA The only one of David’s mighty warriors identified as an Ashterathite (1 Chron. 11:44), probably indicating that he was from Ashtaroth, east of the Jordan. “Uzzia” is an earlier spelling of Uzziah, meaning “the LORD has shown himself strong.”

UZZIAH **(1)** A Levite, the son of Uriel, a descendant of Levi through Kohath (1 Chron. 6:24).

(2) The father of Jonathan, who was an administrator during David’s reign (1 Chron. 27:25).

(3) Also known as Azariah, he was the king of Judah from approximately 783 to 742 BC. The account of his rule is in 2 Kings 14:21–22; 15:1–7; 2 Chron. 26:1–23. He likely ruled as coregent with his father, Amaziah, starting in 792 BC, before he was sole ruler. He became king at the age of sixteen, when his father was assassinated. Much of his reign overlapped with that of Jeroboam II of Israel, and both kingdoms prospered economically during this time.

Uzziah was a relatively faithful king. He was also successful, maintaining a robust building program and achieving victory over the Philistines. His reign and life turned in a negative direction, however, when he pridefully presumed to offer incense in a holy area of the temple. Such actions were permitted only for the priests. The priests tried to stop him, but he continued, and so God caused him to become leprous for the rest of his life and thus excluded from the temple. Thereafter, his son Jotham discharged the kingly duties. When Uzziah died, he was buried with his fathers, but at some distance because of his condition (2 Chron. 26:23).

Although their messages were directed to the northern kingdom, the superscriptions to the books of Amos and Hosea indicate that these two prophets ministered during Uzziah’s reign (Hos. 1:1; Amos 1:1). Isaiah was called to be a prophet in the year Uzziah died (Isa. 1:1; 6:1), and Zech. 14:5 records an earthquake that took place during his rule.

(4) A priest who was guilty of marrying a foreign woman during the time of Ezra (Ezra 10:21).

(5) The father of Athaiah, a member of the tribe of Judah who was a provincial leader who settled in Jerusalem during the time of Nehemiah (Neh. 11:4).

UZZIEL **(1)** The ancestor of the Uzzielite clan (Num. 3:27), he was a grandson of Levi (Exod. 6:18), an uncle of Aaron, and the father of three sons (Exod. 6:22), two of whom carried Aaron’s dead sons outside the camp (Lev. 10:4). **(2)** One of the four sons of Ishi who led five hundred Simeonite fighters against the Amalekites in the hill country of Mount Seir during the reign of King Hezekiah (1 Chron. 4:42). **(3)** A grandson of Benjamin, he was the third of the five sons of Bela, heads of families (1 Chron. 7:7). **(4)** One of the fourteen sons of Heman the seer, he was among the musical prophets during the reign of King David (1 Chron. 25:4). **(5)** A Levite descendant of Jeduthun who helped cleanse the temple during the reforms of King Hezekiah (2 Chron. 29:14). **(6)** The son of Harhaiah, he was a goldsmith who helped rebuild the wall of Jerusalem (Neh. 3:8).

UZZIELITE Descended from Uzziel, a clan in the tribe of Levi (Num. 3:27; 1 Chron. 26:23).

V

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VAIN The word “vain” can refer to either of two related but distinct concepts: futility and conceit. In the first sense, the word often is used to refer to the inability to accomplish anything in reliance on merely human strength or resources, or without God’s approval, blessing, or assistance (Lev. 26:16; Pss. 33:17; 127:1–2), and to any attempt to stand against God’s purposes (Ps. 2:1). In the second sense, it refers to the self-conceit of those who would trust in their own resources (Phil. 2:3).

VAIZATHA The youngest of the ten sons of Haman the Agagite, the evil adversary of the Jews in the book of Esther. After King Xerxes hanged Haman and transferred his power to Esther and Mordecai, the Jews slew all their enemies, including Vaizatha and his brothers, whose corpses were hung in public by Xerxes at the request of Esther (Esther 9:7–14).

VALLEY Israel’s hilly terrain naturally has many valleys, and the Bible includes more than 250 references to at least four different types and nearly thirty named valleys. The *’emeq* was a wide valley sometimes called a “plain,” often having excellent agricultural land (Isa. 17:5). Thus, an *’emeq* such as the Jezreel (1 Sam. 29–31) or Elah (1 Sam. 17) served as a contested battlefield or as a place for worship (2 Chron. 20:26) or judgment (Joel 3:2). Another wide valley/plain was the *biq’ah*, such as at Megiddo (2 Chron. 35:22) or Jericho (Deut. 34:3). A much narrower valley was the *gaye’*, typically found higher in the hills. These valleys often functioned as boundaries for regions or cities, as the (Ben) Hinnom Valley helped delimit Jerusalem (Josh. 18:16). They also served as sites for battles (2 Sam. 8:13), grazing (1 Chron. 4:39), or illicit worship (2 Kings 23:10). Finally, the *nakhal* commonly denoted a wadi, a valley that carried water only after a rain, typical in Israel. One could even raise excellent crops in a *nakhal* (Num. 13:23–24), but finding adequate water was also important (Gen. 26:17–19).

VALLEY OF CRAFTSMEN *See* Ge Harashim.

VALLEY OF THE ARABAH Also referred to as the Brook of the Arabah (Amos 6:14 NASB, ESV), it marked the southern border of the northern kingdom of Israel. Its exact location is not known, although it is sometimes associated with the Zered River, which flows into the Dead Sea at its southern tip near Zoar, although this is too far south to be considered the southern border of Israel. More likely it refers to a river flowing from Jericho to the west (Wadi-el Qelt) or to Wadi el-Kefren, which runs from the northern end of the Dead Sea eastward.

VANIAH One of the descendants of Bani in the list of the returned exiles who had sinned by marrying a foreign wife (Ezra 10:36).

VASHNI Identified in the KJV as the oldest son of Samuel the prophet (1 Chron. 6:28), the name “Vashni” is actually a misreading of the Hebrew phrase “and the second.” The Hebrew text originally read, “The sons of Samuel: Joel the firstborn and the second, Abijah.” When the name “Joel” was accidentally dropped, scribes read the Hebrew phrase “and the second” as the proper name “Vashni” (so KJV). Samuel's firstborn actually was named "Joel" (1 Sam. 8:2; 1 Chron. 6:33). He and his brother Abijah corrupted the office of judge. In response, the elders increased their demands for a king (1 Sam. 8:2–5). He was the father of Heman the singer (1 Chron. 6:33; 15:17).

VASHTI The Persian queen of King Xerxes I (r. 485–464 BC) and the precursor to Queen Esther (Esther 1). During an extravagant banquet, King Xerxes became intoxicated and sent for Queen Vashti in order to put her on display to his guests. Queen Vashti refused and remained at the women's banquet that she was hosting. This not only elicited the king's fury but also alarmed the royal advisers, who worried that all women in the kingdom would follow Vashti's lead and refuse to obey their husbands. This led to the banishment of Vashti and ultimately the installment of Esther as the new queen.

VASSAL *See* Covenant.

VEIL In the harsh desert of the Middle East, a veil is useful protection from the sun and windblown sand. While Hebrew women tend to appear without veils (Gen. 12:14; 24:16; 29:10; 1 Sam. 1:12), dressing in veils in public may have been considered appropriate for women of certain status (Song 4:1, 3; 5:7; 6:7), so that forced removal becomes an act of shaming (Isa. 3:18–19; 47:2; Ezek. 13:21).

However, in the Bible, veils also serve as more than protection from the elements. Rebekah puts on a veil in deference before encountering her future husband, Isaac (Gen. 24:65). Tamar veiled herself in order to deceive Judah, her father-in-law, into sleeping with her (Gen. 38:14–19). And judgment is said to await the women who "make veils of various lengths for their heads in order to ensnare people" (Ezek. 13:18, 21).

Perhaps the most celebrated of veils in the Bible is the veil (*masweh*) worn by Moses over his face in order to keep its glow, caused by his encounter with God, from affecting the people (Exod. 34:33, 35). A veil also hung at the entrance of the tabernacle (Exod. 26:36, 37), while another significant veil hung in the tabernacle and the temple, separating the holy place from the most holy place (2 Chron. 3:14), into which the high priest entered but once a year (on Yom Kippur) for the atonement of sin (Exod. 30:10; Heb. 9:3). This veil was torn in two when Jesus died (Matt. 27:51; Mark 15:38; Luke 23:45), symbolizing open access into the presence of God (Heb. 10:20).

God is figuratively described as being veiled by clouds that keep us from his sight (Job 22:14), while divine judgment can be characterized as the "veil over their hearts" (Lam. 3:65).

In the NT, Paul requires women to veil their heads, particularly in worship, while veiling of the head by men is considered inappropriate (1 Cor. 11:6–7; cf. Isa. 3:17–18). He also compares Moses' veiled and fading glory to the surpassing and unfading glory of the ministry of the Spirit (2 Cor. 3:7–14) and says of the spiritually blind that "a veil covers their hearts," blinding them to God's grace that comes through Christ (3:15). The gospel is veiled to those that are perishing (4:3); however, this veil is removed by the Spirit when one turns to Christ (3:16–18).

VENGEANCE Today, vengeance normally is understood as retaliation for a suffered wrong, an action arising from vindictiveness and antipathy toward its object. Such an understanding runs counter to the biblical concept of vengeance. Indeed, the negative individual vengefulness associated with the term is either unequivocally forbidden or shown to be wrongheaded (Exod. 23:4–5; Lev. 19:18; Ezek. 25:12–16; Jer. 20:10–11; 1 Pet. 3:9). Thus, the term is better understood by considering the Hebrew term *naqam* (or its synonyms *baqash* and *gemul* [Josh. 22:23; 1 Sam. 20:16; 2 Sam. 4:11; Ps. 94:2;

Isa. 59:18; Obad. 15]) and the Greek term *ekdikēsis*. A close study of the biblical terms suggests that vengeance has to do with the administration of justice: the rendition of appropriate sanctions against a violator of established norms, and the provision of justice or vindication to the victimized or oppressed. One recurrent motif in the incidences of God's vengeance is its function in stopping or recompensing injustice (Isa. 59:14–18). The prerogative of such a solemn task rests with someone with legitimate authority. Such authority is ultimately God's (Deut. 32:35, 39; cf. Ps. 94:1–3; Prov. 20:22; Rom. 12:19). Indeed, the subject of four out of every five occurrences of "vengeance" in the Bible is God.

In that capacity, God combines, almost indistinguishably, the roles of a sovereign, supreme judge, and warrior in his execution of vengeance on the errant (Exod. 15:1–7; Ps. 89:6–18; Isa. 51:4–5; 52:10; Jer. 20:12). He sometimes delegates this function to angels (Gen. 18–19; Exod. 12:23; 2 Kings 19:35; Acts 12:23); nations, or national armies (Deut. 28:45–50; Isa. 10:5; Jer. 50:9–15); Israel (Deut. 9:1–5; 7:1; 20:16–17; Josh. 6:17–25; 8:24); kings, political leaders, and judicial officers (Deut. 25:1; Jer. 27:6; Rom. 13:1–4; 1 Pet. 2:13–14); and nonintelligent beings or elements of nature (Exod. 23:28–30; Amos 4:6–11).

God's vengeance has its moorings in his holiness (Jer. 50:28–29; cf. Deut. 32:4). The violation of his holiness arouses his justice, which demands just retribution for the offense (2 Sam. 12:1–12; Jer. 50:6–7; Ezek. 31:3–11). Put differently, God's righteousness is the obverse of his vengeance. One's experience of either is contingent upon one's relationship with God. In other words, his vengeance flows from his justice (Ps. 89:31–32; Nah. 1:3). God's justice is counterbalanced by his love (cf. James 2:13). For that reason, his vengeance on his covenant people is often more corrective than punitive and anticipates their repentance, redemption, and restoration (Isa. 1:24–26; Jer. 3:1–17; 46:28). Ultimately, he forgives his people, whom he disciplines (Pss. 89:19–33; 99:8; Zeph. 3:7; Rom. 5:6–11).

Therefore, there always is a close link between God's vengeance on the wicked and the salvation of his people (Isa. 34:8; 49:26; 61:1–3; Jer. 51:36). This is why the nations that he uses to punish Israel end up being punished themselves because of their hubris and overreaching attempts to annihilate his covenant people (Isa. 47:1–11; Jer. 46:10; 50–51), their failure to recognize the God who has prospered them, and their opposition to him (Deut. 32:26; Mic. 5:14). Thus, God's people come to expect or even call for God's vengeance on their enemies (Ps. 94:1–7; Jer. 11:20; 15:15; Lam. 3:60–66; Hab. 1:2–4). Such expectation is usually futuristic and parallels Israelite hope for the impending "day of the LORD" (Isa. 13:9–11; Jer. 46:10; Luke 21:20–24; 2 Thess. 1:6–8). Thus, the cries of God's people for his vengeance on their enemies represent the abandonment of personal revenge in favor of God's acts of justice and vindication—petitions for the rule of God's law over mere human justice (Pss. 58:11; 79:10; Rev. 6:10).

VENISON The KJV sometimes translates the Hebrew word *tsayid* as "venison," a general term for various types of edible meat. The NIV renders the Hebrew term as "game" or "wild game." The blessing of Jacob in the place of Esau occurs immediately after Jacob and Rebekah successfully hatch a plot to fool Isaac by passing off the meat of goats from their flock as wild game caught by Esau (Gen. 25:28–27:33).

VENOM A poisonous substance of various types secreted by some animals such as snakes, spiders, scorpions, and bees, which is transmitted to their victims through biting or stinging (Deut. 32:33; Job 20:16). Also translated "poison," the Hebrew term *ro'sh* can refer to poisonous plants (Deut. 29:18;

32:32).

VENOMOUS SERPENT When the Israelites grumbled in the wilderness, God sent “venomous [lit., “burning”; Heb. *serapim*] snakes” that bit the people (Num. 21:4–9; cf. KJV: “fiery serpents”). In response to Moses’ prayer on their behalf, God commanded Moses to make a *sarap* and put it on a pole; the people who looked at it would live. Moses made a bronze serpent. Because the people worshiped the bronze serpent, Hezekiah destroyed it (2 Kings 18:4). Jesus likened the bronze serpent lifted up in the wilderness to the Son of Man being lifted up (John 3:14). From a human perspective, both a serpent and a crucified messiah were unlikely objects of faith.

“Burning snake” appears in Deut. 8:15 (NIV: “venomous snakes”); the burning aspect may refer to the effects of the venom. Isaiah employed the image of a “flying” venomous snake in referring to Ahaz’s successor (Isa. 14:29 KJV; NIV: “darting”). *Serapim* appeared in Isaiah’s vision of the supernatural winged creatures flying above the throne of God; one brought a burning coal to touch Isaiah’s lips (Isa. 6:2–6). *See also* Seraphim.

VESPASIAN The Roman emperor in the years AD 69–79. Prior to becoming emperor, he was a military commander assigned by Nero to settle the revolt in Judea (AD 67). Great political upheaval followed the death of Nero in AD 68, which resulted in brief reigns by Galba, Otho, and Vitellius (AD 68–69). At the time he became emperor in AD 69, Vespasian had reestablished Roman rule in much of Judea, though the final conquest of Jerusalem was accomplished by his son Titus in AD 70. Relative peace and stability eventually returned to the empire under the leadership of Vespasian.

IMPCAESVESPAVGPMTRPPPCOSVIII

Coins with the image of the Roman emperor Vespasian

VESSELS AND UTENSILS Vessels and utensils of antiquity fell into two basic categories: sacred and everyday. Sacred vessels and utensils found use in cultic festivals, events, and services. Everyday vessels and utensils were used in household places such as the kitchen or a workroom.

VESSELS

Materials and uses. Vessels in antiquity could be made from precious metals, different types of stone, and varieties of wood. The most common material used, however, was clay. Clay was readily accessible and relatively easy to shape once obtained. Furthermore, once it had been fired, clay was fairly sturdy and nonporous enough to hold liquids for long periods of time. Numerous types of household vessels made from clay were in wide use by the time of the NT. The shape of the pottery was largely dependent on the function of the vessel.

Some of the more common vessels from the NT era and before include the *alabastros, amphoreus*, *hydria*, *kratēr*, *oinochoē*, and *stamnos*. The *alabastros* was a small vase for perfume or oil. It had a broad, flat mouth, a narrow neck, and a thinly made body (Matt. 26:7; Mark 14:3–4). The word *amphoreus* refers to something to be “carried on both sides,” and such vessels had two vertical handles, a wide body, and a narrow neck. They came in various sizes and were used to transport wine and water and sometimes finer solids like grain. The *hydria* was used to fetch water (John 2:6). These containers usually had oval bodies, two horizontal handles, and one vertical handle. The *kratēr* was a large mixing bowl used for blending water and wine; the mixture was taken from the *kratēr* by a ladle and served to the guests (the inferior wine at the wedding feast mentioned in John 2:10 may have been this type of watered-down concoction). An *oinochoē* was a jug used to pour wine. It usually had one handle along its side. The *stamnos* was a pot used for storing and mixing. It had two small horizontal handles on its side. The body was rather round, and it had a short neck. Such pots were the norm in ancient households for storage and service. Because they were fragile, handmade, and earthen, such vessels became images for humankind, for whom the same qualities can be listed (Job 4:19; 33:6; Isa. 45:9; 2 Cor. 4:7).

Besides earthen vessels, containers made of wood and reeds often were used for storage. Those who could afford wood used it for storage containers of various goods because it protected the contents well from pests. Baskets made of reeds of some sort were far less expensive and therefore more common in storage rooms. Grains and dried fruits usually were stored in such vessels until it was time for them to be used. Typically, a cook waited until meal preparation to transform the grains into flour, as pulverized substances were difficult to store (Exod. 11:5; Num. 11:8; Prov. 27:22). When it came time to cook foods, pottery also sufficed for the common household, since metals were too costly (for an example of a clay pot used for boiling an item, see Lev. 6:28). Dishes were made of wood, pottery, or metal for the more wealthy. Archaeologists have discovered spoons and other small utensils, but it is not known whether these were used for eating or simply for serving. Traditionally, people ate from a shared dish placed on the floor using bread to scoop up the food (Mark 14:20). Finally, liquids sometimes were stored in animal skins, especially in the earlier eras of biblical history (Josh. 9:4, 13; Judg. 4:19; Neh. 5:18; Job 32:19; Ps. 119:83; Matt. 9:17).

Sacred vessels. Sacred vessels were quite similar to their secular counterparts in many ways, except that they were set apart for use in sacred rituals and ceremonies (Exod. 25:39; 27:3). They included trays, shovels, pots, basins, forks, fire pans, and hooks (1 Chron. 9:28–29; 2 Chron. 24:14–19; Jer. 27:18–21). At a banquet, the Babylonian king Belshazzar used gold and silver goblets taken from the Jerusalem temple, a blasphemous act for which he was harshly judged (Dan. 5). Joseph’s silver cup may have played a part in his decision-making process, or it may simply have been a symbol of his high-standing office (Gen. 44:2).

Everyday, or profane, vessels and utensils were never to be brought into the sanctuary or used for worship services. In fact, some vessels that were used for worship were to be destroyed if somewhere in the process they were profaned (Lev. 6:28; 11:33). The prophets, however, looked forward to a day when even the most common or profane of items would be rendered sacred and holy to God, a day when all could participate in the sacrifices of God's people (Zech. 14:20–21).

Ossuaries. One other type of important vessel in the life of ancient Judaism was the ossuary. An ossuary, or bone box, was a container in which the bones of a deceased individual were placed for burial after decomposition of the body had occurred. They generally were made from limestone and could be ornately decorated or quite simple in form. Ossuaries were used as part of the burial process from about 30 BC to AD 70 to store the bones of loved ones (though the practice continued sporadically into the third century AD). Most consider their use to be the result of the teachings of the Pharisees that the bones needed to be freed from the sinful flesh and collected for resurrection.

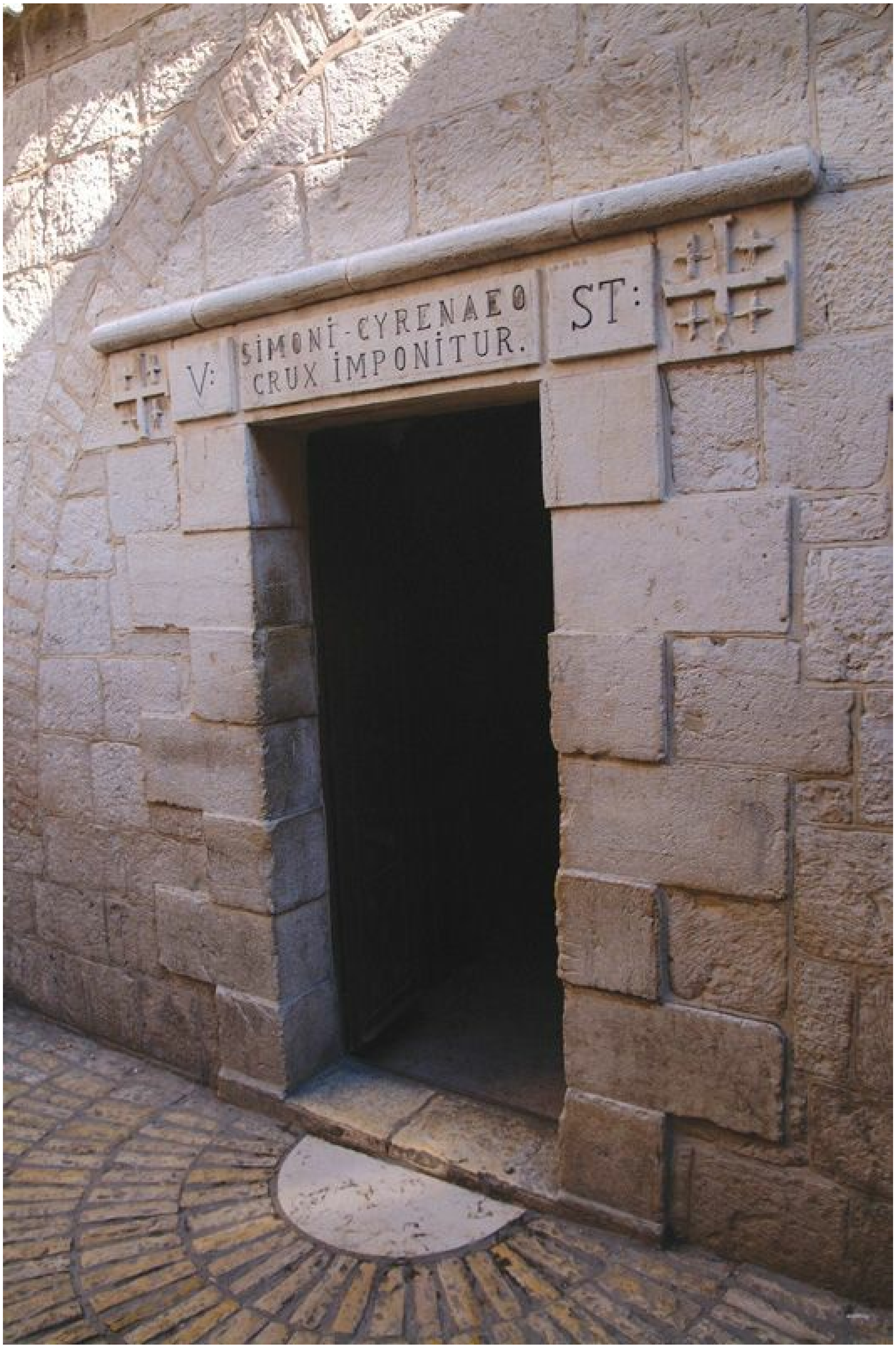
UTENSILS

Some utensils necessary for cooking have already been discussed in connection with the vessels. There were, however, other items used in everyday life that had only tangential or no connection with cooking.

Fire could be started by using a friction drill. This tool consisted of a wooden bow whose string was wound tightly around a spike. With a hollowed-out drill cap made of stone or a nutshell, the spike was pressed against the fire stick and rotated by moving the bow back and forth. Dry branches or dried dung could be used to fuel a cooking fire (2 Kings 6:25; Ezek. 4:12, 15). (*See also* Tools.)

Writing utensils of the ancient Near East depended largely on the material upon which the writing would be done. Early writing on clay was done using knives or a stamp applied while the clay was still wet. When the material was cloth, skin, or papyrus, brushes were used to apply a rich ointment used for ink. Finally, when a wax tablet was used, the writer scratched the surface with some type of sharp utensil. This instrument was a stylus or bodkin, which could be made from a variety of materials, such as iron, ivory, bone, minerals, or any other hard substance. These were sharpened at one end to make indentations and flattened on the other end for erasing marks and smoothing the surface. (*See also* Writing Implements and Materials.)

VIA DOLOROSA The "Way of Sorrow." According to tradition, this is the route that Jesus, carrying his cross, took from the judgment hall where Pilate condemned him to death to Golgotha ("Place of a Skull"), the site of the crucifixion. Today it winds along the narrow streets of Jerusalem's Old City. The route, followed by many pilgrims today, leads west from the Ecce Homo ("Behold the Man" [cf. John 19:5]) Arch to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the traditional site of Jesus' burial. Along the route there are fourteen "Stations of the Cross." Each station represents a sacred event that occurred on the way to Jesus' sacrificial death: (1) Jesus is condemned to death; (2) Jesus takes up the cross; (3) Jesus falls under the cross for the first time; (4) Jesus meets his mother; (5) Simon the Cyrenian is forced to carry the cross; (6) Veronica wipes the sweat from Jesus' face; (7) Jesus falls the second time; (8) Jesus consoles the daughters of Jerusalem; (9) Jesus falls the third time; (10) Jesus is stripped of his garments; (11) Jesus is nailed to the cross; (12) Jesus dies on the cross; (13) Jesus is taken down from the cross; (14) Jesus is laid in the tomb. Although the authenticity of the Via Dolorosa is uncertain, it certainly is a most hallowed road for pilgrims.



The fifth station of the cross on the Via Dolorosa in Jerusalem, where Simon of Cyrene picked up the cross of Jesus

VIAL A small, closable vessel used especially for holding liquids. Samuel poured oil from a vial to anoint Saul (1 Sam. 10:1 [NIV: “flask”]). A woman poured perfume from an alabaster vial to anoint Jesus (Matt. 26:7 [NIV: “jar”]). Seven “vials of wrath” appear in Rev. 16 (NIV: “bowls”).

VILLAGE A permanent settlement for a small community. Villages are smaller than cities or towns but larger than camps. A village represents a shift from the band-level society and the nomadic hunter-gatherer lifestyle to a sedentary tribe or chiefdom, which subsists mainly on farming and animal husbandry rather than foraging. Settled communities are one element of the societal and economic shifts necessary for full-time agriculture or pastoralism to be a viable means of subsistence. Villages can be structured where one or more clusters of rooms house an extended family or a small, close-knit community, or they can be dispersed, consisting of several freestanding buildings. Population can range from a few dozen to a few hundred. Though generally considered small and rural, villages usually have ties or relationships with other nearby villages, towns, and even cities and local or regional centers.

VINE, VINEYARD Grape-producing plants are widely cultivated in Palestine. The first biblical reference to vine cultivation appears in Gen. 9:20, where the restoration of the earth is implied by Noah's planting of a vineyard. The appearance of the vine in Pharaoh's chief cupbearer's dream implies widespread vine cultivation in Egypt (Gen. 40:9–11). Before the Israelites' entry, the land of Canaan was also famous for the production of grapes and wine (cf. Num. 13:23; Deut. 6:11; 8:8). Several places around the region are named in the OT for their fruitful vines: Eshkol (Num. 13:23), Sorek (Judg. 16:4), Sibmah, Heshbon, Jazer, Elealeh (Isa. 16:8–10), Helbon (Ezek. 27:18), Lebanon (Hos. 14:7), and En Gedi (Song 1:14).

Vine cultivation. Vine cultivation is detailed in the Bible. A hilly terrain is terraced, stones are cleared, and soil is plowed (Ps. 80:9; Isa. 5:2). The walls are built up with stones, often with a hedge of thorny bushes, to protect the vineyard from thieves and wild animals (Isa. 5:2). Then young vines are planted where water is supplied (Ezek. 19:10). As their branches develop, they are raised up on supports (Ezek. 17:6). In the spring the vines are pruned so that they will bear good grapes (Lev. 25:3; John 15:2). Winepresses are hewn out of wood or rocky ground (Isa. 5:2). A watchtower is erected to overlook the vineyard, especially as the harvest season draws near (Job 27:18; Isa. 1:8; 27:3). When the grapes are ripe, they are gathered in baskets and taken to winepresses (Hos. 9:2), while some are dried into raisins. When the harvest is done, the poor in the village are allowed to enter the vineyard to gather the gleanings (Lev. 19:10; Deut. 24:21; cf. Isa. 24:13; Jer. 49:9; Mic. 7:1).

Since the production of grapes was of major importance to the Israelites, the continuing cycle of vine cultivation meant national peace and security (cf. "under their own vine and under their own fig tree" in 1 Kings 4:25; Mic. 4:4; Zech. 3:10; joy of the harvest in Isa. 16:10; Jer. 48:33). Thus, the characteristic expression of planting vineyards and consuming their fruits signals God's blessing (2 Kings 19:29; Ps. 107:37; Isa. 65:21–22; Jer. 31:5; 40:12; Ezek. 28:26; Amos 9:14), whereas not enjoying the fruit signifies misfortune (Deut. 20:6) or God's judgment (Deut. 28:30; Ps. 78:47; Jer. 8:13; Amos 5:11; Hab. 3:17; Zeph. 1:13). Likewise, a feast with wine signifies God's blessing (Isa. 25:6; 55:1; Jer. 31:12; Joel 2:19; cf. Jesus turning water into wine [John 2:1–11]), while the lack of wine means God's judgment (Isa. 24:9, 11; 62:8; Hos. 2:9; 9:2; Joel 1:10).

A vineyard in Israel

Old Testament. The vine and the vineyard are important metaphors in the OT. The fruitfulness of the vine often symbolizes the fruitfulness or blessedness of a person (e.g., Joseph in Gen. 49:22; a fruitful wife in Ps. 128:3). In Song of Songs the vineyard is not only the main place of love (2:13, 15; 6:11; 7:12) but also a metaphor for the woman's body (8:11); also, the "beloved" is compared to "henna blossoms from the vineyards of En Gedi" (1:14), and her breasts to the "clusters of grapes on the vine" (7:8).

The metaphors of the vine and the vineyard are also used of God's people. In Ps. 80:8–13 Israel's history is presented in terms of the vine-cultivation cycle (cf. Jer. 2:21; Hos. 10:1). A similar story is heard in Isa. 5:1–7, which compares the Israelites' lack of justice and righteousness to the bearing of wild grapes (cf. "vine of Sodom" in Deut. 32:32; "a corrupt, wild vine" in Jer. 2:21). Ezekiel also uses the vine metaphor in rebuking the Israelites' iniquity (Ezek. 15:2–4; 17:3–10; 19:10–14). If the aforementioned passages describe Israel's history from its birth to judgment, Isa. 27:2–6 presents God's promise of restoration through the story of the restored vineyard.

New Testament. In five parables Jesus refers to vines and cultivation (Matt. 9:17 pars.; 20:1–16; 21:28–32; 21:33–46 pars.; Luke 13:6–9). Notable is the fact that God often is portrayed as the owner of the vineyard (Matt. 20:1; 21:28, 33; Luke 13:6). In Rev. 14:18–20 God's judgment upon his enemies is described by means of the imagery of the vine harvest, in which the enemies are trampled like harvested grapes in the "great winepress of God's wrath" (cf. Isa. 63:1–6; Joel 3:13). In the vine metaphor in John 15:1–8, Jesus identifies God as the farmer, himself as the "true vine," and the believers as its branches. No longer are God's people identified as the vine, which is expected to bear good fruits; rather, Jesus is the vine, and the believers are his branches. So the fruitfulness of the branches depends on their adherence to the vine. Jesus' use of the "fruit of the vine" at the Last Supper as the symbol of his atoning blood can be compared to his metaphorical self-identification as the vine (Matt. 26:29; Mark 14:25; Luke 22:18). *See also* Plants.

VINEGAR In the Bible, vinegar is wine that during the fermentation process has become acidic and soured. It is mentioned only five times in the OT. Despite its acidity and sourness, it could, mixed with water, be used as a beverage, but primarily for the lower and poorer classes. In Num. 6:3 Nazirites are prohibited from drinking wine or wine vinegar. In Ruth 2:14 vinegar is mentioned as a condiment for dipping bread. Other references, however, point out vinegar's undesirable qualities (Prov. 10:26; 25:20). In Ps. 69:21 the psalmist complains that his enemies gave him vinegar for his thirst, evidently undiluted, therefore making the gesture cruel and mocking.

All four references to vinegar in the NT are in the Gospel accounts of the crucifixion (Matt. 27:48; Mark 15:36; Luke 23:36; John 19:29). Matthew and Mark narrate that at an early point in the crucifixion the soldiers had tried to give Jesus wine to drink, but he refused it. Most commentators believe that Jesus refused this drink because of its sedative properties. All four Gospels indicate that at some point later during the crucifixion, they gave Jesus wine vinegar to drink, which this time he accepted. The Gospel narrators almost certainly want the reader to see here a fulfillment of Ps. 69:21.

VINEYARD *See* Vine, Vineyard.

VIOLENCE Hostile action carried out against someone or something. While used in Ezek. 22:26 to describe the manner in which Israel's priests had utilized God's law, violence most often involves the infliction of physical harm against a person or group. The subject of violence in the Bible, while extensive, is far from simple. Many OT passages refer to participation in violence as something to be avoided, belonging to the life of the wicked rather than to that of the righteous (Ps. 27:12; Prov. 4:17). In the NT, violence is discouraged as well (Rom. 12:19–21). Violence is addictive and ultimately destructive for those who live by it (Prov. 13:2; 21:7). Violence begets violence (Ps. 137; Matt. 26:52). A recurring biblical depiction of violence entails the spilling of blood, due to a close association of blood with life (Jer. 51:35; cf. Lev. 17:14).

Many passages assert or assume that God disapproves of violence (e.g., Job 16:17; Ps. 17:4; Mal. 2:16; 1 Tim. 1:13; Titus 1:7). God is a refuge against violence (2 Sam. 22:3). Widespread violence on the earth is the reason God gives for bringing about the flood (Gen. 6:13). Violence is the sin of Nineveh (Jon. 3:8) as well as that of Israel, a point emphasized by the prophets when declaring that Israel would go into exile (Isa. 53:9; Jer. 22:3; Ezek. 8:17; Hos. 12:1).

Yet there are also passages that tolerate and even advocate violence. Scripture contains numerous stories of God's people acting violently. While in some cases these individuals may be acting on their own (see Judges), in some passages God explicitly commands violence (e.g., Deut. 7:1–2). In biblical military life, violence seems to be an accepted and even useful tool (e.g., 1 Sam. 17; 1 Chron. 12). God is often described as, among other things, a warrior (Exod. 15:3; Matt. 10:34; Rev. 19:11–16).

The question of the persistence of violence is voiced in Scripture but not answered (Hab. 1:2–3), suggesting that there is no simple answer. Perhaps God's recognition of the wickedness of the human heart (Gen. 8:21) leads him to be involved even in the violence of this world, as instigator and also as recipient (Jesus). That the Bible acknowledges the prevalence of violence in the world certainly is significant. Yet the Bible also bears witness that this too shall pass as it describes God's future plans, in which violence will be no more (see Isa. 60:18).

VIPER Of the more than thirty types of snakes in Israel, six poisonous species are implied in the biblical references to vipers, many of which are metaphors for an enemy (Gen. 49:17; Ps. 140:3; Prov. 23:32; Isa. 14:29). Although God warned of vipers as punishment (Jer. 8:17), there will be a day when they are no longer a threat (Isa. 11:8). When John and Jesus condemned the Pharisees and the Sadducees, they called them a "brood of vipers," implying that they were lethal foes (Matt. 3:7; 12:34; 23:33).

VIRGIN There are two Hebrew words that the NIV translates as "virgin." The first, *betulah*, carries the more common English understanding of "virgin," designating a woman who has not had sexual intercourse. The second, *ʾalmah*, generally refers to a young woman who has reached childbearing age and is marriageable. It does not, however, always imply that the woman has not had sexual intercourse or even that she is not married. In NT Greek the word *parthenos* is generally used of a woman who has not had sexual relations. The definition of "virgin" is theologically important because of statements in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke that Mary the mother of Jesus was a virgin (*parthenos*) when he was born (Matt. 1:23; Luke 1:27; cf. Matt. 1:18, 25; Luke 1:34). Further compounding the interpretive problem is Matthew's use of Isa. 7:14 in Matt. 1:23, where he follows the LXX's *parthenos* even though the Hebrew reads *ʾalmah*.

VIRGIN BIRTH The traditional designation "virgin birth" refers to the supernatural conception of Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit, apart from sexual relations. Technically, one should speak of a "virginal conception," since Jesus was virginally conceived but was born normally. The virgin "birth" is considered by some theologians to be the means by which the two natures of Jesus Christ are preserved: his humanity stems from the fact that he was born of the virgin Mary, while his deity proceeds from the reality that God was his father and he was conceived by the Holy Spirit. The later Apostles' Creed formulates the matter this way: Jesus Christ "was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary." Here, three aspects of the virgin birth are discussed: (1) the virgin birth and Isa. 7:14; (2) the virgin birth in the NT; (3) the historicity of the virgin birth.

Isaiah 7:14. Isaiah 7:14 reads, "The virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel" (ESV). Two key issues are involved in Isaiah's prophecy. First, should the Hebrew word *ʾalmah* be translated as "virgin" or as "young woman"? While the Hebrew term does not necessarily mean a virgin, but only a young woman of marriageable age, the Greek term *parthenos* used in the LXX of Isa. 7:14 and quoted in Matt. 1:23 has stronger connotations of virginity. Second, when was Isa. 7:14 fulfilled? Most likely the OT text was partially fulfilled in Isaiah's day (with reference to King Ahaz's unnamed son or to Isaiah's son Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz [Isa. 8:1]) but found its ultimate fulfillment in Jesus, as Matt. 1:23 points out.

New Testament. The infancy narratives recorded in Matt. 1–2 and in Luke 1–2 provide the story line for Jesus' virginal conception: (1) Mary was a virgin engaged to Joseph (Matt. 1:18; Luke 1:27, 34; 2:5); (2) she was found to be pregnant while still engaged to Joseph, a conception produced by the Holy Spirit (Matt. 1:18, 20; Luke 1:35; cf. Matt. 1:18–25; Luke 1:34); (3) only after Jesus was born did Mary and Joseph have sexual relations (Matt. 1:24–25). Even though there is nothing in these narratives like the hypostatic union formulated in the later church creeds, it is clear that Matthew and Luke in some way associate Jesus' deity and humanity with the virginal conception. Other NT texts are considered by some as possible references to the virgin birth. John 1:14 states that "the Word became flesh," which certainly highlights Jesus' two natures—deity and humanity—but does not thereby explicitly mention the virgin birth. Paul does something similar in Rom. 1:3 ("[God's] Son, who as to his earthly life was a descendant of David"), Gal. 4:4 ("God sent his Son, born of a woman"), and Phil. 2:6–11 (Jesus existed in the form of God but took on human likeness). Beyond these passages, there is little else regarding the virgin birth stated or alluded to in the NT.

Historicity. Two important considerations indicate that the virgin birth of Jesus was a historical event and not a mythic legend. First, the simplicity of the descriptions of the birth narratives in Matthew and Luke, when compared with the fantastic details found in contemporary accounts of Greco-Roman and Jewish supernatural births, bespeak the authenticity of the NT documents. For example, one can cite the stories of the supernatural birth of Alexander the Great in Greek sources and of Noah in extrabiblical Jewish sources. In addition, secondary details such as the mention of Anna's father, Phanuel (Luke 2:36), add nothing significant to the account and thus appear to be matter-of-fact reporting by an eyewitness. Second, the commonalities between Matthew and Luke regarding the virgin birth of Jesus attest to its historicity.

In conclusion, while the NT does not contain extensive information concerning the virgin birth of Jesus, there is sufficient evidence to support its historicity.

VISION A divine communication in the form of visual imagery, usually accompanied by words, and often using symbols that require explanation and spur reflection about God's otherwise imperceptible presence and activity. Presumably, the recipient "sees" the vision as an event of inward perception, often within a dream during sleep or in a divinely induced state of ecstasy (Gen. 15; Dan. 7:1; 10:1–9; 2 Cor. 12:1–4). Characteristically, visions entail conversation with God or an angelic representative, often following a question-and-answer format (Dan. 7:15–28; Zech. 1:8–15, 18–21). The visionary is actually in the scene as direct observer and active participant (Dan. 8:1–2).

Prophetic visions are meant to be retold. For example, imagery is accompanied by the authentication of divine commissioning (Isa. 6; Ezek. 1:1–3:15; Rev. 10), leading to announcement of judgment (Jer. 1:4–19). This close conjunction of image and word (1 Sam. 3:21) is reinforced by statements about a prophet "seeing" God's word (e.g., Mic. 1:1 ESV, NRSV, NASB) and about prophetic books as collections of visions (2 Chron. 32:32; Nah. 1:1). Vision reports join oracles and other forms of prophetic speech as essential features of these works. Visions contribute to the community's spiritual well-being (Prov. 29:18; Ezek. 7:26), but not always (Lam. 2:14; Ezek. 13; Zech. 13:4; Col. 2:18).

Visions drive the narrative surrounding Jesus' birth (Matt. 1:18–2:23; Luke 1:1–2:20). The baptism of Jesus includes a visionary element, the Holy Spirit's anointing of Jesus for his ministry, accompanied by the Father's word (Matt. 3:16–17; Mark 1:10–11; Luke 3:22; John 1:32–33). Jesus' transfiguration is comparable (Matt. 17:1–9; Mark 9:2–10; Luke 9:28–36). Visions mark key transition points in the narrative of Acts (e.g., chaps. 9–11). The book of Revelation opens with a vision of the Son of Man (1:9–20) and is structured around three vision cycles of judgment interspersed with visions of heaven meant to bolster the readers' faithfulness.

VOCATION *See* Call, Calling.

VOLUNTEERS Those who offer themselves freely and willingly, without compulsion or consideration of value in return, to perform a task, make a vow, or serve another. In the OT, volunteers usually serve God (Deut. 23:23; 2 Chron. 17:16; Ps. 110:3), Israel (Ezra 7:13; Neh. 11:2), or a leader in Israel (Judg. 5:2, 9; 1 Chron. 28:21). God himself is the ultimate volunteer, as he freely gives place, purpose, and a partner to Adam (Gen. 2:15–22); unilaterally covenants with Abram to give him descendants, blessing, and land (Gen. 12:2–3; 15:17–21); liberates Israel from bondage in Egypt (Exod. 6:6–8; Deut. 20:1; Josh. 24:17; Ps. 81:10); and remains faithful to Israel despite its repeated failures (Pss. 68:35; 106:44–46).

In the NT, God is also the sender of Jesus (Matt. 10:40; Mark 9:37; Luke 4:18–21; John 4:34; 5:24, 30, 36–37), who heals of his own volition (Luke 5:13), gives rest to the weary (Matt. 11:28), and lays down his life of his own accord for our redemption (Mark 10:45; John 10:18; Gal. 3:13–14; Eph. 5:2; Titus 2:14; 1 Pet. 1:18–19). With Jesus as the standard, the concept of willingly giving of oneself and one's possessions runs throughout the NT (Eph. 5:1–2). Christians are called to love and serve one another in spiritual and practical ways (Acts 2:44–45; Rom. 12:9–21; 1 Thess. 5:15–18; Philem. 14). They are also to love their enemies and pray for their persecutors (Matt. 5:44; Luke 6:27, 35). Those who wish to lead must first volunteer themselves as servants to others (Matt. 20:27; Mark 9:35; Luke 22:26). Elders are to shepherd voluntarily (1 Pet. 5:2). Paul, who urges Christians to offer their bodies as living sacrifices (Rom. 12:1), is himself a model of volunteerism and self-sacrifice (Acts 20:34–35; 21:13; 1 Cor. 9:19–23; 2 Cor. 4:5; 11:23–27).

VOPHSI The father of Nahbi, the representative of the tribe of Naphtali among the twelve spies sent by Moses from the wilderness of Paran to scout the land of Canaan (Num. 13:14).

VOWS Binding promises made to God while awaiting God's help (Gen. 28:20; Num. 21:2; 1 Sam. 1:11). When God's answer comes, worshipers fulfill their vows by performing what they have promised (1 Sam. 1:21; Acts 21:23–24).

Mosaic regulations address how and by whom vows are to be implemented (e.g., Lev. 7:16; 22:17–25; 23:38; 27:2–11; Num. 30; Deut. 12:5–28), including the "Nazirite vow" of radical separation to God (Num. 6:1–21; cf. Judg. 13:2–5; Acts 18:18). Lament psalms connect vows with the outcry to God and portray their fulfillment in thank offerings that respond to God's deliverance (Pss. 50:14–15; 56:12–13; 66:13–15; cf. Job 22:27; Jon. 2:9). Since vows are intended to distinguish God's faithful worshipers (e.g., Ps. 116:14, 17–18), Scripture condemns rash or unfulfilled vows (Num. 30:2; Deut. 23:21–23; Prov. 20:25; Eccles. 5:5–6; cf. Judg. 11:30–39). Some vows are made insincerely (2 Sam. 15:7–8; Prov. 7:14) or to idols (Jer. 44:25).

VOYEURISM Voyeurism is the compulsive practice of obtaining sexual gratification by looking at sexual acts or objects. A voyeur typically operates secretively, contributing to the addictive nature of the practice. Voyeurism falls under the category of noncontact sexual abuse, which includes exhibitionism, voyeurism, coercion to view or participate in child pornography, obscene sexual phone calls and emails, and other intrusive behavior such as not allowing a child to undress or use the bathroom in privacy.

Several biblical texts can illustrate voyeurism. Ham engages in blatant voyeurism toward his father, Noah (Gen. 9:22). Drunk from wine, Noah disrobes, and Ham "saw the nakedness of his father" (ESV, NRSV, NASB), a phrase referring to observation, not a sexual act. The diverted gaze and the specific garment (in Heb., "*the* garment," i.e., Noah's garment) used by his brothers confirm Ham's leering (9:23). In the book of Habakkuk, God pronounces woe upon the Babylonians for getting prisoners drunk so that they can "gaze on their naked bodies" (Hab. 2:15).

When individualism separates personhood from relationships and secularism opts for the "harm principle" ("An act is okay if no one gets hurt")—to say nothing of pervasive pornography issues on the Internet—it is no surprise that voyeurism is a growing problem.

VULGATE This Latin translation of Scripture, based on the work of Jerome, was the most widely used Bible version before the time of the Protestant Reformation. *See also* Bible Texts and Versions.

VULTURE A large bird of prey that feeds chiefly on carrion. Other sizable birds of prey include eagles, owls, and falcons. In English Bible versions these birds usually appear as "buzzard," "carrion bird," "eagle," or "hawk."

A vulture

The texts emphasize large carrion eaters common to the ancient Near Eastern world. Common among determined scavengers, the vulture has a heavy body, wide wingspan, and the ability to soar at great heights to spot prey. In fact, the Talmud cites an ancient proverb that says of the vulture, "It can be in Babylon and spot a carcass in Palestine" (*b. Hul*. 63b). This maxim is illustrated in Gen. 15:9–20, a covenant ceremony between God and Abram. At one point, Abram has to drive off vultures that are swooping down on the carcasses of sacrificed animals. Vulnerable Israel will be prone to attack from the surrounding nations, particularly Egypt (cf. Exod. 6:6; 7:4; 12:12; Acts 7:6). In Egypt, the falcon symbolized the god Horus, an image of Pharaoh himself.

In the NT, the same Greek term (*aetos*) is used for both eagles and vultures. The NIV uses the translation "vulture" to refer to a bird flying over a corpse (Matt. 24:28; Luke 17:37) but uses "eagle" elsewhere (Rev. 4:7; 8:13; 12:14).

W

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WADI A ravine, gorge, valley, or streambed, sometimes steep, in an arid region that is dry except during rainy season, when it becomes susceptible to torrential, life-threatening flash flooding. Job compares his fickle friends to a wadi (Job 6:15–20; NIV: “intermittent streams”]).

Feran Wadi in Egypt

WADI OF EGYPT Also known as the Brook of Egypt (ESV, NASB, NKJV), it is the southwestern limit of the territory given to Israel (the Euphrates being the northern boundary). It was promised to Abram in Gen. 15:18. It is likely identified as the Wadi el-Arish, which flows from the middle of the Sinai Peninsula to the Mediterranean Sea (Num. 34:5; Josh. 15:4, 47).

WADI OF THE WILLOWS *See* Arabim.

WAGES Payment for the hire of one’s labor, often disbursed daily. The Bible refers to wages in connection with various occupations, including agricultural worker (Gen. 29:15; 30:27–29; Zech. 11:12; Matt. 20:1–16; John 4:36), artisan (1 Kings 5:6; Isa. 46:6), soldier (2 Chron. 25:6; Ezek. 29:18–19; 1 Cor. 9:7), prostitute (Hos. 9:1; Mic. 1:7), priest (Judg. 18:4; Num. 18:31), nurse (Exod. 2:9), and even the beast of burden (Exod. 22:15; Zech. 8:10; 1 Tim. 5:18). Prophets were paid for their work (Amos 7:12), though a late OT and Second Temple period tradition regarded the sin of Balaam as prophecy for hire (Deut. 23:4; Neh. 6:12–13; 13:2; 2 Pet. 2:15; Jude 11). In the NT, the concept of wage labor is extended to the church leader and the apostle (Luke 10:7; 1 Cor. 3:8; 1 Tim. 5:18).

Behind many references in the NT to wages lies the Latin term *denarius* (Gk. *dēnarion*) a small silver coin equivalent to a day's wages (as in Matt. 20:2). Thus, in Mark 6:37 "more than half a year's wages" (NIV) translates what in Greek is "two hundred denarii" (NRSV) (see also Mark 14:5), and the commodity prices in Rev. 6:6 show massive inflation relative to the day's wage or denarius. In addition to the payment of wages with money, the Bible attests the payment of wages in kind, including wives (Gen. 29:17), livestock (Gen. 30:32), food (Num. 18:31; 1 Sam. 2:5), and, in the case of soldiers, plunder (Ezek. 29:19).

Several texts regard the fair payment of wages as a basic element of social justice and, conversely, the withholding of wages as an evil. Deuteronomy 24:15 commands the employer to pay workers wages "each day before sunset, because they are poor and are counting on it" (cf. Lev. 19:13; Job 7:2). Likewise, Mal. 3:5 denounces those who defraud workers of wages (cf. Gen. 31:2), a stance continued in the NT (Rom. 4:4; James 5:4).

The reward of righteousness and the punishment of wickedness are described as a wage, as in Rom. 6:23: "The wages of sin is death." Proverbs 10:16 says, "The wages of the righteous is life, but the earnings of the wicked are sin and death" (cf. Prov. 11:18; Isa. 65:7; 2 Pet. 2:13).

WAGON *See* Cart; Litter.

WAHEB *See* Zahab.

WAIL *See* Grief and Mourning; Repentance.

WALK Walking was the primary mode of transportation in Bible times, and metaphorically it referred to one's conduct of life. It is used figuratively in both Testaments. For example, Noah is introduced as a righteous and blameless man who "walked faithfully with God" (Gen. 6:9), and Christians are to "walk in the light" (1 John 1:7) and "walk just as [Jesus] walked" (1 John 2:6 NRSV).

WALL, ANGLE OF THE In 2 Chron. 26:9; Neh. 3:19–20, 24–25 reference is made to the "angle" (Heb. *miqtsoa'*) of the Jerusalem wall (NRSV: "the Angle"; KJV: "the turning of the wall"). It refers not to a main corner of the wall but perhaps to a projection of or indentation in the wall's course.

WALL, DIVIDING The NIV renders the Greek word *mesotoichon* in Eph. 2:14 as "dividing wall" (KJV: "middle wall"). Within the temple infrastructure stood a wall of one and a half meters. This temple balustrade separated the court of the Gentiles from the inner courts and the sanctuary in the Jerusalem temple. Because the wall is a powerful symbol of the separation of Gentiles from Jews, the NT declaration that this wall has been broken down is rhetorically significant (Eph. 2:14; cf. 1 Macc.

9:54). Christ has (symbolically) broken down this dividing wall through his death. Jews and Gentiles now stand as one as they approach God.

A difficulty in this interpretation of Eph. 2:14, however, is that the “dividing wall” in the temple was still standing until the destruction of the temple in AD 70. It seems preferable to see the reference to the “dividing wall” as an ad hoc formulation coherent to the context of Eph. 2:14. The writer continues with the partitioned house/temple theme in 2:19 and refers to the “holy temple” in 2:21. It was the purposeful and exclusive attitudes of the Jews that separated Jew from Gentile and created a barrier between them. This social barrier would have been closely associated with some of the boundary markers used by Jews to separate themselves from Gentiles.

WALLS Walls were necessary defense architecture surrounding a city or a fortress (e.g., Deut. 3:5; Josh. 2:15; 1 Sam. 31:10). Unlike the stone fence that protected vineyards, orchards, or gardens (Prov. 24:31; cf. Eccles. 10:8), walls were constructed of unbaked mud-brick or stone and enhanced with features such as a glacis (ramparts), supporting retaining walls, dry moats, and towers. By the time of the Early Bronze Age (3300–2200 BC), some cities were even fortified by two layers of walls, supported in between by a glacis.

Two types of walls have been discovered in Palestine: casemate walls and solid walls. Casemate walls consisted of two parallel walls joined by a short wall filled with rubble at regular intervals, forming a series of casemates. After the Solomonic era, however, the main fortifications were solid walls that were offset-inset, with projecting and receding sections built into the wall face to give a better defense against battering rams and scaling ladders.

WAR *See* Holy War.

WAR CRIMES Atrocities in violation of laws and customs constraining the injurious actions of belligerents against their enemies. These include the killing of civilians, the mistreatment of prisoners of war, the wanton destruction of nonstrategic targets, and genocide.

War crimes were first identified during the 1474 tribunal of the knight Peter von Hagenbach in the Holy Roman Empire. He was beheaded for heinous offenses against the people of the upper Rhine, despite his protest that he was only following orders issued by the Duke of Burgundy. Currently, war crimes are governed by the Third (1929) and Fourth (1949) Geneva Conventions.

The biblical case against war crimes is the product of wise exegesis, as many of Israel’s OT battles feature elements of brutality shocking to modern readers (Josh. 6:20–21; Judg. 9:45, 49; 1 Sam. 22:19; Ps. 137:7–9). However, it is important to realize that such practices were contextually customary, being executed in an attempt to purify the land of Canaan and, in the case of *kherem* warfare (i.e., devotion to destruction), prescribed by Yahweh as a sacrificial offering. Further, they are accompanied by passages reiterating that vengeance belongs to God (Deut. 32:35; Ps. 94:1; Heb. 10:29–31), and they must be read in light of the NT imperatives to love one’s enemies (Matt. 5:44; Luke 6:27) and treat them with compassion (Rom. 12:17–21). *See also* Holy War; Vengeance.

WASHERMAN’S FIELD The road to the Washerman’s Field (NIV: “Launderer’s Field” in Isa. 7:3; 36:2) locates where Ahaz was inspecting Jerusalem’s water supply in preparation for an attack by Syria and Israel (Isa. 7:3), and where the Assyrian commander stood (2 Kings 18:17; Isa. 36:2). Jerusalem was supplied by a series of pools connected by channels. The launderer’s occupation of cleaning cloth required much water (cf. Mal. 3:2). The field was located outside the city, at its southern end.

WASHING *See* Ablutions; Bathing.

WATCH A chronological division of the night. The term is derived from soldiers or others guarding, or "watching," something during specified portions of the night. In the OT, there apparently were three watches or divisions in the night. Gideon and his men struck the Midianites at the beginning of the "middle watch" (Judg. 7:19). The Roman system had four divisions or watches in the night, and the Gospels report Jesus walking on the lake during the "fourth watch" (Matt. 14:25; Mark 6:48 ESV, NASB, NKJV). The term can also be used to refer to the guard placed on duty to guard something (Neh. 4:9).

WATCHMAN The watchman was stationed on the city wall or in a watchtower. He was to identify potential enemies approaching the city and alert the city's inhabitants by blowing a trumpet (Jer. 6:17; Amos 3:6). It was the duty of some watchmen to inform the king of any suspicious person approaching the city wall (2 Sam. 18:24–27). Just as the watchman warned of potential danger so that people could prepare themselves, so the prophet was to warn of impending judgment on the unrighteous (Ezek. 33:1–11).

WATCHTOWER Military watchtowers could be part of city battlements (Isa. 21:8) or more-isolated lookouts (2 Chron. 20:24 NRSV). Vineyards also had watchtowers (Isa. 5:2; Matt. 21:33; Mark 12:1).

WATER Water is mentioned extensively in the Bible due to its prevalence in creation and its association with life and purity. The cosmic waters of Gen. 1 are held back by the sky (Gen. 1:6–7; cf. Pss. 104:6, 13; 148:4). God is enthroned on these waters in his cosmic temple (Pss. 29:10; 104:3, 13; cf. Gen. 1:2; Ps. 78:69; Isa. 66:1). These same waters were released in the time of Noah (Gen. 7:10–12; Ps. 104:7–9).

Water is also an agent of life and fertility and is therefore associated with the presence of God. Both God himself and his temple are described as the source of life-giving water (Jer. 2:13; 17:13; Joel 3:18; cf. Isa. 12:2–3). Ezekiel envisions this water flowing from beneath the temple and streaming down into the Dead Sea, where it brings life and fecundity (Ezek. 47:1–12; cf. Zech. 14:8). The book of Revelation, employing the same image, describes "the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb" (22:1). This imagery is also illustrated in archaeological remains associated with temples. Cisterns are attested beneath the Dome of the Rock (presumably the location of the Jerusalem temple) and beneath the Judahite temple at Arad. Other temples, such as the Israelite high place at Tel Dan, are located close to freshwater springs. The Gihon Spring in the City of David may also be associated with the Jerusalem temple (Ps. 46:4; cf. Gen. 2:13).

This OT imagery forms the background for Jesus' teaching regarding eternal life in the writings of the apostle John. Jesus claims to be the source of living water, and he offers it freely to everyone who thirsts (John 4:10–15; 7:37; Rev. 21:6; 22:17; cf. Rev. 7:17). This water, which produces "a spring of water welling up to eternal life" (John 4:14), is the work of the Holy Spirit in the believer (John 7:38–39).

Water is also described in the Bible as an agent of cleansing. It is extensively employed in purification rituals in the OT. In the NT, the ritual of water baptism signifies the purity and new life of the believer (Matt. 3:11, 16; Mark 1:8–10; Luke 3:16; John 1:26, 31–33; 3:23; Acts 1:5; 8:36–39; 10:47; 11:16; 1 Pet. 3:20–21; cf. Eph. 5:26; Heb. 10:22).

Finally, the NT also reveals Jesus as the Lord of water. He walks on water (Matt. 14:28–29; John 6:19), turns water into wine (John 2:7–9; 4:46), and controls water creatures (Matt. 17:27; John 21:6). Most important, Jesus commands “the winds and the water, and they obey him” (Luke 8:25; cf. Ps. 29:3).

WATER CARRIERS Persons engaged in the menial tasks of drawing and carrying water. This chore, typically coupled with cutting wood, often was performed for others in power (Deut. 29:11; Josh. 9:21, 23, 27).

WATER JAR A jar or vessel made for carrying water. The vessel normally was made of clay, but also could be stone. In the ancient Near East women often carried the smaller pots upon their shoulder or head (see John 4:28). Larger stone pots could be used to store water. Jesus’ first miracle involved turning water from large water jars into wine (John 2:6). *See also* Vessels and Utensils.

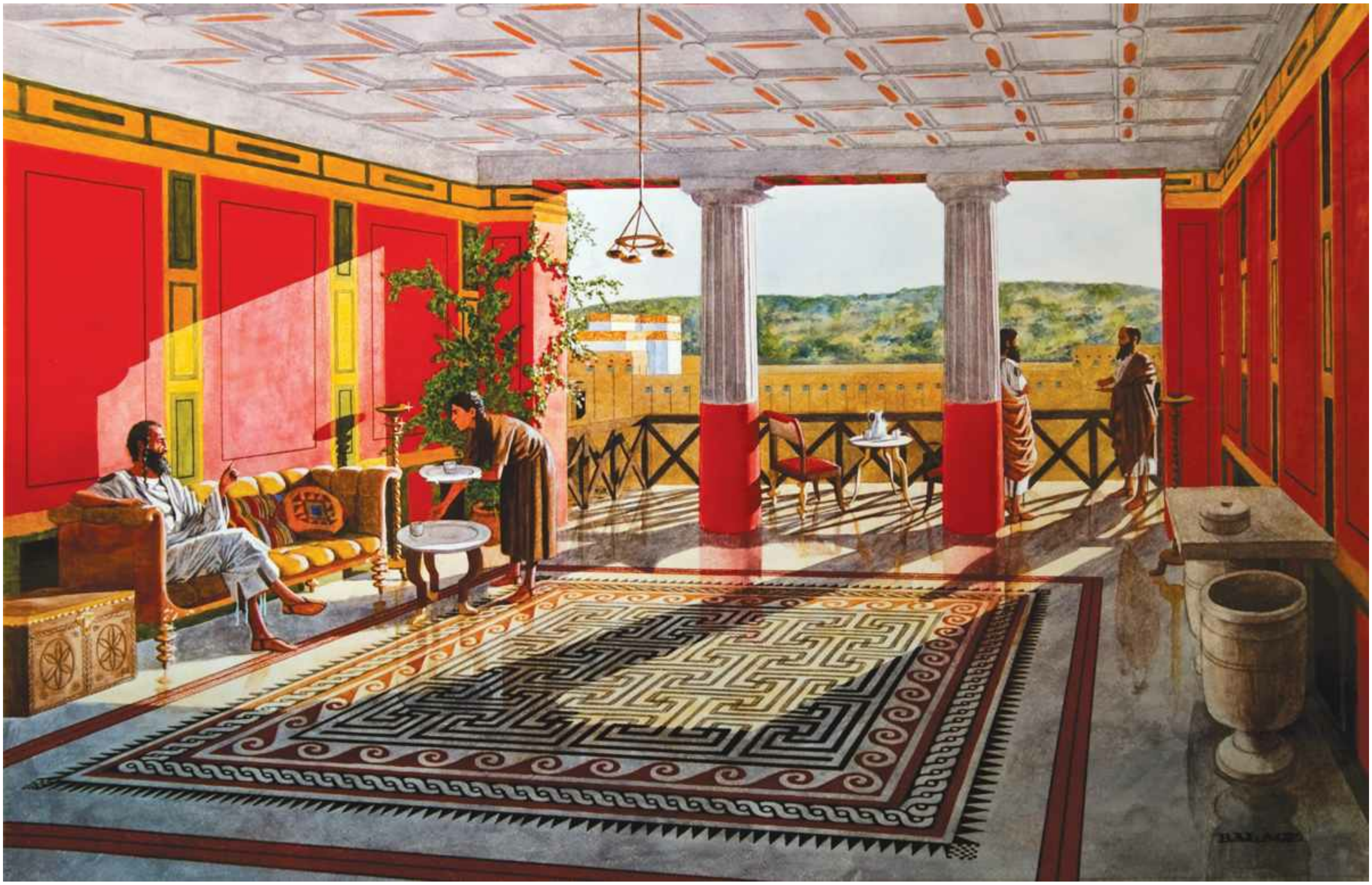
WATER OF BITTERNESS, WATER OF JEALOUSY *See* Bitter Water.

WATERPOT *See* Water Jar.

WATERS OF MEROM *See* Merom.

WEALTH AND MATERIALISM Both the OT and the NT view wealth as ultimately a result of God’s blessing (Prov. 10:22). Abraham shows the right attitude by refusing to accept plunder from the king of Sodom, recognizing God as the sole source of his riches (Gen. 14:23). Solomon’s wealth was seen as God’s favor (1 Kings 3:13). Wealth and riches are said to be in the house of persons “who fear the LORD” (Ps. 112:1–3). However, material success alone is not necessarily an indication of God’s approval, nor is poverty a sign of God’s disfavor. Fundamentally, neither poverty nor wealth can be superficially tied to divine displeasure or favor.

Balanced view. The Bible articulates a balanced view of wealth. It warns against having an arrogant attitude by failing to acknowledge that the source of wealth is God (Deut. 8:17–18). There is danger in trusting in riches (Pss. 52:7; 62:10). The rich are charged not to be haughty, and to set their hopes not on uncertain riches but rather on God (1 Tim. 6:17–18). The love of money is described as the root of all kinds of evil (1 Tim. 6:9–10), and it is therefore extremely difficult for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God (Matt. 19:24). The foolishness of materialism, making riches the center of one’s life, is shown in the parable of the wealthy farmer (Luke 12:15–21). Instead of monetary greed, the spirit of contentment is commended, because even if lacking on the material level, one still has the Lord (Luke 12:15; Phil. 4:11; Heb. 13:5). Material possessions should be gained rightly; effort and diligence are required (Gen. 3:19; Prov. 10:4). Obtaining wealth through dishonesty and ill-gotten gains is denounced and condemned (Prov. 11:26; 13:11; Jer. 17:11; Mic. 6:12).



Wealthy Jewish home in Jerusalem

God-centered perspective. Wealth and material possessions are to be viewed from a God-centered perspective. God is the one who provides everything; thus we should trust him for our daily needs (Matt. 6:25–34; Luke 11:3). Job's confession in a time of loss, "The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away; may the name of the LORD be praised," shows an admirable attitude to emulate (Job 1:21). God is the owner of all things, and we are simply stewards and administrators of God's wealth. We need to remember that one day we will be accountable for the use of our wealth (1 Cor. 10:31). Jesus teaches us to seek the kingdom of God first rather than his material blessings (Luke 12:31–33). Anything that draws us away from serving God should be avoided. We cannot serve both God and mammon (Matt. 6:24). Our treasures are to be in heaven, meaning that our central focus should be on matters pertaining to the kingdom: "Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" (Luke 12:32–34).

Responsibility and generosity. With the possession of wealth comes the duty to give generously to those in need (Prov. 11:24; 28:27). Prosperity is given as a means to do good; thus we ought to be rich in good deeds (1 Tim. 6:18). Although it is a duty of the covenant community to take care of the needy in the OT, it still emphasizes the voluntary heart (Deut. 15:5–11). In 2 Cor. 9:7, Paul presents the principle of giving in the NT: "Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." It should be not an exaction but a willing gift (9:5).

The Christian should emulate Jesus: “Though he was rich, yet for [our] sake he became poor, so that [we] through his poverty might become rich” (2 Cor. 8:9). Therefore, material offerings to Christ should not be a burden (1 Cor. 9:11). Sacrificial giving is an expression of love to the Lord (2 Cor. 9:12). It also generates thanksgiving to God from those who receive it (2 Cor. 9:11). Worldly wealth should also be used for evangelistic purposes (Luke 16:8). If we are faithful in the use of money, we can be trusted with the kingdom’s spiritual riches (Luke 16:12–13). Although riches do not have eternal value in themselves, their proper use has eternal consequences (Luke 12:33; 1 Tim. 6:19). One of the qualifications of a church overseer is to be free from the love of money, and a deacon must not pursue dishonest gain (1 Tim. 3:3, 8). A good name is to be chosen over great riches (Prov. 22:1). James condemns as sinful the attitude of favoring the wealthy over the poor. Nonpreferential love is the answer to prejudicial favoritism (James 2:1–9).

WEAPONS Early weapons used shaped flint blades, which remained in use well after the advent of metal weaponry. These included knives, arrowheads, and simple axes with wooden handles. The invention of metal casting brought more-durable metal weaponry during the Chalcolithic (4500–3300 BC) and Bronze Ages (3300–1200 BC). At first, the most common weapons were axes and maces, which were most effective against soft targets. As technology and armor advanced, spears and swords became more important. The first swords of the ancient Near East developed during the Bronze Age; typically they were sickle shaped, with one cutting edge on the outer portion of the blade. The Late Bronze Age also saw the arrival of the composite bow, greater in range and power than previous bows. During the Iron Age (1200–586 BC), the days of the judges and the Israelite monarchy, the Philistines and other Sea Peoples brought new weapons, including an Aegean-style sword, which was a double-edged straight sword more akin to the medieval broadsword. Both iron and bronze weapons were used throughout the Levant until the tenth century BC, when iron replaced bronze as the dominant material for weaponry. *See also* Arms, Armor.

WEASEL The Hebrew for the first unclean animal in Lev. 11:29, *kholed*, is translated as “weasel” in several versions (e.g., NIV, NRSV, KJV). Weasels are small, reddish-brown carnivores, indigenous to Israel until recently. With long bodies, short legs, and constant movement, they appear to “swarm” close to the ground. The mongoose and the polecat, more common in Israel, are somewhat similar.

WEATHER Palestine has arid and wet Mediterranean climate zones and a steppe zone. Its two seasons are dry/summer and wet/winter (cf. Gen. 8:22). In summer the weather is remarkably stable, and the incoming air from the northwest typically is rather arid. With no cloud cover most days, there is, on average, zero rainfall from June through September—the background for the miracle of 1 Sam. 12:16–18 (cf. Prov. 26:1).

In winter the weather is variable, with rains and thunderstorms arriving from the Mediterranean Sea, generally from the southwest. The rains usually fall in concentrated amounts over a few hours. Rainfall diminishes overall from north to south and west to east, though varying elevations create deviations from the overall pattern. Annual rainfall varies significantly (from twelve to forty inches), falling almost entirely between November and April. Dew is a significant source of water in the region, especially in summer, sometimes constituting 25 percent of the annual moisture.

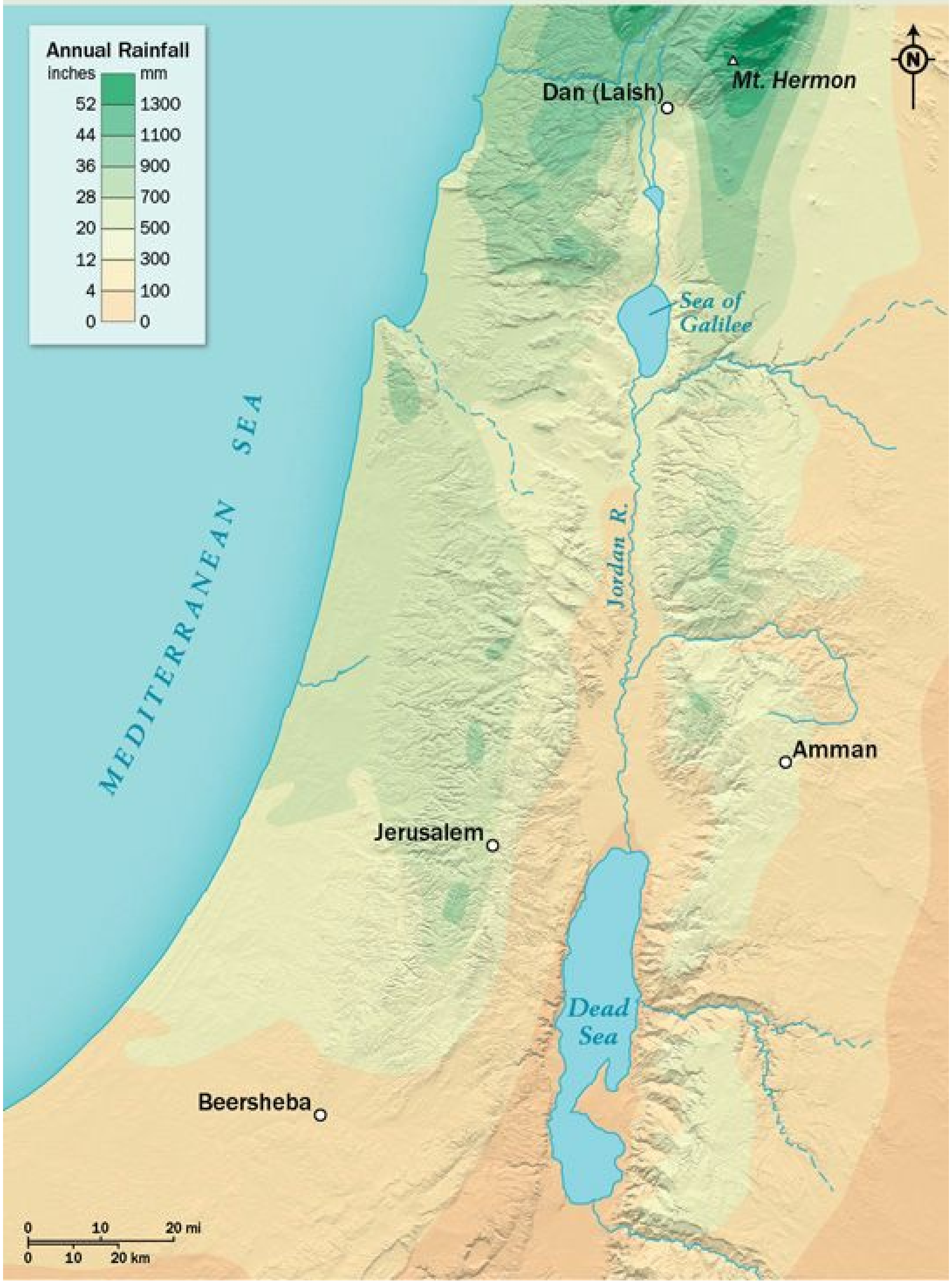
Table 11. Average Low–High Temperatures (°F)

Month	Tel Aviv (sea level)	Jerusalem (2,500 ft.)	Tiberias (-650 ft.)	Jericho (-840 ft.)
January	34–74	39–53	45–61	49–65
February	36–80	40–56	48–66	49–64
March	37–87	43–61	54–73	56–73
April	42–95	49–70	55–77	62–82
May	47–99	54–77	59–86	68–90
June	55–97	59–82	68–93	74–98
July	60–92	63–84	70–95	80–100
August	62–91	63–84	72–97	80–100
September	59–92	61–82	68–93	74–95
October	50–92	57–77	61–88	70–89
November	43–87	49–66	55–75	64–81
December	36–79	42–57	50–68	54–69

Apart from thunderstorms early in the rainy season, such as occur on the Sea of Galilee (cf. Luke 8:23), a high-pressure zone can form over Iraq during the wet season, forcing hot, dusty, and sometimes prolonged east winds into Palestine; these are called *qadim* in the Bible (Exod. 10:13; Ps. 48:7; Jon. 4:8). In the transitional periods between the two seasons, the sirocco (Arab. *hamsin*), may occur, in which an east wind from the Arabian desert sweeps up from the south and across Palestine toward a low-pressure zone over Egypt or Libya, causing humidity to drop as low as 10 percent and the temperature to rise as much as 22°F. This can last days or weeks, with sweltering effects (cf. Ezek. 17:10; Hos. 13:15; Luke 12:55). Such storms are often used as a backdrop to highlight the weakness and transience of earthly existence (Isa. 27:8; Hos. 12:1; James 1:11).

While various weather conditions are described throughout the Bible (rain, snow, storms, lightning, thunder, wind, etc.), Jesus refers specifically to weather prediction in Matt. 16:2–3, where he accuses the Pharisees of being able to predict the weather but not able to discern the signs of the times.

RAINFALL PATTERNS IN ISRAEL


Annual Rainfall
inches
mm
52
1300
44
1100
36
900
28
700
20
500
12
300
4
100
0
0
N
Mt. Hermon
Dan (Laish)
Sea of Galilee
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
Jordan R.
Amman
Jerusalem
Dead Sea
Beersheba
0 10 20 mi
0 10 20 km

WEAVER, WEAVING *See* Spinning and Weaving.

WEB Thread arranged on a loom for weaving (Judg. 16:13–14 [NIV: “fabric”]). Also, the silken netting spun by a spider as a snare is used as a negative metaphor for flimsiness and/or evil entrapment (Job 8:14–15; Isa. 59:5–6). More generally, “web” refers to an entangling mesh or net (Job 18:8).

WEDDINGS Ceremonies marking entry into marriage. In the Bible, weddings initiate the formation of new households with the blessing of family and community.

OLD TESTAMENT

In the OT, weddings were important to the patriarchs and to Israel because the new couple was expected to produce children to help fulfill the Abrahamic covenant (Gen. 12:2; 17:6; 22:15–18; Ruth 4:11–13; Isa. 65:23). Heirs were also the assurance that a man's name remained eternally with Israel, so much so that if a man died childless, his brother was obligated to wed the widow and produce children in his name (Gen. 38:8; Deut. 25:5–10). Moreover, weddings assured that property was kept within families and tribes and also transferred in an orderly way from one generation to the next (Num. 36:1–12; Ruth 4:5; Ps. 25:13).

Multiple wives were allowed in the OT (Gen. 30:26; Deut. 21:15; 1 Sam. 1:2; 2 Sam. 5:13; 1 Kings 11:3), as were multiple concubines, who had official standing in the household, though lower than that of wives. Weddings usually were associated with a man publicly taking a wife; he acquired concubines with less fanfare (Gen. 16:1–3; 30:3–5; Judg. 19:1, 3).

OT weddings included certain distinctive elements. The bridegroom or his father paid a bride-price, or dowry, to the father of the bridegroom's prospective wife (Gen. 34:12; Exod. 22:16–17; 1 Sam. 18:25). The bridegroom had a more central role than the bride. He emerged from a chamber or tent to claim his wife (Ps. 19:5; Joel 2:16), who, in the case of a royal wedding, may have processed to him (Ps. 45:13–15). Both he and the bride were adorned (Song 3:11; Isa. 49:18; 61:10; Jer. 2:32); the woman was also veiled (Gen. 24:65; 29:23, 25; 38:14, 19; Song 4:1, 3; Isa. 47:1–3). Their wedding was the occasion of much rejoicing and feasting (Gen. 29:22; Jer. 7:34; 16:9; 25:10; 33:11) and lasted seven days (Gen. 29:27; Judg. 14:17). The main event was their sexual union (Isa. 62:5), which occurred on the first night (Gen. 29:23; Ruth 4:13). Unless she had been a widow, the bride was presumed to be a virgin on her wedding night, and evidence of her virginity, a bloodstained cloth, was retained as proof (Deut. 22:13–19). Virginity was essential to a previously unmarried bride; a woman who had been raped or otherwise engaged in premarital sexual relations was deemed defiled and unmarriageable to any but the first man with whom she had intercourse (Deut. 22:21; 2 Sam. 13:1–20). The importance of this underpins the shock value of the book of Hosea (see esp. 1:2), an extended metaphor that presents Israel as a prostitute nevertheless pursued by Yahweh as her husband.

NEW TESTAMENT

The NT continues to testify to many of these wedding traditions, significantly including the gathering of community (Matt. 22:2; John 2:1–2) in joyful celebration (Matt. 9:15; Mark 2:19; Luke 5:34; John 2:9–10). Wedding feasts could be lavish affairs (Matt. 22:4; John 2:6–10), with protocols regarding seating (Luke 14:8–10) and attire (Matt. 22:11–13; Rev. 19:7–9).

In the NT, these and other first-century wedding customs illustrate aspects of the kingdom of heaven. The parable of the wedding feast (Matt. 22:1–14) contrasts the invited guests (corrupt religious leaders in Israel) who ignored the king's wedding invitation and murdered his servants with those people, good and evil, gathered from the streets (the downtrodden) who took their place. Their willingness to attend is qualified only by their coming properly attired in wedding robes, which by inference were provided by the king himself (Rev. 19:7–8).

The parable of the ten virgins (Matt. 25:1–13) plays on the understanding that weddings occurred not at a specific time but when the bridegroom was ready. His readiness was determined by, among other things, the readiness of a dwelling place for his new bride. In first-century Capernaum, this would have been a room or rooms built onto his father's insula, a multifamily compound surrounding an interior courtyard; the same image is behind John 14:2–4. The parable, identifying the Son of Man as the bridegroom, illustrates that while his coming in glory is certain, its timing is unknown. Therefore, the bridal party is to be vigilant and prepared.

Elsewhere, Jesus is specifically named as the bridegroom preparing to marry his bride, the church (2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:25–27, 31–32). The wedding feast at Cana (John 2:1–11), which begins Jesus' public ministry, points proleptically to the marriage supper of the Lamb, which inaugurates the eschatological age (Rev. 19:7–9). The culminating picture of God with his people (Deut. 16:13–16; Matt. 1:23; John 1:14) is a magnificent wedding (Rev. 21:2, 9) between Christ and the new Jerusalem.

WEEK A week signifies a group of seven, most often a group of seven days marked by the Sabbath on the last day. The week serves as an important reminder of God's creative activity (Exod. 20:11). The first day of the week prominently marks the resurrection of Jesus (cf. Matt. 28:1; Mark 16:9; Luke 24:1; John 20:1; Rev. 1:10). A week also describes a full period of time, as it is used in Daniel's interpretation of Jeremiah's prophecy regarding the return from exile (Dan. 9:24–27).

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES It is difficult to imagine a world without consistent metrological systems. Society's basic structures, from economy to law, require a uniform and accurate method for measuring time, distances, weights, volumes, and so on. In today's world, technological advancements allow people to measure various aspects of the universe with incredible accuracy—from nanometers to light-years, milligrams to kilograms.

The metrological systems employed in biblical times span the same concepts as our own modern-day systems: weight, linear distance, and volume or capacity. However, the systems of weights and measurements employed during the span of biblical times were not nearly as accurate or uniform as the modern units employed today. Preexisting weight and measurement systems existed in the contextual surroundings of both the OT and the NT authors and thus heavily influenced the systems employed by the Israelite nation as well as the NT writers. There was great variance between the different standards used merchant to merchant (Gen. 23:16), city to city, region to region, time period to time period, even despite the commands to use honest scales and honest weights (Lev. 19:35–36; Deut. 25:13–15; Prov. 11:1; 16:11; 20:23; Ezek. 45:10).

Furthermore, inconsistencies and contradictions exist within the written records as well as between archaeological specimens. In addition, significant differences are found between preexilic and postexilic measurements in the biblical texts, and an attempt at merging dry capacity and liquid volume measurements further complicated the issue. This is to be expected, especially when we consider modern-day inconsistencies—for example, 1 US liquid pint = 0.473 liters, while 1 US dry pint = 0.550 liters. Thus, all modern equivalents given below are approximations, and even the best estimates have a margin of error of + 5 percent or more.

WEIGHTS

Weights in biblical times were carried in a bag or a satchel (Deut. 25:13; Prov. 16:11; Mic. 6:11) and were stones, usually carved into various animal shapes for easy identification. Their side or flat bottom was inscribed with the associated weight and unit of measurement. Thousands of historical artifacts, which differ by significant amounts, have been discovered by archaeologists and thus have greatly complicated the work of determining accurate modern-day equivalents.

Beka. Approximately 1⁄5 ounce, or 5.6 grams. Equivalent to 10 gerahs or ½ the sanctuary shekel

(Exod. 38:26). Used to measure metals and goods such as gold (Gen. 24:22).

Gerah. 1⁄50 ounce, or 0.56 grams. Equivalent to 1⁄10 beka, 1⁄20 shekel (Exod. 30:13; Lev. 27:25).

Litra. Approximately 12 ounces, or 340 grams. A Roman measure of weight. Used only twice in the NT (John 12:3; 19:39). The precursor to the modern British pound.

Mina. Approximately 1¼ pounds, or 0.56 kilograms. Equivalent to 50 shekels. Used to weigh gold (1 Kings 10:17; Ezra 2:69), silver (Neh. 7:71–72), and other goods. The prophet Ezekiel redefined the proper weight: “The shekel is to consist of twenty gerahs. Twenty shekels plus twenty-five shekels plus fifteen shekels equal one mina” (Ezek. 45:12). Before this redefinition, there were arguably 50 shekels per mina. In Jesus’ parable of the servants, he describes the master entrusting to his three servants varying amounts—10 minas, 5 minas, 1 mina—implying a monetary value (Luke 19:11–24), probably of either silver or gold. One *mina* was equivalent to approximately three months’ wages for a laborer.

Pim. Approximately 1⁄3 ounce, or 9.3 grams. Equivalent to 2⁄3 shekel. Referenced only once in the Scriptures (1 Sam. 13:21).

Shekel. Approximately 2⁄5 ounce, or 11 grams. Equivalent to approximately 2 bekas. The shekel is the basic unit of weight measurement in Israelite history, though its actual weight varied significantly at different historical points. Examples include the “royal shekel” (2 Sam. 14:26), the “common shekel” (2 Kings 7:1), and the “sanctuary shekel,” which was equivalent to 20 gerahs (e.g., Exod. 30:13; Lev. 27:25; Num. 3:47). Because it was used to weigh out silver or gold, the shekel also functioned as a common monetary unit in the NT world.

Silver shekels minted by the Jews during the first revolt against the Romans (AD 66–73)

Talent. Approximately 75 pounds, or 34 kilograms. Equivalent to approximately 60 minas. Various metals were weighed using talents: gold (Exod. 25:39; 37:24; 1 Chron. 20:2), silver (Exod. 38:27; 1 Kings 20:39; 2 Kings 5:22), and bronze (Exod. 38:29). This probably is derived from the weight of a load that a man could carry.

Table 12. Biblical Weights and Measures and Their Modern Equivalents

Hebrew/Greek Weights	Biblical Equivalent	US Equivalent	Metric Equivalent
Beka	10 gerahs; ½ shekel	1⁄5 ounce	5.6 grams
Gerah	1⁄10 beka; 1⁄20 shekel	1⁄50 ounce	0.56 grams
Litra		12 ounces	340 grams
Mina	50 shekels	1¼ pounds	0.56 kilograms

Pim	2⁄3 shekel	1⁄3 ounce	9.3 grams
Shekel	2 bekas; 20 gerahs	2⁄5 ounce	11 grams
Talent	60 minas	75 pounds	34 kilograms
Linear Measurements			
Cubit	6 handbreadths	18 inches	45.7 centimeters
Day’s journey		20–25 miles	32–40 kilometers
Fingerbreadth	¼ handbreadth	¾ inch	1.9 centimeters
Handbreadth	1⁄6 cubit	3 inches	7.6 centimeters
Milion		1 mile	1.6 kilometers
Orguia	1⁄100 stadion	5 feet 11 inches	1.8 meters
Reed/rod		108 inches	274 centimeters
Sabbath day’s journey	2,000 cubits	¾ mile	1.2 kilometers
Span	3 handbreadths	9 inches	22.8 centimeters
Stadion	100 orguiai	607 feet	185 meters
Capacity			
Cab	1 omer	½ gallon	1.9 liters
Choinix		¼ gallon	0.9 liters
Cor	1 homer; 10 ephahs	6 bushels; 48.4 gallons	183 liters
Ephah	10 omers; 1⁄10 homer	3⁄5 bushel; 6 gallons	22.7 liters
Homer	10 ephahs; 1 cor	6 bushels; 48.4 gallons	183 liters
Koros		10 bushels; 95 gallons	360 liters
Omer	1⁄10 ephah; 1⁄100 homer	2 quarts	1.9 liters
Saton	1 seah	7 quarts	6.6 liters
Seah	1⁄3 ephah; 1 saton	7 quarts	6.6 liters
Liquid Volume			
Bath	1 ephah	6 gallons	22.7 liters
Batos		8 gallons	30.3 liters
Hin	1⁄6 bath; 12 logs	1 gallon; 4 quarts	3.8 liters
Log	1⁄72 bath; 1⁄12 hin	1⁄3 quart	0.3 liters
Metretes		10 gallons	37.8 liters

LINEAR MEASUREMENTS

Linear measurements were based upon readily available natural measurements such as the distance between the elbow and the hand or between the thumb and the little finger. While convenient, this method of measurement gave rise to significant inconsistencies.

Cubit. Approximately 18 inches, or 45.7 centimeters. Equivalent to 6 handbreadths. The standard biblical measure of linear distance, as the shekel is the standard measurement of weight. The distance from the elbow to the outstretched fingertip. Used to describe height, width, length (Exod. 25:10), distance (John 21:8), and depth (Gen. 7:20). Use of the cubit is ancient. For simple and approximate conversion into modern units, divide the number of cubits in half for meters, then multiply the number of meters by 3 to arrive at feet.

1 cubit = 2 spans = 6 handbreadths = 24 fingerbreadths

Day's journey. An approximate measure of distance equivalent to about 20–25 miles, or 32–40 kilometers. Several passages reference a single or multiple days' journey as a description of the distance traveled or the distance between two points: "a day's journey" (Num. 11:31; 1 Kings 19:4), "a three-day journey" (Gen. 30:36; Exod. 3:18; 8:27; Jon. 3:3), "seven days" (Gen. 31:23), and "eleven days" (Deut. 1:2). After visiting Jerusalem for Passover, Jesus' parents journeyed for a day (Luke 2:44) before realizing that he was not with them.

Fingerbreadth. The width of the finger, or ¼ of a handbreadth, approximately ¾ inch, or 1.9 centimeters. The fingerbreadth was the beginning building block of the biblical metrological system for linear measurements. Used only once in the Scriptures, to describe the bronze pillars (Jer. 52:21).

Handbreadth. Approximately 3 inches, or 7.6 centimeters. Equivalent to 1/6 cubit, or four fingerbreadths. Probably the width at the base of the four fingers. A short measure of length, thus compared to a human's brief life (Ps. 39:5). Also the width of the rim on the bread table (Exod. 25:25) and the thickness of the bronze Sea (1 Kings 7:26).

Milion. Translated "mile" in Matt. 5:41. Greek transliteration of Roman measurement *mille passuum*, "a thousand paces."

Orguia. Approximately 5 feet 11 inches, or 1.8 meters. Also translated as "fathom." A Greek unit of measurement. Probably the distance between outstretched fingertip to fingertip. Used to measure the depth of water (Acts 27:28).

Reed/rod. Approximately 108 inches, or 274 centimeters. This is also a general term for a measuring device rather than a specific linear distance (Ezek. 40:3, 5; 42:16–19; Rev. 11:1; 21:15).

Sabbath day's journey. Approximately ¾ mile, or 1.2 kilometers (Acts 1:12). About 2,000 cubits.

Span. Approximately 9 inches, or 22.8 centimeters. Equivalent to three handbreadths, and ½ cubit. The distance from outstretched thumb tip to little-finger tip. The length and width of the priest's breastpiece (Exod. 28:16).

Stadion. Approximately 607 feet, or 185 meters. Equivalent to 100 orguiai. Used in the measurement of large distances (Matt. 14:24; Luke 24:13; John 6:19; 11:18; Rev. 14:20; 21:16).

LAND AREA

Seed. The size of a piece of land could also be measured on the basis of how much seed was required to plant that field (Lev. 27:16; 1 Kings 18:32).

Yoke. Fields and lands were measured using logical, available means. In biblical times, this meant the amount of land a pair of yoked animals could plow in one day (1 Sam. 14:14; Isa. 5:10).

CAPACITY

Cab. Approximately ½ gallon, or 1.9 liters. Equivalent to 1 omer. Mentioned only once in the Scriptures, during the siege of Samaria (2 Kings 6:25).

Choinix. Approximately ¼ gallon, or 0.9 liters. A Greek measurement, mentioned only once in Scripture (Rev. 6:6).

Cor. Approximately 6 bushels (48.4 gallons, or 183 liters). Equal to the homer, and to 10 ephahs. Used for measuring dry volumes, particularly of flour and grains (1 Kings 4:22; 1 Kings 5:11; 2 Chron. 2:10; 27:5; Ezra 7:22). In the LXX, cor is also a measure of liquid volume, particularly oil (1 Kings 5:11; 2 Chron. 2:10; Ezra 45:14).

Ephah. Approximately 3⁄5 bushel (6 gallons, or 22.7 liters). Equivalent to 10 omers, or 1⁄10 homer. Used for measuring flour and grains (e.g., Exod. 29:40; Lev. 6:20). Isaiah prophesied a day of reduced agricultural yield, when a homer of seed would produce only an ephah of grain (Isa. 5:10). The ephah was equal in size to the bath (Ezek. 45:11), which typically was used for liquid measurements.

Homer. Approximately 6 bushels (48.4 gallons, or 183 liters). Equivalent to 1 cor, or 10 ephahs. Used for measuring dry volumes, particularly of various grains (Lev. 27:16; Isa. 5:10; Ezek. 45:11, 13–14; Hos. 3:2). This is probably a natural measure of the load that a donkey can carry, in the range of 90 kilograms. There may have existed a direct link between capacity and monetary value, given Lev. 27:16: “fifty shekels of silver to a homer of barley seed.” A logical deduction of capacity and cost based on known equivalences might look something like this:

1 homer = 1 mina; 1 ephah = 5 shekels; 1 omer = 1 beka

Koros. Approximately 10 bushels (95 gallons, or 360 liters). A Greek measure of grain (Luke 16:7).

Omer. Approximately 2 quarts, or 1.9 liters. Equivalent to 1⁄10 ephah, 1⁄100 homer (Ezek. 45:11). Used by Israel in the measurement and collection of manna in the wilderness (Exod. 16:16–36) and thus roughly equivalent to a person’s daily food ration.

Saton. Approximately 7 quarts, or 6.6 liters. Equivalent to 1 seah. The measurement of flour in Jesus’ parable of the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 13:33; Luke 13:21).

Seah. Approximately 7 quarts, or 6.6 liters. Equivalent to 1⁄3 ephah, or 1 saton. Used to measure flour, grain, seed, and other various dry goods (e.g., 2 Kings 7:1; 1 Sam. 25:18).

LIQUID VOLUME

Bath. Approximately 6 gallons, or 22.7 liters. Equivalent to 1 ephah, which typically was used for measurements of dry capacity. Used in the measurement of water (1 Kings 7:26), oil (1 Kings 5:11), and wine (2 Chron. 2:10; Isa. 5:10).

Batos. Approximately 8 gallons, or 30.3 liters. A Greek transliteration of the Hebrew word *bath* (see above). A measure of oil (Luke 16:6).

Hin. Approximately 4 quarts (1 gallon, or 3.8 liters). Equivalent to 1⁄6 bath and 12 logs. Used in the measurement of water (Ezek. 4:11), oil (Ezek. 46:5), and wine (Num. 28:14).

Log. Approximately 1⁄3 quart, or 0.3 liter. Equivalent to 1⁄72 bath and 1⁄12 hin. Mentioned five times in Scripture, specifically used to measure oil (Lev. 14:10–24).

Metretes. Approximately 10 gallons, or 37.8 liters. Used in the measurement of water at the wedding feast (John 2:6).

WELFARE PROGRAMS Governmental agencies established to distribute money, vouchers, medical coverage, and other necessities to those who are in need and who qualify for such distributions according to government-established rubrics. Welfare programs as we know them in our own modern societies are modern creations of secular states and are not aspects of the biblical or ancient Near Eastern world. The Bible, however, significantly addresses the complex subject of poverty and Israel’s responsibility to the poor.

The OT emphasizes Israel’s responsibility for the poor, especially fellow Israelites, but also foreigners sojourning in Israel (Exod. 22:25; Lev. 25:25, 35; Ruth 2:10). Because of the blessings bestowed on them by God, Israelites were commanded to be personally generous to those in need (Lev. 25:36–38; Deut. 15:7–13). They were to underharvest their fields, vineyards, and groves so that the poor might glean from them (Lev. 19:9–10; Deut. 24:19–22; Ruth 2:2–3, 7–11). Those who aided the poor were promised blessing (Prov. 19:17; 22:9; 28:27).

The powerful were not to oppress the poor by lending to them usuriously (Lev. 25:36–38) or enslaving them indefinitely (Lev. 25:39–42; Deut. 15:12; 24:14–15). Oppression was a grave offense because God had led Israel out from oppression in Egypt (Exod. 22:21; 22:9; Ps. 72:4, 12–14; Prov. 22:16; Jer. 22:17–19; Ezek. 18:5–9; 22:29–31; Amos 4:1–3).

Particularly in Proverbs, Israel is also cautioned against behaviors that lead to poverty, including sloth (6:6), slacking (10:4), neglecting discipline (13:18; 20:13), loving sleep (20:13), loving pleasure (21:17), heavy drinking and gluttony (23:21), and empty pursuits (28:19).

The NT builds and expands on the OT's admonitions about treatment of the poor. Giving to the poor remains an imperative (Acts 2:45; Rom. 12:13; James 2:15; 1 John 3:17), but it is to be done without fanfare (Matt. 6:2–3; Mark 12:38–40). Generosity ought to be from the heart and regardless of means (Luke 21:2–4; 2 Cor. 8:1–5), yet not under compulsion (2 Cor. 8:8–9; 9:7). Christians are called to assume responsibility for themselves (2 Cor. 11:9; Eph. 4:28; 2 Thess. 3:7–11) and their families (1 Tim. 5:8, 16).

WELL Unlike a spring, a well allows access to subterranean water through a shaft that has been dug into the ground. Wells typically were deep and lined with stone or baked brick for stability, often capped with heavy stone to prevent exploitation. In an arid environment, wells were invaluable to the community. Here, livestock were watered and conversations were held (Gen. 24:10–27; 29:1–14; John 4:6–8). Figuratively, the well is used of a lover (Song 4:15), an adulteress (Prov. 23:27), and a city (Jer. 6:7). Wells commonly were named (Gen. 21:25–31 [Beersheba, "well of an oath"]) and often fought over (Gen. 21:25–30; 26:18).

Three kinds of "well encounters" can be seen in Scripture: (1) human being with deity (Gen. 16:7–14), (2) clan with clan (26:20), and (3) man with woman (29:1–14). The latter became highly developed as a betrothal-type scene that included standard elements: stranger's arrival (= otherness), meeting (= bond), paternal announcement (= hospitality), and domestic invitation (= acceptance) (see Rebekah [Gen. 24]; Jacob and Rachel [Gen. 29:1–14]; Moses and Zipporah [Exod. 2:15–22]).

Jesus' encounter with the Samaritan woman (John 4:1–42) draws on multiple aspects of a well encounter: divine (Jesus) with human (the woman), Jew and Samaritan, a traveler, foreign (i.e., hostile) land, refreshment, announcement, invitation, and so on. However, now Jacob's well (4:6) hosts Jesus' presentation of himself as the groom whom she has been seeking (4:26). The patriarch's well becomes a symbol of salvation, just as water becomes a metaphor for transformation (4:14–15). What could have been another "well of nationality" conflict (John 4:9, 11–12 [cf. Gen. 26:20: "Esek = argument"]) was elevated to a "living water" conversion (John 4:10, 13–15 [cf. Gen. 16:14: "Beer Lahai Roi = well of the Living One who sees me"]). Her plea "Come, see a man" (John 4:29) echoes an earlier "outcast," Hagar, who exclaimed, "I have now seen the One who sees me" (Gen. 16:13).

WEST *See* Directions.

WHALE The word "whale" occurs four times in the KJV. The KJV uses the word to describe the large fish that were created by God (Gen. 1:21). Similarly, the KJV, translating Jesus' saying about

Jonah, places the reluctant prophet in the “whale’s belly” (Matt. 12:40). This is the text that gives rise to the story of Jonah being swallowed by a whale, even though in Jon. 1:17 the KJV says that Jonah was swallowed not by a “whale,” but rather by a “great fish.” Finally, the KJV chooses “whale” for Job 7:12 and Ezek. 32:2, where in both cases a mythological sea monster is being described. In all these cases, more-recent versions prefer expressions such as “huge fish,” “sea monster,” and so on, depending on the context.

WHEAT Wheat was a major crop in Palestine throughout biblical times and was the most important crop during the patriarchal times (Gen. 30:14). Wheat is a winter crop that was sown by hand in November or December; it was ready for harvest in May and was commemorated by the Festival of Weeks. Between the time of the late monarchy and the time of the NT, wheat was not only a food source but also a source of export income (Amos 8:5). Wheat can be eaten in a variety of ways and was often used, ground into fine flour, as an offering at the tabernacle and temple (Lev. 2:1). In the NT, wheat is used to symbolize the good produce of the kingdom of God (Matt. 13:24–31; cf. 3:12).

A field of wheat in Judea

WHEEL There is no mention of wheels in the NT, while four different types of wheels are described in the OT. They include a potter's wheel, a chariot wheel, a wheel used for processing grain, and the wheel referred to in Ezekiel's theophany. The potter's wheel was a simple device for creating pottery that was symmetrical and strong. Jeremiah observed a potter working with a pottery wheel (Jer. 18:3). Chariot wheels may have been invented by the Sumerians and were a common part of warfare during most of the OT. These wheels were either a solid wheel made of two or three planks of wood held together with wooden pegs or the more common wheel-and-spoke assembly. The spoke assembly was favored as iron and other metal technology was developed (Exod. 14:25). This sort of wheel also functioned in the temple to hold the lavers (1 Kings 7:30–33). Wheels also were used to crush grain in order to separate the husk from the harvested grain, to grind grain into flour, and to extract oil from olives (Isa. 28:28). There is much speculation about the specifications of the phantasmagorical wheels in Ezekiel's visions, which include the enigmatic description of a wheel intersecting a wheel (Ezek. 1:15–16). It is clear from this description that the wheels are intended to guide a vehicle that can go in any direction instantly, but nothing else is known about them.

WHIRLWIND Elijah the prophet, at the end of his earthly career, was taken up alive into heaven in a whirlwind (2 Kings 2:11). The Hebrew word there behind "whirlwind" (*se'arah*) also describes the atmospheric phenomenon of Ezek. 1:4, the "windstorm"—the early impression the prophet had of the flying chariot cherubim, above which God was enthroned. Thus, God communicates in a special way to these two prophets in the whirlwind/windstorm; in both cases, this encounter initiated a climactic event in their prophetic ministries: Elijah's ended, and Ezekiel's began. The same Hebrew word is used when God speaks to Job: "Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind [*se'arah*]" (Job 38:1; 40:6 NRSV [NIV: "storm"]). God appears at times in wind and storm (e.g., Ps. 77:18; Isa. 66:15; Jer. 23:19; Nah. 1:3).

WHITE Typically associated with glory (Dan. 7:9; Matt. 17:2; Rev. 1:14) and purity (Ps. 51:7; Isa. 1:18; Rev. 3:4), white is a color worn by both angels (Mark 16:2; John 20:12; Acts 1:10) and heavenly saints (Rev. 7:9). On skin, however, white is abnormal, indicating a skin disease (Exod. 4:6; Lev. 13:3–4). Snow is often used in similes or comparisons to depict the color white (Exod. 4:6; Num. 12:10; 2 Kings 5:27; Ps. 51:7; Isa. 1:18; Dan. 7:9; Matt. 28:3; Rev. 1:14). *See also* Colors.

WHORE *See* Prostitution.

WIDOW Lacking the provision and protection of a husband, widows are needy members of society, often grouped with the fatherless. Both Testaments promote special efforts to care for the needs of widows.

God's concern for widows is evident in descriptions of his character and his commands for their protection and benefit. These are complemented by condemnations, punishments, and curses for those who fail to care for widows and by praise and blessings for those who do. Widows figure prominently in several biblical stories.

God himself cares for widows and gives them justice (Deut. 10:18; Ps. 68:5; Prov. 15:25). He instructs Israel and the church to care for widows. Negative commands warn of the consequences of mistreating widows (Exod. 22:22–24; Deut. 24:17–18). Positive commands require giving justice to widows (Isa. 1:17; Jer. 22:3), including them in community celebrations (Deut. 16:11–14), and providing for them. OT provision came in two forms. Every third year a harvest tithe was deposited in town to provide for the Levites, aliens, orphans, and widows (Deut. 14:27–29; 26:12–13). Additionally, harvesters were instructed to leave harvest remains for the alien (a displaced person seeking refuge), orphan, and widow (Deut. 24:17–22; cf. Ruth 2). Care for widows was central to the controversy that led to the appointment of deacons (Acts 6:1–6). Paul instructs Timothy to prioritize caring for widows who are over sixty years of age and without family to care for them (1 Tim. 5:1–16).

Failure to care for widows draws condemnation (Deut. 27:19; Job 24:2–3; Isa. 1:23; 10:2; Mal. 3:5; Mark 12:40). In contrast, care for widows is a mark of righteousness that brings blessing (Job 29:12–16; Jer. 7:5–7; Acts 9:39). James includes care for widows and orphans among the essential parts in his summary of true religion (James 1:27).

The OT included a special custom for the protection of, presumably, young widows. If a woman's husband died and left her childless, her brother-in-law was to marry her and reckon the first child of the union as that of his deceased brother (Gen. 38:8; Deut. 25:5–6; Ruth 4:5, 10; Matt. 22:24). This custom lay behind the contention between Judah and Tamar (Gen. 38).

Widows figure prominently in several stories. A widow cared for Elijah in Zarephath (1 Kings 17; cf. Luke 4:25–26). At Elisha's instruction, a widow was able to fill multiple containers with oil from a single jar (2 Kings 4:1–7). Jesus brought the son of a widow back to life (Luke 7:12–17). He remarked on a widow who made a small yet significant contribution to the temple treasury (21:1–4). Jesus illustrated persistence in prayer with a story about a widow seeking justice (18:1–8). *See also* Poor, Orphan, Widow.

WIFE *See* Family; Marriage; Woman.

WILDERNESS A broad designation for certain regions in Israel, typically rocky, although also plains, with little rainfall. These areas generally are uninhabited, and most often "wilderness" refers to specific regions surrounding inhabited Israel. A fair amount of Scripture's focus with respect to the wilderness concerns Israel's forty-year period of wandering in the wilderness after the exodus (*see also* Wilderness Wandering).

GEOGRAPHY

More specifically, the geographical locations designated "wilderness" fall into four basic categories: the Negev (south), Transjordan (east), Judean (eastern slope of Judean mountains), and Sinai (southwest).

The Negev makes up a fair amount of Israel's southern kingdom, Judah. It is very rocky and also includes plateaus and wadis, which are dry riverbeds that can bloom after rains. Its most important city is Beersheba (see Gen. 21:14, 22–34), which often designates Israel's southernmost border, as in the expression "from Dan to Beersheba" (e.g., 2 Sam. 17:11).

Transjordan pertains to the area east of the Jordan River, the area through which the Israelites had to pass before crossing the Jordan on their way from Mount Sinai to Canaan. (Israel was denied direct passage to Canaan by the Edomites and Amorites [see Num. 20:14–21; 21:21–26]). Even though this region lay outside the promised land of Canaan, it was settled by the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh after they had fulfilled God's command to fight alongside the other tribes in conquering Canaan (Num. 32:1–42; Josh. 13:8; 22:1–34).

The Judean Desert is located on the eastern slopes of the Judean mountains, toward the Dead Sea. David fled there for refuge from Saul (1 Sam. 21–23). It was also in this area that Jesus was tempted (Luke 4:1–13).

The Sinai Desert is a large peninsula, with the modern-day Gulf of Suez to the west and the Gulf of Aqaba to the east. In the ancient Near Eastern world, both bodies of water often were referred to as the "Red Sea," which is the larger sea to the south. In addition to the region traditionally believed to contain the location of Mount Sinai (its exact location is unknown), the Sinai Desert is further subdivided into other areas known to readers of the OT: Desert of Zin (northeast, contains Kadesh Barnea), Desert of Shur (northwest, near Egypt), Desert of Paran (central).

The Judean wilderness

WILDERNESS IN THE BIBLE

Wilderness is commonly mentioned in the Bible, and although it certainly can have neutral connotations (i.e., simply describing a location), the uninhabited places often entail both positive (e.g., as a place of solitude) and negative (e.g., as a place of wrath) connotations, both in their actual geological properties and as metaphors. The very rugged and uninhabited nature of the wilderness easily lent itself to being a place of death (e.g., Deut. 8:15; Ps. 107:4–5; Jer. 2:6). It was also a place associated with Israel's rebellions and struggles with other nations. Upon leaving Egypt, Israel spent forty years wandering the wilderness before entering Canaan, encountering numerous military conflicts along the way. This forty-year period was occasioned by a mass rebellion (Num. 14), hence casting a necessarily dark cloud over that entire period, and no doubt firming up subsequent negative connotations of “wilderness.” Similarly, “wilderness” connotes notions of exile from Israel, as seen in the ritual of the scapegoat (lit., “goat of removal” [see Lev. 16]). On the Day of Atonement, one goat was sacrificed to atone for the people’s sin, and another was sent off, likewise to atone for sin. The scapegoat was released into the desert, where it would encounter certain death, either by succumbing to the climate or through wild animals.

On the other hand, it is precisely in this uninhabited land that God also showed his faithfulness to his people, despite their prolonged punishment. He miraculously supplied bread (manna) and meat (quail) (Exod. 16; Num. 11), as well as water (Exod. 15:22–27; 17:1–7; Num. 20:1–13; 21:16–20). God’s care for Israel is amply summarized in Deut. 1:30–31: “The LORD your God, who is going before you, will fight for you, as he did for you in Egypt, before your very eyes, and in the wilderness. There you saw how the LORD your God carried you, as a father carries his son, all the way you went until you reached this place.”

The harsh realities of the wilderness also made it an ideal place to seek sanctuary and protection. David fled from Saul to the wilderness, the Desert of Ziph (1 Sam. 23:14; 26:2–3; cf. Ps. 55:7). Similarly, Jeremiah sought a retreat in the desert from sinful Israel (Jer. 9:2).

Related somewhat to this last point is Jesus’ own attitude toward the wilderness. It was there that he retreated when he could no longer move about publicly (John 11:54). John the Baptist came from the wilderness announcing Jesus’ ministry (Matt. 3:1–3; Mark 1:2–4; Luke 3:2–6; John 1:23; cf. Isa. 40:3–5). It was also in the desert that Jesus went to be tempted but also overcame that temptation.

WILDERNESS WANDERING In the biblical account of the exodus, Israel’s departure from Egypt begins in Exod. 12:37. The original intention was for the Israelites to go to Mount Sinai to receive the law and instructions for the tabernacle and then to proceed to Canaan. But Israel’s trip was not to be quite that simple. Because of the Israelites’ disobedience in the desert, they were condemned to a forty-year period of wilderness wandering, enough time for those twenty years of age or older during the rebellion to die in the wilderness (see Num. 14, which describes what is actually the final rebellion in a series of grumbling incidents that go back to Exod. 15:22–27).

Technically, the wilderness period began immediately after the crossing of the Red Sea. The Israelites passed through the Desert of Shur, the Desert of Sin, Rephidim, and then Sinai itself. These locations, however, were only stations on the way to Sinai, and so they do not pertain to the specific forty-year period of punishment, which begins in Num. 14. Their wandering period would not be officially over until they crossed the Jordan River and entered Canaan (Josh. 3:17).

MAPPING THE ROUTE

The wilderness wandering, like the exodus and the passage through the Red Sea, are very difficult to outline precisely from a geographical and archaeological point of view. Many of the places named in the lists have not been located. Moreover, the two itinerary lists, one in Num. 33 and the other at various points in Num. 11–22, do not agree on every point. Although the two lists do not directly conflict, Num. 33 includes many more sites than Num. 11–22 and leaves out relatively few. One reason for this difference may be that only Num. 33 is actually intended to be an itinerary, whereas the sites mentioned elsewhere in Numbers are injected in the course of a narrative.

What contributes to difficulties in locating the wilderness route is that biblical names are not those used today, not to mention that many of these places no longer exist at all. Moreover, similarities between some names then and now have no necessary bearing on the issue. Also, it seems that at least some of the biblical names are symbolic. For example, “Meribah” means “quarreling,” and “Massah” means “testing.” These names seem to reflect the events recorded in Exod. 17 rather than being original names.

One of the most contested issues concerning the wilderness wandering is where it began: the location of Mount Sinai. It is commonly accepted that this mountain is located somewhere in the Sinai Peninsula, although numerous places have been suggested. Best known, perhaps, is Jebel Musa, the location of St. Catherine’s monastery, located in the southern portion of the peninsula. This is based not so much on historical evidence, however, as on church tradition. Another theory puts Mount Sinai in the eastern portion of the peninsula, near Midian. One factor in favor of this theory is that Moses first met God on Mount Sinai when he was living in Midian (with Zipporah, his wife, and Jethro, his father-in-law). According to Exod. 3:1, Moses left Jethro’s house to tend his sheep and it was on this journey that he came to Mount Sinai for the first time. Unless one presumes that he herded the sheep over one hundred miles in a southwesterly direction, into the desert, one might conclude that Mount Sinai is perhaps a more reasonable distance from Midian. But as with all theories regarding Sinai’s location, conclusive evidence is lacking.

REMINDER OF REBELLION AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

Interest in the wilderness wanderings, however, extends beyond understanding ancient geography. There is also a powerful theological dimension, and this seems to be of greater importance for biblical writers. Wandering in the wilderness is Israel’s punishment for disobedience and rebellion. As such, it stands as a reminder for later Israelites to encourage them not to repeat that mistake. Indeed, the events of Numbers are not recounted merely to catalog arcane events but are preserved in writing to be a reminder for subsequent generations.

Israel’s wilderness experience is referenced in various portions of the OT. The rebellion is mentioned in Ps. 106:14, 26, and wilderness is associated with a place of death. Elsewhere the desert represents a place of God’s protection and provision for the new generation of Israelites living in the desert (Deut. 8:15–16; 29:5; 32:10; Ps. 136:16; Hos. 13:5).

Another example of a later appropriation of the wilderness tradition is found in Ps. 95, where the Israelites, perhaps in an exilic setting, are warned not to rebel as the exodus generation did (vv. 7–11). This same warning of Ps. 95 is picked up by the writer of Hebrews and applied to the church (Heb. 3:1–4:13). The author argues that since a greater mediator than Moses has come, the past warning holds all the more as the church goes through its period of wilderness wandering (which lasts until the church’s entrance into its heavenly promised land). The main difference Hebrews introduces is that the church’s period of wilderness wandering is not characterized by God’s wrath but rather is a time of God’s activity in redeeming the world.

WILL, HUMAN “Will” refers to a person’s wishes or desires and the power to act on those desires. In the Bible, human will is at times contrasted with God’s will or mercy (Rom. 9:16 ESV, NRSV; cf. John 1:13) or the power of the Holy Spirit (2 Pet. 1:21 NASB, NRSV). In his humanity, Jesus had his own will, but he chose to submit it to the Father’s will (Luke 22:42; John 6:38). *See also* Free Will; Will of God.

WILL OF GOD The accomplishment of God’s purposes. This was most clearly expressed by Jesus’ prayer, “Not my will, but yours be done” (Luke 22:42). Jesus stipulated in the Gospel of John that he was pursuing not his own will but that of God (5:19, 30; 6:38). God’s will is revealed in creation (Rev. 4:11), Scripture (2 Pet. 1:20–21), his standards (Ezra 10:11; Rom. 12:1–2; 1 Thess.

4:3), his calling (1 Cor. 1:1), and his purpose (Isa. 46:10).

WILLOW Shrubs or small trees with reddish branches that grow by brooks and watercourses (Job 40:22; Isa. 15:7 [NIV: “poplars”]). Several species are common in Palestine, the most common being the Palestine willow. This is the willow in Ezek. 17:5, and not the “weeping willow,” which was introduced into Palestine after the exile. The ease with which the willow (poplar) takes root from a twig is used figuratively in Ezek. 17:5 (cf. Isa. 44:4). Branches from the willow and other trees were taken to make booths at the Feast of Tabernacles (Lev. 23:40).

WILLOW CREEK *See* Arabim.

WILLOWS, BROOK OF; WILLOWS, WADI OF *See* Arabim.

WIMPLE In Isa. 3:22 the KJV translates the Hebrew word *mitpakhat* as “wimple,” referring to a woman’s medieval head covering that framed her face. Other translations render the Hebrew word as “cloak” (NIV, NASB, NRSV). In Ruth 3:15 the KJV translates the same Hebrew word as “vail” (NIV: “shawl”).

WIND Scripture describes wind as a powerful force that is under God’s command. The Hebrew word *ruakh* sometimes is translated as “wind” but other times can mean “breath,” as well as “spirit” (Gen. 1:2). The Greek word for “spirit,” *pneuma*, hints of a similar range of meaning, although another word is most often used in the NT to denote wind.

Old Testament. Throughout the OT wind is used by God to fulfill his purposes. Psalm 148:8 declares that winds do God’s bidding. Yahweh keeps the wind in storehouses until they are needed (Ps. 135:7; Jer. 10:13). God uses wind to protect and provide for his people. For instance, God sends a wind over the earth to cause the floodwaters surrounding the ark to recede (Gen. 8:1), a strong east wind to drive back the sea during the exodus from Egypt (Exod. 14:21), and a wind that drives quail in from the sea to serve as food for the Israelites in the wilderness (Num. 11:31).

Wind can also be an agent of God’s destruction. God sends a plague upon Egypt by making an east wind blow locusts all across the land; afterward, God uses a west wind to blow the locusts into the sea (Exod. 10:13–19). In the book of Job a mighty wind from the desert causes the house of Job’s eldest son to collapse, killing Job’s seven sons and three daughters (Job 1:19). In the book of Jonah a great wind sent by God threatens to destroy Jonah’s ship, and a scorching east wind later causes Jonah to grow faint and desire death (Jon. 1:4; 4:8). The prophetic books use the subject of wind in communicating God’s judgment (e.g., Isa. 28:2; 64:6; Ezek. 5:2; 13:11).

While a single wind is able to blow in several directions (Eccles. 1:6), many passages specify four winds from the four quarters of the heavens. The north wind brings rain (Prov. 25:23), while the south wind brings heat (Job 37:17), both of which are useful for growing a garden (Song 4:16). Only one verse refers to the west wind specifically (Exod. 10:19), but numerous verses refer to the east wind as an agent of destruction, often appearing along with military terms. When let loose by God (Ps. 78:26), the east wind may shatter ships (Ps. 48:7), and those in its path will scatter (Jer. 18:17) or shrivel (Ezek. 19:12). In Hos. 12:1 God accuses Israel of pursuing the east wind along with multiplying lies and violence. Together, the four winds can be sent to bring destruction (Jer. 49:36) or to bring life (Ezek. 37:9). They also appear in the visions of Daniel (Dan. 7:2; 8:8; 11:4; cf. Rev. 7:1).

God rides on the wings of the wind on cherubim (Ps. 18:10; 2 Sam. 22:11), with the clouds as his chariot (Ps. 104:3). In Ps. 104:4 the winds are called God's "messengers." This imagery is strikingly similar to ancient descriptions of the Canaanite god Baal, although Scripture adds that it is Yahweh who created the wind (Job 28:25; Amos 4:13). Yahweh's power is not contingent upon wind, as Elijah learns when he experiences the presence of Yahweh in the whisper and not the wind (or the earthquake) after his successful contest against the prophets of Baal (1 Kings 19:11–12).

The wisdom literature focuses upon other characteristics of wind besides its power. The transient nature of wind is significant, as wind is the inheritance of those who bring trouble upon their family (Prov. 11:29). Ecclesiastes continually refers to all things done under the sun as "a chasing after the wind" (e.g., 1:14, 17). Empty talk is spoken of as wind (Job 8:2). The function of wind to blow away chaff is also used to declare the fate of the wicked (e.g., Ps. 1:4; cf. Job 21:18). The unpredictability of wind serves as a metaphor for the mystery of God's actions (Eccles. 11:5).

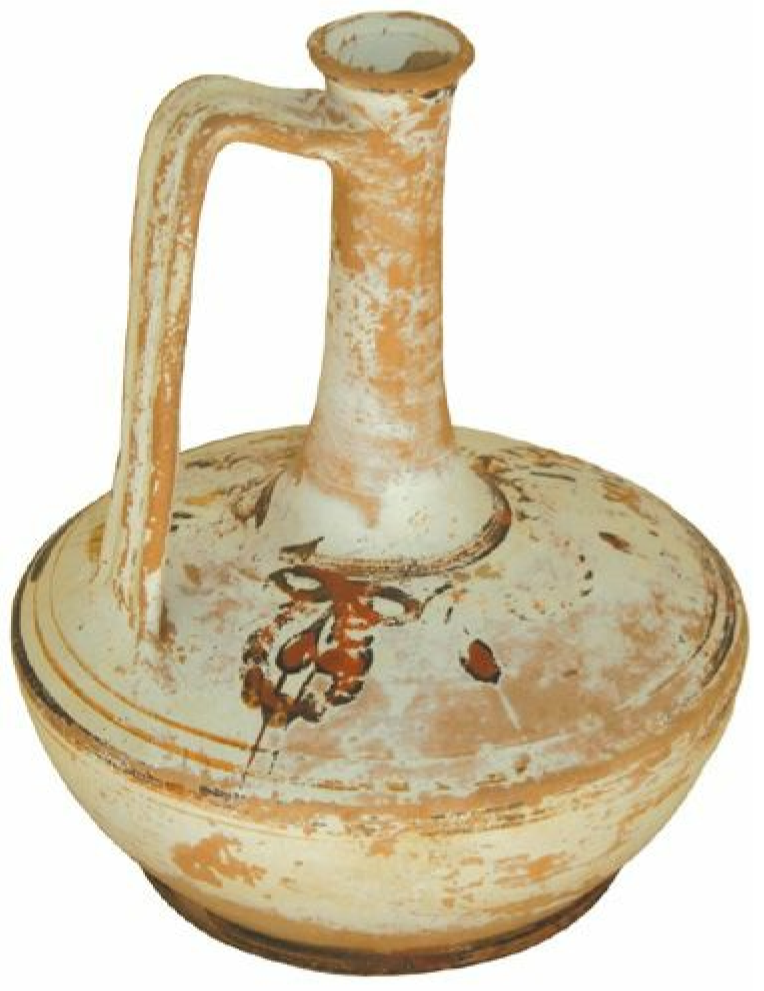
New Testament. In the NT, the Gospels reveal the divine nature of Jesus by emphasizing his ability to command the wind (Matt. 8:26–27). Jesus declares that the Son of Man will gather his elect from the four winds (Matt. 24:31; Mark 13:27). Wind is a metaphor in John 3:8 for the mystery and unpredictability of those born of the Spirit. Jesus uses the image of empty talk as wind when he refers to John the Baptist as a prophet rather than a reed swayed by the wind (Matt. 11:7; Luke 7:24). In Eph. 4:14 false teaching is referred to as wind. It is wind that easily sways the one who doubts (James 1:6). Finally, a correlation between wind and the Holy Spirit occurs when a sound like a violent wind occurs at the time when the Holy Spirit fills all those in the house at Pentecost (Acts 2:2).

WINDOW In biblical times, windows usually were small and few, for the purpose of admitting light or air. Windows helped regulate temperatures inside a house. Some, however, were large enough to permit an intruder (Joel 2:9; cf. Jer. 9:21) or a fugitive (Josh. 2:15; 1 Sam. 19:12; 2 Cor. 11:33) to go through.

Windows of "recessed frames" in Solomon's temple (1 Kings 6:4 NRSV), the numerous windows in Ezekiel's eschatological temple (Ezek. 40:16, 22, 25, 29; 41:16), and the elaborately paneled windows in Jehoiakim's house (Jer. 22:14) contrast the simplicity of general window design.

Symbolically, "windows of/in heaven" depict wide openings through which blessings or judgment flow to earth (Gen. 7:11; 8:2; 2 Kings 7:2, 19; Isa. 24:18 KJV [NIV: "floodgates of the heavens"]; cf. Mal. 3:10).

WINE An alcoholic beverage made primarily by fermenting grapes, wine was valued as both a pleasurable and a functional drink (Ps. 104:15; 1 Tim. 5:23) and therefore a staple of ceremonial practice and social gatherings (Exod. 29:40; John 2:1–3). For this reason, wine is a symbol of God's blessing (Gen. 27:28; John 2:11), particularly for his covenant people (Isa. 25:6, 55:1; 1 Cor. 11:25). Yet the Bible also warns against the abuse of alcohol, which can lead to drunkenness and debauchery (Prov. 9:4–5; Eph. 5:18). Such abuse becomes a symbol of God's curse for disobedience (Hos. 4:11; 9:2; Matt. 27:48–49).



A lagynos, a single-handled wine container, which would be hung in front of wine houses as a kind of shop sign

WINEPRESS A mechanical device that extracts juice from grapes for use in making wine. Winepresses in ancient Israel were hewn from bedrock to form a flat surface for treading. They consisted of a pair of square or circular vats arranged at different levels and connected by a channel. The vat in which the grapes were trodden (*gat*) was higher and larger than its deeper counterpart (*yeqeb*) into which the juice flowed from the press. The beam press came later, a Greek invention dating to the sixth century BC. One end of the beam was secured to a wall, the other end weighted with stones, and the baskets of grapes placed beneath. Even after the invention of the beam press, however, treading the grapes under bare feet was preferred in both OT and NT times because of the quality of the product obtained.

The vintage season was a joyous occasion accompanied by celebrating, feasting, shouting, and rejoicing as family members trod the grapes. Thus, the imagery of a winepress overflowing with new wine often stands for divine blessing (Prov. 3:10; Joel 2:24), and the lack of new wine from a winepress is a picture of divine judgment (Job 24:11; Jer. 48:33; cf. Isa. 16:10). As a metaphor based upon the treading of the grapes in the vats, the winepress connotes divine destruction and judgment. In Joel 3:13 the image of God’s mighty army trampling the enemy is couched in the language of a vintner treading the grapes. The abundant flow from the presses is then compared to the greatness of the wickedness of the nations. Isaiah 63:3 likens a judging God to a lonely treader of a winepress, and the juice from the press to blood. This is best understood against the background that normally treading in vintage is communal work. The lonely treader conveys the idea that God is the only judge of the nations. The metaphor of the winepress for judgment is used climactically in Rev. 14:19–20; 19:15, where the winepress is identified with divine wrath and the juice with bloodshed. In Sir. 33:17, however, the winepress is used as a positive metaphor connoting the learning of Torah.

The winepress and wine occur in various places in the book of Judges, yet in each there is a literary twist. Gideon was introduced as threshing wheat in a winepress to hide it from the Midianites (6:11). Zeeb, the Midianite general, was killed at the winepress of Zeeb (7:25). Gideon calmed the anger of the Ephraimites by reference to Abiezrite wine (8:2). A vintage festival marked the beginning of the end for Abimelek (9:27). Finally, the kidnap of the women of Shiloh occurred during a vintage festival (21:20–22).

WING Wings symbolize protection (Exod. 19:4; Ruth 2:12; Ps. 17:8; Matt. 23:37) or strength: “Those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles” (Isa. 40:31). In some cases, heavenly beings have wings (Ezek. 1:6–11; Rev. 4:8).

WINNOWING Part of the process for preparing grain that follows harvesting and threshing. Farmers winnowed grain to separate grain from chaff (Ruth 3:2). They used a pitchfork (Jer. 15:7; Matt. 3:12 // Luke 3:17) to toss the grain and chaff into the air. The heavier grain fell into a pile, but wind blew the lighter chaff away. The term “winnow” is also often used for discerning judgment by God (Matt. 3:12) and by humans (Prov. 20:8; Isa. 41:15–16).

WINNOWING FORK A tool resembling a shovel or a fork that was used in the winnowing process. The winnowing fork (KJV: “fan,” Isa. 30:24; Matt. 3:12; Luke 3:17) was used to throw the grain into the air to allow the chaff to blow away while the heavier grain settled. *See also* Winnowing.

WINTER HOUSE The KJV uses the term “winter house” to refer both to a room set aside within a house that retained heat from a brazier or firepot containing hot coals (Jer. 36:22) and to an auxiliary winter residence (Amos 3:15). In modern versions such as the NIV, these are distinguished as “winter apartment” and “winter house.” Ornate auxiliary residences served kings (see 1 Kings 21:1) and the wealthy upper class, and in Amos 3:15 such opulence comes under God’s judgment as a sign of injustice against the poor.

WISDOM, WISE In the OT, wisdom (*khokmah*) is a characteristic of someone who attains a high degree of knowledge, technical skill, and experience in a particular domain. It refers to the ability that certain individuals have to use good judgment in running the affairs of state (Joseph in Gen. 41:33; David in 2 Sam. 14:20; Solomon in 1 Kings 3:9, 12, 28). It can also refer to the navigational skills that sailors use in maneuvering a ship through difficult waters (Ps. 107:27). Furthermore, wisdom includes the particular skills of an artisan (Exod. 31:6; 35:35; 1 Chron. 22:15–16). In all these cases, wisdom involves the expertise that a person acquires to accomplish a particular task. In these instances “wisdom” is an ethically neutral term, or at least that dimension is not emphasized. The wise are those who have mastered a certain skill set in their field of expertise.

The uniqueness of the OT wisdom literature (Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, etc.) is that it highlights the moral dimension of wisdom. Here “wisdom” refers to developing expertise in negotiating the complexities of life and managing those complexities in a morally responsible way that honors God and benefits both the community and the individual. Although it is difficult to pin down a concise definition, one can gain a better understanding of wisdom by investigating two important dimensions: wisdom as a worldview, and the traits of a person who is considered to be wise.

WISDOM AS WORLDVIEW

Wisdom describes a worldview, a particular way of perceiving God, humanity, and creation. The God of the sages is sovereign Lord. But their understanding of sovereignty manifests itself differently from the way the Torah and the prophets describe it. All through the OT Israel frequently witnessed God at work through mighty acts of deliverance and conquest and protection. God orchestrated these monumental saving acts. Wisdom, however, looks at God's sovereignty differently. It makes few references to the mighty acts of God.

For the sage of Ecclesiastes, the world is the arena of God's mystery. God is active in creation and in the world, but his ways are inscrutable (3:11; 6:10–12; 7:13–14). God is distant (5:2), but he spans this distance when humans receive and enjoy the ordinary gifts of friendship, food, family that he gives to sustain life (2:24–26; 3:12–13; 5:18–20; 9:7–10).

For the sage of Proverbs, God is present in the daily routines of life. God is involved in the interactions that take place between people (15:22; 27:5–6, 9–10, 17). God works through both the good and the bad experiences of life, employs human language to carry out his purposes, and uses material wealth and even poverty in the service of maturing people.

In the very realm where individuals believe that they exercise the most control—human thoughts and plans—God establishes a presence (Prov. 16:1, 9). Exactly how God does this the sage does not say; rather, the sage assumes that divine sovereignty and human activity exist together in inexplicable ways.

From the view of God to the view of humans, wisdom emphasizes a particular perspective. Wisdom's worldview of humanity places great confidence in what humans can accomplish. Wisdom affirms that individuals are capable of making wise choices and displaying responsible behavior. In so doing, such people will live healthy, prosperous, successful lives (Prov. 9:1; 14:1, 11). Because they value human ability and understanding, the sages use all the resources at their disposal to discover the means of living a successful life. They use the sources of the culture around them as well as their own inner resources.

One other dimension to probe in wisdom's worldview is the important role that creation plays. Living in harmony with the order of the universe brings longevity, wealth, and good fortune. When individuals integrate their lives with the order of creation, success results; neglecting that order brings failure. However, the sages sometimes are accused of possessing too mechanical a view of such order: the wise, it is said, believe in a world automatically programmed to prosper the pious and punish the perverse. Such a view perceives the world as operating on a rigid system of rewards and punishments. It is true that some wisdom teaching appears to reflect this worldview (Prov. 26:27). However, even though the sages developed plans and strategies by which to live, they did not believe in a created order that operated mechanically. The sages do have an interest in discovering certain predictable patterns of experiences, but the order that underlies the experiences of life is not a fate-producing one (21:30–31). The sages wrestle not so much with the concept of a rigid order as with the person of God. A dialectic exists between the predictable order of creation and the free work of God. Wisdom seeks not to master life but to navigate it. The sages guided themselves and others through the experiences of life, striving not to dominate but rather to assume responsibility. This is the fundamental worldview of wisdom.

TRAITS OF THE WISE

Who is wise? First, the wise are those involved in a lifelong process of character development. They manifest the virtues of righteousness, justice, and equity (Prov. 1:3; 2:9). The embodiment of these virtues culminates in the description of the woman of noble character at the conclusion of Proverbs (31:10–31). She exhibits self-control, patience, care, diligence, discipline, humility, generosity, honesty, and fear of the Lord (cf. James 3:13–18). She is the epitome of wisdom in its maturity and the model that all should emulate.

Second, the wise know the value of words and how to use them. They know when to speak, what to say, and how to say it (Job 29:21–22; Prov. 15:23; 25:11; Eccles. 3:7; 12:9–10). Wisdom and the wise place a premium on the power of words.

Third, the wise place great importance on relationships and on interaction with others. The wise person is the one who is open to the give-and-take of relationships (Prov. 27:5–6, 17, 19). Such a person develops the humility necessary to receive correction and criticism from others. Hearing criticism and changing wrong behavior are integral to wisdom (3:1–11). The wise appreciate insightful criticism because it helps them live life more productively (15:12). Wisdom is, ultimately, relational.

Fourth, the wise person develops the art of discernment (Prov. 1:2, 4–6). The sage is equipped with the ability to think critically. The very quality of wisdom itself invites the re-forming and rethinking of ideas. Sages are not interested in pat answers (26:4–5). Proverbs 16:1–9 throws a wrench in the conventional cogs of wisdom, claiming that although humans make their plans, God has the final say. Both Job and Ecclesiastes go head to head with conventional beliefs, probing more deeply into the complexities of life and the relationship between human and divine. No easy answers exist here. In contrast, fools do not use their mental faculties. They view wisdom as a commodity, a matter of learning some techniques, accepting certain beliefs, and memorizing a few proverbs (17:16). The wise, however, know that wisdom involves the art of critical thinking and interacting with others.

Fifth, and most fundamental, the wise person takes a God-centered focus toward life. Wisdom literature affirms, “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom” (Prov. 9:10; cf. Prov. 1:7; Job 28:28; Eccles. 12:13). That this is the beginning step in the process of gaining wisdom means that one who misses this step can proceed no farther along the path to wisdom. The fear of the Lord is to wisdom as the letters of the alphabet are to forming words. The wise gain wisdom by being in relationship with the Lord (Prov. 3:5–8). The fear of the Lord is the beginning as well as the culmination of wisdom.

Wisdom is a highly prized quality, superior to might and power (Prov. 25:15; Eccles. 9:13–16), and one must diligently seek it (Prov. 2:1–5). Yet in the end, wisdom is a gift that only God can give (Prov. 2:6–8; 1 Kings 3:9).

WISDOM LITERATURE The wisdom literature of the Bible includes Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, and numerous psalms. These books have some features in common. One of these is that they do not draw on God’s special redeeming works throughout history for their message. There is little if anything in these books of the law of Moses, the covenant with Abraham, the sacrificial system, the ceremonial laws, Israel as a special people, the Davidic kingship, or polemic against idolatry. Instead, the wisdom books tend to draw upon that which has not changed over time, such as practical matters of daily life, the fact of suffering, the inability to perceive meaning and purpose without a word from God, and the power of human sexuality. Thus, these books have more affinity than the remainder of the Bible with non-Israelite ancient works.

Mesopotamian wisdom poem from the library of Assurbanipal, king of Assyria

WISE *See* Wisdom, Wise.

WITNESS The English term “witness” occurs in both Testaments numerous times, with a wide range of meanings. One common meaning relates to someone who gives legal testimony and to the legitimacy of that testimony (Num. 35:30; Deut. 17:6; 19:15–16, 18; Prov. 12:17; Isa. 8:16, 20). Throughout the NT the term occurs primarily in the context of someone bearing witness—especially God—or testifying to something (Rom. 1:9; 2 Cor. 1:23; Phil. 1:8; 1 Thess. 2:5, 10), though it also has a forensic dimension in regard to one who establishes legal testimony (e.g., Acts 6:13; 7:58; 2 Cor. 13:1; 1 Tim. 5:19; Heb. 10:28).

Central to the concept of witness is the truthfulness of the witness. This was a vital component of the OT concept of witness. Thus, in legal proceedings a lone witness was insufficient to establish testimony against anyone (Deut. 17:6). This principle carries over into the NT (cf. Matt. 18:16; 2 Cor. 13:1). Such truthfulness was so significant that the ninth commandment expressly forbids bearing false witness (Exod. 20:16; Deut. 5:20; cf. Prov. 19:5, 9).

Truth-telling was not something that the people of Israel were called to merely among themselves. They were to be God’s witnesses to the nations (Isa. 43:10; 44:8). As witnesses of God’s existence and holiness, they were called to be separate from the nations (Exod. 19:6) and to be a light to them (Isa. 49:6). Tragically, Israel failed in this responsibility and was deemed “blind” (Isa. 42:19).

The NT continues the concept that the people of God are to be God’s witnesses. John the Baptist is commissioned “to testify concerning that light” (John 1:7). It is in this context that Jesus later declares himself to be “the light of the world” (John 8:12; 9:5). Jesus himself is the exemplar of a “faithful witness” (Rev. 1:5). And his followers, whom he has designated as “the light of the world” (Matt. 5:14), are then called to bear witness to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8).

“Witness” is also employed in terms of a legal testimony regarding what one has seen. That the disciples were intent on establishing such legal testimony is evident in their stipulation that the person to replace Judas Iscariot be someone from among those who had been with Jesus from the beginning of his ministry to his ascension, so that “one of these must become a witness with us of his resurrection” (Acts 1:22). This forensic aspect of witness appears in the close of the Gospel of John: “This is the disciple who testifies to these things and who wrote them down. We know that his testimony is true” (21:24). Paul demonstrates this forensic concern for witnesses when he references Peter, the Twelve, some five hundred others, and himself as among those who have witnessed the resurrection (1 Cor. 15:3–8).

While linguistically the Greek word *martys* (“witness”) has given rise to the English term “martyr,” at the time of the NT *martys* did not connote physical martyrdom. Instead, it is likely that the use of this term in the book of Revelation and its association with the deaths of those who faithfully witnessed to Jesus Christ and the gospel in the face of persecution gave rise to its application in the technical sense of “martyr.”

Throughout Revelation there resides a direct link between Christians bearing witness and suffering, and perhaps dying, as a consequence of this witness. This is evident in the mention of Antipas, who was martyred, and is then designated as “my faithful witness” (Rev. 2:13). Also, the two unnamed witnesses in 11:1–12, who explicitly function as witnesses, are the subject of attack and are eventually murdered. Their murder occurs only after they have finished “their testimony” (11:7).

It is this association of persecution and martyrdom that likely leads to the second-century employment of "martyr" as a designation for those who bear witness to Christ to the point of death. *See also* Martyr.

WOLF A wild carnivore (species *Canis lupus*) that lives and hunts in packs. The Bible refers separately to dogs, foxes, jackals, and hyenas. Wolves were reported as late as the 1900s in the Carmel and Galilee regions of Israel, and in Scripture the wolf (Heb. *ze'eb*; Gk. *lykos*) stands out as a savage predator (Gen. 49:27; Jer. 5:6; Zeph. 3:3). In the NT, wolves occur only to symbolize danger for Christians (Matt. 7:15; 10:16; Luke 10:3; John 10:12; Acts 20:29).

WOMAN

ANCIENT NEAR EAST

The ancient Near East was a male-dominated culture in which, therefore, women were marginalized and treated more or less as property. Note, for example, Boaz's question "Who does that young woman belong to?" (Ruth 2:5). Women, of course, produce children, and this power was prized. Women were also fit to engage in various mundane tasks, but they were not trained for war or educated for service in the royal court. Their role in society was subordinate and secondary.

In the Epic of Gilgamesh, the wild and powerful Enkidu met a "wise woman" who seduced him. Thereafter, Enkidu was tamed and weakened. She made a civilized man of him. In the Ugaritic legend of Danil, Danil was unhappy because he had no sons. With the blessing of the gods, he married Hurriya, and had sons and daughters. Thus, sons fulfilled Danil as much as they fulfilled the woman.

But the power to reproduce, which resides in the woman's womb, also was mysterious and seemed to belong in the same category as other forces of nature, such as the rebirth of life in the spring following sterile winter. Thus, the ancient world was filled with goddesses of great power. These goddesses at times also took on masculine characteristics, such as displaying great prowess in war; this is especially true of Anat of Canaanite mythology.

Throughout Israel's sojourn in the promised land, there was an undercurrent of Canaanite-style goddess worship. In the period of the judges, the Israelites worshiped the goddess Asherah (Judg. 6:25). Led astray by his wives, Solomon also worshiped the goddess (1 Kings 11:1–8). The "fertility cult" included ritual sex in places of worship. This eventually took place in the temple of Yahweh. Much of this seems to have been homosexual sex (2 Kings 23:7).

CREATION OF WOMAN

In the Bible, woman is first encountered along with man in Gen. 1:26–28. God created "man" in the plural, male and female, and commanded them to reproduce and to fill the earth and subdue it. Being created male and female is set in parallel to being created in the image of God. In the ancient Near East, perhaps the king would be thought of as the image of God. But in Genesis, not only is the first man the image of God, but the first woman participates in the image as well. This is all but unthinkable in the ancient world, and it suggests an unparalleled dignity and worth in womankind.

Genesis records that the human race fell through the instrumentality of a man, a woman, and the serpent. The serpent approached the woman, not the man. The woman was convinced by the serpent and ate the forbidden fruit. She gave some to her husband, who also ate it without saying a word. Thus, the woman can be blamed in part for the fall of the race. Adam was condemned because he "listened to [his] wife" (Gen. 3:17). Her judgment, for heeding the serpent, was pain in childbirth and a desire for her husband, who would rule over her (Gen. 3:16). The exact parameters of this judgment are unclear, but it appears that her desire will be for his position of leadership and will be perpetually frustrated.

Throughout the remainder of Genesis, this judgment does not seem to unfold as expected. Instead, men are shown to desire women. Jacob was willing to work seven years to get the beautiful Rachel as his wife, and when he was fooled into marrying her sister, Leah, he was willing to work another seven years for her (Gen. 29:16–30). And women exploit men and their desire in order to get what they want, in effect mastering them. Lot's daughters contrived to get what they wanted from him (19:30–38), and Tamar manipulated Judah's desire (38:13–26).

REPRODUCTION

Often in the Bible, women are motivated by their desire to have children. Rachel demanded of Jacob, "Give me children, or I'll die!" (Gen. 30:1). She saw herself in competition with her sister, Leah, in this respect (30:8). The "fruit of the womb" is a reward, and like arrows, the blessed man's quiver is full of them (Ps. 127:1–5). Note also the beatitude of Ps. 128:3: "Your wife will be like a fruitful vine within your house; your children will be like olive shoots around your table."

In Genesis, the reproductive capability of slave girls is at the disposal of their owners. Thus, Rachel and Leah's maidservants became surrogate mothers for a number of their sons (Gen. 30:3–10). Sarah also became frustrated at her inability to conceive, so she gave Hagar to Abraham. The result was great familial turmoil, finally resulting in the banishment of both Hagar and Ishmael, whom she bore to Abraham.

In the beginning, God joined one man and one woman together as husband and wife. But soon this idea was corrupted, and Lamech, a man from Cain's lineage, is credited with the first polygamous marriage (Gen. 4:19). Although the patriarchs (such as Jacob) did have more than one wife, the household discontent and strife are what is highlighted in those stories, such as with Hagar. In the NT, an elder is to be, literally, a "one-woman man" (1 Tim. 3:2; ESV, KJV: "the husband of one wife"), meaning monogamous.

In the Bible, women are described as having a number of different sexual relationships with men. There were wives, who enjoyed the closest relationship and had the greatest privileges. There were concubines, who were not wives but were bound to a single man. The greatest deviation from the norm of creation was the institution of the harem, whereby a king took to himself any number of consorts. The law of Moses restricted this practice (Deut. 17:17).

LEGISLATION

The Torah contains significant legislation regarding women. The daughters of Zelophehad argued that their father died without sons, so in Canaan they were disinherited. God agreed and decreed that in Israel daughters would inherit land in the absence of sons. Only if there were no children at all would the land pass to other kin (Num. 27:1–11).

When a man made a vow, he must fulfill it, but a young woman's vow was subject to her father. If he remained silent, the vow stood, but if he expressed disapproval, then she was freed from it. If she was married, her husband governed her vows, but if she was divorced, then there was no responsible male over her, and her vow was treated as a man's (Num. 30:1–16).

Sexual intercourse was also regulated in the law of Moses, insofar as the act rendered both parties ritually impure (Lev. 15:18). Both must bathe and were unclean until evening. A woman's menstrual discharge also made her unclean for a week. Everything she sat or lay upon was unclean, as was anyone who touched these things. She must wash and offer sacrifice to become clean again (15:18–31).

If a man discovered on his wedding night that his bride was not a virgin, he could accuse her publicly. If her parents provided evidence that she had in fact been a virgin, then the man was severely punished for lying and not allowed to divorce her (otherwise, it was simply a matter of writing a letter to divorce her [Deut. 24:1]). If her virginity could not be proved, she was to be put to death by stoning (Deut. 22:13–21).

In the case of a rape of a betrothed virgin, if it occurred in the city, both the rapist and the victim were stoned, since apparently she had failed to cry out for help and thus, the law assumed, consented to sexual intercourse. If she was raped in the countryside, only the man was killed. But if he raped a woman who was not spoken for, his punishment was that he must marry her without possibility of divorce (Deut. 22:23–29).

Numbers 5:11–31 treats cases where a husband was suspicious that his wife had been unfaithful—that is, a matter of covenantal jealousy. The unprovable was left to God to punish.

THE STATUS OF WOMEN

In the Bible, women sometimes are afforded dignity beyond what is expected in an ancient Near Eastern provenance. Hagar is the only woman in all ancient Near Eastern literature who gave a name to a deity (Gen. 16:13). In Judg. 4:4, Deborah “judged” Israel (despite the NIV’s “leading,” the underlying Hebrew verb indicates “judging,” as in the NRSV). Even as judge, however, she did not lead the army against the enemy general Sisera; Barak did so. But Barak was unwilling to undertake this mission unless Deborah went with him (4:8). Thus, God ensured that the prestige of killing Sisera went to a woman, Jael (4:9, 21). Another prominent woman was Huldah, to whom the priests turned for guidance when the law was rediscovered (2 Kings 22:14).

Many biblical stories feature heroines. Mighty Pharaoh was undermined by two midwives in his attempt to destroy Israel (Exod. 1:15–21). Ruth the Moabite woman gave her name to the book that recounts her trek from Moab to Israel, including her famous oath of loyalty (Ruth 1:16–17). Esther too was a courageous woman whose book bears her name. Heroines are especially prominent in the Gospels, and the women there have the distinction of being the first to witness the risen Lord. Luke’s birth narrative is largely organized around Mary. Priscilla (with her husband) taught and helped to shape the early church (Acts 18:26). Paul lists many women in Rom. 16, calling them “deaconess,” “fellow worker,” and possibly even “apostle.”

Scripture also at times portrays various women as being temptations to men. Eve handed the fruit to Adam (Gen. 3:6). In the wilderness Israel worshiped Moabite gods in conjunction with sexual activity (Num. 25:1–9). Later, Israelites intermarried with Canaanite women, directly leading to worship of their idols (Judg. 3:6). Bathsheba was a temptation to David, and this began a series of events that marred his career as a man after God’s own heart. Solomon loved many foreign women, who turned him to worship their gods. After the exile, the Israelites were admonished by Nehemiah to put away their foreign wives lest history repeat itself (Neh. 13:26).

SONG OF SONGS

Song of Songs, while acknowledging the great power of sexuality to move people to act against their own best interests, nevertheless portrays love in a very positive light. The love between a man and a woman is shown in Song of Songs to be not primarily about generating children. Offspring are not at issue in the Bible's great love song. Rather, relations between man and wife rest on a deeper foundation, that of sexual enjoyment and desire. In the words of Hannah's husband, Elkanah, "Don't I mean more to you than ten sons?" (1 Sam. 1:8).

In Gen. 3:16, God pronounces judgment on the woman that her "desire" will be for her husband, but that he will master her. The Hebrew word for "desire" occurs only once outside Genesis, in Song 7:10, where the woman says that her lover's "desire" is for her. This seems to be a direct reference to Gen. 3:16. Thus, in Song of Songs the judgment on the woman is rolled back and reversed in love. In Song of Songs it is the king who is enthralled in love and thus subdued (7:5). He would not have it any other way!

Thus, sexuality is celebrated in Song of Songs. What proves to be such a grave temptation to men elsewhere is shown to be an essential part of God's good creation, albeit a potent and dangerous facet of life. Women do not exist simply to produce children; they partner and revel with their lovers, together enjoying that particular part of God's creation that requires two sexes to explore.

IMAGERY

Women and marriage are used in the Bible as images for spiritual things. Paul writes that marital love mirrors the church's relationship with Christ (Eph. 5:32–33). A man should love his wife as Christ loved the church. Revelation portrays the climax to human history in the figure of two women: the bride of Christ, adorned with righteous deeds for her husband (19:7–8), and the whore Babylon, drunk on the blood of the saints (17:5–6). The consummation of the age is when one is judged and the other enters her eternal marital bliss.

The book of Proverbs also separates humankind into two groups, symbolized by two women. Along the path of life, the youth hears the voices of Woman Folly (9:13–18) and of Woman Wisdom (1:20–33) calling out to him. Folly is incarnated in the flesh-and-blood temptation of the immoral woman (7:6–27), whereas Woman Wisdom has her counterpart at the end of the book in the detailed description of the woman of virtue (31:10–31). There, the woman who fears God is set as a prize far above earthly wealth—the highest blessing of the wise.

Paul uses two women from sacred history to help explain his gospel of law versus grace. Hagar the slave woman represents the Mosaic covenant given at Sinai, and the earthly Jerusalem—that is, a mind-set of slavery that futilely attempts to earn God's favor by works of the law. Sarah was the free woman, and her son was the promised son, who represents the heavenly Jerusalem, the new covenant, and freedom from the requirements of the law (Gal. 4:21–31). Again, two women symbolize two paths and two peoples—one being slaves, the other being God's free people.

CHURCH GOVERNMENT

Throughout most of Christian history, women's roles in the church have been comparable to their role in the general culture. Women participated little in the institutional life of society, and the church was no different. A number of Bible texts can be used in support of women's marginalization as leaders. For example, in the OT, the cult was managed by the priestly caste, and no woman was ever a priest of Yahweh. In the NT, the local churches were overseen by a company of elders. Elders are described by Paul as men, the husband of one wife, who were apt to teach and who managed their own families well (1 Tim. 3:1–7). Immediately before this description, Paul notes that women were not to teach or have authority over men (1 Tim. 2:9–15). Women were the "weaker partner" (1 Pet.

3:7). Thus, women’s subordinate role throughout most of church history has some biblical justification.

However, as women participate more and more in the institutional life of society, the normative value of the aforementioned texts has been questioned, and other texts have been put forward to provide an alternative biblical conception of women’s roles in the church. Perhaps 1 Tim. 2:12 is only against teaching a specific heresy, and the Greek verb translated “to assume authority over” (*authenteō*) may refer to a specific kind of authoritarian or domineering behavior. As noted above, in Rom. 16 Paul considers women to be leaders in the church. Since it is true that in Christ there is no male or female (Gal. 3:28), how far does this extend? Today’s challenge for churches is to decide these matters in light of the whole of Scripture rather than a few proof texts.

WONDERS *See* Miracles; Sign.

WOODWORKER A person who worked with wood at any point from harvesting raw materials to fashioning finished products. Their work was considered honored and skilled work (Ps. 144:12; Jer. 46:22). According to 1 Kings 5–6, woodworkers, or “woodsmen” (see 2 Chron. 2:10), were involved in constructing King Solomon’s temple: cutting trees in the forest (5:6), transporting logs by means of bodies of water (5:9), paneling the interior of the building (6:15), and engraving the walls (6:29). Although chopping wood was used as a punishment for the deceptive Gibeonites (Josh. 9:21), woodcutters in Israel are described as recipients of the covenant (Deut. 29:11).

Plaque showing a carpenter using an adze (Mesopotamia, 1900 BC)

WOOL Fine, wavy hair forming the fleece of sheep or goats. Outer garments were made from the cloth spun from wool. The industrious wife of Prov. 31 “works with eager hands” as she weaves cloth from wool (v. 13). The whiteness of wool was used to describe the whiteness of snow (Ps. 147:16), the purity of sins forgiven (Isa. 1:18), the hair of the Ancient of Days (Dan. 7:9) and of Christ envisioned by John (Rev. 1:14).

WORD “Word” is used in the Bible to refer to the speech of God in oral, written, or incarnate form. In each of these uses, God desires to make himself known to his people. The communication of God is always personal and relational, whether he speaks to call things into existence (Gen. 1) or to address an individual directly (Gen. 2:16–17; Exod. 3:14). The prophets and the apostles received the word of God (Deut. 18:14–22; John 16:13), some of which was proclaimed but not recorded. The greatest revelation in this regard is the person of Jesus Christ, who is called the “Word” of God (John 1:1, 14).

The primary focus of this article is the written form of the word of God, the Bible. The psalmist declared God’s word to be an eternal object of hope and trust that gives light and direction (Ps. 119), and Jesus declared the word to be truth (John 17:17). The word is particularized and intimately connected with God himself by means of the key phrases “your word,” “the word of God,” “the word of the Lord,” “word about Christ,” and “the word of Christ” (Rom. 10:17; Col. 3:16). Our understanding of the word is informed by a variety of terms and contexts in the canon of Scripture, a collection of which is found in Psalm 119.

THEOLOGY OF THE WORD

From the perspective of many systematic theologians, the word of God is defined with several essential labels. The word is the special revelation of God to humans—specifically, truth communicated from God to his human creatures by supernatural intervention, including a disclosure of his mind and will, his attributes, and his redemptive plans. This revealed word is inspired. Inspiration is an act of the Holy Spirit of God whereby he superintended the biblical authors so that they composed the canonical books of Scripture. Inspiration is verbal and plenary in that it extends to every part of the Bible and includes the choice of words used by the authors.

The word of God is inerrant, free from error in every matter addressed, and infallible, true in every matter addressed. The locus of inspiration, inerrancy, and infallibility is the original manuscripts and not the translations. A translation is reliable when it accurately reflects the meaning of the inspired originals (Matt. 5:18; cf. John 10:35; 17:17; 2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:21). And finally, the word is authoritative. Because the Bible is the divinely inspired word of God reliably composed in the originals without error, it is binding upon people in their relationship with their God as well as their relationships with their fellow human beings. Biblical authority derives from the eternal character of the divine author and the revelatory content of the Scriptures.

PSALM 119

A key OT text extolling the word is Psalm 119 (cf. Pss. 1; 19). The writer glorifies God, his word, and his divine directions to people by means of an acrostic format that covers the subject of Torah meditation. Eight synonyms are used for the “word” in the psalm. The eight are translated in the NIV as “words” (v. 57), “promise” (v. 58), “statutes” (v. 59), “commands” (v. 60), “law” (v. 61), “laws” (v. 62), “precepts” (v. 63), and “decrees” (v. 64).

The Ps. 119 word vocabulary informs us that God has pierced the darkness of our existence with the light of his word to make himself known to us. The word is his word spoken to us and preserved for us. The psalm also instructs us that the word is the will of God. When God pierced our darkness, he lit the path of freedom for us with his word. He described himself, defined righteousness, declared his love, announced his promises, and issued his warnings. Finally, the vocabulary establishes the authority of his word in our lives. Directions, commandments, laws, charges, and divine will ring with the sound of authority. The word of God is an authoritative proclamation from God to us that must be obeyed, that must be sought, that cannot be ignored.

Finally, Ps. 119 makes an intimate connection between the content of the word, things spoken, and the author of the things spoken. This connection better enables us to understand the “Word” as the person of Jesus Christ in John 1. The progressive development of verses 1–2 of Ps. 119 intimately connects the law of God, his statutes, and him, the one sought with all the heart. Verses 89–96 emphasize the durability and eternality of the word in keeping with the eternal character of God. In verse 114 the writer parallels God as refuge with putting hope in his word. Here the writer intimately connects God as a refuge with his word. In the Hebrew text “you” and “your word” stand side by side. In verses 137–44 the writer aligns the righteous God with a righteous word. According to verses 105, 130, 135, God and God’s word give light. The life-giving quality of the word and the Lord are proclaimed in verse 93. Just as God is to be feared, so is his word (vv. 63, 120).

THE WORD OF GOD

The theme of the word in Ps. 119 is continued and clarified in the NT, accentuating the intimate connection between the word of God and God himself. The “Word” of God is the eternal Lord Jesus Christ (John 1:1; 1 John 1:1–4), who took on flesh and blood so that we might see the glory of the eternal God. The sovereign glory of Christ as the Word of God is depicted in the vision of John in Rev. 19:13. As the Word of God, Jesus Christ ultimately gives us our lives (John 1:4; 6:33; 10:10), sustains our lives (John 5:24; 6:51, 54; 8:51), and ultimately renders a just judgment regarding our lives (John 5:30; 8:16, 26; 9:39; cf. Matt. 25:31–33; Heb. 4:12).

WORK, THEOLOGY OF

GOD THE WORKER

A biblical theology of work starts with God as the creator of all things. In the OT, the verb *bara’* (“to create”) is used only with God as subject. The first verb in the Bible (Gen. 1:1), it occurs also in many other texts that describe God accomplishing what only God can do. Other terms such as *yatsar* (“to form, fashion”) and *’asah* (“to make, do”) are used numerous times throughout the OT with either God or humans as subjects.

These three terms reinforce the portrayal of God as worker in Gen. 1–2 (cf. Isa. 45:7). God creates light and darkness; sky and earth; sun, moon, and stars; land and sea; plant and animal life; and humankind—in sum, all that is. He forms the “man” (Heb. *’adam*) from the dust of the ground, bringing him to life by breathing into him the breath of life.

Elsewhere in the OT God is said to build, build up, or rebuild/restore (Heb. *banah* [e.g., Pss.

102:16; 147:2; Jer. 24:6; Amos 9:11]). Interestingly, God takes a rib from the man, which he then makes (lit., "builds into" [Heb. *banah* + *le*]) a woman (Gen. 2:22). He founds (Heb. *kun*) the earth (Isa. 45:18) and stretches out (Heb. *natah*) the heavens (Zech. 12:1). Further, wisdom is God's "craftsman" (Heb. *'amon*), taking part in the world's creation (Prov. 8:30). The NT reveals Christ as the one through whom God creates all things (John 1:1–3; Col. 1:16). This brief sketch suggests the range of ways in which God's work is described.

HUMAN LABOR

Ideally, work is performed as service to God (Col. 3:17, 22–24). Work is one way we express the divine image. God's creation mandate to fill, subdue, and rule the earth implies work (Gen. 1:26–28), and God places the man in the garden "to work it and take care of it" (Gen. 2:15). The importance of work for human dignity as well as survival undergirds the laws of gleaning that make provision for the poor to gather their own food (e.g., Deut. 24:19–22). The expansion of human technologies and occupations (*mela'kah* [see Exod. 12:16]) reflects that dignity and God's own diverse workmanship. Job 28 celebrates human industry and achievement while subordinating all to the prevailing value of wisdom, rooted in "the fear of the LORD." Given the indispensable role of work within the limits of human life, diligence is commended (Eccles. 3:9–10), idleness condemned (Prov. 10:4; 12:24; 21:5; 2 Thess. 3:6–10). Work is essentially God's good gift to us in creation.

But work now has negative aspects. In response to Adam's sin, God curses the ground, introducing "painful toil" into the work cycle (Gen. 3:17–19; 5:29). We now eke out our living by hardship, finding frustration instead of bounty—a lifelong reminder that we are made of dust and will return to dust. The book of Ecclesiastes echoes this note of futility and raises sharp questions about the lasting value of human labor (1:2–3, 14; 2:4–11, 17–23; 3:9; 4:4–6; 8:16–17). Sin and death haunt the unfolding occupations in Gen. 4, and the episode of the tower of Babel in Gen. 11 signals God's judgment on human pretension (cf. James 4:13–16). Excessive toil (workaholism) is a pitfall, not a virtue, for it expresses reliance on self rather than on God, who builds, protects, and gives rest (Ps. 127:1–2). Oppressive, unjust working conditions are cause for lament, and they incur God's judgment (Exod. 5:6–19; Prov. 14:31; James 5:4–6).

Thus, Israel's labor policy is to reflect God's covenant faithfulness, generosity, and concern for the vulnerable. Moses' law places limits on employers/masters to protect employees, slaves, and foreign workers from exploitation. The primary limit is God's command that Israel keep the Sabbath holy by a complete cessation of labor (Exod. 20:8–11; Deut. 5:12–15). This move prioritizes God's covenant above human labor and sets a rhythm of work and rest. Exodus grounds the Sabbath in God's rest from his work of creation on the seventh day. Deuteronomy ties it to Israel's history of slavery in Egypt and deliverance by God; by keeping the Sabbath, Israel shows gratitude to God and guards against replicating Egypt's oppressive policies.

Exodus 31–32 portrays work in its best and worst lights. The proper interplay of work and rest is seen in chapter 31, which narrates the divinely empowered work on the tabernacle, followed by a strong reminder to keep the Sabbath as a "sign" between God and Israel. In contrast, chapter 32 portrays artisanship put to the worst use, the making of a golden idol. Aaron fashions gold with a tool and makes the calf image, but later he tells Moses, "I threw [their gold jewelry] into the fire, and out came this calf!" (32:24). This remark anticipates the prophets' later mockery of idol-makers (e.g., Isa. 44:9–20) and raises the issue of personal responsibility for the outcome of one's labor: Aaron seeks to avoid being implicated in Israel's idolatry by concealing his own role in the project.

Public labor issues increase in complexity when Israel adopts human kingship and engages in international trade (e.g., 1 Sam. 8; 1 Kings 9:15–23). Babylon deals a decisive blow to Judah's statehood by deporting leaders and skilled workers. Many of these establish such viable, productive new lives in Babylon that when Cyrus later allows the exiled Judeans to return, they choose to remain.

The NT assumes the legitimacy of work and adopts the OT's view that within proper limits work is a good gift of God. Jesus, however, has come to do his Father's "work" (John 5:16–18), which entails calling some people away from their normal occupations to follow him, as well as a new approach to Sabbath observance (Mark 2:21–27; 3:4). These moves signal the urgency and newness of the kingdom of God. Consequently, the apostles are "co-workers in God's service" (1 Cor. 3:9), and Christians are "God's handiwork" (Eph. 2:10). In light of the resurrection, we offer to God work (Gk. *ergon*) and labor (Gk. *kopos*), not in futility but in hope (1 Cor. 15:58; cf. Rev. 14:13).

WORKS The Bible has much to say about works, and an understanding of the topic is important because works play a role in most religions. In the most generic sense, "works" refers to the products or activities of human moral agents in the context of religious discussion. God's works are frequently mentioned in Scripture, and they are always good. His works include creation (Gen. 2:2–3; Isa. 40:28; 42:5), sustenance of the earth (Ps. 104; Heb. 1:3), and redemption (Exod. 6:6; Ps. 111:9; Rom. 8:23). Human works, therefore, should be in alignment with God's works, though obviously of a different sort. Works in the Bible usually reflect a moral polarity: good or evil, righteous or unrighteous, just or unjust. The context of the passage often determines the moral character of the works (e.g., Isa. 3:10–11; 2 Cor. 11:15).

Important questions follow from the existence of works and their moral quality. Do good works merit God's favor or please him? Can good works save at the time of God's judgment? When people asked Jesus, "What must we do to do the works God requires?" he answered, "The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent" (John 6:28–29). Without faith it is impossible to please God (Heb. 11:6). The people from the OT commended in Heb. 11 did their works in the precondition of faith. Explicitly in the NT and often implicitly in the OT, faith is the condition for truly good works. God elects out of his mercy, not out of human works (Rom. 9:12, 16; Titus 3:5; cf. Rom. 11:2). Works not done in faith, even if considered "good" by human standards, are not commendable to God, since all humankind is under sin (Rom. 3:9) and no person is righteous or does good (Rom. 3:10–18; cf. Isa. 64:6). Works cannot save; salvation is a gift to be received by faith (Eph. 2:8–9; 2 Tim. 1:9; cf. Rom. 4:2–6). Even works of the Mosaic law are not salvific (Rom. 3:20, 27–28; Gal. 2:16; 3:2; 5:4). Good works follow from faith (2 Cor. 9:8; Eph. 2:10; 1 Thess. 1:3; James 2:18, 22; cf. Acts 26:20). The works of those who have faith will be judged, but this judgment appears to be related to rewards, not salvation (Matt. 16:27; Rom. 2:6; 2 Cor. 5:10; cf. Rom. 14:10; 1 Cor. 3:13–15).

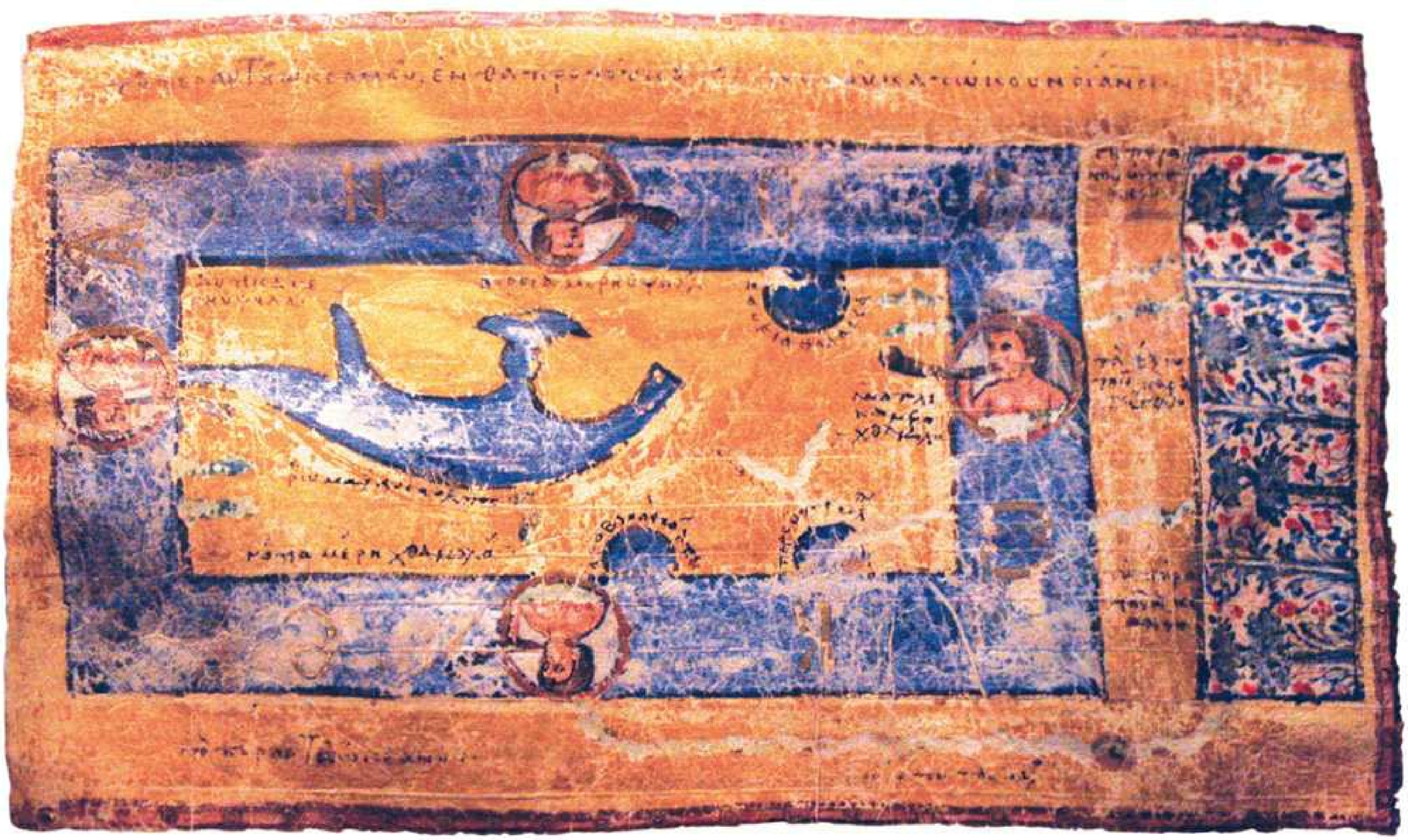
WORLD In classical Greek, "world" (*kosmos*) communicated the idea that the external universe is a well-ordered system. In early Greek usage, the term was used with reference to specific types of social orderings, such as the seating order of rowers (Homer, *Od.* 13.77), the order of soldiers (Homer, *Il.* 12.225), and well-ordered political states such as Sparta (Herodotus, *Hist.* 1.65).

CREATED WORLD

In the OT, the notion of the created "world" departed from the Greek understanding specifically in that creation is never seen as an independent entity controlled by an impersonal, all-embracing order. Rather, the universe, usually described with the phrase "the heavens and the earth" (Gen. 1:1; 2:1, 4;

Ps. 113:6; Jer. 10:11) or at times the “all” or “all things” (Ps. 103:19; Jer. 10:16), is always understood in its relationship to its creator: “He who created the heavens, he is God; he who fashioned and made the earth, he founded it; he did not create it to be empty, but formed it to be inhabited—he says: ‘I am the LORD, and there is no other’ ” (Isa. 45:18). Here, the “world” (“earth”) refers to the material elements that make up the planet (see also Jer. 32:17; Zech. 12:1) and the sum total of the entire universe (cf. Acts 17:24). Even in the account of creation in Gen. 1:1–2:4, where many of the elements of the physical world are mentioned (waters, firmament, stars, etc.), the primary intent of the account is to convey that God is Lord over everything because he is the Creator. Often these created elements that make up the world are praised not for their own inherent beauty, but as a testimony to the majesty, supremacy, and omnipotence of the Creator (Pss. 8; 19:1–6; 33:6–9). In Ps. 148:3–6 the elements within the natural order (*kosmos*) are instructed to praise God: “Praise him, sun and moon; praise him, all you shining stars. Praise him, you highest heavens and you waters above the skies. Let them praise the name of the LORD, for at his command they were created, and he established them for ever and ever—he issued a decree that will never pass away.”

Though not providing a comprehensive description, the OT does at times refer to how the world is constructed as a whole. The “vault” (Gen. 1:6–20 [RSV: “firmament”]) of heaven separates the waters above from the waters below (which are restrained by God’s sovereign care [Gen. 1:7; 7:11; 49:25]), and this area or chamber rests on “pillars” (Job 26:11). At times the earth is described as a disc with the sanctuary as its center point (Judg. 9:37; Ezek. 38:12), which rests on pillars (Job 9:6). There is an underworld, from which there is no return (Job 10:21); however, the OT does not engage in the kind of speculation regarding the underworld as is evident in the Greco-Roman tradition.



The world map by Cosmas Indicopleustes (sixth century AD) shows a rectangular landmass surrounded by the ocean, with paradise to the far right (east).

EARTH AND ITS INHABITANTS

The term “world” conveys other nuances in the Bible. It often refers to the inhabitants of the earth or the place of human life: “He rules the world in righteousness and judges the peoples with equity” (Ps. 9:8 [cf. Pss. 96:13; 98:9]); or, “Come near, you nations, and listen; pay attention, you peoples! Let the earth hear, and all that is in it, the world, and all that comes out of it!” (Isa. 34:1). Also, in the Gospels “world” is used in this way: “What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul?” (Mark 8:36). Matthew 4:8 refers to all the kingdoms of the world. Also the expressions “coming into the world” (John 1:9; 3:19), “in the world” (John 1:10; 2 Cor. 1:12), and “leave this world” (1 Cor. 5:10) can be understood as referring to the sphere of human life.

UNGODLY CULTURE AND WORLDVIEW

“World” can also refer to something more than the material world or humanity in general; it can refer to the entire cultural value system or world order that is hostile toward God. The “world” is a common biblical way of referring to the ungodly worldview and lifestyle that characterize human life in its rebellion against the Creator. The course of the world is profoundly affected by fallen humans, through whom death came into the world and rules over it (Rom. 5:12). Therefore, Paul can claim that “the whole world” has become guilty before God (Rom. 3:19), and even the created world is affected by such rebellion (8:20–22). Paul especially links “this world” with “this age” (1 Cor. 3:19; 5:10; Eph. 2:2 NET), which God has judged (Rom. 3:6). John declares that Satan is the “prince of this world” (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11). Paul refers to Satan as the “god of this world” (2 Cor. 4:4 ESV, NRSV, NASB), who is able to blind individuals to the truth and who animates human rebellion (Eph. 2:2). In this sense, God and the world are strictly separate: “Don’t you know that friendship with the world means enmity against God? Therefore, anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God” (James 4:4). Because of this call to an exclusive relationship with God, believers are mandated to resist and even confront the world. Followers of Christ must not be taken captive by philosophy or the “elemental spiritual forces of this world” (Col. 2:8, 20), since, as Paul says, “the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world” (Gal. 6:14).

But it is the world that designates the location and object of God’s saving activity. Indeed, God sent his Son into this world in order to reconcile it to himself (2 Cor. 5:19). Jesus, the sacrificial Lamb of God, “takes away the sins of the world” (John 1:29). Out of love for this world, God sent his Son (John 3:1), not to judge it but to save it: “God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him” (John 3:17).

Although believers live in the world (1 Cor. 5:10; Phil. 2:15) and must have dealings with the world, ultimately they are not of the world (John 17:14). Remaining in Christ, believers are able to demonstrate in the world the belief and practice of the new commandment to love (John 13:34; 15:9). Therefore, Christians must maintain a critical distance from the world’s system: “Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in them. For everything in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—comes not from the Father but from the world” (1 John 2:15–16 [cf. James 1:27; 4:4]). Believers are to avoid the seductive power of the world and not abandon themselves to it; they are to follow their Lord in proclaiming God’s project of reconciling the world to himself through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ (2 Cor. 5:18).

WORM In the Bible, the worm is used as an image closely associated with destruction, death, and the grave. In several passages the worm is a metaphor for humanity's lowly position before God (Job 25:6; Ps. 22:6; Isa. 41:14). As an agent of destruction, the worm eats vineyards (Deut. 28:39; Jon. 4:7), clothes (Isa. 51:8), and sinners (Job 24:20; Acts 12:23). A picture of death and the grave includes worms covering one's dead body, along with dust and maggots (Job 21:26; Isa. 14:11). The undying worm covering the dead bodies of those who rebel against God in Isa. 66:24 is used in Mark 9:48 to describe hell.

WORMWOOD A plant common to the Middle East. It has a bitter taste and can be toxic to other plants. Its bitter taste often is referred to in passages speaking of sorrow, lament, or judgment (Jer. 23:15; Amos 5:7). In Rev. 8:10–11 the great, blazing star that falls from the sky is named "Wormwood."

WORSHIP Worship of God is a critical dimension of both Testaments. One might argue that it is the very goal for which Israel and the church were formed.

TERMINOLOGY

Our understanding of worship is informed by the terms, practices, exhortations, and warnings of Scripture. The worship vocabulary in both Testaments provides insight into the personal dispositions and posture associated with worship focused on the person of God. The first set of biblical terms concerns the posture of the worshiper. The Hebrew terminology communicates the idea of bowing down and falling prostrate before the sovereign and worthy God (Ps. 95:6; 1 Chron. 29:20). NT words bear a similar idea of humble acknowledgment of God's authority with a reverent prostrate position (Matt. 28:9; Rev. 5:14).

The second set of worship terms concerns service. In the OT, the worship of God includes the idea of serving with a view to bringing honor to him (Exod. 3:12; Mal. 3:14, 18). In the NT, worship bears the nuance of serving in the sense of carrying out religious duties (Heb. 12:28). This set of terminology has a priestly connotation to it. The OT priests and the NT believers (1 Pet. 2:5) serve God with their individual lives and their routines of life as acceptable offerings.

The final set of terms describes the attitude or disposition of worship. This word group includes terms such as "fear," "awe," and "dread," which initially seem out of place in the context of worship. However, the terminology serves to inculcate an attitude of genuine respect. Yahweh is the awesome God, who is to be feared (Exod. 3:6; 15:11). Israel is to love and trust who God is and what God says in promise or in warning. The fear that one is to have for God involves a respect for him, a reverence for his divine worth (Col. 3:22; Rev. 11:18).

GOD AS THE OBJECT OF WORSHIP

The worship terminology sets the focus of worship. The living God is the sole object of worship. He delights in the satisfying joy that his children find in him. The nature of worship is not about servant entertainment or passive observation; it is an active acknowledgment of God's worth in a variety of humble ways.

A genuine selfless focus on the person and work of God brings about a humble response that affects one's posture, generates works of service, and stirs up a healthy attitude of fear and respect. Knowledge of God is the foundational element in worship. God is worshiped for who he is and what he does. He is the Eternal One (Ps. 90:1; 1 Tim. 1:17), unique in every way (Isa. 44:8); he is God alone (Deut. 6:4). He is distinguished by his self-existence, the self-reliant quality of his life (Exod. 3:14; Deut. 32:30). The psalmist calls God's people to shout joyfully to their good, loving, eternal, and faithful Creator (Ps. 100).

God is worshiped as the Creator of all life. This magnificent creative work of God, declared in the opening of Genesis, is a critical focus in worship (Ps. 95:6; Rom. 1:25; Rev. 4:11). Along with this is the companion declaration that God is the redeemer. The redemptive work of God is celebrated in the Song of Moses (Exod. 15:1–18) and in the Song of the Redeemed (Rev. 14:3).

Worship is also associated with the royal aspects of God's character. It was the desire of the magi to find Jesus the king and worship him (Matt. 2:1–2). The final scenes of history will be characterized by humble submission to and worship of the King of kings (1 Tim. 6:15; Rev. 17:14; 19:16; cf. Rev. 15:3–4). The psalms often draw the reader's attention to God's royal character as a basis for worship (Pss. 45:11; 98:6).

Finally, God is worshiped as the Lord of his covenant relationship with the nation of Israel. This covenant theme and metaphor summarize the varied aspects of God's character and his relationship with Israel. The God who brought Israel into a covenant relationship is to be sincerely and exclusively worshiped (2 Kings 17:35, 38; cf. Deut. 31:20). These confessional statements about the character of God are a glorious weight that moves believers to prostrate themselves, to have an attitude of awe and respect, and to obediently serve.

THE FORM OF WORSHIP

Although the form of worship looks different in each Testament, the essential elements of worship are constant. In the OT, the priests primarily led the worship of God. In addition, the duties of the king (Deut. 17:18–20) and of the prophet (18:14–22) had worship implications and responsibilities. Ideally, these three administrators were to work together to ensure a healthy quality of covenant life for the nation. Worship in both Testaments has both corporate and individual aspects.

OT worship was organized around sacred places such as designated locations (Gen. 3:8; 12:7), the tabernacle (Exod. 29:42), and the temple (1 Kings 8; cf. Rev. 21–22). In addition, there were sacred times in the calendar of Israel for celebration of the appointed feasts (Lev. 23). The three main feasts in Israel's calendar are Unleavened Bread, Weeks, and Tabernacles (Deut. 16:16; cf. Exod. 34:23). The sacred actions of worship for the nation involved burnt offerings, meal or tribute offerings, peace offerings, sin offerings, and guilt offerings (Lev. 1–5).

Offering stand from Megiddo (1200–1025 BC) that was used in worship through burnt offerings

The regulation and routine of OT worship never were intended to be merely dutiful. The routine of worship was to manifest a love for God and for the covenant community (Deut. 6:1–5; Mal. 2:10). The prophets often challenged Israel to have a heart for God and at times called upon them to consider the emptiness of their worship routine (Isa. 1:11). The heart of worship was nurtured in psalms of praise and lament and in the call to remember God (Pss. 42; 77:11).

The form of NT worship is not distinguished with the same externals as in the OT. However, similar core beliefs underlie the form and practice of NT worship. The distinguishing feature in this new era is the final and sufficient work of Christ (Heb. 9–10). As with previous revelation, worship is not anthropocentric; it is joyfully Christocentric, based on the gospel (1 Cor. 15:1–5). Christ and his work replace the OT temple. Jesus is the greater temple that has come (Matt. 12:6). Sacrifice is no longer limited to any particular geographic location, but instead involves the offering of oneself (Rom. 12:1–2) along with the presentation of spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God (1 Pet. 2:4–5). NT worship is regulated by the Spirit and truth (John 4:20–24). This type of worship is distinguished by the word of God, the Spirit, preaching, prayer, Spirit-filled service, and mutual edification. NT worship also includes the regular celebration of the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper (Acts 2:42–47) within the context of the local church.

WRATH The words "wrath" and "anger" are used in Bible translations for a variety of Hebrew and Greek words that refer to the disposition of someone (including God) toward persons (including oneself [Gen. 45:5]) or situations considered to be seriously displeasing. There may be degrees of anger (Zech. 1:15), and it may be accompanied by other sentiments such as distress (Gen. 45:5), hatred (Job 16:9), jealousy (Rom. 10:19), grief (Mark 3:5), and vengeance (Mic. 5:15).

Anger may be a proper response to sin or a sin-distorted world, as seen in, for example, Moses' reaction to the golden calf (Exod. 32:19). Paul envisages an anger that does not necessarily involve sin (Eph. 4:26). Jesus is said to display anger at the willful stubbornness of his contemporaries (Mark 3:5), and his response to the mourning for Lazarus (John 11:33) might be rendered as "outrage," an anger directed not so much at the mourners as at the ugliness of death, the consequence of sin, and with thoughts, perhaps, of his own impending death necessitated by this fallen world.

On the other hand, a display of anger may be the result of distorted perceptions or values (Gen. 4:5–6). A tendency to anger in oneself needs to be kept in check (James 1:19) and in others needs to be handled prudently (Prov. 15:1). Unchecked, anger may lead to violence and murder (Gen. 49:6). In several NT lists anger is associated with such other sinful behavior as quarreling, jealousy, selfishness, slander, malice, gossip, conceit, strife, idolatry, sorcery, and bitterness (2 Cor. 12:20; Gal. 5:20; Eph. 4:31; Col. 3:8).

In Ps. 76:10 NLT (cf. ESV, NASB, NRSV) God is said to cause human anger to bring him praise (but see NIV, NET, where it is God's wrath against human beings that brings him praise). Perhaps an instance of this is seen in Rom. 13:4–5, where the wrath of the civil authority serves to maintain justice under God.

WRATH OF GOD Despite tendencies to downplay the reality of God's anger (God is classically described as "without passions"), if we are to do justice to both Testaments, we must allow the language of Scripture to stand, where God often is said to be angry with individuals or nations, including Israel. Although God is changeless (Mal. 3:6), he interacts in a personal way with a time-bound world. The Bible writers intend us to understand that there is something in God's anger to which human anger is analogous, though God's anger is not identical to ours (Hos. 11:9). God's anger is not an automatic response; he can restrain it (Ps. 78:38). God is said to be characteristically slow to become angry; that is, his anger is a deliberate response (Exod. 34:6, a text with numerous echoes) and may also be short-lived (Ps. 30:5; Mic. 7:18).

God's anger against Israel in the wilderness is noteworthy (Heb. 3:10, 17). The apostasy with the golden calf (Exod. 32:10–12), the complaining (Num. 11:1, 33), and the failure to enter the promised land following the report of the spies (Num. 32:10–11) all provoke God to anger. Failure to heed God's word (Zech. 7:12) or that of his prophets (2 Chron. 36:16), neglect of his worship (2 Chron. 29:6–8), and intermarriage with idolaters (Ezra 9:14) are behaviors that incur the wrath of God.

God's anger is directed against individuals, particularly for failures of leadership, as with Moses (Exod. 4:14; Deut. 1:37) and Solomon (1 Kings 11:9–11). God's anger often is directed against the Israelite and Judean kings, not just those who committed idolatry (2 Chron. 25:15), but even those who are faithful in most respects, for their failure to remove the idolatrous high places (2 Kings 23:19).

Picking up on the warning that God’s anger will be directed against those who do not pay homage to God’s appointed king (Ps. 2:5, 12), Jesus declares that disobedience to God’s Son brings upon one the wrath of God (John 3:36), which evidently is not incompatible with his love for the world (3:16). According to Rom. 4:15, God’s wrath is a consequence of the law; that is, the law, giving concrete expression to the character of God, brings culpability for transgression. God’s wrath is revealed against all forms of ungodliness and its tendency to suppress the truth (Rom. 1:18). Those who demonstrate their disobedience to God or his truth will be subjected to his anger (Rom. 2:8; Eph. 5:6; Col. 3:6).

A pervasive metaphor for anger is that of a burning fire (Deut. 32:22; Ps. 89:46; Isa. 66:15) along with associated images of smoke (Ps. 18:8) and smelting metal (Ezek. 22:20, 22). Other images are the winepress (Isa. 63:3; Rev. 14:19), drinking from a vessel (Isa. 51:22; Rev. 14:10), and a tempest (Ezek. 13:13).

The judgment that follows as a consequence of God’s anger being aroused takes the form of the withholding of God’s covenant favor (Ps. 95:11; Isa. 54:8) or the implementation of his covenant curses (Deut. 29:27), specifically through drought (Deut. 11:17), plague (Ps. 78:50), the sword (Ps. 78:62), and deliverance into the hands of enemies (2 Kings 13:3), leading to exile (2 Chron. 6:36). God’s anger can be depicted in various forms of cosmic upheaval or the undoing of creation (2 Sam. 22:8–16; Ps. 18:7; Jer. 4:26). God’s anger is beyond human ability to endure (Ps. 76:7), such that hiding in Sheol is considered preferable (Job 14:13).

God’s wrath becomes particularly associated with a coming day of wrath at the end of the age, when God’s justice will be powerfully displayed (Dan. 8:19; Zeph. 2:3; Luke 21:23; Rom. 2:5; Rev. 6:17).

Subjection to God’s anger may evoke the cry “How long?” (Pss. 79:5; 80:4). While God’s mercy cannot be taken for granted, since his anger against some may be final as an expression of his justice (Jer. 30:24; Rom. 12:19), God’s anger may be assuaged or averted through humbling oneself (2 Chron. 12:7) and an appeal to God for mercy (Ps. 106:23; Hab. 3:2), by repentance (2 Chron. 29:10; Ezra 10:14; Jon. 3:9), by zealous action to root out evil (Num. 25:11), and by the faithful ministry of God’s appointed servants (Num. 1:53; 18:5).

The NT brings to fulfillment these forms of mediation in presenting the ultimate remedy for God’s wrath in the person and work of Jesus Christ (Rom. 5:9; 1 Thess. 1:10; 5:9). The use of “propitiation” language (Rom. 3:25; Heb. 2:17; 1 John 2:2), though its significance is disputed, is classically understood in terms of the need for God’s wrath to be satisfied. In that case, it is specifically the cross of Christ that ultimately deals with God’s righteous anger against sinners.

WRITING, HISTORY OF The implementation of writing as a form of communication involves a complicated yet interesting feature of the emerging ancient Near East. The chronological development of pictures into letters and words depicts the creativity of ancient cultures, striving to preserve records in concrete form.

EARLY HISTORY

Hieroglyphs. Evidence from the end of the fourth millennium BC in Mesopotamia and Egypt depicts written communication as originally pictographic, or hieroglyphic, in nature. Each small, primitive picture represented objects, concepts, and actions. Egyptian hieroglyphics (3150 BC) employed several hundred frequently used phonetic signs, some of which were alphabetic in character. Egyptian writing is based on the acrophonic principle, in which each pictorial symbol designates the first sound in the object's name. Each sign could also represent a single consonantal sound followed by a vowel. In addition, Egyptian pictographs can represent two or three consonant clusters, with or without various vowels, although customarily hieroglyphics omitted vocalization (vowel pronunciation). As a result, there are four different ways to interpret every Egyptian hieroglyph because each symbol serves multiple functions. Egyptian writing used a combination of nonalphabetic signs in addition to alphabetic symbols, lacking the economy and simplicity of an alphabet. Most of the twenty alphabetic symbols transcribed foreign proper names.

While some archaeological remains of Egyptian writing are engraved on stone or rock, the majority of writing entailed the use of a brush made of reed or rush. The common black ink was used for normal writing, while important passages or information were written in red ink. Egyptian writing on papyrus consisted mainly of drawings or painted lines depicting signs. Some stone engravings of Egyptian hieroglyphics are dated to the first century AD, although the cursive system on papyrus, primarily employed for sacred or hieratic (cursive) texts, extended through three millennia. Archaeological evidence reveals that contracts, accounting, and business documents were written with a demotic, or popular, diplomatic cursive system from at least the eighth century BC through the first century AD.

Syllabic writing and cuneiform. The complicated writing systems of the ancient Near East gave birth to simpler forms of written expression that could convey abstract concepts in addition to concrete ideas. Syllabic writing, consisting of an enormous number of signs, each representing a syllable, developed from the early Egyptian forms of pictographic, or hieroglyphic, writing. This writing system, comprised of almost six hundred signs, represented a variety of sound values, since all languages have far more possible syllables than they have individual words. Written in cuneiform characters impressed with a stylus on wet clay, the signs concurrently retain a pictographic function while also expressing whole words or syllables. The earliest known cuneiform, Sumerian, dates before the third millennium BC, evolving from the utilitarian needs of the city-states. Early tablets of stylus-embedded clay signs that were subsequently baked in the sun preserved many of the Sumerian writings for millennia. Sumerian does not resemble any other ancient or modern language in either grammar or vocabulary. The wedge-shaped linear signs, created with a square or round stylus, were originally written vertically, then rotated into a horizontal format, and read from left to right.

The Akkadians adopted the Sumerian sign system in the middle of the third millennium BC; however, they read those words as Akkadian equivalents. Since the number of separate sounds in most languages is small, the concomitant number of signs required to represent those sounds would be few. Akkadian sounds are not all adequately represented by Sumerian script because Sumerian, as an unrelated language, lacks some of the distinctive sounds essential to Akkadian. Consequently, a written language consisting of individual sounds could not develop from Akkadian cuneiform writing. Akkadian evolved in two areas of Mesopotamia into two East Semitic dialects, Babylonian and Assyrian, which continued in use through the first century AD.

Similar to Egyptian, Proto-Canaanite was written either horizontally or vertically, and from left to right on one line, then right to left on the next. The direction of writing determined the direction or stance of the signs. The predominant use of vertical columns of writing in the earliest period shifted gradually to a horizontal script during the Late Bronze Age. Many symbols shifted ninety degrees clockwise to adapt to the horizontal direction of script. These rotated forms have been traced from the analysis of documents extending from the fifteenth to the eleventh centuries BC, when character direction stabilized.

The need for more-efficient modes of communication grew in proportion to the expansion of administrative and international correspondence. A faster script developed over time, and although such trends influenced lapidary, or engraved-stone script, the latter remained intact alongside cursive script, usually written in ink. The spread of writing activity beyond the professional scribal schools led to widespread writing variations among the common people. Officials struggled to maintain certain writing standards, while those who were unrestricted found methods of faster writing. These innovations led to a widespread cultural adoption of one systematized form of writing.

EARLY ALPHABET

Inscriptions in Egyptian hieroglyphics and Mesopotamian cuneiform have been uncovered in Syria-Palestine, although overwhelming evidence substantiates the development of an indigenous writing system in the region of Syria-Palestine: the alphabet. The reduction of several hundred signs to twenty or thirty made writing more accessible to the general community and systematized written communication.

The first steps toward alphabetic writing took place during the early second millennium BC, eventually rendering Egyptian and cuneiform writing extinct. The invention of a Proto-Canaanite alphabet rendered it one of the most influential innovations of the ancient world. All known alphabets originated from Proto-Canaanite, and the invention has never been repeated in isolated cultures using a syllabic script or logographics, visual symbols representing words or sounds. The invention of the alphabetical system, in which only one sign represented each phoneme or sound, allowed for sounds to be combined with vowels, contrary to the syllabic system, in which each sign represented both a consonant and a specific vowel. The limited notation of the Proto-Canaanite script harmonized well with the peculiarity of syllable formation in the West Semitic languages. Every syllable begins with a consonant, and the vowel system in Proto-Canaanite consists of only three vowel areas of phonemic significance, lending simplicity to the script.

Egyptian hieroglyphics, an early example of writing

Alphabetic inscriptions. The most important surviving exemplars of early alphabetic writing are the Proto-Sinaitic inscriptions discovered by Flinders Petrie in the ruins of an Egyptian turquoise mining community in the Sinai Peninsula at Serabît el-Khadem. The alphabetic inscriptions, some carved in stone by Canaanite mine workers, generally reflect religious votive texts. Some of the inscriptions were carved on piles of stones or on rock panels shaped to resemble stelae, slabs of stone erected as memorials. These inscriptions date to the second half of the sixteenth through the first half of the fifteenth centuries BC. Other alphabetic inscriptions found in various Canaanite ruins (Gezer, Shechem, Lachish) date to approximately the seventeenth to the sixteenth centuries BC. These discoveries suggest that the alphabetic script was more widespread than first conjectured and make it more difficult to determine the exact location where the alphabetic script first developed. The Proto-Sinaitic inscriptions are subsumed under the broader category of Proto-Canaanite; on this basis, historical linguistics established a date around the fifteenth century BC. Egyptian influence on the alphabetic script is apparent, since the Egyptians had a small number of phonetic signs that were alphabetic in nature, though they did not use them that way. The use of pictorial signs to represent initial sounds by the Egyptians may be observed in the earliest alphabetic writing from Canaan.

The Gezer Sherd (1800–1630 BC?) represents the oldest extant example of genuine alphabetic writing, with three archaic alphabetic signs: a palm, which signifies the letter *k*; a house, which signifies the letter *b*; and an ox goad, which represents the letter *l*. The Proto-Sinaitic inscription number 357, scratched on the wall of a mine in Serabît-el Khadem, depicts one of the longer examples of early alphabetic writing. The text is read vertically from top to bottom, then horizontally. The pictographs, such as the fish, represent the first letter of the word. Thus, a fish, called *dag*, represents the letter *d*; water, called *mayim*, denotes *m*; and so forth.

Ugaritic texts. Beginning in 1928, a large cache of tablets from the fourteenth century BC was discovered at Ras Shamra of Ugarit. The excavations yielded approximately one hundred tablets written in Canaanite cuneiform, which employs only a limited number of signs in contrast to the hundreds of signs generally depicted in cuneiform scripts. The script—consisting of a simple combination of lines and wedges adapted into lapidary, or engraved-stone, writing—is based on an alphabetic system. The tablets include a number of abecedaries (or alphabet lists), organized in a manner similar to early linear Phoenician. Increasing evidence suggests that the Canaanite cuneiform alphabet was not limited to Ugarit but was also employed by the Canaanites throughout Syria-Palestine. Ugarit ceased to exist after a severe earthquake and fire in 1200 BC.

The Ugaritic alphabet, an adaptation of the early linear alphabet of Proto-Canaanite, originally comprised twenty-seven consonantal signs. Ugaritic scribes did not adhere strictly to the consonantal principle of the linear alphabet. Instead of one sign representing, for example, the letter *alef*, the scribes employed three signs, each of which represented *alef* plus one of three short vowels: *a*, *i*, or *u*. A traditional order of the signs seemed fixed no later than the fourteenth century BC, according to texts excavated in 1949. Ugaritic generally is written from left to right. A word divider often separates the words from one another, although there are many exceptions. The tablets have their share of scribal omissions and additions, and the stance of the letters varies on some tablets.

The establishment of a long alphabet comprising thirty letters might have been construed as the earlier and original one, from which a shorter alphabet of twenty-seven letters developed through the loss of eight letters; however, this line of development would contradict the normal expansion of alphabetical systems as they accommodate a particular language. Evidence affirms the coexistence of the longer alphabet, expressly used for Ugaritic, and shorter abecedaries displaying characteristics of later Phoenician.

Discoveries have even uncovered two Ugaritic tablets that contain an alphabet composed of twenty-one signs, perhaps indicating an idiomatic version of the alphabet. In 1955 a special type of abecedary came to light that lists in parallel columns the Ugaritic signs and the cuneiform syllabic signs meant to transcribe the Ugaritic. Although the tablet is incomplete, the text contains the transcriptions of twenty signs.

The Ugaritic texts represent the oldest available complex of connected texts in any West Semitic language, furnishing materials for comparative Semitic linguistics, including pronunciation, word formation, and lexical data from the Late Bronze Age. These royal documents and cultic mythological texts display highly formulaic poetic structure, helping inform other ancient Near Eastern poetic texts. The range of archaic and more contemporary texts allows the scholar to trace the development of language over a long interval of time.

EARLY PHOENICIAN AND RELATED SCRIPTS

Two principal linear alphabet forms were established by the end of the Late Bronze Age (c. 1300 BC): a northern tradition (Phoenician) and a southern tradition.

Phoenician. The consonantal inventory of Phoenician, limited to twenty-two letters, became the original source for subsequent alphabetic writing, including Hebrew, Aramaic, Moabite, and eventually the Greek alphabet. The earliest existing texts date to approximately the eleventh century

BC, although earlier inscriptions dating to the late thirteenth and early twelfth centuries BC demonstrate the evolution toward linear Phoenician. Among significant twelfth-century inscriptions, the 1953 discovery of the ’El-Khadr arrowheads provided important data concerning the transitional period between older pictographic script and the early linear (Phoenician) alphabet. The arrowheads record the shift in letter stances as they evolved in the multidirectional writing styles of the Proto-Canaanite period until they stabilized in the eleventh century BC.

Among the peoples who adopted the Phoenician script were the Hebrews and the Arameans. A bilingual inscription written in Akkadian and Aramaic employs the Phoenician characters, although opinions regarding dating are diverse (eleventh through ninth centuries BC). Ancient Aramaic inscriptions from the ninth to the eighth centuries BC continued to render their languages using the Phoenician script. The earliest substantial Phoenician inscription known is an elaborately carved text on the upper rim and lid of a limestone sarcophagus belonging to Ahiram, king of Byblos. The inscription is one of five other Byblos inscriptions written in Phoenician script that present historical information concerning the reign of five kings during the tenth century BC and provide links in the chain of the diachronic development of early Phoenician characters.

Hebrew and Moabite. Ancient Hebrew inscriptions appropriate the Phoenician alphabetic script as well; however, it became apparent that the scripts and languages of the various Iron Age states of Syria and Canaan began developing regional or national features that distinguished them from one another. Aside from the Gezer Calendar, probably one of the most famous early ancient Hebrew inscriptions is found on the Moabite Stone, a black granite stela erected by Mesha, king of Moab, dating to the middle of the ninth century BC. The characters on the Moabite Stone are decidedly Moabite, but the language is Hebrew. The form of the Moabite script manifests discernible differences in development from the linear Phoenician; however, at this time Hebrew and Moabite would have been indistinguishable. Distinctive Hebrew forms do not emerge until the discovery of the inscribed stone bowl found at Kuntillet ‘Ajrud. The later Hebrew alphabet manifests commonalities and influences of the early linear script of Phoenician, adapting the twenty-two grapheme, or consonantal, alphabet and retaining certain letter names, such as *mem* and *bet*.

Greek. The Phoenician alphabet was transported to Greece during the late ninth or early eighth century BC. Although there are certain features that seem incompatible with the late-ninth- or eighth-century borrowing from Phoenician, the majority of the Greek script originates from a combination of Phoenician and perhaps some other Northwest Semitic alphabetic writing as well. Some of the archaic Greek letters seem to resemble Proto-Canaanite letters of 1100 BC.

Paleo-Hebrew and Aramaic. Increasing use of an alphabetic writing system throughout the ancient Near East became evident from the number of preserved clay seals, seal impressions, ostraca, and lists, all of which exemplify the Paleo-Hebrew script prevalent during this period. Among these finds, the ’Izbet Sartah Ostracon, uncovered in 1976, displays eighty-three letters arranged in five lines, beginning at the bottom with an abecedary, leading scholars to believe that this was a practice exercise. The ostracon contains multiple errors, confirming the inexperience of the scribe.

The Aramean kingdom, conquered by Assyria, included a number of Aramean scribes who served in the Assyrian administration, leading to the prominence of Aramaic as the official international language of trade during the Persian Empire. Aramaic also evolved into the official trade language in Judah; the square script was first appropriated by the Jewish people in commercial communication. During the postexilic period and extending through the Hellenistic period, the Jewish communities employed the square Aramaic script for copying sacred documents, including the Torah. Sections of the books of Ezra and Daniel (Ezra 4:6–6:18; 7:16–26; Dan. 2:4–7:28) combine Hebrew with

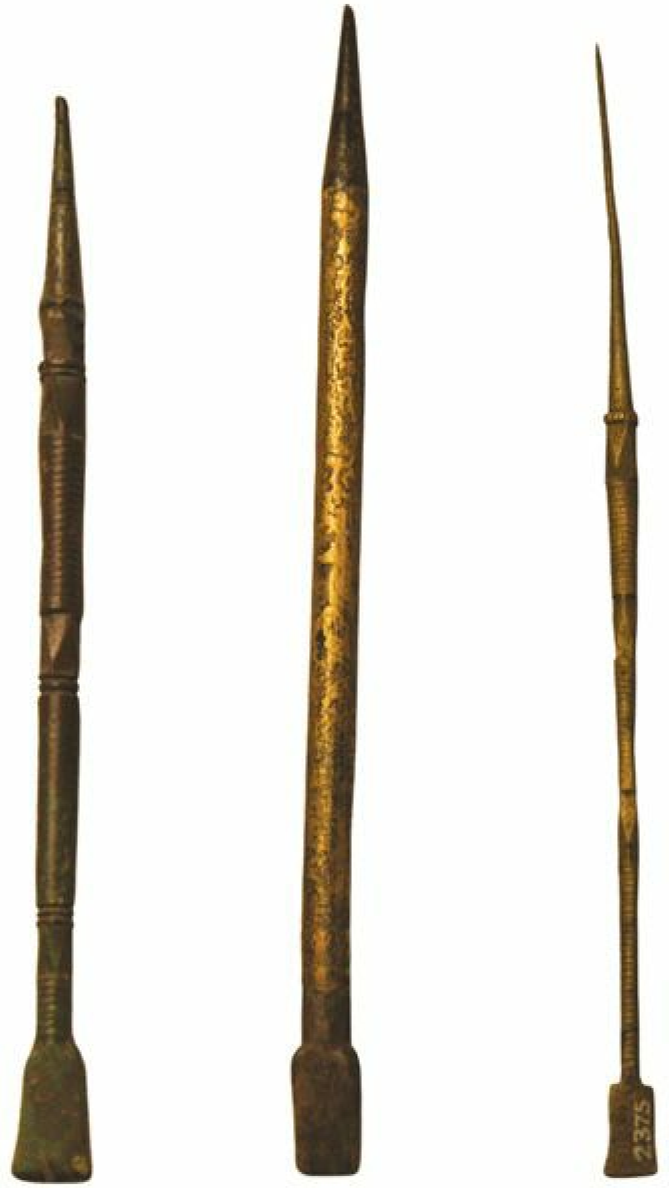
Aramaic. The few artifacts from the Persian period onward suggest that the use of Paleo-Hebrew, apart from a few formal names and manuscript fragments, gradually dissipated and was eventually totally replaced by the Aramaic square script.

The Greek language and script also began to play a more prominent role in Judean culture during the Second Temple period and onward into the first century AD. The Samaritans preserved the practice of transcribing biblical texts in Paleo-Hebrew, and the tradition remains evident in the DSS. While some of the biblical scrolls reflect Paleo-Hebrew, there are a number of Greek translations of the biblical text as well, suggesting a plurality of text traditions. Most Jews used the square script for common communication, though Greek gained importance for many Jews. Eventually, the Hebrew Bible was translated into Greek in order to meet the linguistic needs of the Jewish communities.

CONCLUSION

Alphabetic writing, first devised and implemented in ancient Syria-Palestine, provided the template for all other alphabetic systems known in the modern world. Although in many cases the evidence for the development of Northwest Semitic languages before the first millennium BC remains slim, archaeological discoveries enable scholars to trace the development of early alphabetic writing from its Egyptian hieroglyphic and Sumerian roots. Near the end of the first century BC, early linear Phoenician characters evolved, not as a national script, but as an international script appropriated by peoples throughout Syria and Canaan. This development is not surprising in light of Phoenicia’s extensive seagoing trade economy. Eventually, emerging city-states developed distinctive characteristics and national dialects that expanded into many other languages. Society owes much to the Egyptians and the Sumerians, with whom writing began, and to those who first envisioned an innovative and simplified means of written communication.

WRITING IMPLEMENTS AND MATERIALS In the Bible, writing was carved into stone (Exod. 24:12; Josh. 8:32) or stone covered with plaster (Deut. 27:1–10), metal (Exod. 28:36), or wood (Num. 17:2–3; Ezek. 37:16). Clay tablets or wooden tablets covered with wax were also used (Isa. 8:1; 30:8; Hab. 2:2; Luke 1:63). However, while clay tablets were common in Mesopotamia and among the Hittites in Anatolia, they were used more rarely in Israel or Egypt because of the accessibility of papyrus and parchment.



Styluses from the Roman period. The sharp end was used for writing, the flat end was used for erasing.

Writing implements are mentioned occasionally in the Bible. A stylus—a sharpened instrument fashioned from materials such as reed, bone, or metal (e.g., Job 19:24; Jer. 17:1)—was used to carve letters into clay or wax. A sharpened reed could also be dipped in ink to function as a pen for writing on papyrus or parchment (Ps. 45:1; Isa. 8:1; Matt. 5:18; Luke 16:17; 2 John 13). A scribe would often need additional implements to prepare the writing surface, to remove or rub out an error, to mix the ink, or to sharpen the stylus (cf. “writing kit” in Ezek. 9:2–3, 11; “scribe’s knife” in Jer. 36:23).

During Old and New Testament times, papyrus was one of the two most common types of writing material. The tall, marshy papyrus reed (*Cyperus papyrus*) grew abundantly in Lower Egypt in ancient times (Job 8:11) and was used for baskets (Exod. 2:3), mats, ropes, sandals, and even boats (Isa. 18:2). As early as 3000 BC, however, the papyrus reed was most known for making a kind of paper referred to simply as “papyrus.” Literary and archaeological evidence demonstrates that papyrus was used extensively across the Near East well into the first Christian millennium.

Papyrus stalks are typically the diameter of a human palm and roughly triangular in shape. Sections were cut about a foot long. The inner fibrous pith was cut lengthwise into thin strips that were placed side by side on a board. A second layer of strips was placed at right angles. The resulting "sheet" was pounded together. Pliny the Elder (*Nat.* 13.11–13) claimed that the Nile water glued the strips together, but actually the crushed pulp did so. The dried sheets were trimmed to a standard size, varying by "factory," typically ten inches high by eight inches wide.

Sheets (with the horizontal fibers on top) were glued side by side with the sheet on the left slightly lapping over the right, so that a scribe's pen slid "downhill" when moving onto the next sheet. It was not uncommon for a column of text to be on a joint (unlike leather sheets, whose sewn joint would not hold text). The joined sheets formed a roll (scroll) of standard length (about twelve feet) called a *chartēs* (2 John 12), the typical unit of sale. It is estimated that in NT times a *chartēs* cost four denars (= approximately U.S. $450). Secretaries cut sheets off a *chartēs* or glued on additional length as the task required, but the typical ancient letter, such as 3 John, was about one sheet in length.

The other most common type of writing material was leather parchment. Made chiefly from the skins of sheep or goats, parchment would be prepared by soaking, dehairing, scraping, and washing the hide. The skin would be stretched on a frame and smoothed with a pumice stone. Vellum is a finer grade of parchment and is made from calfskin or kidskin. Sections of parchment also were sewn together to make a roll. Paul asked Timothy to bring him "the parchments" (2 Tim. 4:13).

Papyrus had the advantage of being lightweight and durable, and perhaps less expensive, so it was often preferred over clay, wooden, metal, or stone tablets, or even parchment (at least until the third century AD). However, papyrus had two major disadvantages: it deteriorated rapidly in water and was almost exclusively from Egypt. Since ink was water-soluble, all documents were routinely protected from moisture, so trade issues with Egypt may be to blame for major shifts to parchment. Unfortunately, only ancient papyri left in dry locations in dry climates have survived, explaining why the bulk of known papyri are from the Egyptian desert.

Paper made of wood pulp or similar fibers was invented in China and was not adopted in the West until the eighth century or later.

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XERXES The king of Persia from 486 to 465 BC. He inherited the throne from his father, Darius; his son Artaxerxes was king during the time of Ezra and Nehemiah. In the Bible Xerxes is called “Ahasuerus” (though the NIV and some other versions use “Xerxes”), a Hebrew equivalent (*’akhasherosh*) of his Persian name. Esther (Hadassah) was wed to Xerxes in 479 BC and became queen (Esther 2:17), and thus she was in a position to save the Jewish nation from the annihilation plotted by Haman (Esther 4:12–17). Additionally, the “enemies of Judah and Benjamin” (Ezra 4:1) wrote a letter to Xerxes when the Jews began rebuilding God’s temple in Jerusalem.

A table of eclipses, containing a rare reference to the murder of Xerxes by his son on about August 14, 465 BC

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YAH Shortened form of the Hebrew “Yahweh,” the personal name for the God of the covenant. It also occurs as part of personal names in the OT such as “Nehemiah” (*nekhemyah*), where “iah” is the English equivalent of “yah.” *See also* YHWH.

YAHWEH *See* Jehovah; YHWH.

YEAR *See* Calendar.

YEAR OF JUBILEE The Jubilee was a year of rest after seven cycles of Sabbatical Years (Lev. 25:8–55). The Israelites were to sound the ram’s horn on the Day of Atonement and consecrate the fiftieth year, proclaiming liberty throughout the land. The fiftieth year was to be a “jubilee” (Heb. *yobel*).

Two principles were essential to the Jubilee practices. The first was that the land belongs to God (Lev. 25:23). The Israelites’ socioeconomic system, rooted in the land, was shaped by their understanding that they were to provide for all members of society from God’s land. The second was the familiar redemption paradigm. God had brought them out of Egypt, delivering them as free people so that they might serve him (25:38–45). Thus, they were not to own land or slaves permanently, since that would reverse the impact of the exodus and create a perpetual underclass. Instead, they were to buy them back, just as God had redeemed his people.

The specific requirements for the Year of Jubilee involved rest for the land, continuing the Sabbatical Year practices. The people were not to sow or harvest. In the Jubilee Year they were to return land and houses to the family or clan of original ownership. The price of any land sold was to be determined by the number of potential crops that the buyer had forthcoming until the next Jubilee. If it was a long time, the price could be set higher. In the interval, if someone had sold family landholdings due to financial stress, the nearest relative could redeem them, or the seller could buy them back personally. In the end, however, the property reverted to the clan ownership in the Jubilee. A house in a walled city could be redeemed for one year. After that, the new owner could keep it permanently because the urban setting was separate from the land. A house in an unwalled city could be redeemed anytime and had to be returned to the original owner at the next Jubilee, since such a city was considered open country. Property of the Levites was always subject to redemption. Any Israelite unable to pay off debts could sell himself, either to a fellow Israelite or to a resident alien. As with the land, the nearest relative or the seller could provide the redemption payment prior to the Jubilee. Failing that, in the Jubilee Hebrew hired workers and their children were to be set free.

There is no direct evidence in the historical books that the Israelites actually practiced the Year of Jubilee. There are echoes of it in Isa. 61:1–7 with the allusions to the release of the prisoner (as in Lev. 25:10) and the inheritance. Jesus cited this passage with reference to his own messianic ministry (Luke 4:16–21), suggesting his affirmation and fulfillment of the Jubilee principles.

YEAST *See* Leaven.

YELLOW A color noted in medical diagnoses and in describing gold in the OT. The presence of thin, yellowish hair is an indication of leprous or infectious disease (Lev. 13:30, 32, 36). Gold-plating on the wings of a dove is represented as “yellow gold” (KJV) or “green gold” (NRSV) in Ps. 68:13 (NIV: “shining gold”). *See also* Colors.

YHWH Known as the Tetragrammaton (“four letters”), these four consonants comprise the personal name of God. Most English versions gloss this name in small capital letters as “LORD” (see Gen. 15:1) or “GOD” (see Gen. 15:2 KJV, RSV, NRSV, NASB). “Lord” without the small-capital format signifies a title, not a personal name, in Hebrew: *’adonay*. In the intertestamental period, reverent Jews became reluctant to speak the divine name, and so they substituted *’adonay* or some title for “YHWH.” In the Middle Ages, when vowels were introduced to the Hebrew text, those belonging to *’adonay* were inserted into “YHWH,” reminding readers to speak the title rather than the name. English speakers, however, substituting *J* for the *Y*, vocalizing *W* with a *V* sound (both under the influence of German), and reading the consonants and vowels together, invented from this an artificial word that no ancient had ever pronounced: “Jehovah” (see Gen. 15:2 ASV).

Many derive “YHWH” from the Hebrew verb “to be” (*hayah*) and understand the meaning of the name to be “He Is,” though this is debated. Such an etymology is found in Exod. 3:13–14, where Moses asked God his name, and God replied, “I AM WHO I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: ‘I AM has sent me to you.’ ” Passing by Moses on Mount Sinai, God declared the meaning of this name, revealing God’s nature as being compassionate, gracious, patient, loving, forgiving, and just (Exod. 34:5–7). Jesus claims this name for himself in John 8:58: “Before Abraham was born, I am.” Christians baptize in the singular name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (Matt. 28:19). *See also* Lord.

YIRON *See* Iron.

YOKE A wooden crosspiece fastened to the neck and shoulders of one or, more often, two animals (e.g., 1 Sam. 6:7) to facilitate labor. Yokes were also used by individuals to balance a load suspended from the shoulders (Num. 4:10, 12; 13:23). As such, the yoke also functioned as a symbol of subjection (Gen. 27:40; Lev. 26:13; Deut. 28:48; Jer. 27:2–7; Gal. 5:1; 1 Tim. 6:1), sometimes of joint labor (2 Cor. 6:14; Phil. 4:3), and is closely associated with pairs of animals (Luke 14:19; 1 Sam. 11:7). *See also* Weights and Measures.

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ZAANAIM See Zaanannim.

ZAANAN A town mentioned by the prophet Micah (Mic. 1:11). The name sounds similar to the Hebrew verb “to come out,” creating a wordplay between the name and the fact that “those who live in Zaanan will not come out” because of the invasion. The town probably was southwest of Jerusalem.

ZAANANNIM A place known for its large oak tree that marked the southern boundary of Naphtali, between Heleph and Adami Nekeb (Josh. 19:33). Heber the Kenite pitched his tent at a place of the same name, also having an oak tree, near Kedesh (Judg. 4:11 [KJV: “Zaanaim”]). These two are probably the same place. If so, the site is likely to be Khan et-Tuggar, two and a half miles from Mount Tabor. However, there may have been two distinct Zaanannims, one farther south near Megiddo.

ZAAVAN The second of the three sons of Ezer, a chief among the descendants of Seir the Horite in Edom (Gen. 36:27; 1 Chron. 1:42).

ZABAD **(1)** The son of Nathan, a Judahite (1 Chron. 2:36–37). **(2)** The son of Tahath, a descendant of Ephraim (1 Chron. 7:21). **(3)** The son of Ahlai, he was one of David’s mighty warriors (1 Chron. 11:41). **(4)** The son of the Ammonite woman Shimeath, he was one of the officials who conspired against Joash (2 Chron. 24:26). He is called “Jozabad” or “Jozacar” in 2 Kings 12:21. **(5)** A descendant of Zattu, he was among those condemned by Ezra, after the return from exile, for having married foreign wives (Ezra 10:27). **(6)** A descendant of Hashum, he was among those condemned by Ezra for having married foreign wives (Ezra 10:33). **(7)** A descendant of Nebo, he was among those condemned by Ezra for having married foreign wives (Ezra 10:43).

ZABBAI **(1)** A descendant of Bebai who was among those forced by Ezra to divorce their foreign wives after the return from exile (Ezra 10:28). **(2)** A man whose son, Baruch, was an outstanding worker on the rebuilding of the wall of Jerusalem under the guidance of Nehemiah (Neh. 3:20).

ZABBUD *See* Zakkur.

ZABDI **(1)** A son of Shimei, listed in the genealogy of the tribe of Benjamin (1 Chron. 8:19). **(2)** A Shiphmite in charge of the vineyards in David’s administration (1 Chron. 27:27). **(3)** The grandfather of Mattaniah, one of the Levites who settled in Jerusalem in Nehemiah’s time (Neh. 11:17).

ZABDIEL **(1)** The father of one of David’s commanders, Jashobeam (1 Chron. 27:2). **(2)** The son of Haggedolim, he was the chief officer of a division of provincial priests chosen to settle in Jerusalem after Nehemiah rebuilt it (Neh. 11:14).

ZABUD Zabud, son of Nathan, was a priest and personal adviser to King Solomon at the height of his power (1 Kings 4:5).

ZABULON *See* Zebulun.

ZACCAI *See* Zakkai.

ZACCHAEUS A wealthy tax collector in Jericho who, being short in height, climbed a Sycamore tree to see Jesus as he was walking by (Luke 19:1–10). A Jew—Jesus calls him a “son of Abraham”—his position as “chief tax collector” (*architelōnēs*) suggests that he had several others working for him. Since tax collectors were hated by their fellow Jews, Zacchaeus’s senior position would have made him especially despised. Jesus initiated the contact with Zacchaeus, and he responded by bringing Jesus to his home. After time with Jesus, Zacchaeus responded in faith, giving money to the poor and making restitution to those whom he had cheated.

ZACCHUR, ZACCUR *See* Zakkur.

ZACHARIAH *See* Zechariah.

ZACHARIAS The Greek form of the Hebrew name “Zechariah,” used by the KJV in the NT. *See also* Zechariah.

ZACHER *See* Zechariah; Zeker.

ZADOK **(1)** The son of Ahitub, and a descendant of Aaron (1 Chron. 6:1–15, 53), he was a priest during the time of David and became high priest during the time of Solomon. Initially, Zadok is mentioned alongside the high priest Abiathar (2 Sam. 8:17). Both men served as spies for David when Absalom, the king’s son, took Jerusalem during a civil war. The priests’ sons, Ahimaaz and Jonathan, were runners reporting to David. Toward the end of David’s life, Abiathar supported Adonijah’s bid for the kingship, so when Solomon became king, he was removed from the high priesthood.

Zadok anointed Solomon as king and became the sole high priest, fulfilling a prophetic word uttered against the house of Eli years before (1 Kings 2:35; cf. 1 Sam. 2:27–36). In his vision of a future temple, Ezekiel often references the priestly line of Zadok (Ezek. 40:46; 43:19; 44:15; 48:11).

(2) An otherwise unknown descendant of David named in Matthew’s genealogy of Jesus (Matt. 1:14).

ZADOKITES The priestly line of Zadok (KJV: “sons of Zadok”; cf. Ezek. 40:46; 44:15). Ezekiel 48:11 refers to them as “faithful” priests, in contrast with the Levites who went astray. *See also* Zadok.

ZAHAB A location on the route that the Israelites took through Moab that is also mentioned in the Book of the Wars of the Lord (Num. 21:14). Its exact location is unknown. In most translations the name appears as “Waheb,” following the Hebrew Bible (see NIV mg.); “Zahab” is based on a variant spelling found in the LXX.

ZAHAM The youngest of three sons born to Rehoboam and Mahalath (2 Chron. 11:19), who was a granddaughter of David through his son Jerimoth.

ZAHAR A city or region mentioned in Ezekiel’s lament for Tyre (Ezek. 27:18). Because of Tyre’s large assemblage of produce and goods, Damascus entered into business with Tyre, trading wool from Zahar as well as wine from Helbon. Zahar is one of many cities or people groups listed in an illustration of Tyre’s greatness and wealth.

ZAIR An unknown location near Edom that was the site of a battle between the forces of King Joram (Jehoram) and the rebellious Edomite forces that had surrounded the king and his men (2 Kings 8:20–22). Joram attacked at night, and the Edomite troops returned to their tents. However, the Edomites continued in rebellion against Judah (cf. 2 Chron. 21:8–10).

ZAKKAI The head of a clan that was part of the early return to Judah from Babylonian captivity in 539 BC or soon after (Ezra 2:9; Neh. 7:14).

ZAKKUR **(1)** The father of Shammua, the representative of the tribe of Reuben among the twelve spies sent by Moses to scout the promised land (Num. 13:4). **(2)** A descendant of Simeon, the son of Hammuel, and the father of Shimei (1 Chron. 4:26). **(3)** A Levite descendant of Merari (1 Chron. 24:27). **(4)** A son of Asaph, he was a Levite temple musician appointed by King David (1 Chron. 25:2, 10; Neh. 12:35). **(5)** A descendant of Bigvai who returned from exile under Ezra with Uthai and seventy men (Ezra 8:14). The MT (followed by the KJV) reads “Zabbud” here, but the NIV and other translations follow the MT Qere reading, “Zakkur,” which looks similar to “Zabbud” in Hebrew script. **(6)** The son of Imri, he helped to rebuild the wall of Jerusalem (Neh. 3:2). **(7)** A Levite who signed the new covenant of Nehemiah (Neh. 10:12). **(8)** The father of Hanan, one of the assistant supervisors over the storehouses appointed by Nehemiah (Neh. 13:13).

ZALAPH The father of Hanun, who repaired one of the sections of the Horse Gate in the wall of Jerusalem under the guidance of Nehemiah (Neh. 3:30).

ZALMON **(1)** An Ahohite, also called “Ilai” (1 Chron. 11:29), he was one of David’s mighty warriors (2 Sam. 23:28). **(2)** A mountain in the vicinity of Shechem from which Abimelek and his men cut branches to use to burn down the tower of Shechem and kill the leaders of the city, who had barricaded themselves within (Judg. 9:46–48). Zalmon is also mentioned in Ps. 68:14 as part of a poetic description of God’s judgment on Israel’s enemies.

ZALMONAH An unidentified location in the wilderness where the Israelites camped upon leaving Mount Hor (Num. 33:41–42). Its name and context possibly suggest a dark or hidden place chosen to elude the Canaanite king of Arad.

ZALMUNNA A Midianite king who, along with Zebah, was captured by Gideon and later executed to avenge the killing of his brothers (Judg. 8:18–21). Their deaths became symbolic of God’s judgment on Israel’s enemies (Ps. 83:11).

ZALMUNNAH *See* Zalmunna.

ZAMZUMMIM *See* Zamzummites.

ZAMZUMMITES This term occurs in Deut. 2:20 and appears to be synonymous with the Zuzites of Gen. 14:5. They were dispossessed by the Ammonites and were considered to be a tall people, like the Emites and the Anakites (Deut. 2:10, 20–21). The name may be a pejorative designation for their “buzzing” speech.

ZANOAH **(1)** The son of Jekuthiel, and grandson of Mered of the tribe of Judah. Jekuthiel was born to Mered through his unnamed Judahite wife, rather than through his wife Bithiah, the daughter of Pharaoh (1 Chron. 4:17–18). **(2)** A town in the lowlands of Judah (Josh. 15:34). **(3)** Another town in Judah, in the highlands (15:56).

ZAPHENATH-PANEAH The Hebrew form of the Egyptian name that was given to Joseph upon being “put in charge of the whole land of Egypt” (Gen. 41:41, 45). Though variously translated by Josephus (“revealer of secrets” [*Ant.* 2.91]) and later scholars, the meaning of the name is uncertain.

ZAPHON **(1)** A town in the Jordan Valley that Israel took from the Ammonites and that Moses gave to the tribe of Gad (Josh. 13:27). Years later, it was the battleground for the conflict between Gilead and Ephraim during the judgeship of Jephthah (Judg. 12:1). **(2)** A mountain in Syria considered to be the home of the god Baal in Canaanite mythology. Psalm 48:2 compares Mount Zion with Zaphon, probably due to its reputation as the dwelling of the gods. In Hebrew, *tsapon* usually means “north,” probably derived from the northern location of the mountain in relation to Israel.

ZARA *See* Zerah.

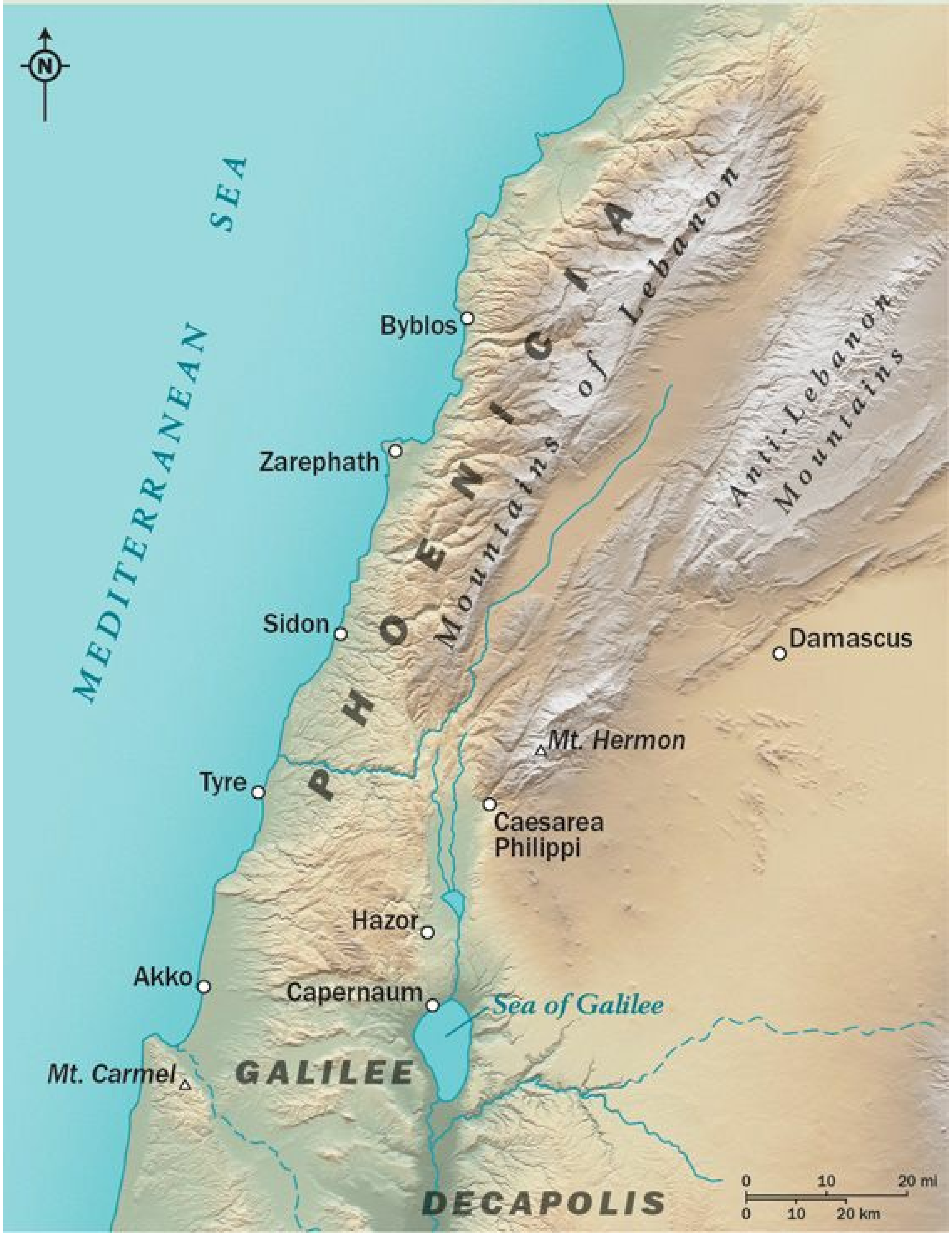
ZAREAH *See* Zorah.

ZAREATHITES *See* Zorathites.

ZARED *See* Zered Valley.

ZAREPHATH A small Sidonian town (“Sarepta” in Luke 4:26 KJV) where a widow served Elijah a meal with all that was left to her household (1 Kings 17:7–24). Her faith and God’s miraculous provision for her in return during the three years of famine are contrasted to the Israelites’ lack of faith. At the day of the Lord, God promises that the exiles of Israel will be able to extend the western border to this town (Obad. 20).

THE LOCATION OF ZAREPHATH


N
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
PHOENICIA
Mountains of Lebanon
Anti-Lebanon Mountains
Byblos
Zarephath
Sidon
Damascus
Mt. Hermon
Tyre
Caesarea Philippi
Hazor
Akko
Capernaum
Sea of Galilee
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GALILEE
DECAPOLIS
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10
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20 km

ZARETAN *See* Zarethan.

ZARETHAN A location best known for its association with the Israelites’ crossing of the Jordan River. Joshua 3:16 indicates that the Jordan “piled up in a heap” at a town called “Adam,” said to be near Zarethan and a “great distance” from where the Israelites actually crossed. Various locations have been proffered as to the precise position of Zarethan, both on the east and the west sides of the Jordan. The town is mentioned in 1 Kings 4:12 as being in the vicinity of Beth Shan below Jezreel, and in 1 Kings 7:46; 2 Chron. 4:17 as the location in the plain of the Jordan where Huram made castings in clay molds for building the temple.

ZARETH-SHAHAR *See* Zereth Shahar.

ZARHITES *See* Zerahites.

ZARTANAH, ZARTHAN *See* Zarethan.

ZATTU The head of a clan that was part of the early return to Judah from Babylonian captivity in 539 BC or soon after (Ezra 2:8; Neh. 7:13). The same clan sent Shekaniah and three hundred men at the time of Ezra, around 458 BC (Ezra 8:5 LXX). Six members of this clan were later found guilty of intermarriage (Ezra 10:27). Zattu is also listed as one who sealed the covenant renewal led by Ezra (Neh. 10:14).

ZAVAN *See* Zaavan.

ZAYIT A tell in the lowland area of the territory of Judah, also known as Tell Zeitah. Archaeological excavations in 2005 yielded the Zayit Stone, a thirty-eight-pound limestone boulder (shaped like a cup) bearing a two-line inscription of an ancient alphabet that is a predecessor to the Old Hebrew script. The form of the letters and the location in the strata of Tel Zayit are said to date the find to the tenth century BC. This artifact is an important abecedary because it is among the oldest found and contributes to the discussion of the state of literacy at the beginning of the Israelite monarchy.

ZAZA The second of the two sons of Jonathan, he was a descendant of Judah through the family of Jerahmeel (1 Chron. 2:33).

ZEALOTS A revolutionary religious group made up of junior priests from the Jerusalem temple and others who were anti-Roman. Their activities precipitated the war with Rome that led to the destruction of the temple in AD 70. Other revolutionary groups were brigands, Sicarii, and the Fourth Philosophy. Simon, one of Jesus' disciples, is identified as a "zealot" (Matt. 10:4; Mark 3:18; Luke 6:15; Acts 1:13), but it is not known whether he had been a member of a revolutionary group or whether this was a general term for zeal for his God and nation (cf. Acts 21:20). *See also* Jewish Parties.

ZEBADIAH **(1)** The fourth of the nine sons of Beriah, a descendant of Benjamin and ancestor of Saul (1 Chron. 8:15). **(2)** The first of the seven sons of Elpaal, a descendant of Benjamin and ancestor of Saul (1 Chron. 8:17). **(3)** A son of Jeroham, he was among the Benjamite warriors who joined David in Ziklag when he fled from Saul (1 Chron. 12:7). **(4)** The third of the seven sons of Meshelemiah, a Levitical gatekeeper (1 Chron. 26:2). **(5)** The son of Asahel and a nephew of Joab, he succeeded his father as an army commander during the time of David (1 Chron. 27:7). **(6)** One of the nine Levites sent by Jehoshaphat throughout the land to teach the law (2 Chron. 17:8). **(7)** The son of Ishmael and the leader of the tribe of Judah, he served as chief judge in matters concerning the king during the reign of Jehoshaphat (2 Chron. 19:11). **(8)** The son of Michael, he returned from exile with Ezra and eighty men from the descendants of Shephatiah (Ezra 8:8). **(9)** A descendant of Immer who was among those guilty of intermarriage with foreign women during Ezra's time (Ezra 10:20).

ZEBAH He and another Midianite king, Zalmunna, were killed by Gideon in retaliation for their execution of his brothers (Judg. 8:18–21). The Midianites were known for camel raids into Israel during harvesttime to ravage the land and impoverish the Israelites (Judg. 6:1–6). The psalmist names Zebah and Zalmunna among God's enemies (Ps. 83:1–11). Israel's victory over Midian under Gideon was a direct result of Israel's crying out to God, and the circumstances of the battle strategy were such that God received the glory for the victory. Upon the defeat of Midian, Gideon pursued the two kings and executed them.

ZEBAIM The hometown of Pokereth (NIV, NET: Pokereth-Hazzebaim), one of the descendants of the servants of Solomon (Ezra 2:55–57; Neh. 7:57–59) among the returnees from Babylonian captivity. The location of Zebaim is unknown.

ZEBEDEE The father of the disciples James and John, he was a Galilean fisherman by trade (Mark 1:16–20; Matt. 4:18–22). Zebedee's sons worked with him in the fishing business, and he seems to have possessed some wealth, as indicated by his ownership of a boat and the use of hired servants (Mark 1:20). His wife's name appears to have been Salome (cf. Mark 15:40; 16:1; Matt. 27:56).

ZEBIDAH The daughter of Pedaiah, she was the mother of King Jehoiakim of Judah (2 Kings 23:36). The Qere reading of the MT gives her name as "Zebudah," and the LXX calls her "Ieldaph."

ZEBINA A descendant of Nebo, he is listed among those guilty of marrying foreign women during the time of Ezra (Ezra 10:43).

ZEBOIIM *See* Zeboyim.

ZEBOIM A town inhabited by the descendants of the Benjamites after the exile, appearing between Hadid and Neballat (Neh. 11:34).

ZEBOYIM **(1)** A city in the Valley of Siddim that was attacked and plundered along with Sodom and Gomorrah. Shemeber ruled over it when Abraham rescued the five cities on the plain from Kedorlaomer (Gen. 14:2, 8). Although Zeboyim is always mentioned along with Admah, its exact location is unknown, though it must be within the Valley of Siddim around the area of the Dead Sea. The account of Zeboyim is also recorded in Deut. 29, and reference is made to its destruction in Hos. 11:8. Zeboyim is not to be confused with the Zeboim mentioned in Neh. 11:34. **(2)** The Valley of Zeboyim, which is a valley facing the desert, was raided by the Philistines while Saul and Jonathan were staying in Gibeah (1 Sam. 13:18). This would place it near Gibeah and Mikmash. The exact valley referenced is unknown.

ZEBOYIM, VALLEY OF *See* Zeboyim.

ZEBUDAH *See* Zebidah.

ZEBUL The governor of Shechem under the rule of Abimelek (Judg. 9:30). Zebul informed Abimelek that Gaal was intending to lead Shechem to an alliance with Hamor, thus bringing about the destruction of Shechem (9:42–45). Shechem was utterly destroyed, and salt was sown upon its ashes.

Remains of the northwest gate at Shechem. Zebul was governor of Shechem under Abimelek (Judg. 9:30).

ZEBULUN The tenth son of Jacob, the sixth from Leah (Gen. 30:20). Upon Zebulun's birth, Leah said, "God has presented me with a precious gift. This time my husband will treat me with honor, because I have borne him six sons." The name Zebulun is a play on the Hebrew word for "honor" (*zabal*) used here. Little is known of the life of Zebulun, other than the names of his three sons, Sered, Elon, and Jahleel (Gen. 46:14). The descendants of these three sons constituted the main divisions within the tribe in the future (Num. 26:26). The tribe of Zebulun later would be a part of Israel, but not very influential in comparison to some of the others. *See also* Zebulun, Tribe of.

ZEBULUN, TRIBE OF Descended from the tenth son of Jacob, Zebulun, this tribe did not drive out the Canaanites but instead subjected them to forced labor (Judg. 1:30). During the wilderness journey this tribe was one of the foremost in marching order, along with the tribes of Judah and Issachar. It responded to Gideon's summoning (Judg. 6:35) and also helped to enthrone David in Hebron (1 Chron. 12:33). It was later dispossessed by the Assyrians under Tiglath-pileser III (744–727 BC). Matthew 4:13–16 points to Jesus' ministry in the regions of Zebulun and Naphtali in Galilee as the fulfillment of Isa. 9:1–2.

ZEBULUNITE A title of Elon, one of the minor judges, who was from the land of Zebulun. He led

Israel for ten years (Judg. 12:11).

ZECHARIAH **(1)** A king of Israel, the son of Jeroboam II (2 Kings 14:29). His reign was cut short at six months due to his assassination by Shallum (15:8–12). **(2)** The maternal grandfather of King Hezekiah (2 Kings 18:2; 2 Chron. 29:1). **(3)** A Reubenite listed between Jeiel the chief and Bela son of Azaz (1 Chron. 5:7). **(4)** A son of Meshelemiah, he was a gatekeeper at the tent of meeting during the reign of David (1 Chron. 9:21; 26:2). He was assigned the North Gate and was considered a wise individual (1 Chron. 26:14).

(5) The ninth of the ten sons of Jeiel and Maakah, in the genealogy of Saul (1 Chron. 9:37). He is called "Zeker" in 1 Chron. 8:31. **(6)** A Levitical musician who played lyre and harp during the reign of David (1 Chron. 15:18, 20; 16:5). **(7)** A son of Ishiah (1 Chron. 24:25). **(8)** The fourth son of Hosah, a gatekeeper (1 Chron. 26:11). **(9)** The father of Iddo, officer over the half-tribe of Manasseh in Gilead (1 Chron. 27:21).

(10) One of the five officials sent by King Jehoshaphat to teach the law in Judah (2 Chron. 17:7). **(11)** The father of the prophet Jahaziel (2 Chron. 20:14). **(12)** A son of King Jehoshaphat (2 Chron. 21:2). **(13)** A prophet, the son of Jehoiada the priest (2 Chron. 24:20). During the reign of Joash, he was stoned after prophesying against the people. He probably is the person mentioned in Matt. 23:35 // Luke 11:51, even though there is confusion about his genealogy. **(14)** A prophet who instructed King Uzziah in reverence and obedience to God (2 Chron. 26:5). **(15)** A Levite during the reign of Hezekiah, descended from Asaph (2 Chron. 29:13). **(16)** A Kohathite Levite who supervised temple repairs during the reforms of King Josiah (2 Chron. 34:12). **(17)** A temple administrator under King Josiah (2 Chron. 35:8).

(18) A prophet contemporary with Haggai and Ezra (Ezra 5:1). He was the son of Berekiah, a grandson of Iddo, and the head of Iddo's priestly line (Zech. 1:1; Ezra 5:1; Neh. 12:16). His career as a prophet began in the second year of Darius (Zech. 1:1). (*See also* Zechariah, Book of.) **(19)** Returned from exile with Ezra and 150 men from the descendants of Parosh (Ezra 8:3). **(20)** The son of Bebai, he returned from exile with Ezra and twenty-eight men of the descendants of Bebai (Ezra 8:11). **(21)** One of the nine leaders sent by Ezra to Kasiphia to bring Levites back to Jerusalem to serve in the temple (Ezra 8:16). He is probably also one of the thirteen men who stood beside Ezra for the reading of the law (Neh. 8:4).

(22) One of the descendants of Elam listed among those guilty of marrying a foreign woman during the time of Ezra (Ezra 10:26). **(23)** An ancestor of Athaiah, one of the Judahite provinicial leaders who returned from exile (Neh. 11:4). **(24)** An ancestor of Maaseiah, one of the Judahite provinicial leaders who returned from exile (Neh. 11:5). **(25)** An ancestor of Adaiah, one of the family heads among the priests who returned from exile (Neh. 11:12). **(26)** The son of Jonathan, he was one of the priests who played trumpets at the dedication of the Jerusalem wall at the time of Nehemiah (Neh. 12:35, 41).

ZECHARIAH, BOOK OF The tenth and longest book of the twelve Minor Prophets. Zechariah's prophecy is one of the most intriguing in the OT, beginning with eight chapters of night visions and ending with six additional chapters of oracles. The second part of the book is quite obscure and apparently more randomly presented than the first part.

Zechariah's importance to a Christian audience is highlighted by two facts: first, no other OT book is quoted more often in the Gospel passion narratives; second, it influenced the book of Revelation.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The superscription (1:1) names Zechariah son of Berekiah, the son of Iddo, as the source of the oracles that follow. Little is known about who Zechariah was, though some speculate that he came from a priestly family, on the assumption that his ancestor Iddo is to be identified with the priest of the same name who came back to Judah with Zerubbabel (Neh. 12:4).

On the other hand, the text is unambiguous about the date of Zechariah's prophecies, at least those in the first eight chapters. Table 13 lists and analyzes the dated oracles by Zechariah and by his contemporary Haggai. Haggai and Zechariah are unusually precise in the dates that they give the oracles in their books. They are dated to a fairly brief period during the reign of the Persian king Darius.

Table 13. The Dated Oracles of Zechariah and Haggai

Reference	Year/Month/Day of Darius	Date BC	Content
Hag. 1:1	2/6/1	Aug. 29, 520	Temple to be built
Hag. 1:5	2/6/24	Sept. 21, 520	Work on temple resumed
Hag. 2:1	2/7/21	Oct. 17, 520	Glory of the temple
Zech. 1:1	2/8/–	Oct./Nov. 520	Zechariah's authority
Hag. 2:10, 20	2/9/24	Dec. 18, 520	Zerubbabel as God's signet
Zech. 1:7	2/11/24	Feb. 15, 519	First night vision
Zech. 7:1	4/9/4	Dec. 7, 518	An issue about fasting
(Ezra 6:15)	6/12/3	Mar. 12, 515	Temple completed

The opening verse of Zechariah refers to the second year of King Darius of Persia, which points to 520 BC. This date fits well with the purpose of the prophecies of the first eight chapters, which serve to encourage the returnees to resume rebuilding the temple.

This historical background to the book begins in 539 BC with the Persian defeat of the Babylonians, who had exiled the Judeans. Cyrus then issued a decree (2 Chron. 36:22–23; Ezra 1:1–4) that allowed Judeans to return and rebuild Jerusalem. The first waves of Judeans to return came under the leadership of Sheshbazzar and Zerubbabel, both of whom are in turn credited with rebuilding the foundation to the temple in the 530s BC. However, due to external pressure as well as economic hardship, the people stopped their reconstruction of the holy site. The ministry of Zechariah (and Haggai, his contemporary) had as its purpose in large part to inspire the people to resume rebuilding the temple (see Ezra 5:1–2), which was begun in 520 BC and finished in 515 BC.

Although the date of Zech. 1–8 is uncontroversial, there is considerable disagreement about the date of the oracles in Zech. 9–14. These chapters are less concerned with immediate issues of the postexilic community and more interested in the far-distant future.

Ruins of the palace of Darius I at Persepolis. Zechariah’s oracles are dated to his reign.

LITERARY CONSIDERATIONS AND OUTLINE

Zechariah begins by situating his words in the tradition of the “earlier prophets” (see 1:2–6). The book is a fascinating collection of prophetic visions that take place at night as well as other types of judgment and salvation oracles. Zechariah, especially chapters 9–14, has often been compared to apocalyptic books like Daniel, which use bizarre imagery to describe the end of history.

I. Superscription (1:1)

II. The Prophet Calls on God’s People to Repent (1:2–6)

III. Eight Night Visions (1:7–6:8)

IV. A Crown for Joshua, the High Priest (6:9–15)

V. The Prophet Answers a Question about Fasting (7:1–8:23)

VI. Oracle: The Coming of the King (9:1–11:17)

VII. Oracle: The Future of the People of God (12:1–14:21)

THEOLOGICAL MESSAGE

The night visions of chapters 1–8 fit in with their historical setting. The people and their leaders had been discouraged by internal economic concerns and pressures from external forces that did not want them to flourish. Zechariah spoke of divine visions that expressed God's intention to protect the people and to lead them to a new level of prosperity. Accordingly, the people should complete the construction of the temple, whose foundation had been laid (4:1–14). The visions also address the need for continual purification from the type of sin that led to the exile in the first place (3:1–10; 5:1–11).

Chapters 9–14 culminate in a vision of God's ultimate victory over those who continue to resist his will. This section includes oracles against foreign nations (9:1–8) as well as a vision of a new king in Zion (9:9–13). Chapter 14, the final chapter, describes a final battle in which God will come as a warrior to save his people and judge their enemies.

NEW TESTAMENT CONNECTIONS

The book of Zechariah, with its night visions, has an atmosphere different from that of many of the other prophets. Even so, most of its core concerns are similar. Zechariah speaks to his audience, both ancient and modern, with a warning about the dangers and consequences of sin, as well as with encouragement about God's ultimate triumph over evil. Zechariah urgently appeals to his contemporaries to rebuild the temple, showing the importance of institutional worship, but he also clearly states that compassion and mercy toward the vulnerable must undergird religious devotion (7:1–14).

For the Christian, Zechariah's vision of a coming king and an ultimate divine victory over evil points not only to Christ's earthly ministry but also to his ultimate return as described in the book of Revelation. This association was not lost on the NT authors. They saw Christ as fulfilling the expectation of a messianic king who makes a humble appearance, bringing righteousness and salvation to Jerusalem while riding on a donkey (Zech. 9:9; cf. Matt. 21:5; John 12:15), betrayed and pierced (Zech. 11:12–13; 12:10; cf. Matt. 26:15 pars.; 27:9–10; John 19:34, 37). But it is this king who will subdue the nations (Zech. 12:8–9) and establish his kingdom on earth (14:3–9).

ZECHER *See* Zeker.

ZEDAD One of the towns that marked the northern border of Israel (Num. 34:8; Ezek. 47:15). It has been suggested that the ruins of Sudud are the remains of this town, but it is uncertain.

ZEDEKIAH **(1)** The son of Kenaanah, he was one of the four hundred prophets who falsely prophesied that God would give success to King Ahab and King Jehoshaphat in their proposed military campaign against Ramoth Gilead (1 Kings 22:11). He was opposed by the prophet Micaiah son of Imlah. **(2)** The son of Maaseiah, he was a false prophet during the time of Jeremiah. Jeremiah prophesied that he, along with another false prophet, Ahab, would be handed over to King Nebuchadnezzar, who would put them to death (Jer. 29:21). **(3)** The son of Hananiah, he was a court official during the days of Jeremiah (Jer. 36:12). He was present for the reading of Jeremiah's scroll. **(4)** One of the officials who sealed the postexilic covenant agreement of the people (Neh. 10:1 [KJV:

“Zidkijah”]). His name appears second to Nehemiah’s, which implies some importance. **(5)** The last king of Judah. Named “Mattaniah” at birth, he was the youngest son of Josiah and Hamutal (2 Kings 24:18; Jer. 1:3). Zedekiah was renamed when Nebuchadnezzar placed him on the throne and made him swear a covenant before God (2 Chron. 36:13). He was twenty-one years old when he was given the throne, after Nebuchadnezzar deposed his nephew Jehoiachin. He ruled nine years, and then he rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar, and war ensued for two years. He also refused to follow the rule of the prophet Jeremiah (2 Chron. 36:12). He was considered “evil in the eyes of the LORD,” along with all the ruling parties of priests and officials during his reign.

ZEEB *See* Oreb and Zeeb.

ZEKER The ninth of the ten sons of Jeiel and Maakah, in the genealogy of Saul (1 Chron. 8:31). He is called “Zechariah” in 1 Chron. 9:37.

ZELA A town in Benjamin where Saul and Jonathan were buried (2 Sam. 21:14). It was the burial grounds of the family of Kish, Saul’s father, and probably was Saul’s birthplace.

ZELAH *See* Zela.

ZELEK An Ammonite listed among David’s famous thirty warriors (2 Sam. 23:37; 1 Chron. 11:39).

ZELOPHEHAD The son of Hepher, he was the leader of a Manassite family that was left without male heirs (Num. 26:33; 1 Chron. 7:15). Upon his death in the wilderness, his five daughters approached Moses and asked that they might inherit their father’s allotment (Num. 27:1–4). Moses brought their case before God, who granted their request and then amended the law to include the right of female inheritance (Num. 27:5–11). Later, it was also mandated that they marry within the tribe so that the tribal land did not go outside the tribe of Manasseh (Num. 36; cf. Josh. 17).

ZELOTES The KJV transliteration of the Greek word *zēlōtēs*, applied to Simon the Zealot in Luke 6:15; Acts 1:13. The Greek rendering of the Aramaic equivalent, *Kananaios*, is used in Matt. 10:4; Mark 3:18 (KJV: “Canaanite”; NRSV: “Cananaean”; NIV: “Zealot”). *See also* Zealots.

ZELZAH A place on the border of Benjamin, near Rachel’s tomb, where Saul was to meet two men who would tell him where his lost donkeys were (1 Sam. 10:2). Samuel prophesied this meeting right after he anointed Saul with oil. There is some question about the possible corruption of the text, including the LXX text regarding this word.

ZEMARAIM **(1)** A town in the allotment of Benjamin, appearing between Beth Arabah and Bethel (Josh. 18:22). This town has been identified as the modern ruins of Khirbet es-Samra, about four miles north of Jericho. **(2)** A mountain in Ephraim from which King Abijah of Judah addressed Jeroboam during their war (2 Chron. 13:4). Following this encounter, Jeroboam never regained his political strength.

There has been conjecture that the town (#1) and the mountain (#2) must be near each other and that they have been named after the Zemarites.

ZEMARITES A tribe named in the Table of Nations as being descended from Canaan (Gen. 10:18;

1 Chron. 1:16). This Phoenician tribe possibly appears in the Amarna tablets (1400 BC), which refer to a town named “Zemar” or “Zumur,” a very important town that disappeared. They are thought to have lived along the western base of the Lebanon range.

ZEMER *See* Zemarites.

ZEMIRAH The first of the nine sons of Beker, from the tribe of Benjamin (1 Chron. 7:8).

ZENAN A town in the Shephelah, the western foothills of Judah, referenced as being next to Hadashah (Josh. 15:37). This pastureland would have been ideal for flocks. It has been associated with Zaanan, which appears in Mic. 1:11, being described as the same region. The exact site of this town has not been identified by modern archaeology.

ZENAS A disciple in the early church who traveled with Apollos (Titus 3:13). Paul used “the lawyer” as a title for him, thus indicating that he was a Jewish scribe who continued to use the title after conversion. Paul urged Titus to supply Zenas and Apollos for their journey.

ZEPHANIAH **(1)** The priest second in rank to the high priest during the fall of Jerusalem (2 Kings 25:18). He was operative during the days of the prophet Jeremiah, and as a member of the “patriotic” party he openly opposed Jeremiah. He and Pashhur were sent by King Zedekiah to ask Jeremiah about the fate of Judah, which was under attack from King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon (Jer. 21:1–2). Upon hearing from Jeremiah the bad news of long-term foreign occupation, Zephaniah read to him a letter from Shemaiah, asking why Jeremiah had not been reprimanded and punished (Jer. 29:24–29). Zephaniah eventually was taken by Nebuzaradan to Nebuchadnezzar at Riblah, where he was executed (Jer. 52:27). **(2)** An ancestor of Heman the Kohathite, a temple musician during the reign of David (1 Chron. 6:36). **(3)** A prophet during the reign of King Josiah of Judah (*see also* Zephaniah, Book of). **(4)** The father of Josiah, at whose house the prophet Zechariah met three exiles returned from Babylon (Zech. 6:9–10, 14).

ZEPHANIAH, BOOK OF The book of Zephaniah is the ninth of the twelve Minor Prophets. This short book moves dramatically from divine anger to divine compassion. Zephaniah is one of the more overlooked prophets, ministering during the same period of crisis as the well-known prophet Jeremiah.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Zephaniah is not mentioned outside this book, but some interesting information is provided in the superscription (1:1). First, he is introduced with a long genealogy: “son of Cushi, the son of Gedaliah, the son of Amariah, the son of Hezekiah.” Most attention has been directed to the last named, Hezekiah. Since the genealogy makes an effort to reach Hezekiah, it is likely that he is the king by that name (727–698 BC), even though he is not specified as such. According to the biblical records, Hezekiah was a godly king for the most part (2 Kings 18–20; 2 Chron. 29–32; Isa. 36–39). Some discussion attends the name “Cushi” as well, since it may point to Ethiopia, leading some to suggest that Zephaniah’s father was from Africa.

As a descendant of Hezekiah, Zephaniah also was related to King Josiah (640–609 BC), who, as the superscription notes, was the king contemporary with this prophecy. The precise date during this period of Zephaniah's prophecy is uncertain. Josiah was a religious reformer, but he was very young, only eight years old, when he became king. He began to seek the "God of his father David" in his eighth year as king (2 Chron. 34:3). He soon began to purify the land of idolatry. In his eighteenth year he began to purify the temple (2 Chron. 34:8). Zephaniah's judgment oracles are directed toward the type of apostasy that Josiah was working to rid the land of, which leads some scholars to date his words early in Josiah's reign. On the other hand, no one believes that Josiah was totally successful in his attempt to purify religion. Zephaniah could have prophesied at any point in Josiah's reign.

Zephaniah also predicts that God's judgment will come in the form of a foreign invasion (1:4, 10–13; 2:1). In the clear light of historical retrospection, it is best to identify this unnamed tool of God's punishment as Babylon, whom God did use to punish the sin of Judah (586 BC).

LITERARY CONSIDERATIONS AND OUTLINE

Zephaniah is a collection of prophetic oracles delivered by the prophet over a period of time. Regardless of their distinctive original oral settings, however, the book presently has a unified structure reflected in the following outline:

I. Superscription (1:1)

II. Judgment Oracles against Judah (1:2–2:3)

III. Oracles against the Nations (2:4–3:8)

IV. Salvation Oracles (3:9–20)

THEOLOGICAL MESSAGE

As with Amos (5:18–20; 8:3–13), Joel, Isaiah (2:6–22), and other prophets, Zephaniah speaks of a coming day of the Lord (1:14). This will be a day of judgment, when those who have rejected and disobeyed God will receive the punishment due them. Zephaniah points out that God will bring his retributive judgment against the nations (2:14–15) as well as his own people (1:14–2:3). The book thus emphasizes the sinfulness of the people (1:7–13; 3:3–5) as well as God's sovereignty to carry out his punishment.

However, Zephaniah also speaks of God's mercy. God will restore a remnant. The remnant is those people who survive the judgment. They are purified and will be the basis of a new people of God (2:3; 3:13, 19–20).

NEW TESTAMENT CONNECTIONS

Modern readers should reflect on God's expressed concern over the disobedience of his people. He is particularly angry with those who follow false gods and also with those who exploit others for their own advantage.

The NT also sees that the day of the Lord anticipates not only a historical judgment like that of the Babylonians on sinful Judah, but also a final judgment on sin. Paul often writes of the day of the Lord, the day of Christ (Rom. 2:16; 1 Cor. 1:8; Phil. 1:6, 10; 2:16; 2 Tim. 4:8) and looks for that final theophany and final vindication of God in history. John describes the warrior God coming with his armies to execute judgment (Rev. 19:11–16).

ZEPHATH A Canaanite city destroyed by the Israelites after the death of Joshua (Judg. 1:17) and renamed “Hormah.” *See also* Hormah.

ZEPHATHAH A valley near Mareshah in the west of Judah where Asa defeated Zerah the Cushite (2 Chron. 14:10). There is no name resembling this found at the site of Mareshah. It has been identified with both Wadi el-’Afranj and Wadi Safieh, with most agreeing on the latter.

ZEPHI, ZEPHO A descendant of Esau through Eliphaz (Gen. 36:11; 1 Chron. 1:36). One of the clans of the Edomites derives its name from Zepho (Gen. 36:15). The two spellings probably derive from the visual similarity of the final Hebrew letter in each name, *yod* and *waw*.

ZEPHON **(1)** The first of the seven sons of Gad, he was the namesake of the Zephonite clan (Gen. 46:16 [KJV, NRSV: “Ziphion”]; Num. 26:15). **(2)** Baal Zephon (“Baal of the north”), a site across the Red Sea where God ordered the Israelites to camp in order to entice Pharaoh into pursuing them (Exod. 14:2, 9; cf. Num. 33:7).

ZEPHONITES A clan in the tribe of Gad, descended from Zephon (Num. 26:15).

ZER A fortified town in Naphtali listed between Ziddim and Hammath, two known places (Josh. 19:35). If the list is geographically ordered, it was on the western slopes of the Sea of Galilee.

ZERAH **(1)** An Edomite descendant of Esau through Ishmael’s daughter Basemath (Gen. 36:13, 17; 1 Chron. 1:37). **(2)** The father of the Edomite king Jobab (Gen. 36:33; 1 Chron. 1:44). **(3)** The younger of the twin sons born to Tamar by her father-in-law, Judah (Gen. 38:30), he is the namesake of the Zerahite clan (Num. 26:20) and an ancestor of Achan (Josh. 7:1, 18). He and his brother, Perez, are listed in the genealogy of Jesus (Matt. 1:3). **(4)** A son of Simeon (Num. 26:13; 1 Chron. 4:24), elsewhere referred to as “Zohar” (Gen. 46:10; Exod. 6:15). **(5)** A descendant of Levi (1 Chron. 6:21). **(6)** An ancestor of Asaph, a temple musician during the reign of David (1 Chron. 6:41). **(7)** The Cushite leader of Egypt who attempted to conquer Judah under the reign of Asa. Asa and his army defeated Zerah in the Valley of Zephathah, and the men of Judah took a large amount of plunder. Zerah is possibly one of the Osorkons known to have ruled Egypt (2 Chron. 14:9).

ZERAHIAH **(1)** The son of Uzzi, he was a descendant of Aaron and an ancestor of Ezra (1 Chron. 6:6, 51; Ezra 7:4). **(2)** The father of Eliehoenai, who returned from exile with Ezra and two hundred men of the descendants of Pahath-Moab (Ezra 8:4).

ZERAHITES Both Simeon and Judah had Zerahite clans (Num. 26:13, 20 [KJV: “Zarhites”]), though Simeon is sometimes referred to as “Zohar” (Gen. 46:10; Exod. 6:15). Later Zerahites included Achan, who was stoned to death for taking “devoted things” from Jericho after its defeat (Josh. 7:17–18); David’s military commanders Sibbekai and Maharai (1 Chron. 27:11, 13); and returnees from exile (1 Chron. 9:6). *See also* Zerah; Zohar.

ZEREDA *See* Zeredah.

ZEREDAH The hometown of Jeroboam, in the area of Ephraim (1 Kings 11:26). There is a possibility, according to the LXX, that it is a strong town in Ephraim, or it can be identified with Zarthan in the Jordan Valley of Ephraim.

ZEREDATHAH *See* Zarethan.

ZERED VALLEY A wadi that flows westward into the southern portion of the Dead Sea, referred to as the Zered Valley (NIV) and the Wadi Zered (NRSV). It was crossed by the Israelites at the end of their wilderness wanderings, thus signifying the end of that period and their preparation to enter into Canaan (Num. 21:12; Deut. 2:13–14). It is likely the same body of water as the Ravine of the Poplars, and it may also be associated with the Brook of the Arabah. It is most likely one of the confluents of Wadi Kerak.

ZERERAH A town in the path of the Midianites as they fled from Gideon and his army (Judg. 7:22 [KJV: "Zererath"]). It is possibly the same town as Zarethan and has been identified as Ain Zahrah.

ZERERATH *See* Zererah.

ZERESH The wife of Haman, she encouraged him to conspire against Mordecai (Esther 5:9–14; 6:12–14).

ZERETH One of the four sons of Helah of the tribe of Judah (1 Chron. 4:7).

ZERETH SHAHAR One of the towns assigned to the tribe of Reuben, said to sit "on the hill in the valley" (Josh. 13:19). It possibly is associated with Chammat ec-Cara, near the hot springs of Macherus.

ZERI The second of the six sons of Jeduthun, he was one of the musical prophets during the reign of David (1 Chron. 25:3). In 1 Chron. 25:11 he is called "Izri" (see NIV mg.). *See also* Izri.

ZEROR A Benjamite ancestor of Kish, the father of King Saul (1 Sam. 9:1).

ZERUAH The mother of Jeroboam, the first king of Israel in the divided monarchy (1 Kings 11:26).

ZERUBBABEL A Jewish leader immediately after the exile who in 539/538 BC or soon after led Jewish exiles back from Babylon to Jerusalem (Ezra 2:1–6:22; Haggai; Zech. 4:1–14).

Cyrus the Great defeated Babylon in 539 BC and then issued a decree allowing Babylon's vassals to return to their homelands and rebuild their temples (2 Chron. 36:22–23; Ezra 1:1–4). Zerubbabel led the first contingent to Jerusalem and then headed up the effort to rebuild the temple to Yahweh in Jerusalem. Zerubbabel saw to the immediate construction of the altar, which allowed sacrificial ritual to resume. However, after running into opposition from the Samaritans, the rebuilding of the temple proper was delayed. God sent Haggai and Zechariah to revitalize the effort, and in 515 BC the second temple finally was completed.

Zerubbabel was the Persian-appointed governor of Judah (Hag. 1:1). He was a descendant of Shealtiel. Sometimes the text implies he is Shealtiel's son, though 1 Chron. 3:19 says that he is the son of Shealtiel's brother Pedaiah, another of Jehoiachin's sons. Whatever the precise connection, there is no doubt that Zerubbabel was a Davidic descendant. The prophets Zechariah and Haggai both speak of Zerubbabel in messianic terms (Haggai; Zech. 4:1–14). Eventually, he simply disappears from the historical record. Some speculate that the Persians removed him because of the high expectation that surrounded him as a son of David. However, he was the governor of Judah, not the ultimate Messiah. A greater one, one of his descendants (Matt. 1:12–13; Luke 3:27), would be the true Messiah—Jesus Christ.

ZERUIAH The mother of Joab, Abishai, and Asahel, the former two men close to David in his campaigns, and the third said to be as swift as a gazelle (2 Sam. 2:18). She is said to be a sister of David, which would account for her sons' closeness to David (1 Chron. 2:16). She is mentioned only in reference to her three sons, whose father is not named.

ZETHAM The second of the three sons of Ladan, from the clan of Gershon of the tribe of Levi. Zetham was a manager of the temple treasuries (1 Chron. 23:8; 26:22).

ZETHAN The fifth of the seven sons of Bilhan, from the tribe of Benjamin (1 Chron. 7:10).

ZETHAR One of the seven personal attendants of the Persian king Xerxes (Ahasuerus), whom he commanded to bring Queen Vashti to his banquet (Esther 1:10). Since he worked with the harem, he was a eunuch.

ZEUS The king of the Greek pantheon. When Barnabas and Paul were in Lystra, Paul healed a man who was born unable to walk. When the people saw it, they were confused and thought that Barnabas was the incarnation of Zeus, and Paul of the god Hermes, one of Zeus's many offspring. The priest of Zeus in Lystra, joined by a crowd, even wanted to offer sacrifices to the two men. Upon hearing of their intentions, Paul and Barnabas tore their clothes in dismay and stopped the crowd from proceeding (Acts 14:8–18).

ZIA One of Gad's tribal leaders who is recorded as living in the vicinity of Bashan (1 Chron. 5:13).

ZIBA A servant in Saul's house who played a role in the court history of David recorded in 2 Sam. 9:2–12; 16:1–3; 19:17–29. David sought to show kindness to Saul's house, and Ziba informed him of a crippled son of Jonathan, Mephibosheth. By David's command, Ziba was charged with providing for Mephibosheth. Later, as David was fleeing for his life from Absalom, Ziba arrived with provisions. Ziba wrongly told him that Mephibosheth stayed behind to regain Saul's throne. David then gave all of Mephibosheth's property to Ziba. After David returned victorious, Mephibosheth said that he unwillingly stayed behind because he was crippled. So David commanded that half of Mephibosheth's property be given back to him; however, Mephibosheth told David to let Ziba keep it all, as David's return was sufficient reward.

ZIBEON Grandfather of Esau's wife Oholibamah through his son (or daughter) Anah (Gen. 36:2). Since Hebrew *bat* can mean either "daughter" or "granddaughter," it is unclear whether in Gen. 36:2 Anah is identified as the "daughter" (*bat*) of Zibeon (KJV, NKJV, ESV), or whether Oholibamah is instead being described as the daughter of Anah (a man) and the "grandaughter [*bat*] of Zibeon" (NIV, NLT, NET). Zibeon is described as a son of Seir the Horite (Gen. 36:20; 1 Chron. 1:38), but also as a Hivite (Gen. 36:2). This may indicate either a textual error or that originally two persons named "Zibeon" were in view.

ZIBIA A leader in the tribe of Benjamin, he was the second of seven sons born in Moab to

Shaharaim and his wife Hodesh, after Shaharaim had divorced Hushim and Baara (1 Chron. 8:9).

ZIBIAH The mother of Joash, the king of Judah after the reign of Athaliah. Zibiah was from Beersheba (2 Kings 12:1; 2 Chron. 24:1).

ZICHRI, ZICRI *See* Zikri.

ZIDDIM One of the fortified cities allotted to Naphtali (Josh. 19:35). It has been identified with Chattin, a modern city five miles northwest of Tiberias.

ZIDKIJAH *See* Zedekiah.

ZIDON *See* Tyre and Sidon.

ZIGGURAT An important architectural form in the ancient Near East, the ziggurat was a stepped structure made of mud-brick and built on a raised platform. Similar to a pyramid, except with a platform at the top, the ziggurat was thought to span heaven and earth and as such was used as an artificial mountain for the worship of deities. Many believe that the tower of Babel was a ziggurat (Gen. 11:1–9).

ZIHA **(1)** One of the ancestors of the temple servants (Nethinim) who returned to Jerusalem after the Babylonian captivity under the leadership of Zerubbabel in 539 BC or soon after (Ezra 2:43; Neh. 7:46). The fact that many of the names in the list are foreign has led to the belief that they were originally prisoners of war who were pressed into service to perform menial tasks as they assisted the Levites. **(2)** With Gishpa, Ziha was in charge of the temple servants living on the hill of Ophel at the time of Nehemiah (Neh. 11:21).

ZIKLAG A town in the Negev of Judah, originally given to the tribe of Simeon during the settlement of Canaan (Josh. 15:31; 19:5). This town subsequently was taken by the Philistines, only later to come into focus as the town given to David by Achish king of Gath (1 Sam. 27:6). David and his six hundred men stayed at Ziklag for a year and four months. During this time, David and his men joined Achish in battle against Saul. While David and his men were out with Achish, Ziklag was overrun, plundered, and burned by marauding Amalekites (1 Sam. 30:1). David quickly caught the Amalekites and saved Ziklag’s inhabitants. Ziklag is also the location where David received the news of Saul’s death (2 Sam. 1:1–4). Ziklag is said to have been resettled under Nehemiah after the Babylonian captivity (Neh. 11:28). Current archaeology has proposed several possible excavations of Ziklag, but none has been shown conclusively to be the biblical Ziklag.

ZIKRI **(1)** The third of the three sons of Izhar the Levite (Exod. 6:21). **(2)** The second of the nine sons of Shimei the Benjamite (1 Chron. 8:19). **(3)** The fifth of the eleven sons of Shashak the Benjamite (1 Chron. 8:23). **(4)** The sixth of the six sons of Jeroham the Benjamite (1 Chron. 8:27). **(5)** The son of Asaph the Levite (1 Chron. 9:15). **(6)** One of the sons of Eliezer the Levite, he was among those in charge of treasuries for “things dedicated” by King David (1 Chron. 26:25). **(7)** The father of Eliezer, officer over the Reubenites during the reign of King David (1 Chron. 27:16). **(8)** The father of Amasiah the Judahite, commander of a family of warriors in the service of King

Jehoshaphat (2 Chron. 17:16). **(9)** The father of Elishaphat, a unit commander among those who collaborated with the priest Jehoiada to return the monarchy to the house of David (2 Chron. 23:1). **(10)** An Ephraimite warrior in King Pekah's army who killed King Ahaz's son Maaseiah and two of his high-ranking officials, Azrikam and Elkanah (2 Chron. 28:7). **(11)** The father of Joel, a Benjamite provincial leader (Neh. 11:9). **(12)** The head of the priestly family of Abijah in the days of Joiakim (Neh. 12:17).

ZILLAH One of the two wives of Lamech, a descendant of Cain, she bore a son, Tubal-Cain, and a daughter, Naamah (Gen. 4:19, 22).

ZILLETHAI **(1)** A descendant of Benjamin (1 Chron. 8:20). **(2)** A leader of Manasseh who deserted Saul to join forces with David at Ziklag (1 Chron. 12:20).

ZILPAH The maidservant of Leah, she was given to Jacob to provide children (Gen. 30:9–12). Zilpah was initially given to Leah by her father, Laban (Gen. 29:24). Zilpah gave birth to Gad and Asher (Gen. 35:26).

ZILTHAI *See* Zillethai.

ZIMMAH **(1)** A Gershonite Levite descended through Libni (1 Chron. 6:20). **(2)** A Gershonite Levite descended through Shimei (1 Chron. 6:42). It is unclear which Zimmah was the father of Joah (2 Chron. 29:12).

ZIMRAN The oldest of the six sons of the union between Abraham and Keturah (Gen. 25:2; 1 Chron. 1:32). He is thought to have settled in the east. There have been speculations about the exact location of his settling based on names found in Ptolemy and Pliny and other ancient manuscripts, but no firm conclusions have been reached.

ZIMRI **(1)** The son of Salu, the leader of a Simeonite family. He brought a Midianite woman, Kozbi, into the Israelite camp, for which the zealous Phinehas killed them both (Num. 25:6–8, 14–15). **(2)** An ancestor of Achan, who angered God and was stoned to death for stealing "devoted things" from the vanquished Jericho (Josh. 7:1, 17–18; 1 Chron. 2:6). **(3)** A military officer of King Elah of Israel, he killed the king and usurped the throne. In doing so, he fulfilled the prophecy of Jehu against Baasha, the father of Elah. Zimri reigned for only seven days before he committed suicide in the face of another military coup led by Omri (1 Kings 16:8–20). **(4)** A descendant of Saul, from the tribe of Benjamin (1 Chron. 8:36; 9:42). **(5)** A region somewhere to the east of Israel, its kings were among those prophesied by Jeremiah to drink the cup of God's wrath (Jer. 25:25).

ZIN, DESERT OF A region in the extreme southeast of the land of Judah, forming a boundary between the land of Israel and that of Edom (Num. 34:3; Josh. 15:1, 3). This desert or wilderness is the same as the Desert of Kadesh (Num. 33:36; Ps. 29:8). There is also a town of Zin located in this wilderness, which most likely is the origin of the name (Num. 34:4). The Israelite spies started from Zin and traveled northward to scout the promised land (Num. 13:21). The region is also the location of the waters of Meribah Kadesh, where Moses disobeyed God and struck the rock for water (Num. 27:14; Deut. 32:51). It is also the place where Miriam died (Num. 20:1). It is not to be confused with the Desert of Sin.

The Desert of Zin

ZINA *See* Ziza, Zizah.

ZION Jerusalem was held by the Jebusites, who mocked David's forces. But David captured the city, which from then on bore the title "City of David," also called "fortress of Zion" (2 Sam. 5:5–9). David made it his capital. Later, Solomon built the temple there, making it also the religious center of the nation (1 Kings 8:1–14). "Zion" (of uncertain meaning) sometimes is a designation for the city of Jerusalem. It is said to have towers, ramparts, and citadels (Ps. 48:12–13), and Jeremiah prophesied its razing (Jer. 26:18). But it is also a designation for the mountain on which the city is built (Isa. 24:23; Zech. 8:3).

Since the God of Israel has a special relationship with Israel and its king, God's purposes for the world often are couched in terms of Mount Zion. God set his king on Mount Zion (Ps. 2:6). The psalmist praises God, who has established Zion "forever" (Ps. 48:1–8). It is there that God is said to reign (Isa. 24:23). Nevertheless, the king on David's throne and the inhabitants of Zion can be censured by God and found wanting (Amos 6:1). In fact, it is precisely because God identifies with the city that the people bear particular responsibility to represent his character. Thus, the time came when Zion was indeed "plowed like a field" (Mic. 3:12). Lamentations mourns Zion's destruction numerous times. After God’s people spent a period of time in exile, God brought them back to Zion (Ps. 126). Although the ancient city was again destroyed by the Romans, Zion has become in the NT a symbol of the present heavenly dwelling place of God, entered into by faith (Heb. 12:22), and the future destiny of the saints (Rev. 14:1).

ZIOR A town allotted to the tribe of Judah in the hill country (Josh. 15:54). It is most likely four and one-half miles north-northeast of Hebron, at the site of modern Si’air.

ZIPH **(1)** A town in the southern Negev allotted to the tribe of Judah (Josh. 15:24). This town is connected with Sufah and is said to be close to the ascent of Akrabbim (Scorpion Pass). **(2)** A town in the hill country near Carmel and Juttah allotted to the tribe of Judah (Josh. 15:55). David hid from Saul in the “Desert of Ziph” (1 Sam. 23:14–15), which was likely the region east of Ziph. David was betrayed by the Ziphites at this time (Ps. 54 superscription [KJV: “Ziphims”]). Saul was on his way to Ziph when David and Abishai crept into his camp at night and confiscated Saul’s spear and water jug (1 Sam. 26:2). This town was later fortified by Rehoboam (2 Chron. 11:8). It is associated with Tell Ziph, approximately five miles southeast of Hebron. **(3)** A grandson of Caleb, in the tribe of Judah (1 Chron. 2:42). **(4)** The first of the four sons of Jehallelel, in the tribe of Judah (1 Chron. 4:16).

ZIPHAH The second of the four sons of Jehallelel, in the tribe of Judah (1 Chron. 4:16).

ZIPHIMS *See* Ziph.

ZIPHION *See* Zephon.

ZIPHITES *See* Ziph.

ZIPHRON A landmark on the northern border of Canaan as described in Num. 34:9. This apparently was replaced by Hazer Hattikon after the Babylonian exile (Ezek. 47:16–17).

ZIPPOR The father of Balak king of Moab, who hired the prophet Balaam to curse the Israelites during the exodus (Num. 22:1–6).

ZIPPORAH The daughter of Reuel (Jethro), the Midianite priest for whom Moses worked. She became the wife of Moses, bearing him two sons, Gershom and Eliezer. Zipporah quarreled with Moses over the necessity of circumcision, calling Moses a “bridegroom of blood” (Exod. 4:25). She was sent back to Midian before Moses returned to Egypt, but later she stayed with the migrating Israelites on their way to the promised land (18:2–5). There is much speculation around whether Zipporah was the Cushite woman who was the source of Miriam and Aaron’s opposition to Moses (see Num. 12:1).

ZITHER A musical instrument consisting of many strings stretched over a shallow wooden sounding board. It was one of the instruments used to play music for the worship of the golden statue made by King Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. 3:5, 7, 10, 15).

ZITHRI *See* Sithri.

ZIV *See* Calendar.

ZIZ A pass overlooking the desert to which God led Jehoshaphat and all the Israelites in order to see the destruction that he had brought upon the Ammonites, the Moabites, and the inhabitants of Mount Seir (2 Chron. 20:16). This pass leads from En Gedi to the plateau above. It was used by Arab marauders. It is currently associated with Tell Hasaseh.

ZIZA, ZIZAH **(1)** The son of Shiphi, he was a clan leader of Simeon (1 Chron. 4:37). **(2)** The second of the four sons of Shimei, a Gershonite Levite (1 Chron. 23:10–11). In the Hebrew text his name is spelled "Zina" in v. 10 and "Zizah" in v. 11 (followed by KJV, NRSV, NET), but one Hebrew manuscript and the LXX write both as "Ziza" (followed by the NIV). **(3)** The third of four children born to King Rehoboam and Maakah (2 Chron. 11:20).

ZOAN A city on the Tanitic plain of the Nile, it is associated with Hebron (Num. 13:22) and later is known as the Greek city of Tanis. The name is found in Egyptian and Assyrian archaeological finds and can be associated with the court of Pharaoh (Isa. 19:11, 13; 30:4). Thus, Zoan is a city of great importance in the Nile Delta and is mentioned in judgment along with Thebes (Ezek. 30:14). The psalmist mentions the region of Zoan (Ps. 78:12, 43), which is also known as the region of Rameses.

ZOAR A city south of the Dead Sea. It was one of the five cities taken over by Kedorlaomer (Gen. 14:2). Zoar was the place to which Lot fled when Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed (19:22–24). Lot later left the city for a nearby mountain dwelling because he felt unsafe there (19:30). Isaiah prophesied that the inhabitants of Moab would flee there in the coming destruction (Isa. 15:5). The city is currently thought to be Safi, along the Zered River, although some suggest that the original site is submerged beneath the Dead Sea.

ZOBA *See* Zobah.

ZOBAH A city of the monarchical period of Israel, first mentioned as an antagonist to Saul (1 Sam. 14:47) and then to David (2 Sam. 8:3, 5, 12). The Ammonites hired mercenaries from this city to try to defeat David in a two-front war (2 Sam. 10:6, 8 [KJV: "Zoba"]). The city, situated north of Damascus in Syria, was one of the leading cities in the Syrian Empire.

ZOBEBAH *See* Hazzobebah.

ZOHAR **(1)** The father of Ephron the Hittite, who sold the cave of Machpelah to Abraham for the burial of Sarah (Gen. 23:8; 25:9). **(2)** The fifth of the six sons of Simeon, also known as "Zerah" (Gen. 46:10; Exod. 6:15). **(3)** According to a textual correction (Qere reading), a descendant of Judah (1 Chron. 4:7). The Kethib reading is "Izhar" (followed by the NRSV; KJV: "Jezoar").

ZOHELETH Adonijah, having set himself up to replace David as king, offered sacrifices at the Stone of Zoheleth in anticipation of his coronation (1 Kings 1:9). David, however, quickly named Solomon as his successor. "Zoheleth" can be translated as "serpent" or "creeping" (cf. ESV, RSV: "Serpent's Stone"). This stone was near En Rogel, a source of water southwest of Jerusalem where the Kidron and Hinnom valleys meet.

ZOHETH A descendant of Ishi, from the tribe of Judah (1 Chron. 4:20).

ZOPHAH The first of the four sons of Helem, among the leaders in the tribe of Asher (1 Chron. 7:35–36).

ZOPHAI The son of Elkanah, from the tribe of Levi (1 Chron. 6:26).

ZOPHAR The third of Job’s three friends who sit with him while he is in misery (Job 2:11). He is known to have the harsher, more philosophical stance in terms of theology, as he takes a very abrasive realist position in regard to Job’s situation. He blames Job for being too anthropocentric in his theological position. Zophar speaks in Job 11; 20; and possibly 27:13–23. He is said to be a Naamathite, which probably places his origin east of the Jordan River.

ZOPHIM The location of the overlook, on top of Pisgah, from which Balaam attempted to curse the Israelites on behalf of Balak (Num. 23:14). This high place is near the northeastern end of the Dead Sea. The Hebrew word (*tsopim*) means “watchmen” and is used in reference to other prophets (cf. Isa. 52:8; 56:10).

ZORAH The name of possibly two towns, one allotted to Judah (Josh. 15:33 [KJV: “Zoreah”]), the other to Dan (Josh. 19:41). The latter was the home of Manoah, the father of Samson (Judg. 13:2). This town is referenced mainly in the Samson narrative (Judg. 13:25; 16:31) and as a home of the spies in the Micah story (Judg. 18:2, 8, 11). Later it was fortified by Rehoboam (2 Chron. 11:10) and resettled after the Babylonian exile (Neh. 11:29). Its location is thought to be that of Sar’ah, thirteen miles west of Jerusalem.

The ancient site of Zorah

ZORATHITES A clan of Caleb in the tribe of Judah descended from Reaiah son of Shobal (1 Chron. 2:53 [KJV: “Zareathites”]; 4:2).

ZOREAH *See* Zorah.

ZORITES A clan of Caleb in the tribe of Judah descended from Salma (1 Chron. 2:54). *See also* Zorathites.

ZOROASTER The founder of the dualistic thinking embodied in what is now known as Zoroastrianism. His teaching is thought to have had some influence in the dualism of Judaism. His dates are unknown, but his teachings seem to have been accepted by the early kings of Persia in the late sixth century BC.

ZOROBABEL The KJV transliteration of the Greek name “Zerubbabel” in the genealogies of Jesus (Matt. 1:12–13; Luke 3:27). *See also* Zerubbabel.

ZUAR The father of Nethanel, who led the tribe of Issachar during the exodus wilderness journey (Num. 1:8; 2:5; 7:18, 23; 10:15).

ZUPH **(1)** An Ephraimite ancestor of the prophet Samuel and of the Levite temple musician Heman

(1 Sam. 1:1; 1 Chron. 6:35). **(2)** A district in Benjamin where Saul decided to return home after searching for his father's donkeys (1 Sam. 9:5).

ZUPHITE Elkanah, the father of Samuel, husband of Hannah, and ancestor of Zuph, is said to be "a man from Ramathaim, a Zuphite" (1 Sam. 1:1). The Hebrew text reads, "a man from Ramathaim Zophim" (followed by NET, KJV; NIV mg.: "Ramathaim Zuphim").

ZUR **(1)** One of the five kings of Midian slain in battle against Israel during the exodus (Num. 31:8; Josh. 13:21). His daughter Kozbi was killed by Phinehas, along with Zimri, who angered God by bringing her into the Israelite camp (Num. 25:15). **(2)** A Benjamite ancestor of Saul, he was the second son born to Jeiel and Maakah (1 Chron. 8:30; 9:36).

ZURIEL The son of Abihail, he was the leader of the Merarites, from the tribe of Levi, during the exodus wilderness journey (Num. 3:35).

ZURISHADDAI The father of Shelumiel, who was the leader of the tribe of Simeon during the exodus wilderness journey (Num. 1:6; 2:12; 7:36, 41; 10:19).

ZUZIM, ZUZIMS *See* Zuzites.

ZUZITES A people group from Ham, a city in the region of the Dead Sea, who were defeated by Kedorlaomer and his allies (Gen. 14:5 [NRSV: "Zuzim"; KJV: "Zuzims"]). They perhaps are synonymous with the Zamzummites (Deut. 2:20). *See also* Zamzummites.

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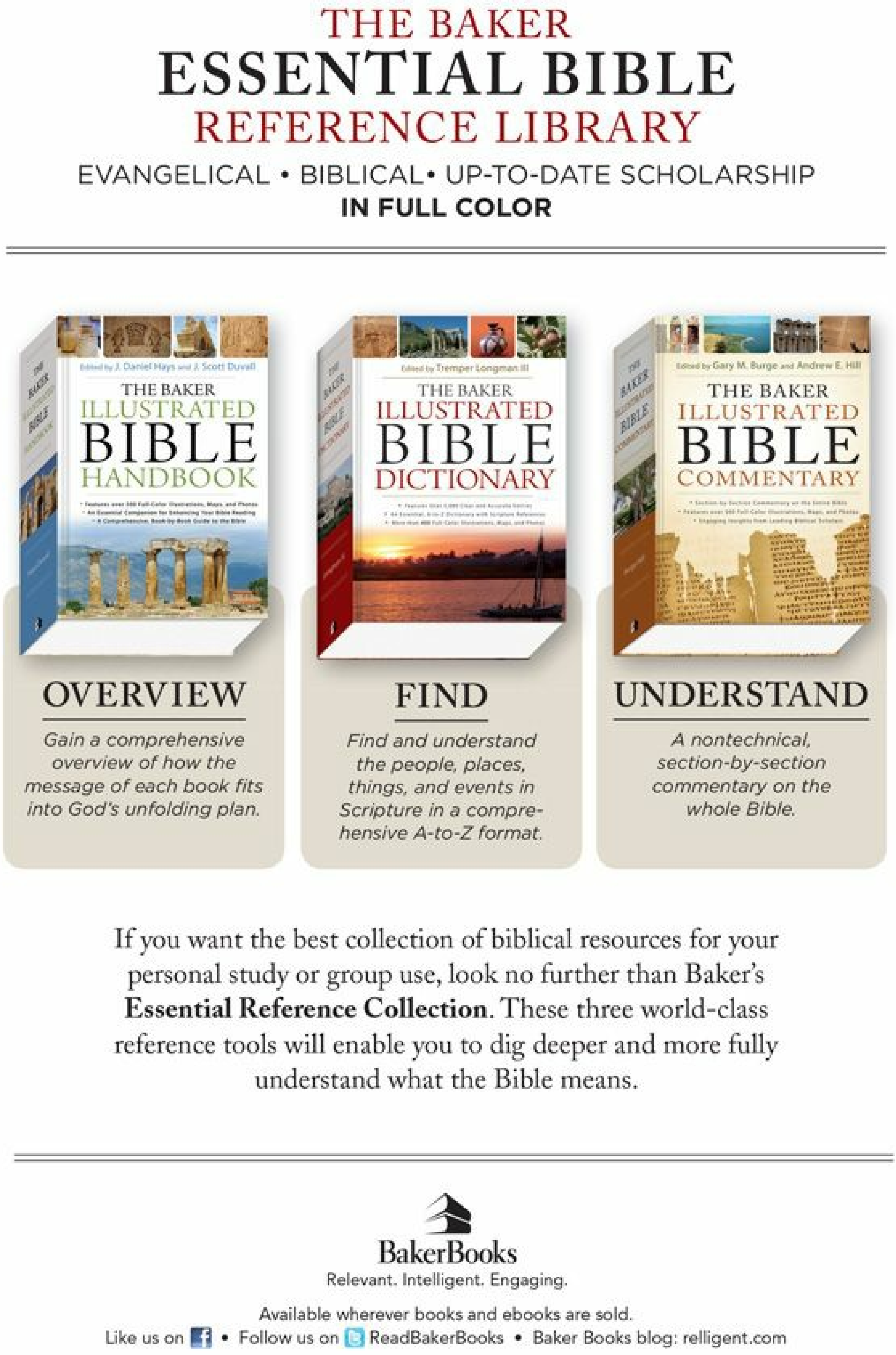

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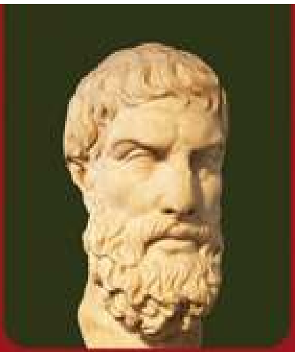

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